

The Passover Seder

The Seder Meal is one of the most widely practiced traditions in the Jewish faith. It is a celebration of the Passover. It is a meal that is rich in tradition and ritual. Just before Jesus broke the bread and poured the wine for his disciples they were celebrating Passover with a Seder meal.

This service is a modified Seder. It is by no means authentic. An authentic Seder meal would take up too much space and require too much explanation than is available here. It is meant to give your students merely a taste of the celebration that Jesus used to gather his friends one last time before his death.

We present this service with much respect to the Jewish faith and recognize that out of that faith comes our own.

It is a long service and involves much preparation.

What you will need:

The Seder Plate: A large plate that will sit in the center of the group seated on the floor. If your group is large you will need to prepare one Seder plate for every five or six students. Place all of the ingredients around the side of the plate but leave the center of the plate open for God.

A pitcher of plain water to drink. Cups for all.

Two cups of wine or grape juice

A small bowl of water for symbolic hand washing.

A small dish of water mixed with salt (symbolizing tears)

Maror (bitter herbs) You can use horseradish. Symbolizes slavery.

Karpas (vegetable) you can use fresh parsley or pieces of cooked potato.

Chazeret (Apples, nuts, Cinnamon or brown sugar, all mashed together into a paste). Symbolizes the mortar the slaves used between the bricks.

Matzah Bread

Zeora (Shankbone) You can use a chicken drumstick with the meat cooked and cut off the bone into small pieces.

Bitzah (Cooked Egg) Cook the egg anyway you like but then cut it into small pieces. It is a symbol of grief as well as a symbol of new life.

Celebration Food: Use some sort of food that symbolizes a celebration. Do not use store bought cookies unless you kids really love Oreos and milk. You can use Ben & Jerry's ice cream or homemade cookies. Some sweet celebration food that your group enjoys.

Candles. One for the center of the room and several placed around the room.

Music Suggestions:

Try music from the movie Prince of Egypt
Mel Gibson's The Passion.

The Passover Seder Script

Leader: We are gathered this evening to observe and remember Passover, God's deliverance of His people. God delivered Israel from the bondage of slavery and He commanded His people to observe this holiday. Even though we are not Jewish we should not celebrate in vain, but should give thanks to our great God and to recognize an even greater Passover and deliverance. Through the death of the foretold Messiah-Yeshua, we too will be passed over from death and released from the bondage of sin. I ask today that you consider each of the scriptures and prayers that we will be reading this afternoon and that you may truly observe and recognize our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I also encourage you to seek God on your own. The truth is revealed in God's Word.

Speaker 1: "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come." (Exodus 12:17)

Speaker 2: Pray

Leader: Light is a symbol of God's presence. Lighting candles during holidays and on Shabbat remind us that God is our light. **It is the women who light the candles, representing creation and redemption.** According to Jewish tradition these candles must be lit, by a woman. (Mary, Mary Magdalene, Mary and Martha, etc.) A special blessing is pronounced in connection with the lighting of the candles. (Here again we see something interesting; few things in Judaism require a woman to perform them, but it must be a woman who gets everything started in the Seder by lighting the candles and BRINGING light to the Passover table. A beautiful symbol of the fact that it would be a woman who gave birth to the Light of the World. In Isaiah 7:14, we read that "the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanu-El, 'God with Us'." Yeshua said in John 8:12, "*I am the Light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*"

ALL WOMEN: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by your commandments, and has commanded us to kindle the Festival lights. Amen.

Light the Candles.

Speaker 3: Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do to Pharaoh: Because of my mighty hand he will let them go; because of my mighty hand he will drive them out of his country." (Exodus 6:1)

The Charoseth (Care o set) — Is a mixture of apples, nuts, wine and spices that represents the mortar used to make the bricks to build Pharaoh's buildings. Very tasty and stimulates your taste buds for the feast. It is usually eaten with matzah. So as we continue, help yourself to the Charoseth. While we do, let us read together Exodus 6:6,7

ALL: "I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with

an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. 7 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians." (Exodus 6:6-7)

Leader: Notice that there are “four expressions of redemption” in G-d’s promise to Moses (Exodus 6:6-7): I will bring you out from under the hardship of Egypt, and I will save you from their bondage; I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you to Myself as a nation, and I will be to you a G-d.

Leader: During the Passover Seder we will drink four glasses of wine: **The Cup of Sanctification, the Cup of Plagues, The Cup of Redemption and the Cup of Praise.** We will say the traditional Jewish prayer before drinking each cup. The KAYDESH. I would also like to point out that there is traditional meaning with each cup as well as Yeshua's fulfillment.

SANCTIFICATION:

Traditional - We are to be clean of yeast.

Fulfillment - We are to be clean of sin -- Yeshua is the only way to be cleansed of our sins.

PLAGUES:

Traditional - Remembrance of the Plagues in Egypt

Fulfillment - Remembrance of our trials and tribulations - develops perseverance, humility and maturity in our walk with the Lord

REDEMPTION:

Traditional - Symbolizes the blood of the Passover lamb who saved the Israelites from death

Fulfillment - Yeshua is our Passover Lamb who's blood saved us from death. **This cup is the cup used in communion or The Lord's Supper.**

PRAISE:

Traditional - Give thanks to God for guiding the Israelites out of Egypt

Fulfillment - We are to always have praise on our lips for our salvation that is given through Yeshua.

Leader: Sanctification sets us apart, the process of salvation. Yeshua calls us to follow in the way of healing, restoration and liberation. May we lean into this sanctification through the Lamb of God, Yeshua, who takes away the sins of the world. Please fill your cup. **(FILL CUPS)** Let us lift our cups, the Cup of Sanctification, and bless the Lord for God's abundant life.

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

Leader: Let us drink of this First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification—remembering the first “I will” from Exodus 6: “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”

Leader: **(after a pause)** Just as Aaron the High Priest was to cleanse his hands and feet before approaching the altar of the Lord, so too, we recognize our need for spiritual cleansing. Michvah-Baptism.

Let us wash our hands. As we wash, let us renew our commitment to God.

(Washing of Hands)

Speaker 4: (Psalm 24:1-6)

- [1] The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;
- [2] for he founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the waters.
- [3] Who may ascend the hill of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?
- [4] He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to an idol

or swear by what is false.

[5] He will receive blessing from the LORD
and vindication from God his Savior.

[6] Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

Leader: Psalm 24:3-4 says, "Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Whom may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false."

The last supper was connected to a Passover Seder. At this last meal before his crucifixion, Yeshua went a step yet further with this traditional washing. John chapter 13 tells us:

Yeshua took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

(John 13:4-5)

He used the ritual of the feast to drive home greater, deeper truth. **Let us pray**

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by your commandments, and has commanded us to wash our hands symbolic of the vital importance of cleansing our hearts. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by your commandments, and call us into a life of service, a willingness to wash the feet of those around us. Amen

Speaker 1: [23b] The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. [24] God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. [25] So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.
(Exodus 2:23b-25)

Leader: We will now take the parsley, called *karpas* and we will dip it into the salt water. We do this to symbolize the tears and pain of the Israelites. After the following prayer, take the parsley and dip it into the salt water and remember

that even though we have painful circumstances in our lives, we will always have the hope of God to free us from our tribulations.

Leader: (Lifting the Bitter Herb): Why do we eat bitter herb? We eat bitter herb because of the hardship that the Israelites had to bear. As it is written: They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly. (Exodus 1:14)

(Dip the parsley in the salt water twice, then eat it.) **THE SOP**

Speaker 2: [6b] Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? [7] Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. [8] Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5:6b-8)

Leader: The Bible speaks of leaven as something that has to be got rid of absolutely during this time. Is there some deeper significance to "leaven"? Bible scholars often see "leaven" in the Scripture as being a symbol of moral corruption, or sin. If that is the case, the purging of the house symbolizes dealing with sin, and that, after all, is what Jesus came to do. (See Matthew 9:13) **We ask God to bless the unleavened bread.**

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

This is the bread blessing Yeshua pronounced at the Last Supper.

Leader: (Lifting the plate of three matzah) The Jews put three Matzahs on the Seder plate. Why do they use three? One theory is that it represents Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But there is even greater significance. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Here in the Passover Feast it is the middle matzah, representing God the Son, Yeshua that is the significant focus.

(Removing and breaking the **middle matzah**) For at this point we now break the middle piece, the bread of affliction. We will eat one half and the other half is called the *afikomen*, [ah-fee-KOH-men] the dessert. (Wrap the **afikomen in a cloth.**) I will hide the afikomen and later the children can try to find it to return it for a reward.

(Hide the wrapped afikomen, but they don't make it too difficult to find. If the children can't find it later, the Seder can't continue. Put the other half back in the pouch.)

The stripes are caused by preparing the matzoh on a grill, because slaves on the run didn't have ovens. The flame leaves brown spots that look like bruises. Because a grill only applies heat on one side, holes are poked in the matzoh to allow more even heat flow during cooking.) even though the Afikomen represents the sinless, broken, bruised, whipped and pierced body of Jesus wrapped in a shroud and hidden for three days, and even though traditional Jews do not believe Jesus is the Messiah, *still* they do those sections -- they don't understand the real symbolism of their actions.

1. without leaven, signifying sinlessness,
2. pierced with holes (John 19:37 - "they shall look on him whom they pierced") and
3. Striped (Isaiah 53:5 - "By his stripes we are healed.")

(This is the bread blessing Yeshua pronounced at the Last Supper.) Taking bread, he blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Eat it in my memory." (Luke 22:19)

Leader: We will now bless the matzah as a food. (holding the matzah on the seder plate)

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

Leader: [4] Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. [5] Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. [6] These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. [7] Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. [8] Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. [9] Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.
(Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

Speaker 4: [20] In the future, when your son asks you, "What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and laws the LORD our God has commanded you?" [21] tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. [22] Before our eyes the LORD sent miraculous signs and wonders--great and terrible--upon Egypt and Pharaoh and his whole household. [23] But he brought us out from there to bring us in and give us the land that he promised on oath to our forefathers. [24] The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today. [25] And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness." (Deuteronomy 6:20-25)

Leader: Tonight is different from all other nights because tonight we will remember what God has done for his people. (And we all say...)

ALL: Blessed is the Almighty God who has given the Word to His people.

Leader: Moses and his brother Aaron went to the Pharaoh to ask for the release of their people. But the Pharaoh's heart was hardened against the Israelites and would not release them from the bondage of slavery. Each time the Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go, the land of Egypt came under a great plague. With the tenth and most awful plague, the heart of Pharaoh would be pierced. (Read with me Exodus 12:12)

ALL: "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals--and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. (Exodus 12:12)

Speaker 3: And the blood on the houses where you are staying shall be a sign for you: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, so that no plague will destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. (Exodus 12:13 NJPS)

Leader: Let us fill our cups a second time. A full cup is a sign of joy and on this night we are filled with joy in remembrance of God's mighty deliverance. We must also remember the great sacrifice at which redemption was purchased. Life was sacrificed to bring the Israelites out of the bondage of Egypt. **As we recite each plague, let us dip our little finger into the cup, allowing a drop of wine to fall, reducing the fullness of our cup of joy this night.**

- Blood!
- Frogs!
- Gnats!
- Wild Beasts!
- Disease to Livestock!
- Boils!
- Hail!
- Locusts!
- Darkness!
- Death of the Firstborn!

And now we together bless our second cup of wine, the cup of plagues.

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

(Drink the second cup of wine.)

Leader: Rabbi Gamaliel, grandson of Rabbi Hillel and teacher of Rabbi Saul (Paul, the Apostle), taught that in recounting the Passover story one must explain three things: The Passover Lamb, Unleavened Bread, and the Bitter Herbs.

The Hebrew word for Passover is *Pesach*, which means "to pass or hover over." This word speaks to us about two things. First, it shows the passing over in judgment from death and sin to life in *Yeshua*. Second, it tells us about allowing, by faith, the blood of *Yeshua* to hover over our lives and give us divine protection from the evil one. Just as the lamb's blood protected the Israelites from death, *Yeshua*'s blood will protect us from death.

It is God that we honor in remembering that He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians. (**Lifting the [shank bone](#) of a lamb**) The shank bone reminds us of the lamb whose blood marked the doors of the Israelites. We read in Exodus that the lamb was to be without defect, brought into the household and cared for. It was then at twilight, the fourteenth day of the month, that the Israelites were to slaughter the lamb and put the blood on the sides and tops of the doorframes. God gave His people instructions that only through obedience would they be spared from the angel of death. Isaiah told of the coming Messiah, that He would be led like a lamb to the slaughter. We know that *Yeshua* was our final blood atonement so that we would be freed from the bondage of sin and we would be passed over from death. **"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"** (Revelation 5:12)

God gave us many signs and prophecies about our coming Messiah. *Yeshua* fulfilled all the prophecies foretold of the first coming of the Messiah, in the Torah, the prophets and the writings.

1. **The lamb was to be without blemish** (Exodus 12:5).
2. **The blood must be applied to the door** (Exodus 12:7,13,22).
3. **Not a bone of the lamb was to be broken** (Exodus 12:43-46).
4. **The Passover (*Pesach*) must be killed outside the gates of the city** (Deuteronomy 16:5).

Optional ... sing a song - FOUNTAIN FILLED WITH BLOOD

Speaker 2: [52:13] See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. [14] Just as there were many who were appalled at

him-- his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness-- [15] so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. [53:1] Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? [2] He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. [3] He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. [4] Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. [5] But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. [6] We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. [7] He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. [8] By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. (Isaiah 52:13-53:8)

Leader: Let us now eat and remember the grace, mercy and love that God has for each of us, for He sent Yeshua, our Messiah, to be our Passover Lamb. We too, like the Israelites released from the bondage of slavery, can be saved from the bondage of sin.

- Sing our Prayer Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below, Praise Him above all heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.
- Break to eat the Passover Supper. Instructions

Leader: **After Dinner** The *afikomen must* be found (by the children) and returned to the Leader for a reward. The reward is a symbol of the fact that Yeshua *purchased* our Redemption at the *price* of His own life. To one who

has trusted in Jesus as Messiah , the significance of the afikomen is startling. The middle matzo representing the Son (Jesus), whose body was broken (crucified), wrapped in white linen and hidden (buried) and found (resurrected), is to be partaken of by all who will.

(**Lifting the afikomen**) The sweetness of this symbol should linger with us. We now give thanks together for the *afikomen*, the dessert by praying...

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth and gives to us all things good.

Leader: The Passover can not be completed without the *afikomen*, nor can our redemption be complete without Yeshua, the Bread of Life, our Messiah!

(Bring in Dessert – Sweetness of the Truth)

Leader: Let us say Psalm 116:12-14 together...

ALL: [12] How can I repay the LORD for all his goodness to me? [13] I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD. [14] I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people. (Psalm 116:12-14)

Leader: Let us fill our cups for the third time this evening. (**Lifting the cup**) This is the Cup of Redemption, symbolizing the blood of the Passover Lamb. **It was the cup "after supper", which Yeshua identified himself** -- "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20) **Let's pray...**

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

Leader: It was during this time that Jesus' intimacy with his chosen disciples was at a very deep level. He teaches, he loves, he prays. The room is thick with atmosphere, commradery, fragrance, satisfied appetites, and surely the feeling that it couldn't get any better than this. As we continue to enjoy each others fellowship, our food and drink, may we each allow the Holy Spirit to fill us with the joy of Christ in our midst.

Leader: (Lifting the extra cup for Elijah) The theme of the Seder before the meal was the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt. In keeping with tradition, we now move to the Messianic redemption theme of the Seder. At this point the Jews open a door, indicating their readiness to receive the Prophet Elijah, herald of the Messiah.

(Have a child open the door.) Together we read Malachi 4:5

ALL: "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes." (Malachi 4:5)

Leader: Before the birth of John the Baptist, an angel of the Lord said, "And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

Later, Yeshua spoke of John, "And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come." (Matthew 11:14)

It was this same John who saw Yeshua and declared, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) Elijah was taken up by a great whirlwind in a chariot of fire. We wait for him today to announce the second coming of our Messiah, Son of David. At this time Jesus may have gone to set in the chair.... Jesus talks to them about Preparing a Place for them.. about being the Way, Truth, Life...About the fact that He was the Vine and they were the branches...that they would be despised by the world and face hard times... that a Comforter, THE HOLY SPIRIT would soon come to them... and then He prays John 17...

Let us fill our cups, the Cup of Praise, a final time, and give thanks to God!

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

(Drink the fourth cup of wine.)

HALLEL

Leader: (Text is from Psalm 136) Read with me responsively

[1] Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

ALL: His love endures forever.

[2] Give thanks to the God of gods.

ALL: His love endures forever.

[3] Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

ALL: His love endures forever.

[4] To him who alone does great wonders, [5] Who by his understanding made the heavens, [6] Who spread out the earth upon the waters,

ALL: His love endures forever.

[7] Who made the great lights-- [8] Who made the sun to govern the day, [9] Who made the moon and stars to govern the night;

ALL: His love endures forever.

[10] To him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt [11] And brought Israel out from among them [12] With a mighty hand and outstretched arm;

ALL: His love endures forever.

[13] To him who divided the Red Sea asunder [14] And brought Israel through the midst of it, [15] But swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;

ALL: His love endures forever.

[16] To him who led his people through the desert, [26] Give thanks to the God of heaven

ALL: His Love endures forever.

Leader: [31] "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. [32] It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, " declares the LORD. [33] "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. [34] No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Leader: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." (Revelation 4:8b)

Speaker 2: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory." (Isaiah 6:3)

Leader: We have now finished our Passover Seder. We are all called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and might, and to treat others with kindness.

Leader: Once the Jews were dispersed all over the world, after the first century A.D., they ended all their feasts by saying "Next Year in Jerusalem". This was a two-fold hope, first, a hope in the return to their home but, secondly, an even deeper hope that soon God would re-establish His reign in Jerusalem, a hope that we long for also, so like them we say together...

ALL: Next year in Jerusalem!

Optional...sing a song that flows with the theme

Speaker 1 - And now... May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord deal kindly and graciously with you. May the

Lord bestow His favor upon you and grant you peace. (Numbers
6:24-26 NJPS)