

# The Nishma Research Pesach Survey

April 2024



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# Introduction & Methodology

## Objective

Pesach (Passover) is the Jewish holiday that almost certainly involves the most planning, expense, and intense activity. It has been said that the Pesach seder get-together is the highlight of Jewish family ritual observance, as measured across the entire Jewish community. Yet, the community's attitudes around Pesach have not been adequately studied. To that end, Nishma Research is pleased to sponsor, conduct and share this research.

A holiday- and ritual-focused study is different from the issues-focused studies that Nishma Research has done over the past eight years. We hope you will find this research interesting and will benefit from this exploration of a very important holiday that we all think and talk about for many months.

It had been our plan to ask respondents to submit their favorite Pesach recipes, and we were going to publish them and make that available online. We still plan to do that, although it has not been done in time for this year's Pesach cooking.

## Methodology

This online survey was conducted March 25-April 11, 2024. The survey was anonymous; the research instrument (questionnaire) is shown in Appendix III (pages 29-32).

We reached the community through the Nishma Research Survey Panel, comprised of past survey participants who have opted to participate; as well as emails to selected shuls for distribution to their members; and WhatsApp groups. The panel cuts across all of Orthodoxy, and a few non-Orthodox, although it does include more Modern / Centrist Orthodox than Haredi.

## Respondents

The survey was taken by 979 individuals who identified as Jewish. Of these, 603 identified as Modern or Centrist Orthodox (sometimes denoted in this report as "MO"), 250 Haredi (Hasidic, Yeshivish), 68 "other" Orthodox, and 58 non-Orthodox.

The body of this report focuses on the 796 respondents who identified as Orthodox and live in North America, and pages 4-5 present a summary of the key findings.

Appendix II (page 28) provides a demographic profile of the respondents. The survey also generated 93 Israeli responses and 58 non-Orthodox responses. These are not reflected in this report (the Israeli responses were similar to those of the Americans), and summary reports are available ... contact us via email (see below).

## Data Presentation

Our mission is to ask the questions that are on the minds of Orthodox Jews, and to explore the differences between segments. In this report, we differentiate MO from Haredi, and the statistics presented for All Orthodox employ stratified sample weighing so that each segment is proportionately represented (see Appendix II for further explanation). We italicize Hebrew/Yiddish terms but not those that are common in English.

## Verbatim Responses

We include many open-ended questions in our surveys and we recommend that readers review the verbatim responses, as they provide valuable "qualitative" insights. The verbatim responses shown in this report are unedited for grammar, spelling, etc., and are randomly selected (via a mathematically randomized process), but we do see them as representative of overall themes. As MO and Haredi verbatims are much more similar than different, we do not differentiate between them in this report. All verbatim responses are available at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>.

We wish you all a joyous Pesach ... a *chag kasher v'sameach*.

Mark L. Trencher, Nishma Research  
West Hartford, CT

April 17, 2024

Email [mark@nishmaresearch.com](mailto:mark@nishmaresearch.com)

## Summary of Key Findings (Page 1 of 2)

### Preparing for Pesach

- Pesach preparation engenders many – often conflicting – emotions, and the one most cited (70%) is anticipation. About half say they feel tired and worried about getting everything done, but an equal number say they feel happy and religiously inspired. Only one-third feel financially worried, and even fewer feel energetic. (See page 7)
- Strongest agreement (more than two-thirds) is around Pesach preparation being extremely time-consuming. In terms of getting it done, 43% feel that “women do all or pretty much all of the preparation work” and 40% say that “preparation is extremely difficult.” Fewer (about one in four) get anxious or upset about food or clothing shopping. (See page 8)

### The Seder – Location and Logistics

- The vast majority (86%) will observe a seder in their or a relative’s home ... 54% in their home and 32% at parents’, children’s or another relative’s home. Haredi more often will be at a parent’s home. 6% of Modern Orthodox and 2% of Haredi will be at a hotel or a tour/program. Among all respondents, 19% leave home for all of Pesach, and basically lock up. The % is identical for MO and Haredi. (See page 11)
- The typical seder has nine attendees ... six adults and three children under age 16. Haredi *sedarim* are slightly larger, with more young children. But there is a very wide range in seder size. In fact, 10% of *sedarim* have 20 or more attendees, about half adults and half children (this includes those at local organizations as well as hotels or tours). (See page 12)
- Among those making a seder at home, 17% say they “have a Pesach kitchen”; 7% buy catered meals or services; and 4% have hired help. (See page 13)
- Among 31 Modern Orthodox respondents who expect to be at a hotel or tour location, 23 (74%) say they are bearing the costs and 8 (26%) say the cost is being paid by someone else. Among the former, costs vary widely, with a median (midpoint) of \$10,000, and an average of \$23,000. Based on the survey results and population data, we estimate the “U.S. Orthodox Pesach vacation market” could be in the range of \$140 million. This is admittedly a very rough estimate based on a small sample, but the purpose of this exercise is to give a sense of scale. (See page 14)

### Meaningfulness of the Seder

- Half of Orthodox Jews see Pesach as the family religious highlight of the year – not surprising given the seder and the family “get-togethers” – and 40% see it as their personal religious highlight of the year. In both cases, Haredim see Pesach as a religious highlight more often than Modern Orthodox. Strong majorities find the *sedarim* to be fun for children and meaningful, with about half also finding them inspiring and fun for adults. Few find them boring. (See pages 16-17)

## Summary of Key Findings (Page 2 of 2)

- About three-fourths say they “Pretty much follow the order and contents of the *Haggadah*.” Modern Orthodox “innovate” a bit more than Haredi. There is widespread unhappiness with the late starting time. (See page 18)

### Pesach Food – Matzas, Laws & Customs, Health

- About half of Modern Orthodox buy mostly machine matzas and some hand-made shmurah (a median of 3 pounds); while half of Haredi buy only hand-made shmurah (a median of 8 pounds, with one-fourth buying 16 or more pounds). Based on these responses and demographic data, the estimated total U.S. market for hand-made shmurah matzas is 2.3 million pounds, at a cost of \$80 million. (See page 20)
- There are variations in the price of hand-made shmurah matza: one in four families pays \$25 or less, and one in four pays \$40 or more. We estimate that one in four Haredi families pays \$700+ for their total hand-made shmurah matza purchases. Finally, respondents estimate that 18% (median) of the shmurah matzas they purchase are broken. So, the expectation is that 5 or 6 of the average 7 matzas in a one-pound box will be whole. (See page 20)
- 62% of Haredi and 30% of MO are very careful with the matza *shiur* at the seder; similar differences are found with *kitniyos* (96% of Haredi and 78% of MO are very strict, although the MO figure rises to 84% if we exclude those for whom it is not a family custom); and for *gebrokts* (45% of Haredi and 5% of MO are very strict). (see page 21)
- About one-third have “food problems” (they see Pesach meals as at least somewhat unhealthy, gain weight, etc.) but a majority do not agree. Among those who gain weight, 20% of Modern Orthodox and 31% of Haredi say they generally do not lose all the weight gained. (See page 22)

### The Overall Pesach Experience

- While nearly half of all respondents say that Pesach makes them feel tired and stressed, these feelings are far outweighed by the overwhelming number (80%) who feel connected to their family, ancestors, Jewish history, and community, as well as the feelings of appreciation for what they have. Pesach truly is a communal holiday, as much as a religious observance. (See page 24)

Differences Between Modern Orthodox and Haredi – These are highlighted for every data display.

Differences Between Men and Women, by Age, and by Income – See page 27

Verbatim Responses – This report contains random samples of the verbatim responses received to several questions. All verbatim responses are available at <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>.

# Preparing for Pesach

**Preparing for Pesach – How People Feel – Pesach preparation engenders many – often conflicting – emotions, and the one most cited (70%) is anticipation. About half say they feel tired and worried about getting everything done, but an equal number say they feel happy and religiously inspired. Only one-third feel financially worried, and even fewer feel energetic.**

Would you say that preparing for Pesach makes you feel ... (Listed in declining order for Total Orthodox)						
	Modern/Centrist Orthodox		Haredi		Total Orthodox	
	Very Much	Total Agree	Very Much	Total Agree	Very Much	Total Agree
Looking forward to the holiday	38%	58%	62%	73%	53%	67%
Tired	38%	56%	31%	50%	34%	52%
Religiously inspired	17%	35%	38%	56%	30%	49%
Worried about getting everything done	33%	50%	31%	47%	32%	48%
Happy	19%	38%	34%	54%	29%	48%
Financially worried or stretched	12%	25%	22%	38%	19%	33%
Energetic	9%	21%	15%	33%	13%	29%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage (total agree).

See question text for Q8 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n (number of respondents) = Modern Orthodox 514, Haredi 216, Total Orthodox 789. Total Agree = Those responding “Very Much” plus half of those responding “Somewhat”

**Preparing for Pesach: Getting It Done – Strongest agreement (more than two-thirds) is around Pesach preparation being extremely time-consuming. In terms of getting it done, 43% feel that “women do all or pretty much all of the preparation work” and 40% say that “preparation is extremely difficult.” Fewer (about one in four) get anxious or upset about food or clothing shopping.**

Would you say that ... (Listed in declining order for Total Orthodox)						
	Modern/Centrist Orthodox		Haredi		Total Orthodox	
	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree
Pesach preparation is extremely time-consuming	51%	68%	45%	63%	47%	65%
Women do all or pretty much all of the preparation work	26%	44%	24%	43%	25%	43%
Pesach preparation is extremely difficult	25%	45%	19%	37%	21%	40%
Food shopping creates worry or anxiety, or makes you upset	14%	30%	10%	25%	11%	27%
Clothing shopping creates worry or anxiety, or makes you upset	7%	15%	16%	32%	12%	25%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage (total agree).

See question text for Q9 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n = Modern Orthodox 503, Haredi 210, Total Orthodox 762. Total Agree = Those responding “Strongly Agree” plus half of those responding “Somewhat Agree”



## Preparing for Pesach: “Are there any comments you would like to add regarding Pesach preparation? – Sample Verbatim Responses

- *I am very lonely and can't be of help for my friends preparing for Yomtov.*
- *Love being with family who gathers for holiday*
- *Pesach is my favorite Holiday and I have learned over the years to prepare with out stress. We host every year over 27 people for each Seder and it is very doable.*
- *I lOve Pesach & look forward to it & all our other holidays. The fact that they are hands on & include everyone in the family help keep them vibrant & alive:)*
- *Even doing the simplest Pesach preparation is stressful and costly.*
- *Much of pre-Pesach anxiety is caused by a fundamental misconception, namely that (any and all) crumbs are chometz. This is simply inaccurate, as crumbs are actually too small to be a shiur chometz. If only people would know...*
- *its hard to see the final destination through the expansive forest!*
- *It's worth it*
- *Happy when all is done!!*
- *it must have been easier to leave egypt rather than prepare for passover.*
- *I dread it. I take off several days from work to be a kitchen slave.*
- *It is time consuming and exciting and cathartic simultaneously.*
- *tremendous financial worries*
- *Despise every aspect*
- *This will be our first year making Pesach so we're not sure exactly what to expect but we have a small apartment and we broke everything that needs to get done into smaller steps so we're hoping for the best. It was my husband's request that we make Pesach instead of going to family so he is very much onboard for doing the cleaning and preparing together, and not leaving it all on me. Growing up, my father always did the cleaning with my mother.*
- *One needs lots of money to do it right and in an expansive manner*
- *We try to keep it as simple as possible*
- *I don't make Pesach at home so for me the biggest stress is packing for myself and the kids for a week at my parent's house. We do kosher our kitchen but my husband usually does all the work. (He returns home for chol hamoed.) We follow sephardic kashering laws which are waaay easier than what I've seen my ashkenazi friends and family do.*
- *HKBH will always ensure it's successful. We have to do our hishtadlus. Worry a bit, but not too much. It'll all be ok*
- *We make lists and schedules*
- *once a year yipee!!!*
- *The cost of Passover food is through the roof*
- *Creates anxiety*
- *I don't make Pesach, we go away to family*
- *Big issue of women doing spring cleaning instead of Passover cleaning*
- *I would differentiate between cleaning preparation and other preparations. The most time consuming preparation, and therefore stressful in finding the time, for me is looking at the Haggadah before the Seder.*
- *Pesach is a Yom Tov we should be looking forward to. People take it out of hand*
- *I'm my family the wife (me) handles nearly all the cleaning, with hired help, and my husband handles the meal planning and most of the shopping and cooking. I also handle the Torah preparation such as it is. Shopping for kids clothes is not more stressful that the usual shopping for kids. We bH can easily swing the cost of pesach at home and but prepared food if needed to make things workable.*
- *Too expensive*
- *Very time consuming*
- *Finding all the foods I want ok for holiday*
- *It wasn't clear of the last two questions were about pesach or not*
- *Only relatively stress free because as I have gotten older I am more religiously 'relaxed' and cheerfully ignore the crazy halachic extremism of our generation. The "rabbis" have priced yiddishkeit out of the market for the average person - both spiritually and financially.*
- *The answers to the questions are more dependent of the individual person than the nature of the preparations . Clothing and food shopping aren't unique to Pesach*
- *Although I know that—halachically—whatever crumbs of chametz I miss us nullified, I still feel the need to do a deep deep cleaning of my house, which is stressful and exhausting, especially with absent-minded children in the house who undo all the cleaning/organizing as soon as it is done.*

See question text for Q10 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n =232 verbatim responses.

All verbatim responses available at:  
<http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>

# The Seder – Location and Logistics

**Where the Seder Will be Observed – The vast majority (86%) will observe a seder in their or a relative’s home ... 54% in their home and 32% at parents’, children’s or another relative’s home. Haredi more often will be at a parent’s home.**

Where will you be observing the Seder on the first night of Pesach this year?			
	Modern/ Centrist Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
My home	52%	55%	54%
Parents’ home	14%	25%	21%
Home of other relative	8%	7%	7%
Children’s home	6%	2%	4%
Friend’s home	6%	1%	3%
Hotel	3%	2%	2%
Tour location/program	3%	0%	1%
Community location	2%	1%	1%
Other (usually a house or apartment rental)	3%	1%	2%
Don’t know yet	4%	5%	5%

6% of Modern Orthodox and 2% of Haredi will be at a hotel or a tour/program.

○ Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

Among all respondents, 19% leave home for all of Pesach, and basically lock up. The % is identical for MO and Haredi.

**Size of Seder – How Many Attendees – The typical seder has nine attendees ... six adults and three children under age 16. Haredi *sedarim* are slightly larger, with more young children. But there is a very wide range in seder size. In fact, 10% of *sedarim* have 20 or more attendees, about half adults and half children (this includes those at local organizations as well as hotels or tours).**

How many adults /children under age 16 do you expect will be at the seder?				
		Modern/ Centrist Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Adults	One in 4 <i>sedarim</i> will have this many or less	4	4	4
	Median (midpoint)	6	6	6
	One in 4 <i>sedarim</i> will have this many or more	9	8	9
Children under 16	One in 4 <i>sedarim</i> will have this many or less	1	2	2
	Median (midpoint)	2	4	3
	One in 4 <i>sedarim</i> will have this many or more	5	6	6
<b>Total attendance, median (midpoint)</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

**Those With a Seder at Home – Among those making a seder at home, 17% say they “have a Pesach kitchen”; 7% buy catered meals or services; and 4% have hired help.**

Resources Used at Home Seder			
	Modern/ Centrist Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Have a Pesach kitchen*	10%	21%	17%
Buy or expect to buy Pesach meals or use catered services	12%	3%	7%
Have or expect to have hired help in the kitchen	5%	3%	4%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

See question text for Q15 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n = Modern Orthodox 260, Haredi 117, Total Orthodox 409.

\* We were wondering about separate Pesach-only kitchen areas and the question could have been worded more specifically.

## Those With a Seder at a Hotel or Tour Location

- **The Modern Orthodox are the only segment with enough respondents taking this option to make the statistics meaningful.**
- **Among 31 respondents who expect to be at a hotel or tour location, 23 (74%) say they are bearing the costs and 8 (26%) say the cost is being paid by someone else.**
- **Among the former, costs vary widely, with a median (midpoint) of \$10,000, and an average of \$23,000. Based on the survey results and population data, we estimate the “U.S. Orthodox Pesach vacation market” could be in the range of \$140 million. This is admittedly a very rough estimate based on a small sample, but the purpose of this exercise is to give a sense of scale.**

# Meaningfulness of the Seder

**Pesach as a Religious Highlight of the Year – Half of Orthodox Jews see Pesach as the family religious highlight of the year – not surprising given the seder and the family “get-togethers” – and 40% see it as their personal religious highlight of the year. In both cases, Haredim see Pesach as a religious highlight more often than Modern Orthodox.**

Do you agree that Pesach is ...						
	Modern/Centrist Orthodox		Haredi		Total Orthodox	
	Fully Agree	Total Agree	Fully Agree	Total Agree	Fully Agree	Total Agree
Your family religious highlight of the year	17%	42%	33%	56%	28%	51%
Your personal religious highlight of the year	11%	32%	22%	44%	18%	40%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

See question text for Q19 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n = Modern Orthodox 499, Haredi 208, Total Orthodox 762. Total Agree = Those responding “Fully Agree” plus half of those responding “Somewhat Agree”



**Meaningfulness of the Seder – Strong majorities find the *sedarim* to be fun for children and meaningful, with about half also finding them inspiring and fun for adults. Few find them boring.**

Based on your seders the past two years, would you say your <i>sedarim</i> have been ... (Listed in declining order for Total Orthodox)						
	Modern/Centrist Orthodox		Haredi		Total Orthodox	
	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree
Fun for children*	36%	58%	50%	69%	45%	65%
Meaningful	29%	54%	52%	69%	43%	63%
Inspiring	18%	39%	41%	60%	32%	52%
Fun for adults	23%	47%	30%	46%	27%	46%
Boring	2%	8%	1%	6%	2%	7%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

See question text for Q20 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n = Modern Orthodox 500 (388 for “fun for children”), Haredi 206 (180 for “fun for children”), Total Orthodox 761 (612 for “fun for children”). Total Agree = Those responding “Strongly Agree” plus half of those responding “Somewhat Agree”

\* Skipped if no children were at the seders

## The Seder – Innovations, Timing, Thoughts – About three-fourths say they “Pretty much follow the order and contents of the *Haggadah*.” Modern Orthodox “innovate” a bit more than Haredi. There is widespread unhappiness with the late starting time.

Is it your general practice at <i>sedarim</i> to ...			
	Modern/ Centrist Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Pretty much follow Haggadah	72%	80%	77%
Do some different things	19%	12%	14%
Do a lot of different things	3%	1%	2%
Depends on who is leading	6%	7%	7%

 Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

### Any thoughts on the seder starting time or length; or thoughts relating to the second seder? (sample of verbatim responses)

- Seder starting times isn't the issue - its being unable to prepare for the second one
- Our seders are long enough without being insanely long, and the second seder is pretty similar to the first.
- We do games at the second seder to try and change things up.
- The seders are my favorite nights of the year. My family has really fun traditions and we all have a blast. I do wish it could start earlier in the day so that my kids could stay up for the whole seder; so much of the seder is geared towards children but the seder starts after bedtime.
- The Seder starting so late is really challenging on the first night of Pesach. Even though I try to finish Seder prep earlier in the day, it's all just exhausting trying to do all the last minute things and it's hard to nap before the first night of yontif.
- We start early in line with a ruling from Salonika.
- Because of the clock change the Seder starts very late. It's hard to stay awake and be 'fun' as the night moves on.
- Seder always starts too late. Second Seder is anti climactic

### Different approaches taken at the seder (sample of verbatim responses)

- New knowledge and fun
- One night is for young kids with lots of hands on shtick, toys and treats
- My father creates a different genius game every year that includes all the children and keeps them very engaged. There are costumes available, and activities involving food - sticky red or white candies for boils that the kids put on their face and arms.
- My mom's side of the family is Sephardic, so we add in some traditions from the heritage, including singing Chad Gadya in Ladino
- Mix of Sephardic and Ashkenazi; read from a feminist haggadah to personally see another angle, make a big deal about afikomen
- Multiple Sephardic traditions and four kinds of Sephardic haroset.
- A karpas course that usually involves dipping fruit in chocolate sauce (of course ... you knew this would be included in this report, right? 😊)
- Everyone chooses a different Haggadah, we add in Ladino
- Annotated Haggadah ... the commentary is a big learning experience.

- Don't schlep with all sorts of gematrias and pshatim, the mitzvah of the night is to say over the sippur of yetzias mitzrayim. Say the midrashim of all the nissim HKBH did
- It's very difficult to start early enough so that a four-hour seder can end at a reasonable time (i.e., before midnight).
- By our ages we have acclimated to the late starts and have learned to both manage the length well and allow people to step away and rest if they need to
- While we do embellish we also go at a good pace as little kids are present (and prefer not to make a pre-Seder)
- It is challenging to wait until so late at night to start the second seder.
- As long as matzos and the story are there it's halachically complete
- Starts way too late mainly due to ridiculous daylight saving time.
- My condition is that I can get up from the table and rest on the couch when needed ... no permission needed
- Start earlier than supposed to
- Starting time of Seder is the absolute worst piece -- and the second night is just awful. So late that you may have already lost some of the kids and people just want to hurry through. It does feel that if the Rabbis really wanted, they could come up with a way to improve the timing!

See question text for Q21-23 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n for Q21 = Modern Orthodox 50, Haredi 206, Total Orthodox 761. n for Q22 and Q23 = 13 and 287 verbatim responses, respectively.

All verbatim responses available at: <http://nishmaresearch.com/social-research.html>

# **Pesach Food – Matzas, Laws & Customs, Health**

**Types, Quantities, Cost (and Breakage) of Matzas – There are variations in the price of hand-made shmurah matza: one in four families pays \$25 or less, and one in four pays \$40 or more. We estimate that one in four Haredi families pays \$700+ for their total hand-made shmurah matza purchases. Finally, respondents estimate that 18% (median) of the shmurah matzas they purchase are broken. So, the expectation is that 5 or 6 of the average 7 matzas in a one-pound box will be whole.**

During all of Pesach, what kind of matzas do you eat?			
	Modern/ Centrist Orthodox	Haredi	Total Orthodox
Only hand-made <i>shmurah</i>	8%	50%	35%
Mostly hand-made <i>shmurah</i> ; some machine matzas	34%	34%	34%
Mostly machine; some hand-made	51%	15%	28%
Only machine matzas	7%	1%	3%
How many pounds of hand-made <i>shmurah</i> matzas do you buy?			
One in 4 families buys this many pounds or less	2	5	4
Median (midpoint)	3	8	6
One in 4 families buys this many pounds or more	5	16	12

MO and Haredi are statistically significantly different for all of the above measures.

Average Number of Pounds of <i>Shmurah</i> Matzas Purchased		
MO	Haredi	Total
5.0	12.6	9.8

Average Price per Pound		
MO	Haredi	Total
\$32	\$37	\$35
There are variations in price: one in four families pays \$25 or less, and one in four families pays \$40 or more.		
We estimate that one in four Haredi families pays \$700+ for hand-made <i>shmurah</i> matzas.		

Breakage
Respondents estimate that 18% (median) of the hand-made <i>shmurah</i> matzas they purchase are broken. So, the expectation is that 5 or 6 of the average 7 matzas will be whole.

See question text for Q24, 26, 27, 28 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n for Q24 (types of matzas) = Modern Orthodox 496, Haredi 202, Total Orthodox 750. n for Q26 (pounds of shmurah bought) = Modern Orthodox 387, Haredi 176, Total Orthodox 610. n for Q27 (price per pounds) = Modern Orthodox 337, Haredi 160, Total Orthodox 540. n for Q28 (breakage) = Modern Orthodox 429, Haredi 184, Total Orthodox 660.

**Seder Food Halachic and Observance Considerations – 62% of Haredi and 30% of MO are very careful with the matza *shiur* at the seder; similar differences are found with *kitniyos* (96% of Haredi and 78% of MO are very strict, although the MO figure rises to 84% if we exclude those for whom it is not a family custom); and for *gebrokts* (45% of Haredi and 5% of MO are very strict).**

How <i>medakdek</i> (careful and diligent) are you in terms of eating the shiur (minimum amount of halachically required matza, within the proper time), at the seder?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Extremely careful	30%	62%	51%
Generally try to do it	40%	31%	35%
Not so much an issue for me	26%	6%	13%
Unaware of the requirements	1%	0%	<1%
Health limits ability to do this	3%	0%	<1%

○ Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

Do you observe the prohibition of kitniyos (legumes, etc.)?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Very strictly	78%	96%	89%
Observe somewhat	11%	2%	5%
Do not observe	4%	1%	3%
Not my family custom	7%	1%	3%

Do you observe the stringency of gebrokts?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Very strictly (for at least the first seven days)	5%	45%	30%
Observe somewhat	4%	8%	7%
Do not observe	29%	9%	17%
Not my family custom	61%	38%	45%
I'm not sure what this is	1%	0%	1%

See question text for Q25, 29, 30 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n for Q25 (*medakdek* in shiur) = Modern Orthodox 494, Haredi 202, Total Orthodox 751. n for Q29 (*kitniyos*) = Modern Orthodox 491, Haredi 200, Total Orthodox 736. n for Q25 (*gebrokts*) = Modern Orthodox 492, Haredi 202, Total Orthodox 749.

**Food – Health, Side-Effects, Weight – About one-third have “food problems” (they see Pesach meals as at least somewhat unhealthy, gain weight, etc.) but a majority do not agree. Among those who gain weight, 20% of Modern Orthodox and 31% of Haredi say they generally do not lose all the weight gained.**

Do you think Pesach meals are unhealthy?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Very much so	6%	3%	4%
Somewhat	38%	30%	32%
Slightly	15%	15%	16%
Not really	41%	52%	48%

Do you tend to gain weight over Pesach?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Yes, a lot	5%	6%	6%
Somewhat	26%	26%	26%
Only a bit	23%	20%	21%
Not really	44%	43%	43%
I actually lose weight	2%	5%	4%

Do you experience any physical side-effects due to Pesach food?			
	MO	Haredi	Total
Yes – significant	11%	6%	8%
Yes – minimal	44%	52%	49%
No	45%	42%	43%

Do you have problems losing the weight that you gain over Pesach? (Asked of those who gain a lot or somewhat)			
	MO	Haredi	Total
I lose it pretty quickly	11%	11%	11%
I lose it, but takes time and effort	69%	58%	61%
I generally do not lose all of it	20%	31%	28%

○ Indicates this segment has a statistically significant higher percentage.

See question text for Q31-34 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n for Q31 (meals unhealthy) = Modern Orthodox 495, Haredi 202, Total Orthodox 752. n for Q32 (experience side-effects) = Modern Orthodox 495, Haredi 201, Total Orthodox 751. n for Q33 (gain weight) = Modern Orthodox 494, Haredi 200, Total Orthodox 749. n for Q34 (problems losing weight) = Modern Orthodox 151, Haredi 62, Total Orthodox 233.

# The Overall Pesach Experience

**The Overall Pesach Experience – While nearly half of all respondents say that Pesach makes them feel tired and stressed, these feelings are far outweighed by the overwhelming number (80%) who feel connected to their family, ancestors, Jewish history, and community, as well as the feelings of appreciation for what they have. Pesach truly is a communal holiday, as much as a religious observance.**

Would you say that the Pesach holiday overall (preparation as well as observance) makes you feel .....						
(Listed in declining order for Total Orthodox)						
	Modern/Centrist Orthodox		Haredi		Total Orthodox	
	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree
Connected to your ancestors and Jewish history	62%	76%	75%	84%	70%	81%
Connected to your family	61%	74%	74%	84%	68%	80%
Connected to the Jewish community	46%	65%	63%	74%	68%	80%
Appreciative of what you have	59%	75%	72%	82%	67%	79%
Happy	35%	57%	59%	75%	50%	68%
Religiously inspired	22%	46%	52%	67%	41%	59%
Tired	32%	52%	22%	44%	26%	47%
Stressed	26%	48%	17%	36%	21%	40%

Haredi responses are statistically significantly higher than MO for all measures.

See question text for Q35 in Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire; n = Modern Orthodox 492, Haredi 202, Total Orthodox 749. Strongly Agree = Those responding “Very much so”  
Total Agree = those responding “Very much so” plus half of those responding “Somewhat”



## Final Thoughts – Sample of Verbatim Responses

- *living in a different community from family makes it more difficult*
- *Others in my family are much more religiously inspired. I start my celaning early so I am less stressed. This year I will be in israel! No cleaning or cooking for me.*
- *Yes, we get into the trenches. My husband bakes matza with a chaburah. the spirit in the house is joyous. we have matching aprons for the kitchen. Also, as far the shiurim my husband is a respected posek and he uses small shiurim for the wine and the matza. I encourage ppl who are challenged in this area to get a psak from a respected posek, it will be less than the "printed" ones. Also, we always reflect after yom tov on how to improve for the next year.*
- *I have some GI issues and Pesach is very hard. Similarly, my son is allergic to dairy...so pesach is matza and meat for him, which isn't great either. So we manage but usually someone doesn't feel well by the end.*
- *Everyone can contribute to the holiday' if not physically helping, at least adding to the spirit & entertaining the children .*
- *I wish more people would focus on the parts of Pesach that make them happy rather than the negative/stressful parts of Pesach.*
- *It makes me think of making aliyah because I really don't want two seders.....*
- *It will be stressful this year; worrying about family & friends in Israel including those deployed & also civilians. I will try to appreciate the holiday, but it will be difficult. Last year, I displayed a photo of the journalist Evan Gershkovich; sadly he is still being held in Russia & I will display his photo again. Despite all this, I am hopeful for the future.*
- *My husband likes only hand-made shmurah matzah, and he only buys Lubavitch, so we pay whatever the price is, and I economize in many other aspects of the Pesach meals, including buying non-perishables for the next year in the after Pesach sales.*
- *I love pesach The severe is my personal most sublime religious moment of the year*
- *Although I was raised in an atmosphere where Pesach was a despised chore, I have come to love Pesach and embrace the preparations; I have learned to rely on myself each year as I have for some previous 40 years and experienced that I can get it all done and that once they arrive, my adult children will help. I wish I didn't also have to go to work the week before Pesach and on hol hamoed—but I take a very spiritual approach and try not to let a little tiredness interfere with my joy!*
- *It is different when you are single and eat out. It is different when as a family you have a minhag to be with specific friends. It is different when you are the only observant person within your birth family. It is different when you have to travel and find a place to sleep and know you will be walking alone everywhere. It is different when don't know or feel connected to anyone else at the seder*
- *its a beautiful holiday!*
- *The work is hard but it's the best holiday. So nice to spend with family and friends. After all the work, the holiday is 8 days to enjoy it all.*
- *I feel like we have too much stuff and the community has a lot of misunderstanding about what halacha is and what prep is halachic*
- *Regarding healthy I try to make as much regular fruits, vegetables and salads and fish and meat as normal*
- *Too expensive*
- *I'm a very peaceful moderate, middle of the road person. I do not believe in extremes. Chag Samayach, ah kusherin Pesach:)*
- *yes - people clean way too much and thus often "dread" pesach. that is terrible, It is meant to be enjoyed. Way too many chumrot re kashrut which are kulot re the mitzva of simcha*
- *Pesach food manufacturers insist on making foods with cottonseed oil and other unhealthy ingredients. I do not buy anything that contains these.*
- *Pesach reminds us where we came from and why we should continue our connection to each other as a family*
- *I always miss Pesach the way my grandparents used to host it - with love, welcoming, and community.*
- *I love everything about Pesach itself and I can't stand anything about the month leading up to Pesach.*
- *Let's finally agree to eat kitniyot.*
- *Expensive. Takes a lot of time preparing shopping*
- *Want to clarify that we are planning to go to Israel this year for Pesach, not on a Pesach program. We have a child studying in a gap year.*
- *Hashgachos need to drop chumras on chumras and permit the mutar. Be at least 5% as particular on price gouging as kitniyos oil*
- *Pesach is part of a bigger picture for me. I am connected to the Jewish community, my ancestors and Jewish history all year. Pesach is part of that, and highlights certain aspects of all these things.*
- *I try to turn the prep work into a fun family affair with the extended family peeling, cooking and getting under foot. It's less efficient that way, but it makes for great memories in the long run.*

# Appendices

- Appendix I – Sub-Group Differences for Selected Measures
- Appendix II – Respondent Demographic Profile
- Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire

## Appendix I – Sub-Group Differences for Selected Measures – This page explores a few key measures by gender, age, and household income.

	Gender		Age		Household Income	
	Men (n=402)	Women (n=384)	Under 50 (n=438)	50 or Older (n=368)	Less Than \$150K (n=271)	\$150K or More (n=355)
<b>Preparation for Pesach</b>						
– Feel Tired	45%	63%*	56%	51%	51%	53%
– Worried about getting everything done	40%	59%*	52%	47%	52%	49%
– Financially worried or stretched	26%	31%	35%*	21%	36%*	26%
– Say it is extremely time-consuming	58%	77%*	67%	67%	68%	65%
– Believe women do all or pretty much all prep	37%	48%*	38%	50%*	43%	41%
<b>The Seder</b>						
– Say it is a family religious highlight of the year	47%	45%	47%	45%	47%	48%
– Say it is a personal religious highlight of the year	37%	35%	35%	37%	37%	37%
– Find the seders to be meaningful	59%	57%	57%	60%	58%	59%
<b>Overall Pesach Experience Makes Them Feel ...</b>						
– Happy	66%*	59%	63%	61%	61%	66%
– Religiously Inspired	55%	49%	52%	52%	55%	50%
– Appreciative of what they have	74%	79%	72%	81%*	73%	77%
	Pesach preparation leaves women significantly more tired, worried and busy than men. But in terms of the seder's meaningfulness and importance, men and women see things about the same. Looking at the overall Pesach experience, men feel slightly more happy and religiously inspired and, interestingly, women feel more of a sense of appreciation for what they have.		Younger respondents (under 50) feel a bit more tired and worried by the preparation and are significantly more financially worried. Looking at the seder and the overall Pesach experience, the two groups' views are similar, with the exception that those age 50 or older express a greater sense of appreciation for what they have.		Except for financial worry, the lower and higher income groups have similar views relating to preparation. And nearly identical views relating to the seder. Not surprisingly, the higher income group more often goes to a hotel or tour (7% vs. 2%), or buys catered meals, but the groups invest equally in the purchase of shmurah matza.	

\* Indicates a difference that is statistically significant at the 95% level.

## Appendix II – Respondent Demographic Profile

	M.O.	Haredi
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	50%	55%
Female	49%	45%
Would rather not say	<1%	0%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
% Married	81%	87%
<b>Have Children Under Age 18 at Home</b>		
None	55%	28%
Have 1 or 2	25%	22%
Have 3 or more	20%	50%
Estimated Average	1.1	2.5
<b>Age</b>		
29 or younger	7%	20%
30 to 49	41%	51%
50 to 69	34%	22%
70 or older	18%	7%
Median Age	51	41

	M.O.	Haredi
<b>Residence</b>		
Total N.Y. State	27%	56%
– Manhattan	7%	2%
– Brooklyn / Queens	6%	35%
– Westchester	1%	0%
– Rockland	1%	9%
– Other N.Y. State	12%	10%
New Jersey	19%	17%
DC / Maryland	16%	1%
Florida	5%	<1%
Connecticut	5%	1%
California	5%	<1%
All Other	23%	24%

	M.O.	Haredi
<b>Annual Household Income</b>		
Under \$50K	4%	9%
\$50K to \$99.9K	14%	26%
\$100K to \$149.9K	18%	23%
\$150K to \$199.9K	16%	17%
\$200K to \$299.9K	22%	15%
\$300K or more	26%	10%
Median	\$194K	\$131K

<b>Stratified Sample Weighting</b> (Weights applied when combining segments to derive Orthodox total)	
Segment	Weight
Modern/Centrist Orthodox	32%
Haredi	62%
Other Orthodox	6%
See “The Nishma Research 2023 Jewish Community Profile” Page 66 (available at <a href="http://nishmaresearch.com">nishmaresearch.com</a> ) for further explanation of stratified sampling. The weights are developed by Nishma Research in consultation with Jewish world demographers.	

## Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire (Page 1 of 4)

### The First-Ever Pesach Survey Nishma Research – March-April 2024

Questions are asked of all respondents, except where otherwise noted. Asterisk indicates a required response.

#### INTRODUCTION

This brief (10 minutes) anonymous survey is sponsored and conducted by Nishma Research, simply because we find the topic interesting.

We ask about recent experiences and also about plans for this year. Only a few questions (denoted by \*) require a response, but we hope you will respond as fully as possible. The survey will be available through end-of-day Sunday, April 7.

In appreciation, we will award three \$25 Amazon Gift Cards. Also, you will be able to enter your email at the end of the survey (which will be kept separate from your responses), and we'll send you the survey report, which we expect to release before Pesach.

If you have any questions, email [mark@nishmaresearch.com](mailto:mark@nishmaresearch.com).

#### SELF-IDENTIFICATION

##### \*Q1. Which of the following best describes your Jewish religious practices and affiliation?

- Modern Orthodox – Liberal, to the left
- Modern Orthodox – Centrist, in the middle
- Modern Orthodox – More stringent (machmir), right-leaning
- Yeshivish, Litvish, Agudah
- Chasidish, not including Chabad-Lubavitch
- Chabad-Lubavitch
- Sephardic (not Ashkenazi)
- Other Orthodox (Observant, heimish, traditional, etc.)
- Not Orthodox
- Not Jewish [Terminate with message: Sorry, you do not qualify to take this survey, as it is aimed at the Jewish community. You may close this web browser window or tab to exit the survey. Thank you.]

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

##### \*Q2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Would rather not say

##### Q3. Are you currently married?

- Yes
- No

##### Q4. Do you have any children under age 18 living in your home?

- None
- 1 or 2
- 3 or 4
- 5 or more

##### \*Q5. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 to 29
- 30 to 49
- 50 to 69
- 70 or older
- Prefer not to say

##### \*Q6 Where do you live?

- United States
- Israel
- Canada
- Other

[Ask if Q6 = United States]

Q7. What are the first three digits of your zip code? \_\_\_ \_\_

## Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire (Page 2 of 4)

### PREPARING FOR PESACH

**Q8. Would you say that preparing for Pesach makes you feel ...**

- Happy
- Financially worried or stretched
- Religiously inspired
- Tired
- Energetic
- Worried about getting everything done
- Looking forward to the yom tov (holiday)

Responses: Very much so, Somewhat, A little bit, Not at all

**Q9. Would you say that ...**

- Pesach preparation is extremely time-consuming.
- Pesach preparation is extremely difficult.
- Women do all or pretty much all of the preparation work.
- Clothing shopping creates worry or anxiety, or makes you upset.
- Food shopping creates worry or anxiety, or makes you upset.

Responses: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

**Q10. Are there any comments you would like to add regarding Pesach preparation?** [Open-Ended]

### SEDER LOCATION

**Q11. Where will you be observing the Seder on the first night of Pesach this year?**

- My home
- Parents' home
- Children's home
- Other
- Don't know yet

[Ask if Q11 = My home, Parents' home, or Children's home]

**Q12. How many adults do you expect will be at the seder? (please enter a number; estimate if needed) \_\_\_\_**

[Ask if Q11 = My home, Parents' home, or Children's home]

**Q13. How many children under age 16 do you expect will be at the seder? (please enter a number; estimate if needed) \_\_\_\_**

[Ask if Q11 = Other]

**Q14. Where will you be observing the Seder on the first night of Pesach?**

- Home of other relative
- A friend's home
- At a community location (shul, school, community center, etc.)
- At a hotel
- At a tour location/program
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

[Ask if Q11 = My Home]

**Q15. Do you ..**

- Have a Pesach kitchen?
- Buy or expect to buy Pesach meals or use catered services for the seder?
- Have or expect to have hired help in the kitchen for the seder?

Responses: Yes, No

[Ask if Q14 = At a hotel, or At a tour location/program]

**Q16. Will you personally be paying, out of pocket, for the hotel or tour location/program?**

Yes

Not sure

No, cost is being paid by someone else

[Ask if Q16 = Yes]

**Q17. How much will this hotel or tour program cost you? (Please estimate if needed.)**

**Enter a whole number dollar amount, rounded off to thousands. For example, if \$8,000, then just enter the number 8. \_\_\_\_**

[Ask if Q11 = Parents' home, Children's home, or Other]

**Q18. Do you plan to leave your home for all of Pesach (lock up, sell the chometz, etc.)?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

## Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire (Page 3 of 4)

### PESACH AND SEDER EXPERIENCES

#### Q19. Do you agree that Pesach is ...

- Your family religious highlight of the year?
- Your personal religious highlight of the year?

Responses: Fully agree, Somewhat agree, Do not agree

#### Q20. Based on your seders the past two years, would you say your seders have been ...

- Meaningful
- Inspiring
- Fun for adults
- Fun for children (skip if no children were there)
- Boring

Responses: Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

#### Q21. Is it your general practice at seders to ...

- Pretty much follow the order and contents of the Haggadah
- Do some things that are different
- Do a lot of things that are different
- It depends on who is leading the seder

[Ask if Q21 = Do a lot of things that are different]

#### Q22. Would you care to share some of the different approaches you have taken at the seder? [Open-Ended]

#### Q23. Any thoughts on the seder starting time or length; or thoughts relating to the second seder? [Open-Ended]

### PESACH FOOD

#### Q24. During all of Pesach, what kind of matzas do you eat?

- Only hand-made shmurah matzas
- Mostly hand-made shmurah matzas; some machine matzas
- Mostly machine matzas, some hand-made
- Only machine matzas

#### Q25. How medakdek (careful and diligent) are you in terms of eating the shiur (minimum amount of halachically required matza, within the proper time), at the seder?

- Extremely careful
- Generally try to do it
- Not so much an issue for me
- Unaware of the requirements
- Health issues limit my ability to do this

[Ask Q26-28 if Q24 = Only hand-made shmurah matzas, Mostly hand-made shmurah matzas; some machine matzas, or Mostly machine matzas, some hand-made]

#### Q26. How many pounds of hand-made shmurah matzas do you buy? (enter a number; estimate if needed) \_\_\_\_

#### Q27. How much do you expect to pay per pound for hand-made shmurah matzas? (please estimate if needed). Enter a whole number dollar amount, rounded off. For example, if \$37.95 then just enter the number 38. \_\_\_\_

#### Q28. Can you estimate what % of the hand-made shmurah matzas that you buy are broken?

- Less than 10% broken
- 10% to 24%
- 25% to 39%
- 40% or more

#### Q29. Do you observe the prohibition of kitniyos (legumes, etc.)?

Very strictly

- Observe somewhat
- Do not observe
- Not my family custom
- I'm not sure what this is

## Appendix III – Survey Questionnaire (Page 4 of 4)

### Q30. Do you observe the stringency of gebrochts?

- Very strictly (for at least the first seven days)
- Observe somewhat
- Do not observe
- Not my family custom
- I'm not sure what this is

### Q31. Do you think Pesach meals are unhealthy?

- Very much so
- Somewhat
- Slightly
- Not really

### Q32. Do you experience any physical side-effects due to Pesach food?

- Yes - significant
- Yes - minimal
- No

### Q33. Do you tend to gain weight over Pesach?

- Yes, a lot
- Somewhat
- Only a bit
- Not really
- I actually lose weight

[Ask if Q33 = Yes, a lot, or somewhat]

### Q34. Do you have problems losing the weight that you gain over Pesach?

- I lose it pretty quickly
- I lose it, but it takes time and effort
- I generally do not lose all of it

## THE OVERALL PESACH EXPERIENCE

### Q35. Would you say that the Pesach holiday overall (preparation as well as observance) makes you feel ...

- Happy
- Stressed
- Tired
- Religiously inspired
- Appreciative of what you have
- Connected to your family
- Connected to the Jewish community
- Connected to your ancestors and Jewish history

Responses: Very much so, Somewhat, Slightly, Not really

### Q36. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding any aspect of Pesach? [Open-Ended]

## DEMOGRAPHICS (Part 2)

### Q37. A final demographic question: What is your annual household income?

- Under \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 to \$299,999
- \$300,000 TO \$499,999
- \$500,000 or more
- Would rather not say

## CONCLUSION

Thank you for your response.

- Please check here if you would like to receive a copy of the report when it is released.
- Check here if you want to be entered in our drawing for the three Amazon gift cards.
- Please check here if you are willing to get email invitations to future surveys of the Orthodox community.

Please enter your email (it will be detached from your survey responses). \_\_\_\_\_





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RESEARCH***

*Sociological and Marketing Research  
for the Jewish Community*