

A PASSOVER GUIDE FOR THE CHURCH

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OUTBREAK

DO THIS

“IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”

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Contents

A Passover Guide for the Church?	2
Where Will This Book Take Us?.....	3
Things You Will Need	5
Welcome to the Seder	
The Hunt for Leaven.....	7
The Festival Candles	9
Part 1: The Promise of Sanctification	
The Prayer of Blessing	11
Breaking the Bread	13
Part 2: The Promise of Deliverance	
The Need for Deliverance	14
The Story of Deliverance.....	16
The Bitterness of Bondage.....	17
Preparing the Heart.....	19
Evidences of Faith	20
Part 3: The Promise of Redemption	
The Afikoman.....	22
Cup of Redemption	23
Part 4: The Promise of Restoration	
Elijah's Cup	25
Cup of Restoration.....	27
New Jerusalem	28

A Passover Guide for the Church?

What! Are you crazy? You're making a Haggadah—whatever that is—for Christians? Isn't that Old Testament stuff for Israel? What does it have to do with the Church? I thought we were under grace. Won't this bring us back under the law? You've got to be out of your mind!

Whether said or unspoken, the above are typical responses I encounter when talking about a Haggadah (a Passover guide explaining how to have a home Seder) for Christians. And the thoughts don't end there. Some flatly reject the idea of Christians observing Passover. Others wonder what their neighbors might think if they held a Seder in their home. Isn't Passover in the Christian home similar to having Christmas in a Jewish home?

You may even want to add your own misgivings to the above list. However, I contend it would be beneficial for the Church to learn how to implement a Passover Seder, much like the one Jesus performed in the upper room. In fact, it's vital to our understanding of redemption, the Lord's Supper, our sanctification, God's plan for the ages, and much more. Furthermore, this concept is not new. Many within the Western Church celebrated Passover until the fourth century AD. and in the Eastern Church until the eleventh century AD.

So is it crazy to make an easy to follow biblically centered Passover Seder for the Church? No. Radical? Yes, because the Church gradually replaced the biblical feast of Passover with its own traditions.

Today, the concept of a Paschal Feast is foreign to the Church. Many of its truths glorifying our Savior have been obscured. In my opinion, it is time for the Church to rediscover the biblical gems portrayed in the Passover Seder.

I trust Christians will find this guide helpful. May parents teach their children, and may their children pass it on to the next generation. Through this, I pray the Church will grow to a fuller understanding of God's marvelous grace as it is revealed through the Passover.

Craig P. Scott

Where Will This Book Take Us?

Most Christians know something about Passover. Many have seen the first Paschal Seder portrayed in the movie, *The Ten Commandments*, with Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner. Others have heard messages preached at church or have listened to Sunday school lessons about Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but that is it. That's as far as it goes. Somehow, after this, a disconnect takes place. The spiritual significance between the events of Passover and our own Christian faith are left hanging or are concealed. Let me explain what I mean.

The fourth century Church changed the biblical time of the Feast for anti-Semitic reasons. As a result, we now use another term for Passover. We call it Good Friday.

We also use a variety of New Testament terms to describe our Lord's final meal with His disciples, such as the Last Supper, the Lord's Table, communion, or the Upper Room discourse. Seldom, if ever, do we call it for what it really is—a Passover Seder.

Consequently, we have unplugged ourselves from one of the greatest events of all ages. This historic event is more than just the story of Israel's deliverance from bondage. It portrays Jesus. He is the fountainhead of eternal redemption for all

creation. He is foreshadowed in the Old Covenant, fulfilled in the New Covenant, and described in scripture as the Lamb of God who brings redemption to all those who come under His blood.

Nevertheless, we alter the biblical calendar, change the terms, obscure the message, and think little of it. We are comfortable focusing on a few important elements of the Passover while missing the larger context.

Should we not wonder why God commanded Israel to keep the Feast *forever*? Has forever ended? Why will all nations keep the Passover during the millennial reign of Christ? Why has the Church replaced the Seder with twenty-four-hour prayer vigils, evening communion services, and candle lighting ceremonies?

I am not saying creative observances on Good Friday are wrong—far from it. But there is more to our Good Friday than what we are currently doing. Our practices display only a portion of God’s divine deliverance—the part that applies to us. We fail to see the whole picture.

It reminds me of the time I visited the Museum and Gallery at Bob Jones University. A painting called *Christ Healing the Blind Man of Jericho* by Cornelius van Haarlem moved me. At first, my eye was drawn to the center of the portrait where Christ stood. I stepped closer to examine the expression of our Lord as He reached out to heal the blind man. As I studied the amazing detail, I moved even closer to see the

anticipation painted on the blind man’s face. Had I stopped there, I would have missed the rest of the painting.

To see the whole canvas, I had to step back. When I did, I could see crowds of people standing around our Lord. Some had faces filled with expectation. Others were standing afar off and, of course, there were the religious leaders with their faces filled with scorn.

Then there are the two items central to the entire painting: the mountain in the back, and our Lord in the forefront which suggests the passage,

“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, . . . but ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant” (Hebrews 12:18, 22, 24).

The same is true with our Good Friday observances. We hone in on the prime elements of the day which is Christ and His atoning work on the cross. Of course, without Christ, there would be no Good Friday. However, instead of stepping back to see the full orb of Christ’s redemptive work, we step forward to spotlight only the Church. Don’t misunderstand me. It is wonderful to gaze with astonishment on the redemption provided for us by Christ, but if we don’t step back, we will not see the whole story of redemption.

Therefore, we should carefully examine our Good Friday activities and ask some serious questions about them. Do our observances show God's power in the past as well as in the present? Do they present Christ's atonement as sufficient for both the Church and Israel? Do they point to our Lord redeeming all of creation? Do our Good Friday observances speak of His return and His glorious reign? I contend that when we see the whole Passover story as Jesus portrayed it in the Upper Room, we will better understand God's redemptive plan to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

This book attempts to bridge the gap between our understanding of the Passover and Christ's atoning work. It is a detailed Seder for the Church and Christian home, providing a step-by-step guide for the Passover gathering.

The reader will find this Haggadah both radical and unique. It is patterned after the Seder Jesus performed in the Upper Room. As a result, it leaves out many rabbinic traditions implemented after the first century. It is unlike any modern Haggadah. Furthermore, the Hebrew terms are replaced with English whenever possible, making it easier to understand. Finally, each chapter will endeavor to explain the links between the Passover and the true Passover Lamb—Jesus.

Things You Will Need

1. *Invite Guests*

Keep in mind that the Seder will include some sort of dinner. It can be buffet style, cover dish, or a fully prepared sit-down meal. What is important is that you specify the role (if any) the guests will have in providing for the meal.

2. *Prearrange Place of Seder*

If there is a large gathering, set up a table where the guests can see the leader and the elements of the Seder. The following items will be needed:

- A flashlight, large feather, and wooden spoon;
- Two candlesticks with holders and matches;
- Unleavened bread or matzo (bread without yeast);
- Candy to reward the children;
- Paper napkins to wrap the leaven bread before burning;
- Bitter herbs—*maror*: horseradish and parsley;
The most common choice is horseradish, romaine lettuce, and endives. The horseradish should be placed in a bowl or it can be spread on small finger size pieces of romaine lettuce and placed on a plate. The parsley should be placed in a bowl of salted water.
- One pitcher or carafe filled with grape juice and warm water;
- Two linen napkins for wrapping the matzo;
- Small cups/communion cups;
- An ornate wine glass or Kiddush cup;

- Two bowls or plates.
 - The first bowl will be used to pass pieces of the unleavened bread to the guests. The second bowl will be used later in the ceremony to pass fragments of the Afikoman.

3. Leaven Bread (common bread with yeast)

Before the guests arrive, hide walnut size pieces of leavened bread where they can be easily found. The children will be asked to search for them at the beginning of the Seder.

4. *A Place to Burn Leaven*

(i.e. fireplace, outside fire-pit, or bucket.)

5. *Assign Participants*

Before the Seder begins, assign people to do the following:

- *A woman to light the Seder candles and to pray;*
- *Two people to read parts of the Seder;*
- *A male child to recite (or read) two questions;*
- *An adult to respond to his questions;*
- *A person to lead the singing.*

6. *Songs*

It would be good to have a few hymns or songs prepared in advance. If the host or hostess cannot, for some reason, lead the group in song, then make arrangements with another guest to do this.

7. *A Place Setting for Elijah*

Set a place at the table or in the room for Elijah. It will remain unoccupied throughout the evening. Make sure the setup includes an empty cup. During the ceremony, a guest will be asked to fill it.

8. *Make Lots*

Hand a piece of paper with a number on it to each guest as they arrive. Place a matching number in a bowl. During the ceremony, a number will be drawn. The winner will pour Elijah's cup.

The Hunt For Leaven

Bedikath Chametz

“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses . . .” - Exodus 12:15”

Historic Overview

“The Seder begins with the search for leaven. Traditionally, the father gathers his family together on the night before Passover. Immediately after sundown, he carries out his search. After the house is cleaned, his aim is to ensure no leaven is left behind. The procedure usually includes a candle, a feather (which acts as a broom), and a wooden spoon into which the pieces of bread would be scooped and placed outside. The following day he would burn the leaven at 12 pm.

In a few minutes, we will reenact this tradition. We will be asking the children to help search this home for leaven.

Bedikath Chametz

“Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:7).

READER 1:

The command to search for leaven is found in Exodus 12:15 where it says,

“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.”

LEADER:

There are two concepts intertwined in the passage above: the leaven-free house and the leaven-free dough.

The leaven-free house reminds the nation of their separation from Egyptian bondage. The purging of leaven from their homes is likened to God purging Egypt from their presence. That divine act freed them to serve God. The leaven-free house should also remind the guests of their need to keep their homes free of any defiling influence.

The leaven-free bread was eaten throughout Passover. It symbolizes the absence of sin. When yeast (leaven) is kneaded into dough, it virtually permeates the entire lump. Sin affects the soul in much the same way leaven affects a lump of dough. When introduced, it permeates every aspect of one’s being.

The unleavened bread is a graphic reminder of God purifying His children by freeing them from the bondage of sin. They are now free to serve God. Therefore, the divine command has tremendous significance.

But the question must be asked, why are we purging this home of leaven when we are no longer under the Mosaic Law? Are we not under a new covenant of grace? What significance does this act have for His Church?

READER 2:

We are given an interesting command in 1 Corinthians 5:7. It says,

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

LEADER:

Therefore, we are commanded to daily purge the leavening influence of sin from our lives. We are to do this through Christ our Passover^r with the same vigor it takes to purge a house from leaven.

May this activity remind us of our need to daily search for and purge any morsel of sin residing in our lives.

THE SEARCH FOR LEAVEN TAKES PLACE

Instruct the children to search the home for remnants of leaven bread. Have them use a flashlight, feather, and spoon to gather the leaven. Reward them with candy when they bring the fragments to you. Wrap the leaven in a paper napkin and burn it in a fireplace or in an outside container.

Before burning the leaven, read the section below:

LEADER:

At the time of Christ, the Passover Seder took on a whole new dimension. Every detail of the Paschal Feast began to point to Jesus as the Christ. Even while the Jewish people were preparing their homes for the Passover, Jesus was prepared for His crucifixion.

According to Mark 15:25-34, Jesus was nailed to the cross at 9:00 a.m. and died at 3:00 p.m. At the same time, Jewish law required every home celebrating Passover to finish gathering their leaven by 11:00 a.m. and to burn it at twelve noon.

At the exact hour every Jewish home burned their leaven, God supernaturally darkened the sun for three hours. Imagine how this must have affected everyone as they stood by their fires and darkness fell over the land.

God punctuated Christ’s atoning work. He literally made Jesus “to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

So as Israel burned the leaven, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.

The Festival Candles

Brechat Haner

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

- Genesis 3:15

Historic Overview

The requirement of the Sabbath candles is of a late rabbinic origin. This is a compilation of Jewish law arranged by Yosef Keto in AD 1563.

Jewish women cover their eyes while saying the blessing to symbolize no light from the Sabbath candle benefit them until after they pray.

It is considered work to light a match on the Sabbath therefore, other candles were kindled in the house before the Sabbath. These were used to bring the light to the Sabbath table.

The rabbinic tradition for lighting two candles comes from the passages found in the Torah, which state they are to “Remember” and Observe” the Sabbath.

The Candle Lighting

Brechat Haner

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” (*Genesis 3:15*).

A woman is chosen to open the Seder by lighting the Passover candles and prayer. Typically, the lady of the house performs this task.

LEADER:

In the traditional Hebrew home, a woman opens the Seder by lighting the Sabbath candles and saying,

“Blessed are you O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to sanctify the day of Pesach.”

This tradition comes from Genesis 3:15 where the promised seed of the woman (the Messiah) would one day come, bringing redemption with Him. Therefore, it is fitting for a woman to bring light to the Seder table.

Lighting the Seder Candles

She lights the two candles on the Seder table. Afterwards, she opens with prayer. The typical Christian prayer should go as follows:

WOMAN:

“Blessed are You O Lord, our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through Faith in Jesus the Messiah, the Light of the world and in His Name we kindle the Passover Lights.”

LEADER:

As this woman opened the Seder by lighting the Sabbath candles, it should be a reminder to us that through a woman the Messiah came bringing light into the world.

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons” – (Galatians 4:4-5).

The Seder Order

“For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you” – (2 Peter 1:12-13).

Historic Overview

“This Seder, as in the traditional Jewish Seder, is divided into four themes gleaned from Exodus 6:6-7: the promise of sanctification, deliverance, redemption and restoration.

The contemporary Jewish Seder has each segment beginning or ending with a cup of wine. However, many scholars recognize that only two cups of wine were part of the 1st Century AD ceremony. The additional cups of wine developed later in rabbinic tradition. The host will be given the opportunity to choose between the 1st Century AD model or the contemporary design.

READER 1:

Exodus 6:6-8 says, “Therefore say to the children of Israel: “I *am* the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I *am* the LORD.”

LEADER:

Most Seders focus on four promises mentioned in the above passage: (1) *The Promise of Sanctification*: “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” (2) *The Promise of Judgment or Deliverance*: “I will rescue you out of their bondage.” (3) *The Promise of Redemption*: “I will redeem you with a stretched out arm.” (4) *The Promise of Restoration*: “I will take you as My people, and I will be your God.”

This Seder will follow the traditional order.

The Prayer of Blessing

The Yachatz — יָחַץ and

The Kiddish — קִדְּשׁ

“Blessed *is* every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways.”

- Psalm 128:1

Part One

The Promise of Sanctification

“I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” - Exodus 6:6

Historic Overview

In Hebrew, the word kiddush means, sanctification. The Kiddush is the blessing recited on all Sabbaths and Holy Days. During a traditional Seder the host recites the blessing and shares a cup of wine with his guests. The practice of the Kiddush Cup is a late rabbinic tradition, there is no evidence that a cup of wine was offered at this point in the 1st Century Seder. Therefore, this part of the Seder is optional.²

The Urchatz יָרַח (washing of hands) usually takes place after the Kiddush blessing. Later in the ceremony, a second washing occurs following the Seder meal. It is called the Rachtzah רַחֲצָה. Both washings were added after the 1st Century. However, we do find Jesus washing His disciple's feet after the meal. Therefore, we assigned the Urchatz and Rachtzah to the part where Jesus washes His disciple's feet.

Furthermore, the contemporary Seder has the section known as the Karpas כַּרְפָּס (dipping of vegetables). It usually appears after the Kiddush blessing and Urchatz washing. This practice is another rabbinic tradition added after the 1st Century and will not appear in this Seder.

The Blessing

The Yachatz – יָחַץ

THE CARAFE OF WINE EXPLAINED

Insight: The warmed wine points to the blood of the lamb that was struck on the doorposts. During the first Seder, the Jewish people assembled safely under the blood. Sanctification begins when we come under the blood of the Lamb.

The leader should point to the carafe filled with the mixture of warm water and wine grape juice) and say,

LEADER:

The striking of the blood on the doorposts followed by the destroyer passing over the land was a one-time historic event. After that time, God instructed the Jewish nation to annually keep the feast of Passover as a memorial. They were to kill the paschal lamb at the tabernacle or temple area, but the blood was no longer placed on the lintel and two side posts; rather, it was given as an offering to God. In the home, the Seder wine now symbolizes the blood of the lamb.

The leader should pour some of the mixed juice into a small bowl and set it aside. It will be used later in the ceremony.

The Kiddush – קִדּוּשׁ

If the host chooses to incorporate four cups of wine into the Seder ceremony, he will now pour his first cup of wine [grape juice] mixed with warm water into his cup. His guests will do the same. He will then open with prayer.

HOST PRAYS:

(Sanctifying the Seder Table)

“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who created all things and gave us the bounty of this table.”

(Sanctifying the Day)

“Blessed are You, O Lord, Who has chosen us for Your service and called us out from among the nations, exalting us and making us holy, though the work of Your Son. In love You have given us, O Lord our God, the joy of salvation in which we remember and give You thanks on this day.

Blessed are You, O Lord, King of the universe, Who has kept us in life, Who has preserved us, and has enabled us to reach this season.”

After the prayer, the host and his guests may drink from their cup.

Breaking of Bread

Motzo – מצה

“And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt”-Exodus 12:39

Historic Overview

“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *there shall be* a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters” – Exodus 13:6-7.

Motzo – מצה

THE UNLEAVENED BREAD EXPLAINED:

OVERVIEW:

This part of the Seder highlights the promise of sanctification. It explains the symbolic nature of the bread and wine.

The unleavened bread points to the sanctified life of our Savior, and reminds us of the kind of life we are to live.

The leader picks up the whole piece of unleavened bread.

LEADER:

God commands Israel to eat unleavened bread during Passover. This yeastless bread represents a nation delivered from bondage. It is based on the idea that the whole body of Israel was purged from Egypt, much like the unleavened dough is purged (or kept) from yeast. It is customary to break the unleavened bread in half in order to illustrate that the nation is incomplete without the Messiah.

BREAKING OF THE UNLEAVENED BREAD

The leader breaks the unleavened bread in half. One half is wrapped in a cloth napkin and laid on the table. This piece is called the Afikoman. (Later, the leader hides it.) As he wraps the Afikoman, he says,

LEADER:

Many Jewish homes wrap this piece of unleavened bread in a linen napkin. It reminds them that their Messiah is hid for a time. This was done in Jesus’s day with earnest expectation of their Messiah’s appearance.

The remaining (unwrapped) piece of unleavened bread is now broken into smaller pieces and placed in a serving bowl. While doing this, the leader and guests should recite the following blessing.

LEADER AND GUESTS IN UNISON:

This is the bread of affliction which was eaten by the Jewish people in the land of Egypt. Let those who are hungry enter and eat thereof, and all who are in distress come and celebrate the Passover. At present, we celebrate it here, but next year we hope to celebrate it anew with our Lord in His kingdom.

Need for Deliverance

רַחֵם אֱלֹהֵי מִשְׁנֵאֵי מְרוֹמְמֵי מִשְׁעַרֵי מוֹת
נִחַנְנֵנִי יְהוָה

Part Two

The Promise of Deliverance

“I will rescue you from their bondage.”

– Exodus 6:6b

“Have mercy on me, O LORD! Consider my
trouble from those who hate me, You who lift me
up from the gates of death.”

- Psalm 9:13

Historic Overview

This reading is not found in any traditional Seder, thus it is optional.
However, it is added to help the Christian reader grasp the intense
emotion felt by the Jewish community when participating in the next
section, the Deliverance Story.

Optional

LEADER:

When we reach this point in the Seder, many begin to wonder when they will eat. By now the aroma of food is filling the air and the children are getting restless. Yet within the Jewish community, the older ones know how important it is to take this time to reflect on God’s great deliverance. For Egypt is not the only place where Jewish people experienced persecution. The elders today know they also suffered at the

hands of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Seleucids, Romans, Spaniards, Crusaders, English, French, Russians, Moldavians, Germans and even in parts of America. This is but a very brief list of their sufferings throughout the world then and now.

And yes, it is true (to our shame) that many within the church took part in these atrocities. Most who participated were unredeemed men who had a form of godliness, but lacked a genuine faith. Unfortunately, there were others within the church who were aware but were either incapable of helping, deceived, or too afraid.

So how does this part of the Seder relate to genuine Christian's today? The Apostle Paul put it well when he wrote, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12), and so it has been from the beginning of the church. It seems that whatever God chooses, the world hates and tries to destroy.

Christian persecution began with unbelieving Jews persecuting their own brethren who embraced Jesus as their Messiah. As the church grew, this anti-Christian sentiment spread throughout the Roman world. Even later in time, men within the church persecuted others who expressed their faith in Christ. Finally, this hatred has grown globally.

In 2019, the Center for the Study of Global Christianity says 900,000 Christians have been 'martyred' in the last decade, equating to 90,000 a year. That is one death every six minutes. Christianity Today conservatively estimates that over 70 million Christians have been martyred since Jesus walked the earth. However, per capita this number has not even come

close to the suffering experienced within the Jewish community.

So, it is important for us to pause and reflect on God's deliverance. We know that hatred and violence will continue to appear against God's elect until the Messiah returns to restore all things. In the meanwhile, may we be watchful to stand against these heinous atrocities. May the following section remind us that God is still able to deliver, just as He did in Egypt, and will most assuredly deliver in the future.

"He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.'" (Revelation 22:20).

Story of Deliverance

The Maggid — מגיד

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.”

- 1 Corinthians 1:30

Historic Overview

“This section emphasizes the second of the four “I will’s” found in Exodus 6. In a typical Jewish Seder, a second cup of wine is raised, and everyone recites a hallelujah. As mentioned before, the first two cups of wine were not part of the 1st Century Seder. Both are late rabbinic traditions. Therefore, the host is given the option to omit the second cup.”

The Maggid - מגיד

If following the four cups of wine, it is here the leader refills his cup a second time with wine [grape juice] and has his guests do likewise.

LEADER:

In a traditional Seder, the youngest child asks several questions which an elder male answers. This little skit is a reminder of God’s command which says,

“It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall be, when your children say

to you, “What do you mean by this service?’ that you shall say, “It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’ So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.” (Exodus 12:25-26).

The Ma-Nishtanah and the Makkot

MALE CHILD (*first question*):

Why is this night different from all other nights?

As the adult male responds to the child’s question, he, along with the guests, will pause to pour a drop of juice from their cup into a bowl or saucer after each plague is mentioned.

The cup of wine is often linked with joy as in Psalm 104:15; Ecclesiastes 9:7; and with judgment (see Psalm 75:8; Isaiah 51:17, 22). Removing juice from the cup of wine symbolizes the divine wrath that will be poured out on all unrighteousness. Reducing the amount of juice in the cup reminds each guest that there is no joy found in the destruction of the wicked (Job 31:29–30).

If the second cup is omitted, the male reader should pause after each plague to add emphasis.

ADULT MALE:

The Jewish people were once slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord redeemed them with a mighty hand. God brought ten plagues on the Egyptians:

A plague of Blood... Frogs... Lice... Flies... Disease... Boils... Hail... Locust... Darkness... and the killing of the firstborn.

Only those with the blood of the lamb over the doorpost did God spare.

LEADER:

It is not uncommon to sing various praises and give thanks during the Seder. Originally, a Hallel was sung in the temple by the Levites during the slaughter of the sheep.

Second Chronicles 35:15 gives a description of a Passover celebration during the reign of Josiah. It says, "And the singers, the sons of Asaph, were in their places, according to the command of David." By the first century B.C., this practice moved to the home.

Singing Songs of Thanksgiving

At this point in the Seder,³³ the guests are drawn back to the second promise found in Exodus 6:6-7.

LEADER:

Remember, the second promise of deliverance reads, "I will rescue you from their bondage."

The second cup of wine is raised

LEADER AND GUESTS IN UNISON:

Truly, we can say hallelujah for the great and costly redemption acquired on our behalf. We saw God's mighty hand when He delivered Israel from Egyptian servitude through the death of the firstborn. Now our Lord has purchased us with His own blood, delivering us from the bondage of sin and death.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Amen!

In unison, everyone lifts their cup and drinks from it.

Bitterness of Bondage

The Maror — מרור

"And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve *was* with rigor."

- Exodus 1:14

Historic Overview

"Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged *them*."

- Exodus 2:23-24

The Maror - מרור

MALE CHILD (*Second Question*):

Why do we have bitter herbs to eat?

ADULT MALE:

It reminds us of the bitter enslavement the Jewish people experienced in Egypt under Pharaoh. It also reminds us of our bitter enslavement to sin and death before Christ our Passover took them away.

TASTING THE BITTER HERBS

*The leader should pass around the serving bowl with matzo and bitter herbs.
As the guests partake, he should say:*

LEADER:

The bitter herbs are a reminder of the sorrow, suffering, and enslavement caused by sin. As the horseradish brings tears to the eyes, so, also, does the affliction of sin. Remember “the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1).

THE LAMB IS EXPLAINED

The leader further explains why there is no lamb served at this Seder by saying:

LEADER:

The Passover originally had lamb for the main course until the destruction of the temple in AD 70. Today, Israel uses a shank bone to symbolize the lamb their forefathers ate in temple times. The lamb is a type pointing to Jesus our Savior. There is no lamb eaten tonight. God’s Son has come and died for our sins and risen again. He fulfills all that the Seder portrays. He is the true Passover Lamb.

On the eve of the original Passover, the Lord commanded Israel to strike the blood of the lamb on the two side posts and on the header of the door. When the Lord would see the blood on the doorpost, He would pass over the house and not allow the destroyer to enter and strike them. It took an act of faith to apply the blood to the doorpost. Those who did not do this demonstrated their unbelief. It also resulted in the death of their firstborn.

In a similar way, men are commanded by God to apply the blood of Jesus the Messiah to their lives by calling on His name – believing that He died for their sins and that God raised Him from the grave. Those who apply the blood of Jesus by faith receive the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life. Unfortunately, those who fail to call on the Lord will experience the second death which is eternal separation from God in hell.

BLESSING FOR THE MEAL

After the blessing, the leader should assign an adult to bring the children outside to strike the doorposts with the grape juice.”

The Eating of the Passover Meal

The Shulchan Orech – שולחן עורך

Preparing The Heart

Urchatz ורחץ and

Rachtzah רחצה

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow”

- Psalm 51:7

Historic Overview

In ancient times, dirt and dung would be beaten down into the roads. In the dry season, this filth turned to dust and clung to the legs and feet of travelers, making it necessary to wash when entering a home. Because of this, a pitcher of water with a basin and towels were customarily passed around to guests. In Jesus’s time, this task of washing feet was usually done by a servant or by a member of the household.

In the Upper Room gathering, apparently, no one offered water to wash the disciples’ feet. It was a servant’s role, and no servant was present. So after the Passover meal and just before the final portion of the Seder ritual, Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. His act demonstrated servanthood, and more importantly, the necessity of daily cleansing through the forgiveness of sins.

Urchatz ורחץ / Rachtzah רחצה

“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psalm 51:7).

Before dessert is served, the guests should be gathered together.

READER 1: Reads John 13:1-6

“And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?”

READER 2: Reads John 13:7-17

“Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.”

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.”

Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!”

Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.”

So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I

have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

LEADER:

It is time for us to prepare our hearts before the Lord. Scripture reminds us that through genuine faith in Christ,

"And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Just as it is physically necessary to wash our feet after walking down a dusty path, it is also necessary to find spiritual cleansing after walking in this world. It is not that we need the washing of salvation again. Once made a child of God, we cannot lose our salvation, but we can be defiled by the filth of this world. Seeking forgiveness restores our precious fellowship with our heavenly Father and Savior. This is the lesson taught by our Lord.

READER 1: Reads 1 John 1:5-10,

"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive

ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

SILENT PRAYER:

The guests should be led in a time of silent prayer. Time should be utilized so each member can seek the Lord for cleansing from sin. After an appropriate time of silence, one of the men should close this time by praying out loud.

Evidence of Faith

וְצַדִּיק בְּאִמּוּנָתוֹ יִתְּהַ

Habakkuk 2:4

"Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? — unless indeed you are disqualified." — 2 Corinthians 13:5

Historic Overview

Before we enjoy our dessert, I would like to point out the seriousness of a false profession of faith. We are told in the book of John that Judas Iscariot left the Seder to betray Jesus. It is a sobering reminder that there may be some among us who know **about** Christ, but have never placed their trust **in** Him for salvation. They may appear to follow Christ, but were never His. This is the danger of the unrepentant heart.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ . . . For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:16-17).

“For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it” (Hebrews 4:2).

Before dessert is served, the guests should be gathered together.

READER 2: Reads John 13:18-30,

“I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, *‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’* Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am *He*. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”

When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.

Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, “Lord, who is it?”

Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, *the son of Simon*.

Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.” But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, “Buy *those things* we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.

Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.”

LEADER:

Some of the saddest words in scripture are these,

“Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.”

It is tragic for one to have the light of God’s Word, as Judas did, and never trust Christ. So it is in our day. Many hear the precious Word of God but not all call upon the Lord to be saved. Oh, to be so near to God and yet turn away lost. For those who “were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come”³⁵ and then turn away, it is truly night.

Dessert is served.

The Afikomen

The Tzaphun — צפון

Part Three

The Promise of Redemption

“Therefore say to the children of Israel: ‘I *am* the LORD . . .
I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.’”

— Exodus 6:6c

“And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.’”

— John 6:35

Historic Overview

The Afikoman represents the missing Messiah. Without Him, God’s people are not complete. It’s hiding represents God concealing and guarding the Messiah until the appropriate hour. The Afikoman is commonly broken into smaller pieces and passed to each guest. They are instructed to eat this bread in remembrance of the coming Messiah who would make them whole.

The Tzaphun – צפון

““And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst’” (John 6:35).

After dessert, gather everyone into one room. The children will be instructed to go through the house to find the hidden Afikoman. Once found, the leader will redeem it with a dollar. The matzo will then be broken into smaller pieces and given to each guest.

THE CHILDREN SEARCH FOR THE AFIKOMAN

The leader should redeem the Afikoman with a dollar.

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Someone should pray and thank the Lord for bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. After the prayer, the leader should pass the bread to each person.

Before the assembly eats the bread, he should say:

LEADER:

When Jesus passed the unleavened bread, He said,

“Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (1 Corinthians 11:24).

The Cup of Redemption

The Ha-Geulah – התחלת

“‘With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you,’ Says the LORD, your Redeemer.”

– Isaiah 54:8

Historic Overview

“This part of the ceremony highlights God’s promise of redemption, which says, “I will redeem you with a stretched out arm.” – Ex. 6:6

By the time of Christ, the Jewish nation had incorporated two cups of wine into the Seder ceremony: the cup of redemption and the cup of restoration.

The cup before us is the cup of redemption. It portrays the blood that was struck on the doorposts. At the Last Supper, Jesus applied this cup to Himself when He said, “This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” – Luke 22:20.

The Ha-Geulah – התחלת

“I will redeem you with an stretched out arm” (Exodus 6:6c).

READER 1: Reads Exodus 6:6-8,

“Therefore say to the children of Israel: “I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as

My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”

This cup represents Christ’s shed blood at the cross for our redemption. The Scriptures tell us, “For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11).

It also says, “That without the shedding of blood there is no remission *of sin*” (Hebrews 9:22). In the original Passover, the application of blood on the doorpost served as a token of their faith.⁴⁰ Death passed over those who gathered under the blood.

The same is true for those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. By God’s grace, His atoning work is applied to them through faith. They are saved from wrath and justified by His blood. Their sin is removed; the sting of death is gone.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

LEADER:

Before we partake in this cup, there is one more statement we must understand. Jesus said,

“This cup is the new testament in my blood” or “the *new covenant* in my blood.”

Moses implemented the first covenant⁴¹ (which is the Law of Moses) by sprinkling blood on the people and the book of the

law.⁴² However, in the book of Jeremiah, we find God promising to make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.” (Jeremiah 31:32)

Jesus is saying that this cup of redemption represents the new covenant.⁴³ It is the foundational promise by which those in Christ find the forgiveness of sin, a new heart, and the indwelling of the Spirit. As Moses implemented the first covenant by the sprinkling of blood, Jesus implemented the new covenant with His shed blood.⁴⁴

Therefore, as we drink from this cup of redemption, we should remember all that Christ did for us and rejoice. We should also look forward to the final fulfillment of this covenant when all Israel shall be saved.

Passing the Cup of Redemption

The leader and guests partake in the cup of redemption.

Elijah's Cup

כוס של אליהו

Part Four

The Promise of Restoration

“I will take you as My people, and I will be your God” –
Exodus 6:7

“What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? . . . A man clothed in soft garments? . . . A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is *he* of whom it is written: “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face . . . among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist . . . if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come.” - Matthew 11:7-14.

Historic Overview

“Elijah is the prominent 9th Century B.C. prophet who was taken to heaven by a whirlwind. His place at this Seder comes from Malachi 4:5-6 where God promises to send him to the nation of Israel.

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

Ever since Malachi's prophecy, the Jewish nation looks forward to Elijah's physical return. It is considered an honor for someone at the Seder to fill his cup.”

Elijah's Cup

כוס של אליהו

A selected guest pours wine into Elijah's cup.⁴⁵

LEADER:

You will note that one place setting has not been touched throughout the meal. It is Elijah's place. He is the prominent ninth century BC prophet who was taken to heaven by a whirlwind.

The Pouring of Elijah's Cup

Make up lots. Hand out small pieces of paper to the guests with numbers on them. Have the papers placed in a bowl, and then randomly select someone to draw one of the lots. The winner with the matching number will have the honor of pouring Elijah's cup.

LEADER:

The expectation of Elijah's return was so great in Jesus's day that when John the Baptist appeared on the scene, the religious leaders ask him if he was this Elijah. John said no he was not the physical return of Elijah, but declared he was the one predicted in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1.

The people did not understand that the forerunner of the Messiah would come in the spirit and power of Elijah. They were looking for the literal reappearance of Elijah. As a result of their misconception, they failed to see John as the true fulfillment of this prophecy.

Scripture reports that an angel announced John the Baptist's birth. Citing Malachi 4:5-6, he proclaimed that John

"will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him (the Messiah Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Similarly, Jesus confirms John's role when He said, "If you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who is to come" (Matthew 11:14.)

Imagine what it must have been like for the Lord Jesus to be led from the Garden of Gethsemane as a prisoner. He was placed in bonds and paraded through the Kidron Valley and the streets of Jerusalem to be tried at Caiaphas's house. On His way, He must have passed numerous homes with their doors opened in anticipation of Elijah's appearance. Even the temple doors were opened during Passover to invite and welcome redemption which was expected at that hour.

The sad irony is, they already missed their *Elijah*, and were about to miss their Messiah. John the Baptist had come in the spirit of Elijah and testified of Christ, yet they would not hear him. Now, the true Messiah, Jesus, passed by their open doors unheeded.

So why do we still have Elijah's place at this Seder? Many believe there is yet another man to come in the spirit and power of Elijah before the Lord returns to the earth. Some

speculate that he will be one of the two witnesses who will appear during the tribulation period (Revelation 11:3-13).

A Child Opens the Door

Have a child open the front door of the house to see if Elijah has come.

Prayer for Christ's Return

The Door Is Closed

The Cup of Restoration

The Hallel - הלל

“I will take you as My people, and I will be your God” — Exodus 6:7

Historic Overview

After the Seder meal, the final cup of wine was drunk followed by the recitation of Psalm 113 through 118. However, in the Lord's Passover, this last cup was not drunk (Matthew 26:29). The Lord implied that He would not drink of this cup until the kingdom age began.

Remember, as the previous cup symbolized redemption, this final cup signifies restoration which will be ultimately fulfilled with Christ's earthly reign.

The Hallel — הלל

“I will take you as My people, and I will be your God”
(Exodus 6:7).

The final cup of wine is poured. The leader lifts his cup up and says,

LEADER:

This final cup of wine highlights the promise of restoration. Its purpose is to remind us that one day, God will restore all things to Himself.

Jesus referenced this cup when He said,

“I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26:26).

That night, Jesus did not drink from the cup of restoration nor will we today. However, its place at this Seder serves as an intense reminder of our Lord’s return to the earth, and we with Him. He will restore all things and establish His kingdom. In that day, we will be called by our Lord to participate in a Passover celebration. Then, we will rejoice with Him as we drink from this cup

The full cup is put down.

New Jerusalem

The Had Gadya or Conclusion

נִרְצָה

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” — Matthew 26:30

Historic Overview

“I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God” (Exodus 6:7).

LEADER:

In the days of Jesus, it was customary to end the Seder singing the Hallel (Psalms 113 through 118). Today, we sing praises to God and rejoice in His gift of eternal life in Christ. May we rejoice in the promise of our Lord’s coming reign and eternal kingdom.

EVERYONE RECITES IN UNISON:

“The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly . . . Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD’s doing; it is

marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" - Psalm 118:16, 19-24.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" - Revelation 21:1-5.

Closing Hymn and Prayer

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

– Revelation 3:12