

A Letter from the Rabbi & the Rebbetzin Yeshua (Jesus) in the Pesach (Passover)

Dear Friends and Family in Yeshua,

Last year, Pesach (Passover) fell quite early in the pandemic and we all found ourselves pivoting. We were figuring out life - working from home, managing remote schooling, sifting through the developing picture of what COVID-19 would mean for all of us. We were afraid of catching the virus, concerned that we didn't know what the next week, let alone months, would hold.

We were delighted that in the midst of so much, we were witness to so much creativity in celebrations of Pesach (Passover). We heard stories and saw pictures - of your [zoom Seders](#), of the [Haggadot](#) you put together by yourself, of the beloved, wine-stained haggadot you have used for generations but you now screen-shared online, of the [homemade matzah you baked for the first time](#) (in Italian), of the matzah balls you made in your own kitchen when usually your aunt would have brought them to the big [Pesach \(Passover\) Seder at a relative's house](#). You welcomed new friends around your (online) tables, you watched the movie Exodus or the Rugrats episode about Passover as part of your Seder, you allowed yourself to relax more than usual and made matzah pizza for dinner. We loved seeing it all. As much as we had hoped to be back together in person this Pesach (Passover), we are not able to do so safely yet. We are still struggling with feeling more restriction and less freedom than we are used to in the routines of our daily lives.

Perhaps you are feeling more energetic and hopeful as more and more people are inoculated. Or perhaps you feel more exhausted and worn down than ever. Perhaps you vacillate between the two. We want you to know: no matter what you feel up for, that's ok. Maybe you are already vaccinated and have plans for a tiny in-person Seder with another person or two who have already been vaccinated. [Maybe you have plans with family or friends for a Zoom Seder or just a Zoom get-together for Passover](#). Whatever you are up for doing, just do that; and that'll be perfectly fine. Maybe you'll find gratification in making sure you have each item for the Seder plate and Seder table and a nice bowl of matzah ball soup to go with it. Or perhaps you'll want to read a book or watch a movie related to one of the themes of Passover and just make yourself matza bread for dinner. Either one of those is great!

On this website you will find all [sorts of resources](#) we have created for you to observe Pesach (Passover) in a meaningful way this year, however traditional or creative you prefer. Here in this letter, we want to lay out some basic ideas for a variety of ways to engage in Pesach (Passover). Of course this isn't a comprehensive list, but we hope that this letter will help give your ideas or spark your own ideas for marking Passover during this unusual and difficult time.

Before Pesach (Passover)/Before the Seder:

One of the traditions of Pesach (Passover) is to do a very thorough [spring cleaning of your home](#), sweeping away every crumb and speck of dust. No time like the present! Feel the link to generations of Jewish folks around the world who have scrubbed and washed at this time of year!

Go old school and write actual, physical letters to those you love and send them. Or propose to family and friends that you will each write to each other. Checking your mailbox will hold a happy anticipation!

As the afternoon wears on and the holiday approaches (on Saturday, March 27th at 7.00PM (Italian Time), call (don't just text!) family and friends to wish them a happy Pesach (Passover). Also [join us](#) on our Community [Zoom Erev Pesach](#) (you can take a look at our [Seder Teaching](#) from last year) on the 27th March 2021 at 7.00PM (Italian Time)! We can't wait to see you and your family! [Write to us](#) to receive the [Special Invitation to our Zoom Erev Pesach 2021!](#)

Pick out a couple books and/or movies related to the themes of Pesach (Passover) (or including at least one scene of a Pesach (Passover Seder) to enjoy during the holiday. Make sure to order them online in advance so you're ready!

Make yourself a playlist (on Spotify or iTunes or whoever you keep your music) for Pesach (Passover). Look up songs related to freedom, journey (perhaps the band Journey?), springtime.

Find 2-3 [Pesach \(Passover\) recipes](#) to try out during the holiday. Enjoy (?) the challenge of locating the ingredients you need, or finding a recipe involving ingredients you already have.

Solo Seder

Read a good Jewish book, or book related to the themes of Pesach (Passover). [Let us know if you want suggestions!](#)

Watch a Jewish movie, or a movie related to the themes of Pesach (Passover). [Again, let us know if you want suggestions!](#)

Take TikTok/Social Media by storm and create a 1-minute, postable video reenactment of the Pesach (Passover) story.

"Lean In" to reclining (get it?) during the [Pesach \(Passover\) Seder](#) and flip through the [Haggadah](#) while lying on the couch or in bed. Or dig even further into the spirit of freedom from physical labor and do some relaxing yoga or soak in the tub with a glass of wine (or 4?) or whatever your preferred beverage may be.

Write little notes to yourself on small post-it notes or other paper and hide them all over your home. Make sure to hide enough that it will be difficult to locate all of them later, so many that you will still be finding them for weeks or months to come. It's like an Afikoman hunt that lasts all year!

Tiny Seder

Most of the above ideas (for “Solo Seder”) would also work quite well for a Tiny Seder! Decide together that you will each bring at least one difficult/complex question or challenging topic to be discussed over dinner. Bonus points if it is based in/relates to Pesach (Passover) or involves themes pertinent to Pesach (Passover) or the Seder.

Hide each other’s cell phones instead of the Afikoman (unless you’ll be connecting with family or friends who are far away by utilizing those devices!) and see how present you can truly be together!

Take turns serving each other and pouring each other’s wine. On Pesach (Passover), no one is a slave and everyone should be waited on!

At the time when you open the door for Elijah – or if you’re not doing an official Seder, whenever some stars come out – take a leisurely walk around your neighborhood. You could even plan in advance to toast neighbors with a l’chaim (from a socially distant, acceptable distance) at a certain time!

Read a good Jewish book/watch a good Jewish movie – or on Pesach (Passover)/Seder-related themes – in advance of Pesach (Passover) and discuss the book or movie over dinner. (Or each person at your tiny Seder could read/watch a different one and be prepared to share and discuss each of those.)

Dramatize the Pesach Seder. Come up with different styles or voices or ways in which to share the story of Pesach (Passover) and take turns picking and reading or reenacting based on whatever you pick. (Read it in the voice of Bugs Bunny, tell the story from Pharaoh’s perspective, modernize it to the Pesach (Passover) story written by Quentin Tarantino, decide which actors would be best to play each character in the story.)

Play “The Phrase That Pays.” Everyone writes down a funny or silly phrase, folds up the papers, and then everyone picks one out of a hat/bowl. Keep your selected phrase a secret and each person must incorporate the phrase naturally into the conversation around the Seder table. By the end of the meal, decide who did it best!

Study something together. (We’ll be sending out study and discussion materials in the coming days!)

Zoom/FaceTime/Skype Seder

Plan to do a [virtual Seder “salon.”](#) where everyone brings a song, story, poem (or piece of art or meditation or whatever you come up with) related to the Seder or to the themes of the Pesach (Passover) story. Share and discuss!

Assign everyone different parts of the Seder to lead from whatever [Haggadah](#) or source they prefer, and however creatively they wish. It’ll be eclectic and fun!

Each household represented on the video call hides their own Afikoman. Then over zoom, the others have to direct you to look in different places in your own home until they figure out where you’ve hidden it!

Instead of a traditional Afikoman, plan ahead that every person attending your zoom Seder will come prepared with a trivia question or riddle, and enjoy solving all of them together! If it's difficult to locate certain Seder plate items, you could divide up the items among the various homes represented in the video call, and between these locations you'll have each symbolic item represented! Or, each person can bring an item that they think represents a theme of Pesach (Passover) or a Seder plate item and you can enjoy listening and discussing these symbolic mementos.

Decide that everyone on the video call will wear their pajamas for the Pesach Seder! (Or everyone can have fun being fancy on the top, pajamas on the bottom! Or dress up as characters from the Passover story using whatever items you happen to find around your home. The weirder or more creative the better!)

What are ten modern plagues? Would you count COVID-19 as one? Discuss.

Study something together. If you want some interesting Jewish texts related to Pesach (Passover) to discuss, let us know. We'd love to share something you'd find interesting!

For kids/families with kids:

Don't miss Sima's big list of Passover activity ideas for families and children [here](#).

Watch the **Rugrats** Passover episode

Watch **The Prince of Egypt**

Read children's books about Passover (let us know if you want suggestions!)

Make scenes from the Passover story out of Legos, or with arts & crafts supplies

Make paper plate masks representing each of the characters of the Passover Story and act the story out

Do charades of the plagues

Make Seder bingo (of words you'll encounter in the Seder or things you'll do). Whoever gets bingo first gets a head start finding the Afikoman (or first matzah ball)

Parents hide Afikoman for kids; kids hide Afikoman for parents!

You can do many of these things or none of them at all. What we hope is that you will find at least SOME way to mark the holiday this year, in whatever way works for you. And please remember, you don't have to do EVERYTHING in order to do SOMETHING.

We said it last year when we still had no idea what was in store for all of us. We say it again now:

This year, we aren't able to be together as we usually are on Pesach (Passover). Next year, may we be pandemic-free. Next year, together!

Teaching on [Pesach](#) and [Pesach Seder](#) and [more ...](#), [Your Haggadah](#) Please give us your [RSVP](#) to the **Zoom Erev Pesach with Seder on the 27th of March 2021 at 7.00 PM (Italian Time)** (Service will be held on Zoom platform) in advance via email so we might serve you as the best we can for Hashem's Glory!

With love in the Moshiach of Israel who is coming soon,
Rabbi Harel & Rebbetzin Gavriela Frye