

Virtual Passover Seder with Alan Gilman

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Virtual Seder Preparation

The word “seder” means “set order.” The Passover Seder follows a traditional order in the retelling of God’s rescue of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. It incorporates various symbolical elements to highlight key aspects of this foundational biblical event. The Seder as I present it is a messianic derivation of the traditional one designed to reflect on its meaning and fulfillment in the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus).

Normally families, extended families, and communities gather in person at table to retell the story, partake of various traditional symbolic foods, and enjoy a festive meal. Our virtual version will provide an opportunity for you to engage the Seder through the various readings and songs.

I recommend that you follow my special designed Passover Haggadah as a script to follow. There will be opportunities for you to read and sing along as you wish.

The Seder is two and a half hours long.

Engaging the Seder

A typical Passover Seder table is prepared with several elements that you will see onscreen. I am providing you with three set up options: (1) no preparation; (2) full setup; (3) minimal setup. *Whichever option you choose, you will find the Seder a most meaningful experience.* I also provide a recommendation for those who wish to incorporate a full meal (not required).

Option One: No preparation

All you need to do is tune in and interact with the Seder as much as you like.

Option Two: Full setup

This option allows you to set-up your location to reflect a, more or less, normal Passover table. This may be the best option for groups, but individuals may prefer going this route as well.

1. **Candles**, preferably white, and at least two. You will light them when prompted.
2. **Seder Plate**. Normally there is one special seder plate at the head of the table. Of the food elements that will be eaten as part of the Seder, there should be enough for a taste for each person. In large groups, additional may be placed on separate plates as needed.

The Seder plate elements are as follows:

- a. **Karpas** (parsley), enough for one sprig per person.
- b. **Haroset**, a mixture of cooked dates and walnuts. To prepare, boil water in a pot, add dates and cook on a low heat, stirring occasionally, adding more water as needed to make a smooth-ish paste. Then remove from heat and stir in coarsely chopped walnuts. Use as many dates for the desired quantity of at least one taste per person. (Note: feel free to look

online for other recipes. I grew up with the common combination of a mixture of apples, walnuts, and wine, but we prefer the date variety.

- c. **Maror**: Prepared white horseradish. Available in jars at grocery stores. Quantity: one or two small tastes per person.
- d. **Hatzeret** (optional): A leaf of lettuce (not eaten). Some traditions use it, others don't. It isn't referenced during the Seder.
- e. **Beitzah**, roasted Egg (not eaten). Instructions (According to [this page](#)): Begin with a hardboiled egg. Then, *“hold [the egg] with tongs above (not in) the flame on your stove, you can place it directly on the rack of a preheated 350 degree oven, or use my favorite method: place it in the toaster oven, where the heating unit is closer to the egg than in the oven, Whichever way you choose, subject the egg to the heat until it just begins to get brown markings and a few cracks.”*

Note: Many people don't bother with the roasting process, but simply use a hardboiled egg.

- f. **Zeroah**, lamb bone: A previously cooked lamb bone with meat removed. Preferably a shank (forearm). If lamb is not available a chicken leg bone (meat removed) may be used as a symbol of a symbol.
3. **Matza** (unleavened bread). May be purchased or you may wish to try [making it yourself](#). Three full pieces of matza should be stacked on a plate with cloth or paper napkins in between each piece and the top of the stack also covered with a napkin. There should be enough matza available for each person to have three approximately one-inch square pieces.
 4. **Sliced hardboiled egg**. This is in addition to the roasted egg above. There should be enough for each person to have one slice.
 5. **A bowl of salted water**. Will be used twice during the Seder. Simply add table salt to a bowl of cold water. Should taste salty. The parsley and a slice of hardboiled egg will be dipped into the salt water and eaten at different times during the Seder.
 6. **Red Wine or red grape juice**. There should be enough wine or juice available for each person to have four sips at four different times in the seder.

Option Three: Minimal setup

To be able to partake of the various elements throughout the seder, the minimum you need is:

- a. **Matza** (unleavened bread). May be purchased or you may wish to try [making it yourself](#). There should be enough matza available for each person to have three approximately one-inch square pieces.
- b. **Haroset**, a mixture of cooked dates and walnuts. To prepare, boil water in a pot, add dates and cook on a low heat, stirring occasionally, adding more water as needed to make a smooth-ish paste. Then remove from heat and stir in coarsely chopped walnuts. Use as many dates for the desired quantity of at least one taste per person. (Note: feel free to look online for other

recipes. I grew up with the common combination of a mixture of apples, walnuts, and wine, but we prefer the date variety.

- c. **Maror:** Prepared white horseradish. Available in jars at grocery stores. Quantity: one or two small tastes per person.
- d. **Karpas** (parsley), enough for one sprig per person
- e. **Sliced hardboiled egg.** This is in addition to the roasted egg above. There should be enough for each person to have one slice.
- f. **A bowl of salted water.** Will be used twice during the Seder. Simply add table salt to a bowl of cold water. Should taste salty. The parsley and a slice of hardboiled egg will be dipped into the salt water and eaten at different times during the Seder.
- g. **Red Wine or red grape juice.** There should be enough wine or juice available for each person to have four sips at four different times in the seder.

The Festive Meal (Optional)

Normally the festive meal is enjoyed about halfway through the Seder. For those incorporating a full meal, you can pause the video and continue when ready.

Various Passover menus are available online. If possible, do include matza ball soup. You will likely notice that lamb is often not included. This is because Jewish people with roots in Eastern Europe didn't use lamb at Passover. The religious reason given is that lamb should be avoided, since the Temple was destroyed, and the proper sacrifices can no longer be made. A more likely reason is that those regions may not have had access to lamb. Jewish people who have roots further east and south tend to serve lamb because it's Passover. The choice is yours.

Questions?

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