

Mini Seder

This "Mini Seder" is adapted from "A Short Messianic Haggadah" by Bernard Howard, Good Shepherd Anglican Church, NYC. We invite you to use this with your friends and/or family on Maundy Thursday (Thursday April 17) around a meal of your choosing. An alternate reading for those with children is found on the back.

Opening Prayer

Light a candle (traditionally done by the woman of the house) if you like

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

Intro

In the story of Holy Week, tonight is when Jesus celebrated Passover as the Last Supper with his disciples. Both meals, Passover and the Last Supper, celebrate sacrifice and freedom, and that is what we remember as we eat together tonight. To do so, we will read 2 short passages before we eat.

First reading:

Exodus 12:1-13, selections, Complete Jewish Bible

"Adonai spoke to Moshe (Moses) and Aharon (Aaron) in the land of Egypt: Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the fourteenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, and take some of the blood and smear it on the two sides and top of the door-frame at the entrance of the house in which they eat it. That night, they are to eat the meat, roasted in the fire; they are to eat it with matzah (unleavened bread) and maror (bitter herbs). For that night, I will pass through the land of Egypt and kill all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and animals; and I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt; I am Adonai. The blood will serve you as a sign marking the houses where you are; when I see the blood, I will pass over you – when I strike the land of Egypt, the death blow will not strike you."

Second reading:

Luke 22: 14-18, Complete Jewish Bible

"When the time came, Yeshua (Jesus) and the emissaries reclined at the table, and he said to them, "I have really wanted so much to celebrate this Passover with you before I die! For I tell you, it is certain that I will not celebrate it again until it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God."

Then, taking a cup of wine, he made the b'rakhah (blessing) and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on, I will not drink the 'fruit of the vine' until the Kingdom of God comes." Also, taking a piece of matzah (unleavened bread), he made the b'rakhah (blessing), broke it, gave it to them and said, "This is my body, which is being given for you; do this in memory of me." He did the same with the cup after the meal, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant, sealed by my blood, which is being poured out for you."

Prayer:

Feel free to use these words or your own prayer for the meal

Bless us, O God. Bless our food and our drink.
Since you redeemed us and delivered us from evil,
as you gave us a share in this food, so may you give us a share in eternal life.

A Feast with Friends

Excerpt from *The Book of Belonging* by Mariko Clark and Rachel Eleanor

MATTHEW 26; MARK 14; LUKE 22; JOHN 13; 16;

1 CORINTHIANS 11

Yeshua is also called Jesus.

THE AIR FELT HEAVY AND EXPECTANT, AS IF THE room were holding its breath. Yeshua (Jesus) sat at the table with his friends, chatting quietly in the glow of the candles. Passover was usually a lively holiday for remembering and celebrating how God rescued God's people from Egypt's power machine. The city swelled with people and parties. There were stories, songs, and cheer. But this year, in this room, it felt different.

Jesus stood with bread in hand. His friends waited for him to recite the traditional Passover words. But he surprised them all. Instead, he said a blessing, broke the bread, and handed it to them, saying, "This is like my body. Soon it is going to break." Lifting his cup, Jesus went on: "And this is like my blood. Soon it is going to pour out."

His friends were sad and confused. Breaking bodies? Pouring blood? Passover was supposed to be fun! A time to celebrate rescue and free-dom! They didn't understand yet that in his own way, Jesus was celebrat-ing rescue and freedom. Something new was happening that only Jesus understood. Just like the escape from Egypt so many centuries before, God was going to lead people to freedom and belong with them in a new way. Jesus understood that this was something worth celebrating.

Yet in some mysterious way, the suffering of Jesus's human body was going to be part of the rescue story. Like a mother who labors and cries when she gives birth, Jesus was about to bring forth something new. And it was going to hurt. Jesus understood that this was something worth honoring. "When you break bread and sip wine, when you sit back from the table with a full heart and feel something of heaven in your gathering, remember me."

Sometimes things happen that are so important and mysterious that we simply can't fit them into our human heads and hearts. They weigh us down like big, heavy stones as we puzzle and wrestle. It helps to do something with our hands and our time, to give those big feelings a place to rest. We call that a ceremony.

Jesus was giving his friends the gift of a remembering ceremony before they even knew they would need it. Something was about to hap-pen that would change the world forever. It would confuse and inspire humans for the rest of history. Jesus didn't give his friends an explana-tion or a lesson; he just gave them a ceremony. A place to put their sad-ness, confusion, doubt, awe, and gratitude.

Jesus looked around the table at his friends. Oh, how he loved them fiercely. And he would love them right up until the end. He was making a love promise to his friends, one that he wanted them to remember in their gatherings.

Remember to remember to remember.

Like Moses sending God's people into the Promised Land, Jesus was getting his disciples ready to live in a new type of world. A rescued world. A world without him.

Jesus had one last meal with his dear friends, and he spent it in the most important way: reminding them of the truest and most beautiful