

## **Pasach, the feast of Passover**

" And He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."(Genesis 22:2)

The Lord in His Wisdom speaks to us today, as He has through centuries from Genesis to Revelations and paints for us a revelatory picture of His heart and purposes for mankind through the Feasts of the Lord. As we allow the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to see, "wonderful things from His Word", we begin to see God's plan of salvation and redemption through Yeshua (Jesus Christ of Nazareth) from Passover to Tabernacles, from the His death on a Cross at Golgotha as the Lamb of God, to His enthronement in Jerusalem.

"For Messiah, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival." (1 Cor 5:7-8)

"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Messiah, a lamb without blemish or defect." (1 Pe 1:18-19)

Passover is the commemoration of the Hebrews being set free from Egyptian Slavery. Pesach, the Hebrew name of the feast literally means "the lamb". Passover is the first of the Feasts of the Lord and the foundation upon which all the rest are built. On the 10th day of the first month, called Nisan, every Israelite family chose a perfect little lamb and had to take care of it until the 14 day, (they had to examine the lamb for four days to see that it was perfect) according to God's commandment to Moses. At twilight, the father of each household slaughtered the lamb and had to put the blood on the doorframes of their house. Because the door of every Israelites household was sealed with the blood of the lamb, the angel of the Lord "passed over" those who were covered ones. Every first born male throughout the land of Egypt, from Pharaoh, to slave, to animal, were killed – those whose homes were not protected by placing the blood of the lamb on their doorposts and lintels.

".....For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7

(In this an innocent lamb had to die to save the lives of millions Israelites). (Exodus 12:6; Luke 23:44-46).

We see clearly how even in Passover the Lord made a distinction between His people and those who were not His people, by the application of the lamb's blood on the doorposts. Those who were under the blood were unharmed, those who were not died.

### **PROCESSION OF THE LAMB**

When Israel had a Temple, once a year a lamb was chosen to die for the sins of the entire nation.

On the 10th of Nisan, it was lead from Bethany to the Temple, in Jerusalem. People would wave Palm branches and sang Psalms including Psalm 118:25-26. "Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Psalm 118:25.26

Yeshua in the same manner on the same day on the 10th of Nisan rode into Jerusalem, as He was the perfect lamb chosen to die for the sins of the nations. The people shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" – Matthew 21:9

Yeshua was examined by the Sadducees and the Pharisees, just as during the Passover lamb for four days prior to the actual Feast. "On that day some Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to Him and questioned Him." Matthew 22:23-33

"Then the Pharisees went and counseled together how they might trap Him in word what He said." Matthew 22:15-22

Yeshua was slain at the same time the unblemished lamb was slain for Passover. (Exodus 12:6)

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice.....” (Matthew 27:46)

“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.” (Matthew 27:50)

Passover has been celebrated from the first community of believers, celebrating the death, burial and resurrection of Messiah every year on the 14th in the first month on the Biblical calendar just like Yeshua did with his disciples. It was not until Constantine in the 4th century forced the Christian bishops to sever all connections with the Jewish people that the biblical celebration of Passover was outlawed and eventually was replaced by the Christian Easter. As believers in Yeshua it is important that we follow the same pattern according to the Word of Truth, so that we do not preach a different gospel than that which the Apostles did. (The Lord instructed Moses that this would be an everlasting ordinance for all generations.

“So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout all generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.” Exodus 12:14 .The Jewish Passover meal, called Seder, is basically the same today as it was in the time of Yeshua and His disciples, and is based on God's command in Exodus 12:8, "That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast." In this celebration the story about God's great plan of salvation for mankind, past present and future, with focus on the Lamb of God is shared. There is a very interesting passage about the Feast of Passover in Exodus 13:8-9, "On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead."

"And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb." (Rev 15:2-3)

## **Passover and the New Testament Church**

"Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast — as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth." (1 Cor 5:7-8)

In Corinthians Paul writes about the keeping of the Passover, so we see that this is not just an Old Testament celebration but also a celebration that was to be kept “throughout all generations.” Yeshua himself encouraged us to celebrate the Passover when he said during his last Passover meal, "Do this in remembrance of me!" Here Paul speaks to the New Testament believers and as many might think that this is only a feast for the Jewish people, be assured that it is not:

Colossians 2:16-17, "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

☒ Instead of saying that Gentile believers are not supposed to celebrate the Sabbath and the other Feasts of the LORD, this text is instead a strong encouragement to do so since the Feasts are a shadow of the reality of things to come..

☒ Paul encourages the Gentile believers to celebrate the Feasts of the LORD. He is trying to say that the Feasts of the LORD are not only for the Jewish people. The Feasts belong to all of those who belong to God and are circumcised by him and we should not let anyone judge us for celebrating them even if we are not Jewish. We are all one in him and we as Gentiles have been grafted into the vine, being Yeshua.

☒ The Feasts of the Lord are part of the spiritual inheritance in Christ.

☒ "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household." (Eph 2:19)

## **THE HAGGADAH**

The Lord instructed Moses that Passover would be an everlasting ordinance for all generations.

(Exodus 12:26,27; 13:8-8)

The telling of the story is so much part of the Passover, as is the celebration and eating of ceremonial foods. The Haggadah (meaning “the telling”) is a traditional booklet with psalms, recitations and explanations of why we eat symbolic foods and the meaning of their customs. The ceremonial meal is called the Seder (or order). Part of the Seder meal is the recitation of what is called “the Four Questions.”

The youngest child in the family will ask, “Why is this night different from all other nights?” He/or she will then identify (according to the meal) what sets and makes this night and meal different from all the other ordinary meals during the year. In the Jewish culture this night is set-apart from all the other nights of the year, and in the same manner we as God’s bride (Gentile bride) should follow and do the same.

## **THE MEANING OF THESE FOODS ACCORDING TO THE ORIGINAL CONTEXT OF EXODUS AND JESUS’ FINAL PASSOVER MEAL:**

### **1. MATZAH**

Is a flat, unleavened bread which symbolizes the Israelites hasty departure from Egypt – they had no time to let their bread rise

### **2. THE FOUR CUPS OF SWEET WINE/GRAPE JUICE**

During the Passover meal, they drink four cups of wine

#### **☞ *THE FIRST CUP - THE CUP OF SANCTIFICATION***

We drink this cup in which we are set apart from the world for the Lord. This symbolizes the consecrated time of Passover, separating this meal from any other meal – in this we also set our hearts apart for our Beloved.

#### **☞ *THE SECOND CUP – THE CUP OF FREEDOM OR THE CUP OF PLAGUES***

Before drinking the second cup, we remember how much the Egyptians suffered during the ten plagues, and dip our fingers into the wine ten times, placing the wasted drops like blood on the napkins. The plagues are remembered and recited. The idea or thought around this is that we see the suffering also of our enemies.

#### **☞ *THE THIRD CUP – THE CUP OF REDEMPTION***

This cup is taken after the meal and it represents the costly price of the slaughter of an innocent lamb. Ultimately the Yeshua (Jesus Christ) the Passover Lamb that was slain, and it is by His Blood that we have been washed and redeemed and that atonement was made for our sins!

Lev. 17:11 – “For the life of the flesh is in the blood. And I have given it to you on the altar to make an atonement for your souls. For it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.”

Luke 22:20 - “In the same way He took the cup, after having dined, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is being poured out for you.” It was through the Blood of Jesus, that we have entered into a New Covenant with Him, and it was sealed by His Blood.

#### **☞ *THE FORTH CUP – THE CUP OF PRAISE***

The Seder meal ends with great joy and worship from our hearts. Usually Psalms are sung and passages recited that includes great words of praise to the King of Kings!

God is looking for an intimate, love relationship with Him, not religion, and so we come before Him with hearts filled with joy and praise and love for the One who gave us His all.

In another sense we also await to drink of the fullness of this cup when Messiah comes, Our Heavenly Bridegroom, who said, that He would not drink it again until He drinks it with us in the Kingdom of Heaven! So we also await to drink it with Him when He returns and takes us to be with Himself and we partake of the fullness thereof at the banqueting table.

### **PARSLEY**

It represents the hyssop plant that was used to paint the doorframes with the blood during the Israelites time in Egypt. The parsley is dipped in a cup of salt water and eaten.

The salt water represents the tears that their forefathers wept while in slavery. So we also, as Gentiles can relate to the same "tears" of our years of bondage and slavery without Messiah. The green also represents the hope of springtime, a time of joy after weeping.

### **THE SHANK BONE**

The shank bone represents the slain lamb.

### **HORSERADISH**

It is the closest representation of the bitter herbs commanded by the Lord in Exodus, and it symbolizes the bitterness in slavery.

### **CHAROSETH**

Is a sweet mixture of apples, nuts, wine and cinnamon. It stands for the mortar used to make bricks for Pharaoh's structures and also for the sweetness of God's promise of deliverance to the Israelites.

Prophetically this is what Yeshua came to do for us through His death and resurrection.

### **THE CUP OF ELIJAH**

Throughout the Seder meal there is a special cup filled with wine set aside called "the Cup of Elijah". This cup is set aside for the visitation of the prophet Elijah, should he come during the Seder. Near the end of the meal biblical verses are recited about Elijah's return to earth. (Please read 2 Kings 2:1-12) Elijah was taken to heaven alive and never saw death. His cup is raised and usually a song is sung in expectation of him.

Matthew 17:10 "And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

The song is translated something like this:

"Elijah, the Prophet, Elijah, the Tishbit; Elijah the Gileadite. Come quick! and in our day; come to visit us with Messiah, the Son of David."

Malachi 4:5 "Behold, I am sending you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of Jehovah."

Malachi 4:6 "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers, that I not come and strike the earth with utter destruction."

The celebration of Elijah's cup is a reminder that the prophet will return to earth as it has been written and prophesied. Elijah will most probably appear at God's appointed time preaching in the Power of the Spirit.

Elijah is coming and will restore all things, and he will prepare the way of the coming King, the Lord Yeshua our Messiah!

Revelations 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. And He will reign forever and ever.

## **THE BITTER AND THE SWEET**

Luke 22:15 "And He said to them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

Luke 22:16 "For I say to you, I will not any more eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Usually during the Passover Seder, the Jews eat both bitter herbs (horse radish) and sweet charoset (the walnut, apple and cinnamon "mortar").

We remember the immense sacrifice that Jesus brought for us on the cross and that He himself knew both the bitter and the sweet of this road. In the same way that Jesus identified with our weaknesses, trials and tribulations, so also we remember and walk in the same manner. For now we also share in the fellowship of His sufferings, as we all experience and have entered the time of both glory and suffering upon the earth!

Romans 8:17 "And if we are children, then we are heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; so that if we suffer with Him, we may also be glorified together."

Habakuk 2:14 "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Matthew 24:21 "for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be."

## **THE AFIKOMEN**

This symbolism is very well understood by believers in Yeshua. After the dipping of the green vegetable in salt water, the Father or leader holds three large pieces of matzah wrapped together in linen cloth. Each piece is separated by a layer of cloth. The middle matzah is pulled out and held up. This piece is then broken in two and hides it somewhere around the house. The children will then go and search for this missing piece. Once it is found it is brought back and the leader will then make sure it "fits" with the other broken half. Thus the two pieces become one whole again.

There are several interpretations for this, one of which believers in Jesus believe that the middle piece represents Him as the mediating priest. He is the only One who stand between God, The Father and man, in the place of intercession and as the sacrificial lamb or atonement. Jesus was broken as the sacrificed lamb; His body was wrapped in linen and "hidden away". He was found and made whole and raised to Eternal life. His sacrifice and death has reconciled us to the Father, once and for all, many was ransomed back from their brokenness and made whole along with Him.

Ezekiel 22:30 "And I sought for a man among them who should wall up a wall for the land, and stand in the break before me, that I should not destroy it. But I did not find one."

For us Passover is a commemoration and a celebration of all that God has promised and faithfully given and shall complete through Jesus our Messiah!

He has paid the price in full through His blood and we have been set free from Egypt (bondage) and have been given a new inheritance (promised land) in Jesus, our Messiah!