

A rustic dining table with a vase of dried flowers, a bowl, and a stack of plates. The table is made of dark wood and has a white cloth on it. The background is a textured wall.

# *Seder Meal*

## GUIDE

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# Setup & Supplies

## *Table Set-Up*

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Each table, including the head table, must have the following items placed on it. This accommodates a group of six people (adjust according to the number of people at each table):

- A plate with 3 slices of Passover Matzah
  - Use whole slices (do not break up the matzah)
  - The plate may be either china or plastic
  - Passover matzahs, if unavailable, use regular unsalted matzah. Passover matzah is usually available at Albertson's, Kroger and Tom Thumb.
- A bowl containing charoseth (*recipe below*)
- A small bowl containing salted water - very salty
- A larger bowl containing fresh water
- A plate containing parsley - one bite-size sprig per person
- A bowl containing horseradish - a dash per person
- A pitcher of grape juice - 6 oz. per person
- A cup for each person to drink from - do not put grape juice in this cup. The leader will direct its use.
- Cutlery - a fork, knife, spoon and napkin.
- A small dessert plate



## *Charoseth Recipe (serves 12)*

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- 2 apples
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 tsp. ginger
- 1/2 cup almonds or walnuts
- 1/4 cup grape juice

Quarter and core the apples.  
Chop the apples.  
Add raisins, nuts, ginger and cinnamon.  
Toss with grape juice.

# Order of Events

Use this concise guide to structure your Passover Seder, ensuring a worshipful atmosphere and a smooth progression. Each point includes brief instructions plus the main purpose. You can also follow along with a video at [fielder.org/seder](https://fielder.org/seder).

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

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Offer a short explanation of why you're celebrating: God rescued Israel from Egypt, and Jesus fulfills that deliverance. Invite someone to read a key verse (e.g., Exodus 12:26–27) to set the tone.

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE (2 MINUTES)

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Ask a woman to light the candle with her head covered (even with a doily), symbolizing God's presence and the coming of the Light of the World. Encourage a brief pause for reverence before moving on.

## FIRST CUP – THE CUP OF BLESSING (3 MINUTES)

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Pour juice or wine for each person; recite the fruit of the vine blessing. Remind everyone this cup reflects God's promise to "bring out" His people (Exodus 6:6).

## WASHING / CLEANSING (3 MINUTES)

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Provide a bowl of fresh water for simple handwashing. Read a verse like Psalm 24:3–4 or offer a short prayer for inward purity.

## PARSLEY & SALT WATER (3 MINUTES)

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Dip parsley (*karpas*) into saltwater, tasting the tears of bondage (Exodus 2:23–24). Affirm that God sees our sorrow and offers fresh life.

## MATZAH & THE BREAKING OF THE MIDDLE PIECE (2 MINUTES)

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Show the three matzahs, break the middle one, and hide the larger portion (*Afikomen*). Explain that this "bread of affliction" foreshadows greater freedom.

## THE FOUR QUESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

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Have the youngest or designated person ask why this night is different. Fulfill Deuteronomy 6:20 by letting childlike wonder lead us to retell God's deliverance.

### DAYENU (3 MINUTES)

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Sing or read “Dayenu,” celebrating that each act of God’s salvation alone is enough. Let gratitude rise as you see His kindness again and again.

### SECOND CUP – THE CUP OF PLAGUES (2 MINUTES)

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Refill cups, briefly recalling the plagues and the Passover lamb’s protective blood. Note how this foreshadows Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf.

### BITTER HERBS & CHAROSETH (5 MINUTES)

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Taste the pungent horseradish (*maror*), then follow with sweet charoseth to temper the bitterness. Reflect on how God transforms sorrow into hope.

### MEAL BREAK (~30 MINUTES)

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Pause for the main meal, enjoy fellowship and rememb God’s present provision. Encourage conversation about God’s faithfulness.

### THIRD CUP – THE CUP OF REDEMPTION (5 MINUTES)

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After the meal, pour the third cup, tied to Exodus 6:6 (“I will redeem you”). Read Luke 22:19–20, connecting it to Jesus’ new covenant in His blood.

### HIDDEN MATZAH (AFIKOMEN) (5 MINUTES)

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Have participants (often children) find the *Afikomen*. Break it among the group, linking it to Jesus’ body, buried and then revealed.

### OPEN PLACE SETTING (ELIJAH’S CHAIR) (2 MINUTES)

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Point to the empty seat and cup left for Elijah (Malachi 4:5). Remind everyone of our ongoing hope in Christ’s ultimate redemption.

### FOURTH CUP – THE CUP OF PRAISE (3 MINUTES)

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Fill cups one last time to honor “I will take you to be My people” (Exodus 6:7). End with thanksgiving or a brief blessing celebrating God’s faithfulness.

### CONCLUDING HYMN (2 MINUTES)

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Finish with a joyful song like “Hevenu Shalom Aleichem.” Encourage everyone to leave with hearts full of praise, echoing the disciples in Matthew 26:30.

*Total Estimated Time: ~85 minutes (Adjust as needed.)*

# How to Use This Booklet

Picture yourself as a chef preparing a special meal but thoughtfully tasting, adjusting, and pouring heart into each dish. That's how we invite you to approach this Passover guide. Yes, we've outlined the steps, the prayers, and the symbolic actions, but ultimately, **you** know your guests, your community, and the spiritual atmosphere. Our hope is that as you read each section and meditate on the corresponding "Leader Prep," you'll sense the Holy Spirit's direction for how best to lead and adapt these moments. Some may enjoy attempting the Hebrew blessings; others may prefer English. **What truly matters is that you facilitate an experience where people engage God's story of deliverance** with their whole selves—heart, mind, and senses.

As you work through the booklet:

- **Pray and Reflect**—Take time beforehand to let each element (candle lighting, cups of wine, bitter herbs, etc.) resonate in your own spirit. Like a chef tasting every component before serving, let these truths transform you first.
- **Follow the Flow**—We've organized the Seder steps to build toward a spiritual crescendo at the Third Cup, then end with celebratory praise. Use this structure, but feel free to adapt the language or pace. Your goal is to lead a meaningful, worshipful journey of remembrance.
- **Rely on the Spirit**—We've provided leader prep notes, Scripture references, and historical context. Yet there's always room for spontaneous prayer, testimonies, or discussions that arise. Trust that God delights in moving through both the planned and the unexpected.
- **Empower Participation**—Encourage guests to ask questions, read prayers, or share reflections. The Seder is at its best when everyone's senses and voices are involved, echoing the scriptural call to pass on these truths to the next generation.

Ultimately, this guide is a tool for you to help others re-experience the depth of God's redemptive plan—both in the Exodus and supremely through Jesus, our Passover Lamb. May every symbolic taste and action point hearts back to God who liberates us from sin and offers us new life through His Son. **Welcome to the table; may the Spirit lead you every step of the way.**





## Why a Passover Seder Meal?

Passover (*Pesach*) was the first meal, the first celebration, and the first month of Israel's calendar. God established this as the **beginning of the year** so that His people would start every year with a reminder of His power, His mercy, and His faithfulness. It is a celebration of God's redemption of Israel from Egyptian slavery. It is also a sign given by God pointing to the Messiah, who came some 1250 years after the Exodus.

As Christians, we now look at this ancient reminder and see **its fulfillment in Christ**. The first Passover pointed forward to a greater deliverance—the redemption that Jesus accomplished through His death and resurrection. This meal, once tied to the Exodus from Egypt, now also invites us to reflect on the greater Exodus: how Jesus, our Passover Lamb, rescued us from the slavery of sin and brought us into **new life with Him**.

We are forgetful humans, who need Godly reminders. Whether you've been a Christian for one year or thirty, your senses **become dulled** to the greatness of the gift Christ has given us. We hear words like *redemption*, *sacrifice*, and *resurrection* so often that they lose their weight. This meal is designed to **awaken us again**—not just with words, but through practice, taste, smell, and touch. It is a meal that is meant to be **experienced** with our whole selves.

Tonight, you will enjoy **fellowship**, laughter, and conversation. But there will also be quiet moments—times to take in the meaning of each element with your whole body and heart. This is a time to **remember** what God has done for you.



# How to *Engage in this Meal*

Each section will guide you through a part of the Passover meal. For each element, we will explore:

1. **Scripture** – Where this element appears in the Bible and what it meant to God’s people.
2. **Meaning** – How this element pointed to Christ and what it now means for us.
3. **Heart Posture** – How our attitude should be as we engage in each part of the meal.
4. **Prayer** – A blessing or a moment of reflection to help us receive what God is teaching us.

Some of these moments may feel **unfamiliar or ritualistic**, especially if you’re not used to structured prayers or physical symbols in worship. But that’s okay. **Rituals, when filled with the right heart and meaning, help us embody truth.** God designed us as whole people—body, soul, and spirit—and He often uses **physical acts** to remind us of spiritual realities. Just as Israel painted their doorposts with lamb’s blood, walked through the parted sea, and ate unleavened bread, we, too, use our **whole selves** to remember the deeper reality of Christ’s redemption.

So, as we go through this meal, let yourself **fully engage**. Feel the bitterness of the herbs. Taste the sweetness of redemption. Let the weight of Christ’s sacrifice settle in as you break the bread. And as we conclude, let your heart rise in **praise**—because just as Passover was the beginning of Israel’s year, Christ’s redemption is the beginning of our **new life**.

**Let’s begin.**



# *Seder Meal*



*“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

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JOHN 8:12

# Lighting of the Candle

## Main Idea

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A woman with her head covered (*even with a doily*), lights the candle to symbolize the welcome of God's presence; it also reminds us that Jesus, the Light of the World, came through a woman (*Mary*)—as God often chooses to use humble unexpected servants.

## Scripture References

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- **Isaiah 9:2** – “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”
- John 8:12; Genesis 1:3–4

## Context & Explanation

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In Jewish tradition, the woman of the home kindles the festival lights to usher in God's presence. By covering her eyes as she lights the candle, she symbolically invites divine radiance to shine upon the gathering. For Christians, this act points to the Light of the World entering through a woman's obedience (Galatians 4:4)—just as Mary's humble faith welcomed the Messiah (Luke 1:38). While there is no direct command in Scripture to light candles for Passover, this custom sets a tone of sacred reflection, reminding everyone that redemption begins with God's illuminating grace.

## Heart Posture

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As the candle is lit, receive the light with gratitude. Reflect on Christ's role as the guiding light in every darkness. Let your heart open to God's presence, aware that any deliverance—then or now—starts with His initiative and gracious intervention.

## Prayer: Hebrew Blessing Over the Candle Lighting

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### TRANSLITERATION

BAH-ROOCH / A-TAH / ADONAI / EH-LO-HAY-NOO / MEH-LECH / HAH-O-LAHM / A-SHER / KID-SHAH-NOO / B'MITZ-VO-SAHV / V'TZI-VAH-NOO / L'HAD-LIK / NER-SHELL / (SHA-BAS / V'SHELL) YOM TOV

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION

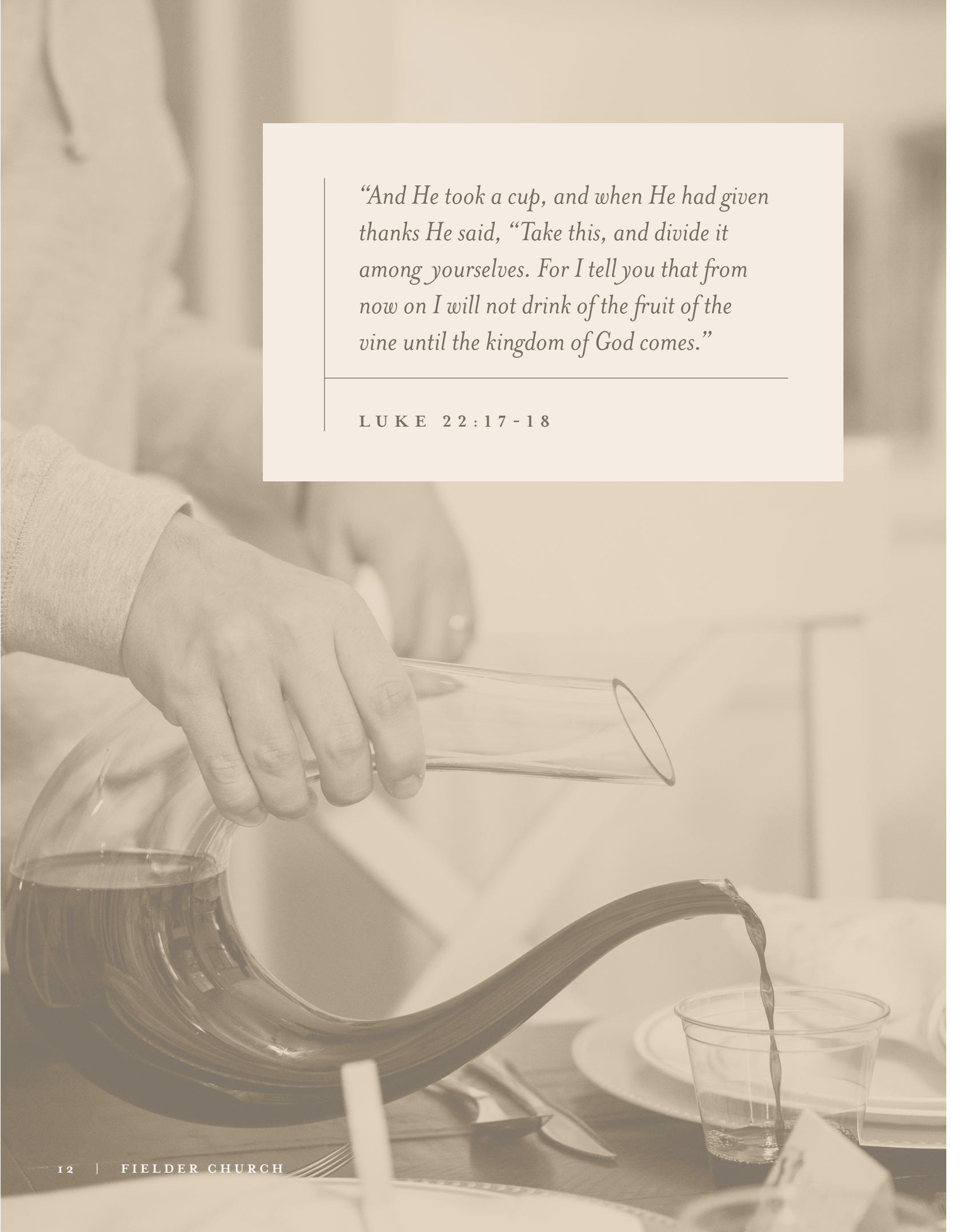
Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who set us apart by Your commandments and directed us to kindle the light of the (Sabbath and of the) holy day.

## Leader Prep

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Take some time to reflect on how intimately God connects His presence with fire throughout Scripture. From the beginning, fire has marked the boundary between holiness and humanity—Genesis 3:24 describes a flaming sword guarding Eden's gate, signifying both judgment and protection. In Exodus 3:2, the burning bush was not consumed, revealing that God was present, calling Moses by name, and preparing to deliver His people. Later, God's flame appeared as a pillar of fire, guiding Israel by night (Exodus 13:21), a constant reminder that His presence leads and protects. The theme of fire continues in Acts 2:3, when tongues of fire descended upon the apostles at Pentecost, igniting their hearts with boldness and power. In each of these moments, we see that when God draws near, darkness flees, and the ordinary becomes sacred ground. Fire is not just a source of illumination but a living sign of God's holiness, His guidance, and His desire to dwell among His people.

Before you invite a woman to light the candle, pause to meditate on what it means to welcome God's presence in this very moment—whether in your home, your church, or within your own heart. Consider Mary's calling: an unlikely vessel for the Messiah's birth, yet her willingness became the doorway for the Light of the World. In the same way, lighting this candle is more than tradition—it is an act of invitation. Pray that this flame would awaken reverence and expectancy in everyone present, a reminder that God still manifests His love and glory today. Ask the Holy Spirit to stir hearts afresh because His fiery presence continues to break through the mundane, transforming those who welcome Him into bearers of His light.

A close-up, sepia-toned photograph of a person's hand pouring wine from a glass carafe into a glass. The carafe is tilted, and a stream of dark liquid is captured mid-pour, falling into the glass. The background is softly blurred, showing a dining table with plates and cutlery. The overall mood is warm and intimate.

*“And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”*

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LUKE 22:17-18

# First Cup: *The Cup of Blessing*

## *Main Idea*

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The first of four cups in the Passover Seder, highlighting God's promise to "bring you out" (Exodus 6:6). Jesus, at the Last Supper, lifts this cup and invites us to celebrate freedom from sin and offer thanks for God's redeeming work.

## *Scripture References*

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- **Exodus 6:6** – "Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.'"
- Luke 22:17-18; I Corinthians 10:16

## *Context & Explanation*

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In a traditional Passover, four cups of wine or juice are consumed at distinct moments to symbolize the four redemptive promises from Exodus 6:6-7: God's pledge to bring out, deliver, redeem, and finally take His people as His own. The first cup often carries the title "Cup of Sanctification" or "Cup of Blessing," reflecting both God's act of setting Israel apart and the worshipful blessing that introduces the meal. Luke 22 describes Jesus taking a cup early in the supper, giving thanks, and sharing it among His disciples—an echo of this Seder practice but imbued with a new deliverance that would soon arrive through His sacrifice.

When we lift this cup, we remember how God drew Israel out of harsh bondage, and we also see a deeper liberation through Jesus. Just as God sanctified Israel for Himself, so Christ calls us out of sin's dominion, dedicating us to live in gratitude and obedience.

## *Heart Posture*

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Approach this cup with thankfulness and awe. It represents an invitation to worship, to proclaim that God is the One who rescues and sets us apart. Let it stir a sense of belonging: we, too, have been "brought out" by His grace.

## *Prayer: Hebrew Blessing Over the Fruit of the Vine*

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### TRANSLITERATION

BAH-ROOCH / A-TAH / ADONAI / EH-LO-HAY-NOO/  
MEH-LECH / HAH-O-LAHM / BO-RAY / P'REE / HA-GAH-  
FEHN

### ENGLISH TRANSLATION

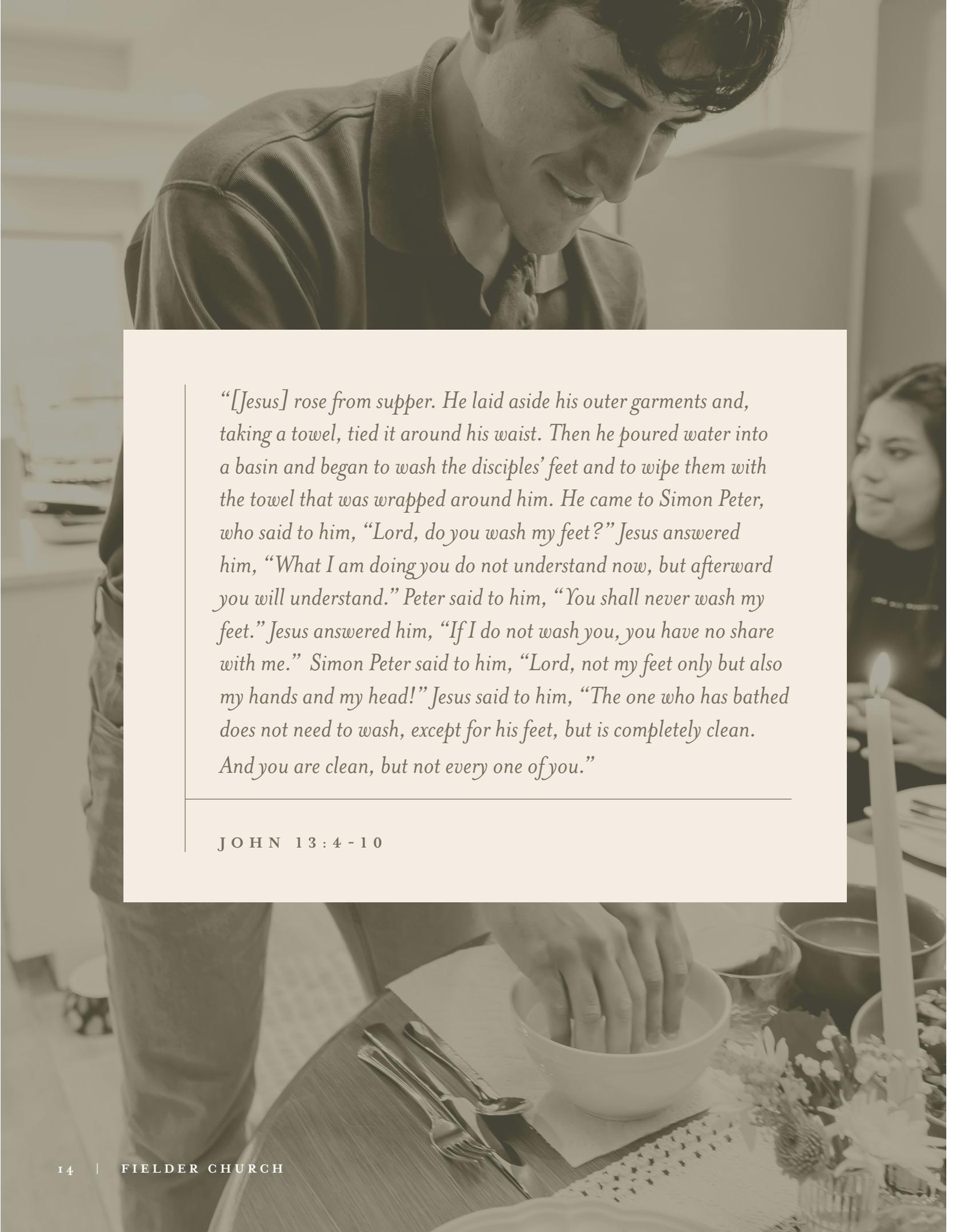
Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,  
Creator of the fruit of the vine.

## *Leader Prep*

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Dwell on the word "blessing." In **Exodus 6:6**, God promised to "bring out" the Israelites from oppressive chaos, transforming their situation from misery to hope. That is a true blessing: being led from captivity into freedom, from darkness into God's marvelous presence. Think of Isaiah's vision in **Isaiah 6:1-5**, where God's holy presence almost undoes the prophet—revealing sin but also offering cleansing. This first cup represents that first step out of bondage and into God's redemptive story, reminding us that every blessing flows from His saving initiative.

As you prepare to guide people in drinking the Cup of Blessing, recall how Jesus gave thanks for this cup before passing it to His disciples (**Luke 22:17-18**). His gratitude teaches us that no matter the chaos or guilt we face, God's promise of deliverance stands firm. He graciously lifts us out, leading us into new life. Invite participants to hold the cup and consider what God has "brought them out of" in recent weeks or years. Encourage them to see this as an encounter with the same holy God Isaiah encountered—One who reveals our need but also draws us into His cleansing love. Pray that each sip reinforces gratitude, worship, and a fresh awareness of the blessing of being rescued.



*“[Jesus] rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments and, taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?” Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”*

JOHN 13:4-10

# Washing / Cleansing

## Main Idea

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In the Passover Seder, participants ceremonially wash their hands as a reminder of the purity required to approach God. For Christians, it also echoes Jesus' teaching on inner cleansing and His servant-hearted act of washing His disciples' feet.

## Scripture References

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- **Psalm 24:3-4** – “Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart...”
- John 13:4-10; Exodus 30:17-21

## Context & Explanation

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The custom of washing at Passover adapts an Old Testament principle: those who ministered in the Tabernacle or Temple needed to wash before entering God's presence (Exodus 30:17-21). Over centuries, this idea of ritual purification spread into everyday Jewish life, eventually shaping the “tradition of the elders” (Mark 7:3-4), which emphasized washing hands before meals. During the Seder, a brief washing or dipping of the fingers underscores the holiness of the occasion, reminding us that we approach God not casually but with reverence and humility.

In John 13, Jesus extends this symbolism by washing His disciples' feet—taking on the humblest servant's role. By doing so, He redefined greatness as service and taught that true purity is far deeper than external ritual. Even as we perform a simple handwashing at Passover, Christians recall Christ's humble act and the cleansing power of His sacrifice, which washes us from sin.

## Heart Posture

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Come to this moment aware of your own need for God's purifying grace. Acknowledge any hidden wrongdoing or pride and let this act of washing rekindle your gratitude for the forgiveness Christ offers.

## Prayer

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“Lord, as we wash our hands, we remember You are the One who cleanses our hearts. Grant us humility to receive Your grace and to serve others as You served us. May this simple water remind us that our purity comes from Your mercy, not our merit. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

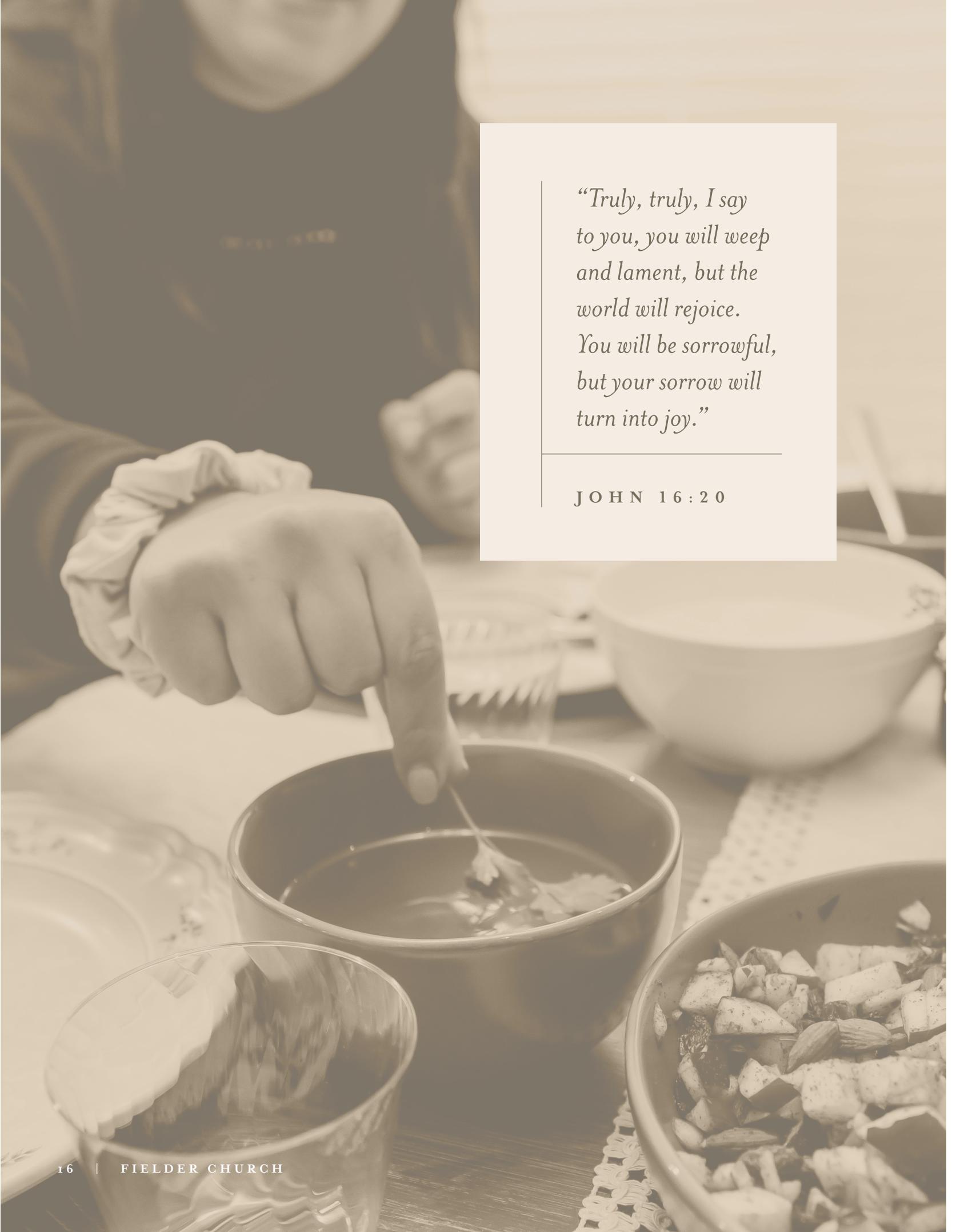
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Before your group performs the act of handwashing, ponder the holiness of God that Isaiah witnessed in Isaiah 6. When the prophet beheld God's throne, his immediate response was a heartfelt cry of unworthiness: “Woe is me!” Yet God cleansed Isaiah's lips, signifying that in His presence, we can find forgiveness and purification for our sins. This resonates with the priestly washings in Exodus 30:17-21, where approaching God's sanctuary required both physical and spiritual readiness.

Reflect on the fact that by inviting people to wash their hands, you are extending a chance to symbolically meet God in humility—allowing Him to show you what needs changing, confessing that you can't cleanse yourself. Think of how Jesus washed His disciples' feet in John 13, stooping low to serve and cleanse His own.

Prepare your heart by asking God to search you—are you harboring pride, bitterness, or secret wrongdoing? Surrender it, letting His grace wash over you as tangibly as water.

Then, encourage your group to approach the bowl not just as another step in the ceremony but as an enacted prayer: “Lord, wash me, that I may stand freely in Your presence, ready to experience the fullness of this Passover celebration.”

A warm, sepia-toned photograph of a person's hands dipping a piece of bread into a bowl of soup. The person is wearing a white ruffled sleeve. In the foreground, there is a glass of water and a bowl of nuts. The background shows a white bowl and a white plate on a table with a lace placemat.

*“Truly, truly, I say  
to you, you will weep  
and lament, but the  
world will rejoice.  
You will be sorrowful,  
but your sorrow will  
turn into joy.”*

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JOHN 16:20

# Parsley & Salt Water

## Main Idea

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Participants dip a sprig of parsley (*symbolizing new life*) into salted water (*symbolizing tears*) to remember the sorrow of Israel's bondage in Egypt and to foreshadow the ultimate hope found in God's deliverance.

## Scripture References

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- **Exodus 2:23** – “During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help... and their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God.”
- John 16:20; Psalm 126:5–6

## Context & Explanation

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Parsley (*Karpas*) is a fresh green herb traditionally dipped in salt water during the early part of the Seder. The greenness points to springtime—a season of rebirth—while the saltwater recalls the tears shed by the enslaved Israelites in Egypt. This simple act grounds participants in the real hardships of bondage, connecting the historic Exodus to our present longing for God's intervention.

For believers in Christ, the tears can also echo our own brokenness under sin's yoke. Yet just as Israel's tears reached God's ears (Exodus 2:24), our cries for mercy find an answer in Jesus. Though the salt water stings with memory, the parsley's vibrant color reminds us that new life ultimately springs from sorrow.

## Heart Posture

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As you taste the saltiness, allow yourself to empathize with the suffering of the Israelites. Then, reflect on how God, in Christ, gathers every tear, turns sorrow into hope, believing He will bring renewal out of pain.

## Prayer

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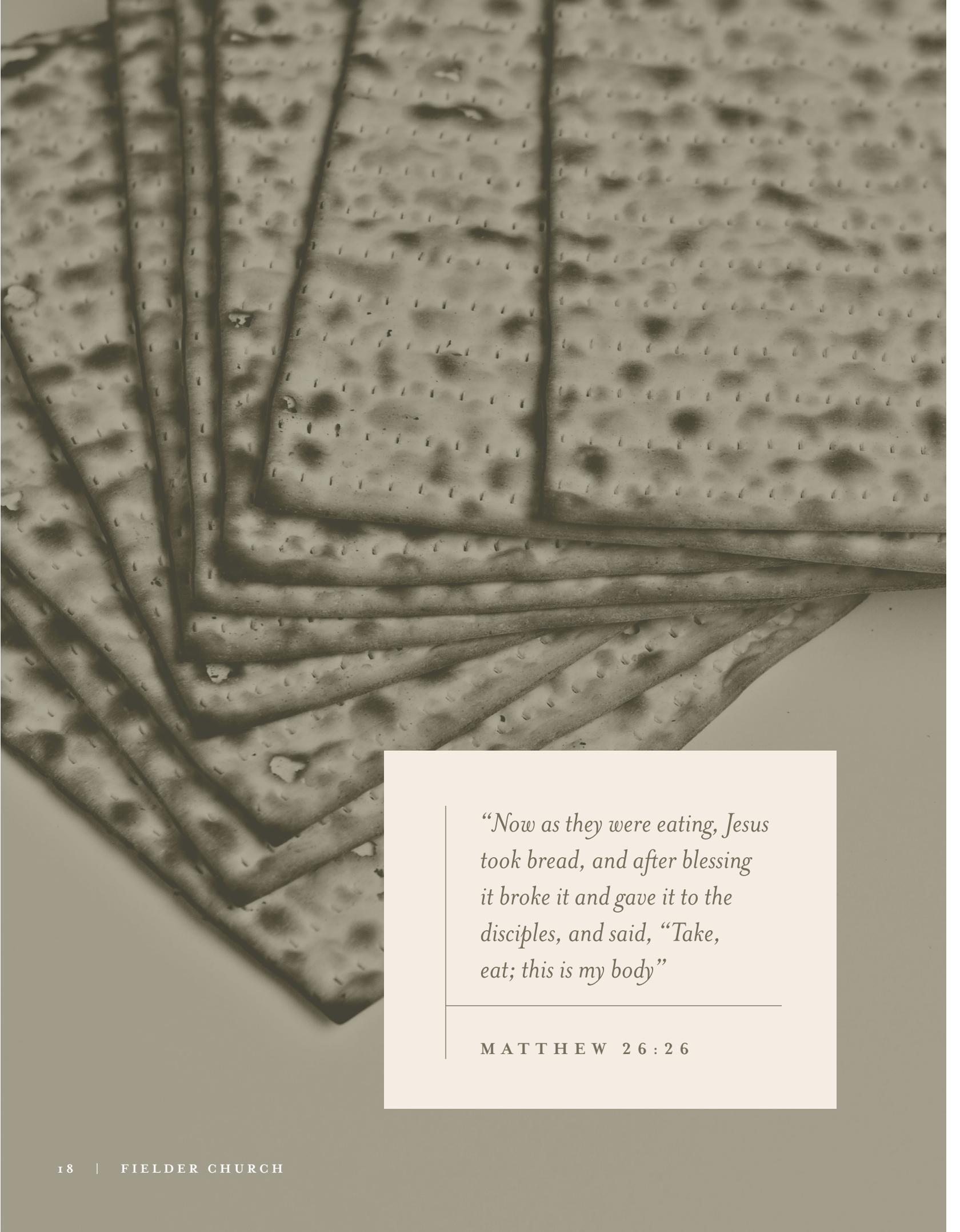
“Lord, as we dip the parsley into salt water, we remember life's bitterness and the groaning of all who suffer. We praise You for hearing our cries and offering new life through Jesus. May each tear we taste lead us back to Your redeeming love. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Before leading your group to dip parsley into salt water, think about how God sees every tear and hears every groan (**Exodus 2:23–24**). Recall moments in Scripture where sorrow yielded a deeper revelation of His character—like Hannah's tears before Samuel's birth or Mary's weeping at Jesus' tomb.

When you taste that salt, you're revisiting Israel's tears in Egypt: a tangible reminder that God doesn't ignore suffering but weaves it into His redemptive story. Meditate on **John 16:20**, where Jesus assured His disciples that mourning would transform into joy, hinting at the resurrection life He offers. Pray that each person partaking senses the paradox: tears can be a holy space where God's compassion breaks through. Encourage them to let the salt water stir empathy for all who languish in bondage, whether physical or spiritual. And trust that, as with Israel, God is never deaf to their cries. In the quiet, before you demonstrate this act, ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind any grief or oppression—yours or someone else's—that you've been holding. Offer it up, remembering that God's heart is moved by suffering. Parsley, fresh and green, symbolizes new life, and the salt water reflects real sorrow; hold these two realities together, just as the Lord invites us to hold hope alongside lament. Remind your group that out of bitter tears, God leads us into the sweetness of freedom—an undercurrent we'll experience again and again throughout the Seder.



*“Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body”*”

MATTHEW 26 : 26

# Matzah & the Four Questions

## Main Idea

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We pause to acknowledge the “bread of affliction”—unleavened matzah—as a symbol of Israel’s hasty escape from Egypt and to ask the Four Questions that highlight why this night is unlike any other. These moments set the stage for remembering God’s past deliverance and anticipating the greater fulfillment in Christ.

## Scripture References

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- **Deuteronomy 6:20** – “When your son asks you in time to come, ‘What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the LORD our God has commanded you?’”
- Exodus 12:39; 1 Corinthians 5:7–8

## Context & Explanation

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Matzah, the unleavened bread, appears repeatedly in the Passover story (Exodus 12:39) because the Israelites fled Egypt so quickly that their dough had no time to rise.

Traditionally asked by the youngest person at the table, the Four Questions highlight the holiness of the night. Each question invites an explanation and remembrance of God’s rescuing acts. Even now as believers, Jesus used matzah to proclaim, “This is my body” (Matt. 26:26), transforming the bread of affliction into a sign of His brokenness for our salvation.

## Heart Posture

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Approach the matzah with both humility and gratitude—recognizing Christ’s sinless sacrifice—and let the questions stir a fresh wonder. Like children, remain inquisitive about God’s past faithfulness and present promises.

## Prayer

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“Lord, as we taste this unleavened bread and ponder the Four Questions, open our eyes to see Your mighty hand in history and in our own lives. May our hearts be quickened to share these truths with the next generation, and may we rest in the freedom You bring through Jesus. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Before leading your group through the matzah ritual and the Four Questions, set aside time to ponder both the tangible call to humility in unleavened bread and the childlike curiosity behind asking, “Why is this night different?” Revisit **Exodus 12:39** and **Deuteronomy 6:20** to remember God’s swift deliverance and His desire for each generation to ask, learn, and remember.

If possible, read **Matthew 26:26–29** or **1 Corinthians 11:23–26**, focusing on Jesus. The true Bread of Life, who bore our affliction to bring freedom. Invite the Holy Spirit to renew your awe as you prepare to guide others in reflection.

**1. On all other nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night why only unleavened bread (matzah)?**

Jesus, like unleavened (sinless) bread is the bread of life. (Ex. 12:15)

**2. On all other nights we may eat any kind of herbs, but why on this night only bitter herbs?**

We must remember the bitterness of slavery (to sin) and Jesus taking all our sin upon Himself. (Ex. 12:18)

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

We were Pharaoh’s slaves in Egypt. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. We must remember that God chose this night for Jesus beginning to go to the cross and be resurrected by God’s might hand. (Deut. 6:21)

**4. On all other nights we eat and drink either sitting or reclining, but why on this do we eat reclining?**

It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover, for He passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when He struck the Egyptians but spared our houses. We must remember the sacrifice of Jesus that has set us free, sparing us the penalty of sin. (Ex. 12:26–27)

Encourage your group to savor each truth.

*“Since, therefore, we  
have now been justified  
by his blood, much more  
shall we be saved by him  
from the wrath of God.”*

ROMANS 5 : 9

# Dayenu & the Second Cup: the Cup of Plagues

## Main Idea

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Singing or reciting “Dayenu” declares that each act of God’s deliverance would have been enough on its own, yet He does immeasurably more. The Second Cup then recalls the plagues upon Egypt, symbolizing God’s judgment against oppression and His mercy for those under the lamb’s covering.

## Scripture References

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- **Exodus 7:4–5** – “Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my hosts, my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD...”
- Exodus 6:6; Luke 22:17; Revelation 5:9

## Context & Explanation

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“Dayenu” (Hebrew for “it would have been enough”) is a spirited Passover song listing the many wonders God performed for Israel—from the Exodus itself to the giving of the Torah and beyond. Each verse declares that if God had only done that one act of salvation, it still would have been enough to merit endless gratitude. Yet the refrain reminds us that God’s grace overflows beyond mere necessity.

Immediately following “Dayenu,” the Seder traditionally moves to the Second Cup (sometimes called the Cup of Deliverance or Cup of Plagues). It recalls the series of judgments (blood, frogs, lice, etc.) that befell Egypt and culminated in the death of the firstborn. Though somber, it also underscores divine mercy: Israel’s firstborns were spared when they applied a lamb’s blood to their doorposts. As believers, we see in this blood the foreshadowing of Christ, whose sacrifice shields us from the ultimate plague—eternal death (Romans 5:9).

## Heart Posture

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Let “Dayenu” foster thanksgiving for every gift, large or small, while the Second Cup humbles you, remembering that deliverance often comes at a cost. Celebrate God’s abundant kindness yet remain reverent before the reality of His just judgment.

## Prayer

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“Lord, thank You that each step of our redemption is more than enough—yet You always do even more. As we consider the plagues, we tremble at Your holiness and praise You for the covering of Christ’s blood. May our hearts sing ‘Dayenu!’ for the abundance of Your grace. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Take a moment to reflect on how God’s grace always exceeds our expectations. Dayenu means “it would have been enough,” urging us to marvel at each act of deliverance as worthy of endless praise. Psalm 103:2 calls us to “forget not all his benefits.” If God had only rescued Israel but never led them through the wilderness - *Dayenu*. If Christ had only taught righteousness but not gone to the cross - *Dayenu*. Yet He gives more, piling grace upon grace. Pray for a heart that sees and savors these layers of kindness. As you lead Dayenu, embody genuine awe. Invite the group to recall one recent blessing before adding their voices to this ancient refrain.

### **Dayenu (It Would Have Been Enough):**

- If He had brought us out of Egypt — *Dayenu!*
- If He had split the sea for us — *Dayenu!*
- If He had fed us manna in the desert — *Dayenu!*
- If He had given us the Sabbath — *Dayenu!*
- If He had led us to Mount Sinai — *Dayenu!*
- If He had given us the Torah — *Dayenu!*
- If He had built the Temple — *Dayenu!*

Pause also to reflect on God’s mercy in judgment. Exodus shows both — plagues on Egypt (Exodus 7–12), but shelter through the lamb’s blood (Exodus 12:13). Romans 5:9 assures us that Christ’s blood delivers us from wrath. As you present the second cup, pray for reverent hearts—grateful for the Lamb who delivers us still.

*“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”*

ROMANS 8:18-21

# Bitter Herbs & Charoseth

## Main Idea

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Tasting the biting bitterness of horseradish (*bitter herbs*) followed by the sweet mixture of charoseth reflects the movement from suffering to redemption. It captures Israel's harsh slavery in Egypt and the sweetness of God's deliverance—ultimately fulfilled in Christ.

## Scripture References

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- **Exodus 1:14** – “And [the Egyptians] made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick...”
- Exodus 12:8; Romans 8:18–21

## Context & Explanation

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Bitter herbs (*Maror*) form one of the key elements God required for the Passover meal (Exodus 12:8). Ancient Jewish commentators emphasize that the stinging taste reminds us of the severity of Israel's oppression under Pharaoh: “They made their lives bitter.” To lessen this pungent experience, dip the *maror* in charoseth, a sweet blend of apples, nuts, and spices resembling the mortar used to build Egyptian storehouses.

The Seder's symbolism is vivid: bitterness transitions into sweetness, recalling how God transformed slavery into freedom. For Christians, this resonates with the gospel's pattern—Jesus bore the bitterness of sin on the cross so believers might taste the sweetness of redemption. Just as the tear-inducing heat of horseradish yields to the gentle sweetness of charoseth, so our sorrow over sin finds relief in Christ's mercy.

## Heart Posture

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Allow the sharpness of the bitter herbs to evoke compassion for all who suffer oppression—physical, emotional, or spiritual. Then let charoseth's sweetness assure you that God hears cries for deliverance. Approach with humility, conscious that Christ endured bitterness so we could know sweetness in His kingdom.

## Prayer

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“Lord, we taste the bitterness of bondage and remember how You set Your people free. Thank You that in Christ, every bitter tear can be redeemed. As we combine *maror* with charoseth, remind us of the joy that follows sorrow for those who trust in You. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Before presenting the bitter herbs (*maror*) and the sweet charoseth, pause to let God bring to mind the raw experiences of human suffering—both globally and personally. Bitter herbs were commanded in **Exodus 12:8** so that each new generation would tangibly recall the sting of oppression. Consider how Jesus, too, tasted bitterness on our behalf: He was “a man of sorrows” (**Isaiah 53:3**), and He even refused to numb His pain with wine mixed with gall at the cross, fully entering our anguish (**Matthew 27:34**). Reflect on times in your own life when you faced heartbreak, loss, or betrayal, and how God met you in that space.

Now think of charoseth—a sweet mixture of apples, nuts, wine, and spices—symbolizing mortar but tasting of redemption. It reminds us that God never wastes our tears; He ultimately weaves even the harshest seasons into a larger story of deliverance. Ask Him to deepen your empathy for those still bound in modern “Egypt”: addictions, injustices, or emotional wounds.

Then, as you lead your group encourage them to savor the moment when sweet and bitter collide on their tongues. We dip twice - first to remember the exile in Egypt and second to remember the redemption (Deut. 6:21). For believers to remember they are sinners, and that Christ redeemed us. God's faithfulness can soften life's sharp edges, transforming the harshness of our stories into testimonies of grace.

Pray for every participant to recognize that Christ enters our bitterness so He can lead us into hope—a hope that, like charoseth, offsets even the strongest sting.



# Meal Break

## Main Idea

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The Seder Meal itself is a time to pause formal ceremonies and share a feast together, reflecting that Passover is not just a solemn remembrance but also a festival of joy. It celebrates God's abundant provision, fellowship, and the unity of His redeemed people.

## Scripture References

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- **Exodus 12:14** – “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations...”
- Deuteronomy 16:14; Acts 2:46

## Context & Explanation

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After the symbolic elements—bitter herbs, matzah, and cups—have been introduced, the Seder traditionally breaks for the main meal. In ancient Israel, the centerpiece would have been the roasted Passover lamb (*before the Temple was destroyed*). Today, families enjoy various dishes (*with no pork or leaven, in accordance with tradition*) as they remember that deliverance from Egypt culminated in celebration.

For Christians, this mealtime evokes the warmth of the early church's communal gatherings. Acts 2:46 describes believers “breaking bread in their homes” with glad and sincere hearts. During the Last Supper, Jesus celebrated with His disciples in an intimate setting, reinforcing the message that salvation is shared in community. The meal time allows everyone to savor the goodness of God's daily provision and to discuss the themes of redemption that the earlier symbols introduced.

## Heart Posture

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Enter the meal in gratitude and fellowship. Enjoy your food as a tangible sign of God's favor. Engage one another in conversation that deepens understanding and fosters unity. Let this be a table of belonging and joy, not just routine dining.

## Prayer

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“Heavenly Father, we thank You for the richness of this feast, for every bite that nourishes us. As we share this meal, remind us of Your gracious provision both in Exodus and in our own stories. Unite our hearts in thankfulness and love for one another. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Before the meal, review how often shared food in Scripture symbolizes renewed friendship, covenant, and joy. In **Deuteronomy 16:14**, God commands His people to rejoice during the festival, ensuring no one is excluded. Think of how Jesus, time and again, used meals to teach, comfort, and reveal Himself—in Emmaus, the moment He broke bread, “their eyes were opened” (**Luke 24:30–31**). Ask yourself: “How can this break in the ceremony become more than just eating? How can it be an act of spiritual celebration?”

Invite the Holy Spirit to prompt meaningful conversations around each table. Maybe someone will open up about a recently answered prayer or a personal Exodus they've experienced. Consider reading a brief passage like **Psalm 34:8**—“Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good”—reminding everyone that we don't just hear about God's goodness; we taste it, too.

Encourage families or small groups to share testimonies of God's provision. Let laughter and fellowship rise, acknowledging that every plate of food testifies to His sustaining grace. As you lead, keep in mind that this meal sets the stage for the deeper reflection coming afterward.

By celebrating God's faithfulness in the ordinary act of dining, you pave the way for hearts to more profoundly grasp the wonder of redemption in the next segments.

*“I have called you by name; you are Mine.”*

ISAIAH 43:1



# Hidden Matzah & *the* Third Cup: *the Cup of Redemption*

## Main Idea

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The third cup—often called the Cup of Redemption—reminds us of God’s promise in Exodus to “redeem” His people, while the hidden piece of matzah (*Afikomen*) symbolizes the Lamb’s sacrifice and, for Christians, Christ’s body broken and “hidden” in the tomb before resurrection.

## Scripture References

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- **Exodus 6:6** – “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.”
- **Luke 22:19–20**; **I Corinthians 11:23–26**

## Context & Explanation

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In the Passover liturgy, the third cup follows the meal and is tied to the line “I will redeem you” (Exodus 6:6). Tradition calls it the Cup of Redemption, emphasizing that deliverance from Egypt was God’s direct intervention. At the Last Supper, Jesus gave this cup new depth: “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you” (Luke 22:20). Thus, He revealed that the Exodus rescue foreshadowed a greater redemption from sin and death.

Meanwhile, during the meal, a piece of the middle matzah (called the *Afikomen*) was previously broken off and hidden. After dinner, it’s retrieved, shared around, and traditionally eaten last. This custom emerged over centuries, yet powerfully aligns with Christian imagery: Jesus’ body was broken, wrapped, “hidden” in the tomb, and then revealed in resurrected glory. Consuming the *Afikomen* after the meal becomes a poignant reminder that our redemption hinges on His finished work.

## Heart Posture

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Receive the third cup with reverence for God’s saving grace. As you break and partake of the *Afikomen*, recognize Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection. Let it kindle gratitude for the precious cost of your freedom.

## Prayer

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“Lord, thank You for redeeming us not with perishable things but with the blood of the Lamb. As we drink this cup and taste this broken bread, fix our eyes on Jesus, whose body was given for our deliverance. May we leave this table renewed in faith and eager to share Your redemption story. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Take extra time to reflect on the weight of this moment, often seen as the emotional high point of the Seder. Revisit Exodus 6:6—“I will redeem you”—and its fulfillment in **Luke 22:20**—“This cup is the new covenant in my blood.” The Third Cup, the Cup of Redemption, embodies the gospel: we are purchased by the Lamb who gave His life. Redemption echoes through Scripture, as in Isaiah 43:1: “I have called you by name; you are mine.”

Consider the disciples’ awe as they realized this familiar cup now signified Christ’s own blood for their freedom. Ask the Holy Spirit to renew your sense of wonder at the cross—its cost and the love behind it. Approach this cup slowly, perhaps with silent prayer or worship. Remind the group while redemption came at a price, it brings immeasurable joy. Pray that each sip deepens gratitude, inspiring not just remembrance but a life lived in the freedom Christ purchased.

Pause to reflect on the drama of the *Afikomen*—the middle matzah, broken, wrapped, and hidden—symbolizing Christ’s body, sinless and “unleavened” (I Corinthians 5:7–8), broken and buried. Yet resurrection brings the once-hidden Savior back in triumph. Recall the disciples at Emmaus (Luke 24:30–31), who recognized Jesus in the breaking of bread. Before leading the search for the *Afikomen*, invite God to rekindle awe at Christ’s victory over the grave.

Encourage participants to see this search as a reflection of their own spiritual journey—times when God seemed absent yet revealed Himself powerfully. Pray that each person views the restored matzah as a sign of Christ’s pursuit, even in doubt. As they take the final bite, remind them: Jesus, once wrapped in linen and “out of sight,” has returned in glory, ensuring brokenness never has the last word.

*“And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”*

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REVELATION 19:9

# Elijah's Chair & the Fourth Cup: *the Cup of Praise*

## Main Idea

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A chair and cup are left for Elijah, recalling the prophecy that he would herald the Messiah's arrival. The Fourth Cup, often called the Cup of Praise (*or Completion*), concludes the Seder with thanksgiving, pointing to the future fulfillment of God's kingdom promises.

## Scripture References

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- **Malachi 4:5** – “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.”
- Matthew 17:10–13; Exodus 6:7

## Context & Explanation

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Jewish tradition holds that Elijah will visit each Passover to announce the coming of the Messiah, tying back to Malachi's final verses. Hence, a place is set—often an empty chair and a cup of wine—for Elijah. Some open the door to welcome him, praying that redemption may soon be realized. For Christians, John the Baptist fulfilled this “Elijah” role at Jesus' first coming (Matthew 17:12–13). Many also anticipate Elijah's involvement before Christ's return, so the symbolism of an open chair remains a reminder of ongoing expectation.

The fourth and final Seder cup corresponds to God's promise, “I will take you to be my people” (Exodus 6:7). Known as the Cup of Praise or Cup of Completion, it crowns the night's recollection of deliverance. Often, Psalms (called the *Hallel*) are sung, reaffirming that all glory goes to God, who rescued Israel and who ultimately rescues His people in every generation.

## Heart Posture

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Watch for God's continuing work. Just as Elijah was expected to precede the Messiah, be alert to signs of Christ's kingdom advancing. When drinking the final cup, let praise overflow—He who began redemption will bring it to glorious completion.

## Prayer

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“Lord, we recall Elijah and the longing for Your full redemption. As we share this final cup, let our hearts soar with praise. We trust You to finish what You've started, to gather us as Your people, and to fulfill every promise in Christ. Amen.”

## Leader Prep

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Reflect on the tradition of leaving a seat and cup for Elijah, rooted in Malachi 4:5: “I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.” For generations, the Jewish people have set a place at their table—a quiet yet steadfast act of faith that God would fulfill His promise. This was more than tradition; it was a lived expectation that the Messiah's arrival was certain.

As Christians, we see this fulfilled in John the Baptist, who came “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17), preparing the way for Christ. The Messiah has come, and yet we, too, wait—for healing, reconciliation, and the completion of God's promises in our lives. Tonight, as we near the end of this supper and approach Easter, let Elijah's empty chair remind us of both the faith of those who waited before us and the faithfulness of God in what is still unfolding. Even when we don't see fulfillment yet, victory is already won.

This final cup—the Cup of Praise—echoes God's promise in Exodus 6:7: “I will take you to be my people.” After sharing the bread and third cup, Jesus said He would not drink again until the Kingdom's fulfillment (Matthew 26:29). This cup is both a celebration of redemption and a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9) when all will be made complete. As you lift this cup, pray with gratitude and expectancy. Trust that He who began a good work—both in Exodus and at Calvary—will finish it perfectly in Christ's return.



## Concluding Hymn

Many traditional Seders end with festive songs that celebrate God’s faithfulness and express hope for peace and future redemption. In some modern settings, a simple Hebrew folk tune like “Hevenu Shalom Aleichem” (“*We bring peace to you*”) is sung to conclude the evening on a joyful note. Historically, Jesus and His disciples ended their Passover celebration by singing a hymn before heading to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30). Likewise, we close in song to remind ourselves that worship and gratitude carry us forward, even after the symbolic elements of the Seder are done.

Below is a common refrain of “**Hevenu Shalom Aleichem,**” repeated as many times as desired:

**Hevenu Shalom Aleichem**

**Hevenu Shalom Aleichem**

**Hevenu Shalom Aleichem**

**Hevenu Shalom, Shalom, Shalom Aleichem!**

Some communities also add “L’shanah haba’ah b’Yerushalayim!” (“*Next year in Jerusalem!*”), echoing the centuries-old longing for complete redemption. As believers in Christ, we echo that hope by proclaiming, “**Come, Lord Jesus!**” — anticipating the day when peace and righteousness will fully reign.

*May this concluding hymn seal  
the lessons of the Seder in our  
hearts, sending us out with joy and  
the assurance that our ultimate  
deliverance is secure in Him.*





