

PASSOVER

LEADER: Passover is rich with spiritual significance and symbolism. For Christians to fully appreciate God's purpose in Passover, it needs to be seen and interpreted in three dimensions:

1. Historically, Passover is remembrance of God's supernatural deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage.
2. Prophetically, the Passover Seder service teaches us about the first and second coming of Yeshua/Jesus. In the steps prior to eating the Passover meal, the Passover Seder focuses on the events of Yeshua's/Jesus's first coming, primarily His death, burial, and resurrection. Following the Seder meal, you are taught about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, judgement of the nations during the tribulation, and the future 1,000 year Messianic Age.
3. Individually, Passover instructs Believers about their personal relationship with God. It shows Believers how to grow in spiritual maturity as they seek to serve God in their daily lives.

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSOVER SEASON

Passover is becoming a popular Feast for Christians to celebrate. What became to be called The Last Supper, is in fact, the Passover meal, or Passover Seder. Seder meaning, set order.

The instructions concerning Passover were first communicated by God to the children of Israel in Exodus 12. Procedures detailing how each instruction are to be carried out were developed and standardized over a period of time. Each step in the Passover Seder remarkably depicts God's redemptive plan for humankind as revealed through the Messiah Yeshua/Jesus.

In Exodus 12:1-6, God instructs the children of Israel to take a lamb one year old, without blemish, on the 10th day of the first month in the Biblical calendar known as Aviv (also called Nisan), and examine it for four days. At the end of the four days, the people were to sacrifice the lamb between the evenings. -- Exodus 12:6.

To understand the expression, between the evenings, you need to understand the Biblical day. The Biblical day, as recorded in Genesis 1, begins in the evening at sunset. From sunset to sunrise, approximately 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., is considered the evening part of the day. From sunrise to sunset, roughly 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., is the morning part of the day. The morning, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., is divided into two sections. From 6 a.m. to Noon is the morning. From Noon to 6 p.m. is the evening. Therefore, between the evening is exactly 3 p.m. which is the ninth hour of the day. -- Matthew 27:45-46,50. This is the exact moment when Yeshua/Jesus died on the cross/tree.

Following the Passover lamb being killed, it was prepared to be cooked. The tractate Pesachim in the Mishnah details how the lamb is traditionally prepared for cooking. In preparing the lamb, the intestines are removed and wrapped around the lamb's head. The lamb is called the crowned sacrifice. In order to make certain the lamb is evenly cooked from inside out, a pomegranate stick is thrust through the lamb from bottom to top in a vertical position. The lamb's carcass is held open by placing a cross piece in a horizontal position and tying a leg on each end.

Through this ceremony, a perfect picture of the crucifixion of Yeshua/Jesus is depicted. During the final week of Yeshua/Jesus' life, He was examined for four days in the Temple by the religious rulers. On the day of Passover at precisely 3 p.m., Yeshua/Jesus was raised upon the cross/tree. -- Matthew 27:45-46,50. On the cross/tree, He wore a crown upon His head (God's crowned sacrifice). His arms and His legs were positioned on the cross/tree exactly as the Passover Lamb. Yeshua/Jesus was God's Passover Lamb! -- I Corinthians 5:7

In the Passover Seder, there are many lessons to be learned. In the next few hours as you celebrate this Passover Seder, you will see, hear, touch, taste, smell and experience the redemptive work of Yeshua/Jesus as He died on the cross. There are 15 steps in doing a Passover Seder. These 15 steps are designed to reveal the complete redemptive plan of God. During the Passover Seder, there will be four cups of wine/grapejuice which will be drunk. Each cup will teach a different aspect of God's redemption.

When setting the Passover table, an extra plate and cup are set. No one sits at this place setting. This is Elijah's place. The cup is called, the Cup of Elijah. Only one of two people may drink of this cup: Elijah, or Messiah. This is the cup Yeshua/Jesus drank when He said, "... this Cup is the New Covenant..." -- Luke 22:20. Because Yeshua/Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb, God allows you to be a partaker of His New Covenant!

JESUS CELEBRATED PASSOVER

LEADER: Yeshua/Jesus and His parents celebrated Passover on a yearly basis, as it is written:

ALL : Now Yeshua/Jesus and His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. -- Luke 2:41-42

LEADER: Yeshua/Jesus is called the Lamb of God as it is written:

ALL : The next day John saw Yeshua/Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" -- John 1:29

LEADER: The evening before His crucifixion Yeshua/Jesus and His Disciples celebrated the Passover Seder as it is written:

ALL : And when the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;.." -- Luke 22:14-15

PASSOVER IS A FEAST OF THE LORD

LEADER: Passover is a Feast of the Lord as it is written:

ALL : And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations (rehearsals) these are My feasts. ... On the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover. -- Leviticus 23:1-2,5.

ALL : So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. -- Exodus 12:14

JESUS IS GOD'S PASSOVER LAMB

LEADER: Historically, God revealed to the children of Israel that the Passover Lamb which would be slain was to be without spot or blemish as it is written:

ALL : Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. -- Exodus 12:5

LEADER: Yeshua/Jesus, the Lamb of God (John 1:29), was slain being without blemish as it is written:

ALL : Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver or gold ..., but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. -- I Peter 1:18-19

THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PASSOVER

LEADER: Historically, Passover is the redemption of God's firstborn as it is written:

ALL : Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, even My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that He may serve Me. But if you refuse to let Him go, behold, I will slay your son, even your firstborn." -- Exodus 4:22-23

LEADER: The church is God's firstborn as it is written:

ALL : But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn... -- Hebrews 12:22-23a

LEADER: Historically, Passover celebrates the deliverance of the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt and the authority of Pharaoh. In order to be delivered out from Egypt, God instructs the children of Israel to kill a lamb and apply the lamb's blood on the doorpost of their houses. Those who obeyed God's instructions were redeemed by Him when the Angel of Death passed over their home. These events are rich with spiritual meaning:

1. Egypt represents a type of the world and world system. The ruler of Egypt is Pharaoh. Pharaoh represents a type of Satan. People are in the bondage of sin when a part of the world's system. -- John 8:34

2. Believers are the house of God. -- Hebrews 3:6; I Peter 2:5

3. The doorpost represents your heart. When you receive Yeshua/Jesus into your heart by faith you have spiritually applied His blood to your doorpost which is your heart.

(a) It is only by trusting in the shed blood of Yeshua/Jesus, your Passover, that you are free from the bondage of sin. -- Galatians 4:3-5,9, 5:1; II Peter 2:19

(b) The blood of Yeshua/Jesus redeems us from sin. -- Leviticus 17:11; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; I Peter 1:18-19; I John 1:7; Revelation 1:5

LEADER: For this reason, when you celebrate the Passover Seder you will see it as God personally redeeming you as it is written:

ALL : And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, This is done because of what the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. -- Exodus 13:8

UNDERSTANDING PASSOVER SEDER TERMS

What Is a Seder?

Seder is a Hebrew term meaning, set order. There is a set order to follow when celebrating the Passover Seder service. There are 15 steps to the Passover Seder.

Seder refers to two things:

- a) The service itself
- b) The meal

What Is the Meaning of the 15 Steps in the Seder?

1. There are 15 steps or parts to the Seder. These 15 steps are always the same and will always be conducted in the same order, "throughout your generations."

2. With each of the 15 steps, you are climbing a spiritual ladder. With each step, you are ascending toward God. With each step, you are being taken to a higher spiritual plane than the previous step.

3. Personally, the 15 steps teaches you to grow in spiritual understanding of God. As born again believers, we are spiritual babes in Messiah. God desires for each believer to grow from spiritual babies to spiritual maturity. Prophetically, these 15 steps take you through the events of the first and second coming of Yeshua/Jesus.

4. The 15 steps are designed by God to make each believer climb a spiritual ladder. The destination of this spiritual ascent is the throne of God. God is sitting on His throne in heaven. Kings sit on a throne. Because Yeshua/Jesus is sitting on a throne, He is recognized as our King. -- Jerememiah 17:12, Zechariah 14:9, Revelation 19:16

5. During the Passover Seder, in respect to God who is our King, we pay tribute to Him for being our King by saying these words, "Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe...".

During the days of Yeshua/Jesus, whenever the pilgrims traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, they prepared their hearts by singing Psalms 120-134. These 15 Psalms are the Psalms of ascent. They parallel the 15 steps celebrated in the Seder. In each of the 15 steps of the Seder, God will deal with different aspects in your life including your personal relationship with Him. As you reach the 15th step, you should spiritually feel that you have entered into the full presence of God.

What Is the Haggadah?

The book used during the Seder is the Passover Haggadah. The word Haggadah means, "to tell". The Haggadah is the book that tells the story of Passover.

Why Does the Father Conduct the Seder at the Table?

The table in front of you is seen as an altar. One male from each table is to minister as a priest at this altar. In doing this, you remember the priests who ministered before God during the days of the Temple. You are also reminded that God told us that we are all kings and priests before him. -- Revelation 5:10

Why Do We Recline During Parts of the Seder?

Passover is the season of your freedom. On this day you are being redeemed from slavery to become a priest and king before God. This is the season of the year whenever you remember your purchased freedom from the bondages of sin through the shed blood of Yeshua/Jesus. During Passover, you rehearse being a king before God. To recline while eating indicates a person of freedom and royalty. For this reason, it is a practice during parts of the Passover Seder to recline. When you partake of the items which represent spiritual freedom such as the four cups, matzah, and the afikomen, you recline. You do not recline when eating symbols of slavery, such as maror.

Why Do We Use the Term Yeshua for Jesus?

The name Yeshua was given by God through the angel of the Lord. -- Matthew 1:21

The name Yeshua in Hebrew means, Salvation. In Matthew 1:21, it is written, "And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call his name YESHUA (Salvation), for He shall save His people from their sins."

The name Jesus is symbiotic with Yeshua. Yeshua expresses to us who Jesus is --- the Savior of the world!

What Is the Blessing over the Bread?

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Ha Motzi Lechem Min Ha Aretz

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth the bread from the earth.

What Is the Blessing over the Cup?

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ri Ha Gafen

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

What Is the Meaning of Derash?

Throughout the Passover Haggadah you will see the heading, Derash. This Hebrew term means, spiritual meaning, or interpretation. Under the sections entitled Derash, are various observances and practices of the Passover Seder service as they pertain to Yeshua/Jesus and Believers.

THE EXPERIENCE OF PASSOVER

God gives you everything in the Seder so you may experience the essence of the redemption. The best way to learn something is by doing. For this reason, God gives the Passover service so that by doing the service you better understand Yeshua/Jesus' work of redemption, and God's plan for salvation.

PREPARING FOR PASSOVER

Bedikat Chametz

(Purging Leaven from the House)

Prior to the celebration of Passover, God gives a ceremony for searching and casting out leaven from your home. In Hebrew this ceremony is called, Bedikat Chametz which means, the search for leaven.

The ceremony is as follows:

1. Prior to Passover, the wife thoroughly cleans the house to remove all leaven -- Chametz.

2. The wife is instructed by God to leave ten small pieces of leaven -- bread -- in the house.

3. The father, with his children, takes a candle, a feather, a wooden spoon, and a piece of linen cloth to search through the house for the ten pieces of leaven.

4.The evening before Passover a final and comprehensive search is performed. This time the house is completely dark except for the candles. Before the search begins, the following words are said:

Bedikat Chametz

(The search for Leaven)

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has set us apart by His commandments and commanded us concerning the removal of Chametz (leaven).

5.Once the father finds the leaven (bread), he places the candle and wooden spoon beside the leaven.

6.The father uses the feather to sweep the leaven onto the spoon. Without touching the leaven, he takes the feather, spoon, and leaven and wraps them in the linen cloth to cast them out the door. After the search is completed, the following is recited:

Bittul Chametz

(Nullifying the leaven)

ALL : All leaven and leavened things that are in my possession of which I have neither seen, nor removed, and of which I know nothing about, shall be nullified and considered ownerless like the dust of the earth.

7.The next morning, the father goes into the synagogue to put the linen cloth with its contents into the fire to burn.

Biur Chametz (Destroying the leaven)

ALL : All leaven and leavened foods in my possession of which I have neither seen nor removed, and of which I know nothing about, shall be nullified and considered ownerless like the dust of the earth.

What Is the Spiritual Meaning for Purging Leaven from the House?

1.Spiritually, believers in Messiah Yeshua/Jesus are the House of God.

(Hebrews 3:6; I Peter 2:5; I Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:19)

2.Leaven -- sin -- is to be cleaned out of your house, your body.

(I Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19-20; II Corinthians 6:15-18)

In the Bible, God refers to leaven -- Chametz -- as symbolic of sin. He refers to the leaven of certain groups of people because of their individual actions. They are:

a) The leaven of Herod.--Mark 8:14

b) The leaven of the Pharisees. -- Mark 8:15; Matthew 16:5-12; Luke 12:1; Matthew 23:1-3

c) The leaven of the Sadducees. -- Matthew 16:6-12

The Sadducees did not believe in the supernatural. They denied the existence of the Spirit of God, angels, and the resurrection -- Mark 12:18; Acts 23:6-8

d) The leaven at Corinth. The leaven at Corinth was sensuality, chiefly fornication.

(I Cor. 4:17-21, 5:1-13, 6:1, 9-11, 13, 16-18, 8:1, 13:4; II Cor. 2:20-21)

3.The spiritual understanding of the candle is that it represents the Word of God. Spiritually you are to cleanse the leaven -- sin -- from your house -- life -- by allowing the Holy Spirit -- Ruach HaKodesh -- to reveal to you, through the knowledge of Yeshua/Jesus, and the scriptures, the sin which is in your life. It is only through God's Word that you are able to identify sin in your life. -- Psalm 119:105

4.The feather represents the Holy Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh). Even though you have the Word of God, you need the Spirit of God -- Ruach HaKodesh -- to illuminate the Holy scriptures to you. -- I Corinthians 2:11-14

5.The spoon represents the tree that Yeshua/Jesus died upon. -- Deuteronomy 21:22-23. Remember, the leaven-- Chametz, representing sin -- is swept on the spoon-- representing the tree -- by the Father when he and his children cleanse their house of all leaven. Likewise, your sin is swept, or cast upon Yeshua/Jesus when He died on the tree. -- II Corinthians 5:21

6.The leaven -- Yeshua/Jesus and our sin upon the tree -- Galatians 3:13, -- is then wrapped in linen -- Yeshua in the tomb - - John 19:40 -- and cast out of the house -- Yeshua's body. Yeshua descended into Hell, the place of burning -- Luke 16:19-24 - - fulfilling the cleansing ceremony when the father takes the linen cloth with its contents to cast it into the fire to be burned.

DERASH

God said that He would search Jerusalem with candles. -- Zephaniah 1:12. This expression is a reference to the ceremony of Bedikat Chametz, purging leaven from the house, which is completed prior to Passover.

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

LEADER: Candles are kindled every Sabbath and during festivals. Traditionally, the table is set with your finest linen, china and silver. These represent your freedom and dignity which you are to experience and enjoy this night. It also serves as a memory of the gold and silver the Egyptians gave the children of Israel as they left Egypt. It is customary for the woman of the house to light the candles. No less than two candles may be kindled.

DERASH

LEADER: The two candles have several spiritual meanings. According to one interpretation, one candle represents the Torah, and the other candlestick represents the Prophets. The Torah and the Prophets reveal that Yeshua/Jesus is the Messiah. Yeshua/Jesus refers to this in Luke 24:44, as it is written:

ALL : Then He -- Yeshua/Jesus -- said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses (Torah) and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me".

LEADER: The Hebrew blessing for the kindling of the lights is given to the woman of the house. This blessing is bestowed upon the woman because it is through a woman that Messiah, the Light of the world is born. -- John 8:12. With her head covered, the woman lights the candles. She then recites the following blessing.

NOTE: If Passover falls on the Sabbath, recite the words in parentheses. If Passover falls on Saturday night, the following should also be recited:

LEADER: Saturday night only. Blessed is He who divides between Holy and holy.

WOMAN: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Asher Kid'shanu B'mitzvotav Vitzivanu L'hadlik Ner Shel (Shabbat V'shel), Yom Tov.

The English translation is:

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by your commandments and commanded us to light the light of the (Sabbath and of) the holy day.

UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS OF THE PASSOVER SEDER

The Elements of the Seder are given to recreate the events of the redemption. Passover celebrates the historical deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. Spiritually, God has given Passover to teach us about our deliverance for spiritual deliverance from the bondage of sin, influenced by the waywardness of the world.

1.Zeroa. The Zeroa represents the Passover Lamb which is sacrificed. The bone is roasted and scorched simulating the Passover sacrifice that is roasted. (Exodus 12:9) The roasted bone is known as a shank bone. There is no Temple in Jerusalem today; therefore, there is no sacrifice, and there is no lamb to be slain. For this reason, you have only a remembrance of the Lamb which is slain. The shankbone on the Seder plate represents this remembrance.

The Believers Passover Lamb is Yeshua/Jesus. -- 1 Corinthians 5:7. The Hebrew term Zeroa means, arm. The Zeroa represents Yeshua/Jesus. -- Isaiah 53:1, 5b-6

2.Three Matzot. Matzah is unleavened bread. The middle piece of Matzah is called the Afikomen meaning, dessert. The middle piece of Matzah is broken and hid prior to the Seder meal. Following the meal, the children search for the hidden Afikomen. Once found, it is redeemed.

The Matzah is:

- a) Pierced ----- Psalm 22:16b; Zechariah 12:10
- b) Striped ----- Isaiah 53:5
- c) Without sin ----- Isaiah 53:9

3.Beitzah, a roasted egg. The Beitzah is a reminder of the additional lamb that was eaten during Passover. This second burnt offering is known as the Haggigah. -- Deuteronomy 16:2. The lamb could only be eaten within the walls of Jerusalem. Pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem for the Passover feast as commanded by God -- Deuteronomy 16:16 -- registered in parties of 10-20 people within the Temple court. A representative for the registered group would go into the Temple to sacrifice their lamb, then bring it back to the company of people in their group to be roasted.

4.God commanded that you eat of the lamb until you are full. If you had 20 people, one lamb may not be enough to fulfill that commandment. Therefore, in this case, you have a second lamb called a Haggigah. The Beitzah, or roasted egg is the remembrance for the second lamb. The Haggigah represents a peace offering. The egg's oval shape represents eternity. It has no connection with Easter, Easter eggs, or the Easter bunny.

5.Maror, Bitter herbs. Two herbs are required because God specified, herbs. -- Exodus 12:8. They are:

a) Romaine lettuce -- Chazeret --. Romaine lettuce first tastes sweet, only later to become bitter. The sweet symbolizes your Egyptian, or worldly experiences. At first, they are fun and exciting. It isn't until later you realize your error. In the bitterness, you are reminded of your bondage to sin. Chazeret becomes bitter if it remains in the ground to long without water. This is a picture of our lives if we live to long without the Word of God.

b) Freshly ground Horseradish. This too is a reminder of the bitterness for being in bondage to sin.

6.Charoset, a mixture of chopped apples, nuts, cinnamon, and spices. This represents the mortar in Egypt. It also represents the food of the promised land. Charoset is eaten with maror to lessen the bite of the bitter herbs. It reminds you that if you press on with God during difficult times that you will eventually experience the sweetness of God in your life.

7.Karpas. A vegetable to represent spring and rebirth. Green parsley is most often used. Celery may also be used. It is dipped in salt water near the beginning of the Seder.

8.The Four Cups. Four cups of wine/grapejuice (normally 4 oz each) are poured during the Passover Seder. Since no leaven may be present during the Passover season, the wine used by Yeshua/Jesus and His disciples during their Passover would have been unfermented, or non-alcoholic. The four cups symbolize the fruit of the vine, Yeshua.

During the week of Passover, Yeshua/Jesus said, "I am the true vine..." -- John 15:1. Isaiah tells us that God has a vineyard, and that vineyard is Israel. -- Isaiah 5:7

The choice vine planted in that vineyard is Messiah, Yeshua/Jesus. Each cup represents another step in redemption, but does not in itself represent complete redemption.

PASSOVER

A memorial of our Redeemer -- Yeshua! Four cups are offered to remind us of His sacrifice. Let us not drink lightly, but know that He alone is the Atonement for our sins!

The cups are:

- 1.Cup of Sactification
 - 2.Cup of Affliction
 - 3.Cup of Redemption
 - 4.The Cup of His Coming Kingdom!
- (NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM !!!)

THE CUP OF ELIJAH

A special cup is filled with wine/grapejuice and placed on the Passover table. It is called, the Cup of Elijah. This cup is to teach you that before Messiah's second coming, Elijah the prophet will prepare His way. -- Malachi 4:5-6

At the first coming of Yeshua/Jesus, Elijah is personified by the person of John the Baptist. He is not literally Elijah but of the spirit and power -- anointing -- of Elijah. -- Luke 1:17. Likewise, one of the two witnesses spoken of in Revelation 11, will be an individual like John the Immerser/Baptist who personifies the spirit and power -- anointing -- of Elijah during the tribulation period, but prior to the second coming of Yeshua/Jesus when He sets His foot down upon the Mount of Olives. -- Zechariah 14:4