

Origins

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Source: <https://velveteenrabbi.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/vrhaggadah6.pdf>

Origins Once we had two spring festivals: Pesach, a lambing holiday, and Chag Hamatzah, a holiday celebrating the year's first grain. In the second half of the thirteenth century B.C.E., when tradition tells us our people left Egypt, the two celebrations became one. The name Pesach comes from pasach, to "pass over" (as God "passed over" the houses of the Hebrews), and matzah came to mean the unleavened bread which represents the haste of our departure. Passover has four aspects. It is seasonal, rejoicing in spring. It is historical, marking the "birthday" of the Jewish people. It is a festival of freedom. And it is a ritual of preparation for an ultimate redemption, of which our first redemption was a hint and a promise.