

Lesson #3-4

The Promises of Passover

Exodus 12:1-13; 13:1-8



Key Verse:

Moses said to the people, "Remember this day on which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, because the Lord brought you out from there by strength of hand; no leavened bread shall be eaten."

Exodus 13:3

The Point:

God gives us ways to remember and celebrate God's deliverance.



Introduction

After years of living as slaves, God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God gave Moses instructions for the people to follow. This included eating a special meal and painting lamb's blood around the doorway. At night, the firstborn of the Egyptian families died, but death passed over the homes of the Israelites. While the Egyptians were mourning, the Israelites fled. As a reminder of what God did for them, the Israelites were told to celebrate a Passover festival once a year. During this time they would eat special foods and remember how God rescued them from slavery.

The Point

God gives us ways to remember and celebrate God's deliverance. This week's reading is a description of the liturgy that God designed to remind the people of the Exodus, and is a practice that is followed by many Jewish families today to remember the deliverance of their ancestors from the oppression they suffered in Egypt. It is a clear, specific, and decisive set of instructions that influence how Jewish families celebrate the holy days of Passover. This commemoration is what drew Jesus to Jerusalem, leading to what we call the Last Supper, the foundation of the Christian communion liturgy.

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Introduction

Family Traditions

Discuss family meal traditions.

10 min.

† Internet-connected devices

Learning the Story

The Promise of Passover

Create a living slideshow.

10 min.

† Bibles

Activities

The Exodus Story

Tell the story through song.

10 min.

† Activity Sheet #3-4.A
† Internet-connected video player
† Optional: *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford

Studying the Seder

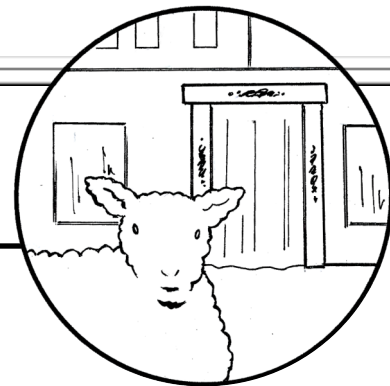
Learn about the Seder meal.

10 min.

† Internet-connected device
† Optional: Food items from Activity Sheet #3-4.B, paper cups, spoons

Prayer

God's Story @ Home



Introduction (10 minutes)

Family Traditions

Discuss family meal traditions.

Supplies:

- † Internet-connected devices

Preparation:

1. Search for images of “Passover Seder” or “Family Seder” and prepare images by printing four to five images of your choice or by setting up your device so that everyone will be able to see.

Instructions:

1. Discuss the following questions. Remember to listen to everyone and give everyone a chance to tell their story. A good way to do this is for each person to invite the next person to speak when they are finished. Everyone has the opportunity accept the invitation to speak or to pass.
 - **Does your family have any traditional meals that you do together every year or almost every year? What is the occasion? Why do you celebrate it? What food is included?**
2. After everyone has shared, look together at the website or images you found and discuss what you see.
 - **What are the people eating?**
 - **What are they doing?**
 - **What are they wearing?**
 - **What do you think they are celebrating?**

3. Today we fast-forward several generations from Joseph to Moses, who is the great-grandson of Joseph's brother, Levi. The Israelites who followed Jacob and Joseph's brother to Egypt had been there for many years, and their situation had become very different from the way it was when Joseph was alive. The Book of Exodus introduces Moses and his amazing story: how he heard God speak, how he spoke up to Pharaoh, how he received God's commandments, and how he led his people to freedom from oppression.
4. Today's reading is less of a story and more of a set of worship instructions, or a liturgy. God is telling the Israelites the way to remember how God delivered them from oppression in Egypt. This liturgy includes a very special meal and a specific way to remember the story. Before we learn more about this liturgy, let's recall the story they are to remember.

Learning the Story (10 minutes)

The Promise of Passover

Creating a living slideshow.

Supplies:

† Bibles

Instructions:

1. Read Exodus 12:1-13; 13:1-8. Choose how to read it, taking turns or one person reading the entire passage. Do not read silently, as that would leave out pre-readers.
2. **We are going to tell this story by creating still shots. For example, we will first create a still scene, like a photo, that depicts the message of Chapter 12, verses 1 and 2. When I read the whole story again, we will get into our still scene about those verses. Together our scenes will create a slideshow that will tell the story. There are two rules: we all participate, and we cannot say anything or move.**
3. Read the story, and create the slideshow. Do it a second time to solidify the story.
4. Afterward:
 - **Why do you think the Lord was specific about what to eat?**
 - **Why did the people have to mark the doorposts with blood and eat quickly?** *[The sign on the doorpost indicated that Israelites were within, and they would not be killed by the final plague. They had to hurry, because they would have to leave immediately after the plague struck.]*
 - **Why was it so important for the Israelites to recreate that exact meal?** *[The ritual would help pass on that very important story.]*
 - **What important meals and rituals do we have in our church?**

Activity (15 minutes)

The Exodus Story

Storytelling through song.

Supplies:

- † Activity Sheet #3-4.A
- † Internet-connected video player
- † Optional: *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford

Preparation:

1. Search for the song “When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land” online.
2. If desired, print a copy of Activity Sheet #3-4.A for each person.

Instructions:

1. **Not only is this story important to the Hebrew and New Testament Scriptures, it is also important to the musical genre of Spirituals. Spirituals were developed by slaves in the United States. They are Christian songs that often connected the slaves’ own experiences with the Bible stories they knew well. Some Spirituals were also “code songs,” songs that had a hidden message. On the surface, they told a Bible story, but double meanings in the lyrics relayed messages about the Underground Railroad and ways to escape from slavery.**
2. **Enslaved Africans saw many parallels between their oppression and that of the Israelite slaves, and embraced the stories of the Exodus as inspiration and hope for their own deliverance. The song “When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land” is a Spiritual with an Exodus theme.**
3. **Let’s listen to this song together.**
4. **Optional: After the song, explain: Not only did the enslaved people connect themselves to the Israelite slaves, they even gave one of their own the nickname of Moses.**
5. **Let’s hear her story.** Read *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford.
6. **Discuss:**
 - **What did Harriet Tubman and Moses have in common?**
 - **Why do you think the enslaved Africans held so closely to the Exodus story?**
 - **What can we learn from these two linked stories?**



Activities (10 minutes)

Studying the Seder

Learn about the Seder meal.

Supplies:

- † Internet-connected device
- † Optional: Food items from Activity Sheet #3-4.B, paper cups, spoons

Preparation:

1. Access the images found at Chabad's [The Seder Plate](#), or search online for other images of "Seder Plate." This website hyperlink is provided for your convenience and is correct and relevant at the time of publication but may not be at the time of use.
2. Optional: prepare the charoset as instructed on Activity Sheet #3-4.B.

Instructions:

1. **Today's reading includes clear instructions from the Lord about what the Israelites were to do to when eating their final meal in Egypt. These instructions were meant to also prescribe the practice of remembering their delivery from Egypt. Today, Jewish families generally celebrate the Passover in homes at a meal called a Seder.**
2. Look through the pictures on the website together. Show the different elements of the meal.
3. **Each of the foods at the Seder meal is an important part of the ritual, playing a symbolic role. The charoset represents the mortar and brick that were laid by the Israelite slaves. Some foods, such as the charoset, are prepared differently from one culture to the next.**
4. **Optional: The charoset we will taste is from the Sephardic Jewish culture, originating in Spain, Portugal, North Africa, and the Middle East. The fruits and spices you taste are native to that area.**
5. Pass the charoset for everyone to taste.

Sending the Story (5 minutes)

We have seen today how very important the Exodus story is to many different people. Today's reading honors that story and gives instructions for a celebration that helps people remember it from one year to the next.

Make a point to come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

God, we thank you for saving your people again and again, and for providing ways to help us remember these stories. Amen.

If you have the "Living the Word: Sharing God's Story @ Home" sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!

The Exodus Story

Storytelling through song.

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land

When Israel was in Egypt's land, Let My people go;
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let My people go;
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

The Lord told Moses what to do, Let My people go;
To lead the children of Israel through, Let My people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

The pillar of cloud shall clear the way, Let My people go;
A fire by night, a shade by day, Let My people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

As Israel stood by the water-side, Let My people go;
At God's command it did divide, Let My people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

When they had reached the other shore, Let My people go;
They sang the song of triumph over, Let My people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

Oh, let us all from bondage flee, Let My people go;
And let us all in Christ be free, Let My people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
Tell old Pharaoh: Let My people go.

Studying the Seder

Learn about the Seder meal.

Charoset Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 cup dried figs
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup pitted Medjool dates
- 1 cup almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 3 tablespoons pomegranate juice

Instructions:

1. Mix all ingredients in a food processor. Pour into a bowl from which participants can serve themselves.