



A SHORT MESSIANIC  
HAGGADAH

## Introduction

This short Haggadah is designed for use at Messianic/Christian Seders. Traditional Haggadahs are so long that the leader typically reads the text at a very high speed, which proves the point that a slimmed-down version can be more meaningful.

The Bible readings can be read by the leader, or by guests. In ancient times a cup of wine was divided between guests (see Luke 22:17), which led to the tradition of four cups at the Seder. It is not necessary for guests to drink four separate glassfuls of wine, although generous availability of wine is recommended!

I hope this Haggadah will help you and your family celebrate Pesach with great joy.

Bernard N. Howard

## Glossary

*Afikoman/Afikomen* — a word of Greek origin. Its meaning is disputed, but it most likely means “that which comes after,” i.e., after the main meal. It refers to the piece of matzah hidden and then brought back at the end of the meal.

*Charoset* — a thick paste made with apple, nuts, honey, and other ingredients. It symbolizes the mortar used by the Israelite slaves for their bricklaying in Egypt.

*Haggadah* — written order of proceedings for the Passover meal

*Matzah* — unleavened bread

*Pesach* — Hebrew term for Passover

*Seder* — ceremonial Passover meal

*Yeshua* — Hebrew name for Jesus

## Essential Ingredients

- A bowl and pitcher for hand-washing
- A box of matzah
- The afikomen bag (a cloth or silk bag containing three compartments, each holding a piece of matzah; if you can't obtain a bag, four cloth napkins can be used as an alternative)
- A lamb shank bone
- A hard-boiled or roasted egg
- Parsley
- Dish of salt water
- Creamed horseradish sauce
- A piece of horseradish
- Charoset (recipes for this are easily found online)
- Candles and matches
- Red wine
- Reward for the child who finds the afikomen (such as a cash prize)

A Short Messianic Haggadah was first published in 2016. This 2022 edition is a slightly revised version. You are welcome to print and reproduce this free resource, but please do not sell or profit from it in any way. The Bible readings are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, by Biblica, Inc.®.



## The Seder Begins: Washing One Another's Hands

**Leader:** Welcome to our Passover meal. This will be a Messianic seder, which means it will honor Jesus the Messiah, Yeshua haMashiach, as the true Passover lamb. We'll begin with the traditional washing of hands.

*[One way to do this is to pass around a deep bowl, and a pitcher of water. The bowl is placed in front of one person while the person on the right pours water from the pitcher over the first person's hands, which are held over the bowl. Then the bowl moves to the left and so on until everyone's hands are washed.]*

**Leader:** It was at this point in the meal that Yeshua washed the feet of his disciples. Our first Bible reading is from John chapter 13, verses 3 to 17:

<sup>13:3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; <sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

<sup>8</sup> "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

<sup>9</sup> "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

<sup>12</sup> When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup> "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. <sup>16</sup> Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."



## Lighting of the Candles

*This is done by the woman of the house, who says:*

**Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.**



## The Question of the Youngest Child

*The following question is asked by the youngest person present (see Exodus 12:26 and 13:14):*

**Why is this night different from all other nights?**

**Leader:** It is because of what the Lord our God did for us when we came out of Egypt. With a mighty hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. When Pharaoh, king of Egypt, stubbornly refused to let us go, the Lord killed every firstborn in Egypt, both man and animal. But he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes. That is why it is called the Passover. The Lord commanded us to commemorate the Passover for the generations to come as a festival to the Lord. At Passover we eat unleavened bread, because the Israelites did not have time to add yeast to their dough on the night when they were driven out of Egypt (Exodus 13:8, 14, 15; 12:27, 14, 20, 39).



## The First Cup of Wine—Kiddush

*The leader says a blessing, just as Yeshua himself did at this stage in the Last Supper:*

**Leader:** Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

*Everyone drinks from their own glass.*

**Leader:** Our next Bible reading is from Luke chapter 22, verses 14–18:

<sup>14</sup> When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. <sup>16</sup> For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

<sup>17</sup> After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. <sup>18</sup> For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”



## The Second Cup of Wine—the Cup of Plagues

**Leader:** The Bible commands us not to gloat over the misfortune of our enemies (Proverbs 24:17), and so by way of solemn remembrance while the ten plagues are recited, each person uses a finger to spill ten drops of wine on his or her plate, one per plague.

*The leader reads the following passages or arranges for guests to read them:*

#### The First Plague — Blood

The LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is unyielding; he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning as he goes out to the river. Confront him on the bank of the Nile, and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water.’” (Exodus 7:14–18)

#### The Second Plague — Frogs

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go, I will send a plague of frogs on your whole country. The Nile will teem with frogs. They will come up into your palace and your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your officials and on your people, and into your ovens and kneading troughs. The frogs will come up on you and your people and all your officials.’” (Exodus 8:1–4)

#### The Third Plague — Gnats

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground,’ and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.” They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came on people and animals. (Exodus 8:16–17)

#### The Fourth Plague — Flies

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning and confront Pharaoh as he goes to the river and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you do not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you and your officials, on your people and into your houses. The houses of the Egyptians will be full of flies; even the ground will be covered with them.’” (Exodus 8:20–21)

#### The Fifth Plague — Livestock

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: “Let my people go, so that they may worship me.” If you refuse to let them go and continue to hold them back, the hand of the LORD will bring a terrible plague on your livestock in the field—on your horses, donkeys and camels and on your cattle, sheep and goats.’” And the next day the LORD did it: All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one animal belonging to the Israelites died. Pharaoh investigated and found that not even one of the animals of the Israelites had died. Yet his heart was unyielding and he would not let the people go. (Exodus 9:1–7)

#### The Sixth Plague — Boils

Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Take handfuls of soot from a furnace and have Moses toss it into the air in the presence of Pharaoh. It will become fine dust over the whole land of Egypt, and festering boils will break out on people and animals throughout the land.” (Exodus 9:8–9)

#### The Seventh Plague — Hail

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. You still set yourself against my people and will not let them go. Therefore, at this time tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm that has ever fallen on

Egypt, from the day it was founded till now. Give an order now to bring your livestock and everything you have in the field to a place of shelter, because the hail will fall on every person and animal that has not been brought in and is still out in the field, and they will die.” Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried to bring their slaves and their livestock inside. But those who ignored the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the field. (Exodus 9:13–21)

#### The Eighth Plague — Locusts

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, “This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me. If you refuse to let them go, I will bring locusts into your country tomorrow. They will cover the face of the ground so that it cannot be seen. They will devour what little you have left after the hail, including every tree that is growing in your fields.’” (Exodus 10:3–5)

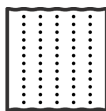
#### The Ninth Plague — Darkness

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness spreads over Egypt—darkness that can be felt.” So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else or move about for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived. (Exodus 10:21–23)

#### The Tenth Plague — The Firstborn Sons

Now the LORD had said to Moses, “I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. After that, he will let you go from here, and when he does, he will drive you out completely. So Moses said, “This is what the LORD says: ‘About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt—worse than there has ever been or ever will be again. But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any person or animal.’ The LORD had said to Moses, “Pharaoh will refuse to listen to you—so that my wonders may be multiplied in Egypt.”

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, “Tell the whole community of Israel that each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. 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. 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.” (Exodus 11:1–10; 12:1–13)



### **The Hiding of the Afikomen**

*At this point the matzah in the middle of the three compartments of the afikomen bag is removed and broken in two. One of its pieces is placed in a cloth napkin and hidden by the leader. When the meal is over, the children will search for it and bring it back, for a reward (usually a cash prize). Meanwhile matzah (not from the afikomen bag) is given to everyone at the table to eat with the items on the Seder plate.*



## The Seder Plate

*This traditionally holds six items: parsley, a boiled or roasted egg, a lamb shank bone, bitter herbs (usually creamed horseradish), a piece of horseradish, and charoset. The leader introduces each one.*

**Leader:** First, the parsley. *The leader dips this in a bowl of salt water and then shakes it in view of everyone at the table.*

The drops from the parsley symbolize the tears of the Israelites during their enslavement in Egypt.

**Leader:** Second, the egg.

The egg is a symbol of mourning that reminds us of the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. The temple's destruction is the reason why Jewish people never sacrifice a lamb at Passover, despite the Bible's directions.

**Leader:** Third, the shank bone.

This dry bone takes the place of a sacrificed lamb, because without the temple no sacrifices can lawfully be made. As followers of Yeshua, we believe that he is the true Passover lamb. He was slain in our place. Anyone who trusts in his atoning blood receives forgiveness of sins. It is as if his blood is on the doorframe of our lives, and the Lord will pass over us when he punishes the wicked on his day of justice.

**Leader:** Fourth and fifth, the bitter herbs. *There is a ceremonial piece of horseradish on the seder plate, but the creamed horseradish is passed around and eaten by guests with matzah.*

We eat these bitter herbs to remind us of the harshness of slavery in Egypt.

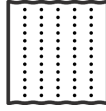
**Leader:** Sixth, charoset. *This too is passed around and eaten by each guest.*

The charoset resembles the mortar that the Israelite slaves used as they labored on building projects in Egypt.



## The Meal

*The main meal is now served. Many suggested recipes can be found online. Yeast, pork, and shellfish should be avoided. Feel free to enjoy one another's company and conversation while you eat.*



## The Search for the Afikomen

*After the meal, the children search for the hidden afikomen. Once it has been found and returned for a reward, the leader breaks it into small pieces and gives one to everyone at the table to eat.*

**Leader:** Our next Bible reading is Luke chapter 22, verse 19:

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”



## The Third Cup of Wine—the Cup of Blessing (also known as the Cup of Redemption)

**Leader:** The third cup of wine is the cup of blessing, also known as the cup of redemption. This is the cup spoken of by the Apostle Paul:

In the same way, after the supper Jesus took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11:25–26)





## The Fourth Cup of Wine—Hallel

**Leader:** This is the cup of Hallel, which means “praise.” It’s time to sing “Go Down Moses,” an African-American spiritual that is often sung at Seders. [*Louis Armstrong’s version can be found on YouTube if the tune is unfamiliar.*]

**When Israel was in Egypt’s land,  
(Let my people go.)  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand.  
(Let my people go.)**

*Refrain:*

**Go down, Moses,  
Way down in Egypt land.  
Tell old Pharaoh:  
Let my people go.**

**“Thus spoke the Lord,” bold Moses said,  
(Let my people go.)  
“If not I’ll strike your firstborn dead.”  
(Let my people go.)**

*Refrain*

**“No more shall they in bondage toil,”  
(Let my people go.)  
“Let them come out with Egypt’s spoil.”  
(Let my people go.)**

*Refrain x 2*



## Elijah’s Cup

**Leader:** Traditionally, an extra glass is filled with wine and placed on the table. At the end of the meal a child is asked to go to the front door to see if Elijah is there, so that he can drink from his cup. This tradition springs from the expectation that Elijah would return before the coming of the Messiah. Yeshua told his disciples that Elijah had indeed come in the person of John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14). It is fitting for Messianic Jews to keep this tradition to remind us that so many of our fellow Jews do not know their Messiah has come. This should stir us up to reach Jewish people with the good news about Yeshua.



## **Next Year in Jerusalem**

**Leader:** First we will all say together: “Next year in Jerusalem!” This toast is an expression of the natural Jewish desire to visit or live in the land of our people. On the count of three, as loudly as you can, one, two, three:

**“Next year in Jerusalem!”**

And because we desire Yeshua’s return to renew the world, we can also say, “Next year in the New Jerusalem!” On the count of three, as loudly as you can, one, two, three:

**“Next year in the New Jerusalem!”**