

(PREPARATION NOTES)

Parents, we pray that this experience is a blessing. That you'll set aside an evening during Holy week to learn, ask questions, worship, and enjoy each other as you walk through this scripted and interactive meal.

Tips: read through it before you start, give everyone their own copy or send it to everyone's device, minimize distractions (turn off wifi and the tv), relax and smile

Supplies to have on hand: candle(s), wine/grape juice, ingredients for unleavened bread (flour, baking soda, shortening (Crisco), and honey.

PREPARE TOGETHER

Make a simple dinner: choose a family favorite that can be kept warm until it's time to eat. It doesn't need to be the traditional lamb and bitter herbs to be a meaningful meal. (If you're interested in cooking a traditional Passover meal, go for it, there are lots of resources online.)

Make unleavened bread: ½ cup of flour, 1/4 tsp (heaping) of baking soda, 1 Tbsp of shortening (Crisco), 1 Tbsp of Honey (a little more doesn't hurt), 2 Tbsp of water. Mix dry ingredients, cut in the shortening, add the honey and water. Mix thoroughly, dough shouldn't be sticky, if it is, add a little flour. Pat flat into a circle 7.5-8 in in diameter. Bake at 350 degrees for 7-8 minutes.

While it's baking, **Read Exodus 12:16-18, 31-26.**

Set the table: matches, candles, cups, wine/juice, unleavened bread wrapped in a napkin, Bibles

Assign roles: *It is ok if one person has more than one role. The intent is for the whole family to be involved.*

Commentator (C), Leader (L)(traditionally the father), Parent (P)(traditionally the mother), Youngest Child, and every able family member takes turns reading the Bible passages (it may be helpful to mark the passages before the meal begins).

Bible passages to mark:

John 8:12 (read by Parent)

Psalms 75:1

1 John 1:9-10

Psalms 19:12-14

Exodus 12:1-14, 17, 26-36

John 1:29 (read by Commentator)

Psalms 114

Psalms 96:1-3

1 Corinthians 10:17

Luke 22:19

Luke 22:20

1 Corinthians 10:26

Numbers 6:24-26 (read by Leader)

Optional additions:

- Awesome video from the Bible Project on Sacrifice and Atonement: https://youtu.be/G_OIRWGLdnw
- Really great podcast teaching on Jesus' celebration of the Passover as it's documented in Matthew 26:17-30 <https://open.spotify.com/episode/0FP0qcK9loRnxWRI3TGJoA> (it's about an hour...but interesting teaching)
- Eat picnic style on the floor, "reclined" with pillows and a low table. This is likely how Jesus celebrated this meal.
- Read about or include traditional Passover foods.
- Jewish explanation of The Passover Seder: What to Expect at a Seder: https://youtu.be/LzsuL9U1a_k

Sit down and begin

Commentator (C): As we prepare for Easter, we've set aside tonight to celebrate a simplified Seder meal. Seder means order. Our meal will have an order that invites us to remember God's faithfulness. Jesus celebrated the Jewish Passover Seder with His disciples on the night He was betrayed. This is an interactive, scripted experience: we will celebrate this meal with joy as we reflect and remember, worship, take turns reading scripture, and learn together.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Parent (P): *We begin with the lighting of the candles & Read John 8:12*

C: Light of the World is one way that Jesus describes Himself. What are some other phrases or names that are used to describe God? (ideas: Isaiah 9:6) We'll share these as part of our opening prayer...

P: God you are...*as a family, list as many names/descriptions as you'd like...* Thank you for claiming us as Your people and choosing to love us. Amen

CUP OF THANKSGIVING

P: *The leader of the family pours the first of four pours of wine/grape juice into each person's cup.*

Read Psalm 75:1

C: What are some things God has done that we are thankful for? What do we appreciate about God? (Psalm 18:1-3)

Say together: **You are blessed, the Lord our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.**

P: *Drink the first cup of wine, the cup of thanksgiving.*

WASHING

C: The washing of hands during the Passover meal reminds participants of our need to be both physically clean and our need to be spiritually "washed" as we prepare to celebrate this feast. It may have been at this point that our Lord washed the feet of His disciples as an expression of His new commandment to love and serve others.

Read 1 John 1:9-10, Psalm 19:12-14

P: Pause for a moment to ask God for forgiveness. *Everyone washes their hands.*

THE HAGGADAH (HAA•GUH•DUH): TELLING OF THE ACCOUNT OF THE EXODUS & THE CUP OF DELIVERANCE

P: *The leader pours the second cup of wine*

Youngest child: Why is this night different from all other nights?

Read Exodus 12:1-14, 17, 26-36

C: To make clear how the deliverance from Egypt is symbolized in this meal the leader would traditionally lift each of the ceremonial foods in turn and explain their significance. Tonight, we'll highlight the Pesach (pei•saak). The Pesach is the unblemished lamb which our ancestors sacrificed to the Lord in memory of that night when the angel of death passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt. **Read John 1:29.** Jesus (God's son) came in human form, lived an unblemished life, and died on the cross as a fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifice requirements. He was our perfect sacrificial lamb. Because of Jesus we no longer have to kill a lamb like our ancestors did to receive forgiveness. Jesus' blood was shed so that all who recognize Him as their Savior are forgiven and saved from eternal death. This sacrifice was all-sufficient, once for all.

HALLEL PSALM OF THANKSGIVING & BLESSING OF THE FOOD

Say together: **Hallelujah, Praise the Lord.**

Read Psalm 114 & Psalm 96:1-3

Say together: **Even if God had not done all these things, it would have been enough. Halleluiah, Praise the Lord!**

Leader (L): Thank you, God, for your rescue and deliverance. It's only by Your grace that we are here tonight. Thank you for this and so many undeserved mercies. May Your will be done through us as it was through our ancestors. May Your name be kept holy throughout the world and may all people be moved to worship You in one accord. Blessed are You.

Say together: You are blessed, the Lord our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

P: *Drink the second cup of wine, the cup of deliverance.*

C: As in the case of the wine shared from a common vessel, the breaking and distribution of a single piece of matzo (unleavened bread) to all present signified unity.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:17

C: For the host during the Passover Meal to dip a piece of bread and give it to one of the guests was a customary token of affection. This is significant because when Jesus celebrates the Passover with His disciples He dipped a piece of bread and handed it to Judas. It was a last loving appeal to him, but as the Gospel of John tells us; "As soon as Judas had received the bread he went out." (John 13:30)

P: *The leader breaks the unleavened bread into two pieces hiding the larger piece within the napkin to be used later (this piece is called the Afikoman*). Break the unhidden piece into smaller pieces and distribute a piece to each person. Holding the bread in their hands, all say:*

Say together: Blessed are You, O Lord our God. You have sanctified us by Your commandments and have commanded us concerning the eating of unleavened bread.

P: *All eat one piece of unleavened bread.*

EAT DINNER TOGETHER

THE CUP OF BLESSING

C: The remaining piece of unleavened bread is now uncovered and raised.** It was probably this piece of matzo that Jesus used when He took bread and broke it and gave it to His disciples...

Read Luke 22:19

L: Let us bless the Lord by thanking Him for all that He has provided for us. God, thank you for... *List together as a family things for which you are grateful and that God has provided.* Amen.

P: *All eat the piece of matzo. The third cup of wine, the cup of blessing and salvation, is then poured.*

Read Luke 22:20 & 1 Corinthians 10:26

C: It is likely this cup of wine that Jesus shared with His disciples and where He offered them and us freedom from our bond of slavery to sin. Like God set the Israelites free from slavery in Egypt, Jesus' sacrifice sets us free. *All stand.*

Read Psalm 116:12-18

Say together: You are blessed, the Lord our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

P: *All drink the third cup of wine. Then all cups are filled for the fourth time, for the Cup of Melchizedek (mel-^lki-zə-_ldek) Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abraham and blessed him. This the cup of peace and promise.*

Say together: You are blessed, the Lord our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

P: *The leader then concludes the meal by speaking this ancient blessing over us.*

L: Read **Numbers 6:24-26**

***C:** *Some families have a tradition of hiding the Afikoman, then after eating the meal, the kids have the challenge of finding the hidden bread. It's sort of like hide-and-seek, but with religious significance. The kids bring it back to the table and it's used for the remaining portion of the meal. Sometimes there is a small prize for the finder.*

L: I will now hide a portion of the unleavened bread which we will use as the Afikoman, the dessert of our meal. It is a symbol of the redemption we long for and we know will come, but yet we do not yet see.

**** C:** *This is when kids will seek out the hidden Afikoman. For followers of Jesus, the Afikoman symbolically represents the Messiah, as Jesus' body was broken, wrapped in linen, buried (hidden), and raised on the third day.*