



# Comparing Christian Churches

	<b>Roman Catholic</b>	<b>Eastern Rite</b>	<b>Orthodox</b>	<b>Protestant</b>
Baptism				
Eucharist				
Confirmation				
Scripture				
Clergy				
Hierarchy				



# Revised Seder Meal Script

## Lighting of the Festival Lights

**Commentator:** According to ancient Jewish custom, it is the task of the mother to light the festival lights in every service which takes place in the home. The candles are also a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.

**Mother:** Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe. You have sanctified us by your commandments and commanded us to kindle the festival lights. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe; You have sustained us and kept us alive and brought us to this season. May our home be consecrated, O God, by the light of Your face, shining upon us in blessing and bringing us peace.

**All:** Amen.

### The Meal

*The wine is poured.*

**Commentator:** The first act of the Jewish Passover is a benediction, the Kiddush. The leader takes a cup of wine and recites this blessing.

**Leader:** Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has chosen us among all peoples and sanctified us with Your commandments. In love you have given us solemn days of joy and festive seasons of gladness, even this day of the feast of the unleavened bread, a memorial of the departure from Egypt. You have chosen us for your service and have made us sharers in the blessing of your holy festivals.

*All present take their cups.*

**Commentator:** Jesus prayed this blessing as he began his Last Supper before his passion and death. We drink this

wine in honor of all who those who, before us and with us today, have embraced the joy and the goodness of life.

*All present drink of the wine.*

**Commentator:** Another traditional action of the Passover meal is the breaking of the unleavened bread.

*The leader lifts up the bread and breaks it in two.*

**Leader:** 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 with us. May it be God's will to redeem us from all trouble and servitude. Next year at this season may all the people of God be free.

*The leader passes the bread around. Each person breaks off a piece and when all have been served, everyone eats the portion.*

### The Questions

**Commentator:** At the Passover dinner, four traditional questions are asked by the children of the family.

**First questioner:** Why is this night different from all other nights?

**Leader:** The Mishnah tells us, "In every generation people must regard ourselves as having come forth ourselves from out of Egypt. Therefore we are bound to give thanks, to praise and to bless God who did all these wonders for our ancestors and for us. God brought us out of bondage to freedom, from sorrow to gladness, from mourning to a festival, from darkness to great light, and from servitude to redemption.

**Second questioner:** Why do we eat bitter herbs tonight at this special meal? And why do we dip the bitter herbs into the salt water?

# Revised Seder Meal Script continued



**Leader:** The Jews of old ate bitter herbs on Passover night, as do the Jews today, because “Our ancestors were slaves in Egypt and their lives were made bitter.” Christians call to mind the bitterness of Jesus’ passion and death, remembering that he said, “Anyone who does not carry a cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” The salt water is a reminder of the tears shed by the Jews during the days of their slavery, and of the tears of those around the world today who suffer from oppression.

*The salt water is passed around; each person dips the herb in salt water and eats the herb.*

**Third questioner:** What is the meaning of the haroses?

**Leader:** The haroses is a reminder of the mortar which our ancestors used to make bricks when they were slaves in Egypt. The sweetness of the haroses is a sign of hope. Our ancestors were able to withstand the bitterness of slavery because it was sweetened by the hope of freedom. Christians remember the hope of the resurrection, and the hope that whatever suffering may befall us can be a source of compassion and wisdom.

*Each person takes a bite of the haroses.*

**Fourth questioner:** Why do we eat lamb at this meal?

**Leader:** At the time of the liberation from Egypt, at God’s command each family took a lamb, sacrificed it, ate it, and sprinkled its blood on the doorpost. On that night, seeing the blood, the angel of the Lord passed over them, smiting the Egyptians and sparing the Israelites. Christians see Jesus as the symbolic lamb of God, who through his sacrifice spared us from ultimate defeat by death.

**Fifth questioner:** What is the meaning of the unleavened bread?

**Leader:** The book of Exodus tells us, “When Pharaoh let our ancestors go from Egypt, they were forced to flee in great haste. They had no time to bake their bread; they could not wait for the yeast to rise. So the sun beating down on the dough as they carried it along baked it into a flat unleavened bread.” The unleavened bread was the “bread of affliction” which enabled the Chosen People to be delivered from slavery.

## Hallel

*Psalm 114 is traditionally recited as a blessing before the meal:*

**All:** When Israel came forth from Egypt,  
the house of Jacob from an  
alien people,  
Judah became God’s holy place,  
Israel, God’s domain.  
The sea beheld and fled;  
the Jordan turned back.  
The mountains skipped like rams;  
the hills, like lambs of flock.  
Why was it, sea, that you fled?  
Jordan, that you turned back?  
You mountains, that you skipped like  
rams?  
You hills, like lambs of the flock?  
Tremble, earth, before the Lord,  
before the God of Jacob,  
Who turned rock into pools of water,  
stone into flowing springs.

*The dinner is then served and eaten.*

## Final Blessing

*All raise their wine glasses.*

**Leader:** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face to shine on  
you and have mercy on you.  
May the Lord lift up His countenance  
on you and give you peace.

**All:** Amen.