

Pesach

Judaism
Practices

The Passover Seder: On the first night of the Seder Jews eat a traditional Seder meal, have blessings over wine, and retell the story of the escape from Egypt

Pesach (Passover): festival in remembrance of the Jewish exodus from Egypt that is celebrated in spring

Preparations

It is believed once the Jews were released, they left in such a hurry they did not have time to wait for their bread to rise. As such, before Pesach all regular bread is removed from the home

Origins

In Exodus God sends **10 plagues** against the Egyptians through **Moses**, after Pharaoh refused to release the Israelite slaves. After the 10th plague in which all the **firstborn sons** of the Egyptians are killed, the slaves are released. It is believed that the **Angle of Death** 'passed over' the houses of the Israelites, hence the name Passover.

In the Tanakh it says...

"I am the LORD. I will free you from the labours of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and through extraordinary chastisements. And I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God"
Exodus 6:6-7

- It is a **reminder** of the time when God **delivered** them from **slavery** in Egypt
- It is a **reminder** of when the Israelites became a **new and unique nation** under God
- The **celebration** aims to recreate the **experience** of being set free for all Jews today
- It is celebrated because **Jews are instructed** in Exodus 12:14 'This day shall be a **remembrance** for you and you shall **celebrate** it as a festival for God, for your generations, as an eternal decree you shall celebrate it.'
- Pesach **reminds** the Jews of the **special relationship** that they have with their God / the cups of wine taken during the Seder meal correspond to the **four promises** of deliverance made by God in Exodus: "I will bring out", "I will deliver", "I will redeem" and "I will take"
- The festival **celebrates God's control** of both nature and history
- Pesach is celebrated because Jews are **instructed** in Exodus 12 to eat lamb, roasted herbs and unleavened bread / Jews today celebrate the Seder meal as a result, etc.
- Pesach is celebrated as a **family tradition**

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| On the Seder plate | This items reminds the jews of |
| Red wine | the lamb's blood marking the slave's houses' doors |
| Unleavened bread | Not time for bread to rise before escape |
| Salt water | tears of slaves |
| Green vegetables | new life in Promised Land after escape |
| Bitter herbs | bitterness of slavery |
| Charoset | the mortar used by slaves when forced to work |
| Roasted egg and lamb bone | sacrifices made in the temple |

