A Passover Meal for Maundy Thursday

Introduction

This service is based upon a genuine order for the Jewish Passover.

With the exception of our introduction, Gospel reading and prayer the wording is correct up to the point at which the meal would be served.

At that point our service moves into a final memory of the first Maundy Thursday with a final reading, prayer and blessing.

***Welcome and Introduction***

***Reading:*** Mark 14. 10—25

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, ‘Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?’ So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, ‘Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, “The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?” He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.’ So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, he came with the twelve. And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, ‘Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.’ They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, ‘Surely, not I?’ 20He said to them, ‘It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping breadinto the bowl with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.’

While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, ‘Take; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, ‘This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.’

***Prayer:***

Father help us to join in celebrating the Passover. We know that it could never be the same as that last supper that Christ shared with his disciples. But we ask that our minds might be sensitive to the movement of your Spirit, so that we might know something of that time of fellowship. As he said, "Do this in memory of me;" so may we not only remember but also understand. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**THE PASSOVER - THE Liturgy from North Harrow**

The Passover

Now in the presence of loved ones and friends, before us the emblems of festive rejoicing, we gather for our sacred celebration. With the household of faith, our elders and young ones, linking and bonding the past with the future, we heed once again the divine call to service.

Lighting of the festive candles:

[The candles are lit, then all say] **In praise of God we say that all life is sacred. In kindling festive lights, we preserve life's sanctity. We praise you, God, majestic sovereign of all life, who hallows our lives and bids us celebrate your presence.**

 Kadaysh – the wine is poured and blessed:

[The "wine" is poured, and then all say:]

O Lord our God, you are the blessed King of the Universe who creates the fruit of the vine. Lord, you are blessed, who has chosen us and made us holy. Out of your love you have given us special times of rejoicing including this festival of unleavened bread, the time of our freedom, a time to remember the Exodus from Egypt.

[The first sip of "wine"]

Oor'hataz – the first hand washing

Karpas – the green herbs:

[Some water cress, parsley or similar is passed round the table. Each takes a piece and then dips it **twice** into salt water, leans back and then eats it. All say:]

O Lord our God, you are the blessed king of the Universe who creates the fruit of the earth.

Yahatz – a bond formed by sharing:

[The leader breaks the middle matzot. One half is placed back between the other two. The other half is placed on one side, this is the Afiktomen, which is to be eaten at the end of the meal.]

Mageed – the story telling:

[The leader uncovers the matzot and holds them up for all to see.]

 Among people everywhere, the sharing of bread forms a bond of fellowship. For the sake of our redemption, we say together the ancient words which join us with our own people with all who are in need, with the wrongly imprisoned and with the beggar in the street. For our redemption is bound up with the deliverance from bondage of people everywhere.

This is the bread of affliction, which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in want, come and celebrate the Passover. As we celebrate here, we join with people everywhere. This year we are here, next year we shall be in Jerusalem. Yesterday we were slaves and today we are free!

**Song 2**

[The youngest person present says:] **Why is this night different from all other nights? Why do we only eat matza? Why do we specially eat bitter herbs?** **Why do we dip the herbs twice? Why do we lean back as we eat?**

To answer these questions let us look at the things around us...

We were slaves in Egypt and we were brought forth by God to freedom. If God had not brought our fathers out of Egypt, then we and all generations would have remained slaves in Egypt. So even if we were all wise and learned we would have to tell this story of our deliverance from Egypt. Indeed, it is considered right to spend time telling of our deliverance.

The lamb bone reminds us of the lamb that was killed so that its blood could be placed on the door posts. This was the sign to the Angel of Death that he should *"passover"* and not kill God's people. The egg is the sign of new life. The karpas, green vegetables, are symbols of the food that God provided for us in the wilderness.

The charoset reminds us mortar and the bricks we made in Egypt. But it also reminds us of the sweet things of life. The bitter herbs remind us of our slavery. It brings tears to our eyes and reminds

us that slavery is always a terrible thing. The salt water reminds us of our tears that we shed in Egypt, the pain and sorry that we experienced before our freedom. We dip the herbs twice, once for each eye.

The wine is drunk four times within the meal. Once for each part of God's four fold promise. He promised to (1) deliver us from slavery, (2) redeem his people, (3) make them his chosen people, (4) give them their own land. We ate matzos because we had to leave Egypt in a hurry. There was no time to bake bread with yeast in. We ate unleavened bread with roast lamb. We were packed and dressed for our journey, ready to go at midnight. We lean back as we eat because now we are free. Slaves do not recline to eat, only the master do!

[The following three passages are shared out among the participants:]

1. **The wise person asks, "what are the precepts, laws and observances which the Lord our God commanded us?" To him we should explain the observances of the Passover, the Laws and the customs thoroughly.**

2. **The wicked person does not associate himself with the Passover and we should explain to him that such an attitude is not worthy of our gift of freedom.**

3. **Others do not ask, and we must tell to them the truth of our deliverance at the hand of God that they might know and share our freedom.**

Let us hear the story of our faith:

[The following three passages are shared out among the participants:]

1. **I took your father Abraham from across the River and led him into the land of Canaan, and I gave him Isaac and to Isaac I gave Jacob. When Jacob and his children went down into Egypt, Joseph was already in Egypt. Joseph had emerged with power over the land of Egypt... There was famine in all the lands, but in the land of Egypt there was bread... and Pharaoh said to the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he tells you, you shall do" ... and all the world came to Joseph in Egypt. After Joseph died and all his brothers and all that generation ... a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people. "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us. Let us, then, deal shrewdly with them, lest they increase, and in the event of war, join our enemies in fighting against us and gain ascendancy over the country."**

**Song 3**

2.  **So they set taskmasters over them with forced labour and they built garrison cities for Pharaoh; Pithom and Raamses. The Egyptians embittered their lives with harsh labour at mortar and brick and in all sorts of work in the fields. But the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and spread out, so that the Egyptians came to despise and dread the Israelites. So Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every boy that is born shall be thrown in the Nile, but let every girl live." We cried unto the Lord, the God of our Fathers, and the Lord heeded our plight, our misery, and our oppression.**

3.  **God heard our moaning, and God remembered His Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. and God looked upon the Israelites, and God knew ... and God said "I will go through the land of Egypt on that night ... and I will mete out justice against all the gods of Egypt. I the Lord. And the Lord brought us out of Egypt by a mighty hand, by an outstretched arm and awesome power, and by signs and portents; not through a messenger, not through any intermediary or any supernatural being, but the Holy One, praised be He – He alone.**

4. **The time the Israelites remained in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. At the end of the four hundred and thirtieth year, to the very day, all the hosts of the Lord departed from the land of Egypt. That same night is the Lord's watch-night for the children of Israel throughout their generations.**

[All raise their glass of "wine" – do not drink]

We praise the God who kept His faith with His people Israel. God's promise of Redemption in ancient days sustains us now.

For more than one enemy has risen against us to destroy us. In every generation, in every age, some rise up to plot our annihilation. But a Divine Power sustains and delivers us.

[Replace the glass untasted]

To remember the upheavals that follow oppression, we pour ten drops of wine, one for each of the plagues upon Egypt:

[The leader drips ten drops of wine into his cup. All count:]

One for the blood, two for the frogs, three for the lice, four for the beasts, five for the boils, six for the blight, seven for the hail, eight for the locusts, nine for the darkness, ten for the slaying of the first born of Egypt.

We cannot be entirely happy if our happiness is purchased at the cost of others!

Who is like You, O God? For he brought us out of Egypt and divided the sea for us! He brought us out of slavery to the promised land!

**Song 4**

The signs of the Pesach:

This bone is a symbol of the Passover lamb. It reminds us of how God passed over the houses of our forefathers, smiting the Egyptians but saving his people Israel.

This matza reminds us how our forefathers left Egypt in such a hurry that they had no time to let their dough rise.

These are the bitter herbs which remind is of the bitterness of life lived without freedom.

In every generation, every person is duty bound to imagine themselves as taking part in that first Exodus from Egypt. The Torah says: "Tell your son on that day that it is because of what God did for me when I came forth out of Egypt." God not only redeemed our forefathers, he redeemed me as well.

The Second Cup – The cup of Memory:

[Raise the glass of wine and say:]

We should therefore thank God and pour out our praise to him who performed all these wonders for our forefathers and for us. He brought us out of slavery into freedom, from sorrow to joy, from darkness to light, from mourning to festivity, from bondage to redemption. We sing to him a new song – Hallelujah!

**Song 5 (as song 1)**

O Lord our God, you are the blessed King of the Universe who created the fruit of the vine!

[All drink]

Rah'tza – the second hand washing:

Motzi Matza:

[The upper matzot is broken and shared around the table but not eaten!]

O Lord our God, you are the blessed King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the ground.

O Lord our God, you are the blessed King of the Universe who has sanctified us and blessed us and commanded us to eat matza.

[Break off a small piece of matza and eat]

Maror – the bitter herbs:

[Take some bitter herbs (horse radish) and some haroset and put on your plate. All say:]

O Lord our God, you are the blessed King of the Universe who has sanctified us and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

[Put some of the bitter herbs (horse radish) on a small piece of matza and eat. Take a small piece of matza and put some haroset on it and eat]

At this point the meal would be served

**Reading: Mark 14. 26—50**

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, ‘You will all become deserters; for it is written,

“I will strike the shepherd,  
    and the sheep will be scattered.”

But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter said to him, ‘Even though all become deserters, I will not.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.’ But he said vehemently, ‘Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.’ And all of them said the same.

They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here while I pray.’ He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. 34And he said to them, ‘I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake.’ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, ‘Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.’ He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, ‘Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial;the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, ‘Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.’

### The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

43Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. 44Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.’ 45So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, ‘Rabbi!’ and kissed him. 46Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. 47But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. 48Then Jesus said to them, ‘Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? 49Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled.’ 50All of them deserted him and fled.

51A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him,

Prayer

Blessing:

 Shalom, Peace!

Peace for us and for everyone

For all people near and far

Now and for ever. Amen.

The Peace of God be upon you now and always. Amen.