

# PASSOVER BRIEFING 2023

Starts nightfall Wednesday 5th April and  
ends Thursday 13th April 2023



# HISTORY

Pesach (פסח), or Passover celebrates Moses leading the Israelites (Jewish people) out from slavery in Egypt to freedom during the period of Exodus.

This year, it will be celebrated from the 5th of April (15th of Nissan in the Hebrew calendar) and lasts for seven or eight days. On the first days of Pesach we remember how God took the Jewish people out of Egypt, following the last of the ten plagues - from slavery to freedom.

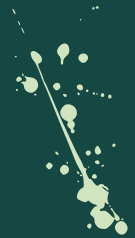
On the seventh day we remember the miracle of the splitting of the Red Sea which allowed the Israelites to escape the pursuing Pharaoh and Egyptian chariots.

Since the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, the focus of Passover shifted to the ritual meal, called the seder, which normally takes place at home.

# The Ten Plagues

## עשר מכות

One of the most dramatic moments of the Passover seder comes with the recitation of the 10 plagues that, the Torah says, God brought on the Egyptians to persuade Pharaoh to free the Israelites from slavery.



Water to blood

דם



Frogs

צפרדע



Lice

כנים



Wild Beasts

ערוב



Death of livestock

דבר



Boils

שחין



Locusts

ארבה



Hail and Fire

ברד



Darkness

חושך

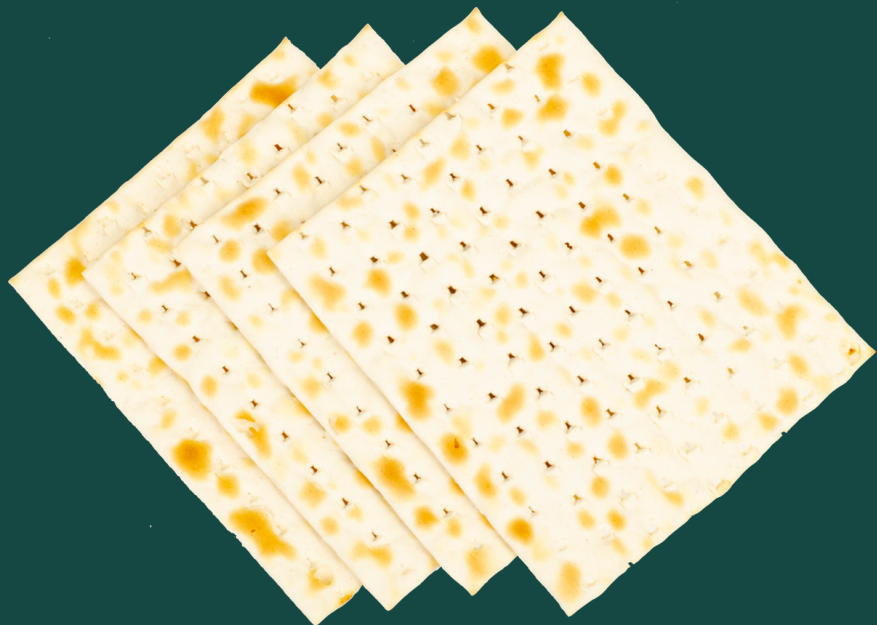


Death of the firstborn

מכת בכורות

# RITUAL

During the festival, the food reflects the major theme of Passover and is intended to help Jews relive God's great redemptive act. As the Israelites had no time to let their bread rise as they hurriedly left Egypt, Jewish law forbids eating (or even possessing) any food that contains leavened grains. Therefore, a major part of the preparations for Passover consists of removing all traces of leavened foods from the home and replacing them with unleavened foods. Many Jews also buy special kosher-for-Passover certified foods which they eat throughout the festival.



The central ritual of Passover is the seder, a carefully choreographed meal that typically takes place in the home. A number of **symbolic foods are laid out on the table**, of which the most important is the **matzah (מצה)**, the unleavened “bread of affliction” – specifically referencing the bread that had no time to rise.

The seder follows a script laid out in the **Haggadah (הגדה)**, a **book that tells the story of the redemption from Egypt**. Although the Haggadah is a traditional text, many people add to it and revise it in accordance with their theology and understanding of God’s redemptive actions in the world.

The first and last day (or days in many communities) of Pesach are festivals where Jewish people do not work, much like a Shabbat. The middle ‘Chol Hamoed’ days Jewish people will work and live as normal, with the exception of the special diet restrictions of Passover.

# The Seder Plate

## זרוע

**Zeroa** (shank bone) symbolising the ancient practice of the sacrifice of a lamb.

## כרפס

**Karpas** (a green vegetable, most often parsley) representing renewal and hope.

## חזרת

**Chazeret** (lettuce) symbolising another bitter herb

## חרוסת

**Haroset** (sweet fruit paste) representing the mortar and brick used by the Hebrew slaves to build the storehouses or pyramids of Egypt.



## מרור

**Maror** (bitter herb) symbolising the bitterness and harshness of the slavery.

## ביצה

**Beitzah** (egg) symbolises the sacrifice, which would be offered on every holiday (including Passover) when the Temple stood. The roundness of the egg also represents the cycle of life.

# SOCIALS

Here are our suggestions of what to post on social media:

- Happy Pesach
- Chag Sameach! חַג שְׂמֵיחַ גָּדוֹל (happy holidays)
- Chag Pesach Sameach! (meaning Happy Passover)
- Chag Sameach to all those celebrating Passover! Please enjoy being together for your seder and enjoy the matzah!
- Chag Sameach - wishing you all a pleasant Passover and Seder night, full of joy and singing with family and friends.

Please follow @jlc\_uk on Twitter and @jlc.uk on Instagram to see content from the JLC, our members and Jewish communities across the country during Passover.





To access our leadership resources for 2023 go to [www.thejlc.org/pesach23](http://www.thejlc.org/pesach23)

The JLC connects and coordinates the Jewish charitable sector, strengthens and supports leadership across our community, and magnifies and amplifies the collective voice of our member organisations.

If you would like to find out more about the festival of Passover visit My Jewish Learning's educational resource.

Contact the JLC:

North West, West Midlands and North Wales:  
Marc Levy - [marc@thejlc.org](mailto:marc@thejlc.org)

Yorkshire, North East, East Coast and East Midlands:  
Leo Brosh - [leo@thejlc.org](mailto:leo@thejlc.org)

For all other parts of the country:  
Russell Langer - [russell@thejlc.org](mailto:russell@thejlc.org)

Press:  
Adam Langleben - [adam@thejlc.org](mailto:adam@thejlc.org)



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