

# High Feasts & Holy Days

## Lesson 9: Passover Seder

4.23.2017

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**Objectives:** Introduce the Passover Seder as one of the most celebrated of Jewish rituals integral to Jewish faith and identity.

**Materials:** flipchart, lesson attachment, and Seder ingredients:

- table, tablecloths, and chairs to accommodate class
- small plates, glasses, and napkins at each place
- two taper candles in candlesticks
- printed copies of the *Haggadah*
  
- *Matzah* (two packages)
- horseradish and lettuce (for *Maror and Chazeret*)
- *Charoset* (chopped apples with cinnamon and nuts and a little red wine)
- lamb bone/or roasted beet as vegetarian option (for *Zeroa*)
- hardboiled egg (for *Beitzah*)
- parsley (for *Karpas*)
- salt water
- grape juice (for wine)

**Time allotments** suggested and meant to be adapted for **75 minute class**.

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**\*\* Note: Today youth will participate in an abridged Passover Seder meal. In order to have time for discussion along the way, please start class promptly. \*\***

### 1. **Nametags and Graffiti Wall** (5 minutes before class begins)

- Make nametags using blank paper, markers, and holders. Youth can create their own unique but LEGIBLE nametag. Make it a regular practice to wear nametags.
- “Graffiti Wall” questions: Write the following on whiteboard. Invite youth as they arrive to grab a marker and weigh in with their responses:
  - ▶ What is your favorite comfort food?
  - ▶ From your most recent worship (likely Easter Sunday, April 16), what’s one thing that you remember as interesting or meaningful?
- Teachers complete attendance sheets.
- **Please take a few minutes to invite reflections from youth about their recent worship experience. Use copies of worship programs as helpful reminder.**

2. **Silly Fun: Never Have I Ever** (5 minutes max)

Youth play one round of “Never Have I Ever” (aka Five Fingers) to see how well they know one another:

- a) Ask everyone to hold up five fingers and keep that hand up throughout the game.
- b) The goal is to think of things YOU (not others) have **never** done or experienced that others will likely have experienced, thus making you unique. Go around the room, taking turns, each person sharing ONE “Never Ever,” hoping that others will have done it. Whoever HAS experienced that thing must put one finger down.
- c) After you go around the entire room, see who has the most fingers still up. That person is quite unique!

3. **Chalice Lighting:** Light the chalice, saying these words together: *“We light this chalice as a symbol of our faith; the light of truth and the warmth of love.”*

**Teacher reads:** (from former Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, Jonathan Sacks)

*“The message of Passover remains as powerful as ever. Freedom is won not on the battlefield but in the classroom and the home. Teach your children the history of freedom if you want them never to lose it.”*

4. **Joys and Sorrows** (10 minutes): Listening is a precious gift that we offer one another at church. Using the balance scale and the blue (sorrows) and yellow (joys) stones, invite youth to share a joy and/or a sorrow from the past week, as a way of *meeting* one another with our lives and *sharing* in community. You will want to set limits (e.g. two stones max per person) so that no one monopolizes sharing time.

Each Sunday, a copy of the congregation’s Embracing Meditation will be made available to your class, so that stones can be put in for those whose names are being spoken in the Sanctuary.

5. **The Passover Seder** (60 minutes)

The table will be prepared by RE staff. Teachers should check over materials and table settings before class.

**Teacher introduces:**

- Passover 2017 is from the evening (sundown) of Monday, April 10 to evening of Tuesday, April 18.
- Passover is a festival of freedom, commemorating the Israelites’ exodus from slavery in Egypt.
- The main ritual of Passover is the Seder meal, a festive meal that involves the re-telling of the Exodus through stories, song, and sharing ritually symbolic foods.

- Seder means “order” and participants say certain prayers and offer readings in a certain order as outlined in the *Haggadah* (literally “the telling”) – a Passover guide with blessings, prayers, readings, songs to guide everyone along.

**Passover Seder:**

- Invite youth to take turns reading aloud and following instructions in their *Haggadah* packet.
- Songs have been left out (but if someone knows any well enough, let them offer a verse or two!)
- The ritual meal of itself is timed for 30 minutes, but teachers should facilitate conversation throughout, inviting questions and dialogue.

**6. Discussion questions** (depending on available time)

- Which symbol on the Seder plate felt the most important to you? Why?
- Why do we have to actually eat dry Matzah and bitter Maror? Why isn't it enough to just tell the story of the bitterness of the exile and our subsequent redemption, without actually eating the symbolic foods?
- What do Passover and Easter have in common? (*Hint: spring festivals, eggs, redemption.*) How do they differ?
- Tradition says that Elijah the Prophet is supposed to announce the coming of the Messiah/Redeemer. If you could send Elijah to any spot on the globe to make the announcement of the Messiah, where would you send him?

**7. Say goodbye until next time:** Extinguish the chalice, saying together:

*“May the light of truth and the warmth of love go with us in our hearts.”*

**8. Help clean up classroom** before leaving: Please keep regular practice of readying classroom for the next class.

- leave lesson plan and all materials organized
- return blue/yellow stones to containers
- wipe the whiteboard clean
- tables and chairs neatly returned
- nametags collected in Ziploc bag
- leave any comments for RE staff on attendance sheets