



PASSOVER SEDER PLATE BLESSINGS

Here is a brief explanation of the Seder plate blessings and their meaning. Share with your children as you decorate your Homemade Passover Seder Plate!

Beitzah – Egg Blessing: The hard-boiled egg serves as a reminder of the “Festival Offering.” It is dipped in saltwater and eaten at the beginning of the Seder Meal. It symbolizes both the celebration of the festivals and the mourning of the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem. Its round shape also represents the cycle of life and things eventually returning to where they began – a hope that the Temple will one day be restored in Jerusalem.

Maror – Bitter Herb Blessing: Usually made of romaine lettuce or endive leaves and ground horseradish, it is dipped in the charoset and eaten. The maror represents the “bitterness” and hard labor endured by the Jewish people while slaves in Egypt. It also represents the bitterness of the Exile. It serves as a reminder of the unhappiness that inspires us to improve our lives.

Zeroah – Shank Bone: The shank bone, with most of the meat removed, is not eaten but instead serves as a reminder of the lamb, or young goat, that was offered to God in the Holy Temple on the night the Jewish people fled from Egypt. It symbolizes God’s love when “passing over” the houses of the Jews on the night of Exodus, when the Egyptian first born died. It represents the ability to exceed our limitations.

Charoset – Mortar Blessing: The charoset, a paste-like mixture of fruit, nuts and wine, is a symbol of the mortar used by the Jewish slaves in the construction of the Pharaoh’s pyramids.

Chazeret – Second Bitter Herb Blessing: The second bitter herb is used in Hillel’s Matzah–Maror sandwich. Hillel, a Talmudic scholar, believed that the matzah, maror and meat of the Passover offering were to be eaten wrapped together, not just at the same meal. This is why the bitter herb is presented twice, once on its own and once sandwiched between the matzah.

Karpas – Vegetable Blessing: The karpas is a small piece of vegetable, most commonly represented by parsley or celery. Sometimes potato or onion is used. It is dipped into the saltwater and eaten at the beginning of the Seder meal. The karpas represents the backbreaking work endured by the Jewish people as slaves in Egypt and the tears of their suffering. It is a reminder that freedom is a luxury. “Karpas” is also an acronym for a Hebrew phrase that translates to “six hundred thousand working at breaking labor”.