

HAGGADAH SEDER MEAL



by Janet Peets @janet_joyfulhealth

For over 3,000 years Passover commemorated the time when God “passed over” his people, the Israelites, punishing the Egyptians and freeing the Israelites from slavery. God commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover every year, and through many centuries of history all the way to modern times, faithful Jews remember the Passover with a special dinner called a Seder. Jesus celebrated the Seder the night before he died. We remember Jesus’ death on Good Friday so we remember His Seder, often called The Last Supper. Although they did not understand it at the time, Jesus tells his disciples how the promise of the Passover will be fulfilled in his death and Resurrection.

About 6 years ago my husband and I decided to check all the boxes for major life stressors with a cross country move, new jobs, having our 4th child just after our oldest turned 5, starting homeschool, numerous hospital stints due to a serious surf injury and I’m sure a number of other things which have been buried under the countless ups and downs of that turbulent year. In the midst of the crazy yet beautiful chaos we were set on remaining intentional in time with our children, especially surrounding the importance of Christ’s sacrifice for us on the cross. Around this time, sweet friends shared this Seder tradition with us and we have joyously celebrated the Messianic (Haggadah) Seder meal with our children every year on the evening before Good Friday. I love the beauty and simplicity of this time together, walking through scripture, pointing our children and reminding ourselves how Jesus fulfilled the promise of the Passover in His death and resurrection.

This time doesn’t have to be perfect, grape juice will be spilled, kids won’t always sit still, there may be interruptions, but don’t grow weary! It’s worth it. That’s the wonderful thing about traditions, they’re repeated year after year and as individuals and family’s grow in number they also grow in their knowledge, understanding and wisdom regarding His word and work in their lives.

The script can be modified and the meal doesn’t have to be perfect. It’s good to include the children in the setup and to give older kids a part in the readings. All items we use for our Seder meal are purchased from the 99cent store, so you’re not breaking the bank either.

Materials (items)

Cushions (to symbolically relax at the table)
Candles
Linen Napkins (for Matzah)
Bible
Large basin and towel for washing hands
\$1 or other small token to redeem the Afikomen
Cups and Plates for each participant

Materials (food and beverage)

Matzah – simple to make – I use this recipe
<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/213682/matzah/>
Grape Juice (or traditional Wine for adults)
Dinner of roasted meat (or traditional lamb) and Spring vegetables
Hard boiled eggs (optional)
For Each Participant or on Central Plate to be passed around:
- Parsley
- Saltwater in small dish
- Prepared Horseradish
- Charoset (we substitute applesauce with cinnamon)



Depending on ages of kids and how many guests are present, divide reading parts up to anyone who wants to participate. It moves quicker than you'd think and feel free to customize songs and specifics of what you say to how your family wants to practice this tradition.

Script to guide you through the meal

Person 1: Passover commemorates the time when God "passed over" his people, the Israelites, punishing the Egyptians and freeing the Israelites from slavery. God commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover every year, and through many centuries of history all the way to modern times, faithful Jews remember the Passover with a special dinner called a Seder. Jesus celebrated the Seder the night before he died. We remember Jesus' death on Good Friday, which is tomorrow, so we remember his Seder, often called The Last Supper, tonight. Although they did not understand it at the time, Jesus tells his disciples how the promise of the Passover will be fulfilled in his death and Resurrection.

Person 2: LUKE 22:7-8, 14-16: Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."... When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

Person 3: The instructions for observing the Seder are found in the Haggadah, a Hebrew word meaning, "the telling." The Haggadah tells the story of the first Passover long ago and we have added scripture verses to the Haggadah that clarify its meaning to us as Christians. We begin with the Mother lighting the candles and saying a traditional prayer.

Person 1: [lights candles] Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has set us apart by His Word and in whose Name we light the festival lights and remember the true Light of the World.



Person 3: We're going to drink four cups of grape juice during the dinner. The first cup is the Cup of Sanctification. Sanctification means 'set apart.' God set this day apart for the celebration of Passover. God set the Israelites apart so that they could follow Him, and in the Exodus he physically set them apart from their slavery in Egypt. Through Jesus, He also sets us apart from our slavery to sin.

Person 4: JOHN 17: 15-19 [Jesus said] My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

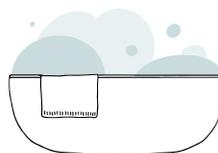
All: Blessed are you, O Lord Our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine. We thank you God for giving us the gift of Festivals for joy and holidays for happiness, among them this day of Passover, the festival of our liberation, a day of sacred assembly recalling the Exodus from Egypt. Blessed are you O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who gives us life and allows us to enjoy this festive holiday.

[Drink the Cup of Sanctification]



Person 3: Now that we have set this time apart, we will wash our hands to begin the meal. The Bible records this portion of the Last Supper as the moment when Jesus washed his disciples' feet. By washing their feet and not just their hands, Jesus is going beyond what the Haggadah directs. He does this to demonstrate true servanthood to his disciples.

[Dad washes hands and brings basin around to assist others in washing their hands]



Person 2: JOHN 13: 3-5,12-17 "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, 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...When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

Person 1: The second cup is the Cup of Deliverance. God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and he delivers us from the slavery of sin. We read about God's deliverance of the Israelites in the Book of Exodus. After Joseph became Pharaoh's assistant and saved Egypt from a famine, Joseph moved the whole family of Israel to Egypt. Over time, they grew so numerous that the Egyptians were afraid they would take over Egypt, so they enslaved the Israelites for many generations. God raised up a leader, Moses, who would lead the his Chosen People out of this slavery and give them their own land. God sent 10 plagues on Egypt to show His power and convince Pharaoh to let God's people go. The first plague is described in Exodus 7: 14-18.

Person 4: "Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go. 15 Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the river. Confront him on the bank of the Nile, and take in your hand the staff that was changed into a snake. 16 Then say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say to you: Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness. But until now you have not listened. 17 This is what the Lord says: By this you will know that I am the Lord: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. 18 The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.'"

Person 3: Time and again, Pharaoh agreed to let the Israelites go, but when each plague was lifted, Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to free them. Eventually, God hardened Pharaoh's heart and showed His power by freeing the Israelites. We will remember each of the 10 plagues by placing a drop of our juice on our plate while reciting the Plagues.

- Blood
- Frogs
- Gnats
- Flies
- Livestock
- Boils
- Hail
- Locusts
- Darkness
- Death

Person 3: In the Final Plague, the firstborn of all the Egyptians died. God instructed the Israelites to follow a certain ritual which would mark them as God's People. God would "pass over" His people and bring death only to those who enslaved them.

Person 2: EXODUS 12: 21-32 "Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb. 22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. None of you shall go out of the door of your house until morning. 23 When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down."

Person 1: The Israelites did nothing to rescue themselves from slavery—they were helpless, and were rescued only by God. God describes our deliverance from sin and freedom through Jesus in many parts of the Bible, both in the New Testament and through prophecy in the Old Testament.

Person 4: JOHN 8:31-34 "To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a [child] belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Person 1: In a traditional Seder, participants would now sing a well-known song in Hebrew, called "Dayenu". Dayenu means "this alone would have been enough". It is a song of praise and thanksgiving as we remember what God did for the Israelites. It was so much more than they could ever deserve...more than enough. The "Dayenu" song has been sung on Passover for more than 1000 years! Maybe someday we will learn the Dayenu song, but for now we will speak some of the many blessings listed in the song and they all reply "Dayenu". Fun fact: in some Jewish traditions, participants pelt each other with green onions when they remember how God provided food for them in the desert, because the Bible tells us that the Israelites complained that manna was not as good as the "leeks, onions, and garlic" they had enjoyed in Egypt!

Person 3:
If he had brought us out of Egypt, and had not parted the Sea for us-
DAYENU

Person 2:
If he had parted the Sea, but had not provided manna for us in the desert-
DAYENU

Person 4:
If he had provided for us in the desert, but had not set apart a Sabbath for us-
DAYENU

Person 2:
If he had set apart the Sabbath for us, but had not given us the Holy Scripture-
DAYENU

Person 1: Dayenu is an upbeat, cheerful song of thankfulness. We may not know "Dayenu", but it did remind of several songs about God's many blessings that we do know. [*This Is Amazing Grace*]



Person 3: We can now say the blessing again, and drink the Cup of Deliverance.

All: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who redeemed us and our ancestors from Egypt and has brought us to this night.

[Drink the Cup of Deliverance]



Person 3: There are four questions that are traditional to the Passover. At every Seder dinner, they are asked by the youngest children and answered by the elders so that we can fulfill God's command to teach our children to remember His faithfulness.

Person 4: On all other nights, we eat bread that is made with yeast. On this night, why do we eat only unleavened bread?

Person 2: Making bread with yeast takes several hours because the bread has to be given time to rise. Unleavened bread does not take very long to make or cook. We remember that the Israelites left Egypt in a hurry when their deliverance finally came. They didn't have time to wait for their bread to rise.

Person 1: On all other nights, we eat many different vegetables. On this night, why do we eat bitter herbs dipped in saltwater?

Person 3: The parsley is called the Karpas. Karpas represents rebirth. It symbolizes the rebirth of the Jewish nation. Saltwater represents tears from crying. It reminds us of the tears shed by the people of Israel when they were slaves in Egypt.

Person 4: On all other nights, we don't dip our food in these sauces. Why on this night do we have these two sauces?

Person 2: One is bitter horseradish. It brings tears to our eyes when we eat it. It represents the lives of the Israelites while they were in Egypt. We remember their sorrows, but we are grateful for our deliverance from spiritual sorrow through the Lamb of God, Jesus. We must also care for those whose lives are filled with bitterness today. The other is Charoset, a sweet mixture of apples and cinnamon. It represents the mortar the Jews used to grind for their Egyptian masters. It has been crushed like mortar, and it has a similar color and texture.

Person 3: On all other nights, we sit up at the table. On this night, why do we recline on pillows?

Person 2: We recline on pillows to remind us that first Passover when God's People were slaves, but now we are free. The first Passover meal was eaten in a hurry. The Israelites wore their coats and shoes and held their walking sticks. They were prepared to leave Egypt at a moments' notice. Today we can relax and enjoy the Passover Seder.

Person 3: By dipping the Karpas in saltwater, we are showing how the nation was formed through many years of sorrow. Hold your Karpas and we'll say the Blessing, then you can dip your parsley and eat it.

All: Blessed are you O Lord our God King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

[Dip Parsley and eat]



Person 1: Matzah is the Hebrew word for unleavened bread. In a traditional Jewish Seder, three pieces of matzah are placed on the table, with the middle one wrapped in a white cloth. This special middle piece is called the afikomen, a word that means "The Coming One" or "The Redeemer". As Christians, we see the 3 pieces representing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We know that the afikomen is a picture of Jesus the Redeemer. He was beaten and pierced for our sins, as was prophesied by Isaiah. I will hide the afikomen, and we will find it later, just like Jesus was raised from the dead after three days.

[Mom hides the afikomen]



Person 3: We can try some of the bitter horseradish and the sweet charoset with the matzah now.



All: Blessed are you O Lord Our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by his commandments and has commanded us to eat unleavened bread.

Person 3: The third cup is the Cup of Redemption. In Hebrew, the word is "gaal". It means paying a price to bring a family member out of slavery. God redeems us into his family, adopting us as sons and daughters. He has paid the price for our sins.

Person 5: ROMANS 8:14-15 For those who are lead by the Spirit of God are children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father".

Person 3: We remember this part of the Seder when we celebrate Communion. The Bible tells us what Jesus did with the Cup of Redemption.

Person 2: LUKE 22:20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

All: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

[Drink the Cup of Redemption]



Person 1: Now we can eat our meal. Just like the Israelites, we are eating roasted meats. We are also eating Spring vegetables to remind us of our New Life in Jesus. We eat hard boiled eggs to symbolize the lambs and other animals that the Jews sacrificed in the Temple; we remember and rejoice that we do not need animal sacrifices to be right with God because Jesus was the one perfect sacrifice, the perfect Lamb of God.

[Dinner!]



Person 1: At each Passover, there is a place set out for the prophet Elijah. According to Jewish tradition, Elijah predicts the coming of the Messiah, which is why he is important to Passover. It's time to open the front door to see if Elijah has come and welcome him in if he has.

[Open the Door]



Person 3: Now it is time to find the afikomen matzah. You may go search for it, and the one who finds it must bring it to me and I will redeem it for a price.

[Find the matzah. Whoever finds it Dad redeems with \$1]



Person 1: As I said earlier, the afikomen is a symbol of Jesus. It has now been returned, symbolizing Jesus' return from the dead. Just as it was broken, He was broken and died for us. And like the price that was paid for its return, Jesus paid the price for our salvation.

Person 3: It was the afikomen matzah that Jesus used for what we now call Communion.

Person 2: LUKE 22:19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

[Break and share afikomen]



Person 3: The last cup is the Cup of Acceptance. It's sometimes called the Cup of Hope or the Cup of Joy. The Israelites trusted God. They accepted God's salvation and left Egypt forever. For those who celebrate the Jewish Passover today, they hope for a time when there is literal peace in the land, and when their Messiah will finally come. As Christians, we know that Jesus the Messiah has already come and that the Messiah has brought Hope and Joy and Peace to those that accept Him.

Person 4: ROMANS 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

[Drink Cup of Acceptance]



Person 1: May the Lord rule over us forever. May the Lord be blessed in Heaven and on earth. May the Lord sustain us and send us his blessings. May the Lord allow us to see the day of the Messiah's return. May He who makes peace in His highest heavens grant His peace to us and all people.

All: Amen. Next Year in Jerusalem! Next year may we dwell in Peace!

[Sing Greater by Mercy Me]

