

SEDER MEAL

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

- To help young children and their families experience a short Seder Meal.
- To think about stories that help us to remember.
- To hear the story of the Passover.
- To think about the remembering meal that Christians enjoy together as often as possible.



Adapted from www.scriptureunion.org.uk/lightlive

RESOURCES.

You will need:-

- A copy of the leaders instructions.
- The following foods:-
Matzah (or crackers), parsley or watercress, salt water, flatbread, bitter herbs, haroseth (a mixture of chopped apples, walnuts and spice), hard-boiled egg; a red drink, eg blackcurrant juice;
- A children's Bible containing the story of the escape from Egypt,
- 4 cards with the following questions written on:
 - Why do we only eat special flat bread on this night?
 - Why do we eat bitter herbs?
 - Why do we dip our food?
 - Why do we stand?

(Choose four children who can read to ask the questions written on the cards. Give each child one card and practise the words as a whole group. The children will ask these questions at a certain point in the story.)

- If using the 'Make a Seder Plate' you will need paper plates, copies of the attached pdf, crayons, scissors and glue.

NB This activity includes points at which you say a prayer together. You can find appropriate prayers in Children's prayer books, or ask the children to make up some prayers before the event which can then be read out.

HOW TO:

Make this a relaxed and unrushed time. If possible lay out your meeting space with food on tables around which everyone can gather. (Stand, if you want to imitate the real



Passover) This Seder meal activity is adapted for young children. You could you invite the parents and carers to the meal as well.

Seder Meal Leaders instructions

Input: Explain to everyone that every year, the Jewish people celebrate a festival called Passover, which reminds them all that they are part of God's family. All the family get together and the children have a special part to play in asking questions about the story and the meal. Encourage all of the children to ask questions as you go along.

The meal starts with a special prayer and then the 'dad' (or person in charge) washes their hands. After that, parsley or watercress is dipped into the salt water and everyone eats some.

Do this.

Say that in the Bible, Moses told the Israelites that when they were getting their meat ready for their special meal, they had to wipe some of the blood from the meat above the doors of their houses. Then God would know to keep the people in that house safe. The parsley reminds of us that.

The Leader then breaks the middle matzah (cracker) and hides half of it. *Do this.*

Say: This is to remind us that the Israelites had to eat flat bread when they were in Egypt. Next, get the children to ask their questions and give these replies.

- Say that flat bread is eaten because we remember that Moses and the Israelites were in such a hurry to get out of Egypt that they didn't have time to let their bread dough rise. (*Eat the bread.*)
- Explain that they eat bitter herbs to remember that the Israelites were very sad in Egypt because Pharaoh (the king) made them all work very hard as slaves. (*Eat the herbs*)
- Say that we dip our food in salt water to remember the tears of the Israelite slaves.
- Explain that we stand to remember that once the Israelites were slaves in Egypt but now they are free people. (*Everyone can now be seated*)

Now **read the story** of the Israelites escaping from Egypt from a children's Bible.

Emphasise the fact that God rescued his people.

Everyone washes their hands and another prayer is said.



Then everyone eats some matzah and the bitter herbs, and some haroseth sandwiched between some matzah.

Then the people would eat a proper dinner, but they would start off by eating the hard-boiled egg from the Seder plate. The egg is a sign of being very sad like when someone has died and again it reminds people of the Israelites being slaves in Egypt.

During the meal, the children have to go and look for the bit of matzah that was hidden (this is known as the Afikoman, *send the children to find the hidden matzah*). After the meal they all eat this last bit up.

Next, say a special thank you prayer and then sing some songs to God.

Finally, have a drink.

At the end of this time together, tell the children that this special family occasion is a way of remembering the story they listened to from the Bible and feeling special, knowing that we are part of God's family.

Remembering brings back memories of sad and happy things, sometimes when we tell each other stories it reminds us of special people that we love.

When Jesus was a little boy he would celebrate Passover every year and he did this as a grown up too. But just before Jesus died he shared a meal with his friends and asked them to always remember him when they ate it together, a remembering meal just like the Passover meal. Christians call that meal Communion and it is very special to us. This special meal helps Christians to remember all that Jesus did because he loved us and wanted us to be friends of God forever. It is a very special way of worshipping God together.

You may want to invite the families to a Family Friendly Communion service after this event or plan to invite your Priest to another session to lead the Service in your normal group setting.