

SHEEPFOLD MINISTRIES
MAUNDY THURSDAY
ANNUAL PASSOVER SEDER

A Time For Remembrance and Reflection
A Festival of Freedom

Next Year in the New Jerusalem!

Sheepfold Ministries
Sharon, PA

Pastor Phil Roland

Pastors Joe Remaley and Ron Wasilchak
2009

PASSOVER EXPLANATIONS

The Passover meal is called the Seder and is observed in homes, not in synagogues or temples. It is a most joyous holiday. The Seder table is set with flowers, the finest china, linen, silver, and lighted candles. A special plate, the Seder plate, is placed at the head of the table.

TERMS:

SEDER = Passover Meal

KIDDISH = Thanksgiving Blessings offered with a cup of wine

PESACH = Jewish holiday, the Festival of Freedom celebrates the Exodus from Egypt

HAGGADA = A Haggadah contains the order of the [Passover Seder](#).

“Haggadah” means “telling,” and is a fulfillment of the scriptural commandment to each [Jew](#) to “tell your son” about the Jewish liberation from slavery in [Egypt](#), as described in the book of [Exodus](#) in the [Torah](#).

On the Seder plate is:

A ROASTED SHANKBONE: A REMINDER OF THE SACRIFICIAL LAMB WHOSE BLOOD WAS PLACED OVER THE DOORWAYS IN EGYPT and was the sign that the people inside were to be saved from the angel of death.

MAROR: Bitter herbs as a reminder of the bitterness of slavery.

HAROSET: A mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine (we use apple butter) which represents the bricks and mortar their ancestors made while slaves in Egypt.

KARPAS: Celery to be dipped into salt water. This reminds us that everything that grows is a gift from G-d. The salt water is a reminder of the tears shed by Hebrew slaves.

HAZERET: Horseradish eaten to fulfill Exodus 12:8.

ROASTED EGG: A reminder of temple offerings.

THREE MATZAHS: Unleavened bread-made from dough that doesn't have yeast or other leaven and so it does not rise as out as leavened bread dough does. It is thin and flat. At the first Passover the Israelites ate unleavened bread. As they hurried away from Egypt they took with them unleavened dough. They didn't have time to prepare dough that had to rise. This was a reminder of the hurry in which the Israelites left Egypt. See Deut.16:3

WINE: Also on the table is a goblet of wine (we use grape juice). An extra cup of wine is placed in the center of the table for the Prophet Elijah because Jewish people believe that Elijah will appear to announce the coming of Elijah and that Elijah tastes of the fruit of the vine on every Seder table.

THE FOUR CUPS OF WINE are because of the four promises of deliverance in Exodus 6:6,7.

1. I will BRING YOU OUT from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
2. I will DELIVER YOU from their bondage.

3. I will REDEEM YOU with outstretched arm.

4. I will TAKE YOU to Me for a people,

RECLINING, NOT SITTING - They eat reclining to show they are free men. Originally at the first passover they ate standing up. During the meal a game is played. The father hides the piece of matzah. The child that finds it is rewarded with a present, usually sweets. The game is called afikomon. It is a reminder that the Messiah is still hidden and yet to come. You will notice that all of the ceremonial matzah is eaten at this point. At His Passover Meal Yashuah used the afikomon to institute His Last Supper.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Corinthians 5:7

“For Christ our Passover lamb was sacrificed for us.”

NOTES TO TEACHERS

1. The lesson is the Passover Story WITHIN the Seder. Tell the story by answering the questions.
2. The teacher may want to be the Father and tell the Passover story or he may let a prepared student who has been in the Passover learning activity do part of it. However, the teacher would take the discussion part after the Seder to make the Yashua application.
3. Order of the Lesson:
 - a. Have a student explain the meaning of the foods on the table.
 - b. Explain that Seder is a family celebration for the purpose of remembering all that God did to bring the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. Make sure the children are instructed.
 - c. Celebrate the Passover service and tell the story.
 - d. Go over applications from Yashua that reveal Pachal teaching.

AN ABBREVIATED PASSOVER SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

The family is seated around the Seder table with tablecloth, candles, and seder plate containing a lamb Shankbone, roasted egg, bitter herbs, celery, three matzahs, and haroset (applebutter), a dish of salt water, and a goblet of grapejuice.

FATHER: Blessed art thou, O lord our G-d, ruler of the Universe, who made us holy with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the Passover.

MOTHER: Blessed are you, O L-rd our G-d, King of the world, who has commanded us to light the holiday lights. (Light candles.)

THE FIRST CUP

FATHER: (Holds up cup) Blessed are you, O Lord our G-d, King of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine. (All take one sip)

ALL: BLESSED BE YOU, O L-RD OUR G-D, KING OF THE WORLD, WHO CREATES THE FRUIT OF THE EARTH.(All dip celery into salt water and eat.)

FATHER: The salt water reminds us of the tears shed in slavery.

THE PASSOVER STORY

Why is this night different from all other nights?

Child 1 Why on this night do we eat only unleavened bread?

Child 2 Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?

Child 3 Why on this night do we dip them twice in salt water?

Child 4 Why on this night do we recline when eating?

Father tells Passover Story answering these questions.

ALL: HAD G-D ONLY BROUGHT US OUT OF EGYPT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH!

THE SECOND CUP

FATHER: Blessed are you, O L-rd our G-d, King of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine. (All take one sip)

FATHER: We eat unleavened bread because there was not time for the dough of our ancestors in Egypt to become leavened before the Ruler of all, the Holy One, redeemed them.

ALL: BLESSED ARE YOU, O L-RD OUR G-D, KING OF THE WORLD, WHO HAS MADE US HOLY BY YOUR COMMANDMENTS AND COMMANDED US TO EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD. (All eat one piece of matzah.)

FATHER: Blessed are Thou, O L-rd our G-d, Ruler of the Universe and commanded us concerning the eating of bitter herbs. Dip bitter herbs in haroset and eat. Then make a sandwich of 2 pieces of matza and bitter herbs.

THE PASSOVER MEAL

After the meal the children look for the previously hidden afikomon, which is a reminder that the Messiah is still hidden and yet to come. Whoever finds it gets a present and everyone is given a piece of this matzah.

After the meal grace is said.

ALL: BLESSED ARE YOU, O L-RD OUR G-D, KING OF THE WORLD, WHO GIVES FOOD TO ALL.

THE THIRD CUP

FATHER: Blessed art Thou, O L-rd our G-d, King of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine. (All take one sip)

ALL RISE

FATHER: Give thanks to the Lord for He is good.

ALL: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER.

FATHER: Give thanks to the L-rd of L-rds.

ALL: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER.

FATHER: To Him who alone performs great miracles.

ALL: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER.

FATHER: To Him who created the world.

ALL: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER.

FATHER: To Him who delivered Israel from the Egyptians.

ALL: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER.

ALL: THIS IS THE PASSOVER FESTIVAL.

THE FOURTH CUP:

FATHER: Blessed are You, O L-rd our G-d, King of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.
(All finish juice.)

A time of singing praises. Closing Prayer of Thanksgiving.

FATHER: Now we come to the end of our Seder service. As we celebrated this Festival tonight, so may we celebrate it next year in joy, in peace, and in freedom. And, next year in Jerusalem!

Sheepfold Ministries – Sharon, PA – Pastor Phil Roland

RESPONSES TO CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

Child 1: Why on this night do we eat only unleavened bread?

Reply to Child 1

The last Great Plague to befall all Egypt was the death of the First Born of all inhabitants of the land. It was G-d's plan to deliver Israel from the oppression of the taskmasters of Egypt. G-d's people became servants and slaves over the 300 years since the death of Yaseph. All Israel was commanded to slaughter a lamb and strike it's blood on the doorposts of each Israelite home. All was to be consumed. Women were to prepare only unleavened bread (matzahs) because there would be no time for the yeast in bread to rise. On the morning after this night of death and destruction, Israel would know deliverance. They were to be ready to move.

Child 2: Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs? (MAROR)

Reply to Child 2

During our days of servitude in Egypt, the Egyptians treated us badly. They make us suffer. They put hard work upon us. The Egyptians caused us to shed bitter tears and to cry out to the L-rd, the G-d of our fathers. And the L-rd heard our voice and saw our suffering and our oppression. And G-d heard our groaning, and remembered His Covenant with Abraham, Isaiac and Jacob.

[Blessed are You, G-d our G-d, King of the universe who has redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt, and enabled us to attain this night to eat matzah and maror. So, too, G-d, our G-d and G-d of our fathers, enable us to attain the other holidays and festivals.]

Child 3: Why on this night do we dip them twice in salt water?

Reply to Child 3

We dip once to remember Israel's tears under the burden and oppression of her Egyptian taskmasters. We dip twice to remember that once Moses, G-d's deliverer, gave notice to Pharoah, Pharoah hardened his heart and oppressed Israel all the more. And Israel's cry went forth before the Throne of the L-rd G-d Almighty. He heard their cry and saw their oppression, Blessed be His Name.

Child 4: Why on this night do we recline when eating?

Reply to Child 4

We recline when eating the Passover because we are no longer slaves to Egypt or

to any man. We recline because men and women of freedom eat reclining. Praise be to G-d, master of the universe, who has set us free.

These are the Ten Plagues which the Holy One, Blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians:

Blood
Frogs
Lice
Wild Beasts
Pestilence
Boils
Hail
Locust
Darkness
Slaying of the First-Born

The L-rd took us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with a great manifestation and with signs and wonders. The L-rd G-d of our fathers took us out of Egypt, not through an angel, not through a seraph, and not through a messenger. The Holy One, blessed be He, did it in His glory by Himself! And the L-ord said, "I shall show wonders in heaven and on earth." The strong Hand of deliverance was manifested with. . .

Blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

(When saying the following words, "blood," and "fire," and "pillars of smoke, spill some of the wine into a broken or chipped cup or dish, three times. This reminds us of G-d's anger and indignation.)

THE SEDER IS OVER

Rabbi Phil

The rites of the Seder are now concluded
In accordance with ancient precept and custom.
With the same earnestness that we have prepared for it,
May we live our lives throughout the year.
Quite appropriately, the Haggadah ends on a note of triumph. Truth, justice, and
lovingkindness are the enemies of slavery, tyranny, and oppression.
The weak may be overcome by the strong, but only for a while, for there are
always new, emerging forces that crush the seemingly invincible forces prevailing
for the moment.

All read in unison:

*This is the power of Passover.
This is the lesson of history.
This is the story of freedom.*

THE PESACH, The Lord's Passover

Exodus 12

¹The L-RD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt,

²“This month is to be for you the first month,
the first month of your year.

³Tell the whole community of Israel that on the
tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb
for his family, one for each household.

⁴If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with
their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are.
You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each
person will eat.

⁵The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you
may take them from the sheep or the goats.

⁶Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of

the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.

⁷ Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.

⁸ That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast.

⁹ Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire—head, legs and inner parts.

¹⁰ Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it.

¹¹ 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 the L-RD'S Passover. (PESACH)

Sheepfold Ministries
Pastor Phil Roland

THE PASSOVER LAMB

EXODUS 12

"Jesus Christ is our Passover Lamb.

**AVERSARY = HEBREW = ☒ ✂ ✂ = AYTZ-OR = To
Straighten**

To Press Upon / To Compress / To Bind Together

To Press With A Seige / To Cut With A Knife

I. A LAMB FOR A FAMILY

THE LAMB MUST BE PERFECT

THE LAMB MUST DIE AT THE PERSCRIBED TIME

THE BLOOD MUST BE APPLIED TO THE DOORPOSTS

EAT THE MEAT WITH BITTER HERBS AND UNLEVENED BREAD

II. EAT ALL OF THE LAMB

EAT THE LAMB IN A HURRY-

Sheepfold Ministries, April 1, 2001
Pastor Phil Roland

THE PASSOVER LAMB

EXODUS Chapters 7 through 12

Jesus Christ is our Passover Lamb.

THE POWER OF EGYPT'S GODS WAS OPENLY DESTROYED

BLOOD = Egypt worshipped the Nile. . .It was defiled by the Plague of Blood.

FROGS=Egypt had frog effigies all throughout their homes. . .Every effigy became real.

LICE=Egypt worshipped the body, grooming, adornment. Not after the Plague of Lice!

ANIMALS=Egypt worshipped their animals. Effigies of animals were everywhere. They died by the thousands.

FLIES=Egyptians revered their insects. . Thought of as deities. . .Not after this Plague!

BOILS=Egyptians worshipped the flesh. . .Their bodies were covered by painful, pus-oozing sores!

HAIL=Egyptians worshipped the skies. . .Hail came from it and destroyed their crops and wealth!

LOCUST= Everything living thing that Egypt worshipped came under pestilence and destruction!

DARKNESS= Egypt worshipped the sun. . .They witnessed it's ineffectiveness against the power of Almighty God!

SLAYING OF THE FIRST-BORN=Egypt worshipped their children. . .God revealed that nothing Egypt viewed as sacred was safe from His Wrath!

LESSONS FROM THE PASSOVER LAMB:

1. The households covered by the Blood of the Lamb were protected.

2. God's obedient people were "Passed Over" by the Angel of Death."

3. Jesus, God's Lamb is greater that our gods.

4. Jesus, God's Lamb has Power over Life and Power over Death.

5. We, who have the Blood of the Lamb applied to the doorposts of our hearts, are "passed from death to life." John 5:24

"Truly, truly, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

6. We are no longer "plagued" by the Fear of Death. Hebrews 2:14,15

"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death that is, the devil. And free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."

7. We are safe from God's Wrath by the Blood of the Lamb.

8. Is the Door Post of your heart protected by His Blood?

THE DEATH ANGEL PASSED OVER THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

THEIR HOUSES WERE PROTECTED BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

THE FIRST-BORN OF ALL EGYPT FELT THE PAIN OF DEATH

Candlelighting Ceremony

Sheepfold Woman or Child

The candles are lighted and blessings pronounced before nightfall. Add the bracketed words on Friday night only:

Baruch ata Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha-olam, asher kideshanu be-mitzvotav, ve-tzivanu le-hadlik ner shel (Shab- bat v'shell) Yom Tov.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle [Sabbath and] festival lights.

Baruch ata Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha-olam, she-he- che-yanu vekiyemanu, vehigianu la'zeman hazeh.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who gave us life, and sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season of joy.

SHEEPFOLD MINISTRIES

ANNUAL MAUNDAY THURSDAY PASSOVER SEDER and COMMUNION

A Festival of Freedom

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:32

OPENING PRAYER

O Lord, our God:

We have gathered on this festive evening, at this Seder table, to recall, retell, and reenact the early history of our people who, from biblical days onward, were infused with a burning desire to achieve freedom.

We pray, as we sit here assembled in family friendship, and as we relive in words and symbols the ancient quest for liberty, that we shall become infused with renewed spirit and inspiration and understanding. May the problem of all who are downtrodden be our problem; may the concern of all who are afflicted be our concern; may the struggle of all who strive for liberty and equality be our struggle. In this spirit we now raise our cups to sanctify Thy Name in the words of the ancient *Kiddush*, which emphasizes our thankfulness for this holiday of *Pesach*, the Festival of Freedom, marking the Exodus from Egypt.

A-Men

THE ESSENCE OF PASSOVER

All are seated around the table, and the leader or one of the participants reads the following introduction:

Passover has a message for the conscience and the heart of all mankind. It commemorates the deliverance of a people from degrading slavery, from cruel and inhuman tyranny. Although we, who mouth the words and perform the ritual, are reliving an story which is peculiar to Jewish history, the drama that is Passover is no longer ours alone. Its enactment is not confined to the dining rooms of our homes alone; it has been embraced by the world at large, and is continually being reenacted on the stage of mankind by all who seek avenues to assert their condemnation of oppression and tyranny, by all who labor in the vineyard of the Lord searching for freedom and peace.

Although it is the Pharaoh of old who is the tyrant of the Haggadah, it is not he alone of whom we speak tonight. We speak this evening of other tyrants and other tyrannies as well. We speak

Of the tyranny of poverty
And the tyranny of privation,
Of the tyranny of wealth
And the tyranny of war,
Of the tyranny of power
And the tyranny of despair,
Of the tyranny of disease
And the tyranny of time,
Of the tyranny of ignorance
And the tyranny of color.

To all these tyrannies do we address ourselves this evening. Passover brands them all as abominations in the sight of God.

Cup #1 – The Cup of SANCTIFICATION

The first of the four cups of wine is now poured, and the leader, together with all participants, recites the Kiddush. The prayer of sanctification is recited before all Sabbath and festival meals. All raise their cups and recite in unison.

The sixth day: God created the heavens and the earth and all that was contained therein. On the seventh day, God finished His work and rested. God then blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it He rested from all His creative work.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe Who created the fruit of the vine.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, Who has kept us in life, and has sustained us, and has permitted us to enjoy this festive day.

All drink of the FIRST CUP OF WINE.

Hors d'oeuvres

Ceremonial Passover foods

A piece of karpas (celery/carrots) is now distributed to all participants. Each participant dips the karpas into a dish of salt water and then all recite the blessing in unison. The salt water reminds us of the bitter tears shed while the Children of Israel were held in the bondage of slavery in Egypt.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who created the fruit of the earth.

BREAKING OF THE MATZA

The leader now takes the middle matza from the set of three and breaks it in half. He places one half in a napkin or bag, setting it aside to be distributed as the afikomon (the Hidden One) at the end of the meal. The children traditionally "steal" the afikomon and hide it from the leader. The Seder service cannot continue until the leader finds it or offers the children a ransom(prize) for its return.

RECITING THE HAGGADAH

The leader uncovers the top matza, exposing it slightly. He then raises the tray or container holding the matzot, and all join in reciting the following:

THE SYMBOL OF AFFLICTION

The Group recites in unison:

Behold this matza - the symbol of affliction and poverty. It is the bread that our ancestors ate as slaves in the Land of Egypt. We are mindful tonight of the hardships they suffered and the cruelty they endured.

To all who are in need we therefore say: We know your suffering, and we are anxious to help you in your need. To all who are hungry we say: Come and join us in our abundance.

Let it be known to all men that, because of our history, we understand the plight of the poor; we know what it is to suffer. We pray with them, and for them, that the coming year will bring with it the promise of a better life.

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

LEADER:

Why is this night different from all other nights?

Child 1: **Why on this night do we eat only unleavened bread?** (Matza)

Reply to Child 1

We eat bread or matza on all other nights, but on this night we eat only matza. The last Great Plague to befall all Egypt was the death of the First Born of all inhabitants of the land. It was G-d's plan to deliver Israel from the oppression of the taskmasters of Egypt. G-d's people became servants and slaves over the 300 years since the death of Yaseph. All Israel was commanded to slaughter a lamb and strike its blood on the doorposts of each Israelite home. All was to be consumed. Women were to prepare only unleavened bread (matzahs) because there would be no time for the yeast in bread to rise. On the morning after this night of death and destruction, Israel would know deliverance. They were to be ready to move.

Child 2: Why on this night do we eat bitter herbs?

(Maror)

Reply to Child 2

During our days of servitude in Egypt, the Egyptians treated us badly. They make us suffer. They put hard work upon us. The Egyptians caused us to shed bitter tears and to cry out to the L-rd, the G-d of our fathers. And the L-rd heard our voice and saw our suffering and our oppression. And G-d heard our groaning, and remembered His Covenant with Abraham, Isaiac and Jacob. We eat bitter herbs and remember our father's days of servitude in Egypt.

Child 3: Why on this night do we dip them twice in salt water?

Reply to Child 3

We dip once to remember Israel's tears under the burden and oppression of her Egyptian taskmasters. We dip twice to remember that once Moses, G-d's deliverer, gave notice to Pharaoh, Pharaoh hardened his heart and oppressed Israel all the more. And Israel's cry went forth before the Throne of the L-rd G-d Almighty. He heard their cry and saw their oppression, Blessed be His Name.

Child 4: Why on this night do we recline when eating?

Reply to Child 4

We once reclined when eating the Passover because we were no longer slaves to Egypt or to any man. We reclined because men and women of freedom eat reclining. On all other days we ate upright or in a reclining position. But on this night we reclined as free men and women. Praise be to G-d, master of the universe, who has set us free. Freedom and liberty are cherished values and are not to be taken for granted.

Through the foods we taste tonight and the manner in which we eat them we learn the meaning of freedom. To appreciate what it means to be free we must be reminded of how it feels to be enslaved.

And so, we recall tonight the historic experience of the Jewish ancestors who had been enslaved in the Egypt of the Pharaohs. By recounting their experiences, the freedom we cherish so dearly today becomes ever more meaningful and vital.

we were slaves

Read in Unison

We were once slaves to the Pharaohs of Egypt, and God in all His glory and power caused the shackles of slavery to be broken. He redeemed us and brought us forth into freedom. And had this great miracle of history not been bestowed upon us, we, to this day, and our children after us, might still be subjects of the Pharaohs of Egypt. We therefore consider it a sacred duty and obligation to keep this miracle of salvation ever alive in our memories. And it matters not how wise or learned we are or how well versed we are in the teachings of the Torah. The duty of retelling the story of our deliverance from slavery is important and compelling; it must be retold each year at this time. And the more we repeat the story and dwell upon its message of freedom, the more praiseworthy are we.

IN THE BEGINNING

In the beginning our ancestors were worshippers of idols, but when they realized the folly of their ways, the Lord drew them near to Him.

PARTICIPANT #1

In days of old, when our ancestors dwelt beyond the Euphrates River, Terah, the father of Abraham, served gods of wood and stone. Abraham rebelled against the senseless practice of bowing down to the work of one's own hands, and he uprooted his family and moved to the land of Canaan. There he took unto himself Sarah as a wife, and their son Isaac was born unto them.

Isaac followed in the tradition of his father. Rebecca became his wife, and Jacob and Esau were the offspring of their marriage.

Jacob followed in the tradition of his father and grand- father. He took unto himself Rachel and Leah as wives, and their handmaids were Bilhah and Zilpah. The offspring of his marriages totaled twelve sons and one daughter.

PARTICIPANT #2

A great sorrow befell Father Jacob, for he lost his beloved son Joseph, who had been sold to a caravan of Ishmaelites by his jealous brothers. Jacob had been told by his sons that Joseph was dead, that he had been killed by a wild beast, and Jacob grieved deeply for his beloved son.

Participant 2, cont.

Once in Egypt, Joseph was resold as a slave to Potifar, adviser of Pharaoh and keeper of the palace. For many years Joseph languished in prison until, through an act of Providence, he was able to display his wisdom to the butler of the king who, like Joseph, was a prisoner.

One day, after the king's butler had been freed and was restored to his post, Pharaoh was troubled

by dreams that none of his wise men could interpret for him. It was then that the butler remembered Joseph, and he told the king about the imprisoned young Hebrew lad who had been successful in interpreting dreams.

PARTICIPANT #3

Joseph was brought before the king, and he successfully interpreted Pharaoh's dreams. From that moment on Joseph rose in power and prestige. Pharaoh said to him, "You shall, rule over my house, and to you all my people will pay homage. Only I and my throne will be more exalted than you."

Having reached this position, Joseph was now determined to bring his father from Canaan down to the Land of Egypt.

A dreadful famine had engulfed the Land of Canaan, and only in the Land of Egypt was food plentiful. After many trying and agonizing episodes, Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers. Soon thereafter Jacob and his family moved to Egypt.

A special city was set aside for the family of Jacob, and it was named Goshen. In the city of Goshen, in the Land of Egypt, Jacob and his offspring dwelled in peace and plenty.

PARTICIPANT #4

Seventy persons had come down to Egypt with Father Jacob, and soon they increased and multiplied. It was as if the land was filled with the descendants of Jacob.

Before long, Father Jacob died, and then Joseph died too. A new Pharaoh ascended the throne of Egypt. The new ruler viewed with apprehension the ever increasing number of Hebrews who were becoming mighty and influential. He chose to forget Joseph and all that he had done to save Egypt in the years of severe famine.

Pharaoh said to his people, "Behold, the Children of Israel are too many and too mighty for us! Let us reconsider their position, lest they multiply even more and grow ever more powerful. Should a war come, it may very well be that they will join our enemies."

And so it was decreed that all Hebrews be carefully watched and their power curbed. Their newborn sons were to be drowned in the river so that the nation might not reproduce itself, and all adults were to become slaves of the Crown.

Participant 4, cont.

And so it happened that the Children of Israel were forced into slavery, and for long hours each day they toiled in the fields, gathering straw and then making the bricks to build the great monuments and pyramids that were to attest to the eternity of the Pharaohs.

PARTICIPANT #5

But one Hebrew baby was stowed away among the reeds of the river. One day, when the king's daughter went down to the river-edge for her daily bath, she heard the cry of a young child and sent her handmaids to fetch it. And she loved the child and took him to the castle and called him Moses, meaning, "I drew him forth from the water."

Under the protective custody of the oppressor himself, Moses, the son of a Hebrew, grew into manhood. And as he grew, so did his sympathy for the lot of his suffering people. In time, he renounced his royal privileges and became the protagonist of his fellow Hebrews, who were being crushed by the yoke of slavery.

PARTICIPANT #6

To escape the wrath of the Egyptian tyrant, Moses fled to the desert of Sinai, and there, as he

searched his soul, he discovered his mission in life. In the burning bush that would not be consumed despite the fiery flames that engulfed it, he found his destiny. This was surely a message from the Almighty saying to him, Whatever is worthwhile cannot be destroyed! Whatever is good and right must be defended!

Was not this a call to return to his brethren? Was not this a message from Above declaring that he must dedicate his life to the liberation of his people?

UNISON:

AND WE CRIED OUT TO GOD! THE GOD OF OUR FATHERS!

And the Children of Israel cried out to the Lord their God, and the God of their fathers, for their oppression was more than they could bear. And God heard their cries and was sympathetic to their agonized plight.

He then sent Moses to Pharaoh with an ultimatum:

PARTICIPANT #7

"Let My people go! Let My people go that they may serve Me," demanded Moses in the name of God.

But Pharaoh refused, saying, "Who is the Lord that I should listen to Him? I know not your God. I will not let Israel go!" And the servitude of the Israelites continued and was intensified.

Moses appealed to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why hast Thou sent me here? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he has added to the burdens of this people and Thou hast done nothing to rescue them!"

Participant 7, cont.

And God answered, "I have heard the groaning of the Children of Israel. I shall heed their cries. Go tell them, 'I am the Lord! I will free them from the burden of the Egyptians, and I will remove from them the yoke of their bondage.'"

Participants will please join in singing the following well-known spiritual which epitomizes the ancient struggle of the Israelites in Egypt.

Let My People Go

When Israel was in Egypt land,
Let my people go.
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go.

REFRAIN:

***Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt land,
Tell ol' Pharaoh, let my people go.***

Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said',
Let my people go.
If not I'll smite your first born dead,
Let my people go. (Refrain)
As Israel stood by the water side,
Let my people go.
By God's command it did divide,

Let my people go.

(Refrain)

But Pharaoh did not relent and showed no remorse. And God therefore visited upon him and his Egyptian subjects ten terrifying plagues.

THE TEN PLAGUES

ALL RECITE IN UNISON

THESE ARE THE TEN PLAGUES THAT GOD WROUGHT UPON THE EGYPTIANS:

RECITE ONE PERSON AT A TIME

The Ten Plagues

THE POWER OF EGYPT'S GODS WAS OPENLY DESTROYED

- 1. BLOOD =** Egypt worshipped the Nile. . .It was defiled by the Plague of Blood.
- 2. FROGS =** Egypt had frog effigies all throughout their homes. . .Every effigy became real.

The Ten Plagues, cont.

- 3. LICE =** Egypt worshipped the body, grooming, adornment. Not after the Plague of Lice!
- 4. ANIMALS =** Egypt worshipped their animals. Effigies of animals were everywhere. They died by the thousands.
- 5. FLIES =** Egyptians revered their insects. . Thought of as deities. . .Not after this Plague!
- 6. BOILS =** Egyptians worshipped the flesh. . .Their bodies were covered by painful, pus-oozing sores!
- 7. HAIL =** Egyptians worshipped the skies. . .Hail came from it and destroyed their crops and wealth!
- 8. LOCUST =** Every living thing that Egypt worshipped came under pestilence and destruction!
- 9. DARKNESS=** Egypt worshipped the sun. . .They witnessed it's ineffectiveness against the power of Almighty God!
- 10. SLAYING OF THE FIRST-BORN =** Egypt worshipped their children. God revealed that nothing Egypt viewed as sacred was safe from His wrath!

HALLEL

Psalm 114

Psalm 114 offers, in graphic and picturesque language, a description of how all nature joyously joined in helping the fleeing Israelites win their freedom, as they escaped from the hordes of pursuing Egyptians. The psalm may be recited responsively.

When Israel was freed from Egypt,
The House of Jacob from a foreign oppressor;

The territory of Judah was to become his sanctuary,
The land of Israel his sacred domicile.

The sea saw the redemption and it fled,
The Jordan turned back in its course.

The mountains shook like frightened rams,
The hills danced like fearful lambs.

Why is it, O sea, that you flee?
Why, O Jordan, do you turn backward?

Why, O mountains, do you prance like rams?
O, you hills, like fearful lambs?

You do have cause to tremble, O earth,
To tremble before the powerful God of Jacob!

For it was He who turned rock into water,
Lifeless stone into a flowing fountain.

Cup #2 – The Cup of GRATITUDE

Lift the cup and recite together:

Blessed are you, O L-rd our G-d, King of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine.

(All drink together)

how grateful are we

How grateful and content are we for all Thy beneficence, O Lord!

For sparing our ancestors of old from the disastrous plagues that befell the Egyptians, we are

grateful and content.

For strengthening our martyrs of latter days to face with courage the demonic forces that took their lives, we are grateful and filled with pride.

Continue responsively:

*Participants: For all Thy acts of kindness,
We are most grateful and content.*

*Leader: If Thy only act of kindness
Was to deliver us from the bondage of Egypt,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

*Leader: If Thy only act of deliverance
Was the bringing of the plagues,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

*Leader: If Thy only act of mercy
Was to divide the Red Sea waters,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

*Leader: If Thy only act of mercy
Was to provide the manna in the desert,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

*Leader: If Thy only act of graciousness
Was the gift of a Sabbath Day,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

*Leader: If Thy only act of love
Was to favor us with Thy Torah,*

Participants: We would have been grateful and content.

RELIVING THE EXODUS

Participants raise cups and recite or chant in unison:

We are mindful tonight of the promise God made to our ancestors to guide and protect them and their descendants in every generation.

Replace cups on the table.

We are also mindful that every generation must discover freedom anew.

Every generation must-earn its claim to liberty.

The struggle for freedom in Egypt and the challenge it represented for our forefathers is no less the challenge of our lives.

It is an ever recurring theme of history.

THE RITES OF PASSOVER

Pesach

Matza

Maror

The first of the three distinctive elements that must be acknowledged at the Seder is the paschal lamb. As the leader raises the bone on the Seder tray, symbolic of the lamb that was originally eaten on Passover, the celebrants recite in unison:

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE PASCHAL LAMB, AND WHAT DOES IT TEACH US?

The paschal lamb that was once eaten on Passover eve when the Temple stood in Jerusalem, and is symbolized by this bone-of what does it remind us, and what does it teach us?

It reminds us of the tenth plague in Egypt, when all the firstborn of the Egyptians were struck down. It reminds us of the salvation of the Israelites whose homes were spared. For pesach means more than paschal lamb; it has another meaning as well. It means, "He skipped over." The Lord skipped over the homes of the Israelites whose doorposts had been dabbed with the blood of the sacrificial lamb.

The willingness to sacrifice is the prelude to freedom.

(The leader replaces the bone and holds up the matza and all recite in unison:)

WHAT THE MEANING OF THE PASSOVER MATZA?

This matza that we eat on Passover---what is its meaning and what is its significance?

The matza is a reminder of the haste with which the Israelites left Egypt. The dough that they were sunbaking on the hot rocks of the Egyptian fields was removed before it could leaven, and so it remained flat.

The leader replaces the matza and holds up the bitter herbs, and all recite in unison:

THESE BITTER HERBS WE EAT ON PASSOVER, WHAT IS THEIR MEANING?

These bitter herbs that we eat on Passover---what is their origin and what is their meaning?

The bitter herbs symbolize the bitter lot of the Israelites who were enslaved in Egypt. They remind us of the forced labor the Children of Israel were compelled to perform in the sun-drenched fields of Egypt under the lash of the Egyptian taskmaster.

Bitter Herbs, cont.

Pesach, matza, and maror are the symbolic expressions that represent freedom in all ages. Translated into modern terms, they are sacrifice, preparedness, and hope. These are essential elements in the battle for freedom. It is the sacred obligation of every parent to teach his child the significance of freedom. As it is written, "On that day shalt thou teach thy son, saying, 'It is because of these (leader points to the symbols on the table) that God delivered me from Egypt.'" Because of *pesach*, matza, and maror did redemption come to us.

Cup #3 – The Cup of REDEMPTION

Not only did God redeem our forefathers from Egypt! We, too, were redeemed. We, too, were with them in spirit. Each of us living today is a beneficiary of the struggle of ages gone by.

(All raise their glasses and recite lengthy passage in unison)

And thus do we raise our voices in words of thanks and praise to the Lord our God who saw fit to bring salvation and freedom to our oppressed ancestors. Miraculously did He take them out of the savage bondage of Egypt and bring them into a new life with its

promise of freedom and equality. He converted their sadness into joy, their mourning into gladness, and their dark future into a great light of hope. For all His goodness, for His great gift of redemption, we raise our voices in songs of praise. Halleluyah!

Cups are replaced on table.

EATING THE MATZA

The leader breaks off pieces of the uppermost matza, and if necessary also pieces of the remaining portion of the middle matza, and distributes a portion to each participant. The following benedictions are recited before eating the matza:

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to eat unleavened bread.

BITTER HERBS

In keeping with the ritual mentioned in the Four Questions---the ritual of dipping twice on the Seder night---the leader dips the spoon of each participant into the horseradish and then into the *charoset*, scooping up a bit of each on the spoon which is then handed to each participant. (The first dipping took place earlier in the Seder, when the karpas {vegetable} was dipped in salt water.) After each participant has received his portion, the following benediction is recited:

Benediction, cont.

UNISON:

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

All eat the sandwich and then recite in unison:

WE REMEMBER THE MORTAR WITH WHICH OUR ANCESTORS CEMENTED THEIR BRICKS WHILE IN BONDAGE.

A hardboiled egg is served to each of the participants. The egg symbolizes the holiday sacrifice offered regularly in the Temple. The egg is dipped in salt water and eaten. Salt water was a dish commonly used in Oriental countries.

Dinner Is Served

At this point the table is cleared. The Seder tray and the symbolic foods are removed, and the full chicken dinner and dessert is served.

The Hidden Matza

After the meal is concluded, the children search for the afikomen. After it is located (or ransomed), a small piece is distributed to each participant, and a prize is awarded to the winner and to each participant. The wine goblets are filled, and Grace After Meals is recited.

Here is where Jesus varied from the time and traditional Passover haggada. Jesus took the afikomen when it was located, held it before his disciples and said, "Take eat this is my body which was broken for you." He passed it to his disciples and all did eat.

The Lord's Supper

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 accept me?"

The Lord's Supper, cont.

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."

Jesus and His disciples sat together celebrating Passover on the night of the last Supper. 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,” Jesus lifted the cup as the disciples would expect and offered traditional Seder thanks, which is 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 by saying 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 Jesus making a marriage proposal, which must have seemed totally out of place in a Passover Seder. And yet, they may have understood Jesus' 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 Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper, we must be mindful of Jesus' 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.”

(Recite even numbered verses in unison)

Matthew 26:21-30

“And while they were eating, he said,

“I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.”

²² They were very sad and began to say to him one after the other, “Surely not I, Lord?”

²³ Jesus replied, “The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me.

²⁴ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

²⁵ Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said,
“Surely not I, Rabbi?”
Jesus answered, “Yes, it is you.”

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

“Take and eat; this is my body.”

²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying,
“Drink from it, all of you.

²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

²⁹ I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

³⁰ When they had sung a hymn,
they went out to the Mount of Olives.

GRACE AFTER MEALS

All recite in unison:

Psalm 126
A Song of Joy

***When the Lord repatriated
The exiled of Zion,
We were as in a dream.
Laughter filled our mouths,
Mirth rolled off our tongues.
And it was acknowledged among all nations
That God did great things for Israel.
True, the Lord did do great things for us,
And we were overjoyed.
Good fortune flowed through our lives
As the waters of the deep course through the Negev.***

*How true it is that they who plant with tears
Will surely reap with joy.*

*Praised be Thou, O Lord, King of the universe, Who provides food for all;
Whose abundance and goodness and mercy endures forever.*

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord,
Sustainer of all mankind.*

*May He who established harmony in the universe bestow His peace upon us,
upon Israel, and upon all mankind. And let us say, Amen.*

Cup #4 – The Cup of Redemption

All participants hold up their cup of wine and recite:

***BLESSED ARE YOU ADONI OUR GOD KING OF THE UNIVERSE, WHO HAS
GIVEN US THIS PASSOVER HOLIDAY. YOU HAVE REDEEMED US WITH
OUTSTRETCHED ARM.***

*All drink the third cup of wine after which the cups are refilled. The special Cup of Elijah is also
filled at this time.*

the messianic age

ELIJAH AND THE OPEN DOOR

According to ancient Jewish tradition, the prophet Elijah did not die; he simply ascended to heaven in a fiery chariot and vanished. The belief grew that someday Elijah would return to earth, and as the forerunner of the Messiah he would prepare the way for a great Age of Peace. Since Passover, the Festival of Freedom, expresses hope in the eventual redemption of mankind and its deliverance from all evil, who could be a more welcome guest at the Seder than Elijah? And so, in every Jewish home a special cup is reserved for the prophet Elijah, the guest of honor. The door to the house is now opened as a symbol of our belief that the coming of a Messianic Age is not an impossible dream. We, too, look for it, hope for it, pray for it, as have our ancestors for hundreds of generations before us.

Leader raises the Cup of Elijah, and all join in reciting:

Eli-yahu Ha-navi

Elijah the Prophet,
Elijah the Tishbite,
Elijah, Elijah, Elijah the Gileadite!
May he soon come,
Soon in our day,
Ushering in the Messiah---Son of David!

WE REMEMBER

On this Seder night we remember with tenderness the millions of our own people, and those of

all nationalities and faiths, who only yesterday were mercilessly crushed by a tyrant more wicked than the Pharaoh who enslaved our fathers in Egypt. The blameless and the pure---men, women, children---did they annihilate in chambers of fire, in factories of death. We remember them tonight. We dare not forget them.

Cup #4 – The Cup of Remembrance

Blessed are You, Adonoy, creator of the fruit of the vine.

All drink the last cup of wine.

THE SEDER IS OVER

Quite appropriately, the Haggadah ends on a note of triumph. Truth, justice, and lovingkindness are the enemies of slavery, tyranny, and oppression.

The weak may be overcome by the strong, but only for a while, for there are always new, emerging forces that crush the seemingly invincible forces prevailing for the moment.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”

As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Romans 8:35-38

(All read in unison)

This is the power of Passover.

This is the lesson of history.

This is the story of freedom.

JESUS IS OUR PASSOVER LAMB

**Pastor Phil Roland
Adapted. 2007**

4/16/01

GREETINGS AND SHALOM:

I Hope your Easter was a beautiful, spiritual and family-filled time!

This was sent from a friend in Israel:

THE LAMB WAS SILENT

A believer living in Israel sent this touching report recently.....

A group of us were going to have the special Seder meal together and I offered to bring the lamb. There is a believer who runs a sheep and goat farm just outside Nazareth and as the days grew closer I knew deep inside I was not only to bring the lamb but go see him be slain. (Most people say "yuck, oogh or something" about this time in the story - - so go ahead.)

Anyway, I called and set the time to meet the butcher at the farm and follow him to the place. Overnight the plans changed (as they often do here!) and so upon arrival we saw a kid born only minutes before, then went to meet them at the shop. It was a reminder of the ongoing cycle of life and death. The sense though of being drawn to watch all this was not a logical thing at all, so I simply decided to open my heart and eyes to take everything in and hope to hear what the Holy Spirit was wanting to reveal.

I didn't have any idea what to expect except a lot of blood poured out of course. There he was with his two hind legs and one front one bound together, laying silently (those are key words) on the slab. At first I thought he'd been drugged because he was just quietly waiting as if he knew this was what he was born for. There was no struggle at the condition and strange place he found himself in. I petted his nose and looked into his eyes. He showed no fear or panic. I'm known to often talk to animals, but what do you say to someone who's about to die for you?? No words came. Then the butcher pulled him up onto the pallet and began washing his neck. The sound of the rushing water startled him, he tried once to get up, but not like he was trying to escape. Then he lay quietly back down again as the knife was put to his neck. My friend was taking pictures and he even held the knife

there for what seemed like ages. There was no "rushing to get it done quickly" here. Then one swift cut and the blood flowed. But.....

NEVER DURING THE WHOLE TIME DID HE OPEN HIS MOUTH!! NEVER – NOT ONCE. Think of it! Isaiah 53:6-7 “. . .and the Lord layed on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, **YET HE OPENED NOT HIS MOUTH**; He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, **SO HE OPENED NOT HIS MOUTH.**”

It says this is how it was, but to watch it with your own eyes! It was not so much the fact of his death - of the life, the blood, being poured out that struck me. It was the manner, the character in which he went through it that pierced my soul. Here before me was absolute trust, obedience and submission. His innocence wasn't because his wool was all white, bright and fuzzy (it wasn't anyway!) And he took it so quietly, willingly, patiently! It was then that I felt so unlike the Lamb..... Not only this dying one before me, but the One who died that we might have Life. I'm so quick to want to speak out against injustice, use and especially abuse in the Body of Messiah. I haven't even fully mastered counting it all joy in my trials and now we've moved on to the must of learning to die silently. Ouch.

What I heard that day is that it isn't enough to thank and worship Yeshua, the Lamb of God, for what He did for us nearly 2000 years ago, the fact of His death. Without one word in this drama, He seemed to be calling us up higher to become like Him...not just apply the blood to forgive our sins, but feed on the Lamb and let Him get inside. It's a place where we must take on His Life and nature and give our "unlamblike" character to Him in exchange!

”All creation is eagerly waiting (on tiptoe) for the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom 8:19). He will have a bride of like character.

The next time you observe the Lord's Table may you do so with a new commitment to become one heart with the Lamb!

”WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN!” (Rev.5 all!)

Agape,
Pastor Phil <><

By Zofia Smardz

WASHINGTON POST

Updated: 7:09 a.m. ET April 13, 2006

Some Jews see trespass in Christian Seders

Jesus spin on Passover holiday 'sets off great anxieties'

WASHINGTON - The hall had been symbolically cleansed of all leaven, and now, over the hush, Meri Harris's voice rang out in solemn intonation: *Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Me lech Haolam . . . Blessed Are You, Lord Our God, King of the Universe . . .* And as she lighted the festival candles, the Passover Seder began.

Over the next two hours, the ritual proceeded in order -- from the blessing of the wine to the washing of the hands to the symbolic opening of the door for the prophet Elijah. There were the questions -- "Why is this night different from all other nights?" -- and the answers, as the story of the Jews' deliverance from bondage in ancient Egypt unfolded.

It was just like a traditional Jewish Passover Seder. Except:

The Seder meal was served before the Seder service started, instead of two-thirds of the way through.

There was dancing.

And Jesus was everywhere.

The stripes and the holes in the matzoh represented his whipped and pierced body. The wine (actually grape juice) represented his blood. The matzoh was wrapped in white cloth, symbolizing the way Jesus' body was wrapped for burial.

You don't traditionally find Jesus at a modern Seder celebrating Passover, which began last night. But this was no ordinary Seder. The 250 people at Immanuel's Church in Silver Spring on Tuesday night were holding a Christian Seder, a phenomenon that's gaining popularity across the country -- to the consternation of many in the Jewish community as well as some interfaith leaders.

Although for decades some churches have held Seders to better understand the Jewish faith, many churches, especially evangelical ones, are now giving them a markedly Christian spin.

"The Seder helps us appreciate our roots and even out the rough spots that developed through past Christian attitudes toward Jews that were not godly," said Charles Schmitt, senior pastor of Immanuel's, an evangelical church he started in his living room 24 years ago that now has 4,000 members.

Connecting to Christianity's heritage

The thinking is: Since three of the four Gospels say the Last Supper was a Passover Seder, what could be more natural than for Christians to learn more about the ritual meal Jesus shared with his apostles before he died?

"Holding a Seder is a way to connect with the heritage of our religion and to see how the practices of the ancient world are still relevant to us as Christians today," said Thom Campbell, who led a Seder for about 20 at Fairfax Presbyterian Church in Fairfax City last Saturday. It's also, he pointed out, a good family event.

But Christian Seders "set off great anxieties" in the Jewish community, says Christopher Leighton, executive director of the Institute for Christian and Jewish Studies in Baltimore.

"There's this fear that well-meaning Christians will end up confiscating Jewish liturgical property."

Even more, there's the fear that evangelicals are using the Christian Seder to proselytize among Jews. Objectors point to the involvement of Messianic Jews, those who believe in Jesus Christ, and Jews for Jesus, a missionary group that seeks to bring Jews into Christianity, in the growing popularity of the ritual among evangelicals.

Harris and her husband, Michael, who led most of Immanuel's Seder, are Messianic Jews. And they readily acknowledge that the Seders are "a major evangelistic tool," Meri said. "Lots of people bring their nonbelieving Jewish friends, to give them the idea that Christianity is really connected to the Jewish people."

The Jewish Seder celebrates the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. It follows a strict order -- the word "seder," in fact, means "order" -- and its symbols -- the special foods of the Seder plate and the four cups of wine drunk in the course of the meal -- bear deep meaning for Jews. The roasted shank bone, for instance, recalls the sacrificial lamb offered to God at Passover; the matzoh recalls the unleavened bread the Israelites ate in their flight.

"People should understand that it's a commandment given to the Jewish people to observe the Passover and tell the story of the Exodus," says Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt of Congregation B'nai Tzedek in Potomac. "And that it is a Jewish ritual and not something they should try to make their own."

'Downright offensive'

Leighton, a Presbyterian minister, said the gradual transfiguration of the Seder in its passage from the Jewish dining room to the evangelical church hall can be "downright offensive."

"It's an underlying assumption that Jews have a rich tradition, but they don't really understand the buried treasure within," he said. "So it's up to Christians to extract the gold. It's energized by a feeling of contempt that Judaism has no spiritual integrity of its own."

Schmitt sees it differently. "It's unfortunate that some Jews view this as a threat and an infringement," he said. "I wish it were not that way, because I deplore all the horrible things that were said and done against Jews in the past."

This, in fact, is the original rationale for the church-held Seder, which Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists and others have been doing as far back as the 1960s. A quest for interfaith dialogue led Christian churches to invite rabbis to perform demonstrations of Seders, as well as Jewish families to invite Christians to their Passover celebrations.

"It seems some people did them for a number of years with the Jewish community and then decided, 'Well, we can just do them ourselves,' " said David Sandmel, a rabbi and a professor at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Instructions for holding a Christian Seder are available online and in bookstores. "Let Us Break Bread Together: A Passover Haggadah for Christians," by Mike Smith, a Baptist pastor, and Rami Shapiro, a self-described "postdenominational" rabbi from Tennessee, was put out last

year. (A Haggada is the text read during a Seder ceremony.) The book declares that it "does not pretend to be in any way Jewish."

Christian spin

Some Catholic and mainline Protestant churches add a modicum of Christian spin at the end of the Seder "to make it relevant to the people who attend," said Fairfax Presbyterian's Campbell. But full-blown Christian Seders such as the one at Immanuel's Church play off the belief that the Jewish Seder is "full of symbolism pointing toward the Messiah," Schmitt said.

"Many things concerning Jesus were foreshadowed and prefigured in the Old Testament," he said. "Redemption in the Passover came through the blood of the lamb [sacrificed in the Temple]. Our redemption today comes through Jesus, who is our Passover lamb."

Shapiro believes the Christian Seder enriches both the Jewish and Christian faiths. "If the Jewish way is the only legitimate way of understanding a symbol, then it's a dead symbol," he said. "If it's living, then it's constantly being explored from a different angle.

"The history of religion is one of borrowing. . . . That's how we cross-pollinate, and I think that Christians have a legitimate claim to Passover, being that Jesus was Jewish."

At Immanuel's Seder, attendee Greg McDonald explained what the ceremony meant to him: "We cherish the history of the Jewish people that led to our salvation through Jesus Christ. This Seder is not a taking over of their ritual -- it's an appreciation of it."

Still, B'nai Tzedek's Weinblatt, for one, would probably be more comfortable with a little less Christian enthusiasm for all things Seder. "Ideally, I'd like for Christians to wish me a happy Passover and learn something about the holiday and its message," he says. "But it's not necessary for them to go all out and celebrate it."

Let My People Go

When Israel was in Egypt land,

Let my people go.

Oppressed so hard they could not stand,

Let my people go.

REFRAIN:

Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt land,

Tell ol' Pharaoh, let my people go.

Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said',

Let my people go.

If not I'll smite your first born dead,

Let my people go. (Refrain)

As Israel stood by the water side,

Let my people go.

By God's command it did divide,

Let my people go. (Refrain)

Luke 22:7-20

Jesus New Passover / The Communion Table

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed.

8 And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."

9 So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?"

10 And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters.

11 "Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'

12 "Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready."

13 So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

15 Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;

16 "for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves;

18 "for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

PASSOVER EXPLANATIONS

The Passover meal is called the Seder (Say-Der) and is observed in homes, not in synagogues or temples. It is a most joyous holiday. The Seder table is set with flowers, the finest china, linen, silver, and lighted candles. A special plate, the Seder plate, is placed at the head of the table.

TERMS:

SEDER = Passover Meal

KIDDISH = Thanksgiving Blessings offered with a cup of wine

PESACH = "The Lamb" – The Jewish holiday, the Festival of Freedom celebrates the Exodus from Egypt

HAGGADA = A Haggadah contains the Script for the [Passover Seder](#).

"Haggadah" means "telling," and is a fulfillment of the

Scriptural commandment to each [Jew](#) to "tell your son" about the Jewish liberation from slavery in [Egypt](#), as described in the book of [Exodus](#) in the [Torah](#).

On the Seder plate is:

A ROASTED SHANKBONE: A REMINDER OF THE SACRIFICIAL LAMB WHOSE BLOOD WAS PLACED OVER THE DOORWAYS IN EGYPT and was the sign that the people inside were to be saved from the angel of death.

MAROR: Bitter herbs as a reminder of the bitterness of slavery.

HAROSET: A mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine (we use apple butter) which represents the bricks and mortar their ancestors made while slaves in Egypt.

KARPAS: Celery to be dipped into salt water. This reminds us that everything that grows is a gift from G-d. The salt water is a reminder of the tears shed by Hebrew slaves.

HAZERET: Horseradish eaten to fulfill Exodus 12:8.

ROASTED EGG: A reminder of temple offerings.

THREE MATZAHs: Unleavened bread-made from dough that doesn't have yeast or other leaven and so it does not rise as out as leavened bread dough does. It is thin and flat. At the first Passover the Israelites ate unleavened bread. As they hurried away from Egypt they took with them unleavened dough. They didn't have time to prepare dough that had to rise. This was a reminder of the hurry in which the Israelites left Egypt. See Deut.16:3

PASSOVER EXPLANATIONS, cont.

WINE: Also on the table is a goblet of wine (we use grape juice). An extra cup of wine is placed in the center of the table for the Prophet Elijah because Jewish people believe that Elijah will appear to announce the coming of Elijah and that Elijah tastes of the fruit of the vine on every Seder table.

THE FOUR CUPS OF WINE are because of the four promises of deliverance in Exodus 6:6,7.

1. I will BRING YOU OUT from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

2. I will DELIVER YOU from their bondage.
3. I will REDEEM YOU with outstretched arm.
4. I will TAKE YOU to Me for a people,

The stripes and the holes in the matzoh represented Jesus' whipped and pierced body.

The wine (actually grape juice) represents his blood.

The Bitter Herbs we eat reminds us of the Bitterness of Calvary.

The salt water we dip into reminds of Jesus' tears in the garden when He prayed, "Not MY WILL, but thine. . ."

The Broken Matzoh reminds us of Jesus' broken body.

The hidden Afikomin remind us that Jesus will hidden from Jewish eyes until the end times.

The matzoh was wrapped in white cloth, symbolizing the way Jesus' body was wrapped for burial.

The Lamb Shankbone reminds us that Jesus is our Passover Lamb, killed and bled for us, whose blood has covered our sins.

The Boiled Egg reminds us of the new life of God's Presence we have because of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 5:7

"For Christ our Passover lamb was sacrificed for us."

The Ten Plagues

THE POWER OF EGYPT'S GODS WAS OPENLY DESTROYED

1. **BLOOD** = Egypt worshipped the Nile. . .It was defiled by the Plague of Blood.
2. **FROGS** = Egypt had frog effigies all throughout their homes. . .Every effigy became real.
3. **LICE** = Egypt worshipped the body, grooming, adornment. Not after the Plague of Lice!
4. **ANIMALS** = Egypt worshipped their animals. Effigies of animals were everywhere. They died by the thousands.
5. **FLIES** = Egyptians revered their insects. . Thought of as deities. . .Not after this Plague!
6. **BOILS** = Egyptians worshipped the flesh. . .Their bodies were covered by painful, pus-oozing sores!
7. **HAIL** = Egyptians worshipped the skies. . .Hail came from it and destroyed their crops and wealth!
8. **LOCUST** = Every living thing that Egypt worshipped came under pestilence and destruction!
9. **DARKNESS**= Egypt worshipped the sun. . .They witnessed it's ineffectiveness against the power of Almighty God!
10. **SLAYING OF THE FIRST-BORN** = Egypt worshipped their children. God revealed that nothing Egypt viewed as sacred was safe from His wrath!

NOT USED 4/10/09

THE FOUR SONS

The Torah speaks of four sons, four children, four types of people who must be taught the message of freedom in different ways. Not all are equally equipped to receive its message; not all are equally sensitive to its importance. The questions they ask about the meaning of Passover and its ritual are different and varied, and we must respond to each on his own level.

THE WISE SON

*The first son is the **chacham**, the wise son.*

What does he ask about the meaning of Passover? He asks about the meaning of all the laws and ordinances that we have been commanded in the Torah. He is keenly interested in understanding why we observe and how we observe. He wants to follow the laws and ceremonies, but he also wants to understand their significance. We answer him by teaching him all there is to know, from beginning to end, from the first precept to the last.

THE WICKED SON

The second son is the *rasha*, the wicked son. How does the wicked son pose his question? He says: "What is the meaning of this Passover service which God commanded *you*?" *You*, he says, not me. By so framing the question, he removes himself from the group and seems even to deny God.

The wicked son must be answered forthrightly, even sharply. Remind him that the Exodus from Egypt was a personal triumph for every individual. Expressing himself as he does, there is no doubt that the wicked son would not have been liberated from Egypt had he lived in those great days of redemption.

THE SIMPLE SON

The third son is the *tam*, the simple son. How does he put the question about Passover? He asks, very simply: "*Ma zot*? What is this? What is this all about?" The events are so overwhelming that they confuse him.

Such a son requires a simple answer, one that will impress him immediately. Say to him very simply, "Passover proves the power of God, Who brought us out of the Land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

THE IMMATURE SON

The fourth son is immature. He hardly knows how to ask a question, and he must be treated tenderly. Assist him by offering to answer the questions which are surely in his mind but which he is unable to articulate. Speak to him in personal terms and say, "This holiday of freedom is being celebrated by each of us because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt." Remind him that he too counts, that the redemption was meant for him along with everyone else.

SHEEPFOLD MINISTRIES
MAUNDY THURSDAY
ANNUAL PASSOVER SEDER

A Time For Remembrance and Reflection

A Festival of Freedom

Next Year in the New Jerusalem!

Sheepfold Ministries
Sharon, PA

Pastor Phil Roland

Pastors Joe Remaley and Ron Wasilchak
2009