



Seder& is an interactive Passover dinner
arranged by Spatula&Barcode

for the “Food and...” conference

Center for the Humanities
Texas Tech University
30 March 2018



Welcome to Seder&!

In making this event, we've realized how much the Seder has influenced our art making, which always involves hospitality, criticality, and "commensality"--eating together.

Tonight in collaboration with the conference we will guide you through a meal, a ritual, an entertainment, and a meditation. If you are religious or spiritual, please celebrate as you are called to do. If you are not, please know that welcoming strangers and those who do not understand is central to the ethos of the Seder.

Table:

There will be elements of audiovisual communication tonight, and people will make speeches and sing, but the heart of the Seder, and of Seder&, is to be at home, sharing books, wine, food, and thought. At your table you'll find companions, ritual foods, instructions, art supplies, and this combination guidebook/program.

Gift:

All Spatula&Barcode projects include gifts (with our semi-ironic logo) for participants. Your gift tonight is the hand-crafted ceramic Seder plate (made by Grant Gustafson of Madison, WI) that is at your setting. We'll use these for our meal and then we'll have them washed for you. You can wrap the plate in the pillowcase at your seat to keep it safe on the way home. If that's not enough padding, you'll find bubble wrap and tape on a table near the exit.

What's with the hats?

Jewish men always, and Jewish women sometimes, cover our heads when we are in the presence of god. While a kippah is traditional for men and a scarf is traditional for women, all forms of hats are acceptable, and so we've decided to mark the "&" of this event with the invitation to wear festive headgear.

What's with the pillows?

Eating while reclining meant freedom in the ancient world. In the standard seder, pillows stand in for this symbolically. It would have been more avant garde of us to have you all lying on the floor, but this would have been both uncomfortable and "ludicrous".

Doodles and Documentation:

Throughout this evening's activities, you are encouraged to decorate your table tops with drawings, writings, comments and questions using markers, cut paper, and foodstuffs. We'll take a moment to admire one another's collaborative creations as our ceremonies concludes.

Questions:

Your table is filled with items that will be explained and/or used throughout the evening. Most are traditional. Ask your informant(s) if you're curious about something that has not been

Roles at the Table

*You've taken a seat with a role associated to it (look at your pillowcase), but you'll have a chance in a moment to negotiate a trade.
There are six roles or responsibilities at each table:*

Facilitator

Someone willing to keep an eye on time and tasks, encourage discussion, and help make sure everyone feels free to participate.

"Informants"

At each table there are one or two (or more) people with experience of attending seder dinners in Jewish households (not all "informants" necessarily identify as Jewish). They can provide commentary on different seder traditions and the meanings they find in them.

"Child" / Interlocutor

Traditionally the youngest person at the Seder performs such tasks as asking the Four Questions and greeting Elijah; we'll ask your table to identify the person with the least knowledge of the Seder to play the naive child.

Archivist

This person's role is to document the evening and to encourage others to do so, with photographs, drawing on the table, writing on your computer or through social media if desired. Use the hashtag #seder& where applicable and mention/DM @spatcode on Twitter or Instagram.

Server

The server coordinates the pouring of the wine and the circulation of food; they should ask for and receive help from the rest of the table.

Reader

The reader will read certain passages to the table and will help the participants decide about which prayers, etc., to use during the service.





Part One: Opening activities

As instructed.

Part Two: Table Introductions

In the next twenty minutes, your table group should accomplish the following six tasks:

Task 1: Introductions and Table Roles

An introductory conversation about faith, spirituality, and religious affiliation

Each member of the group should introduce themselves by name and **write** your name on the table in front of you so everyone can see it. [If you are **vegetarian**, please draw a green circle around your plate!] Share a bit about your experience during the activities you just completed. Tell each other what role you have chosen (informant, child, etc) and negotiate any trades.

Each member should very briefly locate themselves around faith, religion, or spirituality.

Examples:

My name is William. My father was a Protestant minister. I've been an atheist since I was ten.

My name is Beth. I have nine years of bilingual religious education in primary school. I've attended more than 50 seders many of which I have hosted. Being Jewish is my ethnic identity but not my religion.

My name is Asher. I believe in God but I don't belong to any organized religion.

My name is Mary. I recently converted to Judaism and participating in religious ritual is a very important part of my life right now.

Task 2: Light the Candles

Choose one person at your table to light the two candles.

They (or the Reader) can bless the candles traditionally as follows...

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath and holiday lights.

Or you can devise original remarks for the table about light.

Or individuals can make different choices.

Task 3: 1st Glass of Wine

The Server will pour the first of four glasses of wine.

Pace yourselves; don't take more than you want. Your table has about three reds and three whites for the evening, and you are supposed to drink it--or at least pour and bless it--at these designated ritual moments. Grape juice is a viable alternative.

You can bless the wine traditionally as follows...

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Or you can devise an original toast for the table

Or individuals can make different choices.

(The facilitator should help the table reach such decisions).

Drink your wine (but keep some for the counting of the plagues (coming soon).

Task 4: Shehecheyanu

Most Jewish holidays include a celebration of renewal. The traditional prayer for this is:

Praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, for giving us life,

for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

Your table group should celebrate renewal in any way that seem most appropriate to the group as a whole.

Task 5: First Ritual Hand Washing

This is the first of two requisite hand washings. This one is done at the table, ritually, but

without a blessing (we'll wash again more thoroughly later).

Please help each other, passing the bowl, pitcher, and towel.

Task 6: Eat a Green Vegetable

Everyone should eat a green vegetable (scallion or parsley) dipped in salt water.

You can bless the produce traditionally as follows...

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

Or you can devise a original remarks for the table about produce.

Or individuals can make different choices.

Facilitators, please continue these activities until the timer ends and we call for your attention.

Part Three: Hiding the Matzoh

As directed, the "adults" should conspire to

hide the Afikomen from the Child.

(Hide the matzoh, in its cover, somewhere within the four walls of the hall itself.

Don't lock it away somewhere inaccessible--we need the Child to find it eventually.)

*Throughout the rest of the evening, the Child will attempt to find
the Afikomen. The seder cannot be concluded without it.*

(Each table needs one Afikoman--but not necessarily the one they started with!)





Part Four: The Fours

First, check and see if there is someone at the table who would like to sing the four questions in Hebrew. In any case, the *Child* reads the four questions to the table:

*Why is this night different from all the other nights?
That on all other nights we eat both leavened and unleavened breads,
on this night, we eat only matzah?
That in all other nights we do not dip vegetables even once,
on this night, we dip twice?
That in all other nights some eat sitting and others reclining,
on this night, we are all reclining?*

Tabletop Activity: What other questions do you have, about the world, not just the Seder? (*Why is there evil? Why are there mosquitos? Why do we talk about the weather? What is the boundary between the ludic and the ludicrous? Was the Last Supper really a Passover Seder? etc.*) Write and/or illustrate your questions on your tabletop as you share them with your table mates.

The *Reader* should read out this section about the Four Children: *Our tradition speaks of four different types of children who might react differently to the Passover seder. It is our job to make our story accessible to all the members of our community, so we think about how we might best reach each type of child:*

What does the wise child say? The wise child asks, What are the testimonies and laws which God commanded you? You must teach this child the rules of observing the holiday of Passover.

What does the wicked child say? The wicked child asks, What does this service mean to you? To you and not to himself! Because he takes himself out of the community and misses the point, set this child's teeth on edge and say to him: "It is because of what God did for me in taking me out of Egypt." Me, not him. Had that child been there, he would have been left behind.

What does the simple child say? The simple child asks, What is this? To this child, answer plainly: "With a strong hand God took us out of Egypt, where we were slaves."

*What about the child who doesn't know how to ask a question? Help this child ask.
Start telling the story: "It is because of what God did for me in taking me out of Egypt."*

The *Facilitator* leads a discussion: What kind of learner or teacher are you? Do you see yourself in any of these children? How do we relate to each of them? *Facilitator:* please continue discussion until the timer runs out.

Part Five: Enough Plagues

Sing, spill, document as directed.

Part Six: The Seder Plate

There are three tasks for the table over the next 15 minutes or so.

Task 1: Reading

The **Reader** reads the following passages while the **Facilitator** or **Child** holds up the appropriate object from the Seder plate on the table:

Raise the Lamb Shank and say:

Why did our fathers eat the Passover Offering during the period of the Temple?

*It is because the Holy One, Blessed be He, passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt, as it is written:
“You shall say: It is the Passover offering for Adonai, who passed over the houses of the children in Egypt when he smote the Egyptians and spared our houses. The people knelt and bowed down.”*

Raise the Matzah and say:

Why do we eat this matzah?

*It is because the Sovereign of Kings, the Holy one, revealed Himself to our fathers and redeemed them before their dough had time to ferment, as it is written:
“They baked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt into unleavened cakes; for they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provision for their journey.”*

Raise the horseradish root and say:

Why do we eat this bitter herb?

*It is because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt, as it is written:
“They made life bitter for them with hard labor, with clay and bricks, and with all kinds of labor in the field; whatever work tasks they performed were backbreaking.”*

Why is there an orange on the seder plate?

Many families add an orange to the seder plate to honor women and others who have traditionally been marginalized in Jewish practice. Some other non-traditional additions include bananas, cashews, pine cones, fair trade cocoa beans, and potatoes.

<https://reformjudaism.org/modern-additions-seder-plate>





TASK 2: Second Cup of Wine

The **server** will pour the second of four glasses of wine.
You can bless the wine traditionally as follows...

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine.*

Or you can devise an original toast for the table
Or individuals can make different choices.
Drink your wine (note: this is last call until after dinner)

Note: In the traditional sequence, at this point you would go to a sink and wash your hands a second time, saying the blessing:
*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and
commanded us concerning the washing of the hands.*

However, since we're a larger than usual family tonight, we'll wait for this until the break, coming at the end of this table section.

Task 3: Eating:

Bless a piece of matzoh, either traditionally, as follows...

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and
commanded us concerning the eating of matzah.*

Or you can devise a original remarks for the table about flatbreads.
Or individuals can make different choices.
Eat a piece of matzoh.

Bless some horseradish (either a slice from the root or some of the ground from the jar)
either traditionally, as follows:

*Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and
commanded us concerning the eating of the bitter herbs.*

Or you can devise original remarks for the table about horseradish and bitterness.
Or individuals can make different choices.
Eat some horseradish:

Next **make and eat a sandwich using matzoh and charoset** (and/or horseradish).

*Charoset is said to represent the mortar used by the slaves to build the pyramids. We've offered
different styles of haroset from different Jewish traditions.*

INTERMISSION BREAK [15 Minutes]

Use the restroom if you need to, definitely wash your hands (this time with a blessing if you are so inclined) and check in with your friends at other tables.

This is also a good time to search for the afikomen!

Part Seven: Dinner and Panel

Dinner Menu

Gefilte Fish with Horseradish

Vegetarian Alternative: Herb-Roasted Tofu

Chicken Soup with Herbed Duck-Schmaltz Matzoh Balls

Vegetarian Alternative: Borscht with Boiled Egg

Tzimmes (stewed sweet potatoes, carrots, and prunes)

Green Salad

Roasted Chicken

A Taste of the Pascal Lamb

Vegetarian Alternative: Portobello Mushroom

Coconut and Chocolate Macaroons

Flourless Almond Passover Cake

While you eat:

The traditional passover service contains a lengthy rabbinical debate about the meanings of the Passover story. In place of this text (which many families shorten or leave out), we have commissioned "scholarly" takes on the Passover story.

After the Panel: Recovering the Afikoman

In order to complete the seder meal, it's necessary that the hidden Afikoman be redeemed and consumed.

As directed, "Adults" should persuade the *Child* to return the Afikoman in exchange for a special Spatula&Barcode gift.





Part Eight: Giving Thanks & Drinking More Wine

(Table Activity, about 15 Minutes)

What are you grateful for?

Traditionally Jewish meals conclude with the singing of a lengthy, melodic grace. Tonight at your table the Facilitator will lead a short discussion about the things we're grateful for. This might integrate with toasting with the 3rd cup of wine.

Pour the Third Cup of Wine

The **Server** will pour the second of four glasses of wine.
You can bless the wine traditionally as follows...

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Or you can devise an original toast for the table about gratitude.
Or individuals can make different choices.
Drink your wine

Facilitators, please continue with your thankful discussion until we send the "children" to the front door to greet the prophet Elijah.

Part Nine: Long Conclusion

At the beginning of this section, we will send all the “Children” from the tables to the outer door of the synagogue to welcome the prophet Elijah. **While they’re gone, the adults at the table should empty the glass of wine we have poured for the Prophet, amazing the children when they return.**

This is followed in the texts by a lengthy prayer that at many seders occurs close to midnight; some households omit it and some people go to bed early. The only part that we’re keeping is the 4th glass of wine.

Pour the Fourth Cup of Wine

The *Server* will pour the fourth of four glasses of wine.

We'll share this as the whole room, not just at tables, with individuals deciding for themselves whether to offer the following prayer:

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

We'll also invite the whole room to join together in a few toasts.

Next Year?

The Seder service concludes with the participants' declarations of where they would like to find themselves a year from now. In most traditional haggadahs, this is Jerusalem.

Tabletop Activity: Write or draw on your tabletop your responses or ones you like that you hear in the room.

Songs

Not surprisingly, after 4 glasses of wine, the final component of most seders is rowdy singing. You learned *Chad Gadya* on the bus, we'll try to sing it together. After that, as time allows, we can sing other songs that you know!

Epilogue

As you leave, don't forget to take your seder plate with you. Use your pillowcase to wrap it up and add bubble wrap if it's going into checked luggage.

On your way out, take time to admire the tabletop creations that other groups have devised.



*This is the "back" of this booklet; Hebrew is read in a right-to-left direction
and books such as Passover Haggadot turn pages in the opposite direction of most English texts*

We want to thank:

Dorothy Chansky for inviting us to Lubbock, for hosting a great conference, and for running interference on our behalf, **Justin Hughes** for managing our logistics, **Grant Gustafson** for creating the souvenir plates, **Cate Richards** and **Alex Donnelly** for work on the tablecloths, and all our presenters (**Joshua Abrams**, **Chi Ha**, **Jake Morton**, **Kevin Solez**, **Tashima Thomas**, **Athena Stourna**), informants (**Joshua Abrams**, **Deborah Bahme**, **Tim & Nathaniel Nokken**, **Ed & Dorothy Chansky**, **Christo Chaney**, **Jake Morton**, **Gail Tutino**, **Seth Tannenbaum**, **Henry & Sellie Shine**, **Stephanie Shine**, **Hamid Tehrani**, & **Naomi Shine**, **Lesley Wolff**), our song leaders (**Jake Morton**, **Stephanie Shine**), our kitchen assistants (**Piedad Graciano**, **Sarah E. Jones**), and others whose names were not available at press time.

*please feel free to share photos and thoughts: #seder&
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