

A celebration of Passover

For our Passover Festival is ready, now that Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us celebrate our Passover... with purity and truth.

1 Corinthians 5: 7,8



The Seder Plate

On each Table is a special plate with the following on it:

- A lamb bone representing the sacrificial lamb offered by the Israelites in the Jerusalem temple and that eaten on the eve of their departure from Egypt.
- Greens (parsley) representing spring life and also the hyssop with which blood of the lamb was painted on the doorframes of the Israelite houses so that the Lord would pass over their houses and not kill their first born children before they left Egypt.
- A roasted egg representing the second offerings given at the temple in Jerusalem on Passover and some other festivals.
- Bitter herbs (horseradish) representing the bitterness of slavery.
- Haroseth (fruit mixture) representing the mud mixed with straw used by the slaves as mortar in Egypt. However it's sweetness symbolizes that the bitterness of slavery is tempered with the hope for a future.

The Lighting of the Candles

A woman of the household takes the matches and lights the Passover candles: All of the women present say the following prayer:

*"Blessed are You,
the Eternal,
our God,
King of the Universe,
who has sanctified us with His commandments,
and charged us to kindle the Passover lights.*

*Blessed are You,
the Eternal,
our God,
King of the Universe,
who has preserved us alive,
sustained us
and caused us to attain this season."*

The First Cup – Sanctification

The head of the household fills the wine glasses for the first time. He then stands and raises his glass for all to see and pronounces the following blessing. This is called the 'kiddush' and consecrates the meal and the occasion to God.

*"Blessed are You,
the Eternal,
our God,
King of the Universe,
creator of the fruit of the vine.*

*Blessed are You,
the Eternal,
our God,
Sovereign of the Universe,
who has chosen us from above all people,
and did exalt us above all nations,
and did sanctify us with Your commandments;
and with love has given us sabbaths for rest,
solemn days for joy, festivals and seasons for gladness.
And this day, the feast of Unleavened Bread,
the season of our freedom, an holy convocation,
a memorial of the departure from Egypt.
For You have chosen and sanctified us.
Your holy festivals have caused us to inherit joy and gladness.*

*Blessed are You,
O Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
who sanctifies us, preserves us, sustains us, and brings us to enjoy this season.*

The head of the household now assumes a reclining position. (Leans a little to the left if sitting in a chair.) Everyone follows his example and drinks the cup of sanctification.

Washing of the hands.

Everyone takes part in first ceremonial handwashing.

The head of the household now breaks off small portions of parsley from the parsley on the Seder Plate so that each person at the table can hold a bit in their hand. The greens represent life.

Everyone says:

*"Blessed are You,
Lord God,
King of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the earth."*

Everyone dips their portion of parsley into the salt water and eats.

The salt water represents tears. **Dip twice.**

Unleavened bread – The bread of Affliction

Our attention now goes to the unleavened bread on the table. There are three portions, each nestled into a separate fold of a large napkin. According to Jewish tradition these three represent a unity. Some say, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; others say the priests, the Levites, and the rest of the congregation; still others explain that two portions were set out every day in the temple and that the third is for Passover.

But is easy for us to see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Without saying anything the head of the household takes the middle wafer, (the Son), and breaks it in half, (signifies His broken body), wraps half of the broken wafer in a napkin and hides this wrapped piece (Burial). The children must hide their eyes while the "aphikomən" is hidden because later they will be asked to search for it. The head of the household puts the remaining half back between the other two portions.

Now the head of the household lifts the entire plate of unleavened bread and says:

*"This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt.
Let all who are hungry come and eat.
Let all who are in need come and celebrate Passover."*

Everyone says: *"We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and our God brought us forth from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.
Blessed be He for if he had not delivered us we and our children's children would still be in bondage in Egypt."*

The Second Cup – Praise

The head of the household fills the wine glasses for the second time.

The youngest child or designated children ask:

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

- i. *On other nights we can eat leavened or unleavened bread. Why tonight, only unleavened bread?*
- ii. *On other nights, we can eat any kind of herb; Why, tonight, bitter herbs?*
- iii. *On all other nights we don't dip herbs we eat. Why, tonight, do we dip twice?*
- iv. *On other nights we eat and drink either sitting or leaning. Why, tonight, do we all lean?*

What does this ritual mean?

Head of Household answers:

"We eat UNLEAVENED BREAD because there was not enough time for the dough of our ancestors in Egypt to become leavened.

The BITTER HERBS are a reminder that the Egyptians embittered the life of our forefathers.

We DIP TWICE into the salt water to remind ourselves that the Lord fed us and showed us his mercy in our times of fears and trouble. More than once he saved us from destruction.

We eat in a RECLINING position because when we were slaves in Egypt we had to stand to serve the Egyptians.

This RITUAL is the sacrifice of Passover to honour the LORD, because He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. He killed the Egyptians, but spared us." (Exodus 12:27)

Head of Household continues:

"Originally our ancestors were idolaters. Terah the father of Abraham, served other gods. And the LORD took Abraham from the other side of the river and brought him to Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. The LORD gave Abraham many descendants. He gave him Isaac and to Isaac Jacob and Esau. Jacob and his children went down to Egypt, and settled in that country. The LORD gave many children to his people and made them stronger than their enemies. The LORD sent Moses and Aaron. They did God's mighty acts and performed miracles in Egypt.

God told Moses, "Behold, I hear the cry of the children of Israel. I have surely remembered you and seen what is done to you. And now I will put forth My hand and smite Egypt with signs and wonders. Go, tell Pharaoh: **Let my people go!**

But Pharaoh says no. So God sends ten terrible plagues to punish the Egyptians ; to show Pharaoh that only God is God.

First, God turns all the water in all the rivers, streams, ponds, and pools in Egypt to blood. For seven days there is not a single drop of water for the Egyptian to drink. And God says again, **Let my people go!**

Pharaoh still refuses. Now God sends frogs swarming all over Egypt. **Let my people go!**

Pharaoh promises to set us free. But as soon as God makes the frogs hop away, Pharaoh breaks his promise.

So God makes a new plague, and turns all the dust of the earth into gnats and flies. The Egyptians can hardly breathe. And God says: **Let my people go!**

Pharaoh promises to set us free. But his heart is hard and breaks his promise again. God sends a disease to kill every flock and herd of the Egyptians, but not one of our cattle dies. **Let my people go!**

But Pharaoh is stubborn; he still will not let us go. And tells Moses and his brother Aaron to take handfuls of soot from the furnace and throw them up into the sky. Where the soot falls, painful boils break out all over the bodies of the Egyptians and their animals **Let my people go!**

But Pharaoh's heart is hard and he still refuses to let the children of Israel go free. Then God sends a storm of hail. **Let my people go!**

Then God sends a plague of locusts. **Let my people go!**

*When Pharaoh begs forgiveness and swears to free us,
 God sends a strong wind, It picks up all the locusts and blows them
 into the sea. But again Pharaoh's heart is hard.
Let my people go!*

*And now God sends darkness down upon Egypt.
Let my people go!*

When Pharaoh still refuses, God sends the tenth and final plague

*God instructs us to use the blood of a lamb to mark our doors so that the
 Angel of Death will passover our homes.
 God passes through the land of Egypt at night, to execute judgement on all
 the gods of Egypt. He slays every first-born in the land of Egypt, both man
 and beast. He brought us forth from Egypt.*

Everyone say: "That would have been enough for us!" *Yagenu!*
He brought us out of Egypt Yagenu!
He divided the sea for us, Yagenu!
He caused us to pass through the sea on dry ground, Yagenu!
He drowned our adversaries in the sea, Yagenu!
He supplied us for forty years in the wilderness, Yagenu!
He fed us with manna, Yagenu!
He gave us the Sabbath, Yagenu!
He brought us to Mount Sinai, Yagenu!
He gave us the Law, Yagenu!
He led us into the land of Israel, Yagenu!
He built the holy temple for us to atone for our sins. Yagenu!

Head of Household elevates the second cup and says:

*"Therefore, we are bound to thank, praise, glorify, extol, honour, bless, exalt,
 and reverence Him who performed all these miracles for our forefathers
 and for us.*

*He brought us
 from slavery to freedom;
 from sorrow to joy;
 from mourning to festivity,
 from servitude to redemption.
 Hallelujah!*

"This is what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.

Head of Household puts the cup on the table and says:

*"Hallelujah! Praise Him, you servants of the Eternal. Blessed be His name.
From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, praise His name.*

*Let us sing praise to thee, O God among the nations. Your glory is above
the heavens.*

*Who is like unto thee? You lift the needy to sit among princes. You set up
the barren woman to dwell in the house as a joyful mother of
children. Blessed are You, O LORD, who has redeemed Israel.*

Everyone elevates their second cup of wine and says:

*"Then shall we give thanks to You for our deliverance and for the
redemption of our souls.*

Blessed are You,

O LORD,

our God,

who created the fruit of the vine.

Everyone drinks their second cup.

Everyone takes part in second ceremonial hand washing.

**Head of Household takes uppermost piece of unleavened bread
and distributes a piece of it to each person at the table.**

Head of Household says:

"Blessed are You,

O Eternal,

our God,

King of the Universe,

who brings forth bread from the earth."

Everyone says:

"Blessed are you,

O Eternal,

our God,

King of the Universe,

who has sanctified us with Your commandments,

and commanded us to eat unleavened bread."

Everyone eats their portion of unleavened bread.

Head of Household takes middle portion of unleavened bread and breaks off pieces and distributes them to everyone. Pass the bitter herbs so that each person can take a bit of bitter herbs with the bread.

Don't eat it yet: just hold it.

Head of Household says:

*"Blessed are You,
O Eternal,
our God,
King of the Universe,
who has sanctified us with your commandments,
and commanded us to eat bitter herbs."*

Everyone eats the unleavened bread with the bitter herbs.

Head of household takes the undermost portion of unleavened bread, breaks it and distributes a piece to each person at the table.

Pass the Haroseth. Everyone dips into the dish of Haroseth and gets a bit of it onto their piece of bread. Hold it.

Everyone says:

*"Blessed be You,
O Eternal,
our God,
Ruler of the World,
who made us holy with the commandments,
and commanded us concerning these things."*

Everyone eats the unleavened bread and Haroseth

The evening meal

Roasted Lamb
Rice or potatoes
Vegetables or Salad
Fruit or Sweets

Foot washing.

Jesus and his disciples were at supper. He rose from the table, took off His outer garment and tied a towel round His waist. Then He poured some water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet.

After Jesus had washed their feet, he said: I have set an example to you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. You then should wash one another's feet.

Head of Household then washes the feet (or hands) of the person on his right. Each person at the table in turn washes the feet of the person on their right.

Kneels At The Feet

Tom Colvin

Kneels at the feet of his friends,
silently washes their feet:
master who acts as a slave to them.

*Yesu, Yesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from you.*

Neighbours are both rich and poor,
neighbours are black, brown and white,
neighbours are nearby and far away.

Yesu, Yesu,...

These are the ones we should serve,
these are the ones we should love;
They are all neighbours to us and you.

Yesu, Yesu,...

Loving puts us on our knees,
serving as though we are slaves:
this is the way we should live with you.

Yesu, Yesu,...

Let me be your servant

Richard Gillard

Brother, Sister let me serve you,
 Let me be as Christ to you.
 Pray that I might have the grace
 To let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
 We are friends on the road.
 We are here to help each other
 Walk the mile, and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you,
 In the night-time of your fear.
 I will hold my hand out to you,
 Speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping,
 When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
 I will share your joy and sorrow,
 Till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,
 We shall find such harmony.
 Born of all we've known together
 Of Christ's love, and agony

Brother, Sister let me serve you,
 Let me be as Christ to you.
 Pray that I might have the grace
 To let you be my servant too.

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Head of Household says: *"Jesus said, 'I Am who I Am!'"*

Everyone says: *"Praise be to You, our LORD Jesus Christ,
 who gave us the commandment to wash one another's feet."*

Head of Household says: *"Jesus said: I give you a new commandment:
 Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another'."*

Everyone says: *"Praise be to You, our LORD Jesus,
 for giving us the commandment to love one another just as you have loved
 us so that all men will know that we are Your disciples."*

Originally no desert was eaten. The lamb was the last thing eaten so that its taste would be the lingering taste after the Passover.

When the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. it was no longer possible to have sacrificial lambs. Then the 'hidden' piece of unleavened bread became the substitute for the lamb.

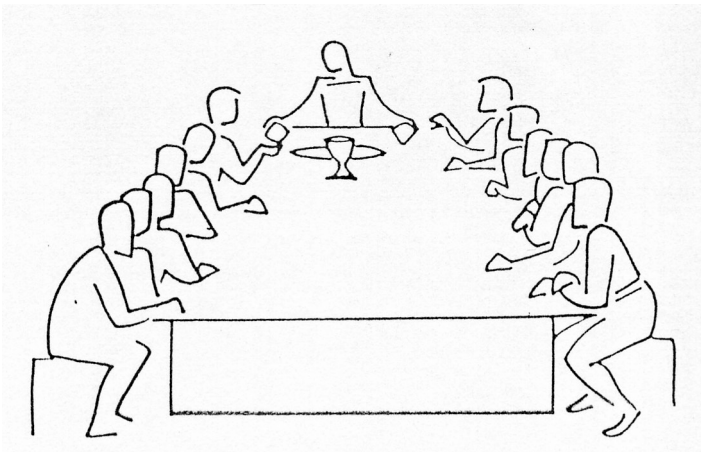
Christ is our substitute. He paid the penalty for our sin. He called Himself the bread of life. His body was wrapped in linen, as we have wrapped this bread in a napkin. Though He was dead and buried He rose again.

Children search for the aphikomén. Adults may help with comments like: "You're getting warmer." When they find it they take it to the head of the household.

Head of Household takes the bread, breaks it into olive size pieces and says:

"Jesus said: 'This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me'".

Everyone eats in silence.



In the Jewish Passover a child is now sent to the door to see if Elijah is coming; we will do it differently.

Head of Household sends a child to the door.

Head of Household asks: *"Who is coming?"*

Child opens the door, looks around and answers:

"The LORD is coming, but His time is not yet."

Child closes the door and returns to seat.

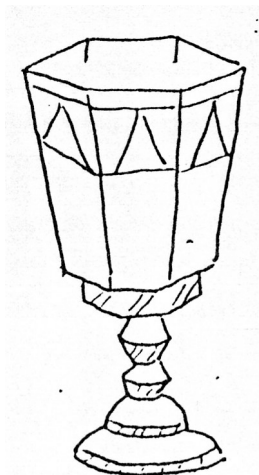
Everyone says: *"Blessed be he that comes in the name of the LORD."*

The Third Cup - Blessing and Redemption

Head of Household fills Elijah's cup with wine, and says:

"Jesus said, 'Drink this, all of you. This is my blood, of the New Covenant; it is shed for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me!'"

Everyone drinks from the third cup.



Head of Household says: *"As it is written: When you have eaten and are satisfied, then you shall bless the Eternal, your God for the good land which He has given you."*

Everyone says: *"Blessed are You,
O Eternal,
for the gift of the land,
and for the food.
We give thanks to You,
O Eternal,
our God,
because you have brought us out of Egypt,
redeemed us from bondage,
given us Your covenant,
and Your commandments."*

Head of Household in bold alternate with everyone else in normal text saying:

*"You are our God, Father, **Pastor**, Shepherd, **Feeder**, and Deliverer.
You are merciful, gracious, granting us grace, peace, salvation,
and every good thing.*

*"Bless my father, the head of this house,
my mother, the mistress of this house,
their children and all belonging to them,
and all that are present here.*

*"The Lord has saved his people with a mighty hand and an
outstretched arm.
He has set free the oppressed that they might praise His name,
He has given sight to the blind
And proclaimed liberty to the captives.*

Everyone says:
*"He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor.
The Spirit of the LORD is upon me.*

The Fourth Cup – Acceptance

Head of Household fills the wine glasses for the fourth time.

Read alternately; Head of Household in bold letters, everyone else in normal letters. Under scored is spoken by everyone.

"Not for our sake, O Eternal! Not for our sake but to your name give glory. Why should others say, Where is their God?"

"Our God is in the heavens."

*"Others have idols of silver, and gold, the work of their hands."
These idols have mouths, but they speak not;
They have ears, but they hear not,
They have hands, but they feel not;
feet, but they walk not;
neither is utterance in their throat.
Those that make them, shall become like them."*

"Those who trust in them shall become like them."

*"Israel shall trust in the Eternal.
The children of the LORD shall trust in Him."*

"He is our Help and Shield."

*"The dead praise not the LORD:
Nor they who descend into the silent grave."*

*"But we will praise the Eternal!
From now and evermore."*

"Hallelujah!"

*"I am glad that the Eternal has heard my voice.
I will call upon Him as long as I live."*

In death, anguish, trouble and sorrow I will call upon the name of the LORD."

"He delivers my soul from death, my eye from tears, and my foot from slipping."

"Therefore I walk before the LORD."

"What shall I give to the LORD for all his benefits toward me?"

"I will take the cup of salvation and call upon His name."

"Unto You LORD I will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving."

Lift Wine glasses

*"To him who smote the first born of the Egyptians,
to Him who delivers with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."*

*"Blessed are You,
O Lord,
our God,
King of the Universe,
creator of the fruit of the vine."*

Everyone drinks the fourth cup leaning (reclining).

The Passover officially ends with one last prayer which **everyone says** :

*"Concluded is the Passover seder according to its law and custom.
As we have lived to celebrate it, so may we live to celebrate it again."*

*"Holy One, who lives in His habitation redress the countless congregation.
Speedily lead the offshoots of Your stock redeemed, to Zion in joyous song."*

Shout: "NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!"