



## Why do we celebrate Passover as Christians?

Here's 3 reasons that we celebrate as believers in Jesus:

1. God instructs Israel to celebrate Passover and we are grafted into His people:

In Exodus 12:14 God tells the people of Israel that Passover *"will be a day for you to always remember. I want you and all generations after you to commemorate this day with a festival to Me. Celebrate this feast as a perpetual ordinance, a permanent part of your life together."* As Jesus spends his last moments with his disciples they are celebrating Passover. It is at this meal that Jesus tells the disciples to take the bread and wine (a normal part of the Passover meal) in order to remember his death and resurrection from that time forward. The Bible tells us in Romans 11 that we have been *"grafted into"* the people of God as a wild olive branch is grafted onto an olive tree. Ephesians 2:11-16 puts it like this...*"Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders...In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope... He[Jesus] united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us...Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us."*

2. To understand the beauty of the cross.

God's deliverance of His people from Egypt is a picture of our ultimate deliverance from the bondage of sin and death through Jesus our savior. God released ten plagues in Egypt because of Pharaoh's refusal to obey His word to *"let His people go so that they could worship Him"*. The tenth and final plague was death to all the first born sons, but Israel was instructed to take the blood of a spotless lamb and put the blood in the shape of a cross on the doorpost of their homes. In doing so, death would "pass over" their families. Jesus is the final spotless lamb that was slain in order that death would "pass over" all who have placed their faith in Him! Egypt is a symbol in the Bible for bondage. When we are released from the bondage of the enemy we are saved from death and able to worship God as His covenant people. What an amazing picture of God's salvation!

3. Passover was celebrated by the first Christians for centuries.

It is clear from the Apostle Paul's personal practice and instructions to the churches that Passover (along with the other yearly feasts) was a regularly celebrated occasion in the

gentile churches. (*Acts 12, 18, 20; 1 Cor 11, 16*) Historians have also verified the significance of these feasts in early church life. During the Roman reformation in the early 3rd Century all signs of Jewish heritage were intentionally removed and replaced by European substitutes for various political and cultural reasons. Through persecution and force many of the vital parts of our Christian heritage were forbidden. Passover was so difficult for Rome to extinguish from the church that even under penalty of death it was still celebrated until at least 600 AD. Thankfully, we live in a time where we are able to restore many of the beautiful traditions that have been lost and may seem foreign in our churches now.

*All in all, we believe that there is great power in paying attention to what the Bible calls "Appointed Times" of the year. We hope you will join with us as we remember Christ's death and victory through the cross!*

## **What supplies will I need?**

### **Center of table: Seder Plate, Candles and Matza**

2 white candlesticks, candle holders and a lighter

3 Matzo crackers stacked and a large white napkin (or white piece of fabric)

An actual seder plate to place items on (can purchase traditional one online or use a regular plate)

### **6 items on Seder plate:**

**Romaine lettuce** and **Horseradish**- the bitter herbs that remind us of the bitterness of physical slavery foreshadowing the bitterness of a life captive to sin.

**Haroset**- resembles the mortar, or the type of labor that Israel was subjected to by the Egyptians, foreshadowing the reminder that you were once a captive to the purposes of the enemy. (explained below)

**Roasted Egg**- the reminder of the covenant that God would bring Israel into new life again, foreshadowing the promise that God would send a messiah to bring new life to all people. (Illustrative purposes, not for eating)

**Parsley and salt water**- a reminder of the tears cried when under oppression. This foreshadows the pain of life before we receive freedom in Christ.

**Lamb bone**- symbolizing the blood of the lamb in the shape of a cross on the doorpost that instructed death to Passover the homes of the Israelites, foreshadowing the life of every believer in Christ who is delivered from death by his blood. (*you can get from a butcher, order online or even buy from a pet store. Only for illustrative purposes.*)

## **Food:**

For Everyone to eat/drink during the script reading:

- Wine and/or grape juice
- Matza bread
- Parsley
- Salt water bowls close by
- Romaine lettuce leaf or another “bitter vegetable” like Radicchio
- Grated fresh or jarred horseradish
- Haroset (*an apple and nut mixture- You can find recipes online, or get from catering.*)
- Treat or candies for any kids

### **Catering for the actual Passover meal:**

Some people choose to go with Lamb as a main but it's not essential. Most grocery stores have catering for passover or you can look up dishes online. It's up to you what you want to make or order.

Note about bread- remember not to serve bread with yeast. (Yeast is a picture of sin/hypocrisy which cuts us off from God.)

### **Seating:**

Everyone needs to be sitting at a table with a place setting and 2 glasses, one for water and one for wine/juice. All items to eat during the reading will need to be within everyone's reach.

### **Children at the meal:**

- you may choose to make a kids table or have kids sit with adults
- have a kids gift bag or coloring and crafts
- the kids will search for the afikomen (half of matzo cracker hidden in the white napkin, which represents Jesus in the tomb). Have a treat ready, like candies, to reward the kids when they find it.

## **Guidelines for our Passover celebration in an online format: Things to prepare beforehand:**

The Script: (attached separately)

The script we will read together is in a “call and response” format. You and your family will read aloud every **BLUE** section. Every time there is an action that you need to do it is labeled in **RED**. Please print 1 script for each person or ensure everyone has a digital copy on their phones before the start of the stream. Also, it would be good for you to read through the script ahead of time so you are familiar with the different prompts (such as lighting the candles or filling the cups etc).

The Child's Question:

Prepare children for the child's question. Learn it at home beforehand- There is a part of the script where the children all come forward and ask: **"Why is this night different from all other nights? What does this celebration mean?"**

#### Your Passover Meal:

Your actual meal should be prepared beforehand and ready to eat once the seder is finished. The components of the Passover meal vary and are up to you. A typical meal would consist of Lamb, vegetables sides like carrot or potato, apple charoset, etc- you can find tons of recipes online. If you want to cater, grocery stores like Whole Foods have great and affordable Passover catering. Remember no yeast!

#### The Table:

Please have your table set with all the passover elements within reach of everyone. During the seder we will partake of these elements together. You will eat your meal independently once the stream is over so you can leave your food for the meal off of the table for the first section.

#### The Passover celebration will be hosted on Youtube:

You will be sent a video link on Friday April 2nd. The videos will be organized in short segments and the whole seder should last between 45min-1hr. It will be available until Sunday night April 4th.

#### Other things you can do as individual homes after the stream:

- There are traditional dances that everyone can do together (you can look up online)
- If you have children you might want to also read the exodus story from a Children's Bible together to help them understand.
- Someone from your group may want to prepare a poem or share a song about the cross or the blood of Jesus.
- You might select other songs of worship to sing together or join in a time of family prayer