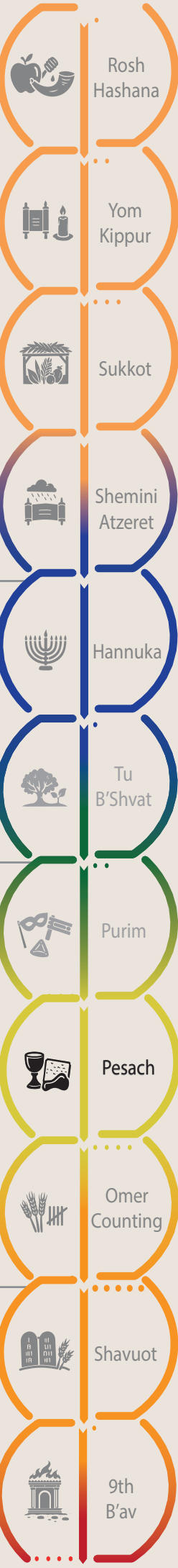


Late Summer/Autumn
Winter
Spring
Summer



Passover: Holiday of Freedom

Did you know that nearly **1,000 years** after the Exodus, the Jews were celebrating Passover in Egypt!



Elephantine Passover letter



Learn more



Pesach פסח Passover

Hebrew Date(s):
15th – 22nd of Nisan

Different names for Passover

- Passover English / פסח Pesach Hebrew
- Festival of Matzot / חג המצות Chag HaMatzot
- Festival of Freedom / חג החרות Chag HaCherut
- Holiday of Spring / חג האביב Chag HaAviv

What is Passover?

Passover is the celebration of the Jews' Exodus **from slavery** in Egypt **to freedom** in the Land of Israel. The Jews were enslaved to **make bricks and build cities** in Egypt. The Hebrew word for Egypt, Mitzrayim, literally means "narrow places." This holiday is all about moving from "narrow places" toward a life of freedom.



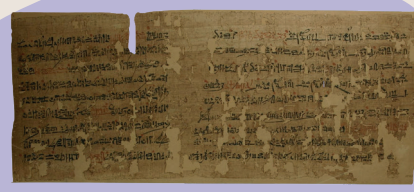
Passover in Jewish Texts

Exodus 12:14-15
וְהָיָה הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה לְכֶם לְזָכְרוֹן, וְחִגְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חַג לַיְי: לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם, חֻקַּת עוֹלָם תִּחְגְּלוּהוּ

This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it as a festival to G-D throughout the ages; you shall **celebrate it for all time**.

שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, מַצּוֹת תֹּאכְלוּ--אֶךְ בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, תִּשְׁבִּיתוּ שְׂאֵר מִבְּתֵיכֶם: כִּי כָל-אֶכֶל חֻמֵּץ, וְנִכְרְתָה הַכֹּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל--מִיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן, עַד-יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי.

Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall **remove leaven from your houses**, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.



Ancient Egyptian letter mentioning bricks and straw

Learn more:



Why does Passover matter?

Symbols and deeper meanings:

✓

We move **from the "narrow places"** (Mitzrayim) of personal or national struggle **to celebrating our freedom.**

✓

We remember that "we were slaves in Egypt" to develop **empathy for those who are weak and oppressed.**

✓

We pray for a **fruitful harvest season.** Today that means we pray for good job opportunities.

✓

The search for Chametz is also symbolic of **removing negative traits** like arrogance from our lives and **replacing them with positive ones**, since Matzah symbolizes humility.



Passover in Ancient Israel

Pilgrimage: Jews from across the Land of Israel would travel to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the holiday.



The ancient Pilgrim Road excavated in the City of David, Ancient Jerusalem

The Passover Lamb Offering: Families would bring a lamb to the Temple as an offering to be shared for the holiday meal.

Hallel: The Levites and the crowds sang songs of praise (Hallel) throughout the Temple courts.

Counting the Omer: Sheaves of Barley called the Omer were brought from the fields to a special courtyard in the Temple where they were counted. This ritual marked the change from the rainy winter season to the dry summer season.

Half-Shekel: Each person contributed a half-shekel to help pay for the Temple sacrifices and service. People gave coins like this Tyrian Silver Shekel, which is more than 2,000 years old.

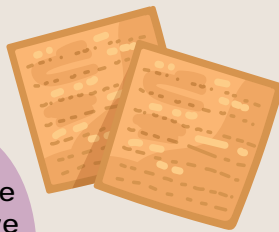


Key Rituals

1

Searching for Chametz (leavened bread):

NO Chametz can be left in the house over Passover. Before the holiday, we search high and low through our homes for chametz using a candle for light and a feather to sweep up any crumbs.



2

The Seder

An elaborate meal full of rituals and special foods. We gather together to read the Haggadah, retelling the story of Passover and the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, including when God sent the 10 plagues to force Pharaoh to let the Jews go!

The famous Bird's Head Haggadah, written in 1300 CE. The artist gave everyone bird heads!



3

Eating Matzah (unleavened bread)

The Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that they didn't have time for their bread to rise. For seven days, we eat Matzah instead of Chametz.

4

Prayer for Dew

We say a prayer for dew so our spring and summer crop seasons will be successful.

5

Counting the Omer

From the second day of Passover, we start counting the Omer for 49 days leading up to Shavuot.



If you had to leave your home in a huge hurry to find freedom, what is the one most important thing you would take with you?



For more information on Passover

Kadima
Moving Jewish Education Forward



Israel in Their Land
Educate Reconnect Empower

