

A Passover Seder in the Light of Christ



"the Lord Himself will
provide the Lamb for sacrifice..."

INTRODUCTION

The Catholic faith is really the continuation of Judaism, in its transformed form, after the coming of the Messiah – the Messiah for whom the Jews were preparing for 2000 years. When He (Jesus) came, he universalized (hence the word “Catholic”, meaning universal) the covenant with the Jewish

people to all peoples who would accept Him and His Church. And the pivot point at which the old covenant became the new covenant was the Last Supper, which was simultaneously the last Seder of the Old Covenant and the first Mass. This “Haggadah” -- liturgy for the Passover Seder – is designed to illumine all of the meaning of the traditional Seder that is only revealed in the light of the Christ.

Let us begin “in the beginning” – in the book of Genesis, with the story of our father Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac: (*Genesis 22, condensed*):

1 After these things God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." 2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his ass, and took his son Isaac; and he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and went to the place of which God had told him. 6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. 7 And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here am I, my son." He said, "I see the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." 9 When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. 10 Then Abraham put forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said..."Do not lay your hand on the lad or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham

lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place The LORD will provide; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided." 15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, "Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will indeed bless you...18 and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

It was Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac which God reciprocated, two thousand years later, with the sacrifice of His only-begotten son, born also from Abraham's seed, on the very same mount, then known as Calvary. And so we see that Abraham's utterance "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son"(v. 8) was prophetic far beyond anything he knew, referring not only to the provision of the ram "provided" by being caught in the thicket, but referring far more profoundly to the only truly acceptable sacrifice, that of God's Son Himself on the altar of Calvary. And the "placeholder" was the Passover lamb, which substitute for Abraham's son for 2000 years until that Passover 2000 years ago when the true sacrifice, God's Son, was offered on the same mount, now known as Calvary. God's promise that **"in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"** has always been seen within Judaism as the promise to send the Messiah; the blowing of the shofar (a ram's horn) on Jewish feasts is, in fact, in Jewish theology a reminder to God of that promise.

As Abraham's near-sacrifice of Isaac was a prefigurement of the Crucifixion, the Church Fathers saw almost everything in the Old Testament as "types" prefiguring their later true fulfillment in Christ. The history of the Jews in Egypt and their release from slavery which we commemorate tonight they saw as a prefigurement of the true release of God's children from the slavery to sin. This is beautifully described by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, one of the Church Fathers, in his "First Lecture On The Mysteries". In summary, the slavery of the Jews to Pharaoh was a picture of mankind's slavery to satan; as the Jews escaped from the clutches of the Pharaoh by crossing the waters of the Red Sea the Christian escapes the power of satan by passing through the waters of Baptism. The Blood of the Lamb on the doorpost turning away the avenging angel and sparing the Jews from death was a picture of the Blood of Christ on the Cross turning away God's rightful judgment, sparing us from eternal death; the forty years journey in the desert to the "promised Land" was a picture of the Christian's journey through this life to the real promised land, Heaven; and as the Jews were miraculously fed by "bread from Heaven", manna, the Christian is sustained in his journey through this life by the true bread from Heaven, the Eucharist. Jesus himself made the connection between manna and the Eucharist when He said, right after performing the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves (which took place at Passover time) (John 6):

"I am the bread of life.. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.... I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."...
"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh

and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day...This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

And the Paschal lamb, sacrificed on that first Passover night in Egypt to effect their release, was but a figure of the true Paschal Lamb, sacrificed on Calvary to bring us true freedom, freedom from our sin. As St. Augustine said (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum*)

[what was thus prefigured in] the feast of the paschal lamb ... has been fulfilled in the sufferings of Christ, the Lamb without spot.... In the gospel we have the true Lamb, not in shadow, but in substance; and instead of prefiguring the death, we commemorate it daily [in the holy sacrifice of the Mass]

And the fact that Jesus himself was the true Paschal lamb is repeated over and over in scripture:

1 Corinthians 5:

For Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed.

1 Peter 13:

18 You know that you were ransomed ... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

And of course John the Baptist's identification of Jesus as the "lamb of God" in *John 1:*

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Exodus 12 makes it clear that no Jew can claim membership with the Jewish people if he doesn't participate in eating the Passover lamb; similarly, one cannot participate fully in the redemption Jesus offers without eating the true Passover lamb; his flesh and blood in the Eucharist. The Old Covenant foreshadowed in symbols the reality of the New Covenant.

Within Judaism, the Passover has always been seen as a prefigurement (and celebration in advance) of the final liberation of the Jewish people which is to come with the coming of the Messiah. The Passover Seder, as we shall see, is filled with a lively Messianic expectation; an expectation filled with the coming of Christ. Tellingly, the Passover lamb, itself, according to both Jewish and Christian sources, was prepared in a way that resembled a crucifixion. According to the Talmud smooth staves of wood were thrust through the shoulders of the lamb to hang and skin it (Pesachim 5:9), and then a skewer of pomegranate wood was thrust from its mouth to its buttocks (Pesachim 7:1). This is confirmed by St. Justin Martyr (2nd Century): **"For the lamb, which is roasted, is dressed in the form of a cross. For one spit is transfixed right through from the lower parts up to the head, and one across the back, to which are attached the legs of the lamb."** Imagine Jesus growing up, seeing the "crucified" Passover lamb each year at the Seder, and knowing that it was a picture of what would befall him!

With that background, let us begin our Passover Seder.

BLESSING OF THE FESTIVAL CANDLES

(The “lady of the house” lights candles while the following prayer is said:)

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has made us holy by the Law, and has commanded us to kindle the Festival light.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך
העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וציונו
להדליק נר של יום טוב.

Baruch attah adonai, Eloheynu Melech Hao-lom, Asher Kidshanu B'Mitz-vo-tov Vitsuvanu L'had-lik Ner Shel Yom Tov.

THE FOUR CUPS (EXPLANATION)

LEADER: During the seder, we will drink four cups of wine, each with its special name and significance, recalling the four promises God made to Moses in Exodus 6. The first is the Cup of Blessing, from when God said “I will free you from your burdens in Egypt.” Second is the Cup of Judgment, from when God said “I will rescue you from slavery by mighty acts of judgment.” Third is the Cup of Redemption, from God’s promise, “I will save you with my outstretched arm.” The fourth cup is the Cup of Praise, where we praise God for saying, “I will make you my own people.”

THE FIRST CUP: BLESSING (KIDDUSH)

(Fill the first cup)

“I will free you from your burdens in Egypt.”



This first cup is drunk in remembrance of God’s deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt, effected by the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. Let us first pray:

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו מלך העולם,
בורא פרי הגפן.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha-olom Boh-ray Pree Ha-gaw-fen.

and then a prayer thanking God for bringing us to this point in our lives:

ALL: Blessed art thou, o Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who Has given us life, sustained us and brought us to this season of rejoicing.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך
העולם, שהחיתנו וקיימתנו והגיענו לזמן
הזה.

(All drink the first cup.)

THE WASHING OF THE HANDS (URCHATZ):

LEADER: Now, the hands are washed. It is here that at the Last Supper (*John 13*):

Jesus rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel...poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded...When he had washed their feet and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. Truly, truly, 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.

ALL: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has made us holy by His law, and commanded us about the washing of hands.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל־נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

*Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher
kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav, v'tzivanu al n'tee-las yadayim.*

(Note how this washing of the hands at the Seder is mirrored when the Priest ritually washes his hands at Mass)

DIPPING OF THE PARSLEY (KARPAS):



(each participant takes a sprig of parsley and dips it in salt water)

The parsley greens stand for the branches of hyssop that were used to place the lamb's blood on the door posts and lintels that first Passover night, and the salt water for the tears of suffering of the Jews in their bondage in Egypt. The lamb's blood on the crossed wood saving the Jews prefigured the truly saving blood, that of Jesus on the wood of the Cross. And it was on a hyssop branch that Jesus was given His bitter last drink: (*John 19:28+*):

After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the scripture), "I thirst." ... they put a sponge full of the vinegar on hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, You create the fruits of the earth.

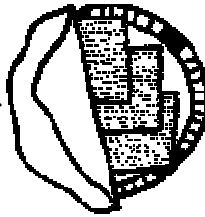
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְרֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

*Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,
borei p'ri ha-adamah.*

(All eat the parsley dipped in salt water.)

BREAKING OF THE MIDDLE MATZO (THE AFIKOMEN):

Now comes one of the most mysterious parts of the Seder, particularly suggestive from a Christian perspective. Three Matzos are on the table in a special white covering, called the "matzo toff", or "Unity". The middle matzo is removed and broken. One half is wrapped and hidden, and later redeemed for a reward. It is called the Afikomen, a Greek word meaning "that which is to come". It seems to be a picture of Jesus, the second person of the Holy Trinity, who left Heaven and came to earth in two natures, divine and human. In His humanity he was broken for us on the Cross, and like the afikomen, wrapped in linen and hidden away in a tomb. On the third day He rose again. Those who find him truly receive a great reward, the greatest known to Man.



(Uncover the matzo and lift up the plate for all to see.)

Let us recite the traditional prayer:

ALL: This is the bread of affliction which our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry – let them come and eat. All who are needy – let them come and celebrate the Passover with us. Now we are here; next year may we be in the Promised Land. Now we are slaves; next year may we be free men.

(the middle matzo is broken and the Afikomen hidden)

These verses echo the Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 61:

The LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

which Jesus applied to Himself in (*Luke 4*):

And Jesus ... came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the synagogue...he [read from] the book of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." And he closed the book, and [said], "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

THE FOUR QUESTIONS:

Now come "the four questions", which inaugurates the telling of the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Traditionally, the youngest one present asks:

**מָה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל
הַלַּיְלוֹת?**

YOUNGEST: *Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat leavened or unleavened bread; why on this night do we eat only matzo, unleavened bread?*

LEADER: This night is different from all other nights because on this night we celebrate our going forth from slavery into freedom. We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Lord saved us with a mighty hand. If God had not taken our fathers out of Egypt, then we, our children, and our grandchildren, too, would still be Pharaoh's slaves.

Why do we eat only matzo? We eat only matzo, unleavened bread, because when Pharaoh finally let the people go they had to flee Egypt quickly. There was no time to let the yeast rise in the dough before they baked it.

YOUNGEST: *On all other nights we eat vegetables and herbs of all kinds; why on this night do we eat only bitter herbs?*

LEADER: We eat bitter herbs to remind us how bitter it was to live as slaves in Egypt.

YOUNGEST: *On all other nights we never think of dipping herbs even once; why on this night do we dip twice?*

LEADER: We dip the parsley in salt water to remind us of the tears of our slavery. We dip the bitter herbs (the horseradish) in the sweet apples (charoseth), to remind us that our ancestors were able to withstand bitter slavery because they never lost the sweet hope of freedom.

YOUNGEST: *On all other nights we eat either sitting up or reclining; why on this night do we all recline?*

LEADER: Why do we eat reclining? Because free men, and not slaves, recline at table. And since our people became free this night, we recline.

THE STORY (MAGGID):

LEADER: During a famine in the land of Canaan, the sons of Israel moved to Egypt. They prospered there, and became a great nation. The Pharaoh feared that they might, in time of war, side with the enemy, so to subdue them he made them slaves and afflicted them with cruel labor. But they continued to thrive, just as God had promised. This caused Pharaoh even greater alarm, and he ordered the slaughter of Israel's infant sons. By his command, every male child born to the Hebrews was to be cast into the Nile and drowned. But God raised up a deliverer, a redeemer, the man Moses. And He sent Moses to Pharaoh's court to declare the commandment of the Lord. But Pharaoh would not hearken to the Lord of Hosts. And so, Moses pronounced God's judgment on Pharaoh's house and on Pharaoh's land. Through Moses plagues were poured out upon the Egyptians, upon their crops, and upon their flocks.

God saw our suffering and heard our cries. He brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. These are the ten plagues which the Most Holy brought upon the Egyptians.

(As each plague is named, each person dips a finger in the glass, and drops a drop of wine onto the plate. The leader reads each plague in Hebrew; all present repeat the plague in English:)

<i>Dam,</i>	Blood
<i>Tzfardeyah,</i>	Frogs
<i>Kinim,</i>	Lice
<i>Arov,</i>	Swarms
<i>Dever,</i>	Blight
<i>Sh'chin,</i>	Boils
<i>Barad,</i>	Hail
<i>Arbeh,</i>	Locusts
<i>Choshech,</i>	Darkness
<i>Makat B'chorot,</i>	Slaying of the First-Born.

LEADER: Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He withstood the first nine of the plagues and would not let the Israelites depart. So then God sent the tenth plague upon the land of Egypt: the death of Egypt's firstborn. "And all the first born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sits upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid servant who was behind the mill; and all the first born of beasts...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment." But to protect the children of Israel, God commanded the head of each Jewish household to sacrifice a spotless lamb, without breaking any of its bones, and to apply its blood to the doorway of our homes, first to the top of the doorway, the lintel, and then to the two side posts. Roast the meat of the lamb and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And you should eat it

quickly like people prepared to leave in a hurry, for this is the Passover of the Lord. I will go through Egypt on that night, and kill all the first-born in the land, both man and beast; I will destroy all the gods of Egypt: for I am **Ha-Shem** [means "the name", used by Jews to avoid pronouncing the name of God] the one true God. The blood will be a sign on your houses. And the blood shall be for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plagues shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt. You shall keep this day as a feast for all your children's children. You will celebrate Passover forever. (based on Ex. 12)

This is why it is called Passover – because the angel of death passed over the houses of the Jews, because the blood of the sacrificial Passover lamb was on the wood of the doorways. And since no bones of the Passover lamb were to be broken, no bones of the true Paschal sacrifice – Jesus – were to be, either: (*John 19*):

Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ... For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled, "Not a bone of him shall be broken."

DAYENU (“It would have been enough for us”)

I - lu ho-tzi, ho-tzi - a - nu, ho-tzi - a - nu mi-mitz-ra-yim, ho-tzi - a - nu mi-mitz-ra-yim
 da - yei - nu. Da, da - yei - nu, da, da - yei - nu - da, da - yei - nu, da -
 yei - nu da - yei - nu da - yei - nu Da, da - yei - nu, da, da - yei - nu,
 da, da - yei - nu, da - yei - nu da - yei - nu!

(All recite together):

If He had merely rescued us from Egypt, but had not punished the Egyptians DAYENU
 If He had merely punished the Egyptians, but had not slain their firstborn DAYENU
 If He had merely slain their firstborn, but had not given us their property DAYENU
 If He had merely given us their property, but had not opened the sea for us DAYENU
 If He had merely opened the sea for us, but had not brought us through on dry ground DAYENU
 If He had merely brought us through on dry ground, but had not drowned our oppressors DAYENU

If He had merely drowned our oppressors, but had not supplied us in the desert for forty years DAYENU
 If He had merely supplied us in the desert for forty years, but had not fed us with manna DAYENU
 If He had merely fed us with manna, but had not given us the Sabbath DAYENU
 If He had merely given us the Sabbath, but had not brought us to Mt. Sinai DAYENU
 If He had merely brought us to Mt. Sinai, but had not given us the Law DAYENU
 If He had merely given us the Law, but had not brought us to the land of Israel DAYENU
 If He had merely brought us to the land of Israel, but had not built us the Temple DAYENU
It would have been enough for us.

THE SECOND CUP: JUDGMENT (MAKKOT) :



This cup commemorates the Jews' release from slavery, from God's words **"I will rescue you from slavery by mighty acts of judgment."**

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
 בּוֹרֵא, פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch attah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha-olom Boh-ray Pree Ha-gaw-fen.

(All drink the second cup).

**THE PRAISES
(HALLEL) :**

Psalm 117/118:

*(to be recited alternately by
the two sides of the table)*



*Praise the LORD, all nations!
Extol him, all peoples!
For great is his steadfast love toward us; and the
faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!*

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say, "His steadfast love endures for ever."

*The LORD has chastened me sorely, but he has not
given me over to death.
I thank thee that thou hast answered me and hast become my
salvation.*

The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.
Blessed be he who comes in the name of the LORD!

*Thou art my God, and I will give thanks to thee;
thou art my God, I will extol thee.
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!*

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His kindness is everlasting;

Give thanks to the God of gods for His kindness is everlasting;

*Give thanks to the Lord of lords for His kindness is everlasting;
Who alone does great wonders for His kindness is everlasting;*

Who made the heavens with understanding for His kindness is everlasting;

Who stretched out the earth above the waters for His kindness is everlasting;

*Who made the great lights for His kindness is everlasting;
The sun, to rule by day for His kindness is everlasting;
The moon and stars, to rule by night for His kindness is everlasting;*

Who struck Egypt through their firstborn for His kindness is everlasting;

And brought Israel out of their midst for His kindness is everlasting;

*Who split the Red Sea for His kindness is everlasting;
And led Israel through it for His kindness is everlasting;
Who led His people through the desert for His kindness is everlasting;*

ALL:

And gave the land as a heritage to Israel, His servant for His kindness is everlasting;

Thank the God of heaven for His kindness is everlasting.

LEADER:

The soul of every living being shall bless Your Name, Lord, our God; and the spirit of all flesh shall always glorify and exalt Your remembrance, our King.

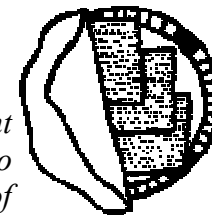
From the beginning to the end of the world You are Almighty God; and other than You we have no King, Redeemer and Savior. To You alone we give thanks. Even if our mouths were filled with song as the sea, and our tongues with joyous singing like the multitudes of its waves, and our lips with praise like the expanse of the sky; and our eyes shining like the sun and the moon, and our hands spread out like the eagles of heaven, and our feet swift like deer we would still be unable to thank You Lord, our God and God of our fathers, and to bless Your Name, for even one of the thousands of millions, and myriads of myriads, of favors, miracles and wonders which You have done for us and for our fathers before us. Lord, our God.

Therefore, the limbs which You have arranged within us, and the spirit and soul which You have breathed into our nostrils, and the tongue which You have placed in our mouth they all shall thank, bless, praise, glorify, exalt, adore, sanctify and proclaim the sovereignty of Your Name, our King.

For every mouth shall offer thanks to You, every tongue shall swear by You, every eye shall look to You, every knee shall bend to You, all who stand erect shall bow down before You, all hearts shall fear You, and every soul shall sing praise to Your Name.

ALL: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name.

BLESSING AND EATING THE UNLEAVENED BREAD (MATZOT), FIRST ALONE THEN WITH MAROR AND CHAROSET



(At this point in the Seder each participant should take four small pieces of matzo, two pieces of bitter herb, and a portion of haroset.)

(Then the leader holds up the three matzos in the “Unity” and all say the following prayers)

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִדֶּקָּאָרֶץ.

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who made us holy by His law, and commanded us about the eating of unleavened bread.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל־אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.

Baruch Attah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav v'tzivanu al achilat matzah.

(All eat a small piece of matzo.)

Then all take two pieces of matzo and make a sandwich with charoseth or 'sweet apples' and bitter herbs. Before eating it pray:

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who made us holy by His law, and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרֹר.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher
kidshanu b'mitzvo-tav, v'tzivanu al achilat maror.*

LEADER: The bitter herb speaks of the sorrow and persecution of the people under Pharaoh in Egypt. As the horseradish brings tears to the eyes, so also did slavery bring tears to the eyes of the Israelites. The sweet apples ,or charoseth, is a symbol of the mortar and clay bricks made by the Israelites in Egypt.

In some places it is still the custom today to give this morsel with affection to a loved one. Many think it is here that (John 13):

Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give this morsel when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. After receiving the morsel, he immediately went out.

THE PASSOVER MEAL: *(This is where the actual dinner takes place.)*



EATING THE AFIKOMEN (TZAPHUN) AND DRINKING THE THIRD CUP

(The children hunt for and find the afikomen, which is then redeemed by the leader and distributed. The third cup is filled.)



At this point we eat the afikoman and drink the third cup, the "cup of redemption".

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

(All drink the third cup and eat the afikoman.)

ELIJAH'S CUP

(Elijah's cup is filled with wine. The youngest goes to the door and opens it.)



LEADER: There is one place setting that has not been touched. It is Jewish tradition to keep this place for the prophet Elijah. He was prophesied to appear before the Messiah came. (Malachi 4):

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers..."

So the door is opened to see if Elijah has come to announce that this is the Passover when the Messiah will come (Judaism teaches that the Messiah will come on the Passover). Israel still waits for the Messiah, although we know that the promised Messiah has already come, and Elijah did come before Him, in the person of John the Baptist: (Luke 1)

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah...your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ... And he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children... to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

So this is an appropriate place to insert a prayer that our Jewish brethren might finally recognize Jesus as their long awaited Messiah. Let us pray the prayer endorsed by Pope Pius IX at the 1st Vatican Council:

The Fathers of the Council humbly yet urgently come to the aid of the unfortunate nation of Israel with an entirely paternal invitation; that finally exhausted by a wait no less futile than long, the Israelites hasten to recognize the Messiah, our Savior Jesus Christ, truly promised to Abraham and announced by Moses; thus completing and crowning, not changing, the Mosaic religion.

The Israelites are always very dear to God on account of their fathers, and because it is from them that the Christ was born according to the flesh. Would that they then speedily acclaim the Christ, saying "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

Would that they hurl themselves into the arms of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, even now their sister according to the flesh, who wishes likewise to be their mother according to grace as she is ours!

AMEN

THE FOURTH CUP: PRAISE (HALLEL)

(Fill the fourth cup.)



LEADER: We come to the fourth and last cup, which praises God for having promised, **“I will make you my own people.”** This cup concludes the Passover Seder, and hence the Passover sacrifice. It was this cup that Jesus consecrated, yet refrained from drinking Himself, since His Passover sacrifice, the true one, was not concluded until He breathed out **“It is finished”** with His last breath on the Cross (John 19). The consecration is recounted in Mark 14:

“[Jesus] took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

This is very fitting, since it is of course the Eucharist which truly makes us all God’s own people. So let us say the prayer for this “cup of praise” praising God for truly having made us His own people through the Eucharist:

ALL: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
בוֹרֵא, פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

(All drink the fourth cup.)

CONCLUSION

And now comes the traditional conclusion of the Seder:

ALL: Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe for the fruit of the vine, for the produce of the field, and for the precious, good and spacious land which You have favored to give as an heritage to our fathers, to eat of its fruit and be filled by its goodness. Have mercy, Lord our God, on Israel Your people, on Jerusalem Your city, on Zion the abode of Your glory, on Your altar and on Your Temple. Rebuild Jerusalem, the holy city, speedily in our days, and bring us up into it, and make us rejoice in it, and we will bless You in holiness and purity. Remember us for good on this day of the Festival of Matzo. For You, Lord, are good and do good to all, and we thank You.

O Pure One in heaven above, restore the congregation of Israel in Your love. Speedily lead Your redeemed people to Zion in Joy. Ended is the Passover Seder according to custom, statute and law. As we are privileged to celebrate the Passover this year, may we be privileged to do so in the years to come.

To conclude the Seder, all shout together:

**נֶחֱדָה שָׂנֵא בְּיָמֵינוּ
בְּיִרוּשָׁלַיִם !!!**