

Chag Hamatzot/ Pesach TLDR

(Feast of Unleavened Bread/ Passover)

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Terms:

Moed. Root יעד “to meet”. “Appointed time”, i.e., a time set for meeting with Yehovah. The Tabernacle was called Ohel Mo‘ed “Tent of Meeting” because God “I will meet (ve-no‘adeti וינודעתי) with you there” (Ex 25:22). All seven days of Chag Ha-Matzot are called Mo‘ed but only the 1st and 7th days are Mikra’e Kodesh. [All seven days of Chag Ha-Sukkot are called Mo‘ed but only the 1st day is a Mikra Kodesh. Shemini Atzeret (8th day of Assembly) is a Mo‘ed, a Mikra Kodesh, but not a Chag. Chag Ha-Shavu‘ot is a chag, a Mikra Kodesh, and a Mo‘ed. Yom Teruah and Yom Ha-Kippurim are Mo‘adim and Mikra’e Kodesh, but not Chag.]

Chag. Root חוג “circle”. “Feast” with connotation of pilgrimage and celebration. Also, “celebration” (Ex 13:6; 1Sam 30:16) and “festal offering” (Ex 23:18; 34:25). Originally, to dance in a circle as a celebration (Jud 21:19, 21; Ps 107:27). Arabic Hajj “pilgrimage” is the same root. In the Tanakh, only the three pilgrimage-feasts Chag Ha-Matzot, Chag Ha-Shavuot, and Chag Ha-Sukkot are called chag. Every chag is a mo‘ed but not every mo‘ed is a chag. In modern Hebrew, every holiday is a chag including the 4th of July (in America).

Mikra Kodesh. Roots קרא “to call” and קדש “holy”. “Holy proclamation”, i.e., a time proclaimed to be holy. Work is forbidden on every Mikra Kodesh. The Mikra’e Kodesh in the Torah are: Shabbat, 1st day of Chag Ha-Matzot, 7th day of Chag Ha-Matzot,

Pesach. Root פסח “to protect, to limp”. Passover, really means protection. In the Tanach, Pesach is the name of the sacrifice. The earliest reference to Pesach as a holiday (rather than a sacrifice) is probably Ostr. Berlin P. 10679 line 5 (bepascha בפסחא “on Passover”) (Elephantine, around 475 BCE).¹ Josephus, *Antiquities* 14:21: “As this happened at the time when the feast of unleavened bread was celebrated, which we call the passover (*pascha* πάσχα)”.

Chag Ha-Matzot–Feast of Unleavened Bread. Since 2nd Temple times often referred to as Pesach. In Aramaic, pascha פסחא, adopted in Greek as pascha πάσχα.

Chametz/ Machmetzet. Root חמצ “leaven”. Any food or drink (e.g., beer) fermented from the five Old World grains: wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt. Pap. Berlin P. 13464 line 6 (Elephantine, 419 BCE): “Do not drink [any fermented drink. And do] not [eat] anything of leaven” [כל שכר] אל תשתו וכל מנדעם זי חמיר אל[תאכלו].²

Se‘or. Root שאר “leaven”. Yeast, sour-dough starter.

¹ <https://elephantine.smb.museum/objects/object.php?o=100079>

² <https://elephantine.smb.museum/objects/object.php?o=100463>

Summary of Pesach/ Chag Ha-Matzot

Passover/ Feast of Unleavened Bread

Pesach, usually translated “passover” means “protection”	Ex 12:13, 23, 27
Pesach sacrifice is on the 14th day of First Month at twilight/ the 15th day of First Month at sunset	Ex 12:6; Lev 23:5; Nu 9:2–5; 28:16; Dt 16:3, 6; Josh 5:10; 2Chr 30:15; 35:1; Ezra 6:19
Pesach sacrifice must be done in a state of ritual purity in the chosen place	Nu 9:6–13; Dt 16:2, 5–7; 2Ki 23:9, 21–23; 2Chr 30:1–20; 35:1–18; Ezra 6:19–22
Chag Ha-Matzot is in the Month of the Aviv, the First Month	Ex 12:2; 13:5; 23:15; 34:18; Dt 16:1
Chag Ha-Matzot is a chag (pilgrimage-feast-celebration) to be enjoyed with food and drink	Ex 12:14; 13:6; 23:14–19; 34:18–26; Lev 23:6; Nu 28:17; Dt 14:22–27; Ezra 6:22; Neh 8:9–10
Do not mourn on a holy day	Neh 8:9–10
Chag Ha-Matzot is a mo'ed (appointed time)	Lev 23:4–8
Chag Ha-Matzot is from the 15th to the 21st of the First Month	Ex 12:18; Ezra 6:22
Chag Hamatzot/ Pesach sacrifice is an eternal statute	Ex 12:14, 17, 24–25, 42; 13:5, 10
Mikra Kodesh on 1st and 7th	Ex 12:16; 13:6; Lev 23:7; Nu 28:18, 25
Do not work on the 1st and 7th except food preparation	Ex 12:16; Lev 23:7–8; Dt 16:8
Eat matzot for 7 days	Ex 12:15, 18, 20; 13:6–7; 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:6; Nu 28:17; Dt 16:3, 8
Matzah is <i>lechem 'oni</i> (bread of affliction)	Dt 16:3
Do not eat chametz or se'or for 7 days	Ex 12:15, 19; Dt 16:3
Remove chametz and se'or	Ex 12:15, 19–20; 13:7; c
Eat Bitter herbs the first night (Ex 12:8)	Ex 12:8
Reason for matzot is that God commanded us to remove chametz and se'or and commanded not to eat chametz	Ex 12:15, 19; Dt 16:3
Reason for matzot is that Israelites left Egypt in haste	Ex 12:34, 39; Dt 16:3
First night of Chag Ha-Matzot is a night of watching (lel shimmurim)	Ex 12:42
Remember the Plague of the Firstborn	Ex 12:26–27; 13:14–15
Remember the day of the Exodus	Ex 13:3–4; Dt 16:3
Assemble on the 7th day	Dt 16:8
Explain to children about the Pesach, Chag Ha-Matzot, and Exodus	Ex 12:26–27; 13:8
Prayer in place of sacrifices for seven days	Lev 23:8; Nu 28:19–24; Hos 14:2–5; Ps 51:17–21
Pesach sacrifice is an entrance into the	Ex 12:43–49; Nu 9:14

covenant; participating in the Pesach sacrifice is transformative (Ex 12:48-49)	
Not participating in the Passover sacrifice removes a person from Israel; not participating in the Pesach sacrifice is transformative (Nu 9)	Nu 9:7-13
Eating chametz on Chag Ha-Matzot cuts a person off from Israel; eating chametz on Chag Ha-Matzot is transformative	Ex 12:15, 19
Prepare heart to seek Yehovah	2Chr 30:18-19
God can "heal" us even when we do not do everything right if our heart is right	2Chr 30:17-20; Hos 14:2-5