



Passover Haggadah

This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD—a lasting ordinance.

Exodus 12:14

REJOICE!

This seder is an adventure. It begins with Jewish people in captivity in Egypt and ends in triumph as the Hebrews enter the Promised Land!

REJOICE!

This adventure is not only for those who are born Jewish, but also for every person who, by accepting Jesus as LORD, has been born again.

REJOICE!

We have been part of God's rescue from Egypt. He has led each believer in Jesus into his or her own Promised Land via the cross.*



*Taken from: Celebrate Passover Haggadah: A Christian Presentation of the Traditional Jewish Festival by Joan R. Lipis (San Francisco: Purple Pomegranate Productions, 1993).

Welcome to our Passover Seder!

This is a great evening for us to connect, interact, fellowship (and eat!) and learn more about the biblical holiday of Passover. God commanded His people to celebrate this holiday every year, and it is a significant one for Christians because Jesus' Last Supper was a Passover Seder. Many of the things we do tonight would have been a part of what Jesus did at that evening meal.

Celebrating Passover helps us understand the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, and it brings new and deeper significance for us as we prepare for Easter. Passover is significant because it is a time when Jewish people remember how God rescued and redeemed them from slavery in Egypt. And we Christians explore this tradition and celebrate this meal as those who have been redeemed and set free by the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus, our Passover Lamb who took away the sins of the world.

Please keep this booklet with you – we will be using it all night, because this is a participatory meal!

What to Expect

Pastor Denise will lead us through the service and meal. As you follow along in this booklet (or Haggadah*) you will see that there are things we all say together, times we all eat together and times we all drink together. We will eat our full meal midway through our booklet and then finish the service after that. Don't be worried if you miss a line or aren't used to reciting things aloud. This is a fun, joyful time for us to learn and participate together. Enjoy it!

The **LEADER** (Pastor Denise) will explain many of the Jewish traditions of the seder and lead us in the prayers in English and Hebrew. The **INSTRUCTOR** will talk about how we as Christians can understand the elements of the Passover meal. As a **GROUP**, we will recite things together as we celebrate this special night!

**Our booklet has been adapted from Celebrate Passover Haggadah: A Christian Presentation of the Traditional Jewish Festival by Joan R. Lipis (San Francisco: Purple Pomegranate Productions, 1993).*

Passover Haggadah

Searching for Leaven

LEADER: As it is written in Exodus 12:14-20, in preparation for the Passover, God commanded the people of Israel to remove all leaven or yeast from their houses. A search is made with a candle and feather to find any leaven and it is all removed from the home. In the Bible, leaven or yeast, often represents sin. So at the seder, the removing of leaven represents the removing of sin from our lives.

INSTRUCTOR: It is from this concept of the cleansing of leaven that Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 5:6, “*Don’t you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast.*”

LEADER: Let us search ourselves for any leaven, for any impurity of thought, word or deed that might separate us from the presence and peace of God. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

GROUP: O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. Before a word is in my tongue, you know it completely, O LORD. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me that needs to be removed as the leaven was removed from the house. Lead me in your everlasting way.

LEADER: When we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

GROUP: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.

Blessing Over the Candles

LEADER: At sunset, to usher in the new day, and to sanctify the seder, we light the candles with these blessings:

TABLE HOST: [Recite the blessing as you light the candles on your table.] Blessed are you O LORD our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us in Jesus, in whose name we light the festival lights.

INSTRUCTOR: Let us remember the significance of the Passover seder, Jesus’ last supper with His disciples. For He said, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

Sanctification of the Meal

LEADER: By getting rid of leaven and lighting the candles, we have declared this day is special and holy. Now the first cup of grape juice will declare our meal special and holy.

The Four Cups

LEADER: Though not commanded in the Bible, the four cups are a very ancient tradition of the seder. They each relate to God's promises of freedom to our people. With each cup we remember His words found in Exodus 6:6-7.

The first cup is the Cup of Sanctification:

GROUP: *"I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians."*

LEADER: The Cup of Deliverance:

GROUP: *"I will free you from being slaves to them."*

LEADER: The Cup of Redemption:

GROUP: *"I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment."*

LEADER: The Cup of Praise:

GROUP: *"I will take you as my own people."*



The Cup of Sanctification

INSTRUCTOR: The word sanctification means "to separate." It is our faith in Jesus, the Messiah, which sanctifies us and separates us to live holy lives.

LEADER: This is the first cup—the Cup of Sanctification. Let us take it together and proclaim the holiness of this day of deliverance. **"Baruch atah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha olam, boray p'ree hagafen."**

LEADER AND GROUP: "Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine."

LEADER: Let us all drink this cup of sanctification.

[Each person drinks from his or her cup at the tables.]

Washing the Hands

LEADER: Ancient regulation requires that hands must be washed before dipping food into any liquid. In the days when the temple was still standing in Israel, it was part of the process of purification to be holy unto the LORD. The purification process also included sacrifice because no amount of water could cleanse us from our sins. God said: *“It is blood that makes atonement and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness”* (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22).

However, now we are free! Therefore, tonight we will only remember the ritual, not participate in it.

INSTRUCTOR: During the Last Supper, it might have been at this point that, as the leader of the Passover seder, Jesus prepared to wash, not His own hands, but the feet of His disciples!

It is helpful to know that the tables of that time did not look like the famous painting of Leonardo da Vinci. Instead they were horseshoe shaped and were very close to the ground. Since there were no chairs then, people sat on the ground. On Passover, to demonstrate freedom, pillows were placed around the table and Jews would recline rather than sit upright.

From the events recorded in the Gospel of John, we know the seating arrangement at the Last Supper. Peter and John sat opposite each other—Peter was on the right end and John was on the left. Sitting next to John was Jesus. Since everyone reclined on their left side, John was leaning on Jesus’ breast. Sitting on the other side of Jesus was Judas. Surprisingly, this was the place of honour.

John 13:4-5 records what happened: *“He got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”*

Remember who was sitting in the place of honour? Judas! So it would have been his feet that Jesus washed first. What a contrast to the argument that the disciples had just had regarding who would be the greatest in the kingdom of God. Jesus demonstrated that humiliation often comes before exaltation.

MEN: Jesus said, *“If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.”* (Mark 9:35)

WOMEN: And He said, *“Now that I, your LORD and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”* (John 13:14-15)

INSTRUCTOR: Jesus’ washing the disciples’ feet was only one act of His

humility. *“For through he was God, he laid aside his mighty power and glory, taking on the guise of a slave, becoming like men. He humbled himself even further by actually dying a criminal’s death on the cross.”* (Philippians 2:5-8, Amplified Bible)

MEN: At the Last Supper, Jesus said, *“Unless I wash you, you have no part of me.”*

WOMEN: He also said, *“You are clean, though not every one of you.”*

GROUP: For He knew who was going to betray Him.

Karpas—Eating the Greens

LEADER: We praise you, God, sovereign of existence! You have called us for service from among the people and have hallowed our lives with your Spirit. In love you preserved us and protected us through the dark times as well as the joyous times.

LEADER AND GROUP: *I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Praise the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD* (Psalm 104:33, 35).

LEADER: The juice we drank was red in color, reminding us of the blood of the Passover lamb. These greens remind us of the hyssop that applied this blood to the doorframes of the homes of the Hebrew slaves. The salt water reminds us of tears we shed in bondage and of the waters of the Red Sea through which we passed to safety. Let us dip the greens in salt water as we recite.

[Each person takes a sprig of parsley from the seder plate and dips it into the salt water and eats.]

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

Yachatz—Breaking the Middle Matzoh

[The leader uncovers the matzoh and lifts the matzoh container.]

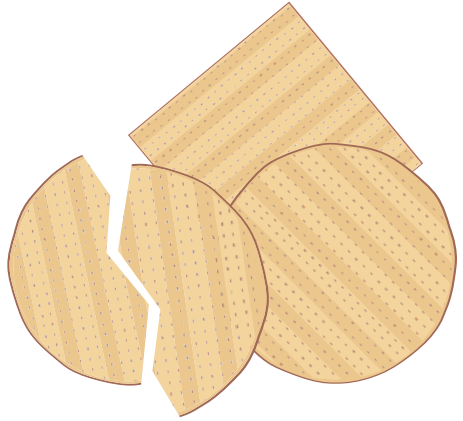
LEADER: The matzoh, or unleavened bread, that we use is kept in a linen. We have three pieces of matzoh here, which symbolizes unity. This is a compound unity—a whole consisting of several parts.

INSTRUCTOR: There is no agreement as to why there are three matzot. Some say it symbolizes the priests, the Levites and the congregation. Others say it represents the three patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Believers in

Jesus can see that it could also represent the Trinity of God: Father, Son and Spirit.

[The host at each table should take the middle matzoh and break it into two parts. Then place the smaller part back between the two whole pieces of matzoh in the linen. Then wrap the larger part in a napkin.]

LEADER: We take the middle matzoh and break it in two. We then put the smaller piece back between the other two pieces and wrap the larger piece in a separate napkin. This larger piece is now called the afikoman, which means “dessert.” We will hide the afikoman until after the meal. Later we will share it as the Passover offering was once shared in Jerusalem. Among people everywhere, the sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship.



[Have all the children close their eyes, while the host of each table hides the afikoman. It should be hidden in an easy-to-find location in the room.]

LEADER: [Leader holds up the matzoh container.] This is the bread of affliction, which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Then we were slaves; now we are free!

INSTRUCTOR: The broken matzoh is also the symbol of the affliction suffered by Jesus to bring us ultimate peace through faith in Him.

GROUP: As free people, let us share with all who are hungry. Let all who are lost or in want share the hope of Passover.

LEADER: *God humbled us and caused us to hunger in order to test us and to know our hearts. Then He fed us manna. He protected and provided for all our needs that we might understand that we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of the LORD (Deuteronomy 8:3).*

GROUP: We give thanks unto the LORD. His mercies are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness!

Maggid—Recounting the Story of the Exodus

LEADER: This next section developed from God’s command in Exodus 12:26-27: “When your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to

you?’ then tell them, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when He struck down the Egyptians.’”

The questions we are about to ask provide the opportunity to tell the story in a dramatic way so that the past, present and



future collide as we see God’s hand upon us. Tonight’s celebration is to be a living drama. It is not the record of a dead event, or an allegory. It is to be an act of personal identification. The Exodus event provided God’s pattern of salvation, which is repeated all through the Bible. We see God in His infinite compassion and love stepped from the heavens to bring His people out of desperate trouble and to provide for them in a new and good environment:

ADULT 1: Bringing Israel out of bondage to Egypt and into the Land of Promise.

ADULT 2: Bringing Israel out of exile in Babylon and back into the land.

ADULT 3: Bringing those who believe in Jesus out from the kingdom of darkness and sin; bringing them into the kingdom of light and life.

ADULT 4: Bringing believers of all eras out of this cursed creation and into the new heavens and new earth.

The Four Questions

CHILD 1: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat bread made with leaven. Why on this night only matzoh—the unleavened bread?

CHILD 2: On all other nights we eat any kind of vegetable. Why on this night only the bitter herbs?

CHILD 3: On all other nights we are not required to dip our vegetables even once. Why on this night two times?

CHILD 4: On all other nights we eat sitting upright. Why on this night do we recline?

LEADER: The answers to these questions explain the major features of the seder: We were once slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD our God

brought us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not brought our ancestors out from Egypt, then we, our children and their children would still be slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. Therefore, even if we were all wise, all understanding, all experienced, all intimate with the Scriptures, we would still need to remember the Exodus from Egypt.

ADULT 1: On this night we eat only unleavened bread to remind us of the swiftness of God's salvation, which came so quickly there was no time for the dough to rise. Further, the purging of leaven from our houses reminds us to purge our lives of sinful thoughts and actions.

ADULT 2: On this night we eat bitter herbs to remind us of the bitterness of bondage in Egypt.

INSTRUCTOR: Similarly, as believers in Jesus, we remember the bitterness of bondage to sin and death from which Jesus has freed us.

ADULT 3: On this night we dip the parsley into the salt water to remind us of the tears shed in bondage. We dip the unleavened bread in the charoset (kar-o-set) to remind us of the sweetness of freedom, which the LORD brought about through the Exodus.

INSTRUCTOR: Similarly, as believers in Jesus we remember how He turned our tears of sadness into joy. We praise Him for the abundant life into which He has brought us.

ADULT 4: On this night we recline because in ancient times that was the posture of free people at meals. Those whom God liberated in the Exodus were no longer slaves.

INSTRUCTOR: Similarly, as believers in Jesus we know that we have been made new creations. We are freed from our past sin and pain, freed to live with joy in the present and freed to live and reign with God forever! Freed by Jesus, we are free indeed.

LEADER: To experience the freedom of Passover, we must try to experience the affliction of Passover. However, the story of Passover doesn't begin in Egypt, but in Ur, a city in Mesopotamia.

Ur was a great city, a cultured city even by modern standards. The Chaldeans were a religious people and served many gods and idols.

Yet it was there that God spoke to a man named Abram (later to be called Abraham) and said, *"Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse; and all people on earth will be blessed through you"* (Genesis

12:1-3).

Therefore by faith Abram left as the LORD had told him, and he traveled to Canaan. Later God made those same promises to Isaac and to Jacob. Jacob became the father of 12 sons, the tribes of Israel.

Eventually there was a famine in the land and Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt to dwell—it was only to be temporary. Israel was treated royally because of Joseph. Once sold into slavery, Joseph (who was one of Jacob's sons) was now master of the king's household, ruler over the king's possessions (Psalm 105:2-21).

Then a new king, who didn't know about Joseph, came to power. Instead of respecting Israel, this king feared their increasing numbers. He declared, *"Come we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and if war breaks out will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country."*

"So they put slavemasters over them to oppress them with forced labor and work them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter..." (Exodus 1:11-14). When the Jewish people continued to multiply, the king ordered that every newborn boy be killed.

GROUP: In faithfulness to His promise, the LORD raised up a deliverer—his name was Moses.

LEADER: Moses trained 40 years as a royal son in Egypt and 40 years as a shepherd in Midian. During this time, the Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out—and God heard their cries.

INSTRUCTOR: So the LORD appeared to Moses at Mount Sinai, and revealed His character in His name, I AM—in Hebrew, Yahweh. I am Yahweh the God who hears the groanings of His people, remembers His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. The LORD God said to Moses, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them cry out, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them out of that land into a good and spacious land." The LORD God then returned with Moses to battle with the "gods" of Egypt.

MEN: Praise the LORD who brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

WOMEN: With great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders (Deuteronomy 26:8).

GROUP: We praise the LORD our God!

The Ten Plagues

INSTRUCTOR: This section of the seder is extremely important as it reflects God’s intolerance of sin, especially pride, disobedience and unbelief. Through the prophet Ezekiel, God said, “The one who sins must die.” As harsh as the plagues may seem to us, they remind us that “the wages of sin is death” (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23).

LEADER: The ten plagues that the LORD inflicted upon Egypt punished them for their harsh treatment of His people and humiliated their “gods.” Each plague targeted an Egyptian “god” as the LORD showed His power and strength as the only true God of the universe.

MEN: Though the plagues on Egypt were the result of their own evil, we do not rejoice over their defeat.

WOMEN: Instead we recognize their suffering and express sorrow for their pain and loss.

LEADER: A full cup is a symbol of joy. Therefore as we recall the plagues and the destruction they caused, I will lessen the amount of juice in my cup.

- The plague of blood
- Frogs
- Lice
- Flies
- Livestock
- Boils
- Hail
- Locusts
- Darkness
- Slaying of the firstborn

LEADER: O LORD, we ask for mercy and thank you for your deliverance from all these plagues. You sent darkness and made the land dark—for they had rebelled against your words.

GROUP: You turned their water into blood, causing their fish to die.

LEADER: The land teemed with frogs that went up into the bedrooms of their rulers.

GROUP: You spoke, and there came swarms of flies and gnats throughout their country.

LEADER: You turned their rain into hail, with lightning throughout their land. You spoke and the locusts came; they ate up every green thing in their land.

GROUP: You struck down all the firstborn in their land.

LEADER: You brought out your people with rejoicing, your chosen ones with shouts of joy. You gave them the land of the nations that they might keep Your precepts and observe Your laws (Psalm 78).

Dayenu

LEADER: During many Passover seders, celebrants sing a song called “Dayenu.” In Hebrew, “dayenu” means, “it would have been enough for us.” So the song answers the question, “For how many favours do we owe praise to God?” The answer is, “unending.” If the LORD had done any one of the mighty acts of the Exodus, that would have been enough, but He continually saves and provides.

We’re not going to sing Dayenu tonight, but we will recite some of its truths together!

LEADER: If God had only brought us up out of Egypt, but had not punished the Egyptians...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER: If He had only punished the Egyptians, but had not destroyed their gods...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER: If He had only destroyed their gods, but had not divided the sea for us...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER: If He had only divided the sea for us, but not fed us with manna...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER: If He had only fed us with manna but not given us the Torah...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER: If he had only given us the Torah, but had not brought us into the land of Israel...

GROUP: Dayenu!

INSTRUCTOR: All believers in Jesus declare: Had Jesus only come to show us how to live according to God’s will, but had not died for our sins...

GROUP: Dayenu!

INSTRUCTOR: Had Jesus only died for our sins, but not raised to give us

eternal life...

GROUP: Dayenu!

INSTRUCTOR: Had Jesus only been raised to give us eternal life, but not sent His Spirit...

GROUP: Dayenu!

INSTRUCTOR: Had Jesus only sent us His Spirit, but was not coming to bring us into eternal fellowship with the Father...

GROUP: Dayenu!

LEADER, INSTRUCTOR AND GROUP: But He is coming!

The Three Essentials

LEADER: The three essentials of Passover are the lamb, the matzoh and the maror (or bitter herbs).

[The leader lifts up the representation of the lamb.]

This represents the Passover lamb that was slain. Its blood was put on the Israelites' doorposts that they might be saved. It reminds us that God passed over the houses of our forefathers in Egypt. *"It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when He struck down the Egyptians"* (Exodus 12:37).

INSTRUCTOR: It also reminds us of Jesus, who was called "the Lamb which takes away the sin of the world." When, by faith, we apply His blood to our hearts God's hand of judgment passes over our sins and we are saved.

[The leader lifts up the matzoh container.]

LEADER: This matzoh reminds us that in their haste to flee, our ancestors did not have time to let their dough rise before the King of kings revealed Himself to them and redeemed them. Exodus 12:39 states, *"With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves."*

INSTRUCTOR: The matzoh also reminds us of the perfect life of Jesus. Though He was tempted in all ways, He did not sin.

[The leader points to the maror.]

LEADER: The maror (or bitter herb) reminds us that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt. Exodus 1:14 says, *"They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work"*

in the fields; in all their hard labor the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.”

INSTRUCTOR: We are also reminded that sin is the most ruthless of all taskmasters. Sin ensnares us, putting us in bondage to pain, fear, anxiety and, worst of all, it separates us from God. But faith in Jesus frees us from the tyranny of sin. Along with the Psalmist and John, we can say, *“The snare is broken and we are set free. Freed by the Son we are free indeed!”* (Psalm 124:7; John 8:36)



LEADER: In response to the mighty acts of the LORD, we respond with the full vocabulary of biblical praise.

GROUP: We are privileged to thank, to praise, to laud, to glorify, to exalt, to honour, to bless, to extol and give reverence to you, O LORD our God, who performed all these miracles for our ancestors and for us. You have brought us forth from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to festivity, from darkness to light and from bondage to redemption! Therefore, we sing to you a new song! Hallelujah!

The Cup of Deliverance

LEADER: The Cup of Deliverance is based on Yahweh’s second promise to Israel in Exodus 6:6, *“I will free you from your slavery.”*

INSTRUCTOR: In the same way, Jesus has freed us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13).

LEADER: Let us raise the second cup, the Cup of Deliverance. [Raise cups.] Blessed are you, O LORD our God, who redeemed us and brought us to this night. You have put a new song in our hearts, a song of praise and thanksgiving for our redemption and the liberation of our souls. Blessed are You, O LORD, redeemer of Israel and all nations.

Baruch atah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha olam, boray p’ree hagafen.

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine. Thank you for declaring us righteous and delivering us from your judgment and wrath.

[All drink from the second cup.]

Eating of the Elements

LEADER: We have heard about the three elements. Let us now share them together. First, the matzoh.

Baruch atah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha olam, ha motzee lechem min ha aretz.

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

[The host of each table breaks olive-sized pieces from the upper and middle matzoh and distributes them to everyone at the table.]

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who has commanded us to eat unleavened bread.

[Everyone eats their piece of matzoh.]

LEADER: Now let us remember the bitterness of slavery in Egypt by eating the maror.

INSTRUCTOR: Remember when Jesus said at the Last Supper that the one who would betray Him would be “the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish”? This would have been the one sitting next to Him at the place of honour, the one who would betray Him.

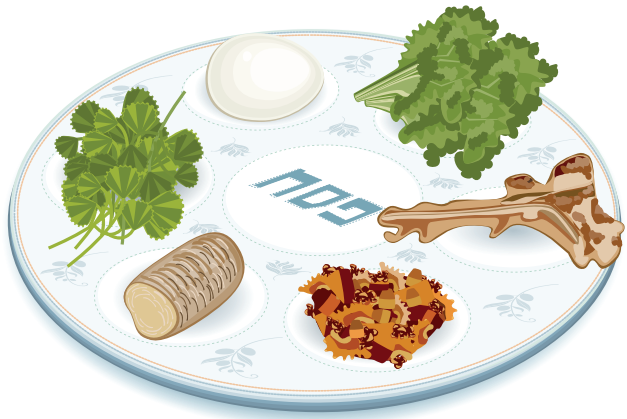
[The host of each table breaks the bottom matzoh into small pieces and distributes them to the table. Each person should dip their piece of matzoh into the horseradish on the seder plate.]

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe who has commanded us to eat the maror.

[All eat.]

INSTRUCTOR:
“Judas took the bread. He went out, and it was night”
(John 13:30).

LEADER: We have eaten the elements together, just as Jesus would have done at the Last Supper. We will now eat our full meal together and then finish our seder after we are full. **Let’s eat!**



The Last Supper

INSTRUCTOR: At this point it is good to remind ourselves that we are celebrating Passover with a fuller revelation than our ancestors had when they celebrated it. We experience the celebration with the knowledge of the complete canon of Scripture. Imagine how the disciples might have felt as they experienced the Passover rituals as they had throughout their Jewish lives, but with growing confusion. They had seen the miracles their master had done—greater than those of Moses. They had heard the shouts of adoration of the people as they had walked with Him into Jerusalem just four days before. Yet, the master was again talking about leaving them.

Imagine what thoughts Jesus might have had. This was His last dinner with His disciples. He had so much to tell them. They had been blinded by their own understanding of freedom. Had He not warned them about this trip to Jerusalem?

“We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be betrayed and handed over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified” (Matthew 20:18-19; Luke 18:31-32).

As with so many people today, the disciples had forgotten the teachings of the law, the prophets, and the Psalms. Jesus would have to suffer and rise from the dead for the remission of sins.

As Jesus celebrated Passover, He knew what was before Him—the pain and also the glory. And He knew that before the day was over, He would be abandoned by all of His disciples. They would be discouraged and afraid. In His infinite love and mercy, He sought to challenge and to comfort them. The words He spoke are as much for us today as they were for the disciples.

ADULT 1: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. I am going to my Father’s house to prepare a place for you that you may be where I am.

ADULT 2: I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

ADULT 3: I will not leave you as orphans. In my name, the Father will send another counselor. He will live with you and in you. He will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

ADULT 4: If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. They will treat you this way because of my name for they do not know the one who sent me. The world must learn that I do exactly what my Father has

commanded me.

ADULT 1: If you love me, you will obey my teaching. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

MEN: A new command I give you, love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples.

WOMEN: I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace.

GROUP: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.

INSTRUCTOR: Jesus could offer His peace for He knew the victory would be His. They would kill Him, but on the third day the Son of Man would rise again; He would be raised to life!

Retrieving the Afikoman, the Hidden Matzoh

[Retrieving the afikoman is usually a treat for the children. Choose a child (or a child representative) from your table to go search for the matzoh we hid earlier. The person who hid the afikoman can encourage by letting them know if they are getting close or far away. Once found, the child should hold the afikoman for a “ransom,” which the child will negotiate with the table host. (The ransom is the small bag of candy on your table.) Our service won’t continue until all the afikomans have been redeemed.]

INSTRUCTOR: This next portion of the seder has immense significance for believers in Jesus. It is here that we see a remarkable illustration of the truth spoken about the suffering servant by the prophet Isaiah.

The afikoman [hold up the afikoman] is the middle piece of the three matzot that has been kept in the container, which forms a unity. It was broken, hidden away and brought back. For its redemption a ransom had to be paid. In like manner Jesus, the second person of the triune God was broken, buried and brought back to life.

LEADER: [Each table host should distribute a piece of the afikoman to each person at the table.] The afikoman is our dessert. Its taste is to remain in our mouths as long as possible to remind us of all God’s deliverance in the past, in the present and in the future.

INSTRUCTOR: As He had done earlier, Jesus took the bread and gave thanks.

LEADER: Baruch atah Adonai elohaynu, melech ha olam, hamotzee lechem min ha aretz.

GROUP: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who

brings forth bread from the earth.

INSTRUCTOR: But then He gave a new commandment, one that must have startled the disciples. He broke the bread and said, “Take, eat, this is my body, given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

[All eat the afikoman.]

The Cup of Redemption

LEADER: Up to this point, we have focused on God’s past redemption—how He brought us out from the land of Egypt and bondage and into the promised land of peace and freedom. In the remaining part of the seder, our focus will be on God’s future work of redemption. We will look at the time of Jesus’ kingdom, a time of everlasting peace and freedom, even freedom from the influence of sin.

The third cup, the Cup of Redemption, recalls God’s third promise to Moses: “I will redeem you (in Hebrew ga’al) with an outstretched arm.”

INSTRUCTOR: A ga’al is one who pays a ransom for the life of another. He who redeemed our fathers from Egypt has redeemed us with His own blood.

GROUP: No man can redeem the life of another or give to God a ransom for him—the ransom for a life is costly, no payment is ever enough (Psalm 49:7-8).

LEADER: But God will redeem our lives from the grave. He will take us to Himself (Psalm 49:15).

GROUP: The LORD redeems His servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in Him (Psalm 34:22).

LEADER: The LORD is my rock and my redeemer.

INSTRUCTOR: He became their Savior. In all their distress He too was distressed. In His love and mercy He redeemed them (Isaiah 63:8-9).

LEADER: We look forward to the final redemption promised in the new covenant: “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

“No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Jeremiah 31:33-34).

GROUP: I know that my redeemer lives.

INSTRUCTOR: To confirm the covenant at Mount Sinai, Moses took the blood of the sacrifice offerings and sprinkled it on the people. As recorded in Exodus 24:8, he said, *“This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you.”*

As the Last Supper was celebrated, Jesus was about to confirm the new covenant with His blood. Now the Cup of Redemption becomes our “thank offering.”

Over this cup, Jesus once again gave new meaning to the existing ritual. As we have over the other cups and as Jesus did at the Last Supper we again give thanks.

[Everyone raises the third cup, the Cup of Redemption.]

LEADER: Baruch atah Adonai elohaynu, melech ha olam, boray p’ree hagafen.

GROUP AND LEADER: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

INSTRUCTOR: *Then Jesus said, “Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:27b-28).*

[All drink from the third cup.]

Elijah’s Place

LEADER: Notice that a place has been set at the table but not used. It has been set for Elijah whose return before the coming of the Messiah was proclaimed by the prophet Malachi: *“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse” (Malachi 4:5-6).*

As we celebrate our freedom from Egypt, we look toward the time when the whole world lives in peace. The nations will beat their swords into pruning hooks, the wolf will lie with the lamb and all the world will praise the LORD God of Israel.

INSTRUCTOR: Elijah was to warn the people of God’s judgment and to prepare the people for the coming Messiah. We know that Elijah’s work was already accomplished in John the Baptist. Nevertheless, we keep Elijah’s place as a reminder of Jesus’ next coming and of the many people who do not know Him. It is to them we must bring the message of true redemption. For not only will Jesus bring peace, but He will also bring wrath upon those who

don't know Him.

Our Jewish brothers and sisters open the door so that the prophet may enter. They wait breathlessly to see if he will indeed herald the coming of the Messiah. However, we open the door to show our trust and dependence upon God and to alert the lost of His coming.

[Someone opens a door and keeps it open until the following liturgy is complete.]

LEADER: You are forgiving and good, O LORD, abounding in love to all who call to you. But you will pour forth your wrath upon the nations that do not recognize you, and upon the kingdoms that do not invoke your name. Not to us, O LORD! Not to us, but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

GROUP: Why do the nations say, “Where is their God?” Our God is in heaven; He does whatever pleases Him.

LEADER: You who fear Him, trust in the LORD—He is your help and shield.

GROUP: The LORD remembers us and will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those who fear the LORD—small and great alike.

[Shut the door.]

Hallel—Songs of Praise

INSTRUCTOR: Every year during Passover, people sing the Hallel—portions of Psalms 113-118. Jesus and His disciples were probably singing these Psalms as they left the Upper Room.

Imagine how Jesus might have felt as He sang these Psalms. The words were written for Him and by Him before the foundation of time. They are words of victory and of surrender. The Hallel was the perfect song as Jesus moved to the cross. On the way to Gethsemane, now only hours before His crucifixion, Jesus sang the words of joy, of love and of trust in God (Matthew 26:30).

LEADER: Let us praise the LORD our God, Yahweh who hears and acts on our behalf. We join with our ancestors who sang the Hallel at every festival while the temple was standing.

I love the LORD, for He heard my cry for mercy. Because He turned His ear to me, I will call on Him as long as I live.

GROUP: The cords of death entangled me, I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.

LEADER: Then I called on the name of the LORD.

GROUP: “O LORD, save me!”

LEADER: LORD you are gracious and righteous.

GROUP: LORD you are full of compassion. When I was in great need, you saved me.

LEADER AND GROUP: Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the LORD has been good to you.

LEADER: You O LORD have delivered my soul from death,

GROUP: My eyes from tears,

LEADER: My feet from stumbling that I may walk before you LORD in the land of the living.

GROUP: How can we repay you LORD for all your goodness to us? We will lift up the Cup of Salvation and call on your name, LORD.

LEADER: We will fulfill our vows to you in the presence of all your people.

GROUP: O LORD, truly I am your servant. You have freed me from my chains.

LEADER: We will sacrifice a thank offering to you in the presence of your people,

GROUP: And in the courts of the house of the LORD.

LEADER AND GROUP: Praise you LORD!

LEADER: Thank you LORD. You are good.

GROUP: Your love endures forever.

LEADER: Let Israel say:

GROUP: His love endures forever.

LEADER: Let those who fear the LORD say:

GROUP: His love endures forever.

LEADER: In my anguish I cried to the LORD, and He answered me by setting me free.

GROUP: The LORD is with me.

LEADER: I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The LORD is with me, He is my helper.

LEADER AND GROUP: I will look with triumph on my enemies. I was pushed back and about to fall, but the LORD helped me.

LEADER: The LORD is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

GROUP: I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done.

LEADER: Open the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks, for He has become my salvation.

GROUP: The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone.

LEADER: The LORD has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes.

LEADER AND GROUP: This is the day the LORD has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

LEADER: O LORD save us; O LORD grant us success.

GROUP: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!

LEADER: The LORD is God, and He has made His light shine upon us. You are my God and I will give you thanks.

GROUP: You are my God, and I will exalt you.

LEADER: Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good.

LEADER AND GROUP: His love endures forever!

The Cup of Praise

LEADER: We now come to the fourth cup, the Cup of Praise, also called the Cup of the Kingdom. This cup is based on God's fourth promise in Exodus 6:7: "I will take you as my people and I will be your God."

INSTRUCTOR: The disciples drank, thinking the time had come for their master to march triumphantly into Jerusalem. But Jesus knew there was another cup from which He had to drink. He did not drink from this one. Instead He said, "I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." As we drink, may we look forward to the day of Jesus' return. In that day there will be a better feast: the wedding banquet to which all who know, trust and worship Jesus have been invited!

[All raise the fourth cup.]

LEADER: In praise of the salvation the LORD has brought and that which is yet to come, we raise the fourth cup and recite in Hebrew: Baruch atah Adonai Elohaynu, melech ha olam, boray p'ree hagafen.

LEADER AND GROUP: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.

[All drink.]

LEADER: Blessed are you O LORD, God of Israel, God of our fathers. We praise you for who you are and all the mighty deeds your hand has done.

GROUP: Your love endures forever!

LEADER: At your command the earth and its fullness was created. At your voice the seas parted for those who believed in you. For your goodwill and pleasure you redeemed Israel and sanctified it to be a holy nation of priests to serve you.

GROUP: Your love endures forever!

LEADER: You also redeemed those who worshipped idols, calling your own a people who formerly were not called your people.

GROUP: Your love endures forever.

LEADER: You alone are worthy to be praised. You are faithful when we are not. Your mercies are new every morning. Daily you load us with blessings.

INSTRUCTOR: Blessed are you, O LORD our God, who has given us the gifts of salvation and eternal life.

GROUP: And this is eternal life, that we might know you, the one true God and Jesus the Messiah whom you sent.

INSTRUCTOR: We look beyond your promise for a restored Israel to your promise of a new heaven and new earth. May the time not be distant O LORD when we might dwell in the New Jerusalem. In that day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is LORD. You will wipe away every tear. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things will pass away. We will proclaim with the heavenly hosts:

GROUP: Worthy is the Lamb who was slain. Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!

INSTRUCTOR: Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen!

Conclusion

LEADER: The order of the Passover service is now complete. Just as we were privileged to perform it tonight, so may we be privileged to do it in the future.

INSTRUCTOR: He is alive! Death could not hold Jesus. According to all the Hebrew Scriptures, the Passover Lamb was sacrificed, was buried and then rose again. He is coming back to bring us where He is. Expectantly we wait for that great Passover.

LEADER: O LORD, who dwells on high, raise up your numberless congregation! Soon, and with rejoicing, lead the redeemed to Zion!

LEADER AND GROUP: Next year in Jerusalem!

