

*May Yahweh bless you
and keep you
May Yahweh make His face to
shine upon you
And be gracious to you
May Yahweh lift up His countenance
upon you
And give you peace
In the Name of the Prince of Peace
Yeshua our Messiah*

Opening Liturgy

Leader

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, Who sanctified us by Your commandments and justified us by the blood atonement of Yeshua HaMashiach and has commanded us to keep the Passover seder and to teach our children of Yahweh's mighty outstretched arm.

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us by Your commandments and justified us by the blood atonement of Yeshua HaMashiach and has commanded us to keep Your holy convocations which are corporate rehearsals for the called-out assembly.

We Light the Candles

Yahweh is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?

Psalm 27:1

Leader

As we kindle the festival lights, we pray for the illumination of the Ruach Ha Kodesh to bring great personal meaning to this, our Passover celebration.

A Women

(Lighting the candles/menorah, says)

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha'olam asher kidshanu bidevaro uvishmo anakhnu madlikim haneyrot shel yom tov.

Blessed are You Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who has set us apart by His Word, and in whose Name we light the festival lights.

Father in commemoration of Yeshua's deliverance of all Believers from the penalty and bondage of sin, we light the festival lights in keeping Your Passover celebration.

Leader

As light for the festival of redemption is kindled by the hand of a woman, we remember that our Redeemer, the Light of the World, came into the world as the promised Seed of a woman.

(Genesis 3:15)

All

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the universe, Who has justified us by the blood of Yeshua HaMaschiach and has sanctified us by Your Torah and has commanded us to keep this Passover that we would remember Your mighty hand of redemption through all our generations.

Shema

All

(Sing)

Shema Y'Israel

Yahweh Eloheynu

Yahweh echad

Baruch shem kevod

Malchuto

L'olam vaed

Parsley

Karpas

...the Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God... Exodus 2:23

Leader

(Lifting up the parsley)

Passover is a holiday that comes in the springtime, when the earth is becoming green with life. This vegetable, called *karpas*, represents life, created and sustained by Almighty God.

(Lifting up the salt water)

But life in Egypt for the children of Israel was a life of pain, suffering, and tears, represented by this salt water. Let us take a sprig of parsley and dip it into the salt water, remembering that life is sometimes immersed in tears.

All

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha'olam borey pri ha'adamah. Amen

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

Leader

Now let us, together, eat the *karpas*.

Passover Elements

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Now you will see what I will do..."
Exodus 6:1

Leader

As Yahweh spoke these words of encouragement to Moses. He revealed to His servant the plan by which He would redeem the children of Israel.

All

“...I *will* bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians...

I *will* free you from being slaves...

I *will* redeem you with an outstretched arm...

I *will* take you as my own people, and I will be your God...” (Exodus 6:6, 7)

Leader

The Matzah

The Unleavened Bread

On all other nights we eat bread with leaven, but on Passover we eat only *matzah*, unleavened bread. As the children of Israel fled from Egypt, they did not have time for their dough to rise. Instead, the hot desert sun baked it flat. But even more than that, the scriptures teach us that leaven symbolizes sin.

All

Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Messiah, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. (1 Corinthians 5:7)

During this season of Passover, let us break our old habits of sin and selfishness and begin a fresh, new, and holy life.

Leader

(Lifting the plate which contains the three *matzot*)

This is the bread of affliction, the poor bread which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need share in the hope of Passover.

It is a Hebrew tradition to have three *matzot* wrapped together for Passover. There are various explanations for this ceremony. The rabbis call these three a “Unity.” Some consider it a unity of the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Others explain it as a unity of worship—the priests, the Levites, and the people of Israel. We who know Messiah can see in this the unique *tri*-unity of God—Father, Son, and Spirit. Three in one. In the *matzah* we can see a picture of Messiah. See how it is striped.

All

“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.” (Isaiah 53:5)

Leader

See how the *matzah* is pierced.

All

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon Me whom they have *pierced*, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son...”
(Zechariah 12:10)

Leader

(Removing and breaking the middle *matzah* in half)

Just as the middle piece of the bread of affliction is broken, Messiah, too, was afflicted and broken. One half is now called the *afikomen*—“the coming one.” It is wrapped in a white cloth just as Messiah’s body was wrapped for burial. (Wraps the *afikomen*)

If the children will cover their eyes, I will hide the *afikomen*. (Does so) Just as I have hidden the *afikomen*, so Messiah was placed in a tomb, hidden for a time.

But just as the *afikomen* will return to complete our Passover *seeder*, so the sinless Messiah rose from the dead to ascend into heaven. (Breaks a piece of *matzah* from the other half of the middle piece and distributes the remainder among the people at the table)

Let us now share a piece of this unleavened bread of Passover.

All

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha’olam hamotzi lekhem min ha’aretz. Amen

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

This is the bread of affliction...

(eat)

Leader

The Maror

The Bitter Herbs

As part of the Passover meal, we eat *maror*, bitter herbs to remind us of the bitterness of our life of sin before Yeshua's deliverance. As sweet as our lives are today, let us still remember how bitter life was for the children of Israel in the land of Egypt.

(Lifting the horseradish)

...so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields...

(Exodus 1:12-14)

As we scoop some *maror* onto a piece of *matzah*, let us allow the bitter taste to remind us of the sorrow that our ancestors knew thousands of years ago and of the sorrow of our life of sin before our revelation of Yeshua.

All

(Lifting the *matzah* with the *maror*)

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha'olam asher kidshanu bidevaro vetzivanu al akhilat maror. Amen

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who has set us apart by His Word and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

Leader

The Kharoset

(Lifting the *kharoset*, the brown apple mixture)

The children of Israel toiled to make treasure cities for Pharaoh, working in brick and clay. We remember this task in a mixture called *kharoset*, made from chopped apples, honey, nuts, and wine. Let us once again scoop some bitter herbs onto a small piece of *matzah*. But this time, before we eat, let us dip the herbs into the sweet *kharoset*.

All

(Lifting the *matzah* with the *maror* and *kharoset*)

We dip the bitter herbs into *kharoset* to remind ourselves that even the most bitter of circumstances can be sweetened by the hope we have in God.

(All eat)

Leader

While they were reclining at the table eating, Yeshua said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me.”

They were saddened and one by one they said to Him, “Surely, not I?”

“It is one of the Twelve,” he replied, “one who dips [unleavened] bread into the bowl with me.” (Mark 14:18-20)

The Story of Passover

Magid

“I have remembered my covenant.” Exodus 6:5

The story of Passover is a story of miracles, a story of redemption, a story of the mighty power of God to overcome evil.

Yahweh had promised the land of Israel to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet here were their children in Egypt. The Pharaoh who had come to power feared them. *These foreigners in our midst are prospering and have grown numerous*, he thought. *Suppose they join with our enemies and turn against us!* Pharaoh decided to exert greater control over this people, imposing harsh and bitter slavery upon the Israelites. Still, God blessed His people in strength and number.

Pharaoh grew more frightened and ordered every baby boy among the Israelites to be drowned in the Nile River. One Israelite couple hid their little boy for three months. Finally, entrusting his future to God, they set him in a basket and placed him upon the river. His sister, Miriam, watched as he floated downstream. Coming upon the basket, Pharaoh’s daughter took pity on the child and chose to raise him as her own son. She called him Moses, meaning “drawn from the water.”

Moses grew and became aware of the travail of his people. One day, in a rage, he lost control of himself and killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew slave. Fleeing the palace and the eye of Pharaoh, Moses became a shepherd in the land of Midian, far from the cries of his suffering brothers.

Yahweh, however, saw the affliction of the children of Israel and heard their groaning. He would raise up a deliverer to lead them out of bondage. It was then that He appeared to Moses in the midst of a bush that burned with fire, yet was not consumed. Moses drew close and listened as God commissioned him to go to Pharaoh. Fearful and reluctant, still Moses agreed to bring God's message to the king of Egypt, "Let My people go!"

All

"I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." (Exodus 3:6)

Leader

The Plagues

I will free you from being slaves... " Exodus 6:6

Moses left the wilderness to return to Pharaoh's palace, the very place where he had been raised. He returned with the message which Yahweh had given him. But God Himself warned Moses of the resistance that he would encounter.

All

"But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. So I will stretch out My hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go."
(Exodus 3:19, 20)

Leader

God sent the following plagues in succession, one by one, upon Egypt:

All

Blood! Frogs! Lice! Beasts!

Cattle Disease! Boils!

Hail! Locusts! Darkness!

Death of the Firstborn!

Leader

Yet with each plague, Pharaoh hardened his heart. The Egyptians became afflicted with discomfort and disease, bane, and blight. Still, Pharaoh would not relent. With the tenth and most awful plague, God pierced through the hardness of Pharaoh's impenetrable heart.

All

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt; I am Yahweh.”
(Exodus 12:12)

Leader

Let us remember the great cost at which redemption was purchased. Lives were sacrificed to bring about the release of God's people from the slavery of Egypt. But a far greater price purchased our redemption from slavery to sin—the death of Messiah.

The Passover Lamb

Pesakh

“The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are and when I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Exodus 12:13

Leader

Rabbi Gamaliel, teacher of Paul, the Apostle, taught that in recounting the Passover story one must be certain to mention three things:

The Unleavened Bread

The Bitter Herbs

The Passover Lamb

All

We have eaten the *matzah* to remind us of the haste with which the children of Israel fled Egypt. We have tasted the bitter herbs to remind us of the bitter slavery they experienced there.

Leader

(Lifting the shankbone of the lamb)

This roasted shankbone represents the lamb whose blood marked the houses of the children of Israel, signifying their obedience to God’s command.

“...on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.

“The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect...

“Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.

“Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs.” (Exodus 12:3, 5-7)

“That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs and bread made without yeast.

“This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is Yahweh’s Passover.

“The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.” (Exodus 12:8, 11, 13)

We are reminded by Moses that it was Yahweh Himself who redeemed the children of Israel from slavery.

“So Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders.” (Deuteronomy 26:8)

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt...

All

I, and not an angel.

Leader

“and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals—

All

I, and not a seraph.

Leader

“and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt;

All

I, and not a messenger.

Leader

“I am Yahweh.” (Exodus 12:12)

All

I myself and none other.

Leader

This shankbone remains to remind us of the sacrificial lamb

All

We who have trusted Yeshua the Messiah, believe *He* is the Lamb of God, our Passover. Like the ancient Israelites, we know that it was Yahweh Himself, *and not an angel*, Yahweh Himself, *and not a seraph*, Yahweh Himself, *and not a messenger*, who achieved final redemption from sin and death. Yahweh Himself, through Yeshua, who takes away the sin of the world.

So Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders.

Leader

Dayenu

It Would Have Been Sufficient

They will celebrate Your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of Your righteousness. Psalm 145:7

How great is God's goodness to us! For each of His acts of mercy and kindness we declare *dayenu*—it would have been sufficient.

If Yahweh had merely rescued us,
But had not judged the Egyptians, *All: dayenu!*

If He had only destroyed their gods,
But had not parted the Red Sea, *All: dayenu!*

If He had only drowned our enemies,
But had not fed us with manna, *All: dayenu!*

If He had only led us through the desert,
But had not given us the Sabbath, *All: dayenu!*

If He had only given us the Torah,
But not the land of Israel, *All: dayenu!*

But the Holy One, blessed be He, provided all of these blessings for our ancestors. And not only these, but so many more.

All

Blessed are You, Yahweh, for You have, in mercy, supplied *all* our needs. You have given us Messiah, forgiveness for sin, life abundant and life everlasting. Halleluyah!

Leader

The First Cup—Sanctification

Kadeysh

“...I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians...”

Exodus 6:6

At Passover, we celebrate these promises of redemption and relationship by drinking from our cups four times. With each cup, we remember the union that Yahweh desires.

Let us lift our first cup together and bless the name of Yahweh!

All

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha'olam borey pri hagafen. Amen

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Let us all drink of this, the first cup of Passover.

Leader

The first cup marks Israel as God's chosen ones—as the people for whom He would bring deliverance from under the burden of slavery, freeing them to worship and serve Him in spirit and in truth. And this is the same work He does for each and every child that is brought into His family through faith in the shed blood of the Messiah Yeshua. The first cup of Passover, the cup of Sanctification or Separation, reminds us of this crucial starting point of our salvation.

All

Yahweh, You have sanctified us and have called us to “Be holy as you are Holy.” May we be a people that carry Your Name and declare Your praise.

Leader

The Second Cup—Deliverance

Let us fill our cups a second time. A full cup is a symbol of joy and indeed on this occasion we are filled with joy at God’s mighty deliverance. Sanctification is preceded by deliverance and redemption. These are the next two cups of which we will partake. Yahweh has and continues to deliver us.

Do you remember a time personally in your life where Yahweh delivered you out from under a yoke of bondage?

Before we proceed, let us personally reflect on Yahweh’s deliverance in our own lives.

[Pause]

Leader

Altogether we declare....

All

Thank you Yahweh for setting me free.

Leader

Are we presently set apart for Him or are there other gods in His place? Are there any unrepentant, sinful habit patterns or bondages in our lives from which we need to be set free?

Let us personally meditate on the things from which He is desiring to set us free.

[Pause]

Leader

Altogether we declare....

All

Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, I am Yahweh, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

(Exodus 6:6-7)

Leader

When ready, lift the second cup and say [to yourself]: Yahweh I lift this cup up and ask for Your deliverance. [Drink]

The Passover Supper

Shulkhan Oreych

“...ye shall keep it as a feast to Yahweh...” Exodus 12:14

Leader

We will now enjoy the Passover meal together and will partake of the afikomen and the final cups after this communal meal.

His Body, His Blood¹

Leader

In the first century when a young Jewish man reached marrying age and his family selected an appropriate wife for him, the young man and his father would meet the young woman and her father to negotiate the “bride price,” the figurative cost of replacing a daughter. The price was usually very high.

With negotiations complete, the custom was for the young man’s father to pour a cup of wine and hand it to his son. His son would turn to the young woman, lift the cup and hold it out to her, saying, “This cup is a new covenant in my blood, which I offer to you.” In other words, “I love you, and I’ll give you my life. Will you marry me?”

The young woman had a choice. She could take the cup and return it and say no. Or she could answer without saying a word—by drinking the cup, her way of saying, “I accept your offer, and I give you my life in response.”

On the night of the Last Supper, Yeshua and His disciples sat together celebrating Passover. The disciples knew the liturgy very well; they had celebrated Passover all their lives. When it came time to drink the third cup of wine, the cup of redemption, Yeshua lifted the cup as the disciples would expect and offered traditional Seder thanks, which are used to this day: “Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, for giving us the fruit of the vine.” And then He offered it to them but said something they probably didn’t expect: “This cup is a new covenant in my blood, which I offer to you.”

There are many meanings to that statement, but one of them, in common ordinary language, was, “I love you, and the only picture I can think of that will describe the power of my love for you is the pure love of a husband for his wife.”

It’s hard to know what those disciples thought that night. Maybe a few chuckled a bit at the picture of Yeshua making a marriage proposal, which must have seemed totally out of place in a Passover Seder. And yet, they may have understood Yeshua’s willingness to die, be buried, and eventually raised to say, “I love you, and as My Father promised your fathers, I’ll pay the price for you.”

Whenever Believers celebrate the Lord’s Supper, we must be mindful of Yeshua’s offer. He still says, “I love you.” He still says, “I offer you My life. Will you be My bride?” The taking of the cup is a solemn moment, for it is in that moment that one looks to the Heavenly Father and says, “Yes, I accept Your love, and I give You my life in response.”

The Afikomen

Tzafun

“...for the transgression of my people He was stricken.”

Isaiah 53:8

(If the *afikomen* has been found by one of the children, it may be ransomed back by the head of the table.)

It is now time for us to share the *afikomen*, the dessert, the final food eaten at Passover. It is shared as the Passover lamb was shared from the time of the exodus until the destruction of the Temple. It is said that the taste of the *afikomen* should linger in our mouths.

In teaching us the truth of His salvation, Messiah did not leave us to grapple with abstraction. He took two elements of the Passover meal, the unleavened bread and wine, to represent the sacrifice of Himself for our redemption. He told the disciples not just to look at the emblems of His sacrifice, but to eat them (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). This is a dramatic way to help us internalize and appropriate the reality of Messiah's vicarious death.

Messiah broke *matzah* and gave thanks to Yahweh

It was then that Messiah added the words,

All

“This is My body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (Luke 22:19)

Leader

Before we proceed, let us personally reflect on Yeshua's sacrifice for our redemption and let God search our hearts so we can repent of any known sin and also forgive any person who we have any offense with.

[Pause]

Let us now eat the *matzah*, meditating on the broken body of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Let us allow the taste to linger in our mouths.

The Third Cup—Redemption

“I will redeem you with an outstretched arm...” Exodus 6:6

Leader

(Lifting the cup) This is the cup of redemption, symbolizing the blood of the Passover lamb. It was the cup “after supper,” with which Messiah identified Himself.

All

“I will redeem you with an outstretched arm...” (Exodus 6:6)

Leader

The prophet Isaiah reminds us,

Surely the arm of Yahweh is not too short to save...

(Isaiah 59:1)

It is our righteousness that falls short.

Though Yahweh searched, He could find no one to intercede.

...so His own arm worked salvation for Him, and *His own righteousness* sustained Him. (Isaiah 59:16)

Yeshua the Messiah lifted the cup, saying,

All

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.” (Luke 22:20)

Leader

Just as the blood of the lamb brought salvation in Egypt, so Messiah’s atoning death can bring salvation to all who believe. Let us gratefully drink. (All drink)

The Fourth Cup—Hope

“I will take you as My own people and I will be your God.”

Exodus 6:7

Leader

Let us fill our cups for the fourth and last time and give thanks to God, our great Redeemer. It is with great hope that we say:

All

You have indeed called us forth. You have chosen us. You have redeemed us. You have lavished Your grace upon us and have given us Your Torah. You have called us to shine Your Light to the nations. May we reflect to the nations around us that we are Your holy and set-apart people.

Leader

The cup of hope also looks to the future at the return of Messiah as declared by the prophet Elijah. So with this cup we look to the future at a time in which our final redemption will come and we will be truly sanctified, delivered, and redeemed.

(Lifting the cup)

Let us lift our cups and bless the Name of Yahweh!

All

Barukh atah Yahweh Eloheynu melekh ha'olam borey pri hagafen. Amen

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Leader

The Prophet Elijah

Eliyahu HaNavi

There is a tradition to set an extra place setting for Elijah and to have one of the children open a door and welcome him to the seder.

All

“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of Yahweh comes.” (Malachi 4:5)

Leader

Elijah did not see death, but was swept up to heaven by a great whirlwind, in a chariot of fire. It has been our hope that Elijah would come at Passover, to announce the Messiah, Son of David.

Before the birth of John the Immerser, an angel of the Lord said,

“And he will go on before Him, in the spirit and power of Elijah...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

(Luke 1:17)

Later Yeshua spoke of John,

“And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.” (Matthew 11:14)

It was this same John who saw Yeshua and declared,

“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

Hallel

Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good.

All: His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods.

All: His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

All: His love endures forever.

To Him who alone does great wonders

All: His love endures forever.

Who by His understanding made the heavens,

All: His love endures forever.

Who spread out the earth upon the waters,

All: His love endures forever.

Who made the great lights—

All: His love endures forever.

The sun to govern the day,

All: His love endures forever.

The moon and stars to govern the night;

All: His love endures forever.

To Him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt

All: His love endures forever.

And brought Israel out from among them

All: His love endures forever.

With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm;

All: His love endures forever.

To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder

All: His love endures forever.

And brought Israel through the midst of it,

All: His love endures forever.

But swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;

All: His love endures forever.

To Him who led His people through the desert,

All: His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of heaven.

All: His love endures forever.

(Psalm 136:1-16, 26)

Leader

Next Year

We close this seder with the plea—Yeshua, we ask that You return. We ask that You reestablish Your throne in Jerusalem, Your holy city. Though You tarry, allow us to enter into this new year, this time of new life, new growth, and a new beginning of Your redemptive cycle. May this year be for us one of growth, prosperity, and health.

Our Passover *seder* is now complete, just as our redemption is forever complete. Let us conclude with the traditional wish that we may celebrate Passover next year in Jerusalem.

All

Next Year in Jerusalem!

Bibliography & Endnotes

¹Vander Laan, Ray “His Body, His Blood” as found in Focus on the Family’s April 1999 issue.

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