



Understanding Passover

**A Biblical Holiday
A Commandment for the Nation**

What the Church Needs to Know
Jewish Roots 101



Passover (pesach)

Leviticus 23:4-8 – The commandment to observe Passover as part of the appointed festivals of Adonai

In Exodus 12, God commands the Israelites to take a lamb without blemish, slaughter it, and place its blood on their doorposts as a sign for protection. That night, God strikes down the firstborn of Egypt but "passes over" the homes marked with the blood, sparing the Israelites. This event marks the beginning of Israel's deliverance from slavery, establishing Passover as an everlasting ordinance

The blood of the spotless lamb on the doorposts foreshadows Yeshua, the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice brings redemption and protection from judgment. Just as Israel was delivered from slavery in Egypt, believers in Messiah are set free from the bondage of sin through His atonement. Passover is not only a remembrance of Israel's physical deliverance but also a prophetic picture of the greater redemption found in Yeshua.



How to Observe Passover

We highly recommend locating your nearest Jewish Neighbor and requesting to participate in their Passover observances. Passover is meant to be observed in community.

If you want to perform your own seder here are items you will need:

- **Haggadah:**

If you're looking for a traditional Haggadah, here are three widely accepted sources:

- **Artscroll Pesach Haggadah** – A highly regarded Orthodox Haggadah with commentary from rabbinic sources, published by Mesorah Publications.
 - Available at: artscroll.com
- **Maxwell House Haggadah** – A classic, widely used in many Jewish homes for decades, known for its clear and simple translation.
 - Often available for free at supermarkets during Passover or for purchase online.
- **Sefaria's Online Haggadah** – A free, digital Haggadah with various traditional commentaries, available in Hebrew and English.
 - Accessible at: sefaria.org

Haggadah

- The Haggadah serves as the guide for the Passover Seder, recounting the story of the Exodus from Egypt as commanded in Exodus 13:8, "You shall tell your son on that day..." Its purpose is to fulfill the mitzvah of telling the story of redemption, engaging participants in remembering God's deliverance of Israel through readings, prayers, songs, and symbolic foods. The Haggadah also reinforces Jewish identity, connects generations, and emphasizes gratitude for freedom, both physically and spiritually.



The Seder

The Seder Plate (Ke'ara) contains symbolic foods that help tell the story of Passover. Here's an outline of its elements and meanings:

- **Z'roa (Shank Bone) – Represents the Paschal lamb (Korban Pesach) that was sacrificed in the Temple. It symbolizes God's redemption and the blood on the doorposts in Egypt.**
- **Beitzah (Egg) – A roasted egg symbolizes the Chagigah (festival sacrifice) and the mourning over the destruction of the Temple. It also represents new life and renewal.**
- **Maror (Bitter Herbs, often Horseradish) – Represents the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. It reminds participants of the suffering endured by the Israelites.**
- **Charoset (Sweet Mixture of Apples, Nuts, Wine, and Spices) – Symbolizes the mortar used by the Israelites when making bricks in Egypt. Its sweetness contrasts with the bitterness of slavery, showing hope and redemption.**

- **Karpas (Green Vegetable, often Parsley) – Represents springtime and renewal, as well as the initial flourishing of the Israelites in Egypt. It is dipped in saltwater, which symbolizes the tears shed during slavery.**
- **Chazeret (Second Bitter Herb, often Romaine Lettuce) – A second portion of bitter herbs, used in some traditions to fulfill the mitzvah of eating Maror. The lettuce starts out mild but becomes bitter, symbolizing how the Israelites' slavery worsened over time.**



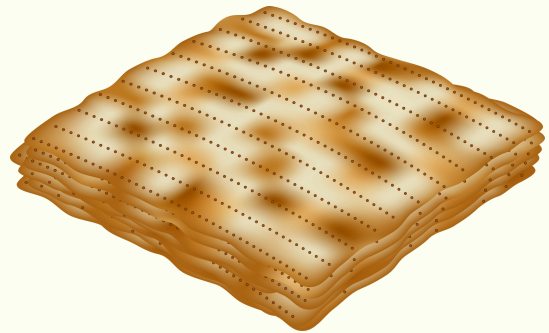
Matzah and Wine

Matzah (Unleavened Bread)

Symbol of Affliction & Redemption – Called the "bread of affliction" (Deuteronomy 16:3), matzah reminds us of the Israelites' suffering in Egypt.

Symbol of Haste – The Israelites left Egypt so quickly that their dough had no time to rise (Exodus 12:39).

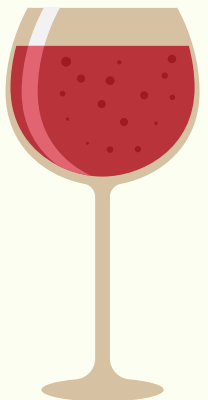
Symbol of Purity & Humility – Without leaven (which often represents sin or pride), matzah reflects a humble and obedient heart before God.



Wine (Four Cups of Wine)

Symbol of Joy & Redemption – Wine represents God's four promises of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7:

- "I will bring you out" (Cup of Sanctification)
- "I will deliver you" (Cup of Deliverance)
- "I will redeem you" (Cup of Redemption)
- "I will take you as My people" (Cup of Praise)



Seder Meal Outline

- **Kadesh (Sanctification)** – Recite the Kiddush and drink the first cup of wine.
- **Urchatz (Washing Hands)** – Wash hands without a blessing, preparing for the meal.
- **Karpas (Dipping the Vegetable)** – Dip parsley in saltwater, symbolizing tears of slavery.
- **Yachatz (Breaking the Matzah)** – Break the middle matzah; half is hidden as the Afikomen.
- **Maggid (Telling the Story)** – Retell the Exodus story, ask the Four Questions, drink the second cup.
- **Rachtzah (Washing Hands Again)** – Wash hands again, this time with a blessing.
- **Motzi Matzah (Eating the Matzah)** – Bless and eat the unleavened bread.
- **Maror (Bitter Herbs)** – Eat bitter herbs (Maror) dipped in Charoset.
- **Korech (Hillel Sandwich)** – Eat Matzah, Maror, and Charoset together.
- **Shulchan Orech (Festive Meal)** – Enjoy the Passover meal.

The Afikomen



The Afikomen (Ah-Fee-Koh-Mahn) is a piece of matzah that is hidden during the Seder, traditionally by the leader or a child. After the meal, it is found and eaten as the last part of the Seder meal. Its consumption signifies that nothing should be eaten after it, symbolizing the end of the meal and honoring the Paschal lamb that was eaten during the time of the Temple.

- **Messianic Significance:**

The Afikomen is often viewed as a symbol of Yeshua (Jesus), the "broken bread" that is hidden (like His body was hidden in the tomb) and then revealed. Just as the Afikomen is the last item eaten, Yeshua's death and resurrection are seen as the culmination of redemption. His body, broken for humanity, parallels the matzah that is broken, hidden, and then brought out again.

לשנה הבאה בירושלים (L'shanah Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim)



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