

EXODUS CHAPEL

From Passover to the Last Supper



THURSDAY
09 APRIL



Exodus Chapel – From Passover to the Last Supper

The Passover Meal: Setting the Scene

Narrator 1: Today we're going on a journey from Exodus to the life of Jesus as we celebrate a meal of remembrance. We'll begin by reflecting on the story of God's people enslaved in Egypt and the mighty way that God delivered them from their slavery into freedom.

Narrator 2: We'll take part in a mini Passover meal. And then we will imagine ourselves alongside the disciples as we picture being with them during the Last Supper.

Narrator 1: We will pray. We will eat. We will remember. Under normal circumstances we would spend time singing together. Which we cannot do the same way over zoom – so that part of the gathering will be a missing piece.

Narrator 2: In Exodus chapters 12 and 13 we read the detailed account of the very particular instructions the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron to guide the children of Israel in their preparation of this meal. It took a lot of work and planning. It was structured and ordered. And the meal was celebrated as a festival to the Lord. God gave it as a perpetual ordinance for his people to observe every year.

Narrator 1: God gave specific directions about the size and kind of lamb, how it was to be cooked, what to do with the lamb's blood, how to prepare the bread, how to explain the meal to your children, what to do with leftovers and how to eat in a hurry.

Narrator 2: It was called Passover because the Lord promised to go through the land of Egypt and strike down the firstborn of humans and animals.' But if the lamb's blood was spread on the doorposts of any family home it was a sign for the Lord to pass over that place and not allow any plague to destroy them.

Narrator 1: This Passover meal took place during the 7-day festival of unleavened bread – a whole week when all homes were purged of leaven or yeast.

Narrator 2: We read in Exodus that God said: 'When your children ask about this festival tell them "it is because of what the Lord did for me when I came out of Egypt.' It shall serve for you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the Lord may be on your lips; for with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt."

Sometimes we need practices to help us remember. God gave this meal of celebration as a gift – something for his people to always remember his mighty deliverance.

Narrator 1: So let's get ready to tell the story of deliverance and redemption! Tradition suggests that we each consider ourselves like slaves in Egypt – that we have all walked in darkness. We celebrate the deliverance in the Exodus as our own deliverance – because Jesus also freed us from the slavery of sin when he died on the cross.

Host: This meal would take place during the festival of unleavened bread and families would have already done a kind of spring-cleaning to get rid of all the yeast in the house. The yeast represents false teaching and negative influences that creep their way into our lives– like yeast spreads all the way through bread dough.

Co-Host: The act of clearing out one's cupboards of yeast can be compared with a kind of spiritual spring cleaning. It is an invitation for us to reflect on our inner lives, and prepare for Easter week – prepare for Jesus – through confession and repentance.



Host: One way to prepare is to confess. Let us pray a short prayer of confession – today we'll read a prayer from the Anglican Prayer Book.

Reader – Prayer of confession:

Almighty and merciful God,
we have sinned against you,
in thought, word and deed.
We have not loved you with all our heart.
We have not loved others
as our Saviour Christ loves us.
We are truly sorry.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be;
that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways,
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Option depending on time and group size - participants may be invited to type a short prayer of confession in the chat box – for the sake of this gathering – general prayers of confession.

The Passover Meal: Context and Preparations

The host reads and leads this section, giving instructions along the way, unless otherwise marked.

At this time in the meal, the rituals would begin. Candles would be lit with corresponding prayers. And all sorts of responsive readings.

Light a candle if you have one...

At several times during our meal we will read the following response out loud together. Our "Response Leader" will be unmuted; all other participants are invited to read out loud but on mute. At this time we will hold our glasses up in the air as if to toast.

Response Leader:

"We praise you O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes our lives holy with your commandments. Today we gather to joyfully remember your faithfulness."

Next we come to the four cups of wine or juice. Throughout the meal, everyone at the table would drink 4 glasses of wine/juice! You can imagine how some Passover meals get very rowdy. Today, for our Passover, instead of having 4 cups we will have 4 sips from one cup.



- **Cup of Sanctification**
- **Cup of Deliverance**
- **Cup of Redemption**
- **Cup of Thanksgiving**

Let's start with the first cup – the first sip.

Cup of Sanctification

– with each sip that we drink comes an “I will” statement from God.

After I read the “I will statement”, join in reading the response aloud. We will do this together 4 times through the meal.

With the cup of sanctification - we remember that God saved his people from the burdens of the Egyptians.

“I am the Lord and I will free you from the yoke of the Egyptians!”

RESPONSE FROM THE PEOPLE – all raise their glasses

(Response Leader reads aloud, participants read aloud but on mute)

“We praise you O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes our lives holy with your commandments. Today we gather to joyfully remember your faithfulness.”

Now we move on to the special food items on this plate – that together tell the story.

The **juice** is red and represents the blood of the Passover lamb.

The **parsley** represents the hyssop, which the Israelites used to place the blood of the Passover lamb on the sides and tops of the doorframe of their houses.

The **shank bone** represents the sacrificial lamb.

The **boiled egg** is the Christian symbol of resurrection.

Lettuce is a symbol of hope and new life – the new life that emerges out of sorrow.

Salt water represents the tears of bitterness shed in Egypt.

Pita bread, or crackers reminds us of the unleavened bread of this festival and that Jesus is the bread of life.

If you have a sprig of parsley or piece of lettuce or celery, take it now and dip it into the salt water - remembering that life is sometimes immersed in tears. Dip it twice. It reminds us of the tears that the Israelites shed when they were slaves to Pharaoh. Let us eat the parsley together.



THE 4 QUESTIONS

Readers should press the space bar to unmute themselves when they read aloud.

Question Reader 1: Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread why on this night do we only eat unleavened bread?

Host: This night is different from all other nights, because on this night we celebrate the going forth of God's people from slavery into freedom. And as Christians we celebrate our freedom from the slavery of sin. When Pharaoh let our forefathers go from Egypt they were forced to flee in great haste. They had no time to bake their bread and could not wait for the yeast to rise. The sun which beat down on the dough as they carried it along baked it into unleavened bread. This bread also reminds us that Jesus is the bread of life.

Question Reader 2: On all other nights we eat vegetables and herbs of all kinds; why on this night do we only eat bitter herbs?

Host: We eat bitter herbs because our forefathers were slaves in Egypt and their lives were made very bitter. As believers, God has delivered us from the bitter bondage of sin into His joyful presence.

Question Reader 3: On all other nights we never think of dipping herbs in water or in anything else; why on this night do we dip the parsley in salt water twice?

Host: The first dip reminds us of the Children of Israel going into the sea and coming out safely. The second dip reminds us of Pharaoh and his army, who went into the sea and were destroyed.

Question Reader 4: On all other nights we eat either sitting upright or reclining. Why on this night do we all recline?

Host: Because reclining was a sign of a free person long ago, and since our forefathers were freed on this night, we recline at the table.

"It is for freedom that Christ – the Messiah – has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

Cup of Deliverance

After I read the "I will statement" please read the response together.

With the cup of deliverance - we remember that God saved his people from the bondage of the Egyptians. "I am the Lord and I will deliver you from slavery!"

RESPONSE FROM THE PEOPLE – all raise their glasses

(Response Leader reads aloud, participants read aloud but on mute)

"We praise you O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes our lives holy with your commandments. Today we gather to joyfully remember your faithfulness."



Host shows the seder plate.

The **horseradish** (hummus, babaganoush, or dip) symbolizes the bitterness of slavery.

The **charoset** is a mixture of apple, walnuts, raisins, cinnamon, and honey. It looks like the clay which Israelites used to make bricks for Pharaoh in Egypt.

There was a famous Jewish leader, Hillel, who had a custom of making a kind of 'sandwich' of some of these items.

Take a small amount of pita bread or crackers, and mix the horseradish with the sweet charoset to remember that our forefathers were able to withstand bitter slavery because it was sweetened by the hope of freedom. We as Christians are filled with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit who gives us the ability to withstand fiery trials.

Make and eat the sandwiches if you have the ingredients – taste the mixed flavours of sweetness and bitterness.

Cup of Redemption

After the "I will statement" please read the response together.

With the cup of redemption - we remember that God saved his people from the bondage of the Egyptians. "I am the Lord and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm!"

RESPONSE FROM THE PEOPLE – all raise their glasses

(Response Leader reads aloud, participants read aloud but on mute)

"We praise you O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes our lives holy with your commandments. Today we gather to joyfully remember your faithfulness."

BREAKOUT ROOMS (5-7 minutes)

Please remember to keep at least 2 sips of juice in your cup for the rest of the meal.

In the breakout rooms we want you all to have the space to reflect and share – help us share the space. You can share, you can just listen.

- Introduce yourselves (briefly)
- What has stood out to you so far?
- What does this experience make you wonder about Moses and the children of Israel?
- Eat your food

COME BACK FROM 'LUNCH' HERE – Host calls everyone back.

Let's drink the final cup now.



Cup of Thanksgiving and Hope

After the "I will statement" please read aloud together the response on your paper

With the cup of thanksgiving/hope - we remember that God saved his people from the bondage of the Egyptians.

"I am the Lord and I will take you as my people and I will be your God!"

RESPONSE FROM THE PEOPLE – all raise their glasses

(Response Leader reads aloud, participants read aloud but on mute)

"We praise you O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes our lives holy with your commandments. Today we gather to joyfully remember your faithfulness."

Host: This is the part of the meal when do some time traveling! Let's jump from the Exodus story and the first Passover meal in Egypt to the night when Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples in the upper room. This meal happened a few days after he had ridden into Jerusalem on a donkey, and just hours before Jesus went out and prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.

HOLY WEEK PASSOVER & THE LORD'S SUPPER: In the Upper Room

From Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22

Narrator 3: In the gospels we read about how Jesus and his disciples kept this 'perpetual ordinance' remembering God's mighty act of rescuing his people from slavery in Egypt into freedom.

On the first day of the festival of Unleavened Bread – the day on which the Passover Lamb had to be sacrificed, Jesus' disciples came to him saying:

Narrator 4: Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?

Narrator 3: So he sent two of his disciples, telling them,

Jesus: Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.

Narrator 3: The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

Narrator 4: Later that evening Jesus and the disciples gathered to share the Passover meal together. While they were eating he said to them:

Jesus: I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.



Narrator 3: While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Jesus: Take and eat; this is my body.

Narrator 4: Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying,

Jesus: Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Host: Different churches and traditions share this meal – the Lord's supper, the table, the eucharist, communion – in a variety of ways. All of these versions originally trace back to this ordinance or this sacrament that Jesus brought to life and gave to his disciples as a way – a practice – of remembering what HE did for us.

We are going to go briefly into our breakout rooms so that you can 'share communion' together in a slightly more intimate space – and with some interaction. If you don't have bread and juice to participate – just be with your group and reflect on this meal. If you would really prefer not to join your breakout room, you are welcome to stay in this room – but this will be a quiet space.

BREAK OUT ROOMS:

Participants will spend only a minute or two in their groups – if someone wants to repeat Jesus' words as you eat and drink – go for it! This is a short time to 'be together' for communion in this disconnected way.

Host: As our meal comes to a close, we are going to pray together as Jesus prayed and taught his disciples to pray.

Jesus: Pray this prayer in your own language. Let's pray:

E tō mātou Matua i te rangi
Kia tapu tou Ingoa
Kia tae mai tou rangatira-tanga.
Kia meatia tau e pai ai
ki runga i te whenua,
kia rite ano ki to te rangi.
Homai ki a mātou aianei
he taro mā mātou mo tēnei ra.
Murua o mātou hara
Me mātou hoki e muru nei
i o te hunga e hara ana ki a mātou.
Aua hoki mātou e kawea kia whaka-waia;
Engari whaka-orangia mātou, i te kino:
Nou hoki te rangatira-tanga,
te kaha,
me te kororia,
Ake, ake, ake.
Āmine.

Our Father
Who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.



AGNUS DEI: Musical reflection

Host: Scripture tells us that at the end of the meal Jesus and his disciples went out to the Mount of Olives after “they had sung a hymn.”

In our normal gatherings we, too, would sing together – but it just won’t work over zoom, so we’re going to wrap up with a musical reflection instead.

The words to this piece are Latin for: “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” It is an intense piece – but fitting for this time as we think about Jesus heading out to the garden of Gethsemane, praying and sweating blood, asking his loving Father to take “this cup away” then ultimately being arrested and led away for trial.

Sit quietly and listen to this piece. Imagine what it would have been like to be with Jesus over this weekend. Let yourself feel the feels and think the thoughts about Jesus and this incredible sacrifice, this gift of love, of dying on a cross for us.

BENEDICTION

Host: Let’s stay in this quieter place of stillness and reflection as we head out – we will save our chatting for another time.

But it has been an honour to get to spend this time together with you remembering God’s great story of redemption... that began in the first garden, worked its way through all sorts of history and events including rescuing an entire nation from slavery... all the way through to the garden of Gethsemane where, on this Passover Thursday, we leave Jesus praying.

As you go out from this celebratory meal – remember our Almighty Father who delivered his people from slavery in Egypt. Go in the peace of Christ – the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

