



Charoset

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1. Mishnah, Pesachim, 10:3

[Then] they set before him unleavened bread, lettuce, and *charoset*, although *charoset* is not compulsory. Rabbi Eliezer bar Tzadok says: It is compulsory.

2. Babylonian Talmud, Pesachim 116a

The mishna states that they bring the *charoset* to the leader of the seder, **although** eating *charoset* is **not a mitzvah**. The Gemara asks: **And if it is not a mitzvah, for what** reason does one **bring it** to the seder? **Rabbi Ami said:** It is brought **due to** the **poison** in the bitter herbs, which is neutralized by the *charoset*...The mishna states: **Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Tzadok, says** that eating *charoset* is **a mitzvah**. The Gemara asks: **What** is the nature of this **mitzvah**? The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Levi says:** It is in **remembrance of the apple**, as apple is one of the ingredients in *charoset*. The verse states: "Who is this who comes up from the wilderness, reclining upon her beloved? Under the apple tree I awakened you" (Song of Songs 8:5), which is an allusion to the Jewish people leaving Egypt. **And Rabbi Yoḥanan says:** The *charoset* is in **remembrance of the mortar** used by the Jews for their slave labor in Egypt.

3. Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of *Chametz* and *Matzah*, 8:8

Charoset is a rabbinic mitzvah in memory of the mortar which they worked with in Egypt. How is it made? We take dates, or dried figs, or raisins, or something similar, and mash them. Then add vinegar, and spice it with spices similar to the way straw is added to mortar. We place it on the table on the nights of Pesach.

4. Shemot, 5

4 The king of Egypt said to them, why do Moshe and Aharon distract the people from its work? Go to your labors! **5** Pharaoh said the people of the land are many, and you would have them rest from their labors! **6** That very day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and its foremen saying, **7** You will no longer provide straw to the people to produce bricks like as heretofore; they will go and gather straw for themselves. **8** And the quota of bricks which they have been making heretofore you will place upon them, do not reduce it. Because they are idle and therefore they cry saying, 'let us go and sacrifice to our G-d.' **9** The work will become heavier for the people, and they will do it, and they will not speak of empty things.

5. Song of Songs, 2:8-9

8The voice of my beloved, behold, it comes! Leaping over mountains, Bounding over hills. **9**My beloved is like a gazelle or like a young stag. There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the window, peering through the lattice.

(See further: *From There You Shall Seek*, Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, Chapter 1)

6. Shemot, 2

23 It happened, over the course of those many days, that the king of Egypt died and the children of Israel groaned from their work and cried out, and the cries caused by their work arose to G-d. **24** And G-d heard their cries, and G-d remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. **25** And G-d saw the children of Israel, and G-d knew.