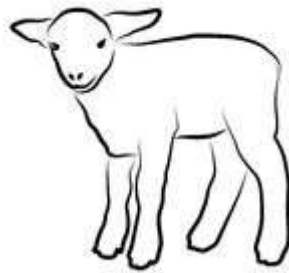


Passover Meal

*A simple Liturgy,
explanation and preparation notes*

For use by families, churches or groups



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Preparation for the Passover Meal

- 1) Choose the date and time of your meal so that it comes shortly before Resurrection Sunday. The scriptural time for the meal is on the evening of the 14th of Nisan on the Biblical Calendar. To find this date go to: www.intimewithgod.com and download the calendar for this year. The Passover lasts between 1 and 2 hours so allow time.
- 2) Invite your guests – a number that can be seated comfortably around the table/s, including children, who are needed as part of the liturgy.
- 3) Decide who will be the ‘father’ and ‘mother’ in the liturgy. If there is a Jewish woman present, she can be invited to be ‘mother’, or the wife of the leader can be ‘mother’.
- 4) Decide. Will you cook a meal or put a ‘bring and share’ buffet table at the side of the room? Traditionally chicken with matzo ball soup is eaten. For the main course - a special chicken and rice dish with salad, or lamb stew and vegetables - something you can have all ready beforehand and just keep warm, ready for serving when the time comes. Dessert should also be quick to serve such as – fruit salad, mousse, or coconut cookies. The meal should not have leavened bread, wheat flour, noodles, pasta, pastry or cake since they go against the spirit of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- 5) You will need:
 - White table cloths – paper or sheet.
 - A little flower arrangement on each table (optional).
 - Cutlery, plate, and a tumbler for the meal for each person at their place setting, serviettes, water to drink.
 - A small plate and a sherry size glass for wine/grape juice per person for the symbolic foods for each person at their place setting.
 - Two white candles in candlesticks, and a box of matches at ‘mother’s’ place setting.
 - A large box of Matzo Crackers per 10 people on a plate. Open the packet at the last minute to keep crunchy. If you have no success in finding

them in the supermarket, Jacobs Crackers will suffice, but try to get Matzo Crackers. They must be unleavened.

- Two large white folded napkins as a matzo cover at ‘father’s’ place setting, or a proper matzo pocket (which has three pockets for Matzos).
- A large plate per 10 people, to put the symbolic foods on.
- Abundant red grape juice and wine.
- A small bowl of salted water per 10 people.
- A large bowl and a jug of water with a towel near the table per 10 people.
- A little prize for just one child – a special pen or a notebook for instance.
- Horse-radish sauce.
- Big bunch of parsley, at least 1 sprig per person.
- Firm lettuce leaves to scoop horse-radish, at least 1 piece per person.
- Haroset – Make this sticky paste by mixing grated apples, honey, cinnamon, chopped walnuts and a spoon of grape juice or wine to taste.
- A lamb shank bone per 10 people, roasted, meat removed, clean and dry.
- A hard-boiled egg, scorched with soot from the flame of a match or candle.
- A copy of the Passover Liturgy Booklet for each person to use and keep.
- A Bible, Microphone (optional), Guitar (optional).

How to Lay the Table

- 1) Select a large flat round plate per ten people and place in reach of ten place settings.
- 2) Arrange the following items on each plate so that they are evenly spaced.
 - 1) A roasted lamb shank bone
 - 2) A cluster of parsley sprigs
 - 3) A pile of hard lettuce pieces
 - 4) A small bowl of horse-radish sauce
 - 5) A small bowl of haroset
 - 6) A hard-boiled egg with soot from a match on it

- 3) Place the pile of large Matzo Crackers next to the ‘Seder’ Plate of Symbolic Foods. Place the Matzo Pocket and Napkin, or Two large Napkins at the place of the leader – ‘Father’.
- 4) Place the bowls of salty water on the table, if possible near the parsley.
- 5) Put the large bowl, jug of water and towel in a separate, accessible place, not on the table.

Appendix

Song – Dayenu (It would have been sufficient for us)

For if he had brought us forth from Egypt, and had not inflicted justice upon the Egyptians,
Dayenu

If he had afflicted justice upon them, and had not executed judgment against their gods,
Dayenu

If he had executed (judgment) against their gods, and had not slain their first born, Dayenu

If he had slain their first-born, and not bestowed their wealth on us, Dayenu

If he had given us their wealth, and had not divided the sea for us, Dayenu

If he had divided the sea for us, and had not caused us to pass over on dry land, Dayenu

If he had caused us to pass over on dry land and had not plunged our oppressors into the sea,
Dayenu

If he plunged our oppressors into the sea, and had not supplied us with everything in the
wilderness for forty years, Dayenu

If he had supplied us with everything in the wilderness for forty years, and had not fed us
with manna, Dayenu

If he had fed us with manna, and had not given us the Sabbath, Dayenu

If he had given us the Sabbath, and had not led us to Mount Sinai, Dayenu

If he had led us to Mount Sinai, and had not given us His law, Dayenu

If he had given us His law, and not led us into the land of Israel, Dayenu

If he had led us into the land of Israel and had not built the temple, Dayenu

The Passover Meal and Liturgy

Male Leader – ‘Father’: This evening we come together to celebrate the first of the seven Biblical Feasts. The Feasts of the Bible are called in Hebrew, ‘*Moedim*’, which means ‘Appointed Times’, (Leviticus 23). The ‘*Moedim*’ are specific times appointed by the Lord for observance, on the Lunar Calendar of the Bible. ‘*Pesach*’ - Passover, the first of the ‘*Moedim*’, dates back over three thousand, two hundred and fifty years, to when the nation of Israel was miraculously released from slavery in Egypt. The Israelites escaped, crossed the Red Sea and journeyed through the Wilderness towards the Promised Land.

The Lord instructed the Jews to keep the Passover Feast every year on the evening of the 14th Day of the 1st month of the Biblical Year. The first month of the Biblical Calendar is called Nisan. The Jews were instructed to keep the Feast of Passover throughout their generations, so as to teach their children the story of the Exodus and continually remind themselves of its truths, (Exodus 12). And so on the evening of 14th of Nisan, Jews around the world eat the Passover Meal with their families, in their homes or Synagogues.

We are told in Matthew 26:17-30, that the Last Supper of Jesus was in fact the Passover Meal. Significantly the betrayal, trial and crucifixion of Jesus took place at the very time of the Jewish Passover. On that night, Jesus took the symbolic foods of the Passover meal and added to them new significance. He showed by them that He had come to fulfil the symbolism of the Passover meal, and He did so by dying on the cross at the ‘Appointed Time’ of the Feast.

As Christians, whether Jew or Gentile, we can join in the Passover Meal because, although we may not be Jewish, Jesus whom we follow is Jewish, and the fulfilment of the Passover is relevant to all of us. The liturgy we use is called a ‘Seder’ which means ‘Order’ in Hebrew. It is an ‘Order of Service’ which guides us through the symbolic foods, prayers, Bible Readings and songs. This Passover Seder is written to reflect the traditional Jewish Seder, but also incorporate our understanding of its fulfilment in Jesus.

Lighting of the Candles

Male Leader – ‘Father’: It is traditional for the ‘mother’ to light the candles at the opening of the Passover Seder.

If there is a Jewish woman present, she can be invited to light the candles and say the blessing:

Woman – ‘Mother’: “Blessed are you, Almighty God, our Heavenly Father. We thank you for your presence with us, and we invite you, Jesus, Light of the World, to fill our hearts with your light, love, and revelation, through the power of your Holy Spirit.” Amen

The First Cup – *Kadesh* - The Cup of Blessing

All fill your little glass with either wine or red grape juice, but don’t drink it yet.

Father: At the Jewish Passover, four ‘cups’ are drunk. The first is the ‘Cup of Blessing’.

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of the universe. We thank you for sustaining us and bringing us alive to this Passover Feast, and for all the symbolism it contains. Thank you for preserving the Jewish nation alive, for delivering the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt and for preserving your covenant people to this day.” Amen

Reader 1: *Read Luke 22:14-18*

All drink the first cup.

***Urchatz* - The Washing of Hands**

The host or hostess comes and pours water over the ‘fathers’ hands’ into the bowl, and dries them with a towel.

***Karpas* - The Dipping of Parsley**

Father: At the first Passover, in Egypt, the children of Israel dipped a sprig of hyssop in the blood of a lamb, and painted the blood on the doorposts of their houses. When the angel saw the blood, he passed over the house and the people inside were kept safe from the plague of death. For us, the parsley dipped in salt water reminds us of the hyssop used by the Israelites to paint the blood on the doorposts. The salt water reminds us of the salty tears of the children of Israel who suffered cruel slavery in Egypt. It also reminds us of our own tears of repentance from sin.

All: “Heavenly Father, we repent of our sins, and put our faith and trust in the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, to set us free from slavery to sin.” Amen

Everyone takes a sprig of parsley, dips it in the salt water and eats it.

Reader 2: *Read Exodus 6:6-7*

Yachatz - Breaking of the Middle Matzo

The father picks up 3 pieces of unleavened bread (Matzot) and holds them together in one hand.

Father: These three Matzot represent the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The father takes the middle Matzo and breaks it into two. Half of it he wraps in a napkin. This is called the Afikomen.

The other half he places in the central pouch of a Matzo pocket or the central fold of another folded napkin. He places the two complete pieces of Matzo either side of the broken piece in the Matzo pocket or folded napkin.

Hiding the Middle Matzo

Father: The broken Matzo is the Afikomen. It is kept hidden from sight.

The father instructs the children to keep their eyes firmly closed while he hides it somewhere in the room out of sight.

Ma Nishtana? - Why is this night different? - The Story of the Passover

All fill your glasses for the second time, but do not drink yet.

Father: Now is the time to teach the children the story of the Exodus.

Youngest Child: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread; why on this night do we

eat only unleavened bread? On all other nights we may eat any kind of herbs. Why on this night are we given bitter herbs? On all other nights we never think of dipping herbs in salt water, but why on this night do we dip parsley in salt water and why are we going to eat bitter herbs which will make our eyes water? On all other nights we eat and drink either sitting or leaning, but on this night, why will we be told to lean?

All: Why? To remember that the children of Israel were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt and they suffered cruel bondage and labour. If the Lord had not brought them out, the children of Israel would still be in bondage and they would never have reached the Promised Land.

Father: We eat unleavened bread on this night because the children of Israel were forced on this night to flee Egypt in great haste and they did not have time to let their bread rise. Yeast in bread makes it puff up. This is a picture of sin in our hearts which puffs us up with ourselves, and our own pride. Jesus had no sin. He is like the unleavened bread. The Apostle Paul wrote, ‘Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.’ (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

We eat bitter herbs on this night to remember that the lives of the Israelites were very bitter while they were slaves in Egypt. We eat herbs dipped in salt water to remember all the tears shed by the Jews, and we eat bitter herbs that make our eyes water to remember our own tears. Knowing Jesus will turn our tears of sadness to tears of joy.

We will recline at table because long ago that was the sign of a free man. Slaves were not permitted to lean at table. On this night we remember that the Jews were set free from slavery in Egypt and that Jesus has set us free from the hard work of trying to overcome our sins in our own strength. At the Last Supper, Jesus and the disciples would not have sat on chairs. They would have reclined around a low table, leaning on an elbow. The disciple, John, was next to Jesus. He leaned upon Jesus. (John 13:23) We lean, to remember that we

are to lean on Jesus, knowing that He loves us and He is our strength and helps us to do what is right, and He clothes us in His righteousness.

Reader 3: *Read Exodus 12:1-14*

Father: Pharaoh kept the children of Israel in slavery. His heart became hardened as he refused to submit to God and set the Israelites free. We harden our hearts against God's commandments when we disobey Him and we suffer the consequences of our disobedience. Sometimes God has to chasten us like a loving father, to turn us back to Him, to walk in obedience to Him. God had to send His judgments on Egypt for following false gods and because Pharaoh would not set Israel free. We remember with reverent fear and respect for God, the severe consequences of turning away from God and hardening the heart, especially against God's covenant people, Israel.

Drops of wine for the Plagues of Egypt

Read together the plagues and with each plague, dip your finger into your glass and put a drop of wine or grape juice on the rim of your plate.

All: Blood
Frogs
Vermin
Flies
Pestilence
Boils
Hail
Locusts
Darkness
Slaying the First-born

A Song

*At this point Psalms 113 and 114 would be read or sung.
We will sing the chorus from Psalm 113 'From the Rising of the Sun'*

All sing: From the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same
The Lord's name, is to be praised (x2)
Praise ye the Lord, Praise him all ye servants of the Lord,
Praise the name of the Lord!
Blessed be the name of the Lord
From this time forth, and forevermore

If anyone wants to bring another worship song they can. Traditionally the Hebrew song Dayenu is sung at this point expressing joy at God's deliverance. The words can be found on Page 4 of this Seder.

The Second Cup – The Cup of Deliverance

Lean on your left elbow and take up the glass in your right hand

Father: “Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine, we thank you for setting us free.” Amen

All drink the second cup

Rachatza - The Washing of Hands

Reader 4: *Read John 13:3-17*

Father: “Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has commanded us to follow your example of washing.” Amen

Two people wash and dry everyone's hands using a jug, bowl and towel.

Motzee - The Blessing of the Unleavened Bread

Father: The unleavened bread reminds us of the sinless body of Jesus, given for us. The bread has rows of piercings which remind us of the piercing of Jesus upon the cross. The brown marks remind us of the bruising of His body. 1 Peter 2:24 tells us that Jesus “Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed.”

The Father takes the broken Matzo from the central pouch of the Matzo Pocket or folded napkin. He holds it aloft and says;

Father: “Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us through your Word and commanded the Passover to be eaten with unleavened bread. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.” Amen

The Father breaks off a small piece of the Matzo he is holding and eats it. He places the Matzo back in the pocket.

Everyone takes a new Matzo for themselves from the plate and breaks off a piece and eats it.

Maror and Hazeret- Bitter Herbs and Horse Radish

The ‘father’ dips a piece of lettuce in the horse-radish sauce. He holds it aloft and says;

Father: The Jewish people were commanded by God to eat the unleavened bread with bitter herbs. (Numbers 9:11) We remember the bitterness of the Jews and we remember the bitterness of the suffering of Jesus.

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us through your Word, and given us bitter herbs to eat.” Amen

All dip a piece of lettuce into the horse-radish sauce and eat it.

Haroset

The sweet Haroset dip was invented by the Rabbis. Everyone makes a little Matzo sandwich stuck together with Haroset. This represents the bricks and mortar that the children of Israel made when they were slaves in Egypt.

Everyone can eat a mixture of Matzo, Haroset and Bitter Herbs from the table.

Zeroa - The Shank Bone

The father holds up the Shank Bone from the plate of foods so that everyone can see it.

Father: The Lamb Shank Bone reminds us of the lambs that were sacrificed at the Temple in Jerusalem during Passover. Jesus became the Passover Lamb when He died upon the cross, fulfilling the symbolism of the sacrificial lamb. The Passover Lamb reminds us of the lambs that were slaughtered in Egypt and their blood painted on the lintels and doorposts, bringing deliverance to the Jews.

The unleavened bread has replaced the Passover Lamb. We have a Lamb Shank Bone on the plate to remind us of the Passover Lamb.

Beytzah - The Burnt Egg

The Father holds the burnt egg for all to see.

Father: The burnt egg represents the Temple in Jerusalem which was destroyed in 70 AD by fire. An egg has an outer shell, an inner white, and inside that a yoke. We are now the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The shell is like our body, the white is like our soul and the yoke is like our spirit. Our spirit is like the Holy of Holies in the most inner place in the Temple. It is the place where we know God and meet with Him.

Shulhan Orech - The Meal

The meal is now served. After you have eaten please stay seated for the final part of the service and the last two cups.

The Afikomen

The Father instructs the children to go and search for the Afikomen which was hidden when they had their eyes closed. The child who finds the Afikomen returns it to the Father and the Father gives the child a prize for finding it.

Father: This is the Afikomen which was hidden. Now it is found. The child's prize is the redemption price. Jesus paid the redemption price for us. On the third day He rose from the dead. Through His resurrection we have eternal life.

The Third Cup – The Cup of Redemption

All fill your glass but do not drink yet.

Father: At the Last Supper, after eating the meal, Jesus took up the Unleavened Bread.

Reader 5: *1 Corinthians 11:23-32*

The 'father' takes the Afikomen from the napkin, and breaks it into small pieces which are passed around.

Father: If you are a believer in Jesus, and trust in Him to take away your sins, you can now eat the bread and drink the cup in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your heart with thanksgiving.

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe who gives us Jesus to be the bread of life.” Amen

All eat a piece of the Afikomen

“Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who gives us Jesus to be the true vine.” Amen

All drink the third cup

Hallel – Praise, the Final Hymn

Father: Traditionally Psalms 115-118 and Psalm 136 would now be sung. We will sing Psalm 118:24, ‘This is the day’

All sing: This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made, that the Lord has made,
We will rejoice, we will rejoice
And be glad it, and be glad in it.
This is the day that the Lord has made
We will rejoice and be glad in it.
This is the day, this is the day
That the Lord has made.

The Fourth Cup – The Cup of Completion

Fill the glasses but don't drink yet

Father: At the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples didn't drink the last cup. They sang a hymn then went out to the Mount of Olives. This is because the last cup concerns the return of the Lord. When Jesus had drunk the third cup He told His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:25, 26)

We drink the fourth cup in anticipation of the return of the Lord, the wedding feast and the coming Kingdom after He has returned.

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, soon to come again to rule and reign in your Kingdom. We drink in anticipation of your soon return."
Amen

All drink the fourth cup.

Reader 6: *Hebrews 13:20-21*

All say the traditional final exclamation:

All: Next year in Jerusalem!