



Let's Have a Passover Seder!



his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."

Psalm 100

Step 14: Finish by drinking the rest of your grape juice.

Now you have enjoyed a traditional Jewish Seder meal. This will help you too to realize how God loves you and has set you free to enjoy life in His care.



Step 11: Remember that piece of matzah that got hidden earlier? Now you get to look for it—and eat it!

Step 12: Thank God for a delicious meal and then take a third drink of grape juice.

Step 13: Read Psalm 100 or sing your favourite praise song to God for the great miracles he performed for the Jewish people.

"Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are

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Passover is an important Jewish holiday when Jews celebrate the fact that more than three thousand years ago God rescued their ancestors from slavery in Egypt. This miraculous story is found in the Bible, along with instructions from God to the Jews about holding a special meal, called a Seder, to remember the great work He did at Passover.

Perhaps there's a food that reminds you of a certain event that happened in the past. Maybe S'mores make you think of camping out. Or turkey makes you think of Thanksgiving.

In a similar way, Jewish people use certain foods at the Seder meal to remind them of what God did to save them at Passover.

Special Foods

Here are some of the foods included in the Seder meal and what these mean:

Charoset is a mixture of apples, nuts, and grape juice that reminds Jews of the mixture that the Israelite slaves used to make bricks and of the hard work the slaves did.

Zeroa is a piece of roasted lamb. This reminds Jews of the lamb that God told them to prepare for a special meal the night before they were freed from Egyptian slavery.

Maror and **chazeret** are two bitter herbs, though some Jews use horseradish and romaine lettuce instead of these sharp herbs. These foods remind Jews of their bitter lives as slaves in Egypt.

Baytz is an egg that is first hard-boiled and then roasted. Jews serve this at the Seder meal as a reminder of the festival sacrifice during the time when a great Temple stood in the city of Jerusalem.

Karpas is a green vegetable, usually parsley or celery, that reminds Jews that everything is alive and new in the Spring, when Passover usually occurs.

Before You Begin

Seder is a special meal, so we eat it at a table and make special preparations. Below is an adapted Seder for you to follow. You will need the following items: grape juice, romaine lettuce (instead of maror and chazeret),

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applesauce or applesauce mixed with Grape-Nuts (instead of *charoset*), salt-water, water in a bowl (or hand sanitizer or wet wipes), parsley or celery (instead of *karpas*), and a stack of three *matzah* crackers.

Matzah is a special bread made without yeast that is similar to what the Israelites took with them when they quickly escaped Egypt.

You will also need a cup and plate for everyone at the table, as well as a copy of the Passover story from the Bible.

Now that you have these items on your table, let's talk about the one action you get to do during the meal: *lean*.

This *Seder* tradition comes from the fact that long ago when the Israelites were still slaves in Egypt, people who

were rich and powerful reclined at the table when they ate meals.

They did this because they were in no hurry and had no worries. In contrast, poor people and slaves would eat while seated on the floor.

Because the *Seder* celebrates the fact that God rescued the Israelites from slavery and made them free, the Jews lean on the table during the *Seder* meal to feel like free people did back then.

Leaning reminds them that they are celebrating their freedom from slavery.

Now you are ready to celebrate the *Seder* meal!

The Seder Service

- Step 1:** Bless the grape juice and then pour a cup for each guest at the meal. Everyone takes a drink.
- Step 2:** Time to wash up! Jews traditionally wash their hands at *Seder* by pouring water on their right hand three times and then on their left hand three times. If you can't do that, use some hand sanitizer or a wet wipe to get your hands clean.
- Step 3:** Take a small piece of your parsley or celery and dip it in salt-water. As you eat this and taste the bitter salt, remember the bitter life the Jews knew when they were slaves.
- Step 4:** Find the middle *matzah* from the stack of three and break it in two. Pay attention! The larger piece of the two broken halves is called the

Afikoman. It gets hidden, and you're going to look for it later.

Step 5: Read the Passover story from your handout and then ask the following four questions. Usually the youngest child gets to ask four questions to guide the conversation, but today we'll all take turns.

QUESTION 1: Why do we eat *matzah* on Passover?

Answer: When Pharaoh finally let the Jews leave Egypt, they were in a great hurry to get away from their life of slavery. There wasn't time to let their bread dough rise



before baking it, so they took the raw dough with them into the dessert. There they cooked it into hard crackers called *matzah*.

QUESTION 2: Why do we eat bitter herbs at our Seder?

Answer: The bitter herbs remind us of the bitterness of slavery and the difficult life the Israelites had before God rescued them.

QUESTION 3: Why do we dip the green vegetable in saltwater and the bitter herbs in *charoset*?

Answer: The green vegetable reminds us of the new life and growth we see in the Spring. Saltwater reminds us of the tears from the Israelite slaves. So dipping the green vegetable into the saltwater is like the new life that came from the difficult life the Israelites used to know.

Bitter herbs dipped in *charoset* remind us of the bitterness of slavery. *Charoset* has a rough texture like the clay used to make bricks for Pharaoh. **QUESTION 4: Why do we lean while we eat the Seder meal?** **Answer:** Leaning represents the comforts of freedom. As slaves, the Israelites knew little comfort. So we lean to remember and celebrate that God set them free.

Step 6: After you finish reading the story and answering the questions, drink more grape juice.

Step 7: Wash your hands again, only this time say a blessing as you wash. *Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to wash our hands.*

Step 8: Say the blessing for eating bread, and then these special blessings.

Blessing 1: *Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.*

Blessing 2: *Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of *matzah*.*

Step 9: Time to eat the *matzah*.

Step 10: Say a blessing over the bitter herbs, or romaine lettuce. Dip them in the applesauce mixture (*charoset*) and then eat them.

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