

Seder Meal

Celebrating a Passover with Jesus

The Seder (say'-dur) is a series of spoken words and practices that are followed carefully both before and after the festive Passover meal itself. The "Leader" is usually the Father of the family, but please choose the person who you feel would best lead your Seder meal.

To have your family Seder meal, you will need the following items:

1) NON-FOOD ITEMS: candle and lighter, napkin or paper towel

2) FOOD ITEMS: (feel free to add other items to the actual meal portion! This list only covers the ceremonial elements.)

- - 3 pieces of unleavened bread (The traditional bread is Matzo, but you could also use naan bread or tortillas)
- - Red juice/wine
- - Bowl of salt water
- - Green vegetable: lettuce, parsley, or celery (some even use a potato!)
- - Bitter herbs (horseradish)
- - Lamb bone (or a picture of a lamb bone)
- - Charoset/Haroset (Traditionally an apple/walnut mixture.
- - Roasted egg (eaten at modern Seder meals instead of actual lamb meat but not actually referenced in the Haggadah.)

OPTIONAL PRINTABLES:

- "My Passover Plate" coloring page
- Question cards for the kids

INSTRUCTIONS:

Follow the prompts for when to taste, eat, and drink each item.

FIRST: A woman lights the candle.

LEADER:

Jewish people have celebrated the special Passover meal for thousands of years. When they celebrate this meal they remember that God delivered them from slavery in Egypt and that death passed over their homes because they followed God's commands by sacrificing a perfect lamb.

On the night before He died, Jesus and his disciples celebrated the Jewish Passover at the home of a friend. It was no accident that Jesus chose the Passover meal for what we now celebrate as the Lord's Supper. 1 Corinthians 5:7 says "Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us." (NLT) Just as freedom from physical slavery was celebrated, we celebrate freedom from slavery to sin. Today we will be able to see, hear, and taste the great love God has for us.

FIRST CUP OF WINE/JUICE:

LEADER: (Pour juice into everyone's cups.)

We pour the juice from one pitcher to show that we are all one in God.

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine.

(Drink from your cup, then refill the cups for using later.)

BREAKING OF THE MATZO:

YOUNGEST CHILD:

1. Why do we eat only bread without yeast on this night?

LEADER:

On this day we eat bread without yeast, unleavened bread, to remind us of the time the Jews were in slavery in Egypt. On the night when they left, they had no time to put yeast in their bread and let it rise. They took the raw dough on their journey and baked it in the hot desert sun into hard crackers called matzo. (moh-tzoh)

(Leader, take the middle piece of matzo and break it in half.)

Just as this piece of bread is broken, God's Son, Jesus' body and skin was also broken. He was whipped and beaten, and a crown made from a thorn bush was pushed onto his head. Then the

soldiers took Him and nailed Him to a cross, putting holes in his hands and feet. We will save half of our bread for after the meal. We wrap it up in a cloth just as Jesus' body was wrapped for burial. This piece of matzo is called the afikomen (ah-fi-KO-men). (wrap half of the matzo in the napkin.)

Kids, please close your eyes. (*ADULTS: hide the matzo somewhere!*)

Just like I've hidden the broken matzo, Jesus' body was put in a tomb, hidden for a little while. But just as the special piece of matzo will come out again at the end of our celebration, Jesus came alive again! Now we bless this bread with no yeast in it, which is a sign of Jesus, who has no sin in Him.

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
Who gives us bread.

(Pass the matzo around the table and each person should break off a piece - don't eat it yet.)

REMEMBERING THE FIRST PASSOVER

YOUNGEST CHILD:

2. Why do we eat bitter herbs on this night?

LEADER:

On all other days we eat all kinds of vegetables, but on Passover we eat bitter ones, to remember how bitter life was for the Israelites in Egypt when they were slaves for the cruel Pharaoh. (Hold up the horseradish) Scoop some horseradish onto a piece of matzo and taste the bitterness of it. This is a reminder of how bitter the slavery of the Israelites was. Remember that without Jesus, we are also slaves, but not to Pharaoh. We are slaves to sin and the pain and death that sin causes.

(give everyone time to taste the bitterness and let this sink in before praying. Don't eat all the matzo yet!)

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
Who is good and loves us.

YOUNGEST CHILD:

3. Why do we dip herbs twice on this night?

LEADER:

On all other days we do not usually dip one food into another, but today we dip them twice. On this day we dip the parsley in salt water and the bitter herbs in Haroset. We dip bitter herbs into Haroset to remind us how hard the Jewish slaves worked in Egypt. The Haroset looks like the clay that the slaves used to make bricks for Pharaoh's buildings. We also dip parsley into salt water. The parsley reminds us of the pieces of plant called "hyssop" that the people used to put the blood of the lamb on their door frames. The salt water reminds us of the tears of the Jewish slaves and of the trip through the Red Sea, when God saved the Israelites by separating the sea and letting them pass through.

(Take a piece of matzo and dip into horseradish and then into the haroset two times and eat. Notice the bitter and sweet. Then take the parsley and dip it two times into the salt water and eat. Notice the saltiness.)

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
Who even in the most bitter things in life brings the sweetness of hope.

YOUNGEST CHILD:

4. Why do we eat our meal reclining on this night?

LEADER:

On all other days we eat sitting up straight, but today we can lean back. The first Passover was celebrated by people who were slaves, so they couldn't relax. The Israelites were told to eat the Passover quickly, with their coats ready, their walking sticks in their hands, their sandals on their feet, ready to leave the bondage of Egypt. Today we all may relax and freely enjoy the Passover meal.

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
Who gives us freedom.

LEADER:

The story of Passover is a story of miracles, a story of redemption, a story of the mighty power of God to overcome evil.

Moses went to Pharaoh with God's command, "Let my people go!" But God warned Moses that Pharaoh wouldn't easily agree. The Lord sent plagues, one by one, but with each plague, Pharaoh refused and made his heart harder against God.

(As you recite the plagues, take a drop of juice/wine from your cup for each plague as a sign that while the Jews were redeemed through the plagues, there were those who suffered.)

LEADER:

Blood
Frogs
Lice
Flies
Cattle Disease
Boils
Hail
Locusts
Darkness
Death of the firstborn

(Drink the second cup of juice/wine and refill.)

With the tenth and most awful plague, God broke through Pharaoh's hard heart.

(Hold up the lamb bone)

This bone is from a lamb – like the one whose blood on the Israelite houses was a sign to God. God told Moses, "The lamb must be perfect", so it wasn't allowed to have any spots or defects. When it was killed, the Israelites marked their door frames with some of its blood, using the leaves from the hyssop plant. They were to eat the meat that night, along with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. God told them to "eat quickly, with your coat ready, your shoes on your feet, and your walking stick in your hand. It is the Lord's Passover." The blood over the door showed that the Israelites were obedient to God, and He promised that when he saw the blood, he would pass over that house and the firstborn children in each house would stay alive. We remember that it is the blood of the lamb that saved the Israelites.

Since Jesus has become our perfect Passover Lamb, no more lambs need to be sacrificed and lamb meat is no longer eaten at Passover. This bone reminds us of the lamb sacrificed for the Israelites and of the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. On the night that Jesus was betrayed and crucified, Jesus took the cup of red wine at the Passover table and told his friends to drink it in remembrance of Him. He said that the wine (or red juice) is a symbol of how he gave his lifeblood when he was crucified to save us from our slavery to sin. Let's drink together to remember Jesus, our Passover lamb.

(Drink your third cup of juice/wine)

LEADER:

It is time to share the hidden matzo. Who can find it and bring it back here? Remember to look for the one with OUR napkin colour.

(children search for the hidden matzo and give it to LEADER)

Remember, this piece of matzo, made without yeast, is a symbol of the promised Messiah,

Jesus. It was hidden and now it is back. Jesus was buried and rose from the dead. This special matzo is the last food eaten at Passover so that its taste stays with us. When Jesus ate the Passover with his disciples, he broke the matzo and gave thanks to the Lord saying:

ALL:

Blessed are You,
Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
who brings forth bread from the earth.

LEADER: *(breaking the matzo into pieces)*

It was here that Jesus added the words: "This is my Body given for you, do this in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19) Jesus changed the meaning of matzo forever, and gives us His body every time we take the Lord's Supper. The matzo, just like at the Lord's Supper, is broken into small pieces and everyone must eat their own piece, just as each of us must accept Jesus' grace for ourselves. No other person can do it for us. Think about Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose body was given for us in the once and forever Passover sacrifice. Eat this little piece of matzo now, and let its taste stay with you.

(All eat)

Now let's refill our cups and give thanks to our great God. *(Pour cup #4!)*

LEADER: *(the rest of the group repeats after each verse)*

Give thanks to the Lord, God of all creation. (Repeat)

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. (Repeat)

Give thanks to the Lord, who gives us hope. (Repeat)

Give thanks to the Lord, who frees us from slavery to sin and death. (Repeat)

LEADER:

Lift your cups and bless the Lord!

(Drink cup #4)

LEADER:

Our Passover celebration is completed, just as God's plan for our salvation through Jesus is complete. Now it's up to us to go and live His Word. Let's end with the traditional wish that next year we will celebrate face to face with Jesus!

ALL: Next year in Jerusalem!

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## **FURTHER DISCUSSION FOR FAMILIES**

Discussion:

- What did you think about this meal?
- What seemed most special to you?
- What was your favorite food item? What was it a symbol of in the Passover meal?
- What do the Bread and Cup symbolize in the Seder? In the Last Supper? How are they the same? Different?
- Why was the lamb important at the very first Passover?
- In what ways is Jesus like the lamb killed at Passover?
- What questions do you have?