

# A PASSOVER CELEBRATION

**Father says:** “Tonight, we celebrate Passover. It is a night to remember that we were once slaves in Egypt and that we were once slaves to sin. It is a night to celebrate that God has rescued His people from slavery!”

Mother lights the two candles.

## **THE SEDER PLATE**

**Show the children the seder plate. Explain the significance of each item. Give each person a piece of parsley. Dip the parsley in the salt water and eat it. Give everyone a small piece of matzah. Show them how to put a small amount of horseradish and charoset on their matzah.** How does this remind you of the bitterness in Egypt? How does this remind you of the bitterness of sin?

## **THE FOUR QUESTIONS**

**Children ask:** “Why is this night different from all other nights?”

**Child #1 asks:** “On all other nights, we eat leavened bread. On this night, why do we eat only matzah, or unleavened bread?”

**Father answers:** “On Passover, we do not eat bread with leaven or yeast. This leaven reminds us of sin. On the very first Passover, God told the people not to eat bread with leaven.”

**Child #2 asks:** “On all other nights, we eat vegetables. On this night, why do we eat bitter herbs?”

**Father answers:** “These bitter herbs remind us of the bitter tears that God’s people cried in Egypt. They were slaves and life was hard. On the Passover night, God sent the final plague, and Pharaoh let the people go. God rescued them out of Egypt. In the same way, you and I were slaves to sin. We needed Jesus to rescue us.”

**Child #3 asks:** “On all other nights, we do not dip our vegetables. On this night, why do we dip them?”

**Father answers:** “We dip our bitter herbs in the salt water to remind us of the tears of God’s people. We dip our herbs in the charoset to remember the bricks and mortar that the Israelites were forced to make as slaves.”

**Child #4 asks:** “On all other nights, we eat our meals sitting. On this night, why do we eat reclining with pillows?”

**Father answers:** “Tonight, we eat reclining and relaxing. This reminds us that we are free and in no hurry. God brought His people out of the slavery of Egypt. Jesus brought us out of the slavery of sin. We can rest and enjoy.”

**Recall the story of the first Passover as a family. Read the story from Exodus 11-12 or tell the story in your own words.**

## **THE CUP OF SANCTIFICATION**

**Read Leviticus 20:26**

**Father says:** "This cup reminds us of the promise that God made to bring the Israelites out from under the Egyptians. He set them apart for Himself. God wanted them to be holy. This promise shows us that God is jealous over His people. We have been saved and set apart for Him alone. We should be holy because He is holy."

**Lift your glasses.**

**Everyone says:** "Blessed are you, Oh Lord our God, King of the universe!"

**Drink.**

## **THE CUP OF PLAGUES**

**Read Exodus 12:27**

**Father says:** "Pharaoh did not want to let the people go. God sent plagues to show His power and authority to everyone in Egypt. These were the plagues that God sent: blood, frogs, gnats, flies, disease, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and death of the firstborn. So much pain and death came before the Israelites were freed. The Israelites were thankful that God had kept His promise to free them from slavery. We are thankful that God has kept His promise to free us from sin."

**Lift your glasses.**

**Everyone says:** "Dayenu! How great are your blessings to us!"

**Drink.**

**Father lifts the unity and shows it to the family.**

**Father says:** "This is the unity. The top matzah represents God, the middle matzah represents Jesus, and the bottom matzah represents the Holy Spirit. We call the middle matza the afikomen. On the night of His death, Jesus gave the disciples bread and told them that it was His body. Jesus was giving His body as a sacrifice."

**Father breaks off pieces of the afikomen and gives one to each person. Everyone eats.**

## **THE CUP OF REDEMPTION**

**Read Isaiah 53:5**

**Father says:** "This cup stands for the blood of the Passover lamb. On the night of His death, Jesus made a new covenant. He told them that this cup was His blood and that they were to drink this in remembrance of Him. Jesus was offering Himself as the final and forever Passover Lamb. The meaning of Passover changed on that night. God had kept His promise and sent His Son to be the sacrifice. Because of the new covenant, we now practice the Lord's table in our churches. It reminds us of this important Passover night, when Jesus gave sacrificed His body and His blood for our sin."

**Lift your glasses.**

**Everyone says:** "Blessed are you, Oh Lord our God, King of the universe!"

**Drink.**

## **THE CUP OF PRAISE**

**Read Psalm 136**

**Father says:** "Because of the cross, we are free from sin. We are His people, and He is our God! On that first Passover night, the people were free from slavery, but they were not yet free from sin. As the people continued to celebrate Passover, they looked ahead to the day when the Messiah would come. God had kept His promises to them before. He would keep His promise to send the chosen One. We celebrate Passover by looking back. God DID send His Son! Jesus has freed us for the ultimate slavery of sin. The promise has been kept. The work is finished."

**Lift your glasses.**

**Everyone says:** "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! His love endures forever!"

**To conclude the Seder, everyone shouts:** "Next year in the New Jerusalem!"

**Eat your Passover feast as a family.** May the delicious food remind you of the satisfaction that you have found in Christ. May the joy of family remind you of the marriage super that is to come. May you find comfort in the presence of the Holy Spirit knowing that you will one day be at home with God forever. This Passover ceremony and feast is meant to lead you to worship God for all that He has done, is doing, and will do.

# PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEDER

## THE PASSOVER TABLE

Traditionally, the Passover table is adorned with a beautiful tablecloth. There is a candle on each end of the table. Each person is given a glass or cup specifically for grape juice. Each person will need a pillow to recline on. The seder plate is usually the centerpiece. Families that practice the Passover every year often purchase a special seder plate for the occasion. Feel free to use a plate that you have instead. You will need grape juice, matzah, and your Bibles at the table as well.

## THE UNITY

Take three pieces of unbroken matzah and fold them in a napkin. Place this on a plate and drape a second napkin over the plate.

## THE SEDER PLATE

- **Charoset:** This is a mixture of chopped apples, nuts, and grape juice. The charoseth symbolizes the bricks and mortar that the Israelites were forced to make in Egypt.
- **Horse Radish:** This symbolizes the bitterness of life in Egypt. It also reminds us of the bitterness of being slaves to sin.
- **Parsley:** You will need enough for each person to have one sprig. The parsley symbolizes the hyssop plant that the Israelites used to smear the blood of the lamb on their doorposts
- **Lamb's Shankbone:** You can buy this bone from a butcher. Remove the meat and roast it in the oven. This bone reminds us of the lamb that each Israelite family killed on that first Passover night. They were spared from the final plague by putting the blood of the lamb on their doorposts.
- **Bitter Tears:** This is a small cup of salt water. It symbolizes the tears of the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt. It also reminds us of our tears when we were slaves to sin.
- **Roasted Egg:** This egg is roasted in the oven. You will want to poke a small hole in it so that it doesn't explode. This egg reminds us of the way that the priests roasted the sacrifice in the Temple.

## THE PASSOVER MEAL

Passover meals vary among families and cultures. The only universal tradition is refraining from eating bread with leaven or yeast. Many orthodox Jews also choose to follow Kosher guidelines. Here are some Passover staples and common dishes that your family could enjoy.

Macaroons

Roasted Potatoes

Chicken Soup

Matzah Ball Soup

Potato Kugel

Roasted Carrots

Braised Brisket

Latkes with Applesauce

Gefilte Fish

Roast Chicken

Pot Roast with Vegetables

Matzo Cake

# The Seder Plate



