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A MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY FROM ARIEL MINISTRIES



THE FEAST OF PESACH (PASSOVER)



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*In the first month,
on the fourteenth
day of the month
at even, is
Jehovah's passover.
Leviticus 23:5*

The Feast of *Pesach* or Passover is the first of the seven holy seasons of the Jewish calendar and will be studied in four major categories: the introduction, the feast of Passover in the Old Testament, the feast of Passover in the New Testament, and the messianic implications.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Names

The first thing to note by way of introduction is the various names that are given for this particular festival. All together there are four key names.

1. Hag HaPesach

The first name, *Hag HaPesach*, means the “Feast of the Passover” and is found in Exodus 34:25. This first name emphasizes the paschal lamb which was eaten on this particular occasion.

2. Pesach or Passover

The second name is *Pesach*, which is the Hebrew word for Passover. The emphasis is on the Angel of Death motif based upon the fact that during the tenth plague, the Angel of Death “passed over” the Jewish homes, but he did not “pass over” the Egyptian homes. This is the origin of this particular name: Pesach or Passover.

This second name is used in four different ways. First, it is applied to the Feast of Passover alone. Secondly, the term Passover is sometimes

used to include both the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the day after the Feast of Passover. Thirdly, it is applied to the sacrificial lamb in reference to the lamb that was sacrificed on the first day of Passover in the Temple Compound. Fourthly, it is applied to the Passover meal itself which is known among the Jewish people as the *seder*. The meal eaten on the first night of Passover is sometimes called the Passover.

3. Hag He'aviv

The third name, *Hag He'aviv*, means the “Feast of Spring,” because it is the first feast of the spring cycle. There are seven festivals of Israel as portrayed by Leviticus 23. These seven festivals are grouped into two segments: first, there is a group of four which comes very close together and are all in the spring. Then there is a long break followed by a group of three festivals, which also come close together and are all in the fall. The Passover is the first of the first cycle of feasts which occur in the spring, so it is sometimes referred to as Hag He'aviv, the Feast of Spring.

4. Zman Cheruteinu

The fourth name, *Zman Cheruteinu*, means the “Season of Our Emancipation” or the “Time of Our Freedom.” This name emphasizes the results of the Passover, freedom from slavery.

B. The Biblical Practice

The biblical practice involved two major elements: the killing of the lamb and the Passover meal or seder.

1. The Killing of the Lamb

The lamb that was to be killed for the Passover was set aside on the tenth day of the month of *Aviv* or *Nisan*. It was then tested from the tenth day until the fourteenth day of that month to make sure that it was “without spot and without blemish.” On the fourteenth day, the lamb was killed for the Passover meal. The next morning, another lamb was used as the Passover sacrifice. According to Exodus 12:46, the main emphasis in the killing of the lamb was that no bone of this lamb was to be broken.

2. The Passover Meal

The second main element was the Passover meal. As recorded by Exodus 12:8, the Passover meal was to include three main things: the paschal lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs. These three things were absolutely necessary for the Passover meal to be observed.

C. The Jewish Practice

During the many years of Jewish history, the rabbis have added many other elements to the observance of Passover. Not all of the details concerning the Jewish practice will be dealt with in this study, because

there are just too many of them, but a few things will be mentioned.

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1. The Time of the Passover

The month in which Passover falls is the month of Nisan and the rabbis have had a lot to say about this month. For example, with the exception of the day before the Passover, no fasting was permitted during this month. According to a Jewish legend, the Tabernacle was erected on the first day of this month.

2. The Passover Lamb

During the Second Temple Period, the procedure for the killing of the lamb was as follows: a lamb or a he-goat was selected; it was brought into the Temple Compound and slaughtered in the forecourt. While other types of sacrifices were brought by individuals, the Passover lamb was brought by a group so that it could all be eaten, and nothing of it remain until the morning. A group consisted of all the members of any one household. If one household was too small, others participated in the same lamb. In this way, one lamb might suffice for several different family groups.

The proceedings would start at midday of the fourteenth day of *Nisan*. All the people who came with their sacrifices would be divided into three large groups. Once the first group entered the Temple Court, the gates were closed and the shofar or the ram's horn was sounded. Normally, the shofar was blown at the time of the oblation of wine, but since there was no wine on this occasion, it was blown at the time of the slaughter of the lambs. The Israelites then slaughtered their lambs and the priests, standing in long rows, caught the blood in gold or silver bowls. The bowls were passed from priest to priest until they reached the priest who was nearest to the Altar of Sacrifice. He took the bowl and sprinkled the blood in one motion on the base of the Altar. He then received another full bowl of blood and returned the empty one. During this entire ceremony, the Levites kept chanting what is known as the *Hallel* (Ps. 113-118), until all the sacrifices were completed.

The sacrifice that had just been killed was then hung up on a hook, skinned, and the entire animal was slit wide open and the entrails removed. The portion intended for the Altar was cut out, put in a vessel, and burned on the Altar.

This entire procedure conducted for the first group was repeated for the second and third groups until each group had their lambs sacrificed and the blood spilled upon the base of the Altar.

Afterward, each animal was taken home and roasted whole with special care taken so that no bone whatsoever would be broken. After nightfall, every animal was eaten by the company which brought it, and anything that was not eaten was burned the next day. The lamb

was eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. No dessert was served since Jewish law forbade eating anything after the lamb.

This was the procedure that was followed during the Temple Period until A.D. 70, but then it was changed. In that year, the Jewish Temple was destroyed and it was no longer possible to offer up a sacrifice. The rabbis replaced sacrifice with prayer. There was a continuation of the practice of the eating of unleavened bread with the total removal of leaven from the home. The seder ceremony, the Passover meal, was eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, but there was no lamb. As Jewish practice developed over the centuries, more and more the unleavened bread became the key symbol for the Passover, because the lamb was no longer there. Eventually, a little piece of unleavened bread known as the *afikomen* was the last morsel eaten at the seder as a symbolic reminder of the paschal lamb. In some Jewish traditions, as they eat the little piece of unleavened bread they recite, “In memory of the paschal lamb that was eaten when the Temple stood.”

Another thing about Jewish practice concerns the Passover lamb itself. The laws of the Passover sacrifice were found in the Law of Moses. Of the 613 commandments which Moses gave, sixteen had to do with the Passover. Four of these were positive commandments, but twelve of them were negative commandments. Five had to do with the *Hagigah*, or “Second Passover,” meaning the Passover lamb that was slaughtered in the Temple Compound as a sacrifice on the morning of the first day of Passover. The Jewish day begins at sunset. As a result of the Jewish system of reckoning time, the first night precedes the first day of any day or any particular holy day; therefore, the first night of Passover precedes the first day of Passover. The first night of Passover was when every Jewish family ate their Passover lamb. The first day of Passover was when the special Passover sacrifice was offered in the Temple. Five of the sixteen commands have to do with the Passover sacrifice of the first day. The remaining eleven concerned the Passover lamb proper, two of which were positive commandments and nine were negative.

The rabbis also initiated various types of rules or regulations. For example, there were special rules for slaughtering, for roasting, and for eating. There were also special rules in relationship to the eating such as: the place of eating, the amount of eating, and the manner of eating. There were also rules given in case the Passover fell on the Sabbath day and other things of this nature. All of these were prescribed by the rabbis.

3. Leaven

Leaven was the main forbidden item for the Feast of Passover and there were special rules and regulations concerning it. In fact, leaven was the central point for all of the negative commands concerning the Passover.

a. The Laws

Only that which actually ferments on decomposition was to be regarded as leaven: that which was made from wheat, barley, spelt, oats, and rye. These five grains in particular were forbidden during the Feast of Passover. All the other grains were technically permitted. Grains which tended to rot, but did not ferment were permitted like rice, peas, beans, lentils, and peanuts. It has become a standard Jewish practice, however, to use only *matzah* meal, flour or meal that is made from the unleavened bread itself, and potato flour. Different Jewish groups follow different traditions along this line, but this is fairly standard among Jews today.

Other rules concerning leaven were very numerous. Some involved the cooking utensils. Even kosher cooking utensils have to undergo a special process of “koshering” or ceremonial cleansing before they could be used. In order to avoid this, many Jewish homes have four sets of dishes. One set is used regularly for meat products, another set is used regularly for dairy products. The other two sets of dishes are used only for Passover; one set for meat products, and one set for dairy products.

According to Jewish law, a Jew may not even own leaven during the Passover season. This law created problems for a storekeeper who might own a lot of leavened goods and would suffer great financial loss if he had to destroy all of his leaven. In order to protect the storekeeper, the rabbis permitted him to sell his leaven to a Gentile temporarily and buy it back after the Passover. The sale itself must be unconditional and the buyer must be free to use it, to sell it, to donate it, or to destroy it. Normally, they would get a Gentile who is friendly to the Jew and who would keep it until after the Passover, and then sell it back to him. The selling price would be quite minimal. For instance, in Israel some Orthodox Jews sell all their leaven to an Arab for one dollar and, after the Passover, pay the Arab one dollar to buy back all the leaven. For a period of eight days, that Arab man owns all of the leaven in that Jewish man’s shop. Although it is obviously only “legal fiction,” it is still considered a legitimate sale under Jewish law. The only difference between this sale and any other sale is one of knowledge in that the owner of the leaven knows that the Gentile will sell it back to him after the Passover. According to Jewish thinking, this knowledge in no way mars or interferes with the legal validity of that sale.

If there is simply too much leaven to move out of the premises of the Jew to the Gentile’s premises, the room which contains the leaven must be sold. A bill of sale must include the leaven and the room as real estate. Sometimes a local rabbi can make all of the arrangements for the entire community whereby the rabbi representing the community, sells all the leaven owned by that community to a Gentile.

Another Jewish practice in relationship to leaven is known as “the cleansing of the leaven,” and the purpose is to purge the individual Jewish home of anything and everything that contains leaven or yeast. This is done the night before the first night of Passover and culminates a period of “spring cleaning.”

b. The Ceremonies

There are three key ceremonies in relationship to the cleansing of the leaven. The first ceremony, known as the *B'dikat Chameitz*, means “the search for the leaven.” This is performed on the night before the first night of Passover. On this occasion, they go through the house searching for any scattered pieces of leaven. It has become a practice, however, to make sure that there is some leaven to be discovered during this period of the search. Normally, the father will go to ten different corners of the home and sprinkle some crumbs of leavened bread. Then, followed by his children, he picks up the crumbs of leavened bread with a spoon and a feather, dumps it into a linen napkin, and wraps the napkin around the spoon and feather. It is then ready to be disposed of.

The second ceremony is known as the *Bitual Chameitz*, which means “the renunciation of the leaven.” At this point, when they are sure that all of the leaven has been cleansed out of the house, they recite a special blessing in case there is some undiscovered leaven still in the house. With this special blessing, any undiscovered leaven is nullified.

The third ceremony is the *Biur Chameitz*, which means “the burning of the leaven.” This is done on the morning before the first night of Passover. All the leaven discovered the night before is burned in a special bonfire, signifying that this Jewish home is now ready and worthy to eat the Passover.

4. The Unleavened Bread

By way of definition, matzah or unleavened bread is bread which is made from that which is capable of becoming leavened, but has not done so.

a. The Laws

There are five basic laws concerning unleavened bread. First, this is the only type of bread that is permitted during the Passover. Secondly, all adults are required to eat at least one piece on the first night. The third law is that all grains which are capable of fermentation are valid for making unleavened bread, but, in practice, only wheat flour is used. Only flour and water are used and not even salt is added, because *they were thrust out of Egypt* (Ex. 12:39). It is called the *bread of affliction* (Deut. 16:3), “the bread of poverty” or “the bread of simplicity” for the reason that only flour and water are used. The fourth law is that unleavened bread is not to be eaten on the day before the Passover, but can only be eaten once the Passover begins.

And the fifth law is that stolen matzah cannot be used to fulfill the commandment of the eating of unleavened bread.

b. Matzah Ashirah

There is a special type of matzah called *matzah ashirah*, which means “rich matzah.” It is unleavened bread that is made of flour mixed with wine, oil, milk, honey, or eggs. All of this is permissible if no water has been used; for as long as no water has been used, it is considered unleavened. While it is not suitable for the seder, the Passover meal when bread of only flour and water is allowed, it is permitted to be eaten on all the other days of the Passover week.

c. Matzah Shmurah

There is a special category of unleavened bread that is highly kosher for the Passover. It is known as *matzah shmurah*, which literally means “guarded unleavened bread.” Matzah shmurah was especially guarded by those in the know from the time of the reaping until the time that it came out of the oven. It was made from flour that had been supervised from the time the grain was harvested to make sure it never comes in contact with water because of the danger of fermentation. It is this type of bread that extremely Orthodox Jews prefer to use, because it has been so carefully guarded.

d. The Baking

There are also special rules for baking. The key rule is that care must be taken so that under no circumstance does the flour begin to ferment before baking. For this reason, special care is taken to make sure that everything is completed very quickly. In fact, from the process of the kneading to the baking, it should take no longer than eighteen minutes. If it takes more than eighteen minutes, it is disqualified to be eaten for Passover.

Because certain factors accelerate the process of fermentation, there were also special rules concerning ways that fermentation could be slowed down; for example, if the flour and water are manipulated constantly. Since hot water accelerates fermentation, only cold water is used. During the Second Temple Period, the water was drawn from the Pool of Siloam. There were two other ways of making sure that no fermentation took place; by striping the unleavened bread dough and then by piercing it. By perforating it, air is allowed to escape, and fermentation is impeded. That is why Passover matzah must be both striped and pierced as well as being unleavened. In fact, if any of these elements were missing, it was disqualified from Passover. This process of piercing and striping makes the bread more brittle and more palatable, so Passover matzah is always lined in that way.

5. The Seder

The *seder* is the meal that is eaten on the first night of the Passover. The purpose of the seder meal is “to pass on the account,” to relate

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the historical facts of the Passover and to affirm the hope of a future redemption.

There are a number of laws concerning the seder. It has a very carefully defined order of ceremony and is to be conducted on the first night. The meaning of the Hebrew word seder is “order.” It starts soon after nightfall with the chanting of the opening lines of a specially prepared book for the occasion known as the *Haggadah*, which means “the telling” of the Passover.

a. The Laws

There are five rabbinic laws concerning the seder. First, it must not start too early; it must start with the chanting soon after nightfall. Secondly, it must not be too late, because the children must stay awake on this occasion. If it starts too late in the night, the children might begin to fall asleep. Thirdly, the last piece of unleavened bread, the afikomen, must be eaten by midnight. Fourthly, it must be conducted by the leader or the master who wears a white robe known as a *kittle*. The kittle is a symbol of purity, joy, and happiness, as well as priesthood. If it is a family, the leader is the oldest male. If it is a community, the rabbi conducts the seder. A function of the priest under the Law of Moses was to be Israel’s teacher. This was a period in Jewish history when it was not possible for every family to own a copy of the Scriptures. The Tribe of Levi was therefore given the responsibility both to maintain the text and to teach the content of Scripture. By so doing, they became the spiritual teachers of Israel. On this occasion, the oldest male member of the family, the father or grandfather or in the case of the community, the rabbi, functions as the priest. It is his responsibility to relate the whole story of the Passover to everyone who is sitting around the table. And the fifth law is that the seder must never fall on a Monday, a Wednesday or a Friday. There are various reasons for this rule, based on the way they fall in conjunction with other Jewish festivals.

b. The Order

This meal is eaten in a very prescribed order, and there are fifteen divisions in the Passover seder.

(1) Kaddesh

The first division is known as the *kaddesh*, which means “sanctification.” A special sanctification prayer is recited for the feast day and a benediction is said over the first of four cups of wine that are drunk on this day. By Jewish law, this must not be delayed, because the children will fall asleep and they must be awake for the entire ceremony. Nor may it be too early, because three stars must be visible before the first part of the Passover can begin. With the kaddesh, the first glass of wine is drunk while everyone leans toward the left. No more wine will be allowed to be drunk between the first and the second cups.

(2) Urchatz

The second division is known as the *urchatz*, which literally means “and wash.” At this point, there is the washing of the hands. This was originally for the purpose of removing ritual impurity. Since there is no Temple today, it was debated among the rabbis whether this part of the ceremony was still necessary. They compromised by saying that it will be done, but without the recitation of the special blessing concerning the washing of the hands. The washing of the hands is a reminder of the procedure that was followed during the Temple Period and is also an expression of hope that Jews will soon be obligated to do so again.

(3) Carpas

Urchatz is in preparation for this third division known as the ceremony of *carpas*. This is when one eats food for the first time. The word *carpas* refers to any green vegetable, though it has become common to use parsley. This green vegetable or parsley is dipped into salt water and eaten near the beginning of the ceremony. As stated before, the green vegetable can be anything green such as: celery, lettuce, or radish tops, but parsley is what is preferred because it is a symbol of the hyssop which was dipped in the blood and applied to the lintel and doorposts of the house in Egypt. Green is the symbol of spring, and spring is the symbol of youth.

This is a reminder that when Israel was a young nation, in the “springtime of her nationhood,” God saved Israel by means of the salt waters of the Red Sea. As Moses led the children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt, Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his army against them. Then God worked a miracle, and the Red Sea was divided so that the Jews crossed on dry land to the other side. But when the Egyptians tried to follow, the walls of water caved in on them and they drowned. So, by means of the salt waters of the Red Sea, God saved Israel when it was a young nation, in the springtime of her nationhood.

Another key reason for this ceremony is to get the children to start asking the right questions so that the answers of how God rescued Israel can then be given.

(4) Yachatz

The fourth division of the seder is known as the *yachatz*, which literally means “divide.” Out of a cloth bag that has three compartments and contains three loaves of unleavened bread, the middle loaf is taken and broken into two parts. The larger piece is hidden away to become part of the afikomen ceremony later. This ceremony comes before the reading of the Passover book, the Haggadah, and with the words, “Lo, this is the bread of affliction,” the smaller piece is returned to its place in the center of the three-compartment bag.

(5) Maggid

The fifth division of the ceremony is known as the *maggid*, which

means “telling the story.” This entails the reading of the Haggadah. The Haggadah is a book that is especially prepared for the occasion, and one reads through it to relate the entire story of the Passover. It includes the first part of the *Hallel* (Ps. 113 and 114). It is also recited over the second cup of wine that is drunk at the end of this particular section, while leaning toward the left. The second cup of wine is known as the Cup of Plagues, because it symbolizes the ten plagues that fell upon the Egyptians.

This part of the ceremony is divided into twelve smaller units. The first unit is known as “the bread of affliction.” The second unit is known as the *Ma-Nishtanah* or “the four questions.” The third unit is the answer, “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt.” The fourth unit states, “The great sages did so” and tells what they did. The fifth unit is that all Jews have a duty to fulfill these things. The sixth unit shows how every type of child should be instructed at the seder. The seventh unit is an explanation of when this duty is applied. The eighth unit deals with the deeper roots of the exile and the Exodus as a way to spiritual redemption. The ninth unit is a Jewish story that presents the details of the Passover story from the *Midrash*. The tenth unit explains the meaning of the paschal lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs. The eleventh unit concerns the celebration of the Passover and that all Jews must see themselves as having gone out of the Land of Egypt. And the twelfth unit praises God for His kindness and ends with a blessing over the Haggadah.

(6) **Rachtzah**

The sixth division of the seder is known as the *Rachtzah*, which means “washing.” It is the washing of the hands before the meal. This one is recited with the benediction. It comes before the second dipping into the salt water. The first dipping into the salt water was the dipping of the parsley. Now, a roasted egg is dipped. The egg symbolizes the roasted Passover sacrifice that was offered on the first day of Passover. The Rachtzah is the washing of the hands in preparation for the Passover meal itself.

(7) **Motzi**

The seventh division is the *Motzi*, which means “bringing forth.” At this point, there is a special blessing for the bringing forth of bread from the earth, and the meal itself begins with this particular course. The regular grace before meals is now recited, “Blessed art you O Lord our God! King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.”

Whereas this is normally recited over regular bread, in this case, it is recited over unleavened bread or matzah.

(8) **Matzah**

The eighth division part of the seder is the *matzah*, which is the

unleavened bread. There is an additional benediction for the unleavened bread which says: “Blessed are you, O Lord our God! King of the universe who commanded us concerning the eating of matzah.”

It is followed by the eating of the smaller piece of the middle loaf that had been broken as well as the upper one. It is also eaten while leaning to the left.

(9) Maror

The ninth division of the seder is known as the *maror*, which means “bitter herbs.” At this point, bitter herbs are dipped into a mixture known as *charoset*, a combination of apples, nuts, honey, cinnamon, wine, and lemon juice. The bitter herb is usually a horseradish root which is dipped into this mixture and eaten. The purpose is to bring tears into the eyes, and horseradish will do this. This is done to remember the bitter tears shed by the Jewish forefathers in the Land of Egypt. This is eaten in an upright position and with a special blessing.

(10) Coreich

The tenth division is known as *coreich*, which means “combining.” It is the eating of a sandwich. Two small pieces of unleavened bread are broken from the bottom loaf of matzah in the three-compartment bag known as a *matzah tash*. Bitter herbs and charoset are placed between the pieces of matzah, and the small sandwich is eaten with the words, “In memory of the destruction of the Temple according to Hillel.” This is also eaten while leaning toward the left.

(11) Shulchan Oreich

The eleventh division of the seder service is known as the *shulchan oreich* which literally means “the ordered table,” a reference to the festival meal itself. There is no special menu that is recommended. Originally, lamb was served, but because the lamb was a sacrificial animal and there is no sacrifice today, most Jews do not eat lamb for Passover. Instead, a substitute meat such as roasted chicken or some other kind of kosher meat is used. In some cases, it is not even roasted to avoid any appearance of a sacrifice. Jewish believers, as will be explained later, do eat lamb, because they feel that they should stay with the original.

The meal is eaten in a jolly atmosphere with the singing of songs and comes between the second and third cups of wine. It begins with the dipping into salt water of the roasted egg that represents the sacrifice that was offered in the Temple on the first morning of Passover. There are several meanings given to this. The roundness of the egg symbolizes the cycle of life. It is also a symbol of mourning over the destruction of the Temple when the paschal sacrifice ceased; also, the fact that there is an egg in place of a lamb makes it a sign of

mourning. The egg is, by the way, a symbol of resurrection in Judaism, and perhaps that is the origin of connecting the Messiah's Resurrection with the Easter egg. The egg is also a symbol of the Jewish people, because the more the egg is cooked, the harder it becomes. Likewise, the more the Jews are persecuted, the tougher they become.

A person must not eat or drink to excess during the meal, so as not to be able to eat the afikomen. One must therefore enjoy himself but use discipline and exercise restraint as necessary. One must not become so intoxicated that he allows himself to fall asleep.

The two dippings, the parsley and the egg, are symbolic. In the ancient world, to dip twice was the symbol of the planting and growth of a plant. So we dip twice on this night to symbolize how God planted us, a very small seed, in the Land of Egypt. There we grew and multiplied and became a great nation of two million people, a mighty plant indeed!

(12) Tzafun

The twelfth division is known as the *tzafun*, which means "the hidden." At this point, the hidden piece of the middle loaf is taken from its hiding place. This is the afikomen or the dessert, and everyone eats a piece about the size of an olive. It is eaten while leaning toward the left.

(13) Bareich

The thirteenth division is known as the *bareich*, referring to the grace after meals which is pronounced over the third cup. The third cup of wine is a symbol of redemption and freedom and is therefore called the Cup of Redemption. It symbolizes the blood of the animal that saved the Jews from the last plague. The third cup is also drunk while leaning to the left.

It is forbidden to drink anything between the third and fourth cups in order to avoid intoxication at this point. This is followed by the special recitation that begins with the words, "Pour out Your wrath."

(14) Hallel

The fourteenth division is known as the *Hallel*. The remainder of the Hallel is sung (Ps. 115-118). Following that, Psalm 136, known as the Great Hallel, is sung. The singing of this Psalm is based on Isaiah 30:29 that prophesied: *Ye shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept; ...* The singing is done over the fourth cup of wine. The fourth cup is then drunk while leaning to the left. No wine is allowed after the fourth cup, and no other liquid is allowed except for water.

(15) Nirtzah

The fifteenth division is known as *nirtzah*, which literally means

“accepted.” A special recitation is pronounced, stating that God has found the actions performed acceptable. Appropriate hymns are recited and, with this, the long seder comes to an end.

c. The Three Matzahs

Another important thing about the Jewish observance of the Passover meal today is the three matzahs, the three unleavened loaves of bread. Originally, the three matzahs were placed on top of a special seder plate with six indentations, but that is no longer true. It is now placed in a special Passover bag, the matzah tash, which is one bag, either square or round, that contains three compartments. A loaf of unleavened bread is placed into each particular compartment. While there are three loaves of unleavened bread in one bag, each loaf is separated from the other by a single sheet of cloth.

As has been stated before, there are three requirements for this bread to qualify for the Passover. First, it must be unleavened in accordance with the Law of Moses. Secondly, it must be striped to make it more brittle. Thirdly, it must be pierced in order to impede the fermenting or leavening process. If any one of these three things is missing, the matzah would not qualify for Passover.

The three matzahs, with these three requirements, undergo a special ceremony known as the Afikomen Ceremony. In this ceremony, the middle matzah is taken out of the matzah tash and broken in two. The smaller piece is used for the special benediction over the matzah just before the meal starts. The larger piece is wrapped in a linen cloth and hidden away to be used later for the afikomen or the dessert. After the meal is over, and in conjunction with the third cup of wine, it is removed from its hiding place, unwrapped, broken into small pieces about the size of an olive, distributed to all, and eaten. In the end, there are four pieces of matzah: two whole loaves and two pieces of a loaf. All of this has special messianic significance to be discussed later.

The middle matzah that was broken, wrapped, hidden, and later unwrapped is the afikomen. The word itself is a Greek word that literally means “to the entertainment.” It marked the formal end of a Greek meal, the dessert. The Jewish origin of this ceremony is based upon a law of the rabbis that there was to be no dessert eaten after the paschal sacrifice. No one may add an afikomen or dessert after the Passover lamb, because the lamb was to be the last thing eaten; the lamb itself became the afikomen. But after A.D.70, there was no longer any paschal lamb, so the eating of the hidden matzah now became the last thing that was eaten; the matzah became the new afikomen. The meaning of the afikomen is that it is a symbolic reminder of the paschal lamb. And for this reason, it must be the last thing eaten. No food should follow, for the taste of the unleavened bread should remain in the mouth. The rules that apply to the eating of the lamb also apply to the eating of the afikomen; it, too, must be

eaten by midnight.

d. The Four Cups

On this night, everyone will drink four cups of wine, and each cup has its own name. The rabbis felt that the drinking of wine for the Passover was so important that a man was duty-bound to sell his clothes or to borrow money or to hire himself out to obtain money to buy enough wine for all four cups. Even if it is necessary to go door-to-door begging for it, he must do so. It is obligatory for everyone to drink the four cups of wine.

Also, the wine had to be fermented. It is not true, as it is sometimes taught in churches, that the wine the Jews used for Passover was grape juice. It was not grape juice, it was fermented wine. It had to be both fermented and red wine, for only red wine was to be used.

The first cup is known as the Cup of Blessing, with which the ceremony begins. The second cup is called the Cup of Plagues, symbolizing the ten plagues that fell upon the Egyptians. The third cup is the Cup of Redemption, symbolizing the blood of the animal that saved the Jews from the last plague. The fourth cup is the Cup of Praise, and it refers to the praise psalms (Ps. 115-118), which are sung at the conclusion.

e. The Custom of Reclining

At certain times during this night, everyone reclines; the reclining toward the left-hand position is obligatory at certain points in the festival. Seven such leanings are prescribed: at the drinking of the four cups of wine; when eating the first piece of matzah; when eating the coreich or the sandwich; and when eating the afikomen.

This is often based upon the Song of Solomon 1:12, but this is trying to find a verse to substantiate a practice. The exact origin for this reclining is not known, but the meaning is somewhat clear. Those who were slaves in the ancient world had to eat their food either standing straight up or sitting, but those who were free could recline at their banquet or dinner tables. Since the Passover is a festival of freedom from slavery in Egypt, all recline on this night. The symbolism is that every Jew is free, no matter how much he may be in bondage in reality. Again, the direction of leaning is always to the left to avoid discomfort, even if one is left-handed.

f. The Shank Bone of a Lamb

Another important item at the Passover table is the shank bone of a lamb. Since the lamb can no longer be sacrificed, the roasted lamb can no longer be served at the Passover meal. In remembrance of the Passover lamb, there is a shank bone on the table, and sometimes the bone itself is roasted or boiled. The shank bone is the forearm of the lamb, because it was *with an outstretched arm* that God brought the Jews out of the Land of Egypt (Deut. 26:8).

g. The Salt Water

The salt water is an important item at the Passover supper. As was noted, it is into the salt water that the two dippings occur: the green vegetable, usually parsley; and the roasted egg. While the dippings themselves have meanings mentioned earlier, the salt water represents the tears which the Israelites shed in the Land of Egypt.

h. Chazerat

Chazerat is the green top of some type of bitter herb like the horseradish root. Sometimes romaine lettuce is used or horseradish or both are used, and these are the preferred items, although both iceberg lettuce and endives are allowed. The amount that has to be eaten if the horseradish is used, is equal to the size of an olive, because that is how much it will take to bring tears into one's eyes. The purpose of the green top of a bitter herb is, again, a reminder: to remember the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. According to Jewish tradition, it commemorates the condition of the Israelites in Egypt, because the Egyptians made the lives of the Jews bitter. As it is written: *they embittered our lives with mortar and brick* (Ex. 1:14).

The meaning of this symbol is that these things initially taste sweet, but then turn bitter. The Jews were first paid workers for the Egyptians, sweet, but then became oppressed slaves, bitter.

i. Charoset

There is no English equivalent to translate the word *charoset*. It is a combination of chopped apples, nuts, either walnuts or almonds, honey, cinnamon, and wine. Some Jews even use chili peppers while others might include things like figs, dates, pomegranates, ginger, and raisins. Whatever the combination, it is all chopped up very fine, mixed together, and left standing for about twenty-four hours until it turns a deep brown color, which is the color of brick mortar. The meaning is that both the thickness and the color of this mixture represents clay, thus the symbol of the brick and the mortar. The spices such as cinnamon and ginger are to remind the Jews of the straw that they had to gather to make the brick for Pharaoh. The primary ingredient is always apples because Jewish legend states that, during that period in their history, the Jews gave birth to their children under apple trees. It is mixed with red wine to remember the spilled blood of the Jews. The fruit is a tribute to the Jewish people who were "fruitful" in the Land of Egypt.

All of this is eaten to remind the Jews that when their forefathers were slaves in the Land of Egypt, they had to make bricks and mortar to build the cities of Pharaoh.

j. The Seder Plate

On the table, there will always be a specially designed plate, known as the seder plate or the *kearah*. No one really knows what the origin of the seder plate is, because it is not mentioned in the Jewish Talmud. The earliest known mention of the seder plate is after the year A. D. 600. Seder plates come in various shapes and sizes, but they all have one thing in common: six indentions in the plate. Into each of these six indentions, a special type of food or bitter herb is placed: the roasted egg, charoset, the bitter herbs, the green top, the parsley, and the shank bone of a lamb.

k. The Cup of Elijah

Another important thing on the Passover table is a cup reserved for a very special guest. This cup is called the Cup of Elijah because it is reserved for Elijah. This practice actually started with a debate among the rabbis whether one should drink four or five cups of wine. Finally, they reached a compromise. Only four cups would actually be drunk, but there would be a fifth cup on the table that was not drunk “until Elijah comes” to settle the dispute among the rabbis. In the course of time, the fifth cup was named for Elijah and occupies a place of honor on the table. The cup is set by an empty chair which is also reserved for the Prophet Elijah. The Cup of Elijah is filled with wine between the third and fourth cups. It has become customary that, at the end of the seder service, the youngest son goes outside to see if Elijah is coming. After he comes back and states that Elijah is not coming, it is just about time to draw the seder to a close.

Based upon Malachi 4:5, Judaism teaches that before the Messiah can come, Elijah the Prophet must come first. They also believe that when Elijah does come, it will be on the first night of Passover. So, just in case this might be the Passover when Elijah comes, the chair and the cup are reserved for him. Every year, of course, he has failed to come, and that is why they conclude the service with the words: “Next year in Jerusalem.” Elijah the Prophet has not come this year; and if he has not come this year, it means that the Messiah will not come this year either. And if the Messiah will not come this year, that means the Jews do not get to go back to Jerusalem this year. They will have to wait one more year, and so it is, “Next year in Jerusalem.”

6. The Haggadah

The *Haggadah* is a word that means “the telling” or simply “narration.” This is a book that narrates the core, the substance, the essence of the Exodus story which, in turn, becomes the core, the substance, the essence of the seder ceremony. In a real sense, the seder is a “talk-fest.”

The basis for the development of the Haggadah is Exodus 13:8, which states: you shall tell. The Hebrew word for you shall tell is the same root as the word Haggadah; therefore, the Haggadah is “the telling” of the Passover. Four different times in the Law of Moses, the Jews are

commanded to repeat the story of the Passover (Ex. 12:26; 13:8, 14; Deut. 6:20).

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a. The Book

The book was not written all at one time. Portions came as early as the Maccabean Period, about 170-150 B.C. Much of the text of the Haggadah is already found in the Mishnah, which was codified about A.D. 200. It took centuries to develop before it reached its final form, and was compiled finally as a separate work in the seventh or eighth century A.D. Portions are taken from the Torah, which is the Law of Moses; the Mishnah, which is the older part of the *Talmud*; and the *Midrash*, which are rabbinical commentaries on the Mosaic Law.

The content is an anthology of six different things: sections of Scripture; sections of the *Mishnah*, the rabbinic code of law; the Midrash, the rabbinic sermons and interpretations; legends; prayers; and blessings.

The purpose of the Haggadah is to narrate the historical facts of the Exodus to be applied to personal experiences in that every Jew is to view himself as a participant in the Exodus. In every generation, a Jew is duty-bound to regard himself as if he had gone out of Egypt. It contains hope for those who are not yet free, for while this year we are not all free, the Haggadah states: "Next year, we all hope to be free men in the Land of Israel."

The Haggadah is based upon the number four and contains several sets of fours: four cups of wine; four questions that the youngest son asks; four sons; four expressions of redemption based upon Exodus 6:6-7; and four special foods, the shank bone, the matzah or unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, and the charoset.

The oldest male member of the family or the rabbi, if it is a community, reads through the Haggadah in order to relate the entire story again.

b. The Order

(1) Kiddush: The Sanctification

The first section is the *kiddush*, which is the sanctification; this is recited over the first cup of wine. There are two blessings or benedictions given at this point: one over the wine and one over the Passover. This is followed by the things discussed earlier: the first of the two washings; the dipping of the parsley into the salt water; and the breaking of the middle matzah.

(2) The Invitation

The second section of the Haggadah is the invitation, which is written

in Aramaic. The invitation is extended to all who are hungry to come and partake of the Passover. The invitation reads:

“Lo, this is the bread of affliction which our ancestors ate in the Land of Egypt. Let all those who are hungry come and eat, all who are in need let them come and celebrate the Passover. Now we celebrate it here, next year we hope to celebrate it as free men in the Land of Israel. Now we are slaves, then we shall all be free men.”

It is also customary to open the door at this point to let any strangers in. Following this invitation, the second cup of wine is filled.

(3) The Four Questions

The third section of the Haggadah is the four questions which must be asked. The one who asks is always the youngest son who is able to read. If no child is present, the wife is to ask them. If she cannot ask them, then a man is to ask the questions. The four questions are introduced with the words: “Why is this night different from all other nights?”

The first question concerns the unleavened bread: “On all other nights, we may eat leavened or unleavened bread, but on this night only unleavened. Why is that?”

The second question concerns the bitter herbs: “On all other nights, we can eat all manner of herbs, on this night only those which are bitter. Why is that?”

The third question concerns the dippings: “On all other nights, we do not dip even once, but on this night, twice. Why is that?”

Before A.D. 70, the fourth question concerned the lamb: “On all other nights, we can eat any kind of lamb in any way, and any kind of meat in any way; but on this night, it is the paschal lamb that is roasted. Why is that?”

After A.D. 70, the paschal lamb was no longer eaten, so the fourth question changed and now concerns the reclining: “On all other nights, we can eat either sitting or reclining; but on this night, all recline. Why is that?”

(4) The Answer

In the fourth section of the Haggadah, the answer begins with the words:

“We were all slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. If God had not delivered our ancestors and us with a strong hand, with an outstretched arm, we and our children and our children’s children would still be slaves in the Land of Egypt. This is why this night is different. Wherefore even if we were all wise men, all of us men of understanding, all of us advanced in years, all of us men of knowledge of the Law, it would still be our duty to recount the story of the Passover or the coming

forth from Egypt and all who recount at length the story of the coming from Egypt are verily to be praised.”

(5) **The Four Sons**

The fifth section of the Haggadah concerns the four sons. The legend of the four sons is based upon the four commands in the Law to recount the story of the Exodus. The first son is the wise son and is based on Deut. 6:20. The wise son asks, “What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah our God hath commanded you?” Then you shall tell him according to the laws of the Passover, until the point, we do not eat anything after the afikomen.

The second son is the wicked son and is based on Ex. 12:26. The wicked son asks, “What is this service to you?” meaning to you not to him. Since he takes himself out of the collective body, he denies everything and so the reader, therefore, should blunt his teeth by saying, “Because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth from Egypt,” meaning for me and not for him, for if he had been there, he would not have been thought worthy to be redeemed.

The third son is the simple son and is based on Ex. 13:4. The simple son asks, “What is this?” The answer is simply, “With a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt from the house of bondage.”

And the fourth son is the son who is too young to ask a question. He does not have the capacity to inquire and for this one you must discourse, for it is for his benefit. There is no question here, but the answer comes forward anyway. This answer is based on Ex. 13:8: *And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, It is because of that which Jehovah did for me when I came forth out of Egypt.*

(6) **Maggid: The Story of the Exodus**

The sixth section of the Haggadah is the maggid. This is the story of the Exodus. The narrative recounts the story of Moses and his experiences, but emphasizes the work of God. It does not emphasize so much the work of Moses, in fact, his name is mentioned only once. The story begins with Abraham, goes on to Jacob, and to the Egyptian slavery. It tells the story of the suffering in Egypt, and finally the liberation by God. It tells the story of the ten plagues and why ten drops must be spilled from that second cup of wine, the Cup of Plagues. With each drop that is spilled, the names of the ten plagues are called out in order to show sadness in the face of human suffering. This cup is not to be refilled because wine is the symbol of joy and Jewish law forbids Jews to rejoice over the misfortunes of others. Even if it is their worst enemy who is suffering this misfortune, Jews cannot rejoice over the suffering of others. After the ten drops are spilled, the rest is drunk. Various psalms are recited and songs are sung in this

section of the maggid.

(7) Afikomen

The seventh section of the Haggadah is the afikomen. Again, the afikomen is that little piece of matzah that is eaten at the very end of the meal. At this point, the afikomen is recovered from its hiding place and eaten. Each person must eat a piece. This is followed by a special grace after meals. At this point, the third cup, the Cup of Redemption is drunk. Then the door is opened for Elijah, and the Cup of Elijah is filled. After the Cup of Elijah is filled, the fourth cup is filled, and these words are spoken:

“Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that know You not, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon Your name. They have burned Jacob and laid waste his habitation. Pour out Your indignation upon them and let Your wrath take hold of them. Persecute and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of the Lord.”

(8) Hymns of Praise

The eighth section of the Haggadah is certain hymns of praise. There is the singing of the remainder of the Hallel (Ps. 115-118), followed by the singing of the Great Hallel (Ps. 136). Next comes a special song known as the Nishmat, which is the blessing of the soul. It begins with the words: “Let the soul of every living creature bless Your name.” It is a special song which originated as a result of a Jewish medieval legend, and amazingly, it is based on Simon Peter. According to the legend, this song was written by Simon Peter using his Hebrew name, Simeon Caipha. According to this legend, Peter was filled with alarm at the destruction that Christianity had caused to Judaism. He pretended to convert to the new religion, and used his influence to cause a break from Judaism altogether. He was known as Peter, because he absolved his followers from allegiance to the Torah or Law. The word “Peter” sounds like the Hebrew word *patar*, which means, “to absolve.” He later established the headquarters of this new religion in Rome, and shut himself up in a tower where he compiled this song for the adherents to Judaism to which he actually remained faithful in his heart. This is strictly a Jewish legend, trying to make Peter appear to be a phony believer.

(9) Nirtzah

The ninth section of the Haggadah is known as the *nirtzah*, and it is the ending of the seder service. Special blessings are prescribed for the nirtzah, and the final phrase is:

“Ended is the Seder as the Lord commanded, the order of the Passover is now accomplished as prescribed, according to all its formalities and customs as we had the privilege to arrange it. O may we also merit the actual observance thereof. O pure Dweller on High, raise up Your people of whom it was said, Who can number them? O hasten to lead the shoots of Your plant and bring the redeemed to

Zion.”

The last phrase is: “Next year in Jerusalem.” With these words, the seder comes to an end.

7. Other Practices

In some Jewish observances, there are additional songs which are sung. A common one is known as “Who Knows One?” This song is a series of thirteen questions with thirteen answers. Another song is “One Only Kid.”

For the Passover synagogue service, specific Scriptures are read: Exodus 12:21-51, which gives the details of the last plague and the first Passover; Numbers 28:16-25, which describes the special paschal offerings for this occasion; Joshua 5:2-6:1 and 27, which speak of the Passover at Gilgal after the Jews crossed into the Promised Land; and the Song of Solomon, because this book is closely associated with spring, as is the Passover.

As for synagogue liturgy on this occasion, the Hallel (Ps. 113-118) is sung, and they sing the Song of the Sea of Exodus 15.

It is also customary to pray for dew on this occasion, because the Passover marks the end of the rainy season in Israel and the beginning of the dew season.

II. THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

This feast is the most frequently mentioned feast throughout the entire history of the Old Testament. It is mentioned a total of fifty different times in fifteen passages.

The first passage is Exodus 12:1-14, 21-28, and 39-51. This chapter gives all of the details of the origins of the Feast of Passover, how it was observed, and how the Jews were saved on this occasion. It also includes the story of the Exodus as the chapter closes.

The second passage, Exodus 13:3-4, gives the command that this feast is to be remembered with the eating of unleavened bread in the month of Aviv. It is a spring month that corresponds to about March 15 until April 15 on the Gentile calendar. Today, this month is known as Nisan on the Jewish calendar.

The third passage, Exodus 13:14-15, teaches that the Passover is the basis for the law of the firstborn. While the firstborn of animals were to be sacrificed, the firstborn son was to be redeemed.

The fourth passage, Exodus 23:14-15, points out that this is one of the

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three pilgrimage festivals. On three out of seven festivals, every Jewish male had to come to Jerusalem for the observation of these particular festivals. The fifth passage, Exodus 34:25, deals with the laws of the paschal sacrifice. It teaches that they are not to offer the blood of the sacrifice with the unleavened bread, and no part of the sacrifice itself can be left until the morning. It must either be eaten or burned.

The sixth passage, Leviticus 23:5, lists Passover as one of the seven holy seasons of Israel.

The seventh passage, Numbers 9:1-14, emphasizes the particular laws in relationship to the sacrifices of the Passover.

The eighth passage, Numbers 28:16, emphasizes the date; it is to be observed on the fourteenth day of the first month.

The ninth passage, Deuteronomy 16:1-7, spells out the various details of the paschal lamb; which lamb qualified for the Passover and which lamb did not.

The tenth passage, Joshua 5:9-11, relates how Passover was kept by the Jews after they crossed the Jordan River. This is the first Passover within the borders of the Promised Land. At that point, the manna and the quail ceased, and from then on, they ate from the produce of the Land.

The eleventh passage, II Kings 23:21-23, records how Passover was kept by good King Josiah.

The twelfth passage, II Chronicles 30:1-22, records how it was kept on a national level by good King Hezekiah.

The thirteenth passage, II Chronicles 35:1-19, also records how it was kept by King Josiah. This passage points out that no such Passover was kept since the days of Samuel the Prophet.

The fourteenth passage, Ezra 6:19-21, reveals how it was kept in the days of Ezra and was eaten by those who returned from the Babylonian captivity.

The fifteenth passage, Ezekiel 45:21-24, prophecies that Passover is going to be one of the feasts that will be obligatory in the Messianic Kingdom.

III. THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament, the Feast of Passover is mentioned twenty-

seven times. These references can be divided into two categories: simple references to the feast and the Messiah's observance.

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A. Simple References

The first category is simple references to the feast without any details given. There are five such references.

The first reference is Luke 2:41-50, which relates how the parents of Yeshua (Jesus) observed the Passover and brought Him with them to Jerusalem when He was twelve years old.

The second reference is John 2:13-25 where His public ministry began. It is on this occasion that Jesus cleansed the Temple for the first of two times. This was the first Passover of His public ministry, and He used the occasion of Passover to proclaim His Messiahship.

The third reference is John 5:1, which simply mentions it as a feast of the Jews. Although it does not state which feast it was, most likely it was the Feast of Passover. This would make it the second Passover during His public ministry.

The fourth reference is John 6:4, which mentions that the passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. It was on this occasion that Yeshua fed the five thousand. This was the third Passover mentioned in His public ministry.

The fifth reference, John 11:55-57, mentions the Passover in conjunction with the resurrection of Lazarus. This is the fourth Passover in the public ministry of Jesus.

By these four Passovers, it is possible to determine the length of the public ministry of Yeshua. Since He began about six months before the first Passover is mentioned, His ministry lasted approximately three and one-half years.

B. The Messiah's Observance of the Passover

The second category concerns the Messiah's observance of the Passover, found in all four Gospels: Matthew 26:1-5, 17-30; Mark 14:1-2, 12-26; Luke 22:1-2, 7-20; and John 13:1-30.

Based upon what has been covered in the introductory category dealing with both the biblical and Jewish practices, it can be determined that Yeshua was following the Jewish observance of the Passover. While not all of the various elements are mentioned in the Gospels, eight of them are mentioned.

1. The Preparation

The first element is the preparation for the Passover. This was a special Passover because, on this Passover, Yeshua fulfilled the Feast of

Passover. The special preparations are mentioned in Matthew 26:1-5, 17-19; Mark 14:1-2, 12-16; and Luke 22:1-2, 7-13.

This was the Passover when the Messiah was destined to die. It is no accident, therefore, that the conspiracy against Him included not having to kill Him during the Feast of Passover. While Satan wanted Yeshua to die, he did not want Him to die at the Passover. So, included in the conspiracy by the leaders, was not to kill Him during the Feast of Passover. But He made sure that they would act on the very night that they did not want to act. He had already made special preparations for this Passover as these passages clearly reveal.

2. Kiddush: The Sanctification

The second element mentioned in the Gospels that relates to the Jewish observance is the *kiddush*, which is the sanctification of the Passover. This is mentioned in Luke 22:14-18. This is when the blessing over the Passover is recited and is followed by the drinking of the first cup. Luke mentions both the blessing over the Passover and the first cup. As He began the seder, Jesus pointed out in His sanctification that He had desired to eat this passover with them before He suffered, emphasizing that this was indeed a special Passover.

Luke records this benediction in verses 14-16: *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: 16 for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*

Then came the first cup in verses 17-18: *And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.*

3. Urchatz: The Washing of the Hands

The third thing that is mentioned in the Gospels which correlates with Jewish practice is the *urchatz*, the washing of the hands. It is found in John 13:1-11. The normal procedure is that the hands are washed by a servant. On this occasion, Jesus broke with Jewish custom in that He took the servant's role by doing the washing and also by washing the feet instead of the hands. The lesson is applied in verses 12-20 in that the disciple must also act out the role of a servant as He did.

4. Carpas: The Dipping of the Parsley

Fourth is the ceremony of *carpas*, the dipping of the parsley. This is mentioned in Matthew 26:20-25 and Mark 14:17-21. With this ceremony, Jesus announced that one of the Twelve was going to betray Him. When they all wanted to know who it was, Jesus named no one, but gave a clue. Matthew 26:23 states: *And he answered and said, He that dipped his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.*

It is at that point, that Yeshua apparently took His green vegetable and dipped it into the salt water. At that same point, Judas dipped it with Yeshua in the same dish of salt water. This act of Judas identified him as the betrayer for the first of two times.

5. Coreich: The Making of the Sandwich

Fifth, is the ceremony of the *coreich*, the making of the sandwich of the horseradish and the apple-nut mixture (Jn. 13:21-30). Jesus used this ceremony to identify the betrayer for the second time. For the second time, He announced that someone would betray Him, and, for the second time, they wanted to know who it was. For the second time, He did not name anyone, but gave a clue in verse 26: *He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him.*

To dip the sop was to take a small piece of the unleavened bread and dip it into the horseradish and the apple-nut mixture. The one who dips is the one who officiates, and he does this for everyone including himself. In this case, Yeshua officiated. He was to do this a total of thirteen times: once for Himself, and once for each of the Twelve. The answer to their question was that the first one to receive the dipped sop was the betrayer. When He dipped the first sop, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. At that point, Judas left the seder. Just as the horseradish is bitter, so was the betrayal by Judas.

As already mentioned, on the Feast of Passover everyone reclines at certain times toward a left-hand position. John also mentioned that they were reclining, and John was leaning against Yeshua's breast.

6. Yachatz: The Breaking of the Middle Matzah

The sixth relationship to the Jewish practice is the *Yachatz*: the breaking of the middle matzah, which is recorded in Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; and Luke 22:19. At this point, the middle loaf was broken and this was the afikomen, the key event to be remembered. While the Twelve were doing what they normally did year in and year out, from then on, they should do this in remembrance of Him, the One who is the theme of the Passover. The word "remembrance" is the key element throughout the Passover.

7. The Third Cup

The seventh element is the third cup which is mentioned in Matthew 26:27-29; Mark 14:22-25; and Luke 22:20. Luke is specific, for he wrote that it was the cup after supper. This was the third cup, the Cup of Redemption. It was a symbol of the redemption that came as a result of the shedding of the blood of the lamb in Egypt. That which was a symbol of physical redemption, was now to become a symbol of the spiritual redemption through the Messiah. Again, the key theme is remembrance.

8. The Singing of Hymns

Eighth, is the Hallel mentioned in Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26. At this point, they sang the hymns of Psalms 115-118. The last Psalm is 118, which is a Messianic Psalm that says, in verses 22-23: *The stone which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner. This is Jehovah's doing; It is marvellous in our eyes.*

IV. THE MESSIANIC IMPLICATIONS

A. The Messianic Lamb of God: Isaiah 53:1-9

The point of this very famous messianic passage is that the Messiah would be the final paschal sacrifice, the final sacrifice for sin. The promise was that some day the sacrificial system in general would end, but even more so, the Passover sacrifice would end. The reason is because the Messiah will become that final paschal sacrifice.

B. The Messiah: The Lamb of God

The second point is that which Isaiah 53:1-9 predicted was fulfilled by Jesus in the New Testament: the Messiah is the Lamb of God. He is portrayed as the Passover Lamb in four New Testament passages.

The first passage is John 1:29, where John the Baptist introduced Him as *the Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world!* By calling Him the Lamb of God, he identified Yeshua as both the Passover lamb of Exodus 12 and the lamb of God of Isaiah 53.

The second passage is in John 1:35-36, where John the Baptist again identified Him as the *Lamb of God*.

The third passage is I Peter 1:18-19, where Peter portrays Jesus in terms of “a lamb.”

The fourth passage is Revelation 5:6, which speaks of a “Lamb as though it had been slain.”

C. The Messiah: Our Passover

The Messiah is represented as “our passover” in I Corinthians 5:6-7 and two main things are emphasized: *Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ.*

1. Jesus: The Passover Lamb

First, Jesus was the Passover Lamb, and indeed He was the Passover Lamb in every respect. Part of the biblical practice mentioned earlier was the fact that the lamb which was to be used for Passover was to be set aside on the tenth day of the month. It was then to be tested until the fourteenth day to be sure that it was “without spot and without blemish” before it was killed. Jesus, as the Passover Lamb of God, was

also set aside on the tenth day of the month, because it was on this day that the Triumphal Entry occurred.

Many interpret the Triumphal Entry as being the Messiah's final offer to be Israel's Messiah. But that is not the significance of the Triumphal Entry. Its true significance was that on this occasion Jesus set Himself aside as the Passover Lamb. It occurred on the tenth day of the month, the same day that the literal lamb was set aside. From the tenth day until the fourteenth day of the month, Jesus was tested by the Pharisees, by the Sadducees, by the Scribes, and by the Herodians. By answering all of their objections and questions, He showed that He was truly "without spot and without blemish." Jesus ate the seder meal on the first night of the Passover, the same night that all the Jewish people ate it: the fourteenth of Nisan.

Yeshua died on the first day of Passover. He was crucified at nine o'clock in the morning. And it was at nine o'clock in the morning that the special Passover sacrifice was offered in the Temple Compound. Just as the Jews were very careful to make sure that not a single bone of the Passover lamb was broken, John 19:36 points out that not a single bone of Yeshua was broken either, not during the course of the beatings or the Crucifixion itself or by the Roman soldiers who broke the legs of the other men at the end of it all.

2. The Believer's Responsibility

The second thing is the believer's responsibility in light of all this. Just as the lamb's blood was shed for the Israelites in Egypt, so the Lamb's blood was shed for the world. But to be effective, the shed blood must be applied. Just as the blood of the animal was applied to the doorposts in Egypt, even so when one believes upon Jesus, he has the Messiah's blood, the blood of the Lamb of God, sprinkled upon the "doorposts of his heart." In both cases, the application of the blood meant deliverance from divine judgment. Therefore, just like the Jews had to purge their homes of leaven, the believer is to purge his life of leaven, the symbol of sin. In this context, the application is specifically to the assembly of the local church.

The means of purging leaven in the local church is by means of church discipline. The individual believer can purge his life of leaven by means of confession, according to I John 1:9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

D. The Last Passover and the First Lord's Supper

The main passage concerning the Lord's Supper is Luke 22:14-20. The two main elements of the Jewish Passover were the unleavened bread and the wine.

1. The Unleavened Bread

The unleavened bread is mentioned in verse 19: *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

The body of the Messiah is related to unleavened bread. When Jesus said, "This is my body," He did not say it of wafers or other types of bread. He specifically said it of the Jewish Passover bread.

In reference to the Jewish practice discussed earlier, there were three requirements for the bread to qualify for the Passover. The first requirement is that the bread had to be unleavened, since leaven was the symbol of sin in the Scriptures. Yeshua had an "unleavened" body in that He was sinless (II Cor. 5:21). If He had committed only one sin, that would have disqualified Him from being the Passover sacrifice. But Yeshua was the only Jew who ever lived and kept the Mosaic Law perfectly, and by His perfect keeping of the Law, He did have an "unleavened" body.

Secondly, the bread had to be striped; the body of Jesus was striped by means of the Roman scourge (Jn. 19:1). Isaiah 53:5 prophesied: *with his stripes we are healed.*

The third requirement is that it also had to be pierced. The body of Yeshua was pierced at His Crucifixion on two occasions: first, by the nails (Jn. 19:17-18) and secondly, by the spear thrown by the Roman soldier (Jn. 19:34, 37). Zechariah 12:10 prophesied the day is coming when all Jews will look to Him when the prophet said: they shall look unto me whom they have pierced.

Also, the Jews use a special bag called the matzah tash, one bag with three compartments which represents the Trinity. The three loaves of unleavened bread represent the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the afikomen ceremony, the middle matzah is removed, broken in two, wrapped in linen cloth, hidden away, and later found again in conjunction with the third cup. It is then broken into smaller pieces and given to each person around the table. The removal of the middle matzah from the bag represents the Incarnation, when God became man in the person of Yeshua. The breaking of the middle loaf is a picture of the death of the Messiah. The wrapping in the linen cloth pictures the body of Yeshua, which when it was removed from the cross, was wrapped in linen cloth (Lk. 23:52-53). The hiding is a picture of His burial. The removal and the unwrapping in conjunction with the third cup of wine represents the Resurrection on the third day. The eating of it is a picture of John 6:22-59, where Yeshua taught that one must eat His body and drink His blood to have eternal life, which means to believe on Him (Jn. 6:35, 47).

2. The Wine

The second main element of the Passover is the wine. The first cup is mentioned in Luke 22:17-18, which is the Cup of Blessing and also called the Cup of Thanksgiving. The third cup, mentioned in Luke 22:20, is the Cup of Redemption. This cup, which symbolizes the physical redemption from Egypt, is a symbol of the spiritual redemption through the Messiah. ☆

NOTES

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