

THE FEAST OF PESACH

Please copy it right Prepared by Pastor Bob Hill

God commanded His people Israel to faithfully honor certain feasts, or celebrations. These were very meaningful, and always pointed them to Himself. They have prophetic and Messianic significance as well. The study and practice of these feasts is profitable for all followers of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Below is a brief overview of Passover.

Passover

Date in Hebrew Calendar: 14th of Nisan (March-April) Scriptural references: Exodus 12:1-14; Leviticus 23:5; Deut 16:1; Luke 22:1; Heb 11:28.

The first of seven biblical-mandated feasts is Passover. Passover celebrates God's deliverance of His people, Israel, from the tenth plague in Egypt-the killing of the firstborn. Each family of Israel applied the blood of the lamb to the doorposts of their home, and the angel of death "passed over" their homes, sparing them from the plague. This last plague was so terrible; Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go from Egypt.

The Passover has been celebrated for thousand of years on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish calendar (Nisan). Yeshua (Jesus) was celebrating the Passover with his disciples on the night of the Last Supper. Today the Passover is celebrated in Jewish and Christian homes with a family ceremony-called the "Seder"-on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan, presided over by the head of the household.

The story of the original Passover is recounted and certain symbolic foods are eaten to remind the family members of the suffering of their people in Egypt, and of their miraculous deliverance from bondage. The Passover was a type, or picture, of the final deliverance God had promised for the people of Israel, and indeed for the whole world, when He would offer His Son as the ultimate sacrifice-Messiah the Passover Lamb, who would take away the sin of the world. Yeshua (Jesus) fulfilled every detail of the ancient Passover story right down to the time of day He died on the cross of calvary. Each person need only apply the Blood of this Lamb to the doorposts of his/her heart, and he/she will be delivered from bondage to sin and from spiritual death.

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Date in Hebrew Calendar: 15th-21st of Nisan (March-April) Scriptural references: Exodus 12:15-20, 39; Leviticus 23:6-8; Deut 16:3; Luke 22:7; Acts 20:6; 1Cor 5:7-8.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread commemorates the fact that when the Israelites were finally freed from bondage in Egypt, they had to flee so quickly that there was no time to let their bread rise. They had to take unleavened bread. This feast is celebrated in New

Testament times as well as today. No doubt it was the unleavened bread of this feast that Yeshua (Jesus) broke with His disciples at the last supper, telling them it was His body, and that they should continue to break it together in remembrance of Him.

Today Jewish and Christian families all over the world eat only unleavened bread during Passover and the seven days of this feast. In Jewish homes during the days before Passover, their homes are scoured to remove any trace of leaven so as not to cause defilement. This is believed to be the origin of the term “spring cleaning.”

In many Christian homes Unleavened Bread is observed by removing any leaven in the home. This process includes scouring the home for anything that has crept into the home during the course of the year, then removing permanently any “leaven” (sinful items or practices) that exalts or defies the “Word of God (books, music, DVD’S etc.).

The unleavened bread, or “Matzah,” used during this feast, is pierced and stripped-a perfect symbol of Yeshua (Jesus) on the tree. Leaven is often used as a symbol for sin in the scriptures, so its removal from the home was a symbol of purification from sin, exactly what Yeshua (Jesus) came to accomplish in the lives of His followers.

Feast of Firstfruits

Date in Hebrew Calendar: 16th of Nisan (March-April) Scriptural references: Leviticus 23:9-14; 1Cor 15:20-23.

The original Feast of Firstfruits was a celebration of the spring barley harvest. The harvest would begin in the month of Nisan, and the Lord required the Israelites to bring the first sheaf of the harvest-the “first fruits” – to His temple as a wave offering.

Yeshua (Jesus) was resurrected from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits-as the “Firstfruits” from the dead-another sign of His Messiahship, and of His fulfillment of all the Law and the Prophets. It is very important to note here that Yeshua (Jesus) was not resurrected from the dead on “resurrection sunday” as taught in most Christian churches. Easter “Ishtar” is calculated using the pagan solar calendar. Passover always begins on the fourteenth day of Nisan and is calculated using the lunar biblical calendar. They are not the same celebration and rarely fall on the same dates, during the celebration of Easter “Ishtar,” you cannot fit Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits into the pagan Easter celebration it simply does not work, so manmade religious and pagan traditions have been instituted instead. This year Easter “Ishtar” was celebrated by most churches a month earlier than April nineteenth (Nisan 14) including preaching a resurrection message that does not meet biblical criteria for the resurrection.

In modern observance this day is called the “Counting of the Sheaves” (“Omer” in Hebrew). The count begins on the day the sheaf was to have been waved in the temple-The Feast of Firstfruits-and ends 50 days later on Shavout (Pentecost).

Just as the term “Firstfruits” implies that there will be more, so Yeshua’s resurrection from the dead on the Feast of Firstfruits is indicative of the promised resurrection from

the dead of many more—all those who confess with their mouths that He is Lord, and believe in their hearts that God has raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10).

The Feasts Tell The Kingdom Story

From Passover (Salvation) to Tabernacles (His return) are seven biblical feasts that tell the entire kingdom story for the born again believer.

The Gospel of the Kingdom or God’s design to grant humanity eternal life has existed since “the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34). The apostle Paul beautifully summed up its essence in his letter to the Ephesians: *“He has made known to us his secret purpose, in accordance with the plan (seven feasts) which he determined beforehand in Christ, to be put into effect when the time was ripe: namely, that the universe, everything in heaven and earth, might be brought into unity in Christ. In Christ indeed we have been given our share in this heritage, as was decreed in His design (Passover to Tabernacles) whose purpose is everywhere at work” (Ephesians 1:9-11 REV).*

Days of Passover In The Month Of Nisan			
Days	Torah	New Covenant	
The 10 th Day Of Nisan	The Lamb is taken and set aside	Jesus enters Jerusalem	Teaches on The Temple Mount for 4 days.
The 10-14 th Of Nisan	The Lamb is hidden for 4 days and inspected for blemishes	Jesus spends 4 days on the Temple Mount and is questioned by the Pharisee's	The Lamb Of God passes all doctrine tests. The Pharisee's find no blemishes
The 15 th Day Of Nisan Passover	HIGH SABBATH The night Jesus celebrated Passover with the disciples Lk. 23:54	Jesus crucified Mk. 15:42, Jn. 19:42	Jesus spends 3 days and 3 nights in the depths keys-death, hell & grave Mt. 12:40
The 16-22 nd Days Of Nisan	Feast of Unleavened Bread	Leaven is removed from all homes and not eaten. Lk. 23:54, Mt. 27:62, Jn. 19:21	Symbolic of sin removed from our life
The 16 th Day Of Nisan	Secular Day	Spices and tomb preparations r _{Lk.} 23:55-56,	They wait for the Sabbath to end before going to the tomb
The 19 th Day Saturday	Normal Weekly Sabbath	No work or burial processes can be accomplished	They arrive at the tomb sometime after Sunset on Saturday Lk. 23:56, Mt. 28:1
The 20 th Day	The Morrow after the Sabbath Sheaf of Firstfruits Wave Offering	Jesus Resurrection Mt. 28:1, Mk. 16:1-6, Jn. 20:1, Lk. 24:1	Jesus ascends into heaven and presents Himself as the Firstfruits Wave Offering for all mankind

The Seder Service

The Passover ceremony is known as the Seder, which means “order.” The meal and service follow a prescribed sequence. This sequence is called the Haggadah.

Haggadah

Haggadah means “to tell.” The Haggadah was originally brief, succeeding generations have added their interpretations and traditions to it. There are now thousands of different versions of the Haggadah. At Renewed Hope Ministries we have prepared our Haggadah to “tell the story” in a dinner setting and remain within two hours.

This Seder service symbolizes God's spiritual redemption of His people. It includes the symbols of God's physical redemption of the Hebrews from Egypt and the redemptive grace in the Passover through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah.

Ceremonial Items On The Table

There are various items used in telling the story of Passover. On the table are the **(Matzah)** Unleavened Bread, **(Maror)** Bitter Herbs (Horseradish), and the symbolic **(Pesakh)** Shank Bone (Lamb). Also on the table is **(Karpas)** Parsley and Salt Water, a Sweet Apple mixture called **(Kharoset)** and **(Urkhatz)** Water for washing our hands.

Throughout the evening each person will taste, hear and understand why these items hold symbolic and prophetic meaning for our deliverance from bondage and sin. The Haggadah will tell the entire story from bondage to redemption from sin by Yeshua (Jesus).

Most All Christian Passovers Will Partake Of Four Cups

Each cup represents one of four promises God made in Exodus 6: 6-7.

1. Cup of Sanctification
2. Cup of Judgment
3. Cup of Redemption
4. Cup of the Kingdom

Exodus 6:6-7 "Therefore, say to the children of Israel: 'I am the LORD;(1) I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, (2) I will rescue you from their bondage, and (3) I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments, (4) I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.'" (NKJ)

Pastoral Comments

Passover is a celebration throughout the world-wide Jewish and Christian communities. Jewish and Christian families gather together every spring to observe the "*First of the Lord's Feasts.*" Through the "Passover Seder" (order).

"You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings" (Lev 23:14, NKJ)

This meal includes various elements which remind us of God's great deliverance for His people thirty-five hundred years ago when He sent Moses to Pharaoh with these instructions: "Let My people go!" Pharaoh's resistance to God brought ten plagues upon the Egyptians before their king finally let Israel go (Exodus 9:14). Then, once again, Pharaoh defiantly pursued Israel to the Red Sea, where the Angel of God provided a barrier between Israel and Egypt. God miraculously divided the sea with an east wind so that Israel could escape on dry land (the path through the water). But when Egypt's

army followed Israel into the sea, they were swallowed up and drowned by the waters which closed back upon them.

The hand of God so impressed Israel that they responded by fearing the Lord, believing in Him, and worshipping Him in song and dance (Ex 15:1-21). Scripture teaches that the "fear" of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps 111:10), and that God counts "believing" in Him as righteousness. Abraham believed in the Lord and it was credited to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6). After Israel had finished praising the Lord, Moses led the people into the wilderness where they were tested by God. Israel ultimately failed these tests by ceasing to fear God and ceasing to believe Him and His servant Moses. As a result of their unbelief, Israel suffered the loss of an entire generation of people who died in the wilderness.

We continue to celebrate Passover today, but God desires us to go beyond ritual. Paul explains that all the events of Passover were pre-figurative in nature for the purpose of our instruction (1 Cor 10:1-11). The conclusion Paul reaches in verse 12 is particularly piercing: *"Therefore let he that stands take heed lest he fall."* Again in 1 Cor 5:7, he says: *"Remove the old leaven so that you can be a new batch of dough because in reality you are unleavened in Christ. For our Passover Lamb, the Messiah (Jesus Christ), has been sacrificed."*

Spiritual reality is the only place worth going beyond ritual. Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) is the only reality that will continue to breathe life into our souls if we abide in Him. Yeshua is the "Passover lamb" and this is what we are celebrating in full context. We saw Him in the cloud and pillar of fire leading Israel, the people of God. *"Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."* (1 Cor 10:1-4, NKJ).

Then, moving back through their ranks to keep them separated from Egypt we saw Him as the "Ruach" (Hebrew for spirit or wind) dividing the waters of the Red Sea. Then Paul tells us that He was the rock that gave Israel water in the desert. Yeshua said of Himself in John 6 that *"He is the true manna out of heaven and all who come to him shall neither hunger nor thirst."* We must go beyond ritual to true life in the Messiah who is our Passover Lamb. How do we do this? By fearing the Lord our God and believing in Him who He has sent. *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."* (John 14:6, NKJ).

We must move beyond ritual to find true life and spiritual power. Seder (order) ritual will not impart life and hope, but Yeshua (Jesus) does. Seder ritual will not provide the way of escape during times of testing, but our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) will. Seder ritual will not strengthen our heart when we are about to faint, but the Spirit of God bring the Haggadah (telling of the story) will when we focus our eyes on the "True Lamb of God, Yeshua, our Messiah." As we Haggadah and recall God's great deliverance of Israel out of Egypt bondage this Passover season, we must also grasp the reality of God's great

deliverance for mankind from sin and death through the “Shed Blood of our Savior as the New Covenant Passover Lamb”. In the Messiah, we have more than deliverance from sin; we are also brought into the very presence of God Almighty thus allowing those who believe in the “Passover Lamb of God” the privilege to pass over from death unto eternal life.

Though God may use “The Feasts” to minister His life to us, He does not dwell there He fulfilled Passover. If you are substituting Seder ritual (order) for entering fully into the presence of God - take heed lest you fall. Fear the Lord and Him alone. Put your trust completely in Yeshua (Jesus). The Father is looking for true worshippers, those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. May you know God far beyond Seder (order) ritual and Haggadah (telling) this Pesach, by truly experiencing His presence during Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits. Let each of us receive His shed blood for our sins and Passover forsaking our sinful ways by removing the leaven from our lives while living in the resurrection power of the Firstfruits offering made on Calvary’s hill.

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

1 Cor 15:20 KJV”

The Blessing Numbers 6:24-26 (NKJ)

“The Lord, Bless you and keep you;
The Lord, make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord, lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.”

It is tradition to conclude the Passover Seder by saying in unison the following. So keeping with this tradition and prophetically looking forward to celebrating Passover, Unleavened bread and Firstfruits with you and the Messiah in Jerusalem I conclude this eJournal with **NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!**

Blessings, Pastor Bob Hill