

***EASTER 1997 (5763)***

***A REMEMBRANCE  
OF THE PASSOVER MEAL***

**(Being a derivation of the Jewish tradition for Christian purposes)**

***Preparation (beforehand)***

1. The house is cleaned of leaven to remember that the bread which was baked as the Israelites fled Egypt was baked without leaven so that it could be made quickly
2. The Passover lamb was sacrificed at the Temple (that afternoon)

***Introduction:***

We gather to celebrate the **Passover**, recalling the great traditions of our faith. The Jewish story of liberation from Egypt to religious and political independence is the antecedent of our own freedom story.

We celebrate this remembrance as a family of God's people, recalling how Jesus, the exemplar of our tradition, once met with his own disciples to share such a meal. In so doing, he re-interpreted this sacred meal for our faith in God through Him.

***All Sing: "O God, our Help in Ages Past" – Isaac Watts (1674-1748)***

*O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come.  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home.*

*A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone;  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.*

*Time, like an ever-rolling stream  
Bears all its sons away;  
They fly forgotten as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.*

*O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come.  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,  
And our eternal home.*

***OPENING PRAYER (Hostess):***

*"Blessed are you, O King eternal, Our God, Ruler of the Universe. You have given us festival days for joy.*

*Blessed are you who selected us from among all the people and exalted us among the nations and sanctified us with your commandments."*

***FIRST CUP - The Cup of Kiddush***

**(The sanctification or separation, designed to separate this meal from all other meals. The head of the family takes it, prays, and drinks it all).**

***BLESSING:***

*"Blessed are you, O God; You are Creator of the fruit of the vine.*

*You have given us this feast of unleavened bread in remembrance of the time of our deliverance from bondage and of the departure from Egypt.*

*Blessed are you, O Eternal One, for you hallow the festival days".*

# I. **THANKSGIVING FOR THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH**

## **BLESSING:**

*"Let us take the appetiser of celery and parsley dipped in salt water.*

*Remember how the Hebrews used hyssop to smear lamb's blood on their doorposts in Egypt on the night of the Passover.*

*The salt water shall remind us of the Egyptians' tears and the water of the Red Sea through which our ancestors passed. Let us hear once again the story of these events."*

## **READING - EXODUS 12: 3 -14 and 14: 5 - 16, 21 -23**

*3 Tell 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. If 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. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire--head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. 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 Lord's Passover. "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals--and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD--a lasting ordinance.*

*5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. The Egyptians--all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops--pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon. As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the*

*deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.*

*21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea.*

**ALL** (together): Lord, our God, let us always remember how you saved your people in Egypt. May we ever understand that all people depend on your gracious blessing for salvation.

### ***Dipping of parsley or lettuce***

*(Taken and dipped in the bowl of salt water and eaten).*

### **MEANING:**

*The parsley stood for the hyssop with which the lintel had been smeared with blood and the **BOWL OF SALT WATER** was to remember the tears of the people under oppression in Egypt and the waters of the Red Sea through which they had miraculously passed*

## ***II. THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD***

### ***Blessing:***

*"Blessed be Thou, O Lord, Our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth from the earth".*

*(Of the three circles of unleavened bread, the middle one is taken and broken. Only a little is eaten at this point).*

### ***Prayer: (head of family)***

***ALL:*** *This is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat of it. Let all who have need come and share in the Passover's blessing.*

**The Second Cup - the cup of Haggadah, or explaining**

### ***III. THE STORY OF DELIVERANCE***

***Youngest person at the table asks:***

"What makes this day different from all other days? What makes this meal different from all other meals?"

The **Host (head of the house)** then relates the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

**Youngest Person:** "Why do we eat the unleavened bread?"

**Host:** Because our ancestors were slaves in Egypt and God bought them forth with his right hand. If he had not done this, we would still be slaves.

**Youngest Person:** "Why do we eat the bitter herb and charoses?"

**Host:** The **BITTER HERBS** remind us of our suffering while the **CHAROSETH** (kar'o' set) reminds us of the mortar and bricks we were forced to make as slaves.

**Youngest Person:** "Why do we eat the lamb?"

**Host:** To remind us of how our houses were protected by the smear of blood when the angel of death passed through Egypt.

**All:** Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, who brings forth fruit from the earth. Blessed are you, O God, who has sanctified us with your commandment and enjoined us to eat unleavened bread". who have need come and share in the Passover's blessing.

***Psalms 113, 114 are sung***

from Psalms 113 - 118 called the **Great Hallel**, or praise of God  
These Psalms were committed to memory as children

***The Grace is said:***

*Blessing: "Blessed are you, O Lord, Our God, who brings forth fruit from the earth.  
Blessed are you, O God, who has sanctified us with your commandments and enjoined us to eat this unleavened bread".*

**Small pieces of the bread are distributed.**

**Bitter herbs are taken between two pieces of the unleavened bread, dipped in the Charoseth and eaten.**

***The Meal proper :***

**The Passover Lamb is eaten**

**(All the lamb and bread must be eaten and not left over for any common meal).**

**ALL:** While our ancestors were in the wilderness for forty years, God provided for them, and the food which he provided was sufficient for their needs. He led them into the land of Israel and took care of them. How much more are we indebted for the wonderful gifts of good things God has bestowed upon us.

### ***Cup of Thanksgiving***

This included a prayer for the coming of Elijah, a favourite of prophets.

### ***Blessing:***

*"Let the doors be opened that the Spirit of Elijah may enter. Let us bless God whose gifts we have eaten and through whose grace we have life".*

### ***Second part of the Great Hallel, Psalm 115 - 118 sung.***

**Summarised for us in the hymn: "Give to Our God immortal praise" – Isaac Watts (1674-1748)**

*From all who dwell beneath the skies*

*Let the Creator's praise arise;*

*Halleluiah!*

*Let the Redeemer's Name be sung*

*Through every land, by every tongue.*

*Halleluiah!*

*Eternal are Thy mercies, Lord.*

*Eternal truth attends your word;*

*Halleluiah!*

*Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore*

*Till suns shall wax and wane no more.*

*Halleluiah!*

### ***The fourth Cup is drunk***

### ***Blessing:***

*"All your works shall praise you, O Lord, our God. And your saints, the righteous, who do your good will, and all your people, the house of Israel, with joyous song, let them praise and bless and magnify and glorify and exalt and reverence and sanctify and scribe the Kingdom to your name, O God, our King. For it is good to praise you and pleasure to sing praises to your name, for from everlasting to everlasting you are God".*

*"The breath of all that lives shall praise your name, O Lord, our God. And the spirit of all flesh shall continually glorify and exalt your memory, O God, our King. From everlasting to everlasting you are God, and beside you we have no King, no Redeemer or Saviour".*

### ***Acknowledgements***

This document is derived from a printed programme, and is reproduced with the kind permission of **Brougham Place Uniting Church, Adelaide, South Australia**. This “Remembrance Meal” was celebrated during the week before Easter of 1997 by **Rev Phil Hoffmann**, who had lived for several years in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

At the request of the owner of this website, it was then repeated a few days later around the dining table of his home, as he had never attended the Peschar meal either in reality, or in this form.

The quotation from the Bible is from the **New International Version**, pasted from Parsons’ Technolgy’s “**Quickverse for Windows**”. The words of the two hymns composed by **Isaac Watts** are taken from the **Australian Hymn Book**. While both these sources are copyright, inclusion has been under the "**Fair Dealing**" section of the Australian Copyright Act(s) as amended.

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