

SERMON NOTES

SERMON APPLICATION FROM NOVEMBER 1, 2020



“CELEBRATE THE PASSOVER” BY PASTOR CHRIS ARCADI

Today’s sermon walks through the Jewish Passover Seder meal and compares the Exodus of the Jews to our own spiritual deliverance.

[Click here](#) to view the sermon video.

REVIEW

In his Ezra sermon series, Pastor Chris shared the following key points:

- We must re-ignite the fire on the altar of our hearts for the Lord, and the fire must not go out.
- We must lead a lifestyle of sacrifice to the Lord and be wholly devoted to Him
- We must lay the foundation of our lives solidly on Christ
- We must not allow ourselves to be influenced by the enemy

Are you being a good steward of the blood of Jesus?

LOOKING FOR CHRIST IN THE PASSOVER SEDER

Read [Ezra 6:19-22](#). After the returning exiles rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem, they celebrated the Passover with great joy. Just as God brought the Israelites out of Egyptian slavery, Jesus brings us out of our own bondage to sin. As Christians, reviewing the Seder ritual adds dimension to the “why’s” of our faith. It helps us remember and come into a new appreciation of Christ’s work for us.

The fifteen steps of the Jewish Seder are listed below with reflection points on how they point to Christ. Four cups of wine are prepared representing God’s four promises to His people as recorded in [Exodus 6:6-7](#). The cups reflect sanctification, deliverance, redemption, and praise. The Seder meal is also prepared, with each element representing a part of the Exodus story.

KADESH

The Seder begins with drinking the cup of sanctification, preceded with this special prayer. “Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the universe who has created the fruit of the vine. Blessed are you, Lord our God, who has chosen us, you have shared your holiness with us, among all other peoples. Blessed are you Lord, who sanctifies, who regenerates with new life.”

- Reflect on how Jesus fulfilled these statements in your own life.

The **cup of sanctification** remembers God’s promise to bring His people out with mighty power and great miracles. How is that relevant to us?

- It means He will bring us out from our own spiritual oppression. The ancient Pharaoh who held God’s people in slavery is an Old Testament representation of the Devil, who holds all of mankind in bondage. Through Jesus, God promises to bring us out from underneath the weight of our sin, and slavery to the Devil.
- Sanctification is a process of regeneration. Just as God brought powerful miracles and plagues in a stage-by-stage judgement against Egypt, He too sanctifies us in stages. First, He calls us out. We answer that call by receiving Jesus. In Christ, we have freedom and we have new life.

UR-CHATZ

After the cup of sanctification and the blessing, the worshipper washes his/her hands three times in a bowl of water.

- Other than cleanliness before eating, this symbolizes having clean hands and a pure heart before God as we reflect on and celebrate all He has done for us.

KARPAS

The next step is an appetizer. The worshipper dips a leafy green vegetable into a cup of salt water. A rhetorical question is asked at the same time in a ritual that transfers knowledge and remembrance down to younger generations. Why is this step necessary? This part of the meal is not particularly tasty. So why do it? The vegetable represents spring and rebirth. The salt water represents the tears of the slaves in Egypt. In other words, it means going back and re-tasting Egypt.

- For us, it means remembering our bondage before we can appreciate the riches of our freedom. Do we often think back on the bondage God rescued us from? Do we appreciate our freedom? Or do we feel entitled to it?

YACHATZ

In this part of the Seder, the worshipper takes three stacked pieces of Matzah bread, flat and baked without yeast. The middle piece is broken in two pieces. The larger half is wrapped and hidden until dessert. The smaller piece is placed back in between the two larger pieces.

The breaking of the “bread of affliction” represents brokenness in two ways.

- First, Christ has to be broken in order for God to bring redemption into the world.
- Second, it represents our brokenness. When we reflect on how far we have fallen short of the glory of God, we can allow ourselves to be humbled enough to depend on His work of redemption.

MAGGID

The Maggid is the longest part of the Seder. The purpose is to reflect on the story of the Exodus as recorded in Genesis, Exodus, and through singing Psalms. The central themes told in the stories are 1.) that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and God took them out by His mighty hand, and 2.) that God’s people were idol worshippers until God brought them to Himself. He adopted them.

During the stories, the bread of affliction is given as an invitation to come and eat.

- Likewise, we remember Jesus’ invitation through communion. Jesus said, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Messiah and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you.” – [John 6:53](#). Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” – [John 6:35](#).
- We ourselves have gone through an exodus from sin to salvation. By revisiting and remembering our bondage and God’s wonderful deliverance, we review who we are in truth – broken and resuscitated back to life by God. Many times, we forget the importance of reviewing this – of giving ourselves a spiritual reset. Taking Communion helps. But spending deeper time with God to think back and honestly recommit ourselves to Him is life-giving.

The Maggid story telling time continues with discussing the Passover lamb, the unleavened bread, bitter herbs and drinking the second cup of wine – the cup of deliverance.

The lamb represents the sacrificial lamb each family was to slaughter on the night the Lord passed over. Specific requirements for the preparation of this lamb can be found in [Exodus 12:1-13](#). Its blood was to be smeared on the sides and top of their door posts. The meat was to be eaten in haste and entirety with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The Israelites were to be dressed in their travel clothes and ready to go with sandals on their feet. The beginning of their trip was imminent. The Lord was about to deliver them.

- For Christians, Jesus became the Lamb of God. He was literally sacrificed, His blood spilled. Figuratively, His blood has been sprinkled on the doorposts of our lives. Our exodus from sin began the moment we accepted Him as Savior.

The unleavened bread represents the hastiness in which the Lord brought His deliverance. They could not hesitate. They had not time for dough to rise.

- Sometimes, God intends for our deliverance to be fast and with no return. He often takes us on an uncomfortable journey, with little to no preparation. He asks us to do things out of faith and trust because He knows best. When we get to the other side, we see His work and submit to His methods.

The bitter herbs represent the bitterness of Egyptian slavery - the remembrance of the brutality and hopelessness of that life.

- In [Romans 7:21-25](#), Paul wrote, “So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Drinking the cup of deliverance causes the worshiper to praise and exalt God who performed all of the miracles of the Exodus.

- Jesus took us out of slavery into freedom, out of grief and into joy. Out of mourning to a festival, out of darkness into light, out of bondage to redemption.

RACH-TZAH

At last, the worshiper is ready to eat the meal. A second hand washing ritual is performed with a prayer blessing. “Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the universe who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to clean hands.”

MATZAH

The top and middle piece of the Matzah bread is broken and eaten. It is called the “bread of faith”, or the “bread of healing”. The Jewish word for faith in this circumstance means “resolute knowing”.

- In [John 6:51](#) Jesus said, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”
- [1 Corinthians 11:23-24](#) says, “The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, *he broke it* and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

MAROR

The bitter herbs are eaten right after the broken bread, again dipped in salt water. They represent the remembrance of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt.

KORECH

A sandwich is now made using the bottom piece of the Matzah bread. The sandwich includes more bitter herbs and a sweet spread. It’s a mixture, like life which includes a mixture of experiences.

- As living stones in the Temple of God, we live a mix of life in Jesus. Darkness, light, opposites in emotions. The world offers material things but they don't really satisfy. Real life is found only in God.

SHULCHAN ORECH

The festive meal follows beginning with eating a hard-boiled egg dipped in the salt water, again symbolizing tears in Egypt. The progression of the meal follows transition from mourning to dancing, from not having anything to having abundance. Why? Because God provided it for His people.

- In [John 10:10](#), Jesus taught the disciples, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”
- In [John 1:12](#), Jesus said, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.”

TZAFUN

Desert comes after the meal. The “Afikomen” is the remaining piece of matzah bread that was previously hidden. Children are asked to find it. It is then eaten, again symbolic of the brokenness of life.

- In [John 6:30-35](#), Jesus told a crowd of followers, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

BARECH

After the meal, a third blessing is spoken followed by drinking the third cup of wine – the cup of redemption. This cup remembers God's promise to redeem His people. When they placed the blood of the sacrificial lamb on their doorposts, God's wrath passed over and spared them.

- For us, redemption means a buying back, a transfer of ownership. The blood of the Lamb, Jesus, satisfied God's wrath so that we could be redeemed. We are all guilty, but because of Jesus work, God has made redemption available to all of us. He gave us His own pure and spotless lamb.
- [Isaiah 53:3-6](#) speaks about Jesus, “He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”
- At the Last Supper, Matthew recorded how Jesus drank the cup: “And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.” - [Matthew 26:27-28](#)

HALLEL

After the dinner when everyone is satisfied with their meal, the 4th cup is poured – the cup of praise. This cup remembers God’s promise to adopt His people. Adoption by our Creator gives us hope and security. It breathes His life and love into us, allowing us to be part of God’s family.

In a special tradition the family will open their front door and invite Elijah the Prophet to the Seder. Elijah represents God coming back for His people in a final redemption

- One day, Jesus will come back for His bride. In Him, our redemption is secure. We have a guaranteed inheritance in heaven!
- [1 Peter 1:3-5](#) states, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. “

The cup of praise is taken with a final blessing, “Blessed are you Lord, for all that we have received by your hand.”

- As Christians, we have received so very much from God.

CONCLUSION

Celebrating the Passover is special for both Jews and Christians. As we must re-commit our lives to Christ during this “Repair, Rebuild, Revive” season, remembering our deliverance, rescue, redemption, and adoption by God is a special celebration of our freedom.