

CHAPTER 12

MESSIANIC HAGGADAH: THE ORDER OF THE PASSOVER SERVICE FOR THE CHURCH OF GOD

Let all things be done decently and in order.

—Apostle Paul



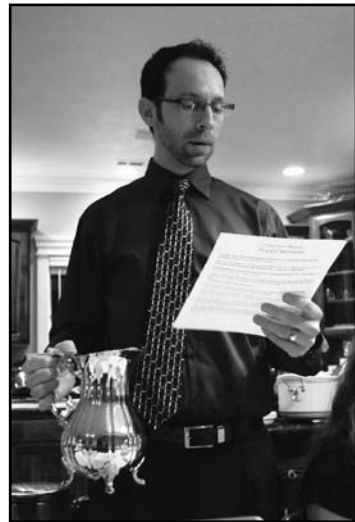
iThe Passover really begins with the preparation for the Seder (Luke 22:8). Once the rooms to be used are clean and organized and all leavening is removed, the

tables can be set. A count of those eating the Passover is helpful for both food preparation and the table settings (Ex. 12:4). The wine should not be poured ahead of time. Special care should be taken to set aside enough wine for each of the blessings that come during and after the supper (usually four blessings). Matzah or unleavened bread can be placed at each table. Additionally, special care should be taken to set aside some matzah in a special place (either covered with a clean napkin, or in a special cloth pouch) for the ceremonial breaking of the bread that symbolizes the body of our Messiah. Typically, the dress code for Passover is the same as a church Sabbath or synagogue service.

[Note: This messianic Seder and Haggadah does not include some of the nonbiblical, traditional foods and customs that were later added by the Jews as part of the Seder. For example, later tradition makes use of a roasted egg, which is said to be symbolic of a peace offering and of the destruction of the temple and burning of Jerusalem in A.D.70. Later tradition also makes use of chopped apples and nuts mixed with sweet wine, honey, and cinnamon, which is said to represent the mortar used by the Hebrew slaves. Many Jews prepare a saltwater dip, symbolizing the tears of the Israelite slaves in Egypt. Unleavened bread is hidden and sought out by the children present—a fun traditional to further include children. This was called the *Afikomen*. Later tradition also developed the custom of the ritual washing of hands and the setting of a place and cup at the table for Elijah, in anticipation of his prophesied return.

While these traditions are not wrong, and it is always good to make Passover a stimulating and enjoyable evening for the children, I have sought to present herein only those elements that are of biblical origin.]

ii Some blessings that are recited require more than a mere “amen” by the family or assembly at their conclusion. To make the Passover *b`rakhah* (blessing) usually involves those attending the Seder reciting a blessing, or at least saying amen, in unison. Therefore, it is helpful to provide a copy of each blessing that will be recited during the evening so that the parts to be recited by the congregants and the sections to be read by the leader are both clearly identified. Copies of each blessing should be specified according to the order of its use and then placed by each table setting, or incorporated into a Haggadah and distributed. I have included blessings for each of the four Passover *b`rakhah* (blessings) and labeled them. They may be used in their entirety or in part, or you may wish to use them as examples to aid in composing or finding other appropriate blessings. Or you can obtain copies of



this Haggadah (or another appropriate messianic Haggadah) and distribute them to all so they can follow along with the blessings and service.

iii Roasted lamb (or goat, Ex. 12:5), bitter herbs, bitter greens, unleavened bread, and wine are the minimum ingredients to be prepared for the Seder. (Since Christ, the Passover Lamb of God, fulfilled the need for sacrifices once and for all [Heb. 7:27], we no longer need to roast a whole lamb or be concerned with any bones or leftovers.) Because there are numerous Jewish recipe books and websites with a variety of good Passover recipes, I've not reproduced any here.

We proceed now with the “telling.”

MESSIANIC HAGGADAH



L Passover begins on the evening of Abib 14 at twilight just after sunset but before nightfall (Num. 9:3). As soon as everyone is seated, have someone open the evening with prayer and the giving of thanks; then begin serving the Paschal meal. What a special treat it is. Let us all be grateful. [Remember God's promise to bless those who bless the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:3), therefore it is customary to include a blessing for Israel within the blessings.]

As soon as the people are seated, the minister, rabbi, leading teacher, or patriarch begins the Seder with formal discussion and teaching about the meaning and history of Passover. The Exodus from Egypt and the New Testament parallels should be covered. It fits

God's purpose to allow certain aspects of Passover to be discussed in brief organized messages by willing and capable fathers and leading members of the congregation. The leader will need to coordinate with each contributor the time allotted for any discussions, to prevent the service from exceeding midnight. Remember, God has called each head of household to act as a priest on behalf of his family at Passover. During any pauses in teaching, there should also be parental teachings and family discussions that round out the evening.



2 Early in the meal the first cup of blessing—the Cup of Sanctification—is to be lifted. Biblically, blessings are spoken and given over wine with a customary “amen” by each of the parishioners (1 Chron. 16:36; Neh. 8:6; Ps. 41:13; Luke 24:53; Rom. 1:25; 1 Cor. 14:16; Phil. 4:23; Rev. 7:12).

Note: Traditionally there are four blessings in the Passover *b'rakhah*, that are recited during the Passover Seder. Scripturally, Luke and Matthew reveal the last three, with the first one (the one with the meal) being implied. The first blessing is made while eating the

Passover meal (Luke 22:15–16); the second blessing is made over the wine that is divided among all during the meal (Luke 22:17–18); the third blessing is made with the unleavened bread after supper—that represents the body of the Messiah (Luke 22:19); and the fourth with wine, also after supper—that represents Messiah’s blood that was shed for each of us (Luke 22:20).

Each blessing is accompanied by a sip of wine that came from the Cup of Blessing, a Kiddush (or Kadesh),



meaning “to sanctify.” A Kiddush cup is a cup or drinking vessel used for purposes of sanctification. Regardless of the particular means chosen to fulfill the command to “divide the cup,” a Kiddush cup large enough to accommodate the size of your Passover group should be obtained. (This becomes difficult for larger groups.) After pouring the wine into the cup for blessing, recite the

blessing over the wine. Then the wine is to be “divided up” among each member, usually by pouring the wine from the Kiddush into each individual member’s cup or by use of a wine fountain and a Kiddush cup set. (Some smaller family groups may wish to simply pass around the Cup of Blessing to each member to drink

from.) Paul called the Kiddush “*the cup of blessing with which we bless*” (1 Cor. 10:16).

While the wine is being poured and divided up to all, the use of wine and blessings at Passover should be explained scripturally by the family patriarch, minister, teacher (rabbi), or leading member. Before taking of the wine, God is blessed first, followed by blessings directed toward God’s people. Here, then, is the first blessing.



KADESH

The First Cup of Blessing: The Cup of Sanctification

*I will take you as My people, and I will be your
God.... I am the LORD your God who brings you
out from under the burdens of the Egyptian.*

—Exodus 6:7

*To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness
to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they
may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance
among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.*

—Acts 26:18

Leader: Pour the Kiddush full of wine and recite

Dear God, You abound in holiness, Your mighty power is awesome, Your majestic beauty is supreme over all, and the depth of Your wisdom is beyond searching out. But Your greatest gift to us begins with Your love and mercy resulting in our sanctification through the body and blood of Your promised Messiah, the Passover Lamb of God.

All:

Halleluiah! We bless and praise You, Yahweh the Most High God, for the indescribable gift to us of sanctification through Your powerful arm, stretched out to us in love.

[Divide the wine. Drink the first cup of blessing with contemplation.]

Leader:

We praise and thank You, who first loved us, for calling and sanctifying us through the gift of Your Son. We love You, O God. Please accept our love and aid is in grateful praise to Your Holy Name. Help us to humbly walk with You, our Father, and with the Rock of our salvation.

All:

We love and praise You, Lord, who first loved us. We thank You for sanctifying us as Your special people in praise and unto good works.

Leader:

From humble beginnings, we praise You who are without beginning. We bless You, our eternal Elohim, for life, for we live by Your Word.

All:

Praise the Ancient of Days. From the jaws of death we cry out to Him who alone has defeated death, and whose command for us is everlasting life. You are the only Savior and eternally blessed God, and we are Your people. Amen.

THE WINE OF BLESSING FOR GOD'S DELIVERANCE, TAKEN WITH THE PASSOVER MEAL

3 During the meal a heartfelt prayer of gratefulness and praise should be made to God for the food, the lamb, the bitter greens and herbs, the unleavened bread, and all that they each symbolize. Based on the teachings of Deuteronomy 8:10, a prayer of gratitude should be made during or toward the end of our meal, when we are full. This is the placement we see in the recorded Passover prayers of Yeshua as well.

Traditionally, the asking of questions about the Passover and feast by the young children takes place during the Seder. It is the duty and honor of the fathers and leaders to answer them. (This tradition is biblically based [Ex. 13:14; Deut. 6:20–25].)

After the answering of questions from the children, further explanation of the Passover Seder, the lamb, the bitter herbs, and unleavened bread should be made with appropriate and relevant passages recited.

Before the end of the meal, the second cup of blessing—the Cup of Judgment—is lifted while the *b'rakhah* is made.



Note: Reciting of portions of the “Hallel of Egypt” (Pss. 113—118) and the “Great Hallel” (Ps. 136) should take place, and/or be part of the blessings offered during the meal. This has long been a tradition of God’s people and of the prophets of old.

The Second Cup of Blessing:
The Cup of Deliverance Through
His Merciful Judgments

*I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you
with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.*

—Exodus 6:6

*A slave does not abide in the house forever,
but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son
makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

—John 8:35–36

Leader: Pour the Kiddush and recite

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine and has blessed us bountifully through the True Vine, Yeshua the Messiah.

All:

Amen.

Leader:

We praise and bless Your holy name for delivering us from the plague of death, for freeing us from the bondage of false religion and sin. We thank You for the gift of Torah and Your holy feasts, which foreshadow Your salvation for all humankind through Yeshua.

[Pause for moment of silent meditation and prayer while the wine is divided; then drink.]

Leader:

As David said in the Great Hallel, Psalm 136, we give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!

All:

For His mercy endures forever.

Leader:

We give thanks to the God of gods!

All:

For His mercy endures forever.

Leader:

To Him who alone does great wonders, for His mercy endures forever.

All:

To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn, for His mercy endures forever;

Leader:

And brought out Israel from among them, for His mercy endures forever;

All:

With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm,
for His mercy endures forever;

Leader:

To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, for His
mercy endures forever;

All:

And made Israel pass through the midst of it, for
His mercy endures forever;

Leader:

But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,
for His mercy endures forever;

All:

To Him who led His people through the wilderness,
for His mercy endures forever;

Leader:

Who remembered us in our lowly state, for His
mercy endures forever;

All:

And rescued us from our enemies, for His mercy
endures forever;

Leader:

Who gives food to all flesh, for His mercy endures forever;

All:

Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! for His mercy endures forever.

Leader:

Blessed is God, who allows us to eat this Passover with Him, our Father, and with His loving Son Yeshua. Blessed be Israel, Your firstborn. Blessed be all those whom You have called to be the firstfruits of Your children. May You gather them together as one in Messiah.

All:

Amen.

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth, who feeds all, who cares for all, and gives life to all. Amen.

[After the second blessing is a good time for a brief break and perhaps a partial clearing of the table in preparation for the final blessings and foot washing ceremony.]

THE UNLEAVENED BREAD OF HIS BODY, BROKEN FOR YOU



4 Next, and after the main meal, order should be called to the meeting and the specially kept matzah, or unleavened bread, is then uncovered and broken before all. The meaning of this special pierced, flat bread should be explained; it represents the body of our Messiah broken for us. This is a good time for the main leader to quote the relevant scriptures showing Yeshua as the true unleavened bread from heaven, broken for us. (This takes study and preparation on the leader's part.) Also, discussion of healing as part of the Passover fits well during this portion of the service (Isa. 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24; Ps. 105:37; 2 Chron. 30:20).

Before the matzah is broken and passed out, another blessing and prayer should be given to God to His glory out of gratitude for His forgiveness; for mental, spiritual, and physical healing; and for all He has done for



us (Matt. 26:26). Each blessing is carefully chosen from either God's Word, a Siddur or Haggadah, or written out ahead of time and then read responsively in the hearing of

all. Usually prayers are best spoken thoughtfully and spontaneously from the heart, but if preferred, they too may be carefully written out and spoken before all as well.

During the blessing, the broken unleavened bread is passed around for each member to take a piece. (Be sure ahead of time that there is sufficient unleavened bread to go around.) All who are taking the Passover should eat of this unleavened bread.

Now for the third Cup of Blessing accompanying the unleavened bread: the communion of the body of Christ.

The Third Cup of Blessing: The Cup of Acceptance into the Body of Messiah

*But because the LORD loves you, and because He
would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers,
the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand,
and redeemed you from the house of bondage,
from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

—Deuteronomy 7:8

*I am the living bread which came down from
heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live
forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh,
which I shall give for the life of the world.*

—John 6:51

**Leader: Bring out the matzah. Do not break or
divide it until reciting the blessing. Recite:**

Blessed be You, O Eternal One, who with this unleavened bread gives us remembrance of the haste with which Your people fled Egypt. With this unleavened bread, You remind us to remove the sin from our lives and to replace it with a life in Messiah. With this bread, we humble ourselves and put away a puffed-up attitude that defies Your love and wisdom given to us in Torah. With this bread, we eat of the true Bread from heaven, your eternally blessed Son, without which we are not free. We praise Him. As we eat this unleavened bread, we eat the Passover and

we honor You, our heavenly just and loving Father.
We praise and worship You—the Most High.

All:

We laud and praise You, O' Eternal. Amen.

[Leader: Appoint someone for prayer and giving thanks; Then uncover, break, and divide the matzah. Pause for prayer and personal introspection then continue the blessing.]

Leader:

Dear God, when sickness strikes and cruel plagues wither a person's body, You can restore that one to health and fullness of life like You did at Hezekiah's Passover. Thank You for Yeshua's stripes by which we are all healed and restored.

All:

We thank You and Praise You, the Healer.

Leader:

Blessed be the Most High, the Father and God of Yeshua our Messiah, and Father and God of all mankind. Blessed be YAH, who gives us the True Unleavened Bread of Life, who came down from heaven, so that whoever eats of His flesh and drinks His blood, and whoever is baptized in Your Holy Spirit, may have eternal life.

All:

Lord, as we eat this bread, we portray Messiah's death for us. We eat this bread with a hunger for the true Bread from Heaven. Amen.

Leader:

Blessed be Yeshua, who humbled Himself and became obedient to death. He is blessed above all, for the Most High God has highly exalted Him. He has given Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Yeshua, every knee should bow, of those in heaven, of those on earth, and of those under the earth—and that every tongue should confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord, to the glory of You, our God the Father.

All:

Amen.

Blessed be He who gives us the Lamb of God, bitter herbs to remember the bitterness of life without Him, the true Unleavened Bread from heaven to nourish us in righteousness and the freedom through the blood of His redemption. Amen.

Blessed be He who gives us bread and wine, forgiveness and life. Amen.

Leader:

The wisdom of Torah teaches us not to return to Egypt and it lights our path to His presence so that

we may become a kingdom of priests. The Word is the lighted path; He is the Gate and the Door. All who enter life go through Him. He leads us on a path of truth and hope. He leads us to our Father's mansion in paradise. The righteous dwell there. The redeemed dwell there. Peace lives there. The Lord is there— New Jerusalem. Thy Kingdom come Yahweh, and Your City of Peace.

All:

Amen.

THE CUP FOR THE BLOOD OF MESSIAH, SHED FOR US ALL



5 Next, blessings and prayers are made over the wine representing the blood of our Messiah, shed for us all. Each member should drink wine that came from the single Cup of Blessing, or Kiddush, for the blood of the Lamb of God. If not already discussed, the symbolic meaning of the hyssop can be briefly covered here as well. A special prayer that glorifies God and expresses special thanks is spoken over the wine (Matt. 26: 27–29; 1 Cor. 11:25–26), followed by “amen” from those assembled. Now comes the fourth and last cup we lift: the Cup of Redemption through Jesus’ blood that was shed for us all.

The Fourth Cup of Blessing: The Cup of Redemption Through Messiah's Blood

Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

—Exodus 12:13

And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

—Revelation 5:9

Leader: Pour the Kiddush, but do not divide the cup until after the blessing. Recite:

With this cup we remember Israel's deliverance from 430 years of servitude. With this cup we remember the cruelty of Pharaoh's bondage. With this cup we remember Your just judgment and the plagues You poured out on Egypt, and the resultant freedom You gave Israel. With this cup we also remember our new covenant redemption from the plague of sin's death by the blood of our Passover Lamb as we follow Him to freedom in the Promised Land.

He took the cup, made the blessing, after which He told His disciples, "Divide it among yourselves" and "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood

of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

All:

As often as we drink it, we remember and praise Him. Halleluiah!

Leader:

I now bless the only true God and lift up the cup of salvation, in communion with Yeshua. We call upon the Eternal and remember that Yeshua’s blood was poured out for the forgiveness of our sins.

All:

Blessed are You, YHVH our Elohim, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine and has sent Yeshua our Messiah, the True Vine. Amen.

Leader: [Pause and appoint someone for prayer and giving thanks, then divide the cup of wine and drink. Then continue the blessing.]

Leader:

Our beloved brother Paul wrote, the cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Messiah? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Messiah?

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Amen. Thank You, Lord. Amen.

All:

O Lord, as our forefathers applied the blood to their doorposts of their dwellings, please see the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of our bodies and souls, which are the temple of Your Holy Spirit, and pass-over us for judgment and death and leave us the blessing of life with You.

Leader:

Blessed be Yahweh. Let all Praise His name. For His glory and in His mercy He delivered Israel as He delivers us. Blessed be the Israel of God, blessed be all those who fear His Name.

All:

Those who know Your name shall trust in You. Blessed be those who trust in You. Blessed are those who faithfully drink this cup of redemption as You have commanded us. Blessed be the One whom God sent, the One who has come and who will come. Amen.

LESSONS OF SERVICE AND HUMILITY LEARNED THROUGH FOOT WASHING



6 After supper, Yeshua rose from the table, girded Himself with a cloth, and washed the disciples' feet. In so doing, He symbolically washed our feet, as well. Likewise, when we do as He commanded us; we are symbolically washing His feet when we wash the feet of our brother in the faith! (Foot washing is a good topic for one of the leading fathers to briefly explain before the ceremony takes place.)

Following Yeshua's example, we use a personal basin with water, gird ourselves with a towel, and humbly wash one another's feet. Each willing person present should wash someone else's feet and have his or her own feet washed in like manner (John 13:4–5, 12–15). For propriety's sake, it is usually best for men to wash other men's feet and for women to wash other women's feet. Many men would rightfully object to having another man wash his wife's feet. For the sake of decency, this may or may not require separate

foot-washing areas. After the foot washing, each person should wash their hands before returning to their tables. The eating (and drinking) of Passover should now be complete, and only the hymns remain.

Luke records the wine of the blood of Messiah and the bread for His flesh both followed the main meal (Luke 22:20), but still took place at the table. John also records that the foot-washing took place at the conclusion of the Seder meal (John 13:2–5). But John also records that Yeshua “rose from supper,” before washing the disciples’ feet. Therefore we have biblical record that the foot washing takes place after all of the discussion, prayer, and blessings over the bread and wine, which take place at the table. That is why its placement is listed here last.

This makes sense, as the biblical examples of cleanliness would dictate that foot-washing should follow any eating or handling of bread, food, and drink—not the other way around.

[Break for foot washing]

SING THE PRAISE OF THE HALLEL



7 Hymns were sung as the concluding event of the Passover service (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26). The literal word Matthew and Mark used is *hymning*. Hymning indicates that there was likely more than one hymn sung. Many translators, commentators, and scholars point out that the hymns the disciples sang were the *Hallel*, the blessing and praise psalms that have been recited each Passover (Pss. 113–118) from biblical times. They were anciently called the *Hallel* Psalms (or “Hallel of Egypt”). *Hallel* is from the root word *hallelujah*, literally meaning “Praise Yah” or “praise ye Yah.” Notice how the *Complete Jewish Bible* translates Matthew 26:30: “After singing the Hallel, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

So, following the example of the disciples, after singing a selection of a few Hallel hymns, everyone is excused.

[Following is a list of additional relevant scriptures that are helpful to read or discuss during the Passover: portions of John 14–17; Isa. 42:1–9, 16–23; 50:5–6; 52:13–14; 53:1–12; Ps. 103:2–3; 105:37; 1 Peter 2:20–24.]

[Note: The Passover was so important that God provides a second Passover thirty days after the first. It was only for those who were unable to keep Passover at its appointed time (Num. 9:10–11; 2 Chron. 30:2–3).]

May your Passovers be filled with truth, learning, and understanding from our Lord and Savior. May God guide and bless you as you seek Him. May He keep you and cause His face to shine upon you, and may He pour out His Spirit upon all who love His holy Name. Blessed is the One who has given us the Passover Lamb of God, freed us from sin, and granted us life. Amen.