

Passover

begins the evening of Monday, April 14 and ends the evening of Tuesday, April 22.

Passover, or **Pesach**, is an 8-day holiday (in Israel and in many Reform and Reconstructionist communities it's celebrated for 7 days) when we commemorate the Jewish People's redemption from slavery in Egypt thanks to G-d's miracles. Traditionally, our observance of this festival begins with a Seder, a special ceremonial meal on the first and second nights. At the Passover Seder, the Exodus story is told, questions are asked and ritual and

symbolic food items like *matzah*, unleavened bread, *maror*, bitter herbs used to recall the difficulty of slavery, and *charoset*, the nut and fruit paste that symbolizes the mortar used by the slaves in Egypt, are eaten.

Over the centuries the Seder has evolved to engage friends, family and guests in meaningful conversation and learning.

Did you know that the Seder means "order" and has several different parts? Here are three parts of the Seder about which to ask new questions:

כרפס - *Karpas* – We eat veggies?

The Passover Seder is an excellent way to learn about Judaism by experiencing it in action! At a more typical evening meal, the family would have washed hands and then said *hamotzi*, the blessing over bread. At the Seder, they wash their hands and then eat a vegetable. Children at the Seder may already be noticing that something is unusual, and this change in events is one of the central precursors to the Four Questions that ask, "Why is this night different from all other nights?"

When have you changed something in your routine, even just slightly, to make a significant impact on yourself or on others?

מגיד - *Maggid* – What's the story?

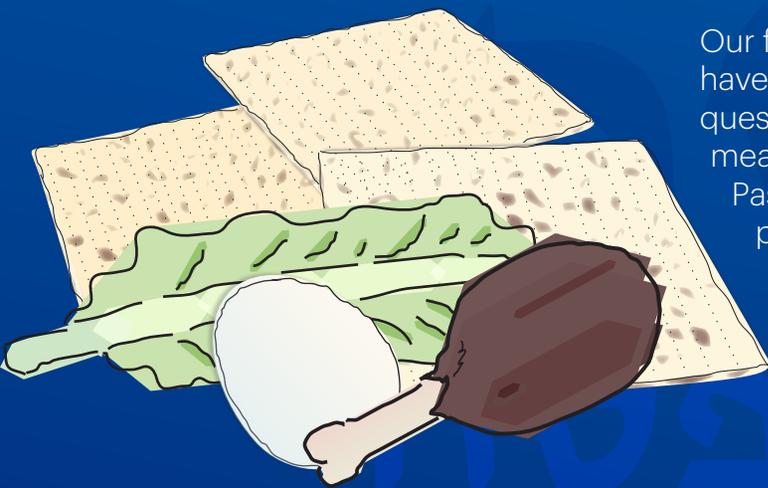
Proverbs 22:6 teaches, "*Chanoch LaNa'ar Al Pi Darco* – Educate a child according to their way." The Seder's inclusion of four unique children – the "wise" child, the "wicked" child, the "simple" child and the child who does not know how to ask - exemplifies this practice. In our conversations and exchanges, every individual will participate and contribute differently and will share their own perspective and understanding of the truth.

What was a particularly meaningful conversation you had and what were some of the different perspectives that were shared?

צפון - *Tzafun* – This is dessert?

Did you know that the Greek Symposium significantly influenced the Passover Seder? Like the Greeks, we continue to recline, feast and rejoice together at our Seder. However, unlike the Greek Symposium, which often ended in drunkenness and debauchery, the *afikoman*, the hidden matzah, marks the very last thing that we eat or drink that evening.

When have you (and when haven't you) incorporated the customs and practices of other cultures in your own Jewish custom and practice?



Our friends at **Ask Big Questions** have developed several "big questions" to help inspire more meaningful conversation at your Passover Seder or chapter program. Since Passover is the Festival of Freedom, engage your Seder table with these *new* Four Questions:

- 1 When have you not been free?
- 2 When have you become free?
- 3 What are you thankful for?
- 4 For whom are you responsible?