

PASSOVER AND OUR MESSIAH: THE PROMISE KEPT

by Avram Yehoshua

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The First Passover, 3,400 years ago, emphatically reveals our God keeping His promise to our Father Abraham. In the actual cutting of the Covenant with Abraham, God promises to give his descendants the land of Canaan. But this, only after a time of slavery. Did you ever wonder why it had to be that way? Many of us have to come to our wits end before we'll call out to God to help us and to be part of our lives.

'Then Yahveh said to Abram, 'know for certain that your children will be strangers in a land not their own and they will be slaves and humiliated for 400 years. But I will pass judgment on the nation that enslaves them and after that they will leave with many possessions.' (Genesis 15:13-14)

And that's exactly what happened! With the death of the firstborn of Egypt, Moses led Israel out with much wealth. God was faithful to His Word. Interestingly enough, what protected Israel's firstborn from death was the blood (death) of a lamb. Each household sacrificed a lamb. A very strange thing to do, looking back from the 21st century, but who are we to argue with success? Not one Hebrew died. All the firstborn of Egypt did. This was God's way, not man's.

God has also promised us a Messiah. An anointed one, like Moses, who would teach us and lead us to Our Father, the God of Israel. In our Scriptures, he is known as the Messiah, the Son of Joseph. This is because he suffers at the hands of his brothers and is not recognized by the majority of our people when he comes. But God kept His Promise in sending Yeshua (the Hebrew Name for Jesus) to us. It was such a strange way that Messiah was sent that the Prophet Isaiah (53:1) declares, 'Who would believe such a thing?!' Our Messiah would die. He continues,

'Yahveh has been pleased to crush Him with suffering. If He offers His life in atonement, He shall see His heirs. He shall have a long life and through Him, what Yahveh wishes, will be done.' (Isaiah 53:10)

How could anyone 'offer His life' and still have a long life? Incredible as it is, Yeshua died at Passover as our Lamb that God has provided for us. This is so we might enter into His Kingdom now, and have the Wrath of God 'pass over' us when we stand before Him at the end of time.

We know this is true because of two things the Lord has done. One, God resurrected that dead Messiah Yeshua, emphatically declaring to all, that Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel. And that anyone who believes can enter into the experiential shalom (peace) of His Kingdom now. And two, you will receive the Holy Spirit, another promise of God's to His people Israel (Ezekiel 36:22ff). For the Spirit of God will witness to you that Yeshua was resurrected by God, and that

Yeshua is our Messiah.

Hard to believe? Who would have ever believed *before* Moses came on the scene, that all the firstborn in Egypt would die? But I'm not asking you to believe some historical fact alone, I'm telling you that God has done this for you! Ask God if Yeshua is the Messiah. He will reveal Yeshua to you and you'll never be the same again. He is the One you can trust, for He has promised to be your Savior. 'I, I am Yahveh; there is no other Savior.' (Isaiah 43:11) And to free us from our sins against Him,

'I it is, I it is who must blot out everything and not remember your sins. I have dispelled your faults like a cloud, your sins like a mist. Come back to Me, for I have redeemed you.' (Isaiah 43:25; 44:22)

All this that we may 'taste and see that Yahveh is good' as King David wrote (Psalm 34:8). For God promises to give us His Spirit.

'For I will pour out water on the thirsty soil, streams on the dry ground. I will pour out My Spirit on your sons.' (Isaiah 44:3)

May the Holy Spirit draw you to the God of Israel through His Messiah Yeshua. Then you would be able to celebrate this Passover season with the new life that our God has given us with the Death and the Resurrection of His Lamb. This is God's Way, not man's. He is right beside you now; tell Him you want to have the Blood of Messiah Yeshua over the doorposts of your heart. Open your heart to Him now.

Lambskins

by Rivka Yehoshua

A few weeks ago, I observed a woman putting on a scarf on her head to cover her hairstyle from the wind. As she sat there in her car, she placed a wool scarf over the initial silk one, and then a rain bonnet over the top of that. It was not raining at the time, in fact, it was a beautiful day, although a little windy. It was apparent to me that she was not wearing the head coverings for the sake of modesty, but rather to cover and protect something of great value to her; something she was determined to save. But her hair style became only the object of vanity.

This struck a chord in me, because I wear a head covering daily. For me, my head covering is a symbol of modesty and my respect for my husband and submission to God. In a single phrase, 'a sign of my righteousness.' Yet I am often aware that my heart is condemning or my mouth is contentious, or I am rebellious in my attitude, while wearing the outward sign of a different character.

This woman brought home for me the nature of my righteousness: I 'put on' righteous behavior to shield myself from being blown by the wind. If I were to allow my heart to be uncovered, my

inner life would soon be visibly in disarray with each gust of inconvenience or test of my serenity. When I have hidden my heart behind knowledge, superiority, the right smile, proper dress, or 'good deeds,' even the Spirit of God can't uncover and remove my black heart (although He sees and knows it's there), because I have wrapped it in 'fig leaves.'

You see, that's what I've really covered: my nakedness. When Adam and Eve sinned against the Creator by eating from the forbidden tree, they saw that they were naked (without the covering of the Holy One), and they were ashamed, and did not want God or each other to see. They attempted to cover themselves by fig leaves of their design, but God, knowing their sin and their vulnerable state, knew that the fig leaves would not be sufficient. So, He sacrificed a lamb to provide a kipor, a covering for them.

That's where God finds me; still sewing together fig leaves. In all the thousands of years since the Garden, fig leaves still aren't enough. My best defenses still leave me hurt and angry, empty and scared. But if I will see and accept my nakedness and expose myself to God, He will cover me, but not with fig leaves which wither and die, but with the skins, the holy righteousness, of a Lamb who died to cover me. I don't need to condemn myself or accept the condemnation of others, if God Himself does not condemn me. There is no condemnation for those who are found in (covered by), the Lamb of God's choice, Yeshua our Messiah, our Deliverer from condemnation.

Thus covered in the modest attire provided by Yahveh, I am presented to the world free at last, without shame. His covering is sure, and will never expose my nakedness to the world.

'From the depths I call to You, Oh Yahveh. Listen to my cry for help! Listen compassionately to my pleading! If You never overlooked our sins, Oh Yahveh, could anyone survive? But You do forgive us, and for that we revere You.' (Ps. 130:1-4)

A Living Light

by Avram Yehoshua

As a flower needs the sun, so I need You Yahveh. As my infant son needs to nurse, so I crave You Yahveh. As the deer pants for water, so my soul yearns for You, my God.

At 24 years old, I had a B.A. in political science from a college in northern New Jersey, and was wondering what to do with my life. For the last five years I had 'shot pool' and could have turned professional but I saw the lives of the professional pool players and I knew I didn't want that. Hustling for a living, on the side of professional tournaments, just didn't hold the satisfaction that I looked forward to, as I thought of the future.

When I began college in 1969, I thought I'd be a lawyer but before I graduated, that interest faded. I knew that I didn't want to put my life's energies into the field of law but wasn't sure what I wanted to do. So, at 24 years old, when a friend suggested moving to Florida, I said,

‘Let’s go.’

When we arrived in Tampa, Florida, in September of 1975 we thought we had gone from the frying pan into the fire. Jobs were few up in Jersey but in Florida they were almost non-existent. Before long we would run out of money. It was during our first month that I read a book about Yeshua the Messiah and my life came together for me.

I realized I had been searching all my life, but could never put my finger on just what it was that I was looking for. It all came together for me in Yeshua. I remember the day I was half way through the book and I knew that He was what I wanted. I closed my eyes and asked Yeshua to come into my heart. I was on Cloud Nine. All the world changed for me. There was peace in my heart. I had a real peace with God. I felt His Presence. It was the most wonderful thing that ever happened to me. The God of the Sabbath came into my heart.

A few days later, my friend and I sat down to our last meal. We had run out of money. The ‘meal’ consisted of one potato and the two heels of a loaf of bread. I thanked God for the new life He had given me, blessed Him for the food and ate my half of the potato and my one piece of toasted heel, with no butter. I was happy. I really wasn’t bothered that neither one of us had a job, money, or any food left in our apartment.

An hour after we ate, a neighbor in the next apartment came to our door and invited us to a party he was having that very night. My friend Tommy asked him if there’d be any food at the party and when he said, ‘Yes’ he told him we’d be there. We ate very well that night.

I imagine Tommy informed him at the party, that we didn’t have any food or money because he came over to me and told me that he was the chief cook at the Western Sizzler. And that as long as we needed to, we could go there and eat steak and potatoes ‘on him.’

God had provided for us. This was to be the first of many experiences where God would ‘open a door’ where there didn’t seem to be one. I was so grateful. God was teaching me about trusting Him. I could really rely on Him. He was not just some historical figure that Abraham once knew, but He was alive for me also.

A few days later I had a job. I thought with a college degree, people would be beating a path to my door. I couldn’t have been more wrong. So, when the opportunity presented itself for me ‘to pump gas’ I grabbed it. It was a 48 hour a week job, minimum wage, but it paid for rent, food and I had a little spending money.

The real beauty of the job lay in the amount of time that ‘was my own.’ Again, God had His Hand in this. Approximately half of the time I was on my job, about 24 hours, we were not busy. And the boss said that as long as my other work was done, I could do whatever I wanted when we weren’t busy. I read the Scriptures. No, I devoured the Scriptures. I couldn’t get enough. I’d get up in the morning and read and pray for a few hours. Then, I’d go to work and read for four of the eight hours. Then I’d go home and read some more. The Lord was teaching me, and preparing me for my life ahead. (Continued in Newsletters 2 & 9)

I desire to know God and His Messiah more than teaching about Him or against Him.

Information, however orthodox and current, however strongly held in conviction and passed on in passion, lacks the essential quality of experience. I must experience the Messiah for myself.

But everything else has to prove insufficient and fruitless before we can really be shown. Are you tired of vanity and darkness? He wants to reveal Himself to you, and then begins a new life of knowing Him, of being able to really depend on Him and of loving Him as He proves Himself faithful to you. He wants you to learn to lean on Him. You can start now. Tell God you believe that He has sent Yeshua as your Messiah. That Yeshua died for you, for your sins. Ask Yeshua into your life, into your heart, and then get in touch with me.