

Simple Christian Passover Celebration

Following is a simple Christian Seder. You can use this guide with your family, roommates, or invite friends to join you.

Passover Seder Preparations

Grocery List

- 2 Taper Candles and Candlesticks
- Wine and/or grape juice
- Matzoh (unleavened bread)
- Parsley
- Horseradish
- Apples
- Walnuts
- Cinnamon
- White sugar
- Honey
- Shank bone of a lamb (or another representation for a lamb, vegetarians use a beet)
- Egg
- Salt



Matzoh

Additionally, you will need to plan your dinner for this evening. The Passover meal is not a true meal and you will have unhappy children or guests if you don't plan a true meal.

Meal Preparations

- Make the haroset (recipe)
- Roast the lamb shank
- Boil an egg and peel it
- Prepare salt water

Table Preparations

Set the table. We use the coffee table in our living room and place cushions all around. Some years the children have dressed up like Israelites. :) In the center of the table, place:

- 2 unlit taper candles and matches
- Pitcher of ice water for drinking
- Wine or grape juice in an easy pour bottle or carafe
- Large plate with at several sheets of matzoh; (wrap the top 3 sheets together in a white napkin)

Set a place for each participant (plus one extra empty chair and place setting) with:

- A small plate for each participant, and one extra place setting
- Glass for wine or grape juice
- Glass for water
- Knife, fork, and spoon
- Napkin, and
- A cushion or pillow for each participant to sit on or lean against, and one extra
- A copy of the Christian Passover Haggadah (Script) for each participant with "parts" assigned

At or near the head of the table, put the Seder Plate, a plate or platter large enough to hold 5 small shallow bowls. We just use small ramekins. In the middle, place:

- Fresh parsley, one sprig for each participant, plus an extra sprig to remain on the seder plate
- Horseradish, fresh sliced, or pureed from a jar, about 1 tsp. per participant
- Haroset, about 1 Tbsp. per person
- A shank bone, or other representation of a lamb (small picture or statue of a lamb, chicken leg bone, etc.)
- A "roasted" (hard boiled) egg
- And a small bowl of salt water nearby on the table.
- Matzoh (three wrapped in a napkin)



On a small table near the head of the table place:

- A bowl for hand and/or foot washing
- A washcloth for hand and/or foot washing

Once your preparations are complete and your guests have arrived, seat everyone around the table and begin your Christian Passover Celebration.

A Christian Passover Haggadah

Introduction

LEADER:

The Passover story has been told over and over for thousands of years, stories about miraculous change from misery to peace, slavery to freedom, sin to grace. One of the last things Jesus did with his disciples was to celebrate Passover and retell the story to them. It's no coincidence Jesus chose the Passover meal for what we now celebrate as the Lord's Supper. God gave us the Passover celebration and He used the same celebration to teach us even more about His love.

God cared for His people long ago and He cares for His children today. Tonight we will be able to see, hear, and taste the great love God has for us!

We Light the Candles

LEADER:

As we light the candles, we pray for the Holy Spirit to touch our hearts with the meaning of the Passover.

SECOND LEADER (light the candles):

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has chosen each one of us to be transferred from the dominion of darkness to the Kingdom of your glorious light through Jesus Christ.

The Four Cups of Wine

LEADER:

God told Moses, "Now you will see what I will do" (Ex.6:1), and He made four promises about how he would save his people.

ALL (repeat after SECOND LEADER):

"I will bring you out of Egypt...

I will free you from slavery...

I will save you by my own hand...

I will take you to be my own people, and I will be your God..."

LEADER:

To remember these four promises, we drink from our cups four times.

The First Cup - Kiddush -The Cup of Sanctification

LEADER:

When Jesus began His last Passover supper, He offered a cup to His disciples and said, "Take this, all of you, and drink from it" (Lk.22:17). Let's hold up our first cup together and bless the Lord! Let's drink the first cup remembering that Jesus has led us out of our places of bondage into the freedom as His children. (Romans 8:21)

Urkhatz--Washing of Hands

LEADER

(washes hands of the person to his right and gives him/her the cloth and small bowl of water. You could choose to wash feet, if you'd like.):

The Scripture says only the person who has clean hands and a pure heart can stand in God's presence (Ps.24:3-4). When we wash each others' hands, we remember how Jesus, on the night

of His last Passover supper, poured water into a bowl and washed the disciples' feet for them, like a servant. He asked them, "Do you understand what I, your Lord and Teacher, have done for you? Now in your hearts you should be willing to do the same kinds of things for each other" (Jn.13:12-14). (Each washes hands to the right.)

Karpas--Parsley

LEADER (Holding up the Parsley):

The Passover holidays come in the spring, when the earth turns green with new life. Only God can create life and keep it alive. This green parsley is the sign of life. (Holding up the salt water): But while the Israelites were still slaves in Egypt, their life was miserable. The salt water stands for their tears. We know our life can be miserable and full of tears when we live in rebellion to God. We dip our parsley in the salt water and eat it to remind us of our ancestors' tears and of how miserable our own sin makes us. We also remember how God parted the salty Red Sea to lead His people to new life.

Ma Nishtanah--The Four Questions

Question 1

PARTICIPANT:

Why is this night so different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat leavened or unleavened bread. On this night why do we eat only unleavened bread?

LEADER:

Tonight is so different from all other nights because we were once slaves. Just like the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, we were slaves to sin. Just as God used Moses to bring the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, He has given us a Deliver, Jesus, who brings us out of our bondage to sin. Tonight is different than other nights because we gather to remember who we are, what God has done for us, and tell the story of God's deliverance of the Hebrew people that points ahead to Jesus' deliverance of us.

LEADER:

And why do we only unleavened bread on this night? On all other nights we eat any kind of bread, but on Passover we eat matzoh, unleavened bread. When the Israelites left Egypt, they were in such a hurry they didn't have time to let their dough rise. Instead, they baked it flat. From Old Testament times until today, each year our Jewish brothers and sisters sweep their houses clean of yeast as a reminder to clean out the sin in their lives. Not only this, but Jesus warned his disciples to be particularly mindful of two types of sin that are like yeast.

PARTICIPANT

“Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod.” (Mark 8:15)

LEADER

Jesus was warning His disciples and us to be particularly mindful of the sin of the Pharisees, religiously obeying the law and following manmade traditions without heart transformation, and that of Herod who lived in blatant sin.

(Holding matzoh): This is the bread of suffering that the Israelites ate. The three matzoh in one napkin show us the special unity of the Lord God, the Messiah, and His Spirit. The Holy Trinity, three-in-one. The matzoh itself is a symbol of the promised Messiah, Jesus. See how it is striped, as Jesus' back was marked by the scourging before his crucifixion.

PARTICIPANT

"He was wounded for our sins, bruised for our sinfulness: He suffered to bring us peace; and by his stripes our sin is healed." (Is.53:5)

LEADER:

See how the matzoh is pierced with holes, as God's only Son was pierced by the nails and the soldier's lance.

PARTICIPANT:

"I will pour out my spirit of grace and prayer: and they will see me whom they have pierced, and they will cry with sadness as for an only son." (Zech.12:10)

LEADER (taking the middle matzoh and breaking it in half):

Just as this middle piece of the bread of suffering is broken, the Son, Jesus, also suffered. We save half for after the meal. It's wrapped in a white cloth just as Jesus' body was wrapped for burial. (Wrap the matzoh half.)

Kids, please hide your eyes... (Hide the matzoh half somewhere in the room.)

Just like I've hidden the broken matzoh, Jesus' body was put in a tomb, hidden for a little while. But just as the special piece of matzoh will come out again to finish our celebration, Jesus came out of the tomb and lives forever. Now we share this piece of bread made with no yeast--a sign of Jesus, Who has no sin. (Pass the other matzoh half.)

Maror--The Bitter Herbs

Question 2

PARTICIPANT:

On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables. On this night why do we eat only bitter ones?

LEADER:

On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables, but on Passover we eat maror, bitter ones, to remember how bitter life was for our ancestors in Egypt. (Holding up the horseradish): "...the Egyptians became afraid of the Israelite slaves and made them work even more. They made their lives bitter with hard work making brick and mortar and doing all kinds of work in the fields." (Ex.1:12-14) Scoop some maror onto a piece of matzoh and let the bitter taste bring tears to your

eyes. Remember with compassion the tears our ancestors cried in their slavery long ago, and remember the bitterness of our own slavery to sin when we do not allow Jesus to set us free.

The Haroset

Question 3

PARTICIPANT:

On all other nights we don't dip our vegetables even once. On this night why do we dip them twice?

LEADER:

On all other nights we don't dip our vegetables even once, but tonight we dip them twice. We've already dipped the parsley in salt water. (Holding up the haroset): The Israelites worked very hard to make brick and clay to build cities for Pharaoh. We remember this in a mixture called haroset, made from apples, cinnamon, honey, nuts, and juice. Now again scoop some maror (horseradish - 2nd vegetable) onto a piece of matzoh, but this time, before eating it, dip it into the sweet haroset.

Tonight We Recline

Question 4

PARTICIPANT:

On all other nights we sit at the table. On this night why do we recline on soft cushions?

LEADER:

On all other nights we eat sitting at the table, but tonight we relax on soft cushions. The first Passover was celebrated by a people enslaved. They had no time to eat at a table or recline on cushions, but ate their meal in haste as they prepared for their escape from slavery in Egypt. Like the Israelites, once we were slaves but now we are free.

ALL:

Once we were slaves but now we are free!

LEADER:

The Israelites were told to eat the Passover quickly, 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 seder.

ALL (repeat after 2ND LEADER):

Jesus said: "Come unto me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"(Matt.11:28)

Maggid--The Story of Passover

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.

PARTICIPANT:

The Lord had promised the land of Israel to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet here were their children in Egypt. The Pharaoh who had come to power feared them. These foreigners in our midst are prospering and have grown numerous, he thought. Suppose they join with our enemies and turn against us! Pharaoh decided to exert greater control over this people, imposing harsh and bitter slavery upon the Israelites. Still, God blessed His people in strength and number.

PARTICIPANT:

Pharaoh grew more frightened and ordered every baby boy among the Israelites to be drowned in the Nile River. One Israelite couple hid their little boy for three months. Finally, entrusting his future to God, they set him in a basket and placed him upon the river. His sister, Miriam, watched as he floated downstream. Coming upon the basket, Pharaoh's daughter took pity on the child and chose to raise him as her own son. She called him Moses, meaning "drawn from the water."

PARTICIPANT:

Moses grew and became aware of the sufferings of his people. One day, in a rage, he lost control of himself and killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. Fleeing the palace and the eye of Pharaoh, Moses became a shepherd in the land of Midian, far from the cries of his suffering brothers.

PARTICIPANT:

The Lord, however, saw the affliction of the children of Israel and heard their groaning. He would raise up a deliverer to lead them out of bondage. It was then that He appeared to Moses in the midst of a bush that burned with fire, yet was not consumed. Moses drew close and listened as God commissioned him to go to Pharaoh. Fearful and reluctant, still Moses agreed to bring God's message to the king of Egypt, "Let my people go!"

The Second Cup: The Cup of Plagues

LEADER:

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

2ND LEADER:

The Lord said, "On that night I will pass through Egypt and every firstborn person and animal will die, and I will punish all the demon gods of Egypt for I AM the Lord" (Ex.12:12)

LEADER:

We fill our cups a second time now. A full cup is a sign of joy and we're certainly filled with joy that God has set us free. But we should also remember how much that freedom cost. Many lives were lost to save our people from slavery in Egypt. But an even greater price was paid to save us from slavery to sin--the death of Jesus, God's only Son. When we say the name of each plague, dip a finger into your cup and let a drop fall onto your napkin, making the cup of joy a little less full as we remember the cost of our freedom.

ALL (repeat after 2ND LEADER):

Blood--Frogs--Lice--Wild Animals--Cattle Disease--Boils--Hail--Locusts--Darkness--Death of the Firstborn!

The Passover Lamb

LEADER:

In telling the Passover story, three things absolutely must be mentioned: the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, and the Passover lamb.

2ND LEADER:

We've eaten the matzoh to remind us how quickly our ancestors left Egypt. We've tasted the bitter herbs to remind us of the bitter life they lived there.

LEADER (holding up shank bone-if you do not have a lamb bone just read through the writing with out it):

This bone stands for the lamb whose blood on the Israelite houses was a sign to God. God told Moses, "The lamb must be perfect" and when it is killed, "the people are to mark their door frames with some of the blood... They are to eat the meat that night, along with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. 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 will show your obedience; when I see the blood, I will pass over you and no plague will touch you when I punish Egypt." (Ex.12:3-13) We

are reminded by Moses that it is the Lord Himself who redeemed our ancestors from slavery. "So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders." (Deut.26:8)

LEADER:

"On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals-- and I will bring forth judgment on all the demon gods of Egypt. I am the Lord."

ALL (repeat after 2ND LEADER):

The LORD and none other.

LEADER:

Since Jesus has become our perfect Passover Lamb, God has allowed the Temple in Jerusalem to be destroyed. Now no more lambs need to be sacrificed for our sin. This bone is enough to remind 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.

Hagigah--The Egg

LEADER:

Last is the egg. It is called hagigah, a name signifying the traditional offering brought to the Temple on feast days. The egg is now a symbol of mourning, reminding us of the destruction of the holy temple in Jerusalem. The hardness of the shell also reminds us of the hardness of Pharaoh's heart--and of every heart that won't accept God's love. But the egg is also a sign of new birth and eternal life, since the shape of it shows no beginning and no end. God wants us to break the sadness and hardness of our hearts and be born into new life, everlasting life with Him.

(Break the egg, cut, and pass it)

Dayenu--It Would Have Been Enough

LEADER:

God is so good to us! For even one little blessing we should be able to respond, Dayenu! -- "it would have been enough!"

If the Lord had merely rescued us, but had not punished the Egyptians...

ALL: It would have been enough!

LEADER: If He had only destroyed their gods, but had not parted the Red Sea

ALL: It would have been enough!

LEADER: If He had only destroyed our enemies, but had not fed us His food in the desert

ALL: It would have been enough!

LEADER: If He had only led us through the desert, but had not given us his holy day of rest

ALL: It would have been enough!

LEADER: If He had only given us His Words and Commandments, but not a Promised Land forever

ALL: It would have been enough!

LEADER: But Jesus, the Lamb of God, provided all these blessings for the Israelites. And not only these, but so many more, and so many for us, too!

2ND LEADER:

Let's pray - Thank you Lord, for you have given us everything we need...

LEADER:

Everyone drink the second cup now, the Cup of Joy

The "Afikomen" and the Third Cup - The Cup of Redemption

LEADER:

It is time to share the afikomen, the hidden matzoh. Who can find it? (Children search for the hidden matzoh and one gives it to Father.) Remember, this piece of matzoh, made without leaven, 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 matzoh is the last food eaten at Passover so that its taste stays with us. It's shared like the Passover lamb was shared from the time our ancestors were freed from Egypt until the destruction of the Temple, after Jesus' death. Jesus broke the matzoh and gave thanks to the Lord.

LEADER (breaking the matzoh into pieces):

It was here that Jesus added the words: "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." (Lk.22:19) Jesus changed the significance of the matzoh forever, to symbolize His body broken for us. The matzoh, like the bread of our celebration of the Lord's Supper, is broken in 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.

And then Jesus said, "This is my blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sin. Drink in remembrance of me."

Eat the matzoh and drink the Cup of Redemption

Eliyahu HaNavi--The Prophet Elijah

LEADER (lifting the cup from the empty place at the table):

This cup is the cup of Elijah the Prophet. Elijah did not see death, but was taken up to heaven alive in a mighty wind riding a fiery chariot. Our ancestors and the Jewish people everywhere hoped that Elijah would come at Passover to announce the coming of the Messiah.

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 make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Lk.1:17)

Later Jesus said about John, "...he is the Elijah who was to come." (Matt.11:14)

It was this same John who saw Jesus and announced, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

LEADER:

The extra cup also reminds us to pray for our brothers, those Jews still seeking the Messiah who has already come to them and who waits longingly for them. The empty chair reminds us, and every household observing Passover tonight, that there are still those who do not know the freedom Jesus offers.

YOUNGEST PARTICIPANT would you open the door to welcome the Elijah to our seder to announce that Jesus truly is the Messiah for whom all people long!

Hallel--The Cup of Praise

LEADER:

Remember God's promise, "You will be my people and I will be your God" (Ex.6:7) Now let's fill our cups for the fourth and last time, and give thanks to our great God.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

ALL: His love endures forever.

LEADER: Give thanks to the Lord, God of all creation.

Give thanks to Him who destroyed the demonic gods of Egypt. (ALL repeat.)

Give thanks to Him who destroys the works of Satan today. (ALL repeat.)

Give thanks to Him who saved Israel from slavery in Egypt.(ALL repeat.)

Give thanks to Him who saves us from slavery to sin. (ALL repeat.)

Give thanks to God, our God, who chose us to be His people. (ALL repeat.)

LEADER:

Lift your cups and let's take turns sharing what the Passover means to each of us.

2ND LEADER:

(Leads in a prayer of thanks for Jesus, the Passover Lamb)

LEADER:

Our Passover celebration is complete, just as Jesus' death on the cross completely paid the price for our sin. Let's end with the traditional wish that next year we will celebrate in the New Jerusalem! "Lashanah haba'ah bi Yerushalayim!"

ALL:

"Next year, in Jerusalem!"