



PASSOVER DEMONSTRATION FOR KIDS

To Parents/Educators: The purpose of “Passover for Kids” is to help children learn about and appreciate the observance of Passover. As believers in Christ, it is important to understand what Passover is and the meaning and significance it had for Jesus. This is a natural entry point for a greater understanding of the Lord’s Supper, or Communion, since it was instituted by Jesus at His final Passover meal with His disciples.

One of the beauties of the Passover meal is that it involves all five senses. This makes it especially appealing for children, since using all the senses creates a unique learning experience. It should be noted that this is not an actual ceremony for children; it is instruction about the Passover.

There are “Words to Know” that you can use if you wish – it adds a little extra flavor of Hebrew to this Jewish celebration.

Children can only absorb so much information, according to their age. Don’t worry about them grasping the concept of chronological time or the deeper spiritual significance of each metaphor - that will naturally come as they mature. Help them understand the basics, explore the foods, and enjoy it yourself!

Words to Know:	Pesach	Shalom
	Matzah	Seder
	Hallel	Leaven

Introduction:

The Bible is one story with two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the story of God’s people who lived before Jesus was born. The New Testament is the story of Jesus and how people who believe in Him become God’s special people also.

God’s people in the Old Testament were called the “Israelites”, because they came from a land called Israel. Today we call them Jews, and they still worship as people in the Old Testament did. Their families celebrate “Passover” every year, just as we who are Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter. Passover, or PESACH, is observed around the time of Easter, and that is why we are learning about it now.

PESACH (PES-ak) is the Hebrew for Passover

After Jesus had the Passover meal with His disciples, He went to pray in a grove of olive trees called the Garden of Gethsemane. He was then arrested and crucified the next day. Three days later He rose from the dead on Easter Sunday. That is why Passover and Easter are always around the same time of year in the spring.



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Jesus was having the Passover meal with His disciples when He introduced the “New Covenant” for His people. He used MATZAH bread as a picture of His body and the wine (or grape juice) as a picture of His blood. Today we call that the “Lord’s Supper” or “Communion.” We eat a small bit of matzah and drink a tiny cup of grape juice to remember Jesus’ death on the cross.

MATZAH (MAHTZ-ah) is Hebrew for the flat cracker that is eaten with this meal.

You may have Jewish friends that will celebrate Passover during this time. Let’s learn about Passover!

BACKGROUND: The book of Exodus in the Old Testament is the story of God rescuing the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt. God sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt and take them to Israel, which they called “The Promised Land”. In order to persuade Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave, God sent ten “plagues” to their land: He turned the Nile river to blood, He sent frogs, lice, flies, sickness to their livestock, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and finally death to the firstborn of every family (Exodus 7-10). God knew that after the oldest child in each family died, Pharaoh would want the Israelites to leave right away. He told them to prepare food for their journey and be ready to leave quickly. God protected the firstborn children of the Israelites, because they believed in Him. They were to kill a lamb for the sacrifice and then put some of its blood over the top and sides of the front door of their house. The Angel of Death would “pass over” their house and the oldest child would not die. God told them to cook the lamb and eat it with herbs and bread made without yeast. Yeast (leaven) is what makes bread “rise,” and it takes several hours. The Israelites had to do all of this quickly, so they had to bake their bread without leaven, meaning it was flat. This is what God told them to do:

Have a child read: Exodus 12:14 → “This is a day to remember. Each year, from generation to generation, you must celebrate it as a special festival to the Lord. This is a law for all time. For seven days the bread you eat must be made without yeast.”

LEAVEN – yeast, powder that makes bread “rise”

Exodus 12:17 → “Celebrate this Festival of Unleavened Bread, for it will remind you that I brought your forces out of the land of Egypt on this very day. This festival will be a permanent law for you: celebrate this day from generation to generation. “

Exodus 12:25 → Moses said, “When you enter the land the Lord has promised to give you, you will continue to observe this ceremony. Then your children will ask, ‘What does this ceremony mean?’ And you will reply, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, for He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. And though He struck the Egyptians, He spared our families.’”

Children have a very important role in the Seder meal by asking the first question – “What does this ceremony mean?” Let’s find out!



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SEDER (SAY-dur) is Hebrew for “order”, as in the “order of this ceremony”

THE SEDER PLATE: Show the Seder Plate and point children to their own plates. Point out each food and have them taste it.

The first thing we do is lightly touch our fingertips in the juice in our cup and put ten drops on the edge of our plates, one drop for each plague. Name each plague as you do this.

MATZAH is the unleavened bread; eat it at anytime during the meal!

MAROR (mah-roar) is the bitter herb that represents the bitterness of slavery. In the actual Seder, horseradish is used. We substitute a little onion or radish for children.

The LAMB bone represents the lamb that was sacrificed on Pesach.

EGG symbolizes the life that God gave His people when they all so easily could have died.¹

HAROSET (ha-roe-set) is the apple mixture and represents the mortar or glue that held the bricks together. The Israelites had to build Pharaoh’s palace with bricks and mortar they made themselves.

PARSLEY AND SALT WATER represent the tears for the hard years of slavery they had to endure.

AFIKOMEN (ah-fi-koe-man) is a special piece of matzah that is broken in half at the beginning of the meal. Half of it is wrapped in a napkin and hidden from the children. At the end of the meal, the children look for it and whoever finds it and returns it to the table is rewarded with candy. Some families make the game a little more interesting and encourage the children to look for the afikomen and then steal it and hide it themselves. They then bring it out at the end of the meal and bargain for its return. Either way, it’s a fun game of hide and seek probably designed to keep kids awake during the Seder meal!

THE LORD’S SUPPER (COMMUNION)

Jesus had the Passover (Pesach) with the disciples the night before He was crucified. As they ate the meal, he held up the matzah and said, “This is My body which is broken for you”. Then He held up His cup of wine and said, “This is my blood which I will give for you.” (Children may need a short explanation of metaphors here – a metaphor is a word picture of a real object). He told them that from then on, they would observe a new kind of Passover. They would remember Jesus’ death on the cross and how much He loved them.

After their meal, Jesus washed their feet, they sang a hymn and left. There are always songs at the end of the Passover meal, and these are called hallel.

Hallel (ha-LEL) means “praise”, songs of praise

¹ The egg was included in the Seder later; it is not in the biblical account.



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Shalom (sha-LOM) – Peace (Hebrew greeting)

CONCLUSION

One of the most popular Passover songs for kids is “Dayenu” (dah-aye-nu), which means “It would have been enough”. It is a song of gratitude to God for all of His blessings He gave to His people. You can easily find this song online, download and play.

(http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/media_cdo/aid/255530/jewish/Dayenu.htm)