



### *The Three Matzohs*

Matzah is called "The Bread of Faith." When our ancestors hastily left Egypt and faithfully went into the desert, the provisions of dough they carried on their backs had no time to rise. It baked in the sun and formed Matzah. The 3 Matzohs we use in the Seder plate also symbolize the entire Jewish people: Kohen, Levite and Israelite. At least 2 ounces (58 grams) of Matzah should be eaten during each Seder.

### BEFORE PASSOVER

On Passover it is forbidden to eat Chametz — leavened foods made with wheat, oats, rye, barley or spelt. After a thorough cleaning of our homes and possessions, including the pockets of our pants and jackets, we can designate certain areas as a Chametz storage. Inside that area we can lock away any remaining Chametz foods as well as dishes, vacuum cleaners and pet food, etc. Now you can stock up on Kosher-for-Passover items!

### SELL THE CHAMETZ

Aside from not eating Chametz, we may not own it or see it either. The fix? Seal your Chametz closet and "sell" it to a person who isn't Jewish for the duration of the holiday. Ask your local Rabbi to arrange the process.

### THE NIGHT BEFORE

The night before the first Seder (unless the first Seder is Saturday night), we conduct a formal search for Chametz in the home, followed by a declaration to disown any Chametz in one's possession, of which he is not aware. Traditionally, ten small pieces of bread are tightly wrapped and placed around the house to be "found"; a blessing is recited before the search; a candle lights the way. The Chametz is set in a safe place to be burned in the morning.

### THE MORNING BEFORE

In the morning, the ten pieces and any additional Chametz found during last night's search is burned. While the Chametz is burning a declaration is made disowning all Chametz, known or unknown, that is in one's possession.

### DURING THE DAY

To help ensure an appetite for the Seder, we may not eat any Matzah. We also refrain from eating horseradish or foods that are used to make the Charoset.

### THE FIRST SEDER

The holiday begins just before nightfall when candles are lit, and the accompanying candle lighting blessing is recited. At nightfall, the Seder begins.

### THE SECOND SEDER

After nightfall, candles are lit from an existing flame and then followed by the recitation of the candle lighting blessing. Before beginning the second Seder, on this night, we start counting 49 days until the holiday of Shavuot, commemorating the Omer offering in the ancient Holy Temple. This "Omer counting" also represents the 49 stages of purity that we work to achieve between Passover—leaving Egypt—and Shavuot—receiving the Torah.

### THE NEXT FOUR DAYS

The days between the "first days" and the "last days" are a weekday version of the holiday during which work and other common tasks are permitted. Still, it is a festival so we try to abstain from working and continue to rejoice. There is a custom to drink a glass of wine each day of Passover.

### THE SEVENTH DAY

Candles are lit and its accompanying blessing is recited before the sun sets on the sixth day. This night and day mark the miracle of the Splitting of the Sea and our complete liberation from Egypt. In commemoration, many communities stay awake all night studying Torah.

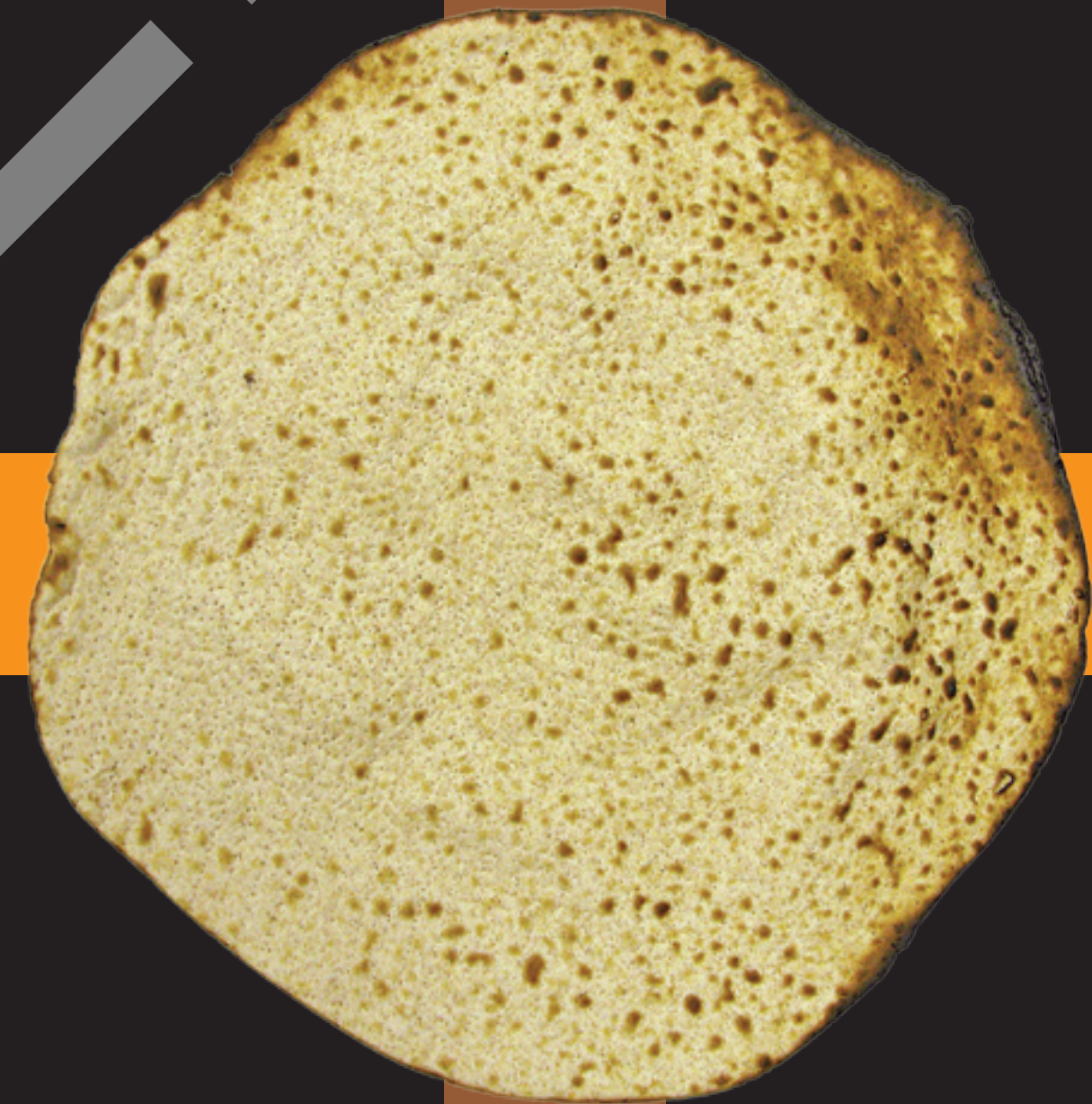
### THE GRAND FINALE

After nightfall (unless Friday night), candles are once again lit from an existing flame and the candle lighting blessing is recited. The conclusion of the Festival of Freedom is traditionally devoted to thoughts, prayers and rejoicing for the imminent and final redemption. Nightfall on the 8th day marks the end of Passover. It is then appropriate for your Rabbi to buy back the Chametz.

WISHING YOU AND YOURS  
A KOSHER AND HAPPY PASSOVER

FROM CHABAD-LUBAVITZCH

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MATZAH**