



## TOO MANY COOKS

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*Oops! Each family member adds his or her own favorite ingredients to the Passover charoses, until the finished product is something no one would choose to eat!*

Known as *Pesach* in Hebrew, Passover begins on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of *Nissan*. Israeli Jews and some in the Diaspora (lands outside Israel that are home to Jews) celebrate for seven days, while for many it is an eight-day observance. The Passover story is chronicled in Exodus, the second book of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible).

Passover is known for its extensive home observance. The *seder*—the “talking feast,” which is the key event of Passover—is one of the most-observed Jewish practices. With a *haggadah*, the text and commentary that provides the ritual’s script and order (“order” being the literal meaning of the word *seder*), Jews navigate the highly symbolic re-enactment of the Exodus from Egypt again and again. This is because the retelling the story fulfills the instruction in Exodus 13:8: “You shall tell your children on that day, saying, ‘It is because of what God did for me when I went out of the land of Egypt.’”

The *seder* is meant to spark the curiosity of children. Before participating in the next *seder*, explore a children’s *haggadah* with your youngsters, pointing out parts you think will be of interest to them during the evening.

### SYMBOLIC PASSOVER FOODS

Jewish holidays are often associated with foods: apples and honey on *Rosh Hashanah* foretell a sweet year, while *latkes* (potato pancakes), fried in oil on *Hanukkah*, signify the miracle of the Temple oil. No holiday, though, contains as many symbolic foods as Passover: unleavened *matzah* recalls the haste with which the Israelites left Egypt and bitter herbs recount the harshness of slavery. *Charoses* (from the Hebrew for “clay”) signifies the mortar used by Hebrew slaves to build cities and storehouses for the pharaoh. Often *charoses* contains nuts, apples, cinnamon and sweet wine; depending on family traditions, the cook might also use chestnuts, coconut, or jelly! Use the method described at the end of *Too Many Cooks* or check the Internet for an appealing *charoses* recipe to try with your children! Pj

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