

# Passover Haggadah

## A Christian Celebration

*The blood shall be a sign for you...  
And when I see the blood, I will pass over  
you, and no plague will befall you to destroy  
you when I strike the land of Egypt*

by Megan Braithwaite

Dedicated to:  
All Believers who know and  
love Jesus Christ and  
acknowledge Him as their  
Lord and Saviour – which  
includes my own precious  
family

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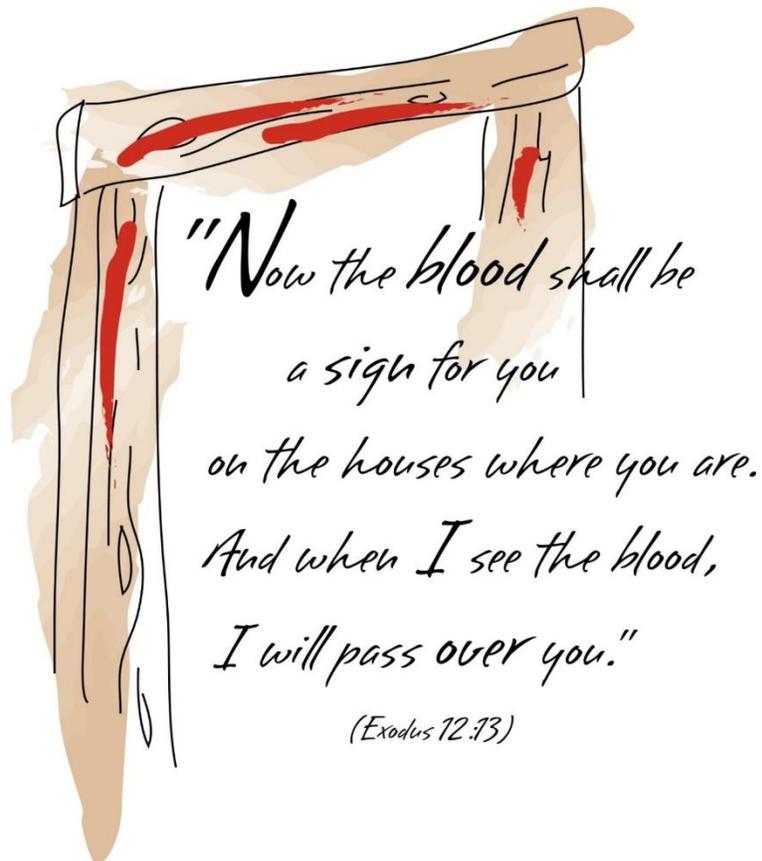
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## Forward

This Pesag Celebration booklet has been designed to lead a congregation through a Messianic Passover Feast. It will guide you through the elements of the feast and through both their scriptural and traditional significance. In it, my prayer is that each one in your community will come away from the gathering more in awe of God's redemptive work on their behalf; more aware of Christ's great love for them; more conscious of the cost of sin before a holy God; and with greater gratitude towards our sacrificial Saviour who has done everything necessary to save us from the ultimate "angel of death" our sins deserve.

My prayer is that God's Spirit be in your celebration – that our Saviour, Jesus the Messiah, would be praised and glorified; and our God honoured in your midst.

With love  
Megan



[The word "Pesag" (pronounced "pay-sach" as in Bach) is the Hebrew word for "Passover". The Passover is the feast that was celebrated by the Jews as a remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt. It is also the feast that was being celebrated by Jesus and his disciples on the night before he was crucified. There is no coincidence in this timing – as you will see.]

## Preliminary Things

In order to host a Pesag celebration, the following elements that are used in this Seder will be required. [A Seder (pronounced “say-der” is the order of service for the Passover. In other words, this booklet may be understood as a Passover liturgy.] (It is preferable if every member of the gathering can participate in the eating and drinking – as these tangible acts make the message more real and significant. If this is difficult, however, one may set up a central table with the elements and refer to each one as one progresses through the Seder.):

1. Service Leader (reading all the black)
2. Reader for Old Testament Scriptures (printed in green)
3. Reader for New Testament Scriptures (printed in red)
4. 2 readers for the Passover story (printed in pink and purple)
5. A young child or person to ask the question (printed in teal)
6. A music team to lead the congregation in worship (using music appropriate to your congregation and the occasion)
7. Either a projected copy of the QUIET REFLECTIONS and COMMUNAL PRAYERS, or copies printed in a booklet form for all participants.
8. Candles to be lit – either 2 on a front table or at every table where the congregation are seated
9. 4 Passover cups of grape juice or wine for every member of the congregation (communion cups may be used). The grape juice or wine must be diluted with water.
10. Parsley and a bowl of salt water for each table
11. 3 Matzo bread [or any other yeast-free bread that is striped and pierced] plus a white napkin for each table.
12. A Seder plate for each table (This could be any plate – or even a white piece of paper.)
13. A baked lamb shank bone (Only one is necessary at the leader’s table.)
14. A small bowl of horseradish sauce (bitter herbs) for each table. (This should preferably be the hot version rather than the creamed variety.)
15. A bowl of Charoset [pronounced “cha-ro-set with the “ch as in Bach] for each table. This is a mixture of grated apple, finely chopped nuts and honey with a little grape juice.

## Open

*Open in a time of worship.*

### 1. Introduction

Welcome to our Passover celebration!

The Passover meal is known as the **Seder**, which means "order," because the meal and service are done in a prescribed sequence. This sequence is presented in the **Haggadah** (meaning "telling") which outlines the steps of the meal as well as the readings for the participants. Therefore our celebration today will follow a type of liturgy.

Today we are doing our own Haggadah (or 'telling') – which may be a little different for those of you who have experienced a Passover Seder before. But we are including the essential elements required to fulfil the commandment on how to observe this feast.

In order for you to gain the full significance of the Passover act and its relation to our Saviour, Jesus Christ, we will be reading many Scriptures around this event – both from the Old and New Testament. Also, because the significance of Passover for us as Christians is less about looking back to God's deliverance out of Egypt, but more about looking ahead to the Easter weekend and Christ's sacrificial death that promises deliverance, this Seder will have a slightly more contemplative feel with time for personal reflection. So I encourage you to use this as an opportunity to prepare your hearts for Easter.

At various points in the service different actions will be required of each of us in unison. All of the actions have specific symbolic meanings, hence the Seder – the 'order'. Instructions should be followed carefully. Just as in communion, please do not eat or drink until instructed. We will be doing a fair bit of speaking, but we would also like your participation. So when prayers are usually said in the Seder, we will say them communally. [They will be on the screen/in your booklet.]

Passover (or Pesag in Hebrew) is the oldest and most important of Jewish religious festivals, commemorating God's deliverance of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt and his establishment of the Israelite people as a nation – whom he called a firstborn to himself. Because it was such a significant, defining event, the entire Jewish calendar was rearranged around the Passover so that it became the first major feast of the religious year.

**Exodus 12:1-2** The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt: "This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year.

For us as Christians, the event of Easter is also a defining event. It points to the act that allowed us to cross over from slavery and sin to freedom in Christ Jesus. In it we were delivered from death. And so we have been given a new identity as the people of God.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone; behold, the new has come!

Passover is based on the rituals of ancient Israel preserved primarily in Exodus 12-14. The term Passover refers to the tenth and final plague God brought upon the Egyptians to persuade Pharaoh to let the people go – the death of all the firstborn of Egypt. In obedience to God's instructions, those who believed placed the blood of a lamb on the door posts of their homes, so that the angel of death would "pass over" those homes. The festival actually celebrates the entire sequence of events that led to the Israelites' freedom from slavery. While thoroughly based in those historical events, the celebration encompasses much more as it becomes a vehicle to celebrate the very nature of God and His gracious work in the world. Jesus Christ specifically linked the significance of his sacrificial death on the cross to the events of Israel's delivery from slavery and from the angel of death. So, although this is a Jewish festival, it has profound significance for us as Christians as well. For Christians it has deep meaning in terms of God's new work of deliverance in Christ. Yet we are indebted to the Jews for preserving these traditions and God's Word for us.

**Exodus 12:24** Obey these instructions as a lasting statute for you and for your descendants forever.

**Genesis 12:1,3** Now the LORD said to Abram, "... and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

**John 4:22** ...salvation is from the Jews.

But we know that the Passover celebration was a shadow of things to come. It was a pointing to the reality of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Jewish Passover of today still points to Jesus (or Y'shua in Hebrew – which means Salvation).

**Colossians 2:16-17** Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

So, let us prepare our hearts to celebrate and tell the story of deliverance, freedom, and redemption. Tradition teaches us that we must all consider ourselves as slaves in Egypt, that we must all consider ourselves to have walked in darkness, so that we might celebrate the deliverance in the Exodus as our own deliverance.

**Romans 6:17-18** But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin, and have become slaves to righteousness.

We are all gathered here because it was the whole community that was to celebrate Passover.

**Exodus 12:6** and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the people of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

In the same way, accepting Christ's sacrifice is required for all who want to be part of God's community.

**Romans 3:22** the righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. For there is no distinction:

It is in that spirit of community that we enter this Passover celebration.



## **2. Removal of Leaven** (or "Chametz" in Hebrew – pronounced "chaa-metz" with the "ch" as in Bach)

During the Feast of Passover, all leaven/yeast was to be removed from the houses of God's people.

**Exodus 13:7** Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen with you, nor should any yeast be seen with you in all your territory.

Leaven or yeast represents sin or evil inclination. Removing leaven, then, is a picture of removing sin which is part of the process sanctification. Just like yeast, sin of pride puffs us up with little substance. In years past, yeast was kept alive, and continuously added to new batches of bread. In the same way, sin, in a sense, is passed on from generation to generation. But at the Passover festival, all yeast was to be removed, symbolising a break with old, sinful ways; so there could be a sense of newness – new beginnings.

**1 Corinthians 5:6-8** Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast – as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

The removal of leaven carries with it deeper significance in Passover than simply its connection with the exodus. The symbolic removal at the beginning of the Seder signifies the attitude of humility and repentance, the willingness to remove any corrupting influence in one's life and submit to God in obedience.

### QUIET REFLECTION:

Take a moment to reflect:

Are you willing to come in submission and obedience to Christ this Easter?

Search your hearts for any hidden sin that may be preventing you from celebrating the joy of this festival.

### COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

“Any leaven or sin that remains among us, which we have or have not seen, which we have or have not removed, may it be as if it does not exist, and as the dust of the earth. Amen.”



### 3. Lighting the Passover Candles

Now that we have removed the leaven, we can begin this Passover season; and we do so with the lighting of the Passover candles. The candles symbolize the presence of God, and mark this as a sacred time.

**Genesis 1:3-4** And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that the light was good.

**Matthew 4:16** the people living in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."

**John 8:12** When Jesus spoke again, he said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

It is traditional for the women to light the candles.

### ACTION:

Women are to light the candles at their tables [or the front communal table].

### COMMUNAL PRAYER:

While the women are lighting the candles, let us pray together:

“Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has sent Your Son, Your Only Son, Jesus Y’Shua the Messiah, to be the light of the world and our Paschal Lamb, that through Him we might live. Amen.”



### 4. The 1<sup>st</sup> Cup = The Cup of Sanctification

Passover is about remembering and acknowledging fulfilled promises. But it is also about hope – the hope that comes from a God who has fulfilled his promises. So, we celebrate redemption as **memory**, but we also celebrate redemption as **hope**. The God of the Exodus is still God, and so we know that what has been is also a promise of what will be. Our story tells us that in various ways, with different words, God gave promises of freedom to His people. Today we will drink 4 cups of grape juice. The 4 cups from the fruit of the vine help us to celebrate and recall God’s promises to Israel and to us.

**Exodus 6:6-8** Therefore say to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will

take you to be my people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD."

In the 4 cups that we drink today we celebrate these four "I will" promises of God: "I will **bring** you..."; "I will **free** you..."; "I will **redeem** you..."; and "I will **take** you...". Therefore we can come with thanksgiving because God has fulfilled His promises allowing us to be His people.

Before we drink it is incredible to know that it was a rabbinical requirement that the wine or grape juice be mixed with water in order to fulfil the commandments of this festival. As Christians, we know that the fruit of the vine represents blood. But consider the water:

**Hebrews 9:19-20** When Moses had declared every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, together with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people; and he said: "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you."

Therefore it was blood and water that ratified the 1<sup>st</sup> covenant that was based on the Law.

**John 19:34** One of the soldiers pierced [Jesus'] side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

And it was blood and water that ratified the 2<sup>nd</sup> covenant of Grace.

*[Mix water with Grape Juice at the front table]*

The 1<sup>st</sup> Cup is called the Cup of Sanctification. Each take a cup, and before you drink, let us pray together:

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

"Blessed are You, O LORD our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, O LORD our God, Ruler of the universe, who chose us from all peoples and exalted us among all nations, by making us holy. Blessed are You, O LORD our God, Ruler of the universe, who has given us life and brought us to this happy season. Amen. "

ACTION:

All drink up every bit of the 1<sup>st</sup> cup. This is the cup of Sanctification.



## 5. The Washing of Hands (or “Urchatz” in Hebrew – pronounced “er-chatz” with the “ch” as in Bach)

In preparation for the meal, there is always a ceremonial hand washing. This is not a sanitary action but is symbolic of the "clean hands" with which one comes before God.

**Psalm 24:3-4** Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol and does not swear deceitfully.

We will not be washing our hands, but rather reflecting on our need to be clean before God.

It was at this point in the Passover meal that Jesus broke with tradition. Instead of hand washing, Scripture tells us that Jesus did the following:

**John 13:3-9,12-14** Jesus, knowing that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, got up from the meal. He took off his outer clothing, and wrapping a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with me." ...When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and returned to his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet."

### QUIET REFLECTION:

Take a moment to reflect:

Consider your need to be clean before the Lord. Are you willing to be humble and vulnerable before God and one another?

### COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

**Psalm 51:1-4,6-7** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified when you speak and blameless when you judge... Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Surely you desire truth in the inner parts, and you teach me wisdom in the inmost place. Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.



## 6. The Green Vegetables (or “Karpas” in Hebrew – pronounced “Car-pus”)

Twice during the Seder two elements representing a mixture of positive and negative experiences or emotions are incorporated into the service. The first is here where we will eat vegetables or herbs with salt water and later when we will eat the sweet charoset with bitter moror. The contrasting elements serve to remind us that life is often a confusing mixture of joy and sorrow, of bitter endings and sweet new beginnings. In the same way, we come to Easter with a mixture of sorrow and joy.

*[Hold up Parsley]*

This vegetable, called Karpas, represents life, created and sustained by God. It fills us with joy to consider the goodness of God in loving us and caring for us, and bringing into our lives all good things.

**John 10:10** I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

But, we are not simply celebrating newness and life in Christ. We are celebrating the freedom and wonderful deliverance that God brought to the Hebrew slaves in Egypt. That was a time of suffering and tears – represented by the salty water. Egypt is often used in Scripture as a metaphor for bondage. For us as Christians, we recognise that sin is a bondage from which we need deliverance.

**Romans 6:16-17** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient.

We mourn over the fact that we were once slaves to sin.

**Matthew 5:4** "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

### ACTION:

Dip parsley in the salt water and eat.

### QUIET REFLECTION:

Take a moment to reflect:

Consider your sorrow before you knew Christ as your Saviour. Rejoice in the new life He has created in you.

### COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

“We praise you, O LORD our God, for the newness of life you bring. Thank you for the reminder of what we once were before we knew your salvation. Amen. “



## 7. Breaking of the Bread – The Matzah (3 Matzo in a napkin) + Afikomen

Although this part of the service was probably not practiced in the time of Christ, it goes back to antiquity, and has remarkable significance for us as Christians.

*[Hold up the 3 Matzo in the napkin].*

Among people everywhere, the sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship and community. This bread I hold up is the bread of affliction which the Israelites ate in the land of Egypt.

But when Passover is celebrated, there are always 3 matzo on a plate to symbolise God.

*[Take out the middle Matzah. Obviously break the middle Matzah in half, and hold the two halves. Return one half of the broken Matzah to the plate with the other two and leave*

*them uncovered. Hold the other half up.]*

This is called the “Afikomen” (which means ‘that which comes later’). It is a symbol of the redemption for which we all long and which we know will come, but which we do not yet see.

*[Hide the second part of the Matzah in a napkin and put it away.]*

### ACTION:

Each of you to break the middle matzah and put one half aside for later.

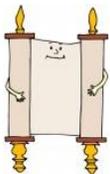
**Isaiah 42:1-3** Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I have put my Spirit upon him; and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not snuff out; he will faithfully bring forth justice.

**Matthew 12:17,21** This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: Behold, my servant whom I have chosen... in his name the Gentiles will hope."

We now consider the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cup of Deliverance.

## 8. The Story of Passover / Haggadah

The Passover Story is the heart of the Seder and was traditionally recounted as a parent telling the exodus story to his children, following the biblical command:



**Deuteronomy 6:20-21** "In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the stipulations, decrees and the laws that the LORD our God has commanded you?' then you shall say to your son...

**Exodus 13:8** On that day tell your son, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'

But we must never forget that the Passover story is actually all about Jesus.

**Matthew 2:14-15** And he got up and took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

There is an encouragement then, to retell this story often in our homes. For those who have seen and heard the self-revelation of God in history that sustains the identity and commitment of a people; they are to give testimony to it. God's Word tells us that our children will ask questions about who they are as God's people. The Lord has instructed us that we should tell them the story so that they might know the Lord. It is both a duty and a privilege to speak of God's grace and redeeming love.

### THE PASSOVER STORY

**READER 1:** The Bible teaches that God had promised Abraham and Sarah that they would be a great people, a promise he renewed to each generation, to Isaac and Jacob. As time passed Jacob's children came to live in the land of Egypt where his son Joseph was advisor to Pharaoh. The descendants of Abraham grew to be a great number of people.

**READER 2:** As the years passed another Pharaoh, who did not remember Joseph and did not know his God, came to power; so he enslaved the Israelites. He forced them to work hard making bricks of clay and straw with which to build his cities.

**READER 1:** As the people increased in numbers, he feared that they might rebel against him. So he subdued the Israelites, and he afflicted them with cruel labour. They knew only toil, suffering, and tears.

**READER 2:** But despite their hardship, they continued to thrive, just as God had promised. This caused Pharaoh even greater alarm, and he ordered even harsher treatment of God's people. He even ordered that every newborn boy be drowned.

**READER 1:** God's people cried out from their cruel oppression, hoping that God would remember the promises He had made to their fathers. And God heard their cry and did indeed remember the covenant He had made with Abraham. So God raised up a deliverer, a redeemer, the man Moses. And He sent Moses to Pharaoh's court to declare the commandment of the Lord...

**READER 2:** Let my people go.

**READER 1:** But Pharaoh would not listen to the Lord of Hosts. And so, Moses pronounced God's judgment on Pharaoh's house and on Pharaoh's land.

**READER 2:** But Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He would not yield to the will of God. He would not let the House of Jacob depart. So God sent ten plagues on Pharaoh and the land of Egypt so they might know that the Lord is God, and let the people go.

It is customary to dip your finger in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cup of deliverance and make 10 drops on the Seder plate to represent the 10 plagues brought on the Egyptians. Though we experience joy at our own deliverance from judgement on evil, our joy is not complete because of those who suffer due to sin. Therefore our own cup will be diminished. As innocent people suffered and died long ago because of the oppression of tyrants, so people today still suffer from evil in the world. We cannot celebrate God's deliverance for ourselves without longing that all people experience freedom from their bondage. As I say the name of each plague we will spill a drop of juice from our cups onto the Seder plate for each plague to recall the cost of sin, and the consequences of evil in our world.

ACTION:

The Plague of **Blood, Frogs, Lice, Gnats, Cattle Disease, Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, Death.**

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray against evil in our nation. Feel free to pray out loud and together where you are.

Close by saying: "Hear our prayer, O LORD."

READER 1: Then the tenth plague fell upon the land of Egypt: the death of Egypt's firstborn.

**Exodus 11:4-6** So Moses said, "This is what the LORD says: 'About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. Every firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, to the firstborn of the slave girl who is at her handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. There shall be a loud wailing throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has never been, nor ever will be again.'

READER 1: But to protect the children of Israel, God commanded the head of each Jewish household to sacrifice a spotless lamb, without breaking any of its bones, and to apply its blood to the doorway of their homes, first to the top of the doorway, the lintel, and then to the two sideposts.

**Exodus 12:13** The blood will be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will touch you when I strike the land of Egypt.

READER 2: By the blood of the lamb Israel was spared.

READER 1: By the blood of the lamb Jacob was redeemed. By the blood of the lamb death was made to pass over.

**John 1:29** The next day [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!..."

**Romans 5:9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him!

READER 2: Passover. The night when death passed over the houses of Israel because of the blood of the Passover lamb. What a mighty act of redemption. And what a beautiful picture of redemption destined to come.

READER 1: And just as the blood of those first Passover lambs was applied in faith to the doorposts of Israel's homes, so the blood of the Messiah must be applied in faith to the doorposts of our hearts.

READER 2: Today, we worship God not only because the angel of death passed over our ancestors' homes, but because all of us whether Jewish or Gentile, may be redeemed from an even greater bondage through our faith in the Messiah of Israel, the Messiah Jesus. Through Him, we may pass over from death to life.

**Romans 3:23-26** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's justice, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he might be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

**Child:** Why is this night different than all other nights?

READER 1: Once we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord in His goodness and mercy brought us out of that land with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Had God not rescued us from the hand of the destroyer, surely we and our children would still be enslaved, deprived of freedom and human dignity. Once we worshipped idols and were enslaved by our sins, but God in His goodness and mercy forgave our transgressions and called us to be His people. Therefore, tonight is different than other nights because we have gathered to remember who we are, what God has done for us, and to tell to our children the story of God's grace and deliverance.



## 9. Passover Elements

*[Hold up the lamb shank bone.]*

This is the symbol of the Passover lamb which was killed so that our children might live. It reminds us not only of God's wonderful grace in providing for us life and not death; it also reminds us that we are called to obedience in response to God's gift of life. It is a shoulder bone, representing God's outstretched arm.

**Exodus 6:6** Say to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, ...and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.

**Psalms 98:1** Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

**Luke 23:33** And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they [stretched out his arms and] crucified him...

These were the instructions regarding the lamb:

**Exodus 12:5** Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old...

**1 Peter 2:22** He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.

**Exodus 12:46** [The lamb] must be eaten in one house; take none of the meat outside the house, and do not break any of its bones.

**John 19:31-33,35-36** Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have their legs broken and the bodies taken down. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs... He who saw it has given witness and his testimony is true, that you also may believe. These things happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken."

*[Hold up the matzah.]*



Tonight we eat Unleavened Bread because the Israelites in Egypt had to leave in such haste that they could not wait for their bread to rise, and so had to bake it while it was still flat.

**Deuteronomy 16:3** Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste—so that all the days of your life you may remember the time when you came out of the land of Egypt.

According to rabbinical tradition, in order for bread to qualify as Passover bread, it must fulfill 3 conditions. It has to be:

- Unleavened – have no yeast
- Striped
- Pierced (These last 2 requirements demonstrate that the bread is truly unleavened)

**Isaiah 53:5** But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

**John 19:37** And again another Scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."



*[Hold up the bitter herbs ("Maror" in Hebrew).]*

Tonight we eat bitter herbs to remind us of how bitter our lives were when we were slaves to sin. As sweet as our lives are now, we must never forget the bitterness of our bondage that we were rescued from.

**Exodus 1:13-14** [The Egyptians] worked the people of Israel ruthlessly. They made them work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard labour, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their hard labour the Egyptians used them ruthlessly.

**Hebrews 12:15** Guard against misusing the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up and causes many troubles with its poison.



*[Hold up the sweet apple ("Charoset" in Hebrew).]*

The Charoset is a sweet mixture of apples, honey, and nuts. It symbolizes the mixture of clay and straw that the Israelites used to make bricks for the cities of Pharaoh. But the sweetness also speaks of the hope of sweet deliverance from slavery.

**Psalms 119:103** How sweet are your words to my lips, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Tonight we dip twice. We have already dipped the Karpas/ Parsley. We will also dip the Matzah into the Maror and Charoset to remind us of the sweetness that God can bring into the most

bitter of our circumstances. Let us now add the sweetness of the Charoset to the bitterness of the Maror.

Each of you is to take 2 pieces of matzah and dip one in the horseradish, and the other in the sweet apple. Then sandwich them together and eat them together.

**ACTION:**

Make and eat the bitter sweet sandwich

**John 13:21-27** After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and said "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me." The disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus which one he meant. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." Then dipping the bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."

Even in the midst of Christ pouring out his grace there is still betrayal.

QUIET REFLECTION:

Take a moment to reflect:

With an understanding of God's knowledge of you personally, consider the bitter-sweet message of God's grace shown to you through Christ's sacrificial death.

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

"Praise be to God who is everywhere. Praise be to God who has brought us freedom and has delivered us from all that enslaves us! Amen."

ACTION:

*Sing worship songs of Deliverance*



### 10. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cup = The Cup of Deliverance

With the second cup we celebrate the deliverance that God has brought to us. We are privileged to thank God, to praise Him, to revere Him, and to rejoice in His grace. He has brought us out from bondage to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from darkness to light, from slavery to redemption.

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

"Thank you, O LORD our God, for your salvation story that has been made real in our lives. Amen."

ACTION:

All drink the 2<sup>nd</sup> cup. This is the Cup of Deliverance.



### 11. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Cup = The Cup of Redemption

It would be at this point that a meal would be eaten and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cup of Redemption would be drunk. Traditionally it would be the lamb that would be the last food one would taste in one's mouth at Passover; and then the Jewish custom would be to say grace after the meal.

But Jesus broke with tradition at this point. He took up the bread again, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cup of Redemption and used them as symbols of his death.

*[Get out the afikomen.]*



I'm taking out the afikomen, the matzah that was hidden away.

The 3 Matzo point to the essence of God – 3 persons in 1. The breaking of the 2<sup>nd</sup> matzah symbolises Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The hiding away for a time represents Christ's burial in the tomb. And the bringing out of the matzah again represents his

resurrection to life. So we share the symbols of his death until he comes again, and then we will feast with him once more.

**Isaiah 61:1-2** The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom to the captives, and release from darkness for the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

**Luke 4:21** And Jesus said to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

**ACTION:**

Let us say together:

"Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!"



**Luke 22:19-20** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after they had eaten he took the cup saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

**1 Corinthians 11:26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**COMMUNAL PRAYER:**

Let us pray together:

"We thank you, O LORD our God, for the gift of your bread and your wine, and for the ultimate gift of your Son – his body and his blood – in order that we may receive salvation and new life in you. Amen."

Just as the Exodus was the means for the nation of Israel to be born, so Christ's death is the means for us as believers to be born into a new community – the people of God. Therefore communion is something we share together as a body of believers in community.

**ACTION:**

Take out your afikomen, and starting at one end of the table break a piece and give it to the person next to you saying "This is Christ's body – broken for you". Do so down the line of people at your table. Once you have done that, you can do the same with the 3rd cup of redemption – giving it to the person next to you and saying: "This is Christ's blood – shed for you". You can eat and drink in remembrance of Christ's death as soon as you have been given the elements.

**Hebrews 9:13-15** The blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who were unclean sanctify them so they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our conscience from acts that lead to death so that we may serve the living God. Therefore Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, now that his death redeems them from the sins committed under the first covenant.



## 12. Hallel

The meal traditionally concluded with the singing of Psalms from Psalms 113-118. This is called the Hallel (which means 'praise' in Hebrew). We will just read some excerpts from these Psalms:

**Psalm 116:13-15** I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD, I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

**Psalm 118:17,22-24,28-29** I shall not die, but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done...The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The LORD has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it...You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God; I will extol you. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

### ACTION:

*Sing worship songs of Praise*



## 13. The 4<sup>th</sup> Cup = Cup of Praise

Our Seder is now complete, just as our redemption is complete. We rejoice with thanksgiving, and yet are humbled by God's love! Yet the story of God's redemption is not ended. We celebrate what God has done in our history, and what he has done for us, but at the same time we still await a new future. All creation still groans and longs for its final redemption. As Jesus left, he promised he would come again and restore all things. We have faith enough to believe that God will not leave the world the way it is, so we await the day in which He will again come and bring His Kingdom in all its fullness.

### ACTION:

Take the 4<sup>th</sup> Cup. This is the Cup of Praise.

### COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

"Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has adopted us as your children, and allowed us to call you Father.

Our Father, who is in heaven, Holy is your name! Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptations, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.”

ACTION:

Drink the 4<sup>th</sup> Cup. The Cup of Praise.



## Close

The traditional conclusion of the Seder is a hope for the future expressed by Jews throughout history. They say: "Next year in Jerusalem." We will conclude our Seder with the same expression of hope and faith in God, as we await the coming of a New Jerusalem. There is not only a sense of celebration at what God has done in the past, there is also an eager anticipation of what God will continue to do to bring deliverance to a world that still groans under its slavery to sin, and awaits its final redemption. The traditional saying "Next year in Jerusalem" is an expression not only of the faithfulness of God in the past, but of faith and hope in God's future as he continues to work out his redemption in the world. Jerusalem is really a symbol of the restoration of all things for which both Jews and Christians eagerly await.

**Revelation 21:1-4** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now, the dwelling place of God is with man, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God."

ACTION:

Say to one another: "Next year in Jerusalem!"

**Hebrews 13:11-14** For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the disgrace he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.

ACTION:

*Sing a worship song expressing our future Hope*

COMMUNAL PRAYER:

Let us pray together:

**Revelation 5:12** "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise! Amen and Amen."

ACTION:

*Close in a song/songs of worship*

