

Why do Jewish people remember Pesach?

It's a Hard Life!

Thousands of years ago in Egypt a Pharaoh had made all of the Hebrew people slaves. He worked them hard to build his empire but was frightened that they would become strong and rise up against him. He decided he would make sure this could never happen and that he would have his men slay each and every one of the Hebrew boys that were born!

A Mother's Love

One Hebrew mother couldn't bear to see her beautiful son killed, so she made him a basket out of reeds and put him onto the River Nile to hide him in the bushes. His sister followed the basket as it bobbed away and saw the Pharaoh's daughter find him.

Who are ya?

Moses grew to be a fine son but one day found out that he was a Hebrew. He finally was able to see the Pharaoh's treatment of the Hebrews for what it was. One day he saw one of Pharaoh's men whipping a Hebrew slave and became so angry that he killed that man and buried his body in the sand. Scared of what might happen to him, Moses ran away into the land of Midian, where he lived his life as a Hebrew and married a Hebrew woman called Zipporah.

A voice from above

Then came the event that changed Moses' life forever. While tending to his sheep, G-D spoke to Moses via a bush that was on fire! Moses couldn't believe his eyes, but G-D told him he had to do His work, and must go to Egypt to free all of G-D's people (the Hebrews).

Threats

Moses took his brother Aaron and asked the Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go. Of course, Pharaoh didn't want to get rid of his workforce and refused. Moses said that unless they were freed, G-d would send 10 plagues to the Egyptians, each one worse than the last.

Bring it on!

Pharaoh was not scared by the threats and told Moses he would never let the Hebrews go, so, true to his word, G-D sent the first nine plagues to Egypt. They were:

- 1) River Nile turned to blood
 - 2) Frogs
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- 3) Lice
- 4) Flies
- 5) All the cattle died
- 6) Boils
- 7) Hail and fire
- 8) Locusts
- 9) Three days of darkness

The worst plague

Pharaoh was stubborn and still wouldn't let the Hebrews go, Moses told him he left no other choice but to send a 10th and final plague, one that was worse than all others. That night, G_d sent an Angel of Death into Egypt that entered every house and killed the first born son. Moses warned the Hebrews that this would happen, and that they should kill a lamb, and paint its blood on their doors so that the Angel would know which were the Hebrew homes and not to enter.

Pharaoh's own son died in that night and Pharaoh was so upset he screamed at Moses to take his people and go!

Go! Go! Go!

Moses told the Hebrews that they needed to go, and fast! They were afraid that Pharaoh would change his mind and stop them. They prepared for their departure quickly, taking only what they needed and making pliantly of flat bread, because they didn't want to waste time letting it rise.

A change of heart

Pharaoh became angry with himself and set out with his men to chase the Hebrews. The Hebrews came to the Red Sea and were unable to cross. They looked at their new leader for help, and he looked to G-D for His help. And with G-D's miracle, Moses commanded the sea to part and all the Hebrews escaped through it. The sea came back to normal in time to trap the Egyptians and stop them from catching the Hebrews. Finally, on the other side of the sea, they were free at last.

Pesach (Passover)

To remember the time when the Angel of Death passed over their homes and the Hebrews came to freedom, Jews remember Pesach every year during spring time for 7 days.

Traditionally Jewish families will come together on the first night of Pesach and have a Sedar meal. Seder means 'order' because of the specific order that things are done during the meal. During the meal a Sedar plate will be on the table which is nobody's meal, but remind them of different parts of the story:

Lamb's bone- to remember the lamb

Charoset- a sticky mix to remember the cement used by Hebrews

Bitter Herbs- to remember the bitterness of slavery

Salt water- To remember the tears of slaves

Green vegetable- to remind them of hope and springtime

A hard boiled egg- to remember the sacrifices in the Temple.

