



Guide to *Pesah* Observance – 5769-2009

by Rabbi H. David Rose

General Information

Pesah is celebrated this year from the night of Wednesday, April 8 through Thursday, April 16. (Those observing seven days of *Pesah* go through Wednesday, April 15, but observe the food rituals through the eighth day.) The two *Sedarim* are observed on Wednesday and Thursday, April 8 and 9. Please also see the ad for Mazon on page 3 of this insert.

In addition to the conducting of *Sedarim* and the observance of *Yom Tov*, (the festival days) the *mitzvah* of abstinence from *hametz* (leaven) is the major characteristic of *Pesah*. *Hametz* may not be consumed from 11:00 am on Wednesday, April 8, to 8:28 pm on Thursday, April 16. *Hametz* must be burned by 12:05 pm on April 8 and ownership of *hametz* is prohibited from 1:10 pm that day.

The Torah prohibits the ownership of *hametz* during *Pesah*. For this reason, we arrange for the sale of the *hametz* to a non-Jew. The transfer, *mekhirat hametz*, is accomplished by appointing an agent to handle the sale. Use the form included in this mailing to appoint Rabbi Rose as your agent for this sale. It is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, Rabbi Rose will arrange for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted *hametz*. If ownership of the *hametz* was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this *hametz* is prohibited after the holiday as well as during (*hametz she-avar alav ha-Pesah*). Due to the fact that the Torah prohibits the eating of *hametz* during *Pesah*, and because many common foods contain some mixture of *hametz*, guidance is necessary when shopping and preparing for *Pesah*. The search for *hametz* is done in the home on the night of Tuesday, April 7.

What follows is a general guideline; however, Rabbi Rose should be consulted when any doubt arises. (Rabbi Rose: 301-299-7087, ext. 1) *Kosher le-Pesah* labels for observance of *Pesah* that do not bear the name of a rabbi or one of the recognized symbols of rabbinic supervision, or which are not integral to the package, should not be used without consultation.

Please note the Mazon ad on page 3 of this insert, and participate in the *mitzvah* of helping those in need during the *Pesah* holiday.

Preparing the Home for *Pesah*

Year after year, at each festival, we relive the miracle of our existence with creative experiences. At *Sukkot*, we move out of the house to re-experience our journey in the wilderness. At *Pesah* we turn our house inside out to relive our journey from slavery to freedom. Each year we relive the journey by thoroughly cleansing the home, office, and car from *hametz* and leftover food. We clean out desk drawers which might store a snack, pockets in clothing which might still contain a piece of gum or candy, and we scour counter tops and sinks thoroughly. It is preferable to put contact paper or another liner on counter tops and shelves to avoid contact with *hametz* during *Pesah*. The stove is prepared by thoroughly scrubbing and cleansing all parts and turning on full flame until all the grates or burners are red hot. The oven is turned to its highest setting and left on for twenty minutes. An electric dishwasher may be used for *Pesah* after thoroughly scouring it with boiling water, running it for one cycle on empty, and, if feasible, obtaining a new tray.

Let all who are hungry, come and eat. – Haggadah

Do you have an extra place at your table? Do you need a place at a *seder* table?

Pesah hospitality is an important *mitzvah*. If you can host a guest or a family for a *seder*, or if you would like to attend a *seder* in someone's home, call Paula Weisman, 301-299-7087, ext.1.

