

# Celebration of the Seder

## **Instructions and Ringing of the Gong**

### **Call to Worship**

Leader: Almighty God and Father, we come to you recognizing you are the source of all we have and all we are. We have set apart this night to remember your mighty acts as you preserved and protected us. You have given yourself to all who believe in you. We rest in Your Love, Your Sovereignty, Your Judgment, and Your Redemption. WE declare our faith in you, as did our fathers and mothers before us.

### **Blessing Over the Candles**

Leader: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe who sanctified us by your commandments and commanded us to light the lights of the Passover.

*Reading from Exodus 12:14-20*

### **Blessing of The Meal**

#### **(The First Cup)**

Leader: At the beginning of this evening we rededicate ourselves to God so that, during the Seder, hearts and minds seek to realize fully all we owe God for his goodness and redeeming power and for the many ways God has blessed his people. Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine. We thank you for giving us this festival to remind us of our deliverance from bondage. We take this cup and proclaim the holiness of this day of deliverance

#### **All: (Raise First Cup)**

**Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine, who has kept us in life, sustained us, and brought us to this season. (Drink First Cup)**

### **Washing of the Hands**

Leader: *(While washing hands in bowl of lemon water)*

We wash our hands as a symbol of purification and preparation for this meal.

#### **All: (Wash in Lemon Water and Dry Hands)**

### **Eating of the Greens**

Leader: *(Pick up Greens and Dip into Salt Water)*

And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the doorposts with the blood that is in this basin.

These greens remind us of the cleansing hyssop which kept the Angel of Death from Israel, they are our symbol of life. The salt water is a symbol of the tears of life, the struggle of bondage. We dip and eat the greens to symbolize new life coming from sweat and suffering in the past. We have been redeemed from tears.

**All: (Take Greens, dip into Salt Water, and Eat Greens)**

## **Breaking the Matzoh**

### **The Bread of Affliction**

Leader: *(Take a Piece of Matzoh and break in two)*

This is the Bread of Affliction, which our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in need come and celebrate the Passover. Many today are enslaved by sin and oppression, May all be free.

Leader: *(Wrap Extra Matzoh, fill the second cup, raise a small piece of Matzoh.)*

Leader: This is the Bread of Affliction *(Pass out a Small piece of Matzoh to all, and eat.)*

## **Recounting the Exodus Story**

Reader (Youngest at the Table): Why is this night different from all other nights?

Reader: Other nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread; this night only unleavened. Other nights we may eat any kind of herbs; tonight we must eat bitter herbs. Other nights we do not dip even once; tonight twice...first the greens and later on the bitter herb. Other nights we eat sitting or reclining, as we please, tonight we all recline.

Leader: Because in Egypt we were Pharaoh's slaves, But the Lord our God brought us out from that land with outstretched arm and the strength of his hand. Had the Holy One, blessed be He, not saved us and our ancestors from bondage then, neither we nor our children, nor their children would be free. Still being slaves, not as we are now, free. We would serve in Egypt, Thanks be to the God who saves!

## **The Second Cup**

Leader: *(Raise Second Cup)*

Blessed be He who always keeps His promise, as He did to Abraham. God's faithfulness when enemies conspired to blot us out in ages past preserved our ancestors and always fired our hearts when evil cast its shadow. For the Holy One required our lives at tyrants' hands and saved at last. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us by your commandment to eat unleavened bread.

Leader: *(Still holding Second Cup)*

These are the ten plagues that the Holy One, Blessed be He, brought on the Egyptians...

**All: (As Each is Named, dip finger into cup and place one drop on your plate.)**

**Water into Blood, Frogs, Gnats, Flies, Plague on Livestock, Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, Death of the Firstborn.**

**All: (Drink Second Cup)**

### **Eating of the Elements**

Leader: *(Hold Up Shank Bone)*

This bone reminds that a lamb was sacrificed for us and so the Lord passed over the homes marked with blood of that lamb when God killed the firstborn of the Egyptians.

Leader: *(Hold up the Egg)*

This is the Haggigah: This is the remembrance of the holiday sacrifices at the temple, marking death and new life. We dip it into the salt water, mourning the destruction of the temple.

**All: (Peel Egg, Dip into Salt Water and Eat)**

Leader: *(Hold up Matzoh)*

This is the flat, unleavened bread that our ancestors ate during their departure from Egypt, for in their haste, they could not wait for dough to rise. (Distribute Two Pieces to All)

Leader: *(Hold up bowl of Horseradish)*

This Maror, or bitter herb, reminds us that the lives of our ancestors in Egypt were made bitter with slavery and hard service.

**All: (Pass Ground Horseradish, Dip Matzoh and Eat)**

Leader: *(Hold up Charoset)*

The bitterness of slavery was sweetened by God's redemption of the chosen people. Charoset, a sweet mixture of apples and spices, reminds of the hope given to us by God.

**All: (Pass the Charoset, Dip and Eat as with Horseradish)**

**Together these shall be the Haggigah of new life, the matzoh of freedom, the maror of slavery, and the charoset of redemption. Praise to you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe.**

### **Retrieving of the Afikomen**

Leader: *(Unwrap remaining Matzoh)*

For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, nor beyond the sea, but the word is very near you, in your mouth

and in your heart, that you may do it. Let us bless the Lord. Those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing. Blessed is the one who trusts the Lord. The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

Leader: *(Unwrap and Pass out Matzoh to share with the meal)*

### **Blessing the Meal**

#### **The Third Cup**

Leader: *(Raise Third Cup)*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine. I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

**All: (Drink Third Cup)**

### **Eating of the Meal**

*At this time you may share in all the elements. Add into this your cooked lamb and spend time enjoying your meal together. All Ingredients mixed together are wonderful.*

#### **The Fourth Cup, The Cup After Supper**

Leader: *(Raise Fourth Cup)*

This is the cup of completion, I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the Fruit of the Vine.

**All: (Drink Fourth Cup)**

Leader: The door is opened, reminding us to be open to the hope for a better world, to hold onto the hope that we may live in a world without hunger, slavery, war, or any injustice.

**All: May the All-merciful God send us comfort and tidings of deliverance. Thanks be to God.**

*Reading from Mark 9:9-13 and 1 Corinthians 15: 50-58*

### **Ringling of the Gong**