

Name _____ Date _____

Handout 4A

Biblical Birth Stories

Isaac (Genesis 18:1–15; 21:1–21)

Summary:

Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:19–34)

Summary:

Joseph (Genesis 30:1–24)

Summary:

Samson (Judges 13:1–25)

Summary:

Samuel (1 Samuel 1–2:11)

Summary:

How are these stories similar to the story of Moses' birth (Exodus 2:1–10)? How are they different?

Seder Food Symbols

The Greens (<i>Karpas</i>)	Although any green vegetable may be used, the most popular Seder greens are celery, parsley, or lettuce. The greens represent spring and rebirth—the rebirth of the Israelites after their slavery in Egypt.
Shank bone (<i>Zeroa</i>)	The shank bone symbolizes the Passover sacrifice brought to the Temple in Jerusalem by Jews. Any meat or poultry may be used at the Seder, but the most popular is a roasted lamb chop or a chicken/turkey neck. The bone is not eaten, since ritual sacrifice is not allowed in the absence of the Temple.
Bitter Herbs (<i>Maror</i>)	These herbs, usually horseradish or romaine lettuce, symbolize the bitterness of slavery. During the Seder, the herbs are dipped into salt water and then eaten.
Bitter Herbs (<i>Chazeret</i>)	Many Jews include a second bitter herb, or <i>chazeret</i> , at the Seder, stemming from Numbers 9:11, which refers to “herbs” in the plural. The bitter herbs are eaten with matzo as a sandwich during the Seder meal.
Roasted Egg (<i>Beitzah</i>)	Eggs are traditionally a symbol of mourning in Judaism. The Seder egg symbolizes the loss of the Temple and the hope that it will be rebuilt. Some Jews eat the egg dipped in salt water toward the beginning of the meal.
Fruit and Nuts (<i>Haroseth</i>)	This mixture is symbolic of the mortar used by slaves. Most American Jews make the <i>haroseth</i> with apples, walnuts, sweet red wine, and cinnamon. At the Seder, the bitter herbs are dipped into the <i>haroseth</i> to dull their bitterness.
The Four Cups	During the meal, Jews drink four cups of wine (one at a time). They also leave a full cup of wine on the table for the prophet Elijah, who supposedly is also present during the Seder.
Unleavened Bread (<i>Matzo</i>)	Matzo is flat, unleavened bread (flour and water) that symbolizes the unleavened bread the Israelites ate at the first Passover. Matzo is also called the “bread of affliction.” At the Seder there are three pieces of matzo, symbolic of the three categories of Jews that remain from ancient times: the priests, the Levites, and the Israelites.
Salt Water	This symbolizes the tears of the Jewish slaves in Egypt. The salt water also represents the tears of joy the Israelites shed when they were freed from slavery.

