



From our family to yours...Happy Passover

The Seder Plate

The Passover Haggadah demands that each person see him or herself as having personally come forth out of Egypt. Accordingly, the seder is one of the most sensory-heavy rituals of the Jewish year. During the seder, we don't just tell the story of the Exodus, we see, smell, feel, and taste liberation. Many of the elements of this sensory experience appear on the seder plate, which serves as the centerpiece of the seder table. The seder plate traditionally holds five or six items, each of which symbolizes a part (or multiple parts) of the Passover story:

Karpas--a green vegetable, most often parsley. *Karpas* represents the initial flourishing of the Israelites during the first years in Egypt. At the end of the biblical book of Genesis, Joseph moves his family to Egypt, where he becomes the second-in-command to Pharaoh. Protected by Joseph's exalted status, the family lives safely for several generations and proliferate greatly, becoming a great nation. The size of this growing population frightens the new Pharaoh, who enslaves the Israelites, lest they make war on Egypt. Even under slave conditions, the Israelites continue to reproduce, and Pharaoh eventually decrees that all baby boys be killed. In the course of the seder, we dip the karpas in salt water (Ashkenazi custom) or vinegar (Sephardi custom) in order to taste both the hope of new birth and the tears that the Israelite slaves shed over their condition.



Haroset--This mix of fruits, wine or honey, and nuts symbolizes the mortar that the Israelite slaves used to construct buildings for Pharaoh. The name itself comes from the Hebrew word *cheres* or clay. Ashkenazi Jews generally include apples in haroset, a nod to the midrashic tradition that the Israelite women would go into the fields and seduce their husbands under the apple trees, in defiance of the Egyptian attempts to prevent reproduction by separating men and women. Sephardic recipes for *haroset* allude to this fertility symbolism by including fruits, such as dates and figs, mentioned in Song of Songs.



Maror--This bitter herb allows us to taste the bitterness of slavery. Today, most Jews use horseradish as *maror*. Originally, though, maror was probably a bitter lettuce, such as romaine, or a root, such as chicory. Like life in Egypt, these lettuces and roots taste sweet when one first bites into them, but then become bitter as one eats more. We dip maror into haroset in order to associate the bitterness of slavery with the work that caused so much of this bitterness.





Hazeret--A second bitter herb, used in *korech* or the Hillel sandwich, which consists of matzah and bitter herbs (some add haroset as well). Many Jews use horseradish for maror and romaine lettuce or another bitter green for *hazeret*. Others use the same vegetable for both parts of the seder, and do not include hazeret on the seder plate at all.



Z'roa--A roasted lamb shank bone that symbolizes the lamb that Jews sacrificed as the special Passover offering when the Temple stood in Jerusalem. The *z'roa* does not play an active role in the seder, but serves as a visual reminder of the sacrifice that the Israelites offered immediately before leaving Egypt and that Jews continued to offer until the destruction of the Temple. Vegetarians often substitute a roasted beet, both because the red of the beet resembles the blood of the sacrifice and because the Talmud mentions beets as one of the vegetables sometimes dipped during the seder.



Beitzah--A roasted egg that symbolizes the *hagigah* sacrifice, which would be offered on every holiday (including Passover) when the Temple stood. The roundness of the egg also represents the cycle of life--even in the most painful of times, there is always hope for a new beginning.



Placement

There are a few traditions regarding the arrangement of items on the seder plate. Most commonly, the maror is placed in the middle of the plate. The hazeret is at the six o'clock position followed by, moving clockwise, karpas (seven o'clock), beitzah (11 o'clock), z'roa (one o'clock), and haroset (five o'clock).

On the Table

In addition to the items on the seder plate, the seder table should also have three pieces of *matzah* wrapped or covered in a cloth and a container of salt water or vinegar in which to dip the karpas. Some seder plates have a compartment for matzah underneath, or include space for salt water among the other symbols. In most cases, though, matzah and salt water or vinegar sit near, but not on, the seder plate.



Many contemporary Jews add additional items to the seder plate to symbolize modern liberation struggles. The most common new item is an [orange](#), which symbolizes the fruitfulness that women bring to Jewish life. Some Jews place an olive on the seder plate to signal hope for eventual peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Some Good Articles on how to engage young children

<http://pjlibrary.org/pj-blog/index.php/archives/4486/engaging-children-at-the-passover-seder/>

<http://pjlibrary.org/pj-blog/index.php/archives/4486/engaging-children-at-the-passover-seder/>

<http://www.kveller.com/blog/traditions/how-to-choose-your-passover-haggadah/>

http://www.kveller.com/traditions/Holidays/How_to_Survive_a_Seder_With_Kids.shtml

http://www.interfaithfamily.com/holidays/passover_and_easter/Ten_Tips_to_Enliven_the_Seder_Ways_to_Delay_That_Fifth_Question.shtml

<http://haggadot.com/clip/passover-play-ten-minute-script-all-ages>

Here is a link to the Four Questions

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/holidays/Jewish_Holidays/Passover/The_Seder/Conducting_a_Seder/Maggid/The_Four_Questions.shtml

Passover Songs

The Matzah on Passover
The Matzah on Passover
Goes "Crunch Crunch Crunch"
"Crunch Crunch Crunch"
"Crunch Crunch Crunch"
The Matzah on pesach
Goes "Crunch Crunch Crunch"
At the Seder table!

The Building Song (Shirley Cohen)
Bang, bang, bang
Hold your hammer low
Bang, bang, bang
Give a heavy blow
For it's work, work, work
Every day and every night,
For it's work, work, work
When it's dark and when it's light.

Dig, dig, dig
Get your shovel deep
Dig, dig, dig
There's no time for sleep
For it's work, work, work
Every day and every night
For it's work, work, work
When it's dark and when it's light.

The Frog Song (by Shirley Cohen)
One morning when Pharoah awoke in his bed
There were frogs in his bed, and frogs on his head
Frogs on his nose and frogs on his toes
Frogs here, frogs there
Frogs were jumping everywhere.

Listen King Pharoah (by Shirley Cohen)
Oh listen, oh listen
Oh listen King Pharoah
Oh listen, oh listen
Please let my people go.
They want to go away
They work too hard all day
King Pharoah, King Pharoah
What do you say?
"No, No, No.
I will not let them go."
No, no, no, he will not let them go.

Take Us out of Egypt
(sung to the tune of Take me out to the ball game")
Take us out of Egypt
Free us from slavery
Bake us some matzah in a haste
Don't worry 'bout flavor--
Give no thought to taste.
Oh it's rush, rush, rush, to the Red Sea
If we don't cross it's a shame
For it's ten plagues,
Down and you're out
At the Pessah history game.

"The Matzah Making Song" and fingerplay
(sung to the tune of "Row, row, row your boat)

Roll, roll, roll your dough (one hand palm up, other hand above it, palm down making circular motions).

Make it nice and round (make a circle with fingers).

Make it flat (one hand palm up,slap other hand down on it),

Poke lots of holes (one hand palm up, with your fingers on the other hand pretend to poke holes in palm up hand),

And bake it till it's brown (both hand palm up, touching on sides, move forward, as if putting a tray in the oven).

Passover Song

(sung to the tune of London Bridges)

Moses freed the Jewish slaves,
Jewish slaves, Jewish slaves,
Moses freed the Jewish slaves, On Passover.
He told the Pharaoh let them go,
let them go, let them go,
He told the Pharaoh let them go, On Passover.
Moses parted the Red Sea,
the Red Sea, the Red Sea,
Moses parted the Red Sea, So they could be free.
He led them safely to the shore,
to the shore, to the shore,
He led them safely to the shore,
Slaves they'll be no more!



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