

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

PASSOVER MEAL

Preparation Instructions

This meal is an adaptation of the Jewish Passover Meal designed for Christians who are interested in learning more about the Jewish roots of their faith. The meal can be as fancy or as simple as you like, although Passover is usually a dress-up occasion. The booklets and instructions were designed for a large group but you can also do the meal with a small family group.

Option 1: Large group, fancy. A dress-up meal with costumed actors reclining on cushions at a separate Jesus table. Full worship team to provide music.

Option 2: Small group, simple. Assign Jesus table (Lord's Supper) reading parts without worrying about a separate Jesus table.

Option 3: Single family group. Your table is the head table. Assign multiple reading parts to each person until they are all assigned—including the Jesus table (Lord's Supper) parts (see booklet and below). For example, the Father can also do Reader #1 and Jesus; the Mother can also do Reader #2.

SET TABLES and chairs for the number of people expected. A large U-shaped arrangement of end-to-end tables is particularly nice, with everyone seated around the outside of the U so they can see the optional Jesus table in the center of the U. This also helps everyone feel like one big family at a meal. At the top right of the U set the Head Table. Put musicians and narrator (standing) at the top of the empty side of the U. Alternatively, the Jesus table can be set up on a stage.

EACH TABLE (or setting for 6-8 people) needs:

- 1) For each person: A plate, glass for juice (or plastic cup, plastic wineglasses are nice), utensils (knife, fork, spoon), chair, and Passover Meal booklet.
- 2) For each table: Food enough to feed everyone at the table for a special meal--but **no** leavened bread: no bread, cakes, cookies, or anything made with yeast. **No** pork. **No** seafood--except fish with scales and fins, which is OK. Rice is OK. Chicken is OK. Beef is OK. Sweets made without leaven are OK. Everything is OK except leaven, pork, and seafood (other than fish).
- 3) Water to drink.
- 4) Red (not white) grape juice: Each person will drink 4 glasses of juice during the meal. The traditional beverage used by the Jews is red wine, though in Jesus' day this was mixed with between 1 and 10 parts water. Real grape juice is accepted as an alternative by the Rabbis.
- 5) Unleavened flat bread (Matzah): If you have a Middle Eastern bakery or restaurant nearby, no problem. The traditional circular flat bread is what was used in Jesus' day. Place your order in advance. Or try asking at other kinds of ethnic restaurants, like Mexican. If not, and you're not up to making it yourself, use the matza crackers used by modern Jews available in the supermarkets at Passover time. Need at least 2 per person.
- 6) One plate of sliced bitter herbs. You can be strict about the bitterness if you want, but we usually use any combination of **fresh** (not cooked) vegetables: onions, carrots, cucumbers, radishes, red peppers or green peppers.

- 7) One small bowl of salty water. Fill a small bowl with water, add enough salt that it tastes salty.
- 8) One small bowl of Kharoset (see recipe below).
- 9) A pitcher, basin, and towel for handwashing. Fill the pitcher with water. If not enough pitchers, fill basin with water and use a small cup to pour water on hands. **PLEASE NOTE: Ritual handwashing was a new innovation in Jesus' day of which he disapproved (Matt. 15:1-20, Mark 7:1-23). This probably means that he and his disciples did not wash their hands during the Passover meal. For this reason, you may want to skip the hand washing sections of the meal. I plan to remove these sections from future editions of our Passover Meal booklet.**
- 10) Optional: Fresh fruit—all kinds are OK.
- 11) Optional: A bowl of hard-boiled (or baked) eggs. To bake eggs: bake in oven at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.
- 12) Optional: A bowl of nuts or seeds such as mixed nuts (no peanuts). Can be served with dried fruit. For a tasty Middle Eastern flavor, use figs and dates. And don't forget to have olives somewhere.
- 13) Optional: A small pillow for each person's chair to make them more comfortable. If you really want to go wild, you can collapse the tables and have everyone recline at the meal, as Jesus and the disciples did (see instructions for the Jesus table below). But if you do, make sure you have a lot of extra pillows. Most modern people get uncomfortable in this position after a short time.
- 14) Optional: Biblical costumes. Some churches have a lot of these left over from Christmas/Easter productions.
- 15) Optional: Flowers in a centerpiece.

THE HEAD TABLE needs all of the above, **plus**:

- 16) A chicken leg bone on a small plate: the bone should be cooked already, with all the meat removed and wiped clean. This is what the Jews use today to represent the lamb bone of ancient times (called "Lamb bone" in the Meal booklet). For more realism, use a lamb shank bone (cooked and cleaned off). Ask in the meat department of your supermarket. If they have any, they will sometimes give you one at no charge.
- 17) A white linen cloth to wrap the 3 matzahs. Approximately 3 feet by 1 or 2 feet. Wrap the 3 matzahs in the cloth as follows: lay out the cloth. Place the first matzah on the short end of the cloth, the edge of the matzah at the edge of the cloth. Then fold the remaining cloth back over the matzah. Put the second matzah on the cloth, immediately above the first matzah. Fold the remaining cloth back over again. Put the third matzah on the cloth, immediately above the others. Fold the remaining cloth back over again, and tuck the edges under so the "stack" is the same basic size as the matzahs themselves. You should have the tips of two matzahs (1 and 3) visible on one side and the tip of the other matzah (2) visible on the other side.
- 18) Simple square scarf or cloth. For the Mother to wear on her head when she lights the candles. A pretty silk scarf with a fringe is ideal.
- 19) Small square cloth or napkin for hidden bread. The Father will use this to hide the broken piece of the second matzah from the children.
- 20) A small, comfortable pillow for the Father's chair.
- 21) Two candlesticks with white candles and matches. Mother will light them at the beginning of the meal.

22) One special glass in the middle of the table (Elijah's Cup). This is usually the nicest glass on the table.

23) A nice, preferably white tablecloth.

Please Note: All special foods on the Head Table—bitter herbs, salty water, chicken (or lamb) bone, grape juice, kharoset, and the wrapped “stack” of 3 matzahs—should be placed within reach of the Father (as much as possible).

Please Note: Reading parts seated at the head table are: Mother and Father, Reader #1, Reader #2, and Youngest. You might also want to make a place available here or nearby for the Narrator to sit when he is not narrating.

Important Note: Assign reading parts in advance. The Father is the most important part, and must be a good reader (pastors are usually the best choice). Preference is given to older rather than younger men. In a home setting, this is the man of the house. Reader #1 and Reader #2 also should be good readers. The Mother will ordinarily be the wife of the one reading the Father part. The youngest is ideally the youngest one present that can read the part. All readers should read through their parts before the Meal begins. To say the Hebrew blessing properly, listen to it on our website in the classroom section at www.totheends.com

OPTIONAL JESUS TABLE:

It's a nice touch to have Jesus and the disciples in costume at a separate table. This table must have all the same items as for all the other tables (#1-15). They will participate in the meal along with everyone else, plus read the special “Lord’s Supper” parts in the booklet.

24) Both history and the original language of the gospels tell us they were reclining, not sitting, for the Passover meal .

To get an idea of what this looked like, see the drawing on the front of the Passover Meal booklet. Make a U-shaped table with 3 long Sunday School tables with the legs collapsed. This smaller U will go in the middle of the much larger U of other tables (if you decide to use this setting suggested above). Or, you can put the Jesus table on a stage at the front of the room. The surface of the table should be only a couple of inches (less than six inches) from the floor. It looks better with a tablecloth on it (preferably white).

25) Provide lots of pillows for Jesus and the disciples to recline on—it gets uncomfortable after a while. To be fancy, drape Middle Eastern looking cloths over the pillows.

26) Costumes are usually available from past Christmas or Easter productions.

Please note: Reading parts seated at the Jesus table are: Jesus, Peter, and John. There is also a non-reading part for Judas, who leaves at a certain time during the meal. Judas can then change out of his costume and join one of the other tables in regular clothes.

Please note: Jesus and the disciples recline around the outside of the U on three sides, with their feet facing perpendicularly away from the table (see the drawing on the cover of the meal booklet). The traditional position for eating is reclining on the left side and eating with the right hand, though it's not necessary they stay in this position the whole time. Looking from the perspective of the drawing on the front cover of the booklet, the closest position on the left is John, next behind him is Jesus, then Judas. The closest position on the right is Peter. (These positions can be deduced from the gospel accounts.) The others are scattered in between.

Important Note: Assign reading parts in advance. Jesus is the most important part, and must be a good reader: a little acting ability helps, too. All readers should read through their parts before the Meal begins. To say the Hebrew blessing properly, listen to it on our website in the Classroom section at www.totheends.com

MICROPHONES:

If the group celebrating the meal is large, it is recommended that microphones be used for all speaking parts. In addition to the worship team, microphones will be needed at the Head Table (2 or 3), the Jesus Table (2 or 3), and for the narrator.

KHAROSSET RECIPE--for 10 tables

5 apples, peeled & shredded
5 tbsp grape juice
1 cup ground nuts (not peanuts)
1/2 tsp cinnamon
Add honey to taste

Mix & put in refrigerator. It will turn brown, which is OK. It's supposed to look like mud!

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