

EASTER FAMILY DATE



Celebrating the Passover Feast!

Getcha some matzah bread, and let's learn more about the precious sacrifice of Jesus Christ. You might think celebrating Passover is only appropriate if you're Jewish, but it is the foundation upon which Easter stands.

Ancient believers celebrated this festival during the same time of the year that Christians celebrated Easter. (Jesus observed it the night before He died.) The main purpose of Passover was to look back to God's rescue of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery and (little did they know) to look forward to the ultimate rescue of humanity through the blood of Jesus Christ. But a really cool bonus purpose was to answer



questions the children might have. The annual meal was an invitation for kids to ask: "what's that mean, really!?" I love that! As parents remembered God's faithfulness the children were learning about it.

Let's be mindful that the narrative of Christ's resurrection is familiar to us, but it's complex. Experiencing Passover will help children understand and offer them a chance to ask you any questions they may have about the Christian faith.

HE IS RISEN!



IN HIS GREAT LOVE,
DANNAH GRESH
Founder of True Girl



mytruegirl.com/subscription



SUBJECT:

God's rescue of humanity

SETTING:

Your kitchen/dining room table

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED:

matzah rolls or crackers

parsley

a bitter green lettuce

horseradish sauce

lamb shanks
(or chicken wings/legs)

boiled eggs

charoset or chunky applesauce

red grape juice

3-5' of red ribbon

candy

your Bibles

This special family connection experience will help you understand both the Passover and the Resurrection story better. You can do this very simply in less than one hour, or you can make a day of it and invite your kids to cook, decorate, and plan with you. Here's what you'll do:

- 1 Make your food.** The recipes are fairly simple. If it's fun for you to make some of these things, we've included recipes. If not, just buy items at the grocery store.
- 2 Decorate your table.** Be as simple or as elaborate as you want. White tablecloths, candles, palm branches, baskets of matzah rolls or crackers, a pitcher of red grape juice, and several small bowls of salt water. Each table setting needs:
 - A "goblet" and a metal plate or a piece of tinfoil
- 3 Prepare each plate.** Each person needs access to:



Maroro (horseradish representing the bitterness of the past)



Baytzah (boiled egg representing new life)



Chazeret (bitter lettuce representing the harshness of slavery)



Z'roah (a lamb or chicken bone representing the passover lamb)



Karpas (parsley representing the new beginning)



Charoset (chunky applesauce representing the brick and mortar from building blocks)



Matzah (unleavened bread representing a set apart life)



Salt water (representing the tears of the slaves)

- 4 Hide the afikomen.** The afikomen is a piece of the matzah bread or cracker. Break it off and conceal it in a white cloth. After the meal concludes, it is tradition to have an afikomen hunt. The child who finds it gets candy.

- 5 Enjoy the Seder meal.** Take your time and allow the children to ask any questions they have about either the exodus from Egypt or the death and resurrection of Jesus.



Send us photos of your Seder meal. Post them on Instagram or Facebook and be sure to tag True Girl or Dannah Gresh!



Matzah Rolls Recipe

Unleavened bread represents holy, set apart living. You can buy some matzah-style crackers at the store, or make these with your kiddos as part of the learning and fun.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 2 c matzah meal | 1 c water |
| ½ t salt | ½ c vegetable oil |
| ½ t sugar | 4 eggs |

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet. In a large bowl mix dry ingredients. Boil the water. Pour over matzah mixture and stir until blended. Stir one egg at a time into the mixture. Let stand for 15 minutes. Shape the dough into balls and place on the baking sheet. Bake for 50 minutes.



Charoset

This tasty treat represents the mortar used to build bricks for Pharaoh while the Israelites were slaves.

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 12 apples, diced small | 6 T sugar |
| 1 c pecans, chopped | 6 T red grape juice |
| 1 t cinnamon | |

Chop up your apples and pecans until they are a chunky consistency. Moisten with red grape juice and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar.





The Seder Meal Script

It's helpful to have a script so you don't have to become a Passover expert. So, just read through this script as you go and you'll experience something similar to what the ancient Israelite's did when they hosted a Seder meal during Passover. ♥ *Have your Bible ready. Allow your children to ask questions, and keep the atmosphere light. This is a celebration!*

PARENT:

We're going to experience a Seder meal. This is a tradition celebrated by Jewish people as part of the Passover festival. It is still celebrated today by faithful Jews and some Christians who think it helps them better understand the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

The first Passover happened the night God set his people free when they were slaves in Egypt. You know the story about Moses! The Egyptian pharaoh would not let God's people go free, so God sent ten plagues. The final one was the angel of death which killed every firstborn in Egypt but "passed over" the Israelite homes. Do you know why? Because they marked themselves as believers in the one true God. How? They sacrificed a lamb and put its blood on their doorposts.

♥ *Have the oldest child place the red ribbon on a nearby door frame to symbolize the lamb's blood on Israelite homes.*

PARENT:

One reason we celebrate is to remember how God helped the Israelite people by leading them out of slavery. We also celebrate Passover because Jesus did! Remember, when Jesus joined his friends for one "Last Supper" before He died on the cross? That was this meal!

♥ *Ask the oldest child to read Mark 14:12-16. Discuss it if you like.*

PARENT:

Jesus did things a little differently that night when He ate the Seder dinner. Let's read about what He did that was remarkable!

♥ *Ask the second oldest child to read Mark 14:22-24. Talk about how the disciples must have felt when Jesus introduced something new.*

PARENT:

Jesus was saying, "You don't need this food anymore to remember God's deliverance. I am your Savior. From now on, you will remember me!" As we celebrate tonight, we'll do it as the Israelite's did and remember God's deliverance from Egypt. But we will also think of an ever better rescue story: Jesus' death and resurrection. Our red ribbon reminds us of the blood of Christ.

As we experience this Seder meal, we will eat the same kinds of foods that Jesus ate and say some of the same words He said. During the meal, you will be served a drink of red grape juice in your goblet four times. This is an ancient tradition of the Passover Seder. Each cup represented something special to the Jewish people. Ours will be a little different. We will drink from:

- The cup of sanctification reminds us that God set His people apart.
- The cup of deliverance which reminds us God set His people free.
- The cup of redemption which reminds us that Jesus died for us.
- The cup of praise which reminds us to be thankful for what He has done.

And we remember throughout our dinner tonight, that Jesus is always at our table, just like He was at the table with the disciples.

We begin tonight with our first cup—the cup of sanctification.

♥ *Pour small amount of grape juice in each goblet. Wait to drink.*

PARENT:

To sanctify something means to set it apart. That is what God did for His people in the Passover. If there was blood on their door post, they were different from the other families and homes. So the angel of death passed over them.

Jesus's death, if we accept it as our salvation, does the same thing. Though we will die physically, we will live eternally overcoming death.

This is what we say before we drink the cup: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

♥ *Everyone drinks the first cup.*

PARENT:

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.

♥ *Have a child read John 13:3-5, 14-15. You may choose to wash the feet of your children. And they may also wash yours. Everyone should wash their hands.*

PARENT:

Something you will read about in the Bible is that Jesus dipped his food at the same time that another disciple did. It's time for the first "dipping." We'll use the parsley and salt water. The parsley reminds us of the Hyssop which applied the Lamb's blood to the doorframes 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 dips twice and eats the parsley. Pour the second cups. Do not drink yet.*

After the first dipping, the host of a Passover Seder poured the second cup. That's when a child asked some important questions.

CHILD:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

PARENT:

Then the father would say, "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:

The Bible records 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:

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. Explain how some of the food might taste different from what they normally eat. Encourage your children to be willing to try new things, and to remember that each part of the meal has special meaning.*

PARENT:

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 (or chicken) symbolizes the Passover sacrifice. The charoset represents the mortar the slaves used in their work.

We will now drink from the second cup—the cup of deliverance—to remember that the Israelite's were delivered out of Egypt. And we are delivered from our sin by the death of Jesus!

This is what we say before we drink the cup: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the Vine.

♥ *Drink. Then have a parent or child say grace before the meal is eaten. Serve the meal including lamb [or chicken] at this time. Do not use utensils. Close the meal with the following blessing.*

PARENT:

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.

♥ *Pour the third cup—the cup of redemption. If you'd like, you may also offer everyone "bread" to serve a full communion.*

PARENT:

We will now receive the third cup—the cup of redemption. In Jewish tradition, the cup of redemption helped the Israelites remember 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! He took the cup, gave thanks, and said: "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." He also took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." The disciples may have been confused. They didn't know what we know: that Jesus was about to die on a cross for their sins. And for ours. This would overcome death the same way that the Passover symbol—the red blood of a lamb on the door of each home—made the angel of death pass over those homes. Let's read the story of Jesus' death and resurrection.

♥ *Read Luke 23:26-24:8. If you are taking full communion, be sure to instruct your children to confess sin quietly before they partake. Otherwise, you may drink the third cup. Ask someone to pray a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for what He has done for us. Pour the fourth cup.*

PARENT:

This is what we say before we drink the cup: We have reached the fourth and final cup, the cup of praise. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

♥ *Drink the fourth cup. Tell the kids you've hidden a piece of afikomen. When they find this bread, broken and wrapped in a white cloth, ask them what it reminds them of in the Easter story. Answer: Christ's body wrapped in a cloth and hidden in a tomb. Ask a child to read Mark 14:26. Ask the children: how did the Seder meal Jesus ate end? Answer: a hymn.*

End your time together with a hymn or worship song.

