

VIRTUAL PASSOVER 2008

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Keeping the Passover and remembering the Ancient Israelites' Exodus from Egypt, as well as Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection, is a very special time for Messianic Believers. More Christians get exposed to the Messianic movement around Passover probably than any other time of year. As you keep Passover in your home, this is an excellent time to share these important truths with your family. There are many Passover *haggadahs* available, each of which has its own specific way of following the order of the Passover meal. We offer this short Passover Haggadah as a template that you can use when you celebrate this appointed time.¹

Bedikat Chametz

Prior to the Passover, it is customary that all leavened items be removed from one's home. These leavened items notably include things that have yeast in them. The lesson we learn from removing all *chametz* from the house is that we are to search our hearts and remove the sin from our lives. In many homes, it is customary to take the leaven outside and burn it.

The Sedar Plate

The traditional *sedar* plate holds the ceremonial items of Passover. These include the bitter herbs, roasted egg, the *charoset* apple mix, parsley, and lamb shankbone. Each one has a symbolic importance regarding the Passover story.

Lighting the Candles

The Passover *sedar* begins with the lighting of the holiday candles by the mother or woman of the house. She then recites the following blessing:

Baruch atah ADONAI, Elohenu melech ha olum, asher keedshanu b'mitzvohtav l'hayot or l'goyeem v'natan-lanu Yeshua M'sheekhaynu ha-or la-olum.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by Your commandments and has commanded us to be a light unto the nations, and has given us Yeshua, the Light of the World.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us and brought us to this season. Amein.

The Cup of Sanctification

The first cup of wine drunk at Passover is the Cup of Sanctification. Before drinking it, we all say the following blessing:

Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, boray p'ree hagafen. Amein.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

¹ This abbreviated Passover Haggadah borrows elements from *The Messianic Passover Haggadah* (Baltimore: Lederer, 1996), a standard Messianic Jewish Haggadah used or adapted for use in many Messianic congregations.

All then drink the Cup of Sanctification.

Urchatz

Now all assembled take a basin of water and wash their hands. This is a symbolic act as we remember the holy nature of this appointed time. It was at this time in the *sedar* that Yeshua washed the feet of His Disciples (John 13:5, 12-14).

Karpas

We now dip the parsley in salt water, being reminded how Israel is as a green plant, but was birthed out of tears. We dip the parsley in the salt water twice because it reminds us that we must be born again. As we eat the *karpas*, we recite the following blessing:

Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, boray p'ree ha'adamah.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the Earth.

Yachatx

Three pieces of *matzah* or unleavened bread are taken. The middle of the three pieces is broken in two. The best part of the two broken pieces, called the *afikomen*, is taken and wrapped in a linen cloth. It is taken to a place to be buried, covered with a pillow called the stone. Near the end of our meal, we will call for the *afikomen* to come forth.

The Cup of Instruction

The Cup of Instruction is the second cup of Passover. Prior to drinking this cup, it is customary for us to recall the story of the Passover from the Book of Exodus. At this time, the small children ask the following four questions:

1. On all other nights we eat bread or *matzah*. On this night why do we only eat *matzah*?
2. On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables. On this night why do we eat only bitter herbs?
3. On all other nights we do not dip our vegetables even once. On this night why do we dip them twice?
4. On all other nights we eat our meals sitting or reclining. On this night why do we eat only reclining?

We then go through and remember the Ten Plagues that befell the Egyptians: *blood, frogs, gnats, flies, murrain, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, death of the firstborn.*

After this, we go through the various elements on the Passover plate and what they represent.

We then recite the blessing over the Cup of Instruction and drink it.

Motzee Matzah

After drinking the Cup of Instruction, we now take a small piece of *matzah* and eat it. Before eating it we recite the following blessing:

Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, hamotzee lechem meen ha aretz. Amein.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the Earth.

Following this, we now take a piece of *matzah* and eat it with the bitter herbs. It was likely at this time that during the *sedar* meal Yeshua announced to His Disciples that the one who would betray Him would dip with Him in the dish. Before eating the bitter herbs, we recite the following blessing:

Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotuv v'tzivanu al achilat maror. Amein.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by Your commandments and has commanded us to eat bitter herbs. Amein.

It is now customary to eat what has become known as the "Hillel sandwich," where we take two pieces of *matzah*, adding bitter herbs and *charoset*. Eating this reminds us of the bitterness of slavery with the sweetness of the Lord.

DINNER IS SERVED

Tzafun

After our dinner, we commemorate Yeshua as the firstfruits by calling the *afikomen* forth. The children go to where the *afikomen* was placed, covered with the pillow/stone. When the children go to the *afikomen*, they discover that it is missing. The children are sent to find the *afikomen* and a ransom is paid for it.

We remember first that it was during the *sedar* that Yeshua took the *afikomen* and said "This is My body, broken for you."

Finding the *afikomen*, we then say the traditional blessing over the bread and eat it, remembering Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection.

The Cup of Redemption

The Cup of Redemption is the third cup of the Passover *sedar*. This is the cup that Yeshua took and said that "This cup is the new covenant in My blood shed for you." After reciting the traditional blessing over the cup, we drink it.

Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, boray p'ree hagafen. Amein.

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

The Cup of Elijah

A special cup that was added over the centuries has been the Cup of Elijah. The coming of Elijah signals the coming of Messiah. This cup is filled to the brim so that it will be irresistible for Elijah to come to our table.

The Cup of Praise

The fourth cup of the *sedar* is the Cup of Praise. Yeshua said of this cup that He would not drink of it until He was in the Kingdom. As we drink it, we look forward to His coming Kingdom. We recite the customary blessing over the cup as we drink it.

*Baruch atah ADONAI, Eloheinu melech ha olum, boray p'ree hagafen.
Amein.*

Blessed are You, O LORD our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Next Year in Jerusalem

As the *sedar* is complete, we remember the Passover Lamb, Messiah Yeshua, and His work for us. We look forward to the day when we can keep the Passover fully in Jerusalem.

La'shanah haba'ah b'Yerushalaim!
Next year in Jerusalem!