

KEEPING PASSOVER AT HOME

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) INTRODUCTION

Due to recent world events, many are now forced to keep Passover at home—some for the first time. As a result, there has been some uncertainty. This article addresses several Frequency Asked Questions (FAQs) concerning keeping Passover at home. This article is not intended to provide instructions on the meaning of the Passover or to help anyone spiritually prepare for it. Links to Passover sermons and books can be found at the end of this article.

2) WHAT WILL I NEED TO KEEP THE PASSOVER AT HOME?

First and foremost, PREPARE ahead of time. You will need the following items, and you should make certain that they are on-hand well before Passover.

- a) Print out the booklet *The Christian Passover Ceremony*. This is important in case there is a problem with accessing the Internet. You can find it here:

https://www.cbcg.org/images/books/Christain_Passover_Ceremony.pdf

- b) You can also watch or download the audio or video for the Passover ceremony. You can find them here:

Video: <https://www.cbcg.org/video/passover-ceremony-renewal-of-the-new-covenant.html>

Audio: <https://www.cbcg.org/passover-ceremony.html>

- c) Basin and towel for footwashing
- d) Unleavened bread
- e) Red wine
- f) Plate and glass(es)

3) HOW DO I PREPARE THE ROOM?

The room should be de-leavened, clean, and free of clutter. It should also be able to be closed off from anyone who is not participating in the Passover. The room should be ready at least an hour before sundown to avoid having to do it at the last minute. Do not set up more than a few hours beforehand to prevent the room from being disturbed.

Given the recent concerns with transmittable diseases, it is appropriate to have sufficient seating space between participants, facial tissues, and hand sanitizer (particularly for use after the footwashing).

4) WHAT KIND OF WATER SHOULD I USE FOR THE FOOTWASHING?

Tap water is sufficient. A separate basin should be used for each person and the water should be warm to the touch for the comfort of all involved.

5) WHAT KIND OF BREAD SHOULD I USE?

Only use unleavened bread. The easiest solution is to purchase unflavored Matzos. The other option is to make your own (*The Christian Passover Ceremony* booklet has a recipe),

but make certain it is hard and dry like a cracker. The unleavened bread should not be stale or soggy, so ensure that it is stored properly until the Passover. Do NOT break it beforehand. After asking God's blessing on it during the ceremony, the bread MUST be broken prior to eating it. This represents the broken body of Jesus Christ. Serve each person a small piece, about the size of a quarter.

6) IS SALT REQUIRED FOR THE UNLEAVENED BREAD?

No. The unleavened bread can be with or without salt. While salt is required for Old Testament offerings, the Passover unleavened bread is not an offering but a symbol of Jesus Christ's body.

7) WHAT KIND OF WINE SHOULD I USE?

Only use red wine. Do not use white wine, rosé, blended wine, flavored wine, sparkling wine, or grape juice. Appropriate wines include burgundy, Merlot, cabernet sauvignon, Zinfandel (red only), Malbec, Pinot Noir, Syrah/Shiraz, Sangiovese, and Nebbiolo. Make certain they are not fortified (such as with brandy to make Port, Sherry, Madeira, Marsala, etc.) and do not have added flavorings. The type of cork or lid does not matter. Store the wine at room temperature until the Passover.

A new, unopened bottle of wine is highly recommended. One that has been previously opened is acceptable as long as the bottle has never come in contact with someone's lips and the wine is not spoiled.

8) WHAT KIND OF PLATE AND CUP SHOULD I USE?

Use a clean plate large enough to hold the bread and a small, clean glass for each person in which to serve the wine. Ceramic cups are acceptable, but plastic cups should be avoided. One to two teaspoonfuls for each person is appropriate.

The plate and glasses should be placed on a clean and uncluttered surface. Never place them on the floor. Have everything ready about an hour before sundown and put any pets out of the room to avoid contamination of the bread or wine.

It is best to use separate glasses. While it is not wrong to use a common glass, it is discouraged. If too much wine is consumed as it is passed around, there may not be enough for the last participants. Plus, good hygiene is especially important today.

9) DO I NEED TO COVER THE WINE AND BREAD?

No, covering the wine and bread is not required. However, if you wish to cover them with a cloth, make certain to use a clean, white cotton or linen cloth. When lifting the cloth, be careful not to break or drop the bread or spill the wine.

10) WHEN SHOULD I BEGIN THE PASSOVER CEREMONY?

The Passover ceremony should begin about 30 minutes after sunset. If others will be participating with you, they should arrive 10 to 20 minutes before sunset and quietly pray or read the Bible until the ceremony begins.

The dates of the holy days can be found here: <https://www.cbcbg.org/calendar/index.html> and sunset times can be calculated here: <https://www.timeanddate.com/sun/>.

11) WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE PASSOVER SERVICE?

Only baptized members of the body of Christ can participate in the Passover ceremony.

12) CAN THOSE WHO ARE NOT BAPTIZED OBSERVE THE PASSOVER SERVICE?

No! This is a solemn ceremony for baptized members that serves as a memorial to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As such, it is a time to renew one's covenant with God. It is not an appropriate venue for learning, teaching, or observing the Passover. Those who are not baptized, including children, should *not* participate or observe in any way.

13) CAN I KEEP THE PASSOVER IF I AM ALONE?

Yes. However, you will not be able to perform the footwashing, although you should read the appropriate passages and understand them. Footwashing is symbolic of our service and humility to each other (John 13:14), so there is no purpose in washing your own feet.

14) CAN A MAN AND WOMAN WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET?

Certain situations may require a man and woman to wash each other's feet. It is certainly acceptable for a husband and wife, but it should be avoided if possible—even if it means that a man or woman perform the footwashing ceremony more than once. If it cannot be avoided, the woman should consider wearing slacks that can be pulled above the ankle during the footwashing.

15) CAN A WOMAN HOST THE PASSOVER FOR OTHERS?

Yes, but, if possible, a spiritually mature, baptized man should be asked to read the ceremony (if you are not using the audio or video), ask God's blessings on the bread and wine, and distribute the bread and wine. The ceremony should be done properly and in order. No one should add to or take away from the ceremony with additional comments or by sermonizing.

16) WHAT SHOULD I WEAR TO THE PASSOVER CEREMONY?

Sabbath attire is appropriate. Women, especially, should avoid extra clothing that would make the footwashing ceremony difficult, such as thigh-length or waist-high hosiery. Men should wear socks with their shoes as they normally would. If wearing a traditional suit, the jacket can be removed prior to the footwashing to make it easier.

17) WHAT IF I INJURED A FOOT OR CANNOT KNEEL DOWN?

If you have an injured or diseased foot, have someone wash only the uninjured foot. If both feet are affected, then you should not have your feet washed; however, you should wash the feet of the other person. Those with severe foot odor should wash their feet before the Passover ceremony as a courtesy to others.

Those who cannot kneel may have to skip washing someone else's feet, but still have someone wash their own feet.

18) WHAT DO I DO WITH THE REMAINING BREAD?

The leftover bread that was blessed must be disposed of properly. The preferred method is to grind it up and bury it in the ground, which is symbolic of Jesus Christ's burial. It can also be burned (symbolic of a burnt offering), such as on an outdoor grill. This requires significant time because the bread must be completely and thoroughly burned to ashes. Dispose of the remaining ashes on the ground or down the drain. If none of the above methods are appropriate, grind up the remaining bread and wash it down the drain. The remainder should never be placed in the trash or flushed down the toilet.

19) WHAT DO I DO WITH THE REMAINING WINE?

Any wine that is left in the glasses should be poured out onto the ground. This is because it was included in the blessing of the wine during the ceremony and it is symbolic of Jesus Christ's blood being spilled on the ground. Leftover wine in the bottle does not have to be poured out as long as it was not in the room when God's blessing was asked.

20) WHAT DO I DO AFTER THE CEREMONY?

Upon completion of the ceremony, participants should quietly return to their homes or rooms and use the remaining time for prayer, Bible reading, and meditation on the meaning of the Passover. The host should properly dispose of any remaining wine and bread that was blessed during the ceremony and then rinse clean the plate and glasses before retiring for the night.

21) UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD I KEEP THE SECOND PASSOVER?

If you are unable to keep the Passover on Nisan 14 because of sickness or injury, God allows for a second Passover to be kept exactly 30 days later (Numbers 9:9-12). Bear in mind that you must make every effort to keep the first Passover. Plan ahead so you are prepared; minor inconveniences or distractions are not valid excuses.

22) ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- a) Sermons - Passover series:
<https://www.cbcg.org/passover/passover.html>
- b) Sermons - Passover preparation:
<https://www.cbcg.org/series/passover-prep/passover-preparation.html>
- c) Sermon - *The Importance of the Christian Passover*:
<https://www.cbcg.org/passover/importance-of-christian-passover.html>
- d) Article - *How to Prepare For Passover and the Feast Of Unleavened Bread*:
<https://www.cbcg.org/how-to-prepare-for-passover.html>
- e) Book - *The Day Jesus the Christ Died*:
<https://www.cbcg.org/images/books/DayJesusDied2-28-14.pdf>
- f) Book - *The Christian Passover*:
<https://www.cbcg.org/booklets/the-christian-passover.html>