

Passover, Eating Lamb

Should we eat lamb as Messianics during Passover? Is it true that the Jews do not eat lamb during Passover?

It is notable that there are divergent practices among the Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jewish communities as it relates to Passover and whether or not lamb is allowed to be eaten. Ashkenazic Jewry (Northern, Central, and Eastern European) does not eat lamb at Passover. This is based on the Biblical command, “You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which the LORD your God is giving you; but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 16:5-6, NASU). Because this is a clear reference to the Temple in Jerusalem, and since the Temple has been destroyed, Ashkenazic Jewish *halachah* prohibits the consumption of lamb at Passover, and instead allows for poultry. Sephardic Jewry (Spain, North Africa, and Arab lands) does permit lamb to be eaten at Passover, as a memorial to the Exodus.

Messianic Jewish practice is often divided as to whether or not someone was raised Ashkenazic or Sephardic. Some Messianic *seders* have lamb, and others frequently serve chicken. At Messianic congregations that have both Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews, sometimes both lamb and chicken are served at the community’s *seder* meal. A viable *halachah* for Messianic non-Jews is frequently debated, and we would encourage you to find the tradition that you are the most comfortable with.