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I am the Lord, and I will free you  
from your slavery in Egypt. I will  
redeem you with mighty power and  
great acts of judgment. I will make  
you my own special people, and I  
will be your God. And you will know  
that I am the Lord your God who have  
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# Celebrating the Passover

(Pesach)

*This night had been reserved by the LORD to bring his people out from the land of Egypt, so this same night now belongs to him. It must be celebrated every year, from generation to generation, to remember the LORD's deliverance.*

EXODUS 12:42

Generation after generation, Jewish people continue to celebrate one of the oldest traditions in human history – *the Passover*.

This celebration focuses on remembering the most important event in Israel's history – God passing over their homes and sending a death plague on the Egyptians who oppressed them.

This miraculous event brought about the Exodus, freeing the Israelites from hundreds of years of slavery and beginning a long journey home to the Promised Land.

Celebrating the Passover is more than just a ritual; it's a call to identify with a people of faith and connect with the God who rescues them.

**(Group parts will be in bold throughout this Haggadah)**

***Read Together:***

***Tonight we celebrate this ancient tradition,  
making it our own.***



## A Messianic Focus

As followers of Jesus, the Church, we are connected to an amazing history. We can trace our spiritual “family tree” back to the father of our faith, Abraham, and on to his descendants, the people of Israel. Their struggles and faith mirror our own journey towards dependence on God.

For Jewish people, the Passover is not just a celebration of past liberation; it also points to a coming Messiah. If we believe in Jesus as the Messiah, this celebration comes alive right before us, giving powerful new meaning to its symbols, imagery and rituals. The Passover becomes a wonderful picture of Christ’s atonement and of our deliverance from the bondage of sin.

*That is something we can celebrate each day of our lives!*

As we celebrate together now, we hope to respect and retain Jewish heritage while pointing towards Jesus the Messiah.

### ***Read Together:***

***We participate in this tradition to...***

***Share in a creative, unforgettable learning experience,***

***Remember how God is our rescuer and provider,***

***Connect with the history and people of our faith,***

***Encounter Jesus and his sacrifice more fully,***

***Know more of the God we love and serve,***

***Celebrate together with great joy!***



# Removal of Leaven

(Chametz)

*Bread was made without yeast because the people were driven out of Egypt in such a hurry that they had no time to prepare the bread or other food.*

EXODUS 12:39

On the night of the first Passover, God instructed the Hebrews to eat bread that was unleavened (without yeast) so they would be ready to leave Egypt quickly – *they didn't have time to wait for the bread to rise!* So they mixed together flour and water and quickly baked it, creating a new type of bread called *matzah* or *matzos*.

God told the Israelites to continue remembering the Passover each year by removing all leaven from their homes:

*You must remember this day (the Passover) forever. Each year you will celebrate it as a special festival to the LORD. For seven days, you may eat only bread made without yeast. On the very first day you must remove every trace of yeast from your homes.*

Exodus 12:14-15

So even today, Jewish families thoroughly clean their entire houses before the Passover so that not even a crumb of leaven – which is called *chametz* (pronounced kha-mets) – can be found. This includes food with any kind of starch or yeast in it. So before the Passover begins, they try to eat up all of their cookies, cakes and bread, and give the rest to non-Jewish friends!

*(Hand out oyster crackers – these are not for eating – continue reading on next page)*



## Removal of Leaven

(Chametz)

Hold this cracker in your palm – *it's made from leaven*. Leaven is a symbol or metaphor of corruption and sin. Removing leaven shows a willingness to remove corrupting influences in our lives and submit to God's ways. Just as the Jews searched every corner of their houses for a crumb of leaven, we must allow God to search the depths of us and remove any sin that remains.

Look at the leaven in your hand. It represents the small and big choices you have made to live your way instead of God's.

*Take a few moments of quiet and whisper this prayer to God...*

***Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my thoughts.***

***Point out anything in me that offends you,  
and lead me along the path of everlasting life.***

PSALM 139:23-24

*In silence, listen for God to reveal to you ways you have sinned.  
Humbly ask for and receive His forgiveness for these areas.*

*(After a few moments of silent prayer, continue reading)*

Traditionally, the night before the Passover, a final, symbolic removal of leaven was made. Parents would leave a few pieces of breadcrumbs in an obvious place for their children to see. Then, the entire family would sweep the crumbs into a bag with a feather. The next morning, the bag and leaven would be burned as a symbol of the removal of all of their sins.

Before we begin the Seder, we will each place our leaven in a fire.  
This action symbolizes our desire for God to purify us from our sins.  
*Do this now with an attitude of prayer.*



# Lighting the Passover Candles

(Brechal Haner)

*God is light and there is no darkness in him at all.*

1 JOHN 1:5

The actual Seder begins with the mother of the home lighting the Passover Candles. Before this lighting, the room would be nearly dark, to symbolize the darkness of sin. The light of the candles then symbolizes the presence of God and marks this as sacred time.

*(Light candles now)*

***Pray Together:***

***Thank you God for being our light.  
We welcome your presence to  
be with us and dwell in us now.***

***May your Spirit show us the meaning  
and significance of this celebration.***

***Amen.***



## Setting Up a Seder

A Seder is a joyful occasion where everyone gets involved! This is a time of celebration, sharing and building relationships. To help promote community and a sense of family, have everyone sit together and face each other around a table or group of tables.

Here are the items you should plan to have for your Seder:

### *At the Seder Leader's seat:*

- 1 dinner plate.
- Silverware.
- 2 dinner napkins.
- 1 glass of ice water.
- 4 clear wine glasses filled with a drink of wine or juice.
- Small bowl of salt water to dip the parsley.
- 3 whole matzahs wrapped in a cloth napkin and placed in a basket.
- Seder Plate with these items:
  - Sprig of parsley.
  - 1/2 teaspoon of horseradish.
  - 1 teaspoon of Charoset.
  - A shank bone, or other representation of a lamb (small picture or statue of a lamb, chicken leg bone, etc.)
  - A “roasted” (hard boiled) egg, brown or decorated for Easter.
- 1 leaf of romaine lettuce: If the Seder plate has a place for a second bitter herb, place the lettuce there; it will not be used.
- A Haggadah booklet.



### *At each place setting:*

A Seder Plate for each person is nice, but it is not necessary. Instead of one per person, you can just provide a Seder Plate for each table that is just used as a representation.

- 1 dinner plate.
- Silverware.
- 2 dinner napkins.
- 1 small plate with a sprig of parsley, about one-half teaspoon of horseradish on it, and a tablespoon of Charoset on it (this could also be done family-style).
- 4 wine glasses filled with a drink of wine or juice.
- These wine glasses can be small clear plastic communion cups or regular wine glasses. If this is not possible, one wine glass can be used and will need to be refilled several times. In this case, a wine bottle or carafe will be needed at the table.
- 1 glass of ice water.
- 1 Haggadah booklet.
- Printed handout of songs (optional).

*(Set up details continued on the next page >)*