

A Passover Haggadah

by Mark Sohmer

based loosely on
Celebrate Passover Haggadah,
by Joan R. Lipis

Welcome

Leader: Welcome to our Passover Seder. A Seder is the meal we eat to commemorate what God had done when He miraculously freed His people from slavery in Egypt.

The Bible teaches us:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.¹”

None of us are slaves in a physical sense, but the Bible does teach us that all people are born as slaves to sin. This Seder has extra significance to all of those who have been redeemed by God, not from physical slavery, but from slavery to sin by salvation in Christ.

The Seder is not just for Jewish people, but for all who know Jesus as the “Passover Lamb of God.”

Let us remember the significance of the Passover Seder. Messiah’s last supper with His disciples was in fact a Passover Seder. Jesus said, “With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.²”

Bedikat Chametz Search for Leaven

Leader: As it is written in Exodus 12:14-20, in preparation for the Passover, God commanded the people of Israel to remove all leaven or yeast (in Hebrew *chametz*) from their houses.

(To Pastor): Do you confirm that there is no *chametz* in this room?

Pastor: I do.

Leader: Let us remember that in the Bible, leaven is a symbol for sin. The Apostle Paul wrote: “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore

¹ Numbers 9:1-4

² Luke 22:15

the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.³”

Group: “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.⁴”

Leader: Let us search ourselves for any leaven, for any impurity of thought, word, or deed, which might separate us from fellowship with the God who commanded us to remove the leaven. And when we find these, let us remove them as we have removed the leaven from this room.

Group: “O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known *me*. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.⁵”

Leader: “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.⁶”

Group: “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.⁷”

Music: *Refiner's Fire*

Purify my heart
Let me be as gold and precious silver
Purify my heart
Let me be as gold, pure gold

Refiner's fire
My heart's one desire
Is to be holy
Set apart for You Lord
I choose to be holy
Set apart for You my Master
Ready to do Your will

³ 1 Corinthians 5:6-7

⁴ 1 Corinthians 5:8

⁵ Psalm 139:1, 23-24

⁶ 1 John 1:9-10

⁷ Psalm 19:14

Purify my heart,
cleansing me from within and make me holy.
Purify my heart,
cleansing me from my sin, deep within

Refiner's fire
My heart's one desire
Is to be holy
Set apart for You Lord
I choose to be holy
Set apart for You my Master
Ready to do Your will

Birket Ha-Ner Blessing over the Candles

Leader: It has always been the Jewish way for a woman to usher in the new day with the lighting of the candles. This should remind us that it was a woman who ushered in Messiah, the Light of the world.

Group: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."⁸

Woman: Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, a-sheer ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav, ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner shel yom tov.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב.

Group: "Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who has made us holy and has commanded us to light the festival light."

Kaddesh Sanctification of the Meal

Leader: The four cups are a very ancient tradition of the Seder. They each relate to God's promises of freedom to our people. With each cup, we remember the words found in Exodus 6:6-7.

The first cup is the cup of sanctification.

⁸ Isaiah 7:14

Group: “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”⁹”

Leader: The second cup is the cup of deliverance.

Group: “and I will rid you out of their bondage.”¹⁰”

Leader: The third cup is the cup of redemption.

Group: “and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments.”¹¹”

Leader: The fourth and final cup is the cup of praise.

Group: “And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”¹²”

The Cup of Sanctification

Leader: This is the first cup, the cup of sanctification. Let us take of it together and proclaim the holiness of this day of deliverance!

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, bo-ray p’ree ha-ga-fen.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַנֶּפֶן.

Leader and Group: “Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.”

Leader: Let us all drink from the cup of sanctification.

(Everyone drinks, and then refills cup.)

Urchatz Washing the Hands

Leader: During the Last Supper, it may have been at this point that the Messiah washed, not the hands, but the feet of His disciples.

⁹ Exodus 6:6

¹⁰ Exodus 6:6

¹¹ Exodus 6:6

¹² Exodus 6:7

Reader 1: “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded... So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.¹³”

Men: Messiah said, “If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.¹⁴”

Women: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.¹⁵”

Leader: The purification process required sacrifice because no amount of water could cleanse us from our sins. God said, “for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.¹⁶”

Men: At the Last Supper, Jesus said, “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.¹⁷”

Women: He also said, “ye are clean, but not all.¹⁸”

Group: “For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.¹⁹”

Karpas Eating the Greens

Leader: The wine we drank was red in color, reminding us of the blood of the Passover Lamb. These greens remind us of the hyssop which applied the blood to the doorposts of the homes of the Hebrew slaves. The salt water reminds us of the tears we shed in bondage and of the waters of the Red Sea through which we passed to safety.

The greens also remind us of the new birth we receive through faith in the Messiah.

¹³ John 13:3-5, 12-15

¹⁴ Mark 9:35

¹⁵ John 13:16-17

¹⁶ Leviticus 17:11

¹⁷ John 13:8

¹⁸ John 13:10

¹⁹ John 13:11

Group: “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.²⁰”

(Everyone dips greens into salt water and eats.)

Yachatz Breaking of the Middle Matzoh

Leader: During the Seder, the Matzoh is kept in a linen container called a “Matzoh Tosh.” The container has three compartments which represent a compound unity, or “*echad*.”

The middle Matzoh is broken. This is called the “*afikomen*.” The *afikomen* will be hidden until the end of the meal.

(*Afikomen* is hidden while children cover their eyes. Alternatively, the leader could have hidden the *afikomen* beforehand.)

Because of the way Matzoh is prepared, it is striped, and it is pierced. It also has no leaven, and as we learned, leaven represents sin in the Bible.

Like the *afikomen*, our Messiah Jesus also was striped, pierced, and was without sin. He also was broken, and hidden in the earth for three days, and like the *afikomen*, he returned.

Group: “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.²¹”

Men: “But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.²²”

Women: ‘For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.²³”

²⁰ 2 Corinthians 5:17

²¹ 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

²² Isaiah 53:5

²³ 2 Corinthians 5:21

Maggid

Recounting the Story of the Exodus

Leader: This next section developed from the imperative of Exodus 12:26-27: “And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.”

Group: “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.²⁴”

The Four Questions

Leader: It is tradition for the youngest child who is old enough to recite the “4 questions.”

(chanting) Mah nishtanah ha-lahylah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-layloht, mi-kol ha-layloht? She-b’khol ha-layloht anu okhlin chameytz u-matzah, chameytz u-matzah. Ha-lahylah ha-zeh, ha-lahylah ha-zeh, kooloh matzah?

Child: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat leavened bread or unleavened bread. Why on this night only matzoh - the unleavened bread?

Leader: (chanting) She-b’khol ha-layloht anu okhlin sh’ar y’rakot, sh’ar y’rakot. Ha-lahylah ha-zeh, ha-lahylah ha-zeh, maror?

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

Leader: (chanting) She-b’khol ha-layloht ayn anu mat’bilin afilu pa’am echat, afilu pa’am echat. Ha-lahylah ha-zeh, ha-lahylah ha-zeh, sh’tay p’amim?

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

Leader: (chanting) She-b’khol ha-layloht anu okhlin bayn yosh’bin u’vayn m’soobin, bayn yosh’bin u’vayn m’soobin. Ha-lahylah ha-zeh, ha-lahylah ha-zeh, koolanu m’soobin?

²⁴ Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Child: On all other nights we eat sitting upright or reclining. Why on this night do we all recline?

Leader: The answers to these questions explain the major features of the Seder: We were once slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the LORD our God brought us out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

On this night we eat only matzoh to remind us of the swiftness of God's salvation, which came so quickly that there was no time for the dough to rise.

Group: We eagerly await Messiah's swift return. "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come... Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.²⁵"

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

On this night we dip the parsley into salt water to remind us of the tears shed in bondage. We dip the matzoh into the charoset to remind us of the sweetness of freedom which the LORD brought about through the Exodus.

On this night we recline because in ancient times this was the posture of free people at meals.

Group: Once we were slaves but now we are free!

Music: *El Shaddai*

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
El-Elyon na Adonia,
Age to age You're still the same,
By the power of the name.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
Erkamka na Adonai,
We will praise and lift You high,
El Shaddai.

Through your love and through the ram,
You saved the son of Abraham;
Through the power of your hand,

²⁵ Matthew 24:42,44

Turned the sea into dry land.
To the outcast on her knees,
You were the God who really sees,
And by Your might,
You set Your children free.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
El-Elyon na Adonia,
Age to age You're still the same,
By the power of the name.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
Erkamka na Adonai,
We will praise and lift You high,
El Shaddai.

Through the years You've made it clear,
That the time of Christ was near,
Though the people couldn't see
What Messiah ought to be.

Though Your Word contained the plan,
They just could not understand
Your most awesome work was done
Through the frailty of Your Son.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
El-Elyon na Adonai,
Age to age You're still the same,
By the power of the name.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
Erkamka na Adonai,
I will praise and lift You high,
El Shaddai.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
El-Elyon na Adonai,
Age to age You're still the same,
By the power of the name.

El Shaddai, El Shaddai,
Erkamka na Adonai,

I will praise and lift You high,
El Shaddai.

Translation:

El Shaddai - God Almighty
El Elyon - The Most High God
na Adonai - O Lord
Erkahnka - We will love you

The Ten Plagues

Leader: The ten plagues which the LORD inflicted upon Egypt punished them for their harsh treatment of His people and humiliated their “gods.” He showed His strength as the only true God of the universe.

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

Leader: A full cup of wine is a symbol for joy. Therefore, as we recall each plague, we remove a bit of our joy.

As each plague is mentioned, take a drop of wine from your cup and allow it to drip onto your plate or napkin or matzoh.

Leader (Repeated by Group): The Nile into blood (dip and drip)
 Frogs (dip and drip)
 Lice (dip and drip)
 Flies (dip and drip)
 Pestilence (dip and drip)
 Boils (dip and drip)
 Hail (dip and drip)
 Locusts (dip and drip)
 Darkness (dip and drip)
 Slaying of the firstborn (dip and drip)

Leader: None of these plagues are pleasant, but they remind us about a very important attribute of our God: His judgment. He has promised that He will punish sin.

Group: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from

mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.²⁶”

Leader: “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.²⁷”

The Shankbone

Leader: (lifting up the shankbone of the lamb) This represents that Passover lamb (*pesach*) who was slain and whose blood was put on our forefathers’ doorposts that they might be saved from God’s wrath.

Group: “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.²⁸”

The Cup of Deliverance

Leader: (raising cup) This is the cup of deliverance.

Group: “Giving thanks unto the Father... In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins.²⁹”

Leader: Let us drink from the cup of deliverance!

(Everyone drinks, and then refills cup.)

Rachtzah Washing the Hands

Leader: In a traditional Seder, we would all wash now in preparation for the meal. However, acknowledging that the Messiah has made us clean, we will forgo the ceremonial washing.

Group: We are all clean who have trusted in Messiah.

Leader: It is helpful to know that the tables of that time did not look like our tables today. They were horseshoe shaped and very close to the ground. People sat on the

²⁶ Psalm 51:1-2,7

²⁷ Romans 8:1

²⁸ John 1:29

²⁹ Colossians 1:12,14

floor. On Passover, to celebrate freedom, pillows were placed around the table and the Jewish people would recline rather than sit upright.

Group: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.³⁰”

Matzoh

Leader: And now we will say the blessing for the matzoh.

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, ha-mo-tzee le-chem min ha-a-retz.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצֵא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Leader and Group: “Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

Maror

Leader: As it is commanded in the Torah, let us remember the bitterness of slavery in Egypt by eating the maror.

(Everyone dips matzoh into bitter herbs and eats.)

Charoset

Leader: So that we remember that our slavery has turned into sweetness, we put some charoset on the matzoh and eat. The charoset is to remind us of the mortar our ancestors used to make bricks. But now that has been changed into sweetness.

Group: “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; To the end that *my* glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.³¹”

Roasted Egg

Leader: The roasted egg reminds us of the temple sacrifices our ancestors performed. But since the temple has been destroyed, we dip the egg into the salt water to represent our tears.

³⁰ John 8:36

³¹ Psalm 30:11-12

(Everyone dips egg half into salt water, and eats.)

Passover Meal

Leader: At this time I'll ask the Pastor to thank God for our meal.

Pastor: Performs blessing.

(Dinner is served, and everyone eats.)

Shulchan Orech The Table is Spread

(The following reading is to be done after everyone settles down and is eating.)

Reader 1: "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.³²"

Reader 2: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from* helping me, *and from* the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou *art* holy, O *thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I *am* a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.³³"

Reader 1: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.³⁴"

Reader 2: "Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help.³⁵"

³² Isaiah 53:2-3

³³ Psalm 22:1-8

³⁴ Isaiah 53:4-5

³⁵ Psalm 22:11

Reader 1: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.³⁶”

Reader 2: “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.³⁷”

Reader 1: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* deceit in his mouth.³⁸”

Reader 2: “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.³⁹”

Reader 1: “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.⁴⁰”

Reader 2: “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.⁴¹”

Reader 1: “He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.⁴²”

Reader 2: “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel.⁴³”

³⁶ Isaiah 53:6
³⁷ Psalm 22:14
³⁸ Isaiah 53:7-9
³⁹ Psalm 22:16
⁴⁰ Isaiah 53:10
⁴¹ Psalm 22:18
⁴² Isaiah 53:11-12
⁴³ Psalm 22:22-23

Tzaphun

Retrieving of the *Afikomen*, the Hidden Matzoh

Leader: And now it is time for the children to look for the hidden *afikomen*.

(Children search for *afikomen*. Big applause when it is found. A reward can be given to the child who finds it.)

Leader: The *afikomen* is the middle piece of the three matzoh which form a unity or “*echad*.” It has no leaven. It was striped, pierced, broken, hidden away, and brought back.

In like manner, the Messiah, the second person of the Triune God (whom Moses had also called “*echad*”) has no leaven of sin. He was striped, pierced, broken, buried and brought back to life!

(Everyone breaks off a small piece of matzoh and holds it).

Leader: When we take the matzoh this time, hold it in your mouth as long as possible. Its taste should remain in our mouths to remind us of all God’s deliverance in the past, in the present, and in the future.

Group: “Blessed are you, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

Leader: Before we eat the *afikomen*, I must warn that this step is only for those who have trusted in Jesus as Messiah.

At Jesus’ last Passover meal, He gave a new commandment, one that must have startled His disciples. He broke the matzoh and said, “Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.”⁴⁴”

(Those who have trusted in Jesus eat the *afikomen*, holding it in the mouth.)

Barech

Blessing for the Meal

Leader: Here we give thanks after the meal to remind us that all that we have just enjoyed has come from and through the provision of God. We must be aware that His

⁴⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:24

goodness and bounty are constant, daily occurrences and will always be so. Let us bless You, our God, of whose gifts we have partaken.

Group: Blessed be You, our God, by whose goodness we exist and by whose lovingkindness we have eternal life.

Leader: We give thanks unto You, O God, for having caused our ancestors to inherit that desirable, good, and ample land, and because You have brought us forth from the land of Egypt, and redeemed us from the bondage of slavery.

Group: We give thanks unto You, O God, because You have redeemed us from the bondage of slavery to sin, and You will bring us to the New Jerusalem.

The Cup of Redemption

Leader: The third cup, the Cup of Redemption, recalls God's third promise to Moses: "and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments."⁴⁵

Group: "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."⁴⁶

Leader: "The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."⁴⁷

Group: "And they remembered that God *was* their rock, and the high God their redeemer."⁴⁸

Leader: We look forward to the final redemption promised in the new covenant: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will 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 bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."⁴⁹

(Everyone raises the third cup.)

⁴⁵ Exodus 6:6
⁴⁶ Psalm 49:15
⁴⁷ Psalm 34:22
⁴⁸ Psalm 78:35
⁴⁹ Jeremiah 31:31-33

Group: “For I know *that* my redeemer liveth.⁵⁰”

Leader: To confirm the covenant at Mount Sinai, Moses took the blood of the sacrifice offerings and sprinkled it on the people. As recorded in Exodus 24:8, he said, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you.”

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, bo-ray p’ree ha-ga-fen.

Leader and Group: “Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.”

Leader: Only those who have trusted in Jesus as Messiah should participate in this part.

After Y’Shua gave thanks for the wine, He said, “Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.⁵¹”

(Those who have trusted in Jesus drink from the cup. Then cup is refilled.)

Elijah

Leader: Notice that a place has been set at the table, but not used. It has been set for Elijah whose return before the coming of Messiah was proclaimed by the prophet Malachi: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.⁵²”

Group: “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.⁵³”

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

Jewish people today open the door at this time so that the prophet may enter. We do it to express our desire to be like the Philadelphian Christians. Our Lord said of them: “I

⁵⁰ Job 19:25

⁵¹ Matthew 26:27-28

⁵² Malachi 4:5

⁵³ Isaiah 40:3

know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.⁵⁴”

Group: Let that be said of us, Oh Lord.

(A child or adult opens a door. It stays open the remainder of the service.)

Music: *Eliyahu Ha-navi/Come Thou Long Expected Jesus*

E-li-ya-hu ha-na-vi E-li-a-hu ha-tish-bi
E-li-a-hu, E-li-a-hu, E-li-a-hu ha-gi-la-di

Bim-he-ra b' ya-mei-nu ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid

E-li-ya-hu ha-na-vi E-li-a-hu ha-tish-bi
E-li-a-hu, E-li-a-hu, E-li-a-hu ha-gi-la-di

Bim-he-ra b' ya-mei-nu ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid

Come thou long expected Jesus,
born to set Thy people free
From our sins and fears release us,
let us find our rest in Thee

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart

Bim-he-ra b' ya-mei-nu ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid

Bim-he-ra b' ya-mei-nu ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
Im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid

⁵⁴ Revelation 3:8

Translation:

Eliyahu - Elijah

Eliyahu hanavi - Elijah the prophet

Eliahu hatishbi - Elijah the Tishbite

Eliahu hagiladi - Elijah the Gileadite

Bimhera b' yameinu ya-vo eileinu - May he soon come to us

Im Mashiach ben David - with the Messiah son of David

Hallel Songs of Praise

Psalms 113-118 collectively are known as the “Hallel” or the “Psalms of Praise.” It is likely that Jesus and His disciples sang from these Psalms during the last Seder meal.

Group: “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.⁵⁵”

Leader: Let us recite some excerpts from these Psalms of Praise.

“Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.⁵⁶”

Group: “From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD’s name *is* to be praised.⁵⁷”

Leader: “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth’s sake.⁵⁸”

Group: “I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.⁵⁹”

Leader: “Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon *him* as long as I live.⁶⁰”

Group: “Gracious *is* the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God *is* merciful.⁶¹”

Leader: “I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.⁶²”

⁵⁵ Matthew 26:30

⁵⁶ Psalm 113:1

⁵⁷ Psalm 113:3

⁵⁸ Psalm 115:1

⁵⁹ Psalm 116:1

⁶⁰ Psalm 115:2

⁶¹ Psalm 116:5

⁶² Psalm 116:17

Group: “*It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.*”⁶³”

Leader: “The LORD *is* my strength and song, and *is* become my salvation.”⁶⁴”

Group: “O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.”⁶⁵”

The Cup of Praise

(All raise fourth cup.)

Leader: In praise of the salvation the LORD has brought and that which is yet to come, we raise the fourth cup and recite:

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu me-lech ha-o-lam, bo-ray p’ree ha-ga-fen.

Leader and Group: “Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the universe, who makes the fruit of the vine.”

(All drink.)

Nirtzah Our Observance Is Accepted

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

At this point it is tradition to recite the phrase “*Le-shana Ha-ba B' Ye-ru-sha-lay-im!*”
“Next Year in Jerusalem!”

This phrase is meant to embody the desire of all Jews dispersed throughout the Diaspora to return back to our homeland.

However, when we say it, we long not for the physical Jerusalem of today, but for the promised “New Jerusalem” that God will bring to earth as part of His final redemptive plan.

Reader 2: The Bible records:

⁶³ Psalm 118:8

⁶⁴ Psalm 118:14

⁶⁵ Psalm 118:29

“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.⁶⁶”

Leader: As Christians, we are not content with the mere Jerusalem of today, impressive of a city though it may be. Nor should we be ultimately satisfied with anything this world offers. As Christians, let our heart’s desire be to live in the “New Jerusalem,” always yearning for the day when our Lord returns for us.

We praise our God by saying together...

Group: “Next year in the New Jerusalem!”

Music: *Trees of the Field*

You shall go out with joy,
and be led forth with peace,
The mountains and the hills will break forth before you
There will be shouts of joy,
and all the trees of the field
Will clap, will clap their hands.

The trees of the field will clap their hands, (*clap, clap*)
The trees of the field will clap their hands, (*clap, clap*)
The trees of the field will clap their hands, (*clap, clap*)
As you go out with joy!

Pastor: (Closes evening with benediction.)

⁶⁶ Revelation 21:2-4

A Jew and His God

Even as a small child I knew Hitler wanted to kill every Jew. I also knew that as a Jew, my duty was to always remain a Jew. I was also taught about Gentiles. Actually, they were called *Goyim*, and it was quite understood that I was not one of them.

You see, I am a Jew, and being Jewish has always been a privilege and a joy for me. Even as a child I loved memorizing prayers in Hebrew and reciting them to my parents. They often told me that I filled them with so much *nachas*.

I had a Bar Mitzvah. I prayed. I went to *Shul*. But G-d was very distant from me, quite far away. I dared not even write his name without substituting the 'o' with a hyphen.

"I don't know" characterized my life. Is there a G-d? I don't know. Does G-d care about me? Maybe, but I don't know. I just did not know.

I did know a lot about memorizing prayers in Hebrew and about going to *Shul*. I knew about Rosh Hashanah and the Day of Atonement. I certainly knew about the Holocaust. I knew a lot about rituals I did for this unknown G-d of mine, but I didn't know anything about who this G-d was. I certainly didn't know what G-d wanted from me, if anything.

After thinking it over, I discovered that, though I was very "religious," I had no relationship with him. The *Tanach* (Jewish Bible) says "this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me" (Isaiah 29:13). I realized that though I was outwardly "religious," my heart was far from G-d.

Like most people, I spent more time and energy planning my weekend than I did thinking about the creator of the universe! Sure, I went to Temple on the High Holidays, and I believed in some sort of G-d, but in practice, I wasn't too interested in what G-d had to say. G-d certainly didn't have much of an influence on my day-to-day activities. Like the Bible said, my heart was far from G-d.

A friend of mine asked me one day if I had ever read any part of the New Testament. My answer: "That's NOT for Jews to read!"

But I decided I wanted to read it. I expected to find anti-Semitism. I expected the stuff that inspired Hitler! I found neither.

Instead, I found Jesus: humble, meek, desiring to fulfill the Law of Moses and being successful. He quoted Hebrew Scripture and said "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).

I had thought that Jesus was just for Gentiles! But you know, just about everyone who believed in him at first were Jews. I found that Jesus was Jewish, that he was interested in Torah, and that he is our Messiah.

"I don't know" will never again be a part of my relationship with G-d. You see, "G-d" became "God!" God became Father. God became personal. The Prince of Peace came into my life, and now I know God.

Solomon, King David's son, was said to be the wisest man who ever lived, and he said, "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20). The Hebrew Bible is clear: all of us have hearts that are far from God. The great Jewish prophet Isaiah tells us, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

The bedrock of Judaism is found in the 20th chapter of Exodus. There Moses records the Ten Commandments. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Had I always put God first in my life? Of course not.



“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” Had I ever used God’s name as a swear-word? I had.

“Thou shalt not steal.” Had I ever taken anything that didn’t belong to me? A pen? A paperclip? Creative tax preparation? The value of the object didn’t matter. Who of us can honestly say we’ve followed this command always?

“Thou shalt not kill.” Another place in the Bible says that if you think evil thoughts towards someone without cause, you are guilty of murder.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.” The Bible says that if you think lustful thoughts then you are guilty of adultery. Who of us can say we have never had lustful thoughts?

And there were others: “Do not covet,” “Honor your mother and father,” “Do not lie.”

The Ten Commandments are summed up in the *Sh’ma* and *Viahavta*, two of the holiest of all Hebrew prayers: “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (Deuteronomy 6:5).

I learned that while man judges the outside actions, God judges the intents of the heart. Isaiah the prophet was right: our hearts are very far from God.

In the Hebrew Bible I learned that we are accountable to God just like a criminal is accountable to the criminal justice system. We have broken God’s law, the Ten Commandments, and we stand guilty before the judge. There is coming a day when God will judge us all based on the intents of our hearts. There will be no appeals, no technicalities, and no evidence thrown out. We are all guilty; none of us even comes close to the standard that God demands. If we defend ourselves based on our own actions and intentions, we will be condemned to hell forever.

But our loving God is about hope, so just as he provided a sacrifice for Abraham in Isaac’s place, so he provided a sacrifice for us in our place. Atonement means that God will pass over our sins and punish someone else in our place. That someone else is our Messiah.

The Hebrew Bible says that Messiah “was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken” (Isaiah 53:8). It says, “he was bruised for our iniquities” (vs. 5). This is all found in the *Tanach*, the Hebrew Bible!

It is only when we realize that we have violated the laws of the Holy God that we can appreciate what atonement means. The Temple sacrifices of the Hebrew Bible find fulfillment in the sacrifice of the Messiah.

If you’re Jewish, then know that God provided Messiah Jesus as an offering for you. If you’re a Gentile, then you’re invited too because God promised Abraham that through his seed he’d bless “all the nations of the earth” (Genesis 22:18).

The Old and New Testaments agree that both Jews and Gentiles need Jesus. We have all broken the Ten Commandments. We need atonement.

It’s actually very simple. It’s actually very Jewish. God calls us to return to Him. Though every one of us has a heart that is far from the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, through our Messiah Jesus, we can return to God. God says in the *Haftarah*, “I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord... for they shall return unto me with their whole heart” (Jeremiah 24:7).

The tough thing about this is that as Jews we can think that believing in Jesus makes us somehow ‘un-Jewish.’ Isn’t it a strange contradiction that no one questions a fellow Jew who claims to be an atheist or an agnostic or a Buddhist? But say that you believe in the Messiah of the Hebrew Bible and no one knows what to do!

The message is this: God sent Messiah to atone for our sins, and that’s good news for us because we never could have atoned for ourselves.

Remember, the Hebrew Bible says, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

We owe a sin debt to God. Jesus paid the debt in full!

Make no mistake: God will judge us. And know that if we're judged based on our own deeds, we will be damned.

Our only hope is to ask God to apply the blood of Messiah to the doorposts of our heart, so that we will be judged based on Jesus, who never sinned once. God has promised through the Jewish prophet Jeremiah to give us a new heart, one that is not far from God. By God's power, and by the finished work of the Messiah, we can return to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel.

Since I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as Messiah and invited him into my life, I have never believed that I have become 'un-Jewish.' I have never believed that somehow I have become a Gentile. What could be more Jewish than believing in the Messiah?

The truth is that many Jews and many Gentiles have received Jesus as Messiah. Jesus offers us atonement so that we can return to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. When we do, He will give us a new heart. God has provided a sacrifice for our sins, and it is up to us as Jews to thank him for that, follow him, and believe on the name of his Son. That is Jewish!

Please find out more about Jesus' claims and what our Hebrew Bible says about him. It may surprise you as much as it surprised me. Please read Isaiah chapter 53 as a good start. Then read the book of John in the New Testament (written by a Jew). Also, check out <http://www.veritasresearch.org>. Please ask Jesus to be your king. And please feel free to contact me anytime. Shalom and God bless.

Mark Edward Sohmer
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If you're in the area, please feel free to drop by a Bible-believing congregation:

Fellowship Bible Church
48 Rod & Gun Club Road
Chester, NH 03036
603-887-2599
<http://www.fellowshipbiblechester.org>
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:45 am

By the way, the reason the photo at the top is of me as a child is because it reminds me that our Messiah has said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17). Please study the prophecies, pray, and then gladly receive the kingdom of God as a child with joy in your heart and hope for your future. May the Lord bless you in the name of Y'Shua (that's Jesus' Hebrew name!). Mazol Tov.