

Order of Seder

Contributed by [Emilia Diamant](#)

Source: Jewish Labor Committee Seder

The word Seder means “order.” While order can be oppressive when it suppresses creativity and choice, order can also be a liberating source of stability.

In the first chapter of Genesis, the world is fashioned out of chaos, each stage of Creation providing the foundation for the next. First light bursts out from darkness; then the waters appear, followed by trees and plants; then animals, from small to large; and finally, human beings. The organizing principle of Creation is itself a promise of the goodness inherent in the world. Rather than eliminating chaos, the natural order contains it, channeling its creativity and vitality to support all life.

Likewise, democratic societies are built on order. The three branches of government, each playing a distinct role, create a delicately balanced structure. Were one branch to overpower the others, the resulting imbalance could return our society to chaos. From a Jewish perspective, this system underscores the belief that no human is above the law, and that the social contract protects humanity from our worst instincts.

The order of the Seder reflects the innate human desire to create order out of chaos. Each step in the Seder has its place. We begin with a welcome, then explain the purpose of the gathering, enjoy a sacred communal meal, and close with thanksgiving and hope for the future. Within this fixed order, there is still room to tell stories, to discuss, and most important, to ask questions. Chaos is not eradicated but contained, its energy channeled into creative rituals and engagement.