

Judaism: How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them? How is Pesach celebrated?

Ten Plagues and freedom

In 1300 BCE, it is believed that Moses 'the Prince of Egypt' freed his people from slavery by the Pharaoh.

Pharaoh told the Jewish people they could no longer worship God.

God punished the pharaoh and sent ten plagues:

1. River turned to blood
2. Frogs rained from the sky
3. Lice made everyone itch
4. Flies arrived
5. Cattle became ill and died
6. People got boils on their bodies
7. Hailstones fell
8. Locusts ate all the crops
9. It was dark in the daytime
10. An angel was sent to kill all first born children

God warned Moses so the Jewish people could mark their door and the angel would 'passover' their home.



How do Jewish people prepare for Seder?

They physically prepare by creating the Seder plate, having family around the table, blessing the food and hiding the bread.

Spiritually they prepare by saying prayers, washing themselves, thinking of their ancestors, saying thank you to God, remembering the process of wanting food and feeling hungry.

Artefacts and symbols

Amnesty candle	Shows hope in a dark time and the Jewish people, or Israelites, had to have hope in God in their own dark time as slaves. Interestingly, the candle continues to burn even though it is in pain. This is similar to how the Jewish people continued to worship God even though they were being treated poorly and tortured.
Seder plate	A special plate containing symbolic food eaten or displayed at Passover Seder.
Salt water	Drunk during the Seder meal, this represents the tears and sweat of the Jewish slaves.
Wine or grape juice	Drunk during the Seder meal, this represents God's gift of freedom.



Seder Plate

- Maror (bitter herb) to symbolise the hard times.
- Charoset (sweet apple, nut and cinnamon paste) symbolises the mortar the slaves used in Egypt.
- Karpas (parsley) symbolises the Jewish slaves' tears.
- Zeroh (lamb meat and bone) represents sacrifice.
- Beitzah (hard, roasted egg) represents spring and the circle of life.
- In addition to the plate, Jewish people eat Matzah (unleavened bread) which reminds them the Jewish slaves had to leave quickly.

Key Vocabulary

persecution	Ill-treatment of people because of their race or religious belief.
Passover	A major Jewish spring festival which celebrates the release from slavery.
Pesach	Hebrew translation for 'passover'.
Seder	Meaning order in Hebrew, it is a special meal and service which happens the night before passover.
Dayenu	A song which translates as 'it would have been enough'.
Haggadah	Part of the holy book which contains the story of Exodus.

