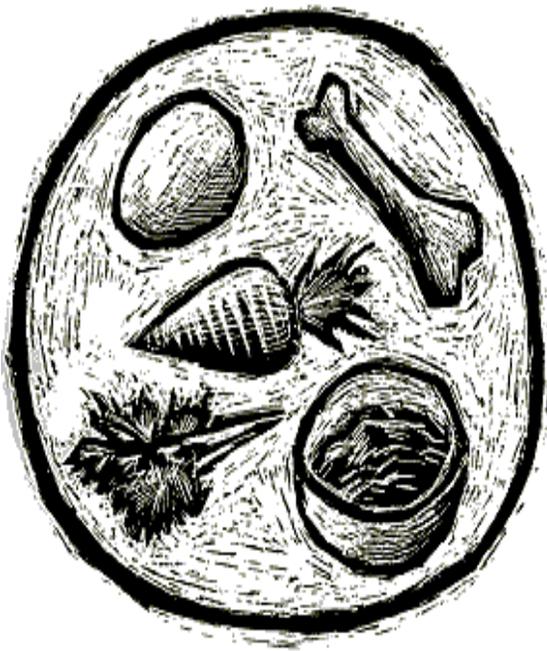




**A Christian Passover Seder  
The Passover of Jesus Christ**

*Compiled by Dr. Bill Levering 2010*



### *Technical notes*

*While the Seder service has many variations, the following service contains most of the elements of a traditional Jewish Passover Seder. However, the particular order or the presentation of the elements has been changed from what they are in a contemporary traditional Passover celebration. This service is meant for Christians to understand the depth of the Jewish tradition of the Last Supper. It is useful to pick a partner for serving and to dry hands.*

Unison Responses are in **bold**. **Actions are in red.**

## **Call to Worship**

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech*

Luke 22: Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, "The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" 'He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there.'" So they went and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

## Lighting the Festival Lights

*A leader at each table lights the candles*



In praising God we say that all life is sacred. In kindling festive lights, we preserve life's sanctity. With every holy light we kindle, the world is brightened to a higher harmony. We praise You, Adonai, majestic Sovereign of all Life, who has kept us alive and brought us to this season. May our homes and our gathering be blessed by this light of your presence shining upon us in blessing and bringing us peace.

## Blessing and Wine

*Pour a cup for each other and say together:*

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech*

*Drink.*

## Washing

On the night of his betrayal, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. "Maundy" is from an old word for Jesus' mandate to wash each other's feet. Washing is an important first part of the Passover seder.

**All: "After Jesus had washed their feet, he put on his robe, returned to the table, and said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord--and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.'"**  
*(John 13:12-15)*

*Wash each other's hands.*

## Green herb

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech:* Praised are you, our God, ruler of the universe, who stands with us in the midst of our tears, who brings us green hope through hard times.



The parsley is green and reminds us that spring is here and new life will grow. The salt water reminds us of tears. We remember that the suffering of the Israelites before they became free.

***Dip and eat herb and say:***

**Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the world, who has created the fruit of the earth.**

## Questions

Young friend: Why is this night different from all other nights?

Leader: We celebrate tonight because we were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and the Lord our God delivered us with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Had not the Holy One, blessed be He, redeemed our fathers from Egypt, we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved. Therefore, even if all of us were wise and well versed in Scripture, it would still be our duty from year to year to tell the story of the deliverance from Egypt.

**All: And we shall tell our children in that day, "It is because of that which the Lord did for us when we came forth out of Egypt that we explain the story of Passover."**

Young friend: On all other nights we just eat dinner. Why do we celebrate communion on this night?

Leader: We celebrate this night because on this night because Jesus used the Passover meal to teach us all about his sacrifice that is like the first Passover when God saved his people Israel. Jesus is the final sacrifice that saves us and unites us with God.

"While they were eating Jesus took a loaf of bread and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples and said 'Take, eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them saying 'Drink from it all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine



### **Matzo**

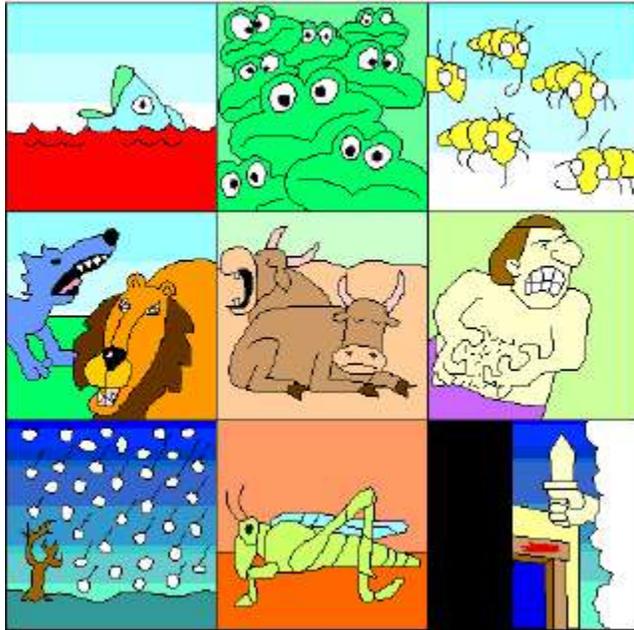
Behold the symbol of the unleavened bread, matzo, the bread of affliction, was the hasty provision that our religious ancestors made for their journey.

***Eat matzo while listening.***

Exodus 12:14-15 This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Exodus 13:6-10 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a festival to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen in your possession, and no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory. You shall tell your child on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.' It shall serve for you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the Lord may be on your lips; for with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt. You shall keep this ordinance at its proper time from year to year.

We remember the mighty acts of God, who with a strong hand and an outstretched arm brought the plagues that free us. For each of the plagues, we drop wine on our plates to remember what was done for our freedom.



*Put one drop on plate as each plague is called.*

Blood.  
Frogs.  
Lice.  
Wild Beasts.  
Pestilence.  
Boils.  
Hail.  
Locust.  
Darkness.  
Slaying of the First-born.

Leader: It is our duty to thank, praise and glorify God who brought us and our forebears from slavery into freedom, from sorrow into joy, from mourning into festive gladness, from darkness into light. Let us therefore praise God.

**All: *Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech:* Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who has redeemed us and our ancestors. May we live to rejoice in your salvation and be gladdened by your righteousness. Grant deliverance to humanity through Israel, your people. May your will be done and your name be sanctified in the midst of the earth, that all people be moved to worship you with one accord. We shall sing new songs of praise for our redemption and deliverance of our souls. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, redeemer of Israel.**

## **Cup of Wine**

There is an extra cup of wine on the table. This is the Cup of Elijah. There is a story that Elijah, a great teacher and prophet who lived many years ago, visits every Seder to wish us a year of peace and freedom. Elijah will herald Messiah's presence, and so the cup is placed on the Seder table in the hopes that this year will see both Elijah's and Messiah's appearance. The door is opened to permit Elijah's entrance.

With song and praise and with the symbols of our feast, let us renew the memories of our past.

**When Israel was in Egypt's Land,  
Let my people go,  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,  
Let my people go.  
    Go down, Moses,  
    Way down in Egypt's Land.  
    Tell ol' Pharaoh,  
    Let my people go.**

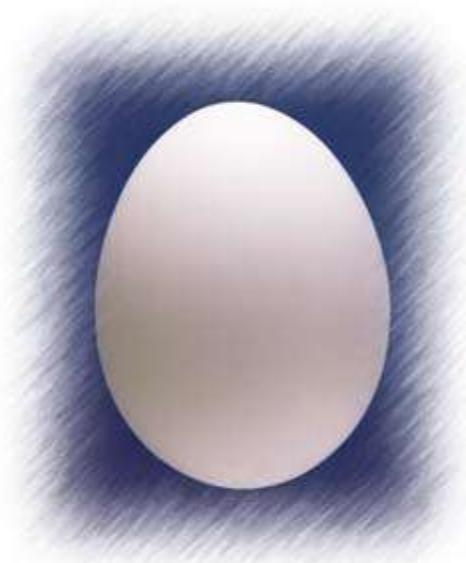
**No more shall they in bondage toil,  
Let my people go,  
Let them come out with Egypt's spoil,  
Let my people go.  
    Chorus**

**With mighty hand and outstretched arm  
Let my people go.  
God saves us all from sin and harm.  
Let my people go.  
    Chorus**

**O let us all from bondage flee,  
Let my people go,  
And let us work so all are free,  
Let my people go.  
    Chorus**

**All: Baruch Ata Adonai Elohenu. Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who has chosen thy people Israel, and, through your Son our Lord Jesus, has chosen us to join them. In love you have given us days of joy and gladness, even this memorial of the departure from Egypt, and of the One who said "Do this in remembrance of me." Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who sanctifies Israel and the festive seasons.**

*Drink wine.*



### **Egg**

The egg reminds us of spring, the time of the holiday of Passover, and of new life that grows in the spring. As the roasted shank bone represents the yearly Passover sacrifice of the paschal lamb, so the roasted egg represents the daily Temple sacrifice which was faithfully presented until the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. Just as a chicken lays an egg daily, so the Jews were commanded to bring an animal sacrifice to the Temple daily, to atone for their sins. We no longer have a Temple to which to bring our sacrifices, but we remember them through the symbol of the egg.

*Eat egg.*



## **Moror – Bitter Herb**

Behold the symbol of the bitter herb. We eat it to recall the bitterness of the narrow life of bondage, of being in the tight place, of being enslaved.

Exodus 1:9-14 (A new king came to power in Egypt) "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us. 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 slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. 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.

Numbers 9:11b In the second month on the fourteenth day, at twilight, they shall keep [the Passover]; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

We understand that in every age and in every life, there is a place of bondage. We cannot turn away from the power of its grip. We should not fail to face the strength of its bitterness.

***All eat of the bitter herb.***



## **Clay**

We use this mixture, the charoseth to remind us how hard the Jewish slaves worked in Egypt. Charoseth looks like the clay which the Jews used to make bricks for building pharaoh's cities and palaces.

***All eat charoseth.***

## **Lamb bone (or red beet)**

Behold the symbol of the Paschal Lamb, the sacrifice of life made for our saving. We remember the lives of the Egyptians who died that Pharaoh might release Israel. We take no pleasure in their death. We remember the life of Jesus the Christ, given for us. We humbly remember his pain given for us.

## **Fellowship Meal**

### **Communion**

Luke 22:14- 20 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then 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." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: (prays, ending with "all the faithful of every time and place.")

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

*Each partakes of bread and cup.*

HYMN:

**Oh Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder  
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made,  
I see the stars; I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.**

**Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee,  
How great thou art, how great thou art. (repeat)**

**And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
Sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.  
Then sings my soul...**

**Fourth Cup of Wine**

**Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the world, who has  
created the fruit of the vine.**

*All drink*

Leader: The service is now complete. With songs of praise we have lifted up the cup of salvation and have called on the name of the Lord. May the Lord who broke Pharaoh's yoke and the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead shatter all fetters of oppression and hasten the day when swords shall be formed into plows and spears into pruning hooks. May the tidings of redemption be heard in all lands so that, free from violence and from wrong and united in a covenant of love, we all may celebrate the universal Passover at that promised supper when Jesus dines once more with his people in the Kingdom of God.

**All: May God bless the whole body of Christ and the whole house of Israel with freedom, and keep us all safe from danger everywhere. May the grace of the Lord turn beloved Jerusalem from hostile ways, into the paths of peace. Amen.**

HYMN (standing)

**When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,  
And there proclaim, My God, how great thou art!  
Then sings my soul...**

The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you. Amen.**



*Needed for this program: Bowls of water and towels for washing, Candles, Matches, Wine and Grape Juice, Parsley, Horseradish, Charoseth, Boiled egg, Beet or roasted lamb shank, Matzo*