"For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the Festival." —1 Corinthians 5:7-8

OLD TESTAMENT ORIGIN OF THE PASSOVER

THE PASSOVER is the Old Testament feast that celebrates and remembers God's liberation of Israel from Egypt. After Joseph saved Egypt from starvation (Genesis 41), the Israelites lived in Egypt as guests. Eventually, the Egyptians forgot about Joseph and enslaved the Israelites (Exodus 1:6–14). The book of Exodus explains how God freed his people from Egypt. Because of the hardness of Pharaoh's heart, God punished Egypt with ten plagues (Exodus 7–11). During the last plague, God killed all the first-borns humans and animals—in the land of Egypt. However, God gave his people a way to escape the destruction: a lamb could take the place of the first-born in the family. God gave Moses the instructions for the time when God's punishment passed over the Israelite homes (Exodus 12). This is the Passover. The Passover feast was to be repeated throughout the generations as a memorial forever.

The following information looks at:

- ► The Old Testament origin and celebration of the Passover
- ► Passover symbolism and how it anticipated Jesus' work
- ► The Passover feast's relevance for Christ's followers today
- ► A comparison of Jesus with the Passover lamb

THE YEAR AD 70 marks a defining moment in the history of Judaism. The Roman armies destroyed the temple. The temple played a crucial role in the Jewish faith. Until then, the main component of the Passover was the sacrifice of the lamb in the temple. When the temple disappeared, the Haggadah, the "telling" of God's acts of deliverance, became the central part of the Passover. Today a roasted lamb shank bone symbolizes the lamb that would have been sacrificed in the temple.

1

THE PASSOVER IN THE BIBLE

In Exodus 12, God gives Moses the instructions and requirements for the Passover.

CHRIST
In Christ, every believer is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Old things and the old life are past.
Christ was closely inspected by: • Pilate (Matthew 27:11–26; Luke 23:1–6; 13–25; John 18:28–19:16) • Herod (Luke 23:8–12) • Annas (John 18:12–13; 19–24) • Caiaphas (Matthew 26:57). They could find no fault in him. Christ is the "lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:19).
Accepting Christ's sacrifice is required for all who want to be part of God's community (Romans 3:21–26).
Christ shed his blood to rescue his people. We need to be covered or justified by the blood of the Lamb to be rescued from condemnation (Romans 3:25; 5:9). Christ is the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).
During the Last Supper, Jesus refers to the bread as "my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).
To speed up Jesus' death, the Roman soldiers were going to break his legs. However, Jesus was already dead, so his bones remained unbroken (John 19:32–33).

THE PASSOVER CELEBRATION AN

FIRST CUP AND KIDDUSH ("SANCTIFICATION")

SEDER Before the Seder began, traditionally a woman lit special candles to mark the commencement of this sacred time. Immediately after this, the head of the table raised the first cup of wine-the cup of sanctification-and blessed it.

LORD'S According to Luke 22:17–18, "After taking the cup, he gave thanks and SUPPER said, 'Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

THE FIRST WASHING OF THE HANDS AND THE BITTER HERBS

SEDER As everyone got ready to partake of the Passover meal, the leader of the Passover washed his hands. Then a plate with salted water was passed around into which everyone dipped a piece of lettuce or parsley (karpas). The salt was a reminder of the tears the Israelites shed during their bondage in Egypt. The green herb was a reminder of a new beginning.

LORD'S Jesus went further than the traditional hand washing and taught his disciples SUPPER humility by washing their feet (John 13:1-17). During the remembrance of the Israelites' tears, Judas' betrayal was likely also a bitter experience for Jesus (Mark 14:20).

THE AFIKOMEN

SEDER The leader took three *matzo* breads and placed them in a special bag with three compartments. The middle matzah was broken and one piece placed back in the matzo bag. The other piece was hidden under a pillow and was called Afikomen.

LORD'S Although the practice of the Afikomen goes back to antiquity, it is quite SUPPER possible that it originated after the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in AD 70. In other words, it probably was not practiced in Jesus' time.

MEN		A practice in the contemporary celebration of the Passover—possibly also an ancient practice—is to take three <i>matzo</i> breads and place them in a special bag with three compartments.
	\$\$X	At one point in the celebration, the middle bread is taken out and broken into two pieces. One of the pieces is returned to the middle bag and the other one is hidden under a pillow. Traditionally, children look for it.

- 🗱 At one point in the celebration, the middle bread is taken out and broken into two pieces. One of the pieces is returned to the middle bag and the other one is hidden under a pillow. Traditionally, children look for it.
- x When a child finds the piece of *matzah*, the leader of the celebration must "rescue" it by paying some money to the child.
- At the end of the meal, when the Passover Seder is complete, the Afikomen is revealed.

(LL)

BASED ON EXODUS 6:6-7, Jewish tradition has incorporated four cups of wine into the Passover celebration. "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people ... "

The Cup of SANCTIFICATION	" I will <i>bring</i> you"
The Cup of PLAGUES	" I will <i>free</i> you"
The Cup of Redemption	" I will <i>redeem</i> you"
The Cup of PRAISE (also called Cup of Acceptance)	" I will <i>take</i> you"

THE SECOND CUP AND THE HAGGADAH

The leader took the second cup of wine (the cup of plagues) and blessed it. No SEDER one drank from it until the Haggadah ("the telling") was finished. At this point a child asked the four questions and the leader of the ceremony would tell the story of God's redemption in the Exodus. Traditionally, the answer had to cover at least three elements of the Passover celebration: (1) The Passover sacrifice, (2) the bitter herbs, and (3) the unleavened bread (matzo). The four questions can be found in the box to the right.

LORD'S In the Gospel account of the Lord's Supper, the words, "This is my SUPPER body..." are Jesus' re-interpretation of the Passover. It is here that the sacrificed lamb and the unleavened bread receive greater meaning: Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29) sacrificed in our place (1 Peter 1:17-21) and he is the Bread of Life that comes down from heaven (John 6: 33-35).

x We come as children to the Lord and we are rewarded when we find him. SYMBOLISM x Jewish Christians who continue celebrating the Passover in the traditional way understand this practice to symbolize important Christian beliefs. The three *matzo* breads placed in the one bag point to God's very nature: Three persons in one. ☆ The breaking of the second bread and hiding it under a pillow symbolize Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection from the tomb. MESSIANIC It is the hiding of the Afikomen for the duration of the Seder represents Christ being hidden from our view for three days in the tomb. Today the *matzo* breads are pierced and striped because of the way the bread is made. In the past, matzah looked like pita bread. ☆ Today many Jewish Christians understand the piercing and the stripes to symbolize the piercing of Jesus on the cross (Jn. 19:34) and his flogging by the Roman soldiers (Jn. 19:1).

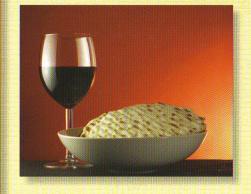
ITS SYMBOLISM

THE HAGGADAH INCLUDES four questions. Today, the Haggadah is the central part of the Passover Seder.

- On all nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night, only unleavened bread. Why is this night different from all other nights?
- On all other nights, we eat all kinds of herbs, but on this night, we eat bitter herbs. Why is this night different from all other nights?
- On all other nights, we do not dip our vegetables even one time, but on this night we dip them twice, in salt water and charoset. Why is this night different from all other nights?
- On all other nights, we eat either sitting or reclining, but on this night, we eat only reclining. Why is this night different from all other nights?

(Answers on page 8.)





FIRST PART OF THE HALLEL AND THE SECOND CUP

SEDER At the end of the Haggadah, the leader raised the second cup of wine and invited all to sing the first part of the Hallel, which is the recitation of Psalms 113 and 114. Then everyone drank the second cup, the cup of plagues.

LORD'S The New Testament does not SUPPER give a detailed account of Jesus' last actions, but rather focuses on the New Covenant (1 Cor. 11:25) and Jesus' sacrifice about to occur. Although they might have recited the first part of the Hallel and taken the second cup, it is not registered in the Scriptures.

SECOND HAND WASHING AND PASSOVER MEAL

All washed their hands once again. Then the leader took the *matzo* breads SEDER and broke them into pieces. The leader dipped the bread into a mixture of bitter herbs and distributed them to the participants. The meal was then taken.

LORD'S As was traditional in the celebration of the Passover, Jesus dipped a piece SUPPER of bread; however, he used this moment to indicate who his betrayer would be (John 13:26). 5

THE GRACE AFTER MEALS AND THE THIRD CUP

When the meal was finished, no one ate any other food. Instead, the SEDER leader of the celebration poured a third cup of wine. Everyone offered another blessing on the third cup of wine, called the cup of redemption, and drank from this cup.

LORD's After the meal, Jesus got up, took a *matzah* bread, and said, "This is my SUPPER body given for you; do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Then he continued with the third cup. He blessed it and said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:25).

THE SECOND PART OF THE HALLEL AND THE FOURTH CUP

SEDER Once everyone drank the third cup, they recited the second part of the Hallel (praise), which consists of Psalms 115–118. No one drank wine between the third cup and the end of the second part of the Hallel. At the end of the singing, they drank the fourth cup of wine, called the cup of praise. Then the Seder ended.

LORD'S Jesus and the disciples finished the Lord's Supper, and Matthew tells us, SUPPER "When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matthew 26:30). The hymn was probably the Hallel. The fourth cup was not drunk! "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" (Matthew 26:29). The last cup of the Passover will be drunk at the wedding feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9).

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Rose Publishing. 2008. Christ in the Passover wall chart (ISBN: 9781596361881). Torrance: Rose Publishing.
- Rose Publishing. 2004. Feasts and Holidays of the Bible, pamphlet (ISBN: 9781890947583), chart (ISBN: 9781890947453), and PowerPoint® (ISBN: 9781596361775).

Torrance: Rose Publishing.

- Rosen, Ceil and Moishe. 2006. Feasts of the Bible. Chicago: Moody Publishers.
- Youngblood, Ronald F., ed. 1986, 1995. New Illustrated Bible Dictionary. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Zimmerman, Martha. 1981, 2004. Celebrating Biblical Feasts. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers.

THE OLD TESTAMENT PASSOVER

The Passover was a celebration, remembrance, thanksgiving and participation in God's mighty acts of salvation for his people. The New Testament equivalent of the Passover, the Lord's Supper, functions in similar ways for Christians today.

- The Lord's Supper is a time of remembrance and thanksgiving (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24–25).
- 2. The Lord's Supper is a time for refreshing and communion (Romans 5:10; 1 Corinthians 10:16).
- 3. The Lord's Supper is a time for anticipation and recommitment (1 Corinthians 11:26, 28–29).



Afikomen comes from a Greek word meaning "that which comes last." It is a piece of *matzah* hidden during the *Seder*.

Betzah is a boiled and roasted egg used in the Passover meal.

Barekh is the after-meal blessing.

Charoset is a sweet apple mixture.

Haggadah means "the telling." It refers to the book used to explain the *Seder* service.

Hallel is Hebrew for "praise." Psalms 113–118 are used for prayers of praise during the *Seder*.

Karpas is one of the symbolic foods in the *Seder*, usually parsley.

Kiddush is Hebrew for a prayer of sanctification or consecration.

Ma Nishtanah means "what is different?" and represents the four questions of the *Haggadah*.

Maggid is the telling of the story of the Exodus.

Maror is Hebrew for "bitter." Usually horseradish, it is one of the symbolic foods in the *Seder*.

Matzah/Matzo is bread made without leaven. Generally, *matzah* is bread (singular) and *matzo* is the meal itself or breads (plural).

Nirtzah is the conclusion of the Seder.

Pesach is Hebrew for "Passover."

Seder means "set order," the procedure or agenda for the celebration of the *Pesach*.

Shulhan Orekh is the eating of the *Seder* meal.

Tzafun is the eating of the Afikomen.

Urkhatz is the washing of the hands.

Yahatz is the breaking of the matzo.

A SEDER FOR CHRISTIANS

This is a shortened description of the Seder. Celebrating this Seder would take about as long as celebrating the Lord's Supper. A more complete Seder, which would take significantly longer, can be found in the reference books mentioned on page 6.

INTRODUCTION

CANDLE LIGHTING

A WOMAN or older girl lights the candles, then she reads this blessing: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who has set us apart by his word, and in whose name we light the festival lights.

FIRST CUP, THE CUP OF SANCTIFICATION

LEADER holds the glass of wine or juice and explains that this is the first of four cups, the cup of sanctification. EVERYONE lifts his or her cup and reads the blessing: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine. All drink a little.

PARSLEY

LEADER holds up parsley and says: This parsley represents life, which God gives us.

Then he holds up the bowl of salt water and says: This salt water represents the tears of the Israelites because of the suffering they endured as slaves in Egypt. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.



EVERYONE takes a piece of parsley, dips it in salt water, and eats it.

HAGGADAH, THE FOUR QUESTIONS

LEADER says: We celebrate the Passover to remember how God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, and we review the story by asking and answering four questions.

A CHILD reads the following: On all other nights we eat bread or matzah. On this night, why do we eat only matzah? On all other nights, we eat all kinds of vegetables. On this night,



why do we eat only bitter herbs? On all other nights, we do not dip our vegetables. On this night, why do we dip them twice? On all other nights, we eat sitting or reclining. On this night, why do we eat only reclining?

LEADER says: On Passover we eat only matzah, flat bread without yeast, because the Israelites did not have time for their bread

dough to rise when they left Egypt. Leaven, or yeast, is a metaphor for the bad influence of sin in our lives. It is a way to represent physically that we are now a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We get rid of the leaven, which is the old life of sin.

THE LEADER holds up the plate with three matzo, takes out the middle piece, breaks it into two, wraps half in a napkin, and says: This bread of affliction reminds us that Jesus suffered for our sins.

Read Isaiah 53:5 and Zechariah 12:10 aloud.

LEADER says: I am going to hide this broken piece of matzah, called the Afikomen, which means "that which comes last." Later the children will look for it. The one who finds it gets a prize. Children close their eyes while someone hides the Afikomen. Then the leader takes a piece of the other half of broken matzah and passes the rest around for everyone to take a piece. All eat.

LEADER says: On Passover we eat bitter herbs to remember the Israelites' terrible life of slavery in Egypt.

EVERYONE takes a piece of matzah, scoops horseradish onto it, and eats it.

LEADER says: On Passover we dip vegetables twice. We have already dipped parsley in salt water to remind us of the Israelites' tears. But we also dip our vegetables in sweet charoset [chah-roh-set]. This reminds us that even in slavery, the Israelites had hope in God.

EVERYONE takes another piece of matzah, scoops charoset onto it, and eats it.



LEADER says: On Passover we recline, or sit comfortably, as free people. In contrast, the Israelites ate the first Passover meal standing, ready to leave any minute.

- 🕸 Leaven is something added to bread to make it rise (for example, yeast). Leaven requires time to expand.
- ☆ In Exodus 12:14–20 God commanded the Israelites to prepare unleavened bread as a way to remind them of the haste with which they had to leave Egypt.
- 1 In those times, a leftover piece of fermented dough was used to make a new batch of dough rise. Today we use yeast to leaven the dough.
- LEAVEN x Leaven is prohibited only at the Passover and in foods dedicated to the Lord by fire (Leviticus 2:11).
 - x In the Passover, removing leaven may represent a complete break from the previous life of slavery in Egypt and the coming into a new life under the Lord.
 - x However, for the peace offering (Leviticus 7:13) and the bread offered during Pentecost (Leviticus 23:17), leavened breads are required.
 - ☆ This requirement suggests that in the Bible leaven does not always represent sin.

The Passover Story

LEADER summarizes the story of Passover from Exodus 1–7. Rabbi Gamaliel, teacher of Rabbi Saul (Paul the Apostle), said that in telling the Passover story one must remember these three things:

- 1. The matzah (unleavened bread)
- *2. The maror (bitter herbs)*

NEW

THE

EAVEN

3. The Pesach (Passover lamb)

THE SECOND CUP, THE CUP OF PLAGUES

LEADER says: Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites go, so God sent ten plagues to change his mind. Now we have the second cup, the cup of plagues. Instead of drinking it, we are going to name the plagues, dip our fingers in our cups, and drop wine or juice on our plates each time a plague is named.

EVERYONE does so, reading each plague three times: blood, frogs, lice, flies, cattle disease, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, death of the firstborn.

PASSOVER LAMB

LEADER holds up the bone and says: This bone reminds us of the Passover lamb that was killed. He briefly summarizes Exodus 11-12.



Then he says: Jewish people can no longer sacrifice a lamb on Passover because the temple was destroyed. But no one needs to make a sacrifice because Jesus died as the Passover lamb to take the punishment for our sin.

TESTAMEN In the New Testament leaven may be used as a symbol of either good or bad influence:

- ☆ In Matthew 13:33 Jesus uses the image of leaven to explain the kingdom of heaven. Like leaven, the kingdom of heaven works unseen, powerfully, and relentlessly.
- ☆ In Luke 12:1, Jesus warns the disciples to beware of the Pharisees' teachings because, like leaven, they corrupt everything they touch.
- ☆ The Apostle Paul uses leaven imagery in 1 Corinthians 5:6–8 to emphasize the effect of bad influence: it spreads quickly and quietly. In other words, "malice and wickedness" corrupt everything just as leaven spreads and transforms the whole lump of bread.
- Ζ ☆ For Jews today, cleaning the house of yeast symbolizes getting rid of any sins in their lives. When a Jewish family prepares the home for the Passover celebration, they are required to search and remove any leaven from their house.
 - x This parallels the searching of the heart and repentance that Christians do when coming to the communion table.

LEADER holds up the betzah (the boiled and roasted egg) and says: The egg symbolizes mourning and reminds us that the temple was destroyed, a sad event for the Jewish people.

FIRST PART OF THE HALLEL

LEADER says: At this point in the Seder, we recite together the words of Psalms 113 and 114.

EVERYONE drinks some of the second cup, the cup of plagues.

PASSOVER MEAL

EAT THE DINNER: (possibly roasted lamb or glazed chicken, gefilte fish, matzo ball soup, stuffing, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, and sponge cake).

AFIKOMEN

CHILDREN look for the matzah that was hidden earlier, and the leader gives the one who finds it a little money.

LEADER says: When Jesus celebrated the last Passover before his death, he took the Afikomen, broke it, and blessed it.

ALL READ: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

LEADER says: Then Jesus gave some of the matzo to his disciples and said, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

He breaks off a piece of the Afikomen and passes it around for everyone to take a piece. All eat.

THIRD CUP, THE CUP OF REDEMPTION

LEADER says: Then Jesus took the third cup, the cup of redemption, and said the blessing.

ALL READ: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

LEADER says: Then Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20).

EVERYONE DRINKS.

CUP OF ELIJAH

LEADER holds up the cup from the place at the table that has been saved for Elijah and says: This cup is for Elijah the prophet, who will come before the Messiah returns. Read Malachi 4:5.

LEADER *says:* Jewish people look for Elijah's return on Passover, so they set a place for him at the table and open the door to welcome him. Christians acknowledge that Elijah has come again in the presence of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14), and also that the Messiah has come. We open the door in expectation of the second coming of the Messiah: Maranatha! (Revelation 22:20).

VOLUNTEER opens the door.

THE SECOND PART OF THE HALLEL AND THE FOURTH CUP, THE CUP OF PRAISE

LEADER *says*: After Jesus and his disciples ate the *Afikomen* and drank the third cup, Matthew 26:30 says they sang a hymn.

READ Psalm 118 together.

LEADER *lifts his cup and says:* The last cup is the cup of praise. Let us read the blessing together: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

ALL DRINK.

LEADER *says:* The *Seder* ends with a traditional wish for celebrating the next Passover: Next year in Jerusalem!

The End

TODAY, there are different groups of Jews in the world. The two largest groups are **Ashkenazim** and **Sephardim** Jews. Besides their places of origin, some of their traditions slightly differ from each other.

Ashkenazim	Sephardim
ASHKENAZ was the Hebrew name for Germany in the Middle Ages.	SEPHARAD was a place mentioned in Obadiah 20. Later, when they moved to the Iberian Peninsula (Portugal and Spain), the word was associated with the place. Today, in Modern Hebrew, SEPHARAD means "Spain."
Most Jews today in North America are of ASHKENAZI descent. There are over five million ASHKENAZIM in North America.	There are less than 150,000 SEPHARDIM in North America today. Most of them live in Israel and France.
ASHKENAZIM Jews avoid eating rice, corn, peanuts and beans during Passover.	SEPHARDIM Jews may eat rice, corn, peanuts and beans during Passover.

RECIPES FOR PASSOVER

🕸 Charoset 🅸

Charoset is a Passover dish that reminds us of the mortar that the slaves used when they built for Pharaoh.

- 12 apples
- 1 to 1 ½ cups of pecans
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 6-8 tablespoon sugar or to taste
- 6-8 tablespoon sweet red wine or juice



Preheat oven to 375° F.

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups matzo meal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup oil

Chop the nuts and apples to the consistency you want (a food processor can be used). The texture of the charoset should remind us of the mortar used by the slaves to cement bricks in place. Sprinkle with spices, and moisten with wine.

☆ Passover Rolls ☆

In a medium bowl, mix *matzo* meal with salt and sugar. In a medium saucepan, bring water and oil to a boil. Add liquid to *matzo* meal mixture. Mix until well combined. Add eggs one at a time. Shape by hand into balls and place on a well-greased cookie sheet. Bake for approximately 45 minutes or until nicely browned. Makes 1 dozen rolls.

x Low-Fat Potato Latkes (Pancakes) x

Preheat oven to 375°F.

- 2 ½ lbs. white potatoes (about 6 medium), peeled and grated
- 1 cup onion grated
- ¹/₂ cup carrots grated
- ¼ cup *matzo* meal
- 1 ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 4 egg whites
- Cooking spray

Peel and grate the potatoes and vegetables, put in a large bowl with the remaining ingredients and mix well. Spray muffin tins with cooking spray. Put ¼ cup of the mixture in each muffin cup. Bake for 45 minutes. Remove by flipping onto a cookie sheet.

Bake for 10 more minutes or until crisp. Serve with sour cream and apple sauce. Makes about 24.