



PASSOVER TRIVIA

Test your Passover knowledge, quiz your friends and family or add some extra fun to your Seder!

1) The observance of Passover lasts for how many days?

- a) Seven or eight days
- b) Two or three days
- c) Five or six days
- d) Nine or ten days

a – Seven or eight days

In Israel and in the Reform movement Passover is celebrated for 7 days; the more traditional Jews celebrate for 8 days.

2) Which of the following is another name for Passover?

- a) Hanukkah
- b) Pesach
- c) Sukkoth
- d) Day of Atonement

b – Pesach

Passover (a contraction of the words “pass” and “over”) is a translation of the Hebrew word Pesach, which means to “skip” or “jump. (Pasach)” The Israelites were instructed to take the blood of the lamb and smear it on their doorposts, a sign to G-d that this was an Israelite home, to be passed over, while death was visited upon the firstborns in all other homes.

3) Which Biblical figure is invited to the Passover Seder?

- a) Moses
- b) Jacob
- c) Abraham
- d) Elijah

d – Elijah

An empty chair is often left at the Passover Seder table for Prophet Elijah. This empty seat is traditionally at the head of the table. In addition to this seat, a cup of wine is placed untouched at the table for Elijah. Based on the teachings of Judaism, it is believed that someday, Prophet Elijah will take his sit on that empty chair and announce the arrival of King Messiah.

4) Who is the most important figure in Passover?

- a) Abraham
- b) Ezekiel
- c) Moses
- d) Jacob

c- Moses

In the Passover story, Moses is regarded as the most important figure, the one responsible for leading the enslaved Jews in Egypt to freedom in Canaan (also known as the "Promised Land").

5) How many times do we wash our hands, according to tradition, during the Seder evening?

- a) 4
- b) 8
- c) 2
- d) 6

c – 2

Ceremonial hand washing is performed twice, once after the Kiddush (blessing over the wine) and once right before saying the blessing over the matzah

6) In which city was the world's largest matzah ball created in 2010?

- a) Jerusalem
- b) Kathmandu
- c) Athens
- d) Tucson

d – Tucson

In a 2010 Jewish Food Festival held in Tucson, Arizona, history was made when the largest matzah ball in the world was created. The gargantuan matzah ball, which was made with over a thousand eggs, reportedly weighed about 488 pounds.

7) Which city hosts the world's largest Passover Seder every year?

- a) Jerusalem
- b) New York City
- c) Stockholm
- d) Kathmandu

d- Kathmandu

Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal is famed for playing host to the largest Passover Seder in the world every year. Thousands of people from all over the world often take trips to Kathmandu to be part of this spectacular event.

8) What does the final day of Passover celebrate?

- a) The arrival of the Israelites to the Red Sea
- b) The arrival of the Messiah
- c) The Jewish New Year
- d) A day of rest

a -The arrival of the Israelites to the Red Sea

The last day of the Passover celebrates the arrival of the Israelites to the Red Sea. It's noteworthy to mention that upon getting to the Red Sea, Moses miraculously parted it for the Israelites to get across. During the last day of Passover, women and girls customarily light candles in commemoration of that great event.

9) In the olden days, Jews celebrated Passover by sending an animal to the temple to be sacrificed. What type of animal was this?

- a) Cow
- b) Goat
- c) Lamb
- d) Deer

c – Lamb

In the past, Jews commemorated Passover by sacrificing a paschal lamb, roasting its flesh and proceeding to eat it.

10) This sacrifice was eaten in groups arranged by:

- a) Birth Order
- b) Age
- c) Religious Observance
- d) Family

d-Family

Each family unit had to "register" to eat the paschal lamb in the Temple. Passover, like most Jewish holidays, is thus celebrated with an emphasis on family even today.

11) At the end of the Seder it is customary to say:

- a) Next Year in Jerusalem!
- b) Forty-nine days to Shavuot!
- c) See you next year!
- d) L'chaim!

a – Next Year in Jerusalem!

The Seder closes with the wish for all Jews to be able to return to the homeland, just as they did after leaving Egypt.

12) Many contemporary Jews add additional items to the Seder plate to symbolize struggles for liberation. What is a common new item that celebrates women?

- a) A lemon
- b) An orange
- c) An egg
- d) An olive

b –An Orange

Reform and liberal Jews place an orange on the Seder plate to represent the LGBTQ community.

Contrary to popular belief, the orange is not there to represent Jewish women; the quote about a woman belonging on the bimah as much as an orange does on the Seder plate is an urban legend. What actually happened was that Dr Susannah Heschel found a story about a girl who asked a rabbi if there was any room for a lesbian in Judaism, and the rabbi replying that there was as much room for a lesbian in Judaism as there was for a crust of bread on the Seder plate. Heschel was inspired by this story, but could not use bread due to it being chametz, so she chose an orange instead. Her explanation: "I chose an orange because it suggests the fruitfulness for all Jews when lesbians and gay men are contributing and active members of Jewish life."

Since the addition of the orange, other symbols have been added to the traditional seder plate. Some vegetarians and vegans have added a "paschal yam," in place of the shank bone, which traditionally represents the paschal lamb. Others have included olives for peace in the Middle East. And some have placed potato peels on their plates to commemorate Jews who starved during the Holocaust. Most recently, members of Rabbis For Human Rights, who work to support the under-paid and over-worked tomato pickers in Florida, have included a tomato as a symbol of contemporary slavery.

13) What is Maot Chittin?

- a) Assisting the poor during Purim
- b) Money give to the poor to purchase wheat for making matzah
- c) A special kind of haroset made from pears
- d) An organization that collects clothes for the homeless

b - Maot Chitim refers to the centuries old custom of gathering wheat to provide the poor with matzah and other items for the observance of Pesach.

14) In medieval Europe, what was the most pressing problem that Jews faced around Passover?

- a) They lived in the ghettos, making it hard to hold a proper Seder
- b) They were too poor to make matzah and buy the wine
- c) There was no problem, they celebrated Passover just fine
- d) It was illegal for them to celebrate any Jewish holiday
- e) Widespread accusations of blood libel

e – Widespread accusations of blood libel

The “blood libel” refers to a centuries-old false allegation that Jews murder Christians – especially Christian children – to use their blood for ritual purposes, such as an ingredient in the baking of Passover matzah (unleavened bread). It is also sometimes called the “ritual murder charge.” The blood libel dates back to the Middle Ages and has persisted despite Jewish denials and official repudiations by the Catholic Church and many secular authorities. Blood libels have frequently led to mob violence and pogroms, and have occasionally led to the decimation of entire Jewish communities.

15) On the first day of Passover we say a special prayer asking for

- a) Sustenance in the year to come
- b) Abundant bread in the year to come
- c) The messiah to come and end Passover
- d) Dew to fall in Israel over the dry summer months

d – Dew

In the first morning of Passover, many Jewish communities recite a special prayer called Tefillat Tal, literally “the prayer for dew.”

The prayer is one of two times in the year when Jews recite special prayers for precipitation. The other is in the fall, at the end of the holiday of Sukkot, when a prayer for rain, Tefillat Geshem, is recited.

Both prayers coincide with the changing of the agricultural seasons in ancient Israel. The winter is the rainy season in Israel. Summer is long, dry and hot, and in ancient times the regular presence of a tiny bit of dew could mark the difference between a successful harvest season and a poor one.

16) Pulitzer Prize-winning author Geraldine Brooks’s best-selling novel, People of the Book, tells the tale of what Haggadah?

- a) Maxwell House Haggadah
- b) The Bird’s Head Haggadah
- c) The Sarajevo Haggadah
- d) The Freedom Haggadah

c- The Sarajevo Haggadah

The Sarajevo Haggadah is an illuminated manuscript that contains the illustrated traditional text of the Passover Haggadah which accompanies the Passover Seder. It is one of the oldest Sephardic Haggadahs in the world, originating in Barcelona around 1350.

17) Some Sephardi Jews mimic the lashings received by Jewish slaves by swatting their Seder table-mates with which edible plant?

- a) Celery
- b) Carrots
- c) Scallions
- d) Kale

c- Scallions

Dayenu" is sung throughout the diaspora during the Seder, but Sephardic Jews from Iran and Afghanistan have a particularly lively custom in which they whip each other with oversize scallions. Before the song begins, each seder participant stands, takes a scallion and starts whacking the other members of the feast. In some families, one scallion is passed around the table while each person takes a turn whipping. There is some debate about where the custom originates. Many believe it is a way to mimic the whips of slave drivers in Egypt. But others say it's a reference to Bamidbar 11:5-6, a passage that describes the Israelites' longing for Egyptian onions while eating manna during their **40** years wandering in the desert. Seder participants whip one other as a way to scold one another for desiring any aspect of their lives of enslavement.