



## A PASSOVER PRIMER

Arguably the best known and most widely observed Jewish holiday is Passover (**Pesach**, pronounced pày-sack) which begins at sundown on Friday, April 10 in 1998. Jewish people around the world will observe the occasion with family gatherings and a traditional meal in a commemoration of their ancestors' liberation from national bondage in Egypt nearly 3500 years ago. In particular, the name of this special "holy convocation" (one of seven to be observed by divine commandment, Leviticus 23) is derived from the fact that God provided a means of protection for His people from the tenth plague, death of every first-born. Application of the blood of the flawless lamb upon the doorpost of the house had a dramatic effect: "... and when I see the blood, I will **PASS OVER** you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you,

when I smite the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:13b). Following are several terms which are used regularly in association with Passover.

**AFIKOMEN** (pronounced ah-fee-kòh-men): The piece of unleavened bread which is wrapped in a cloth and hidden away until the end of the traditional meal. It comes from the breaking of the middle of a stack of three pieces of bread at the very beginning of the meal.

**HAGGADAH** (pronounced hah-gah-dàh): The book which is used to guide the Jewish family through the various parts of the traditional meal. The word means, "the telling," and denotes the essential purpose of the meal, to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt.

**KIDDUSH CUP** (pronounced kid-dòsh): The cup which is filled with wine four times during the traditional meal, after which four traditional prayers are



**Seder Plate**

recited in recalling God's four fold promise to Israel through Moses in Exodus 6:6-7.

**MATZAH** (pronounced màh-tсах): The word is Hebrew for "unleavened bread" and refers to the special type of cracker which is used during Passover, the first day of a week-long period when no yeast (leaven) is permitted in the household. "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses; for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a sojourner or born in the land" (Exodus 12:19).

**SEDER** (pronounced sày-duhr): The traditional meal held in Jewish homes on the first night of the Passover festival. The word means, "order," and refers to the very specific order of symbolic components which comprise this joyful gathering around the table.

**SEDER PLATE:** The plate on the table during the traditional meal which holds six food items representing aspects of Jewish experience and history during the period of the Exodus. These items are used at various times throughout the evening meal to focus upon particular facets of God's blessing of, and provision for, His people.

## HELP WANTED!

Hebrew Christian Fellowship is looking for several couples or individuals who are interested in a career in Jewish outreach ministry. For information on qualifications, available fields, support services, and candidate processing, please contact the office (phone number, mailing and e-mail addresses below). "Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

## HUMOR AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE

"The greatest Jewish tradition is to laugh. The cornerstone of Jewish survival has always been to find humor in life and in ourselves." (Jerry Seinfeld, after being criticized severely in September of 1995, for airing an episode of his television show in which the characterization of a rabbi was deemed offensive)

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