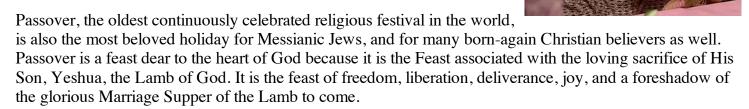


April 2000

Nisan 5760
"Who 'stole' the Afikomen?"
Shalom in the Lamb!

Passover: Now and Forever



The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob instituted the Passover at the Exodus from Egypt. The answers to the Why, When and How of Passover are given by God in the Book of Exodus, *Sh'mot* in Hebrew.

Why?: "So this day [Passover] 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)

When?: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening." (Exodus 12:18)

How?: Read Exodus 12:1-20 and be blessed!

Passover is an eternal celebration. As believers, we now celebrate both the physical deliverance of our ancestors from Egypt, and our personal spiritual deliverance from the bondage of sin. But one day, in the Heavenly Kingdom, we will also celebrate the liberation from our frail, earthen vessels and from a fallen world which is not our home. With the Lamb as the Light we will experience the unspeakable joy of being in the presence of our loving Lord forever.

Passover: Forever New

Each year as we prepare to celebrate Passover we read and re-read the story of the Exodus, and marvel at the new insights we gain on an old story. The Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) leads us into new truths, and refreshes old ones. We'd like to share our gleanings with you this month to enhance your personal celebration of Passover.

Exodus 2:24-25 Notice God's reaction to the groaning of His people in bondage as their cry came up to Him: 1) **God heard** their groaning, 2) **God remembered** His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, 3) **God looked upon** the children of Israel and 4) **God acknowledged** them. Trust God in your life

to respond to **your groanings** in the same way. <u>He hears, He remembers, He looks upon,</u> and <u>He acknowledges</u>. After that: A miracle! An exodus! Expect it.

Exodus 6:6 The traditional four "I wills" of Passover (from which we get four cups of wine in the seder), are actually five "I wills." 1) I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, 2) I will rescue you from their bondage, 3) I will redeem you with an outstretched arm..., 4) I will take you as My people, and 5) I will be your God. Number 5 signifies to us the personal deliverance or salvation that is ours in the Messiah. The same idea is echoed in Jeremiah 31:33 where a New Covenant is promised to the House of Israel. As Messianic Jews we see ourselves as having personally come forth from Egypt, since we have in reality experienced a great deliverance. And we can boldly proclaim: He is my God!

Exodus 9:1(Complete Jewish Bible) `Then Adonai said to Moshe, "Go to Pharoah, and tell him, `Here is what Adonai, the God of the Hebrews, says, "Let my people go, so that they can worship me." ' " '

The reason Israel was set free from Egyptian bondage was so that they could worship God. The reason we have been delivered (saved) from sin is so that we might worship God. WORSHIP is to be our lifestyle, our goal, a major part of our lives. Is it?

Exodus 10:23 When God visited the homes of the Egyptians with the plague of darkness, there was **light** in the homes of the people of Israel for three days. It was light that distinguished God's people from the rest of the world. This concept is very much reinforced by Yeshua in the New Covenant. We are **called** to be **lights** in a dark world. How much light is there in **your** home? We need to pray: "Lord, flood my home with Your light. Show me any darkness that needs to be rebuked in the Name of Yeshua. Help me to walk in the light and to let my light shine that **You** might be glorified."

Exodus 11:2-3 When the Israelites left Egypt, God gave them favor with the Egyptians who gave gold and silver jewelry to their Jewish neighbors when they requested it. Why did God do this? Was it a test? Was He giving His people an opportunity to show their love for Him? Was the gold to be used for the vessels of the mishkan (tabernacle), instead of a golden calf? Is our gold and silver a test also? Do we use it for the service of God or to make idols? We have been very blessed to receive gold and silver from time to time from precious non-Jews who desired to sow seed into this ministry. If the Lord speaks to your heart to give a gift of "gold of silver" we would be honored to receive it, and to use it to further the Gospel of Messiah.

Exodus 12:41-42 Exactly 430 years to the day, God brought His people out of Egypt. The 14th of Nisan, that begins at evening, is called a "night of solemn observance to the Lord" in the Holy Scriptures. In the Complete Jewish Bible, Dr. Stern translates Ex. 12:42 in the following manner: "This same night continues to be a night when Adonai keeps vigil for all the people of Isra'el through all their generations." How wonderful! God watches over His people in a special way on Nisan 14...the evening of April 19 this year. Should we not praise Him on that night for His watchful care? (Psalm 121:4)

Passover: Pesach

It bears repeating each year that the word for Passover in Hebrew is *Pesach* (pronounced PAY-SOCK), which is also the word for the Passover lamb. In the truest sense, Pesach cannot be separated from **the Lamb**. Sadly, however, in Jewish homes around the world, the major symbolic element of Passover as defined in the Holy Scriptures, is often missing from the table. Instead of the shankbone of a lamb, there might be a chicken or a turkey bone.

This was not always the case. The lamb used to be central to the celebration of Pesach. For example, in the days of King Solomon when the first Temple stood, around 960 BCE, Passover was an awesome celebration. The shofar was blown, announcing the paschal sacrifice. Priests,

wearing scarlet robes, stood in two rows, one holding silver basins and the other gold. When an Israelite slaughtered his lamb, the closest priest caught its blood in his basin, then passed it to the priest next to him and so on until it reached the altar, where the blood was poured at the base. The empty basin was returned the same way to the first priest. While this took place, the Levites sang Hallel, praising God. Then the lambs were roasted and eaten, together with matzah and bitter herbs as the Exodus story was told.

This year we learned that the "Four questions" asked in the Passover Seder by the youngest child have remained the same since the seder was instituted _ except for question number four. The fourth question used to refer to the paschal (lamb) sacrifice. It was discontinued, along with the sacrifice, after the destruction of the second Temple in 70 C.E.

So, today, in traditional Jewish homes no one asks about the lamb. We really should ask: "Where is the **lamb** that the Holy Scriptures speak about?"

Some believe that the **matzah** became a symbol of the paschal offering after 70 C.E. Others believe that even at the time of Yeshua the matzah was identified with the lamb sacrificed at the first Passover. The Israelites carried that identity even further and made a connection between the matzah and the manna that their ancestors had eaten in the wilderness. They believed that the Messiah would come at Passover, and that manna would once more fall down from heaven. Yeshua, of course, identified Himself as bread that comes down from heaven. When Yeshua said to His disciples, "This matzah is me," He clearly meant: "I am your Passover sacrifice."

When we consider the **middle matzah**, the afikomen, that is broken, wrapped in a burial cloth, buried and then resurrected during the course of the seder, we can clearly see Yeshua, our Passover, broken for us, buried and raised from the dead!

New Passover Television Program

This Passover our new half-hour Passover TV program will air all over the United States. Many hours went into the production of this program, and tremendous spiritual warfare surrounded it. We are sure that the Lord plans to use it in a mighty way! The program was taped in our home and includes a candlelight search for leaven, a full seder dinner, the Lash family and eight guests, and teaching from the kitchen breakfast area (a first!) all in 1/2 hour!! We believe that this program is our best one yet, a **must** for your family library. Order a copy for yourself or for someone who needs to hear about the Lamb in a Jewish way.

Passover Banquet 2000

Passover will be very special this year as we gather together with mishpochah from near and far to honor the Lamb at a deluxe traditionally Jewish kosher style Passover Seder dinner at the lovely Sheraton hotel in Hollywood, Florida. We will be hosting the seder, and Neil will be teaching along with Rabbi Yosef Koelner of Temple Aron Hakodesh in Ft. Lauderdale. We will praise, worship, dance, break bread together, receive new insights into Passover, and be immersed in the presence and the love of our God. Come join us for a celebration to be remembered. Seating is limited, so please call Rona at (954)741-7634 for details as soon as possible. (Colorado friends, Rona may have some special air and hotel rates for you!)



"...And you shall tell your son..."

Exodus 13:8

Yeshua over Jamie