



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. Use the table at the top right (or left) section of the U as the Head Table. Put musicians and narrator on the empty side of the U when performing—though be sure they also have chairs at the table to participate in the meal! 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 (Exodus 12:8, 13:7). **No** pork (Lev. 11:7). **No** seafood—except varieties of fish that have both scales and fins, which are OK (Lev. 11:9). 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 varieties of fish that have both scales and fins).
- 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 Jewish people is red wine, though in Jesus' day this was mixed with between 1 to 10 parts water. Real grape juice is accepted as an alternative by the rabbis. If you're on a tight budget, use smaller glasses for the juice.
- 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 in modern Jewish Passovers. They are readily 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: **fresh** (not cooked) horseradish, parsley, watercress, endives, or lettuce, for example (in ancient times, lettuce was considered a bitter herb!). But with new groups we often use any combination of **fresh** (not cooked) vegetables cut into small sections that can be used for dipping, such as onions, carrots, celery, cucumbers, red peppers, or green peppers. Horseradish and romaine lettuce are commonly used among the Jewish people today. Need at least 3-4 pieces per person, but we usually prepare more of the less bitter vegetables to serve as a salad for the meal.
- 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) Optional: Fresh fruit—all kinds are OK.
- 10) Optional: A bowl of hard-boiled (or baked) eggs. To bake eggs: bake in oven at 350 degrees for 45 minutes.
- 11) 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.
- 12) 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 people today get uncomfortable in this position after a short time.
- 13) Optional: Biblical costumes. Some churches have a lot of these left over from Christmas/Easter productions.
- 14) Optional: Flowers in a centerpiece.

Please Note: Today, ritual hand washing is an established part of the Passover Meal. But this was a new innovation in Jesus' day of which he disapproved (Matt. 15:1-20, Mark 7:1-23). This indicates that he and his disciples did not wash their hands in this special ritual way during the Passover meal. For this reason, we have omitted the hand washing sections of the meal.

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 Jewish people use today to represent the lamb bone of ancient times (called "Lamb bone" in the Meal booklet). They don't use an actual lamb bone because it can't be properly presented in the Temple in Jerusalem anymore. For more historical realism, however, you can choose to use a lamb shank bone (cooked and cleaned off). Ask in the meat department of your supermarket. If they have any, they will often 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, with 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 folded cloth, directly above the first matzah. Fold the remaining cloth back over again. Put the third matzah on the folded 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 the 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. If you can get hold of two ancient-style oil lamps of the kind used in Jesus' day, that's even better. The Mother will light them at the beginning of the meal. Among the Jewish people, the candles are lit about twenty minutes before sunset. But for Gentile groups, this is not a requirement.
- 22) One special glass in the middle of the table (Elijah's Cup). This is usually the nicest glass or cup 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 easy 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 has the most important part in the meal, and must be a good reader (pastors are often the best choice). Preference is normally 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 on the Hebrew songs page at www.totheends.com/music.html (“Blessing”).

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. This

means, of course, that it will look nothing like Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, which has nothing to do with meal practices in the time of Jesus. 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. Other non-reading disciples should also be added to the Jesus table if possible.

Please note: Jesus and the disciples should recline around the outside of the smaller U of the Jesus table 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 that 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 on the Hebrew songs page at www.totheends.com/music.html ("Blessing").

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.

Important Note: Chords for many of the songs are available on our website at <http://www.totheends.com/PassSngs.pdf>. You can also listen to the melodies at <http://www.totheends.com/music.html>

KHAROSET RECIPE—for 10 tables (60-80 people)

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

Mix (blend) & put in a refrigerator. It will turn brown, which is OK. It's supposed to look and feel like mud!