



PASSOVER IS COMING!

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The house is very clean...matzah ball soup is bubbling on the stove...and a seder plate is on the table! Can you guess what's coming? By the end of the book, you'll know!

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Spring is a perfect time to celebrate Passover, which is all about liberation and a fresh start. The holiday commemorates the Biblical story of Exodus, when ancient Israelites were slaves in Egypt. “Let my people go,” Moses said to Pharaoh – and when Pharaoh refused, God unleashed ten plagues. At last the Israelites were released – but Pharaoh changed his mind as they fled, and sent soldiers to stop them. Moses raised his staff and the Red Sea parted, allowing the Israelites to escape to the other side. Freedom!

Jews mark Passover with a weeklong observance that includes at least one seder, a ritual meal. An important role for children at the seder is to ask the traditional Four Questions about Passover’s rituals and foods. *Matzah*, a special unleavened bread, reminds us that the Israelites left Egypt too quickly to let their bread rise. Families clean their houses from top to bottom to get rid of every bit of leavening. A piece of matzah is also used for the *afikomen* (literally, “dessert”). The afikomen, hidden during the seder, must be found before dessert! Other ritual foods symbolize spring – green vegetables represent new growth, for example, and an egg represents fertility. Visit pjlibrary.org for more information on the holiday – there are countless customs, traditions, and activities your family may enjoy. Happy Passover!