

Pesach (Passover) Study

By

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Pesach is a unique observance in the appointed times commanded by Yehovah through Moshe. Its practices are laid out for us to know today. Yet we will see we can't keep all that has been given to keep because of the iniquity of our fathers. We live today without the priesthood (kohanim) and no altar in the place where we are to bring the Pesach sacrifice. We will look at the first Pesach and how it was kept. We also look at other Pesach's kept through the times in Israel. Also we will look at what Pesach means. Lastly, we will examine the more traditional (rabbinical) Pesach siddur and its origins. Also, look at how we should keep this observance today with all its practices.

First let's look at Pesach in the Tanakh.

Pesach (Pey-Samech-Chet) it is a masculine noun and reference number 6453, which is found on page 820 in the BDB and page 1036 NEHC.

Shemot (Exodus) 12:11, 21, 27, 43, 48 (whole chapter)

1 Yehovah said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2 This month (hachodesh הַחֹדֶשׁ) shall mark for you the beginning of the months (chodeshim

rishon חֹדְשֵׁי רִאשׁוֹן); it shall be the first of the months of the year for you. 3

Speak to the whole community (adat) of Israel and say that on the tenth of this month each of them shall take a lamb to a family, a lamb to a household. 4 But if the household is too small for a lamb, let him share one with a neighbor who dwells nearby, in proportion to the number of persons: you shall contribute for the lamb according to what each household will eat. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a yearling male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 You shall keep watch over it until the fourteenth day of this month; and all the assembled congregation of the Israelites shall slaughter it at twilight (beyn ha'ar'bayim –between the evenings בֵּין הָעֶרְבַיִם).

The Pesach was set aside from the tenth day to the end of the fourteenth day. At twilight (between the evenings) it was slaughtered by the whole community (adat).

7 They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they are to eat it. 8 They shall eat the flesh that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. 9 Do not eat any of it raw, or cooked in any way with water (mebushal bamaym מִבֶּשֶׁל בַּמַּיִם – cooked in

water), but roasted—head, legs, and entrails—over the fire. 10 You shall not leave any of it over until morning; if any of it is left until morning, you shall burn it.

The blood from the animal was used to mark the doorposts and lintel to mark the houses of the Yisraelim. The meal eaten that night consisted of three things the lamb or goat yearling, unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The Pesach was to be roasted over fire. Also it was not to be left over until morning else the reminder was to be burnt.

11 This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly: it is a **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)**

[offering] to Yehovah. 12 For that night I will go through the land of Egypt and strike down every first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and I will mete out punishments to all the gods of Egypt, I Yehovah. 13 And the blood on the houses where you are staying shall be a sign for you: when I see the blood I will **pass (upasach'tiy – 6452 וַפֶּסַחְתִּי)** over you, so that no plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

The blood on the house will cause Yehovah to **pass (skip)** that house.

14 This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it as a festival to Yehovah throughout the ages; you shall celebrate it as an institution (chuqat) for all time. 15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; **on the very first day you shall [cause to cease – tash'bitu 7673] remove leaven from your houses**, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

16 You shall celebrate a sacred occasion (miqra qodesh) on the first day, and a sacred occasion (miqra qodesh) on the seventh day; no work (kal mela'khah lo ye'aseh) at all shall be done on them; only what every person is to eat (akh asher ye'akhel lekal nefesh), that alone may be prepared for you (hu lebado ye'aseh lekhem). 17 You shall observe the [Feast of] Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your ranks out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day throughout the ages as an institution (chuqat) for all time. 18 In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.

This is the end of the fourteenth to the end twenty-first day. If you when from the beginning of the fourteenth day you would count eight days not seven days.

Even 15	Even 16	Even 17	Even 18	Even 19	Even 20	Even 21	
Twilight	Ba'arev						
Day 14	Day 15	Day 16	Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21

19 No leaven shall be found in your houses for seven days. For whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a citizen of the country. 20 You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread.

21 Moses then summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go, pick out lambs for your families, and slaughter **the Passover (ha pasach הַפֶּסַח)** [offering]. 22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and to the two doorposts. None of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. 23 For when Yehovah goes through to smite the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and Yehovah will **pass (upasach וַפֶּסַח)** over the door and not let the Destroyer enter and smite your home.

24 “You shall observe this as an institution (chaq) for all time, for you and for your descendants. 25 And when you enter the land that Yehovah will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. 26 And when your children ask you, ‘What do you mean by this rite?’ 27 you shall say, ‘It is the **passover sacrifice (zevach pesach זֶבַח-פֶּסַח)** to Yehovah, because He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but saved our houses.’”

The people then bowed low in homage. 28 And the Israelites went and did so; just as Yehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

29 In the middle of the night (bachetziy halaylah **בְּחֶצְי הַלַּיְלָה** or halfway through the night) Yehovah struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle. 30 And Pharaoh arose in the night, with all his courtiers and all the Egyptians—because there was a loud cry in Egypt; for there was no house where there was not someone dead. 31 He summoned (vayiq’ra and he called) Moses and Aaron in the night and said, “Up, depart from among my people, you and the Israelites with you! Go, worship Yehovah as you said! 32 Take also your flocks and your herds, as you said, and begone! And may you bring a blessing upon me also!”

33 The Egyptians urged the people on, impatient to have them leave the country, for they said, “We shall all be dead.” 34 So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls wrapped in their cloaks upon their shoulders. 35 The Israelites had done Moses’ bidding and borrowed from the Egyptians objects of silver and gold, and clothing. 36 And Yehovah had disposed the Egyptians favorably toward the people, and they let them have their request; thus they stripped the Egyptians.

37 The Israelites journeyed from Raamses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children. 38 Moreover, a mixed multitude went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds. 39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had taken out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, since they had been driven out of Egypt and could not delay; nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

40 The length of time that the Israelites lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years;
41 at the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year, to the very day, all the ranks of
Yehovah departed from the land of Egypt. 42 That was for Yehovah a night of vigil to
bring them out of the land of Egypt; that same night is Yehovah's, one of vigil for all the
children of Israel throughout the ages.

It is also a night of vigil for us too.

43 Yehovah said to Moses and Aaron: This is the law (chuqat) of the **Passover (ha pasach חַפְּסַח)** [offering]: No foreigner (kal ben nekhar –son of a stranger) shall eat of it. 44 But any slave a man has bought may eat of it once he has been circumcised. 45 **No bound or hired laborer (toshav – dweller or shakhir hired servant)** shall eat of it. 46 It shall be eaten in one house: you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house; nor shall you break a bone of it. 47 The whole community of Israel shall offer it. 48 If a **stranger (ger sojourner)** who dwells (sojourns) with you would offer the **Passover (pesach חַפְּסַח)** to Yehovah, all his males must be circumcised; then he shall be admitted to offer it; he shall then be as a citizen of the country. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. 49 There shall be one law for the citizen (la'ezrach) and for the stranger (velager) who dwells (sojourns) among you.

50 And all the Israelites did so; as Yehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

51 That very day Yehovah freed the Israelites from the land of Egypt, troop by troop.

Here we have the account of the first Pesach. This first observance was a home observance. Each family slaughtered it and each cooked it and the blood covered the entry to their homes. We see also that there were individuals who could eat of it and those who could not. We also see the conversion of a Ger to be as a home born Yisraelim.

Shemot (Exodus) 34:25

25 You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with anything leavened; and the **sacrifice of the Feast of Passover (zevach chag hapasach זֶבַח חַג הַפְּסַח)** shall not be left lying until morning.

Here we see the Pesach referred to as a feast and a sacrifice. Also no leaven was come into contact with the sacrifice. If the leaven was to be gone by the first erev (evening) of 15th then there should not have been any leaven.

Vayiqra (Leviticus) 23:5-8

5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, **at twilight (beyn ha'ar'bayim – between the evenings בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים)**, there shall be a **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** offering to Yehovah, 6 and on the fifteenth day of that month Yehovah's Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread for seven days. 7 On the first day you shall celebrate a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. 8 Seven days you shall make offerings by fire to Yehovah. The seventh day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations.

Beyn ha'ar'bayim or between the evenings is a term referring to the time period between sunset on the fourteenth and darkness on the fifteenth. This is the period the pesach sacrifice was to be prepared.

Bamidbar (Numbers) 9:2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14

1 Yehovah spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, on the first new moon of the second year following the exodus from the land of Egypt, saying: 2 Let the Israelite people offer **the Passover (et-hapesach אֶת־הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] at its set time (bamoado בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ); 3 you shall offer it on the fourteenth day of this month, **at twilight (beyn ha'ar'bayim בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים – between the evenings)**, at its set time (bamoado בְּמוֹעֵדוֹ); you shall offer it in accordance with all its rules and rites.

4 Moses instructed the Israelites to offer **the Passover (hapasach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice]; 5 and they offered **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, **at twilight (beyn ha'ar'bayim בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים – between the evenings)**, in the wilderness of Sinai. Just as Yehovah had commanded Moses, so the Israelites did.

6 But there were some men who were unclean by reason of a corpse and could not offer **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] on that day. Appearing that same day before Moses and Aaron, 7 those men said to them, “Unclean though we are by reason of a corpse (**tame'im lanefesh adam**), why must we be debarred from presenting Yehovah's offering at its set time with the rest of the Israelites?” 8 Moses said to them, “Stand by, and let me hear what instructions Yehovah gives about you.”

The men here were exposed to the dead body and had incurred tame'im la nefesh adam or uncleanness to body of man. This meant they must be clean or tahor to partake of it. To not partake of this meant they would be cut off from the community. So a second Passover or Pesach was instituted to cover uncleanness or a long trip.

9 And Yehovah spoke to Moses, saying: 10 Speak to the Israelite people, saying: When any of you or of your posterity who are defiled by a corpse or are on a long journey would offer **the Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] to Yehovah, 11 they shall offer it in the second month, on the fourteenth day of the month, **at twilight (beyn ha'ar'bayim בֵּין הָעֶרְבַיִם – between the evenings)**. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, 12 and they shall not leave any of it over until morning. They shall not break a bone of it. They shall offer it in strict accord with the law of **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice]. 13 But if a man who is clean and not on a journey refrains from offering **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice], that person shall be cut off from his kin, for he did not present Yehovah's offering at its set time; that man shall bear his guilt.

14 And when a stranger who resides with you would offer **the Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] to Yehovah, he must offer it in accordance with the rules and rites of **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice]. There shall be one law for you, whether stranger or citizen of the country.

It was guilt not to partake of it. Now Leviticus 17 is in effect at this time so they would have to bring it to the copper altar. This sacrifice would be no longer a home based offering.

Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:16

16 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, there shall be **the Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] to Yehovah, 17 and on the fifteenth day of that month a festival. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days.

Moshe is reminding the priest to be careful in offering his offerings and sacrifices. The Pesach was one such sacrifice.

Bamidbar (Numbers) 33:3

3 They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month. It was on the morrow (mimacharat) of **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [offering] that the Israelites started out defiantly, in plain view of all the Egyptians.

Clearly this was a travel day for them and therefore not a shabbat.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:1, 2, 5, 6

1 Observe the month of the Abib and offer **the passover** (pesach פֶּסַח) [sacrifice] to Yehovah Eloheykha, for it was in the month of the Abib, at night, that Yehovah Eloheykha freed you from Egypt. 2 You shall **sacrifice Passover (VeZabach'ta pesach וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶּסַח)** for Yehovah Eloheykha, from the flock and the herd, in the place where Yehovah will **choose (bakhar) to establish (lashakhen – to dwell) His name (Shemi)**. 3 You shall not eat anything leavened with it; for seven days thereafter you shall eat unleavened bread, bread of distress—for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly—so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live. 4 For seven days no leaven shall be found with you in all your territory, and none of the flesh of what you slaughter on the evening of the first day shall be left until morning.

In the morning it is burnt up.

5 You are not permitted to **sacrifice the Passover (lizebach et-hapesach)** in any of the settlements that Yehovah Eloheykha is giving you; 6 but at the place where Yehovah Eloheykha will choose to establish His name, there alone shall **you sacrifice the passover (lizebach et-hapesach לִזְבַּח אֶת־הַפֶּסַח)**, in the evening (ba'arev בְּעֶרֶב), at sundown (kebo hashemesh כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ), **the time of day (appointed time – moed מוֹעֵד)** when you departed from Egypt. 7 You shall cook and eat it at the place that Yehovah Eloheykha will choose; and in the morning you may start back on your journey home (return to your tents).

The place that Yehovah had caused his name to dwell at this point was the Mishkan (Tabernacle) or Tent of Meeting. Miskhan is from the word shakan, which means to dwell. They were to bring the sacrifice to the Mishkan there it was prepared and cooked and they ate it there.

Yehoshua (Joshua) 5:10-11

10 Encamped at Gilgal, in the steppes of Jericho, the Israelites offered **the passover (et-hapesach אֶת־הַפֶּסַח)** on the fourteenth day of the month, toward evening.

11 On the day (morrow mimacharat) after **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)**, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the country, unleavened bread and parched grain. 12 On that same day, when they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. The Israelites got no more manna; that year they ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.

This is the day of the Fifteenth, which is the same day they departed Egypt on the morrow of the Pesach. Thus, new grain may be eaten once wave sheaf was brought.

Bamidbar (Numbers) 33:3

3 They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month. It was on the morrow (mimacharat) of **the Passover (hapesach חַפְּסַח)** [offering] that the Israelites started out defiantly, in plain view of all the Egyptians.

You see that both of these accounts happened on the morrow of the Pesach thus the fifteenth day is not a shabbat

Melekhim Bet (II Kings) 23:21, 22, 23 (Melekh Yoshiyahu)

21 The king commanded all the people, “Offer the **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] to Yehovah Eloheykha as prescribed in this scroll of the covenant.” 22 Now the **passover (kapesach חַפְּסַח)** [sacrifice] had not been offered in that manner in the days of the chieftains who ruled Israel, or during the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 Only in the eighteenth year of King Josiah was such a **Passover (hapesach חַפְּסַח)** [sacrifice] offered in that manner to Yehovah in Jerusalem.

Melekh Yoshiyahu reinstated the Pesach sacrifice with its rites.

Divrei HaYamim Bet (2 Chronicles) 30:1, 25, 15, 17, 18

1 Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah; he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the House of Yehovah in Jerusalem to keep the **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** for Yehovah Elohim of Israel. 2 The king and his officers and the congregation in Jerusalem had agreed to keep **the Passover (hapesach חַפְּסַח)** in the second month, 3 for at the time, they were unable to keep it, for not enough priests had sanctified themselves, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem. 4 The king and the whole congregation thought it proper 5 to issue a decree and proclaim throughout all Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan that they come and keep the **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** for Yehovah Elohim of Israel in Jerusalem—not often did they act in accord with what was written. 6 The couriers went out with the letters from the king and his officers through all Israel and Judah, by order of the king, proclaiming, “O you Israelites! Return to Yehovah Elohim of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and He will return to the remnant of you who escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.

15 They slaughtered **the paschal (hapesach חַפְּסַח)** [sacrifice] on the fourteenth of the second month. The priests and Levites were ashamed, and they sanctified themselves and

brought burnt offerings to the House of Yehovah. 16 They took their stations, as was their rule according to the Teaching of Moses, man of Elohim. The priests dashed the blood [which they received] from the Levites. 17 Since many in the congregation had not sanctified themselves, the Levites were in charge of slaughtering **the paschal**

(**hapesachim** **הַפֶּסַחִים**) [sacrifice] for everyone who was not clean, so as to

consecrate them to Yehovah. 18 For most of the people—many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun—had not purified themselves, yet they ate **the paschal**

(**et-hapesach** **אֶת־הַפֶּסַח**) [sacrifice] in violation of what was written. Hezekiah

prayed for them, saying, “The good YEHOVAH will provide atonement for 19 everyone who set his mind on worshiping Elohim, Yehovah Elohey of his fathers, even if he is not purified for the sanctuary.” 20 Yehovah heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

Remember that to partake of the sacrifice you must be clean (tahor) the Israelites were not tahor but tame. But Melekh Yehiz’qiyahu prayed that those who set their minds to worship Yehovah though not purified.

Divrei HaYamim Bet (2 Chronicles) 35:1,6,7,8,9,11,13,16,17,18,19

1 Josiah kept the **Passover** (**pesach** **פֶּסַח**) for Yehovah in Jerusalem; the **Passover**

(**hapesach** **הַפֶּסַח**) [sacrifice] was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month.

2 He reinstated the priests in their shifts and rallied them to the service of the House of Yehovah. 3 He said to the Levites, consecrated to Yehovah, who taught all Israel, “Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders, see now to the service of Yehovah Eloheykha and His people Israel, 4 and dispose yourselves by clans according to your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of King David of Israel and in the document of his son Solomon, 5 and attend in the Sanctuary, by clan divisions, on your kinsmen, the people—by clan divisions of the Levites. 6 Having sanctified yourselves, slaughter **the Passover**

(**hapesach** **הַפֶּסַח**) [sacrifice] and prepare it for your kinsmen, according to the word of Elohim given by Moses.” 7 Josiah donated to the people small cattle—lambs and goats, all for **Passover** (**ha kol lapesachim** **הַכֹּל לַפֶּסַחִים**) [sacrifices] for all

present—to the sum of 30,000, and large cattle, 3,000—these from the property of the king. 8 His officers gave a freewill offering to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the chiefs of the House of Elohim, donated to the priests for **Passover** (**lapesachim** **לַפֶּסַחִים**) [sacrifices] 2,600 all cattle] and 300

large cattle. 9 Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, officers of the Levites, donated 5,000 ALL CATTLE] AND 500 LARGE CATTLE TO THE LEVITES FOR PASSOVER (**LAPESACHIM** **לַפֶּסַחִים**)[SACRIFICES].

10 The service was arranged well: the priests stood at their posts and the Levites in their divisions, by the king's command. 11 They slaughtered **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] and the priests [received its blood] from them and dashed it, while the Levites flayed the animals. 12 They removed the parts to be burnt, distributing them to divisions of the people by clans, and making the sacrifices to Yehovah, as prescribed in the scroll of Moses; they did the same for the cattle. 13 They roasted (and they cooked vayabashelu וַיַּבְשִׁילוּ) **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [sacrifice] in fire, as prescribed, while the sacred offerings they cooked (bishalu בִּשְׁלוּ) in pots, cauldrons, and pans, and conveyed them with dispatch to all the people. 14 Afterward they provided for themselves and the priests, for the Aaronite priests were busy offering the burnt offerings and the fatty parts until nightfall, so the Levites provided both for themselves and for the Aaronite priests. 15 The Asaphite singers were at their stations, by command of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, the seer of the king; and the gatekeepers were at each and every gate. They did not have to leave their tasks, because their Levite brothers provided for them. 16 The entire service of Yehovah was arranged well that day, to keep the **Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** and to make the burnt offerings on the altar of Yehovah, according to the command of King Josiah. 17 All the Israelites present kept **the Passover (et-hapesach אֶת־הַפֶּסַח)** at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. 18 Since the time of the prophet Samuel, no **Passover (pesach פֶּסַח)** like that one had ever been kept in Israel; none of the kings of Israel had kept a **Passover (kapesach כַּפֶּסַח)** like the one kept by Josiah and the priests and the Levites and all Judah and Israel there present and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 19 That **Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** was kept in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah.

Here we have a more detailed of the earlier account of Melekh Yoshiyahu.

Ezra 6: 19-21

19 The returned exiles celebrated **the Passover (et-hapesach אֶת־הַפֶּסַח)** on the fourteenth day of the first month, 20 for the priests and Levites had purified themselves to a man; they were all pure. They slaughtered **the Passover (hapesach הַפֶּסַח)** [offering] for all the returned exiles, and for their brother priests and for themselves. 21 The children of Israel who had returned from the exile, together with all who joined them in separating themselves from the uncleanness of the nations of the lands to worship Yehovah Elohim of Israel, ate of it.

After the Babylonian Captivity they came back and kept the Pesach.

Yehezkel (Ezekiel) 45:21

21 On the fourteenth day of the first month you shall have **the Passover (hapasach חַפְּסַח)** [sacrifice]; and during a festival of seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten.

22 On that day, the prince shall provide a bull of sin offering on behalf of himself and of the entire population; 23 and during the seven days of the festival, he shall provide daily—for seven days—seven bulls and seven rams, without blemish, for a burnt offering to Yehovah, and one goat daily for a sin offering.

In the future the pesach will also be kept.

Pasach (Pey-Samech-Chet) It is a verb and reference number 6452 which is found on page 820 in the BDB and page 1036 NEHC.

Shemot 12:13, 23, 27

13 And the blood on the houses where you are staying shall be a sign for you: when I see the blood I will **pass (upesach'tiy וַפְּסַחְתִּי)** over you, so that no plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

Here we see that the Yehovah would pass (skip) the house that had the blood on it.

23 For when Yehovah goes through to smite the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and Yehovah will **pass (upasach וַפְּסַח)** over the door and not let the Destroyer enter and smite your home.

Yehovah will keep back the destroyer from entering the door with the blood on it.

27 you shall say, 'It is the **passover sacrifice (zevach pesach)** to Yehovah, because He **passed (pasach פָּסַח)** over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but saved our houses.'"

The pesach is the reminder of the passing (pasach) of the destroyer from taking the first born of the Yisraelim.

Melekhim Aleph (I Kings) 18:21, 26

21 Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you keep **hopping (skipping – pos'chim פֹּסְחִים)** between two opinions? If Yehovah is Elohim, follow Him; and if Baal, follow him!" But the people answered him not a word.

26 They took the bull that was given them; they prepared it, and invoked Baal by name from morning until noon, shouting, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound, and

none who responded; so **they** [performed] a **hopping** (vayapasachu וַיַּפְסְחוּ) [dance] about the altar that had been set up.

Here we have an example of skipping. They are not settling on doing one thing they are going back and forth.

Shemuel Bet (II Samuel) 4:4

4 Jonathan son of Saul had a son whose feet were crippled. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse picked him up and fled; but as she was fleeing in haste, he fell and was **lamed**. (vayipasach וַיִּפְסַח) His name was Mephibosheth.

We also see the verb form used to describe a person as being lamed. Leg(s) are damaged and when walking a person might have a limp that caused them to appear to skip when walking.

Karaite Pesach

Karaites follow the Tanakh alone so we stick the following requirements for Pesach.

1. No lamb is brought because of the altar and priesthood does not exist today.
2. A meal commemorating the night is done.
3. The bitter herbs (Marorim) and Unleavened Bread (Matzot) are eaten.
4. The haggadah is read recounting the events in Egypt leading up to the release of The Israelite.
5. A night of vigil (observance).

You can do creative things for that night keeping in mind the requirements. For instance, Make a bitter herb salad. Raddichio, Endive, and other bitter leaf lettuce. The other parts of the meal are your choice. When my daughter was young we would act out the plagues and someone was Moshe, Aharon and Pharaoh. It was very fun and kept her involved in the night. You could listen to festive music. Watch a movie like the ten commandments or Prince of Egypt. Which will give you some discussions if you asks that the children tell you what things are not part of what is in torah about this evening.

Let look at the rabbinic practices. You might ask why? Well we need to understand where they get the symbols and practices from and whether what they do is Tanakh based. This is an article from Jewish Gates, which is a rabbinic source online.

Rabbinic Pesach Traditions (http://www.jewishgates.com/file.asp?File_ID=510)

Nisan is the first month of the Jewish year marking the advent of spring. The Torah also calls this month Aviv, spring. It is a special month because on the 15th of Nisan Pesach, or Passover, begins.

[Aviv is ripening grain not Spring]

According to Leviticus 23:6, Pesach, or Passover, lasts seven days. In order to make sure that they celebrated the holiday at the correct time, Jews living outside the Land of Israel added an extra day at the beginning of the festival, thereby making Passover eight days. Today Jews living in Israel and most Reform Jews celebrate Passover for seven days. Even though we don't live in the Land of Israel, our calendar is now fixed. We don't rely on the [Sanhedrin](#) to announce the New Moon of Nisan, so rationally there is no reason to add the extra day of Passover, but traditionally Jews living outside the Land of Israel continue to celebrate the festival for eight days. Like [Sukkot](#), Pesach is one of the few times when Reform Jews and traditional Jews have different calendars for holidays.

[He is correct in that this is an observance of 7 days for Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot). Passover (Pesach) is only the first evening. Also, Karaites use a different calendar]

The primary mitzvah associated with Pesach, or Passover, is the prohibition against owning or eating anything containing leaven or yeast during the holiday. Our sages took this commandment one step further and ordained that during Passover there should be no eating of any grain that might have risen (except previously prepared matzah). In Ashkenazic communities that prohibition includes rice and legumes, since both could be used as a fermenting agent. Potatoes however were permitted because they were the primary food staple. In Sephardic communities, rice was permitted for the same reason. There was a [disagreement](#) about this in the Talmud.

The preparations for Passover are, traditionally, very rigorous. We thoroughly clean our houses to remove all vestiges of [Chametz](#), (leaven and grain products).

[Karaites also completely remove leaven from our homes too.]

Many Jews use separate dishes and pans, which are not used during the rest of the year. In the Talmud, all pots which had been used during the year [were broken](#).

All matzah for the holiday has to be specially prepared. To ensure that no person accidentally has leaven or yeast, it became the custom to sell all foods to gentile for a symbolic price of a dollar, thus guaranteeing that we no longer own any leaven.

[No where in Tanakh does it say to sell the chametz. It is normally destroyed.]

The laws concerning Passover were so complex that it became a tradition for the Rabbi to lecture the congregation about all of the Passover details on the Shabbat before Pesach. That Shabbat is called "Shabbat HaGadol, the Great Shabbat." Some scholars associate the name "Shabbat HaGadol" with its ritual importance. Some note that the Haftarah portion for that Shabbat, [Malachi Chapter 3](#), contained the phrase "the great and awesome day of Adonai," thus providing the day with its title.

[The ritual in Exodus (Shemot) 12 is a very simple one. Karaites keep that ritual.]

The sages instituted a [ritual](#) for the night before Passover. Using a candle and a feather (as a broom), the family makes a final search for leaven. Traditionally, a parent has hidden some pieces of bread wrapped in a small bags so that the search is successful. The next morning these packets, along with all leftover chametz are burned. A special prayer is recited in which we announce that all leaven which might still be accidentally in our house should be viewed by God as non-leaven.

[Karaites simply make sure the leaven is removed and children are taught this by their parents]

Passover is the classic example of how we creatively took foods and customs from surrounding peoples and made them special, Jewish symbols. Our primary association with Passover is the Exodus from Egypt. We had been slaves, cruelly oppressed by the Egyptians. God, striking Egypt with the Ten Plagues, forced Pharaoh to release us. After letting us go, Pharaoh changed his mind again and pursued us. At the Sea of Reeds, Pharaoh and his army were drowned while we were saved. We were commanded to relive this redemption every year, through the festival of Passover.

[Nothing in Tanakh tell us that these where the practices of the Cananites. If anything it warns us not to follow their practices. Devarim 12:29-31)

Originally, Passover was an agricultural holiday celebrating the BARLEY HARVEST AND THE LAMBING SEASON. The ancient Canaanites had a festival at this season which included eating flat barley cakes, a year-old lamb, and special, sharp herbs. They offered a year-old lamb as a sign of trust that the gods would provide more lambs during the next year. By offering a year-old lamb, they hoped to get more lambs back. We took those same agricultural foods and imbued them with special historical meaning for our people. The original foods became particularistic symbols of our redemption from slavery.

The Torah tells us that the flat barley cakes, now called matzah, remind us of the bread our Hebrew ancestors baked hurriedly when they left Egypt. We are told that the dough, not given time to rise, baked flat. In all likelihood the Torah took a food from the Canaanites and made it into a reminder of our own history.

[Yes, we are told the did not have time to prepare the dough and so they took it unleavened with them.]

During the Seder, three pieces of matzah are used. We use two pieces as a reminder of the [double portion](#) of [manna](#) we received in the desert on Shabbat and holidays. The third piece is used to identify the "bread of affliction" and to serve as the afikoman. A tradition identifies the three pieces of matzah with Aaron, Miriam, and Moses.

[no where in the Tanakh does this practice occur.]

Another tradition identifies them with the three classes of Jews: Kohen (the priests), Levi (the Levites) and Israel (the rest of us).

In all likelihood, our tradition took the Canaanite custom of offering a lamb at this season and made it Jewish. The Torah tells us that prior to the last plague, God commanded all the Hebrews to sacrifice and eat lamb. We were then commanded to dip hyssop (a sweet-smelling, leafy green plant) into the blood and splash it on the doors of our dwellings, so that the Divine would pass over our houses. When the first born of Egypt were struck dead, the blood on the doors of the Hebrews saved us.

We are told that the lamb which we ritually ate each year served as a reminder of the blood we put on our doors in Egypt so God would pass over our homes. No mention is made of the lambing season or the earlier Canaanite festival. The agricultural food became historical symbols.

[There is no connection made to the Canaanites in Tanakh of a festival like this.]

When the [Temple was destroyed](#) in 70 C.E. our rabbis ordered that we could not eat roast lamb on Pesach. We've kept the lamb bone as a symbol of the first lamb eaten in Egypt and of the traditional seder meal eaten in the Temple precincts. Some traditional Jews are so cautious about the prohibition against eating lamb on Pesach that they place roasted chicken neck on the seder plate instead of a lamb shank. When the Temple still existed, there used to be an additional sacrifice on Pesach, called the chagigah. Since we no longer have sacrificial worship, we roast an egg as a reminder of that offering.

[Note only one sacrifice was command in Tanakh the Pesach Zebach]

The sharp herbs called maror remind us how bitter our lives were in Egypt. We usually use horseradish as maror.

The Torah commands us to take the three major symbolic foods, lamb, matzah, and maror, and eat them together as physical reminders of our Exodus from Egypt. We thus took the three foods that were consumed by the Canaanites in their yearly spring festival and made them Jewish.

We are commanded to tell our children the story of our escape from Egypt every year and to relive that redemptive experience. Our sages provided us with the method for re-living redemption: a ritual meal, a seder.

The Hebrew word seder means order. It is not a service; it is a meal with a purpose. Our sages organized the [seder](#) into [fourteen specific steps](#), thus creating an ordered meal. On the seder table is a plate containing the foods that symbolize our slavery and our redemption and relive that experience. The first four ritual symbols have already been explained: matzah, a roasted lamb bone, maror, a roasted egg. There are a number of

other symbols on the seder plate: [charoset](#), salt water, and parsley.

Our sages created the seder in the style of a Roman feast, and the three additional seder plate foods originated with Roman customs. At Roman meals everyone lounged on couches while they ate: the sages ordered that on Pesach everyone should lounge. At Roman feasts guests were given greens dipped in a sharp dip, usually vinegar, sometimes salt water. Our sages took that appetizer and made it Jewish. The greens (usually parsley) became a reminder of spring, the season of redemption. The salt water became a symbol of the tears we shed in Egypt.

At feasts, Roman guests were frequently offered a sweet dip made of either ground dates and wine or apples, nuts and honey all mixed with vinegar and flour. This was eaten before the main meal. Our sages used the same food, charoset, and made it into a historical symbol. According to the Torah, the Hebrew slaves built garrison cities. Charoset reminds us of the mortar they used. The charoset contains wine, and traditionally we dip maror, bitter herbs, and chazeret, a bitter lettuce, into this mixture. It has been suggested that this dipping of greens into red wine might serve as a subtle reminder of splashing red blood on our doorposts with the green hyssop.

Roman feasts tended to end with orgiastic entertainment, called the epicomios. Our sages were against this immoral behavior, so they ordered that the [afikoman](#), the final entertainment, be a piece of matzah. The ritual must end with that piece.

The sages wanted to show that we were free on Pesach, so they insisted that every Jew drink four glasses of wine. In Exodus 6, God promised that the Divine will do five things for the Hebrews. Four of them are: I will bring you out, I will save you, I will redeem you, I will take you to be My people. Our sages ordained one glass of wine for each of these fulfilled promises. Thus wine, instead of being the Roman way of getting drunk, became a symbol of God's promises and redemption.

[No where will you see wine commanded to be drunk at the festival. For some Karaites wine or other fermented drinks should not be kept or consumed.]

It is probably not coincidental that the number four appears frequently in the seder; we drink four glasses of wine, we ask [four questions](#), and there are descriptions of [four kinds of children](#).

Since Pesach celebrated our redemption from Egypt, our sages viewed the Pesach season as a good time for the final redemption, the arrival of the Messiah. According to our tradition, the Messiah would be announced by Elijah the prophet. Therefore Jews wait eagerly for Elijah announce the Final Redemption. His arrival would mean that we could, finally, celebrate the fulfilled fifth promise made by God in Exodus 6: I will bring you into the land. We therefore leave a full glass of wine on the table hoping to be able to drink it. We call it Elijah's Cup. At times when Jews believed that the Messiah had arrived or was about to arrive, they would drink this fifth glass, Elijah's cup.

The seder ends with the words, "Next year in Jerusalem." Our sages emphasized that this does not refer to the physical Jerusalem in Israel; rather it refers to the Final Jerusalem created by the coming of the Messiah. Therefore, even Jews living in Israel say either, "Next year in Jerusalem," or "Next year in the rebuilt Jerusalem."

Since the major Pesach commandment is to tell our children about our Exodus from Egypt, the book used at the seder, the ritual meal, is called the Telling, the Haggadah.

During the Middle Ages the Rabbis began writing down the Telling. This provided an opportunity for Jewish artists to use their creativity and create beautiful Haggadot (plural of Haggadah). The written Haggadah also ensured that the order of the seder became somewhat standardized. Although many traditional Jews concentrate on simply reading the Haggadah as it is written, it was intended to serve as a springboard for discussions, lessons, and additional learning among the guests. We encourage people to ask questions and dig further into the text, and its meanings for us today. We are told in the Haggadah that it is praiseworthy to lengthen the Telling until all present understand the complete meaning of Pesach and redemption.

[We can see a lot of added steps and practices to what was commanded in the Torah on this feast.]

Conclusion:

The symbols of the Rabbinic pesach are not found in Tanakh so for Karaite we do not do them. Instead we search what the miqra shows us and follow that.