

PASSOVER AND JESUS

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In the days of Yeshua and the Apostles, as thousands of caravans of Jewish families made their way to Jerusalem each year for the Passover celebration (Ex. 23:14-17), the men, women and children would sing praise to God, especially the Psalms of Ascent (Ps. 120–134). These Psalms glorify God as the Creator, and also, the Redeemer of Israel, the One that Israel could put their trust in. It speaks of Jerusalem as His city (Psalm 48:2; cf. Mt. 5:35) and Israel as His holy and chosen people.

Excitement mounted as the people came closer to Jerusalem—the city that symbolizes all the pain and all the hopes of the Jewish people, and thoughts would turn toward the First Passover. Incredible was the redemption that God did in freeing Israel from Egyptian slavery by slaying all the firstborn of Egypt. The Hebrew firstborn were spared or *saved* from death by the blood of the lamb (Exodus 12:12-14). No other nation speaks of having their beginning like this.

This great deliverance set in motion the yearly celebration of Passover, a time *to remember* and enter into that mighty deed of God. The Hebrew word *zakar* זָכַר means *to remember* and it has profound significance. When we Jews sit down to eat the Passover meal we envision ourselves *back at the First Passover*. God commands us that we tell our sons that even though we are alive today (3,400 years after the First Passover), we are to say that *we were delivered out of Pharaoh's Kingdom* (Ex. 13:8). All Jews are one with each other—past, present and future. This is theologically known as corporate identity (one body), which the Book of Hebrews speaks of.

Melchizedek *blessed* Abram and then Abram gave a tithe to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20; cf. Heb. 7:1-2). Hebrews 7:1-10 makes the point that the (High) Priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the High Priesthood of Aaron because Levi, who wouldn't be born for another 120 years or so, and from whom Aaron the High Priest of Israel would descend from, *was "in the loins" of Abram* at the time that Abram gave a tithe to Melchizedek. The Author of Hebrews says that "beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the greater" (Heb. 7:7). In other word, Melchizedek was greater than Abram, and consequently, he was greater than Levi and Aaron, Israel's first High Priest.

When the Apostle Paul speaks of taking the physical reminders of Yeshua's body and blood (1st Cor. 11:23-34) he says that as often as we do it we are *to remember His death*. What the Apostle is presenting, in Hebraic terms, is that we are not only to identify with Yeshua in His death (Rom. 6; death to self; new life in Him), but of special importance, that we are to understand that we too were there with Yeshua, at the Second Passover, actually receiving the bread and the wine from our Lord and also, seeing Him tortured, humiliated and crucified, for we are to consider ourselves as having been at the Table "in the loins of the Apostles," so to speak. This is also corporate identity (cf. 1st Cor. 10:1). With the Holy Spirit we can *re-experience* those moments and their significance by entering in through the Spirit *whenever* we take His body and blood, but especially at Passover and the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Passover that Yeshua celebrated before His death is also a picture of the sacred banquet that is seen in Luke 13:28-30 and Rev. 19:6-9. God the Father, in Yeshua, and Israel (in the Apostles) at that Passover Table were eating and fellowshiping together. Eating together is the strongest possible expression of the Father's *friendship* and oneness with us.

In the ancient Middle East, if two hostile enemies sat down and ate together, they became "blood brothers" and friends. That's how powerful biblical table fellowship is. We who were once enemies of God, because of our rebellious, Adamic nature (Rom. 5:10), are now Papa God's friends because of the fellowship that we have with Him at the Passover Table through the Body and Blood of His Son—and this is

infinitely emphasized because we are eating of the True Heavenly Food—Yeshua, the Lamb of God, who makes us like Himself.

The body and blood (bread and wine) are also *living* reminders to us that Papa God is our Friend. *He's the kind of friend that will help us whenever we have any kind of need or if we are in trouble.* They also picture the kind of love that we must have for the Body of Messiah, who also eats of Messiah's body and blood. In other words, when we take the wine and the unleavened bread we should realize that we are to forgive and love all Christians (and everyone else), just as His blood and body made it possible for us to continually experience the forgiveness, life, joy and love of Papa God.

DAILY REMINDERS

Yahveh commanded Israel to remember *every day* what He had done for them. Deuteronomy 16:3 states, “you must remember *every day of your life*, the day that you came out of the land of Egypt!” This means they saw themselves being delivered or saved by God from Egypt every day, and of course, they would be very grateful, and they would live their lives accordingly, obeying His Voice (i.e. His commandments).¹

God also gave them a daily concrete reminder that reflected their past salvation from Egypt. Every morning and every evening (late afternoon) the priests would sacrifice a lamb, with its complement oblation (grain offering) and libation (wine offering; Ex. 29:38-42). These sacrifices twice every day were God's “picture reminders” to *re-experience* their salvation from Egypt by Yahveh.

The daily sacrifices also prophetically pictured the body and the blood of Messiah Yeshua. The oblation (fine grain) pictured His body and the wine represented His blood. The daily lamb sacrifices pointed to both the First Passover in the past and the Second Passover in the future (Yeshua's in Jerusalem), as well as being an immediate reminder of God their Savior and how He is an *ever present* help in times of need.

The blood of the Passover lamb is represented by the wine of Passover, which is a rabbinic tradition (wine not being mentioned as part of the food for Passover in the Scriptures).² The Rabbis say that the wine must be red, in order to symbolize the blood of the lamb. To make wine, the grapes must be stomped on or *crushed*. To make flour for bread the whole kernels must also be crushed.

Yeshua was the heavenly grape and kernel (wine and bread) crushed for us that we might be able to sit at the Passover Table and eat the Food of God, heavenly Food—God the Son Himself. Isaiah 53:10 speaks of this transformation process for Messiah when it says, “Yahveh has been pleased to *crush* Him,” the Bread of Life, because the Father knew the heavenly Life and Joy it would bring to us.

Matza—The Unleavened Bread of Life

The bread that God requires for us to eat at Passover is a special type of bread that reflects the sinless purity, humility, holiness and crucifixion of our Messiah. Israel was commanded to eat this bread at the First Passover (Ex. 12:8) and every subsequent Passover thereafter (Ex. 12:15-20; 13:3-10). This bread is called *matza* מַצָּה (Hebrew for *unleavened* bread for Passover) and reminds Israel of their affliction in Egypt because it's a striped bread without yeast (which makes bread rise and give it “that bread look”). It was also to remind Israel of God's great salvation and His desire for Israel to be holy, pure and sinless.

¹ Deuteronomy 30:1-10, 15-16, 19-20; 31:5, 9-12.

² Exodus 12:8 lists the three foods God commands must be eaten for Passover as lamb, *matza* and bitter herbs.

Matza is the bread that Yeshua used at the Last Passover to picture His crucified body. He held the *matza* up and declared, “*This is My body.*” Then He broke it and passed it out and all the Apostles, except Judas, ate of it because by that time, Judas had left the Passover meal (Mt. 26:20-26; John 13:2-30).³

In 1st Corinthians 5:6-7 the Apostle Paul presents to his mostly Gentile congregation, how even,

“a small amount of yeast is enough to leaven all the dough, so get rid of all the old yeast and make yourselves into a completely new batch of bread, unleavened, as you are meant to be!” (1st Cor. 5:6-7, cf. v. 8)

Aside from revealing that the Passover Feast and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were being celebrated by those Gentile Christians of Paul, we see him using leaven or yeast, which symbolizes the sin of pride, because pride, like yeast, puffs one up, to exhort the Corinthians to keep the Feast in *humility*, not pride. The Sons of Israel were commanded to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days because God wanted Israel to especially *remember* that He had delivered them out of Egypt, *not to do their own thing*, but to be a pure and holy consecrated people unto Him, and that was reflected in their eating *matza* for the seven day Feast and obeying His Voice (keeping His Commandments, etc., i.e. Mosaic Law).

Seven is the number of perfection, wholeness and completion (e.g. Creation *week*) as well as representing holiness (God’s holy Sabbath is on the 7th day of a seven day week; Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; cf. Mk. 2:28). Seven is a unit of time and as such, can represent another unit of time—a year. When we eat *matza* for seven days we’re symbolically saying that we will walk in holiness, and not in pride (sin), for another unit of time—the coming year, until the next Passover when we observe it again and start all over.

That’s why Yeshua, the Sinless Holy One, was able to say that the *matza* was a picture of His body, for it *symbolizes* sinlessness, purity, holiness and affliction (cf. Dt. 16:3). *Matza* has no yeast, so symbolically it’s not full of pride, but humble; not puffed up (Mt. 11:28-30). It pictures affliction (suffering; Yeshua’s at the Cross, and Israel’s in Egypt) in that it not only looks “less full” than bread with yeast, and therefore, “poorer,” but it has black marks or stripes (symbolic of His and Their scourgings) in it from baking, and it also has holes in it, which makes it “afflicted” (Ex. 4:31; Dt. 16:3; 26:7), which allow for the *matza* not to bubble over (like pizza dough when it’s being baked sometimes, with those big air bubbles in the dough).

The stripes and the holes picture the affliction, *scourging*, *piercing* and *crucifixion* of Yeshua so that we could be healed and made “one with Papa God” (Is. 53:5; Zech. 12:10; Mt. 27:26, 35; Jn. 19:34; 1st Peter 2:24). Yeshua was afflicted for us (Is. 53:3-12; Zech. 13:7; Jn. 10:11f.) that we might be healed and made whole.

Yeshua is the pure Bread (*Matza*) of Life that has come down from the Heavens (Jn. 6:26-40). These are the reasons why it’s so important to have *matza* for communion in remembering His death (1st Corin. 11:26), and why God wants us to continue to celebrate His Feasts—they all picture what Papa God and His Son have done for us in this great salvation, through the Holy Spirit.⁴

³ The Roman Catholic idea behind their eucharist is not biblical, but very pagan. The Roman Catholic Church says that when a priest prays (in Latin) over their wafer and wine, the wafer and wine *literally* become the real body and blood of Jesus Christ. They actually bow down to it, do homage to, and worship the wafer as Christ, something that has no biblical foundation or support. That’s why John Knox called it the Wafer God.

When we take the *matza* and the wine (or grape juice) we are proclaiming, in no uncertain terms, that Yeshua is present with us, by His Spirit, and that we are ‘one’ with Him, and that His sacrificial death is sufficient for all our needs; spiritual, mental, emotional and physical, *pictured* in our eating the *matza* and drinking the wine. It’s the presence of the Holy Spirit that applies the reality of His body and blood to our lives. Yeshua used the *matza* and the wine to picture Himself crucified so we could eat of Him. He is salvation and life eternal and with the Holy Spirit we enter into His reality, and we are satisfied because all our needs are provided for.

⁴ Anyone taking leavened bread, bread *with yeast* in it for communion is saying that Yeshua is full of sin, as yeast is a symbol of sin pertaining to the unleavened bread we’re to take for His body.

The Never Ending Matza

When Yeshua multiplied the loaves for the 5,000 men, not counting the women and children⁵ (John 6:10), the immediate reference was obvious to the Jewish people. God, through Moses, had provided *manna* (*unleavened* bread) for Israel in the Wilderness. Yeshua, performing a *similar* miracle, revealed Himself to His Jewish people as the Redeemer–Messiah, the King of Israel—the one *like* Moses (Dt. 18:18-19; Jn. 6:14-15), for just as “Moses” provided manna in the Wilderness, so Yeshua provided (unleavened) bread miraculously for Israel that day. (You really don’t think it was *leavened* bread, do you? It was representative of Jesus as the Bread of Life, who is without leaven/pride/sin.)

Also significant in the multiplication of the bread is that “in Yeshua,” the True *Matza* (Unleavened Bread) of Life from Heaven, *there is more than enough for all of us*, just as there was for the Jewish people that day in John 6, and for Israel for 40 years in the Wilderness. Today, after almost 2,000 years, we who are alive are still being fed off of the breaking (crucifixion) of the *Matza* of Life. He continues “to multiply” Himself to feed and to satisfy us.

Whenever we take the body and the blood we are *to remember* that we are back there at the Second Passover in Jerusalem with Yeshua and all His followers—past, present and future. All Israel, both Jew and Gentile who love Yeshua, is at the Passover Table with God the Father through God the Son, taken there by the Holy Spirit. We are not only a friend of the Father, but because we are eating and drinking of His Son’s flesh and blood, we become like Yeshua was then, and look forward to Judgement Day when we were to be transformed into His present likeness, for He is the glorified God-Man. This is the Promise or Gift of Salvation (Rom. 8:29-30)⁶ and the spiritual reality that “we are Who we eat.”

Red wine is a symbol of Yeshua’s sacrificial death (His blood), *and also a symbol of the Joy* of our salvation—wine having this double meaning in Scripture (Ps. 104:15). In Ex. 12:14, God declares of Passover,

‘This day is to be a day of remembrance for you!, and you must celebrate it as a feast in honor of Yahveh!’

The Hebrew word for “celebrate” means “to dance and to rejoice mightily!” *This is the proper attitude* for taking His body and His blood and can only come from the Holy Spirit. This is the proper attitude for acknowledging what Papa God has done for us in setting us free from our enemies—sin, sickness, Satan and death.

In “discerning Yeshua’s Body,” as Paul says, before eating it (1st Cor. 11:29), we must ask Him to forgive us for any anger, resentment and jealousy we might have toward others (i.e. not being able to forgive others from our heart), and our sins, and for any resistance we might have in fully surrendering ourselves to Him. **Now** we are ready to eat of Yeshua’s body and drink His blood without incurring guilt. It’s for these very reasons that we need His cleansing blood and healing body (Isaiah 53:5, for by His stripes we are healed), to begin with, but we must be willing (1st Peter 2:24 says we *were* healed!). As we yield ourselves to Yeshua He feeds us what we need to grow into His Image and Holiness—to have His heart of sacrificial and forgiving love. At this point the Lord usually takes away all our resentment or bitterness

⁵ Scripture usually counts only men, not women and children, as the men are the authority and the head of the home, and women and children are considered ‘one’ with them (Numbers 1:1-3ff.; Ezra 2:1f.; Nehemiah 7:1f.).

⁶ The gift of eternal life that the Father holds out to every human being is nothing less than becoming like Yeshua is now—the glorified God-Man. The only difference between us in eternity will be that Yeshua was always God the Son, while we will be deity by the new creation because of His sacrificial blood, for the life of the flesh is in its blood (Lev. 17:11) and the Father has given us His Son’s divine blood that we might be transformed into His Son’s very image on Judgment Day, for only ‘one *like*’ the Son of God can marry Yeshua. Hence, why we are also known as the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5:32; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9, 17). Truly, what a great gift the Father and the Son hold out to us! See [Salvation—The Promise!](#)

right then and there, and fills us with a love and forgiveness for the person, but if He doesn't, we look to Him in faith, *trusting* and believing that He will do it. *He is Faithful!* Our trust is not in ourselves, but in Him. We also ask Him to set us free from any inhibitions or fears against freely offering ourselves to Him.

Helpful in dealing with our stubborn carnality is the scene at the Second Passover (Jn. 13:1-30) where Yeshua washes the Apostle's feet. Peter strongly objects, but finally consents. Most rightly understand this as a lesson in humility, but few realize why Peter objected. The only person who washed the feet of the Jew in Israel *was the lowest Gentile slave in the house*. Jewish slaves didn't wash the feet of their Jewish masters. Marshall writes, "Only non-Jewish slaves were required to perform this menial duty for their masters."⁷

The Master of the Universe had taken upon Himself the Role of the Lowest Gentile Slave in the Land of Israel

Adding to His divinely humbling Himself, Yeshua washed the feet of Judas, the one He knew would betray Him. Yeshua did it to show Judas, the other Apostles, and all of us today that there is absolutely *nothing* that He will not do *to serve us*—to wash us clean from sin, sickness, Satan and death, and to help us to grow into His Image in *this* lifetime, and to help us overcome every physical, emotional, mental, financial and spiritual obstacle that would seek to keep us from walking in intimate fellowship with Him now, so that we can live with Him in the eternal New Jerusalem. ***This*** is our Messiah. Do you *know* Him?

Now, when someone has hurt us, or rejected us, or when we have sinned against Him, or when we are angry with someone, or when we have bitterness or resentment against others, we can call upon Yeshua *and picture Him beginning to wash our feet*. He looks up into our eyes and tenderly asks us to give Him that pain, or that sin, or the anger/bitterness and resentment. I dare say that our pain, bitterness and/or anger, etc., would melt away as feelings of divine awe, gratitude, love and humility pervade our being. The Lord Yeshua cares for you. This is how He transforms you—by His faithful forgiving-loving kindness. There is *nothing* that you will ever do that He will not forgive you for, if you ask. There is no need that He cannot supply. He came to love and to serve you (Mark 10:45). He wants you to walk with Him along the Highway of Holiness (Is. 35:8-10), giving you whatever you need, whenever you need it.

Yeshua wants to give us a new heart (Ezk. 36:24-27), filled with *His* love—a love that is strong enough to forgive and love our worst enemies—a love much more powerful than human hate, bitterness and rejection. We cannot love our enemies in our own strength. This is one of our greatest needs that Yeshua brings to us, and we have it because of His broken body and shed blood, pictured in the *matza* and wine of Passover. As we eat of our Messiah we become like Him, to the eternal Glory of Papa God, who has wrought this Great Redemption!⁸

***You see, we're all a lot like Judas...
but oh what a Friend we have in Jesus!***

⁷ I. Howard Marshall, Author; I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque, Editors, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), p. 146. Taken from *Midrash Exodus 21:2 (82a); Keth. 96a*.

⁸ Revised on Monday, April 8, 2024.