



Passover (Pesach)

Passover

Passover (*Pesach* in Hebrew) is a major Jewish spring festival, celebrating freedom and family as we remember the Exodus from Egypt more than 3,000 years ago. The main observances of this holiday center around a special home service called the *seder* (meaning "order"), which includes a festive meal; the prohibition on eating *chametz* (food made with leavened grains, including wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt); and the eating of *matzah* (an unleavened bread made specially for Passover).

On the 15th day of *Nisan* in the Hebrew calendar, Jews gather with family and friends in the evening to read from a book called the Haggadah, meaning "telling," which contains the order of prayers, rituals, readings, and songs for the Passover *seder*. The Haggadah helps us retell the events of the Exodus, so that each generation may learn and remember this story that is so central to Jewish life and history.

Passover is celebrated for either seven or eight days, depending on family and communal custom. In Israel and for most Reform Jews around the world, Pesach is seven days, but for many other Jews, it is eight days.

> **History**

> **Blessings**

> **What to Expect at a Seder**

> **Seder Preparation Checklist**

> **Customs and Rituals**

> **Glossary**

> **Is Passover 7 or 8 Days?**

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