

Seder Guide

By Leigh Fransen

All **bolded** portions are for all participants. Anything in [brackets] is not read aloud. Words in **blue** are to be read as if they were the voice of the Almighty, by a specially-indicated reader.

Each participant should have a candle and matches, a cup, and access to wine or grape juice. Plates before participants should contain matzah, bitter herb, parsley, and matzah spread with butter and honey. Centerpieces should include a lamb and, for larger gatherings, a symbolic doorpost.

For the tune of Horse and Rider, visit <http://tinyurl.com/horseandrider-song> (Note: lyrics have been altered to more closely reflect the scripture.)

For the tune of Wonderful Merciful Savior, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiVvHxgHL5Q>

Passover Service

The story of Passover begins at the very beginning, when darkness was on the face of the deep. And Elohim said, Let there be light, and there was Light.

[Participants each light a candle]

“Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, Creator of the Universe, who created light and said that it was good.”

Elohim created the Earth and every living thing in it. He created male and female humans, and put them in the Garden of Eden. Elohim told them they could eat the fruit of any tree, except for one. But the woman and the man did eat from that tree, and in that moment, sin entered the world. No longer could the man, Adam, and the woman, Havah, walk with Elohim, nor could they live in the perfect garden He had created for them. But Elohim longed for people to walk with Him again, so he made a plan to reunite the Creator with the created.

Many years later, there was a man named Avram who lived in Ur. YHWH called Avram to come out of Ur, leave everything behind and dwell in Canaan. Avram did so, but had to go to Egypt due to famine. When Avram was able to leave Egypt, YHWH told Avram that he would give the land of Canaan to Avram and his descendants forever.

YHWH empowered Avram to defeat all the pagan kings in the land. It was then that Melekh-Tzedek, the King of Righteousness, priest of El Elyon, brought out bread and wine, and blessed Avram. Thus was instituted the blessing for bread and wine.

[Holding up matzah:] “Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

[All eat a piece of matzah]

[Holding up wine:] “Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who gives us the fruit of the vine.”

[All drink some wine and refill cup if needed.]

Avram had no children for a long time. YHWH changed his name to Avraham and promised that he would be father to many. At times Avraham doubted YHWH’s promise that his descendents would be as numerous as the dust of the earth. But his wife Sarah conceived and bore him a son who he named Yitzchak. This son was to be a father to a great nation.

After these things, Elohim tested Avraham. He said to him,

“Avraham! Take your son, your only son, whom you love, Yitzchak, and offer him as a burnt offering on a mountain that I will show you.”

Avraham prepared to do as he was told. Yitzchak asked him, “Father, I see the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Avraham replied, “YHWH will provide himself the lamb.” Avraham built the altar, laid his son on it, and prepared to sacrifice his son. At that moment, an angel called out to him,

“Avraham! Don’t lay your hand on him! Now I know you are a man who fears YHWH.”

Nearby, Avraham saw a ram caught in the bushes. This was the replacement YHWH had provided! Avraham offered up the ram instead of his son. Thus was instituted the offering of the lamb as a substitute.

Yitzchak had a son named Yaakov, also called Yisrael, and Yisrael had twelve sons. When a famine came over the land of Canaan once again, Yisrael’s tribe relocated to Egypt, just as Avraham had once done. The people of Yisrael stayed in Egypt and became slaves to Pharaoh, king of Egypt. They were forced to make bricks and build cities and temples dedicated to the pagan Egyptian gods.

We eat bitter herbs to remind us of how bitter slavery is.

[Participants each take a taste of bitter herbs.]

Hundreds of years later, a new Pharaoh was afraid of the people of Yisrael. He cruelly decreed that all their newborn sons must be killed. One mother hid her son and put him in a basket on the river Nile. An Egyptian princess found the child and named him Moshe. Moshe was raised in Pharaoh’s house. When he was a grown man, he left Egypt and dwelt in Midyan, and became a shepherd.

One day, Moshe saw a burning bush on a mountain. The bush seemed to be on fire, but was not being burned up. Moshe went up to see the amazing sight. When he got there, YHWH called to him saying,

“Moshe, Moshe! Take your sandals off your feet, because the place you are standing is holy ground. I am the Elohim of your father, of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. I have seen how my people are being oppressed in Egypt and I have heard their cry. I am going to bring them out of Egypt to a good land flowing with milk and honey. Therefore I will send you to Pharaoh, so you can lead the descendents of Yisrael out of Egypt.”

Moshe went to Pharaoh and demanded that he let the people go. But Pharaoh said, “Who is this YHWH that I should let Yisrael go? I don’t know YHWH and I won’t let the people go!”

So YHWH sent ten plagues upon Egypt:

[Each participant uses a finger to put a spot of wine on their plate for each plague:]

Blood, frogs, lice, flies, pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, death.

[Sing: Ten Plagues of Egypt, to the tune of The 12 Days of...]

In the 1st plague of Egypt, YHWH gave to thee:

(&) The Nile River flowing with blood

2nd - Herds of Croaking Frogs

3rd – Swarms of biting lice

4th – Flies as thick as darkness

5th – DISEASE ON ALL LIVESTOCK

6th – Boils upon their faces

7th – Hail on land and beast

8th - Locusts eating gardens

9th – Days of deepening darkness

10th – Firstborn a’ dying

The last plague, death, came upon all the firstborn of Egypt. To keep the firstborn of Israel safe, YHWH told them that each family should choose a lamb. The lamb must be perfect, a

male in its first year, and none of its bones were to be broken. Each family slaughtered the lamb at dusk, and smeared the lamb's blood on their doorway. YHWH said,

“ I will pass through the land of Egypt and kill all the firstborn, both men and animals, and I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. The blood will serve as a sign marking the houses where you are; when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the death blow will not strike you.”

[Participants take wine, as a symbol of blood, and use parsley to apply it to the outside doorways of the house. Alternately, it may be applied to the symbolic doorways in the centerpieces on the table. In absence of either option, wine may be applied to participants' plates in the shape of a doorway.]

The people had to prepare their meals quickly that night, because they were getting ready to leave Egypt. They ate unleavened bread, or matzah. YHWH commanded that every year we eat only matzah and no leavened bread for seven days, so each year we celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

So the people of Israel left Egypt and camped by the Red Sea. Pharaoh decided to pursue them, and YHWH blocked his way with a pillar of fire. YHWH opened up the Red Sea and the children of Israel walked through on dry ground. When the pillar of fire died and Pharaoh pursued them through the sea, the sea closed up on him and his army. The children of Israel were free from Egypt at last!

[Holding up cup:] Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who brought us out of Egypt!

[Drink wine]

[Sing Horse and Rider:]

**I will sing unto YHWH
For He has triumphed gloriously
The horse and rider thrown into the sea! [clap clap clap] (x2)**

**YH-WH, my strength, my song
Has now become my victory (x2)**

**Yah is El and I will praise him
My fathers' Elohim and I will exalt Him (x2)**

We eat honey and butter on our matzah to remind us that freedom from slavery is sweet, and to remind us that the land YHWH promised Israel was “flowing with milk and honey.”

[Participants eat the matzah with butter and honey.]

YHWH gave the children of Israel righteous laws to live by. They eventually settled in the land of Canaan, which came to be known as the land of Israel. Thousands of years passed. Some of the people forgot about Passover, but there were always some who remembered, and who each year slaughtered a lamb in remembrance. The people were at times wicked, and many refused to keep YHWH's laws. From time to time prophets arose and foretold of a Messiah would come to Israel and save them from sinfulness.

Two thousand years ago, a child was born, the only begotten son of YHWH Himself. His name was Yeshua, and he is the only person who ever lived a sinless life. That means that he kept every one of YHWH's laws perfectly. A prophet named Yochanan laid eyes on him and proclaimed,

[All participants:] "Behold, the lamb of YHWH who takes away the sins of the world."

Just like the Passover lamb, he was perfect. He taught and performed miracles for almost a year before his last supper with his disciples; as the Passover lamb was in his first year of age, Yeshua was in his first year of ministry.

At Yeshua's last supper, the last evening before Passover that year, he took some matzah and broke it:

"Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth."

And he said, "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

[Each participant breaks and eats some matzah.]

Likewise he took the wine:

"Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine."

And Yeshua said, "Take, drink, this is my blood, shed for you, that you may have your sins forgiven."

[Each participant drinks some wine, refills cup.]

The next day, at the same time the Passover lambs were being prepared for slaughter, Yeshua was sentenced to die on an execution stake. Like the lambs, he had committed no crime. Some of the people were given a choice to set Yeshua free, or to set free a criminal. The people chose to set the criminal free.

Yeshua was whipped many times and a crown of thorns was placed on his head. He was nailed to an execution stake. At the time when the very last Passover lamb was killed, he said, "It is finished!"

[All participants:] It is finished!

And his spirit left his body.

The people were eager for him to die before Passover started, so they decided to break his legs to speed the process. Before they did so, they realized he was already dead; thus, the picture of the bones of the Passover lamb to remain unbroken was fulfilled. They pierced his side, and out poured blood and water. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Yeshayahu:

“He was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

On Passover, we remember:

I am the criminal, I am the one who has sinned. I am the one who ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. I sinned against the Almighty, and I deserved to die. But like Yitzchak, I was spared. Like the criminal, I was set free. Yeshua took my place. He brought me out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, of idolatry, of false worship.

His blood covers the doorposts of this house, separating us, keeping us holy.

When Yeshua drank of the fruit of the vine at the last supper, he said, “I shall certainly not drink of this fruit of the vine from now until that day when I drink it anew with you in the reign of My Father.”

We drink this cup in anticipation of that glorious day when we will drink the cup of celebration with our King of Kings.

[All participants raise cups of wine]

Blessed are you, YHWH our Elohim, King of the Universe, who has created the world, and who has redeemed the world, by the blood of Messiah Yeshua, our Passover. Amen!

[All participants drink their whole cup]

Next Year in Jerusalem!

[Sing Wonderful Merciful Savior:] tinurl.com/wonderfulmercifulsavior

**Wonderful, merciful Savior
Precious redeemer and friend;
Who would have thought that a Lamb could
Rescue the souls of men?
Oh, you rescue the souls of men!**

**Counselor, Comforter, Keeper
Spirit we long to embrace;
You offer hope when our hearts have
Hopelessly lost the way
Oh, we hopelessly lost the way**

**You are the One that we praise
You are the One we adore
You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for
Oh, our hearts always hunger for**

**Almighty, infinite Father
Faithfully loving your own
Here in our weakness you find us
Falling before Your throne
Oh, we're falling before your throne**

**You are the One that we praise
You are the One we adore
You give the healing and grace
Our hearts always hunger for
Oh, our hearts always hunger for**

...Speaking of hunger... let's eat! ☺