

# A Simplified Seder

*The intent of this Seder meal is to provide a time to gather around the table and remember God's work for His people during their enslavement in Egypt and their deliverance. If you do not have children in your home, still feel free to celebrate and assign roles accordingly.*

*Read through the "script" a few times before Thursday evening in order to better prepare and gather supplies for the celebration. We know that we are experiencing a time in our country where you may not want to leave your home or may have a hard time finding supplies. Please note that you can use your creativity with what you have on hand and then take time to discuss what would have been used in a traditional Seder meal.*

*Also, remember that the following Seder celebration is based on an actual Jewish Seder, but does not include all the elements.*

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## SUPPLIES

- Small plates or tinfoil plates
- Small cups
- Boiled eggs
- Fruit & nuts or Charoset
- Horseradish
- Matzo, saltine crackers, or flat bread
- White cloth
- Grape juice
- Parsley or lettuce
- Lamb (optional)
- Candy prize
- Few small bowls of salt water
- Foot washing bowl
- Towel
- Red washable paint, coloring page (lamb's blood on doorpost), or red construction paper
- Bible

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## RECIPE IDEAS

CHAROSET

MATZO

HONEY GINGER CARROTS

SIMPLE WHOLE ROASTED CHICKEN

POTATO KUGEL

FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE



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## PREPARATION

### BEFORE THE CELEBRATION, prepare:

- A bowl of warm water for foot washing, along with a towel
- All dinner items
- A pitcher of grape juice
- If desired, play music in background, such as traditional Passover Seder songs, contemporary Christian songs, or hymns
- Your Bible
- The atmosphere (Remember this is a celebration! Allow your children to ask questions and keep the atmosphere light.)
- Hide the afikomen

*The AFIKOMEN is a piece of your matzo, broken off and concealed in a white cloth. Have candy as the prize for the child who finds the cloth-wrapped afikomen or have candy for all the children. The afikomen hunt will take place after the meal concludes.*

### FOR EACH PLACE SETTING, you will need:

- A goblet or small shallow cup
- A small plate or one made from tinfoil
- No utensils
- Remember to set an extra place to represent Jesus' place at the table

### ON THE TABLE, you will need:

- A few small bowls of salt water.
- If you want to be adventurous, sit on the floor!

### ON EACH PLATE, you will need:

- One boiled egg with the shell on
- A few nuts
- Fruit (such as strawberries, apple slices, orange slices, and/or grapes)
- A bit of horseradish in a small cup

**OPTIONAL:** Decorate your table with a white cloth, candles, baskets of flatbread or Matzo crackers (available at most large grocery stores - can use saltines during this time).

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## SYMBOLISM

### On PREPARED PLATES for each person or ONE LARGE SHARED PLATE:

- The **UNLEAVENED BREAD**, or **MATZO**, reminds us that the Jewish people did not have time to let their dough rise when they made their bread, so they did not use yeast. They had to escape quickly.
- The **HORSERADISH** represents bitter herbs - or moror – to remind us of the bitterness of slavery.
- The **EGG** represents offerings that were brought to God in the Temple of Jerusalem in ancient times. You may also tell them that the empty shell of the egg can remind us of the empty tomb.
- The **LAMB** symbolizes the Passover sacrifice that saved the people from death.
- The **FRUIT AND NUTS** - served tonight separately – were often combined into a coarse, sweet mixture called **CHAROSET**. This represents the mortar the slaves used in their work.

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# SCRIPT

**PARENT/ADULT:** Tonight, we take part in the Passover Seder. It is a tradition celebrated by Jewish people as part of the Jewish Passover. The Passover celebrates the time when God, through Moses, led his people out of slavery. The Egyptian pharaoh let the people go after the angel of death killed every firstborn in Egypt but “passed over” the Israelite homes with lamb’s blood on their doorposts.

*Depending on what you feel is age-appropriate for your child regarding the explanation of Passover, you may choose to have a coloring page of a man preparing his doorpost. Have the child color or paint the doorpost red. You can also use red construction paper that you can tape on the doorposts or have a child color/paint a piece of paper red. Explain that this was a message to the angel of death to “pass over” those houses and spare the first-born children.*

**How may they have felt that night if they were the parent painting the doorpost or a child inside the house?**

**PARENT/ADULT:** Tonight, we celebrate a Jewish ritual. But we are not Jewish. We are Christians.

**So why do you think we should celebrate Passover? (Give children a chance to respond and be open to their thoughts and questions.)**

**PARENT/ADULT:** One reason we celebrate is to remember how God helped his people by leading them out of slavery. We remember that God keeps His promises.

**Can you think of a time when God has kept a promise in your life? (Allow children to respond.)**

**PARENT/ADULT:** We also celebrate Passover because Jesus did! Remember, when Jesus joined his friends for one last dinner before he died on the cross? That “Last Supper” was during a Passover celebration. During dinner, Jesus first introduced Holy Communion to the disciples. He took bread, broke it and said, “This is my body.” He took a cup of wine, lifted it and said, “This is my blood.”

**What do you think the disciples thought when he said his body was the bread and his blood was the wine? (Allow the children to share responses.)**

**PARENT/ADULT:** The disciples might have been confused. No one ever said anything like that before. With Jesus, this meal was given new meaning. Bread and wine had new meaning, too. Even his very best friends, the disciples, were surprised and amazed!

**PARENT/ADULT:** And so, we eat this meal to remember Jesus Christ. We will eat the same kinds of foods that Jesus ate. We will say some of the same words he said. And we can be amazed, too!

**PARENT/ADULT:** (Drawing attention to the goblets) During the meal, you will be served a drink four times, which is an ancient tradition of the Passover Seder. The four cups are:

<b>THE CUP OF SANCTIFICATION</b>	to remind us of God's promises
<b>THE CUP OF DELIVERANCE</b>	to remind us that God delivered (brought) his people out of slavery
<b>THE CUP OF REDEMPTION</b>	to remind us Jesus died for us
<b>THE CUP OF PRAISE</b>	to remind us to thank God for what He has done

**PARENT/ADULT:** (Drawing attention to empty seat) And we remember throughout our dinner tonight, that Jesus is always at our table, just like He was at the table with the disciples.

**CHILD READER (OR ADULT):** Read from Mark 14:12-16. (Discuss briefly. Note how the Bible says that Jesus was celebrating the Passover feast on the night before he died on the cross.)

**CHILD READER (OR ADULT):** Read Luke 22:14-15. (Discuss briefly.)

**What do you think Jesus meant when he talked about suffering? How do you think the disciples might have felt? How might Jesus have felt?**

**PARENT/ADULT:** We begin tonight with our first cup – the cup of sanctification and freedom. (Pour small amount of grape juice in each goblet. Wait to drink.)

**PARENT/ADULT:** Baruch atah adonai, elohay numelech hadlam boray pree hagafen. (English translation) Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

**EVERYONE DRINKS THE FIRST CUP.**

**PARENT/ADULT:** In the traditional Seder, the first cup was followed by the ceremonial washing of hands. During the Last Supper, this might have been when Jesus washed his friends' feet. Read John 13:3-5, 14-15. (At this time, you may choose to wash the feet of your children. And they may also wash yours. Then, wash hands.)

**PARENT/ADULT:** At this point in the Passover meal, the first "dipping" took place. This is represented tonight by the parsley and salt water. You will dip the parsley in the bowl of salt water. The parsley reminds us of the **HYSSOP** which applied the Lamb's blood to the door frames of the homes. The salt water reminds us of the tears shed while in slavery and of the waters of the Red Sea. God parted the waters so the people could pass through to safety and freedom.

**EVERYONE MAY DIP TWICE AND EAT. ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TASTE THE SALT AND REMEMBER THE TEARS. POUR SECOND CUPS. DO NOT DRINK YET.**

*After the dipping, the host of a Passover Seder pours the second cup that the participants did not drink yet. The next step is the asking of questions, usually by the youngest.*

**CHILD:** Why is this night different from all other nights?

**PARENT/ADULT:** Because we were once slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

**CHILD:** On this night, why do we eat only unleavened bread?

**PARENT/ADULT:** Biblical tradition says that the people had to leave Egypt so quickly that they did not have time to let the bread rise. So, they made dough without yeast.

**CHILD:** On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs, but this night only bitter herbs. Why do we dip them?

**PARENT/ADULT:** Because this reminds us of the bitterness of slavery. On this night we dip into salt water to remind us of the tears.

*Explain each element of the Passover meal on the small plates. Explain how some of the food might taste different from what they normally eat. Encourage your children to try new things, and to remember that each part of the meal has special meaning. You might want to try and do each element separately and try it along with the explanation.*

**PARENT/ADULT:** You may now drink from the second cup - the cup of deliverance.

#### **EVERYONE DRINKS THE SECOND CUP.**

**PARENT/ADULT:** Barach atah adonai, elohay numelech hadlam, boray pree hagafen. (English translation) Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the Vine.

**PARENT/ADULT/CHILD/WHOLE FAMILY:** (Say grace before the meal is eaten. Here is an example) God, of Your goodness, grant us Yourself; for You are enough for us, and we could not ask for anything less to be for Your glory. And if we ask for anything less, we shall still be in want, for only in You have we all.

#### **BEGIN YOUR MEAL.**

**PARENT/ADULT/CHILD/WHOLE FAMILY:** (After the meal, you may say this blessing) Blessed are you our God, King of the Universe, who feeds the whole world, with your goodness and with grace, kindness and mercy, for your mercy endures forever.

*At this time, the third cup, the cup of redemption is served. Depending on your religious traditions and beliefs regarding communion, you may serve communion around the table at this time. Otherwise, you may simply note that this is when Jesus would have served communion, and you may drink your third cups of juice individually.*

**PARENT/ADULT:** (Modify, if your children do not yet take communion) We will now be serving the third cup - the cup of redemption - as part of our communion service around this table. Jesus would have done this on the night of the Last Supper, when he celebrated Passover with the disciples in the Upper Room. In Jewish tradition, the cup of redemption recalled God's promise to Moses: I will redeem you with an outstretched arm. Imagine the surprise of the disciples when Jesus suddenly gave this cup of redemption a whole new meaning. During the third cup, Jesus took the cup and gave thanks, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my father's kingdom." He also took the bread, gave thanks and broke it saying, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

**PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

*If you are doing communion, offer it to those around the table able to partake of it. You may offer both the bread and grape juice or wine to the person beside you, saying: "(Person's name), this is the body of Christ, given for you. This is the blood of Christ, shed for you."*

**EVERYONE DRINKS THE THIRD CUP.**

*After communing, you may now pray a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for what He has done for us.*

**PARENT/ADULT:** We have reached the fourth and final cup, the cup of praise. (Pour final cups.)

**PARENT/ADULT:** Baruch atah adonai, elohay numelech haolam, boray pree hagafen. (English translation) Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

**EVERYONE DRINKS THE FOURTH CUP.**

**PARENT/ADULT:** Now it is time to hunt for the hidden **AFIKOMEN**.

**What does this bread, broken and wrapped in a white cloth, remind you of in the Easter story? (Christ's body wrapped in a cloth and hidden in a tomb).  
Award a small prize to the child who found the Afikomen.**

**PARENT/ADULT:** The Passover Seder traditionally comes to an end with a closing hymn. We will do the same tonight, by singing the Doxology.

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him all creatures here below  
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.**

*If it is dark outside, please conclude your time together with the Garden of Gethsemane Prayer Experience.*

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# GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE PRAYER EXPERIENCE

Use this prayer experience to end your Maundy Thursday experience.

**READ MARK 14: 26-31**

If you have time, and weather allows, take a short walk in silence thinking about the journey Jesus knew he would be taking when he left that upper room. End up back at your home and quietly find a place to sit out in nature imagining what it must have been like to be Jesus.

**READ MARK 14: 32-52**

Sit in the silence for some time. Consider what it must have been like for Jesus - those He loved would desert Him, He was going to be all alone from an earthy perspective, tortured at the hands of men, agony of the crucifixion, and ultimately death.

Close your time in **PRAYER** thanking Jesus for all that he endured for your salvation.

