

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LORD'S
SUPPER AND ITS OBSERVANCE IN THE EARLY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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An Academic Research

Dr. Henry Alvarez, MD.

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EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

By

DR. HENRY ALVAREZ, MD.

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FOREWORD

Dr. Henry Alvarez is a wonderful man of God and has written an incredible book on our Jewish roots and the dynamics of the Passover. I love the details that Dr. Henry has assembled in this book to give us an incredible picture of Gods provision for his children. Through this book you will see the wonderful fingerprints of God from the Old Testament to the new. If you are hungry for deeper truth this book is for you. Dr. Henry has done the heavy lifting all you have to do is reap the rewards of his excellent research.

Dr. Bill Moore

Founder and Pastor of Livingway Family Church
Brownsville, Texas

ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the Hebraic meaning of the Lord's Supper in the Old Testament and its observance among the early Christian community. Chapter 1 lays down a general foundation for developing this thesis. Chapter 2 focuses on portraying the Passover from its early development until Israelites were established in Canaan. Historical documents were searched, biblical and postbiblical, that give account of it. The Passover rites per se were divinely ordained as a permanent reminder of God's deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage. However, there is a critical viewpoint to two distinct festivals in the Hebrew Bible: a pastoral feast and an agricultural feast. Chapter 3 depicts the observance of the Passover in Jesus' time and its direct connection with the Last Supper. Jesus used the occasion of the Last Supper meal to establish the fulfillment of the Passover; henceforth, the Lord's Supper would replace the Passover feast as a commemoration of an even greater deliverance. Chapter 4 explains the way the Lord's Supper was celebrated earlier by Jesus' followers. The early Christian community was faithful in observing this ritual, with right understanding and enjoyment of its benefits. Also, this chapter focuses on the development of Easter and the similarities between the Passover Seder and the Lord's Supper today.

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“May the Lord bless you
and protect you.
May the Lord smile on you
and be gracious to you.
May the Lord show you his favor
and give you his peace”.

Numbers 6:24-26

Israel's Escape from Egypt



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Synoptic Gospels clearly emphasize that the Last Supper for Jesus and the twelve disciples was the fulfillment of the Passover established in Exodus 12. Therefore, in order for Christians to understand their own faith more fully, they should seek personally to understand the Passover in a Jewish perspective. A serious study of the Passover will further enlighten Christians on the background of redemption. For instance, the study of the Jewish background of the Last Supper will provide a useful reminder to the Church of some of the more unfamiliar aspects of its biblical heritage as Hallel's Psalms.¹ Yet these psalms doubtless constitute

¹"Hallel's Psalms are from Psalm 113 to 118. The Hebrew *hallel* is derived from the verb 'to praise,' which occurs as a command ('praise thus') in various Psalms. At the Passover Seder Hallel Psalms are recited in two parts, Psalm 113-114 before the Seder and 115-118 afterward. Praise is associated with Passover (2 Chr. 30:21; Wis. 18:9). It is thought that Jesus and His disciples sang from this Hallel after the Last Supper (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26)." David Noel Freedman, ed., "Hallel," *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 542.

the very core of hymns sung by Jesus and His disciples in the upper room. In addition, in a study of the Passover, contemporary Christians are led to reconsider the importance of joyful celebration in connection with the Hebraic background of the Last Supper. However, the writing of this thesis does not in any way demean the death or atonement of Jesus or downplay the significance of self-examination in the process of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:28-29).

In order to understand Jesus' Last Supper and the Passover, it is necessary first to understand the Passover in Judaism: how it began, what it meant, how it developed, and what it is today. For the Israelites, the Passover carries the idea of deliverance from Egypt, and for the earlier Christian, the Passover kept the same idea of deliverance, but it is obtained through faith in Jesus. Both events reinforce each other in meaning and force. In Christianity, the words, images, symbols, and actions that believers usually used in worship and teaching are empty of meaning if they fail to reflect how Jesus' actions and words were built upon in the history and faith of the Hebraic heritage. Indeed, Christians hear about the Passover when the story of Israel's redemption from Egypt is read from the Bible or when God is praised for saving Israel. Easter² services refer to the Passover often because the Jewish

²“The Christian festival that celebrates Jesus' resurrection. This Christian festival developed from the Jewish Passover (Heb. *Pesech*, Gk. *Pascha*), because according to the Gospel, the events of Jesus' last day took place at the time of Passover. Easter was originally observed on the day that followed the end of the Passover fast (14 Nisan), regardless of the day of the week on which it fell. In the mid-second century, however, some Gentile Christians began to celebrate it on the Sunday after 14 Nisan, with the presiding Friday observed as the day of Christ's crucifixion, regardless of the date on which it fell.” Paul J. Achtemeier, ed., “Easter,” *The Harper-*

Passover and the Christian celebration of Jesus' death and resurrection grow from the same faith, the same ritual, and the same theological tradition. Many of the symbols are common, and the perception of God's caring activity follows a pattern. Unfortunately, only some Christians know the meaning of the word "Passover" or something of its biblical history. Few appreciate the Passover's symbolic power and rich development. However, generations of believers have expressed and deepened their faith by living the Passover rituals and rejecting the Passover story.³

Both Judaism and Christianity depend on the Passover as a central symbol of God's care for Jews and Christians. This thesis reviews the history and development of the Passover and attempts to present and explain the historical background of the Lord's Supper and its practice in the early Christian community and shows the deep relationship that presently binds Judaism and Christianity to one another just as Jesus, who reigns as Lord of all remains a Jew bound to His people and century. For instance, the description of the Last Supper given in the Gospels is a record of the Seder of the first night of the Passover. Jesus ate the unleavened bread and drank the wine as was done by the Jews on the first night of the Passover and has been the tradition ever since.

Collins Bible Dictionary (New York: Harper Collins Publisher, 1996), 255.

³Anthony J. Saldarini, *Jesus and Passover* (Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1984), 1-3.

Also, the early Christians celebrated the resurrection of Jesus and called it the *Pesah*. It was observed at the same time that the Jews observed the Passover. “Epiphanius said, ‘So long at least as the first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem (those of Jewish descent) continued, the *Pesah* was celebrated everywhere by all (Christians) or by a great majority of them, according to the lunar computation and method of the Jews.’”⁴ Later, at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, the Christians were prohibited from celebrating the *Pesah* at the time the Jews were celebrating the Passover. However, the *Pesah* is usually celebrated at approximately the same time the Jews observe the Passover, because in contemporary times, the date of the *Pesah* (Easter) has depended on the vernal equinox and has not become a fixed date in the Church. Further, not only was the *Pesah* (Easter) celebrated at the same time as the Passover among the Jews, but also its origin is very much interwoven with the Passover. Even the institution of the Eucharist⁵ is really based on the Jewish custom of giving thanks to God for redemption on the first night of the Passover over unleavened bread and a cup of wine.

⁴Philip Goodman, *The Passover Anthology* (New York: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 13-14.

⁵“Eucharist (Gk. Thanksgiving), the name commonly used by Christians of the post-apostolic and later periods for the rite of the Lord’s Supper.” George A. Buttrick, ed. “Eucharistic,” *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*,” vol. 2 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1985), 179. Also, “The Greek *Eucharistic* (thanksgiving) is a term destined to supplant ‘Lord’s Supper’ or ‘breaking of bread’ as the common designation of the Christian meals as early as AD 150. Ignatius of Antioch, translates the Hebrew *berakah*, the term which denotes the blessing form of all Jewish prayers, including the prayers offered at meals.” Peter E. Fink ed., “Eucharistic,” *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 399.

Seemingly, the Passover began as a festival among shepherds long before the Hebrew people existed, and it endures as a religious celebration within the family and in the synagogue today. This thesis follows the early development of this central feast in Judaism. Long before the exodus, the Passover sacrifice sought the gods' protection for the herds as they traveled from winter to summer pastures. Human awareness of the need for the help of the divine underlies the celebration of the Passover in every century. When the Israelites adopted the Passover as a central festival, they looked to their primeval experience of salvation from slavery in Egypt. When the Temple was built in the tenth century BC, Israel celebrated the Passover in that magnificent setting with solemn ritual and song as a national feast. Jesus participated in the Temple worship in the excitement of the thousands who crowded Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in AD 70, Jews moved the Passover celebration from the holy city to every Jewish home. In place of the lamb, which could no longer be slaughtered at the Temple, unleavened bread and bitter herbs became the ritual center of the meal. Finally, during the first and second centuries, the early Christian believers adopted much of the Passover tradition and transformed it into an explanation and celebration of what Jesus had done by dying and resurrecting for this world.⁶

⁶Saldarini, 4-5.

Dr. Henry Alvarez, MD.

CHAPTER 2

ORIGIN OF THE PASSOVER

Some Theories about the Passover's Origin

There are several theories about the Passover's origin. For instance, the Passover sacrifice was originally a nomadic-pastoral thanksgiving festival unrelated to any particular season. Its main feature was the sacrifice of firstlings. The Feast of the Unleavened Bread, on the other hand, was one of the three Canaanite festivals that marked prominent stages in the agricultural year. Unleavened Bread and Weeks marked the beginning and the end of the corn harvest, while Tabernacles was a feast of vintage and bringing of the corn from the threshing floor. With the Deuteronomic centralization, both the Passover sacrifice and Unleavened Bread lost their primary connection with nature. They were combined, and in the process, the Unleavened Bread was historicized as part of the exodus commemoration.⁷

Further, the Passover probably consisted of three separate springtime festivals. One was a nocturnal firstling sacrifice held at full moon, which was part of the Israelites nomadic heritage. The sacrificial animal had divine properties.

⁷Tamara Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover Until 70 CE* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 21.

It was consumed completely with unleavened bread, since leaven was regarded as ritually impure. At some stage, in commemoration of the tenth plague, a smearing of blood was introduced into the original pattern. This changed the place of its observance; instead of local shrines, it was then held in individual houses. Finally, in time of Josiah, this firstling sacrifice achieved a status of national ceremony: its observance was limited to the central shrine in Jerusalem.⁸ Finally, the Passover sacrifice was observed by nomadic Israelites. It presumably happened on the night of the full moon nearest the spring equinox. Its earliest form consisted of eating raw flesh of the animal together with the bones and blood. The custom was later modified, and the animal was cooked while its blood was smeared on the doorpost.⁹

Additionally, a parallel exists between the Passover ritual and the sacrifices of the ancient Arabs where, similar to the Passover, there was neither altar nor priest. On the other hand, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread was a Canaanite agricultural festival marking the beginning of the harvest in spring. In contrast to the Passover, which was a family festival, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread had a pilgrimage character. Both celebrations were observed in spring.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the Passover seems to be a remnant festival of the seminomadic past of the Israelites. It was a family ritual. The sacrificial animal represented the deity, and those who ate of its flesh absorbed some of its divine qualities. The Passover (which involved the sacrificial animal) became an important festival when it was artificially amalgamated with

⁸Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 21-22.

⁹Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 22.

¹⁰Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 22-23.

the Canaanite agricultural ceremony, the Festival of the Unleavened Bread.¹¹ Furthermore, the emphasis on firstborn and firstlings in the Exodus narrative seem to indicate that the Passover sacrifice was originally a ritual of sanctification of the firstborn performed by the Israelite nomads. Also, the Feast of the Unleavened Bread could only have been a Canaanite festival related to the barley harvest, the purpose of which was sanctification of the first produce of the soil. The two festivals were celebrated in spring, and both performed essentially the same function: sanctification.¹²

However, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was rooted in the agricultural civilization and associated with the beginning of the barley harvest and was eaten in order to release the new harvest for profane use. On the other hand, the Passover sacrifice originated among the nomadic Israelites in order to promote the fertility of animals.¹³

In addition, the Passover was performed originally in spring season in order to protect animals and people against demons and the attack of hostile tribes. According to historical tradition, it was a movement connected with the exodus from Egypt. Also, the Unleavened Bread was a Canaanite thanksgiving festival celebrated after the equinox, which lasted seven days. Israelites adopted it but modified it. Thus, the celebration was directed toward Yahweh instead of Baal, who was the original deity. The referral to Yahweh excluded the nature

¹¹Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 23.

¹²Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 23-24.

¹³Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 24.

myth and removed laments about the dying god of vegetation.¹⁴

In all likelihood, the Passover sacrifice and the Unleavened Bread were originally separate occasions. In contrast to the Unleavened Bread, the Passover sacrifice did not have the character of a festival, and the worshippers were not obliged to undertake the pilgrimage to one of the local sanctuaries to pay homage to the deity. Prior to the Deuteronomic reform, the slaughter of the sacrificial animal was a ritual performed entirely within the context of the clan. Originally, the use of hyssop attested to its protective purpose against destructive agents. The lamb's blood on the door was regarded as a substitute for the blood of the house's occupants. In addition, the pre-Deuteronomistic Festival of the Unleavened Bread was one of the three annual festivals (Unleavened Bread, Harvest, and Ingathering) that required the male Israelites to make a pilgrimage to the local temple. Its main feature was the removal of anything leaven and eating unleavened bread for a period of seven days.¹⁵

Conversely, the Passover was never a combination of two feasts that originated from different cultural backgrounds. Apparently, the Passover sacrifice was the Israelites' festival par excellence. The name *Pesah* is connected with the terms "limp" or "dance," as in a cultic dance. The sacrificial animal was a substitution sacrifice, and the sacrificers mourned while they danced. In addition, this theory explains that the Passover was the southern variant of the Canaanite vernal New Year festival, and because occupations in that part of Palestine were mostly pastoral, its accent was on animals. In the north, the accent of the New Year was on the produce of the land, hence

¹⁴Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 24-25.

¹⁵Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 25.

the unleavened bread. The fusion of the northern and the southern festivals happened not because they were both celebrated in spring but because of their fundamentally same character: fertility and reestablishing the cosmos.¹⁶

Early Development of the Passover

The Passover apparently was a lunar festival (connected to the worship of the moon), which began with a nocturnal celebration. In addition, it was seen as a solar festival (connected to the worship of the sun), which was related to the entrance of the sun into the zodiacal sign of the ram¹⁷ in the spring. The ancient Egyptians and Babylonians also observed a solar festival of this kind. Moreover, the word *Pesah* is understood as “a ritual circular dance,” and it is connected with the spring festival of the Arabians. However, still, it was a connection of the Passover and a festival of the bringing of the offering of the firstborn of the herds. Nevertheless, there is a belief that the Passover may have originally been a festival in which the houses were protected against pestilence. This position is based upon the view of the rite of sprinkling the blood on the threshold. As a result, this action provided a closer communion with a protecting deity. It is quite possible that during the pre-Canaanite period, a type of festival embracing elements of other festivals merged with the Israelites’

¹⁶Prosic, *The Development and Symbolism of Passover*, 25-26.

¹⁷“The zodiac laid the paths of the sun and the moon, and the planets. The zodiac also is divided into 12 signs which are mostly symbolically represented by animals (Gr. *Zodion*, ‘a little animal’). According to the *Yalkut Shimoni* (Lev. 418), the standards of the 12 tribes correspond to the signs of the zodiac. The ram (which is named *Taleb* or Aries) stands for Judah and corresponds to the month of Nisan.” Fred Skolnik, ed., “Zodiac,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 21 (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2007), 646-647.

festival of the sacrifice of the firstborn. After the Hebrews entered Palestine, this Passover was viewed as predominantly agricultural in character as was the civilization in the land. The Passover became a festival of the bringing of the firstborn of all the flocks, which automatically was combined with the first fruits festival of the grain.¹⁸

In addition, with the combination of the Festival of the Passover and Festival of Unleavened Bread, the historical consciousness of Israel began to take form. The two festivals established an occasion to remember the redemption of Israel from Egypt in celebration. In this celebration, the freedom-loving Hebrews acknowledged one of the greatest benevolent acts of their God. Because of its profound and extraordinary significance of both festivals, historically, the redemptive act from Egypt became the first month of the Hebrew yearly calendar (Exod 12:2). Indeed, after the second destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (70 AD), this became the sole idea; wherefore, this festival is always called “the time of our deliverance” in the prayer book.¹⁹

A critical concept has been established that two festivals, originally distinct, have merged, with each underlying idea reappearing in the legend associated with the religious holy day and in the rituals. The name *Pesah* is derived from the root meaning that designates the skipping and dancing motion of a young lamb and secondarily has the connotation of passing over, in the sense of sparing. In addition, the *Pesah*, as it was a festival celebrated by the shepherds, was connected to pastoral life in the early part of spring before the shepherds set out for the new pastures. This family feast was in nature a

¹⁸Isaac Landman, ed., “Passover,” *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 8 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1969), 408-409.

¹⁹Landman, 409.

sacrifice, where the gods of the clan were supposed to partake, as well as the human members. There is a strong presumption that the skipping motions of the lamb was imitated by the participants who danced around the sacrificial offering. With the pre-Canaanites, the lamb served the purpose of propitiating the gods and securing the prosperity of the flock before departing for the pasture. The firstborn of the flock (and of the family) were offered so that the lives of those born later might be safe. Hence, the ceremony was naturally associated with the intention of saving of lives. Thus, the emergence of the concept of being spared, from which the secondary meaning of the root פסח came from the tradition that the Hebrews' firstborns had been spared in Egypt. Wherein God, "passing over" their houses spared the Hebrew people, the sprinkling of the blood points in the same direction. In Exodus 12, seemingly, the primitive manner of preparing the lamb for the family feast is still apparent.²⁰

Furthermore, this pastoral *Pesah* was religiously distinct from that of other feasts such as the *Mazzoth* festival, which was able to merge with it because each occurred in the spring, about the time of the vernal equinox. The *Mazzoth* feast was distinctly agricultural and was performed with the natural offering from the newly gathered barley to the gods that had allowed the crop to ripen for the staple food of the harvesters. Historically, offerings and food are nearly always identical in the concepts and practices of primitive races. However, the *Mazzoth* can be historically supported in the account found in Exodus 12, which the practices of the *Mazzoth* emblematic type of deliverance from Egypt can be paralleled. Thus, according to Siger, the supposition that the *Mazzoth* had been used at the Passover meal came before the

²⁰Isidore Singer, ed., "Passover," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1901), 548-549.

exodus.²¹ Furthermore, the agricultural character of the Passover (or *Mazzoth*) Festival is evidenced by the fact that it is one of the three pilgrim or seasonal festivals.²² Also, the relation of circumcision to the *Pesah* is explained when the original pastoral and proprietary character of the latter is remembered. The pastoral clan would naturally exclude from the meal all who were not of the clan from at which it trusted its protecting god and disarmed his jealousy. Circumcision itself was a rite of propitiation, like the lamb at the *Pesah*, possibly a substitute for human sacrifice. The *Pesah* was at one time the Festival of the Circumcision; all who had become the proper age during the year were circumcised on the same day, the *Pesah*. Three to four days were required to heal the

²¹Singer, 554.

²²“The agricultural nature of the three pilgrimage festivals (Exod 23:14-17; 34:18-24; Deut 16:1-17) in which the people make a pilgrimage to feast before God is evident. These festivals are linked to working the land and the farming seasons: the Feast of Unleavened Bread (when the barley ripens); the Feast of Harvest (the festival of cropping wheat and the first fruit of the field, also called the Feast of Weeks [Exod 34:22] or the Feast of Pentecost [Acts 2:1; 20:16; Lev 23:15]); and the Feast of Ingathering (when the produce of the earth is gathered), also called the Feast of the Tabernacles or Booths (Lev 23:34). However, three major feasts were celebrated in the same month of *Abid* (*Nisan*): Passover, first month *Abid* (*Nisan*) day 14; Unleavened Bread, first month *Abid* (*Nisan*), days 15-21; and Firstfruits, first month *Abid* (*Nisan*), day 16. In addition, the so-called Feast to the Lord that the Israelites wished to hold after a three-day journey in the wilderness (Exod 3:18; 5:1; 8:23-24; 10:9) has been seen (its nature) as a ceremony of wondering and shepherding, which evolved into a new integrated Feast to the Lord. The assumption that such a Feast to the Lord existed and had to be celebrated accords with the background of the account of the arrival of Jacob and his sons in Egypt. This feast’s essence was the pilgrimage of Hebrew families of shepherds to sacrifice to their God in the wilderness, and it thus constituted an early festival of the people of Israel. After the settlement, the Festival of Unleavened Bread (*Mazzoth*) was attached to this early feast in the spring.” Ze’ev Weisman, “Reflection of the Transition to Agriculture in Israelite Religion and Cult,” *Studies in Historical Geography and Biblical Historiography* (2000): 253-256. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (12 July 2007).

wound of circumcision (Josh 5:8; Gen 34:25), and the designation of *Mazzoth* as the bread of affliction (Deut 16:3) may possibly allude to this custom.²³

Moreover, the Yahwistic Passover was seen as an amalgam made of two distinct festivals, one typical of the Israelites with nomadic-pastoral features and the other typical of the Canaanites and their sedentary way of life with agricultural customs. The period of using the unleavened bread was usually taken to represent the agricultural feast, while the ritual performed on its preliminary day with the characteristic animal sacrifice was explained as a heritage from the nomadic-pastoral past of the Israelites. Thus, the majority of scholars who advance the hypothesis that the Passover was a combination of two originally independent festivals assumes that the fusion was possible and mainly because the two coincided in time. It should be mentioned that in addition to the Passover sacrifice and unleavened bread, another prominent ritual of the original festival was in later times understood as an independent feast, known as the Feast of Sheaves (Lev 23:10; Deut 16:9).²⁴ Nevertheless, the Passover sacrifice was originally a family feast in which the observance was restricted to the family homes and, consequently, for which the families were the sole providers of the ritual animal. In general, the conclusions about the family character of the Passover sacrifice are based partly on the legislative text found in Exodus 12:1-20, which omits all references to the Temple.

²³Singer, 556.

²⁴"Feast derives from the nomadic days of Israel. Passover was originally kept on the departure for new pastures at the beginning of the dry season. Up to the present day, the Samaritans have preserved nomadic techniques in the preparation of the Paschal Lamb." Friedrich Gerhard, ed., "*πάσχα*," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), 898.

However, regarding the omission of the Temple as the place of the Passover observance, the Temple became substituted by the family homes, probably due to Deuteronomy 16:7.

Nevertheless, during the period of exile in Babylonia, the lack of a typically Israelite holy place could easily be the reason of why the Passover observance was celebrated in homes. However, given the fact that the Babylonians had their own great Temple festivals, which took place about the time of the spring equinox when the Passover was celebrated, the restriction of the Passover performance to the family house could easily have developed as a particular kind of ritual of resistance.²⁵ On the other hand, the Passover sacrificial system seemed to embrace a pastoral ritual in its origins. Further, research argues theories which postulate that the legislation about the consecration of firstlings and firstborn in Exodus 13:11-13 and 34:18-26 is seen as an evidence for the claim about its pastoral origin, assuming that the former prefer vegetable offerings while cattle breeders, in line with their occupation, favour animal offering.”²⁶

²⁵Tamara Prosic, “Origin of Passover,” *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 13, no. 1 (1999): 78-94. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (11 July 2007).

²⁶“The Sheaf is the offering of an *agricultural* community and not of a nomadic community; the Paschal victim, a slain animal, though it could be, and was, offered after the Hebrews became agriculturalists, is an equally natural offering for a nomadic community. . . .” G. B. Gray, “Sacrifice in the Old Testament. Its Theory and Practice” *Origins* (1971): 343, quoted in Prosic, “Origin of Passover,” 87. “According to ancient nomadic custom the Israelites . . . would offer chiefly animal sacrifice and specially that of beasts from their flocks. In Egypt the sacrifice of whole animals including sheep and goats was not completely unknown, although it was not very usual; by preference a vegetable offering was made along with poultry and pieces of meat. M. Noth, “Exodus. A Commentary,” trans. J. S. Bowden (1962): 78; quoted in Prosic, “Origin of Passover,” 87.

In addition to the early development of the Passover, it is important to mention that the primitive Passover was identified as a ritual directed toward a special deity; it had to be held on a fixed date and at a certain shrine. It was preceded by ceremonies of purification lasting seven days and including a feast, and all who participated, including the animal victims, were ritually clean. The climax was an assembly attended by all male adults, and this assembly was regarded as mustering for military as well as for religious purposes. The people were divided into tribes and the tribes subdivided into families. The people were led by a chief, whose rank was publicly proclaimed or confirmed by festal processions and solemn blasts upon the trumpet. It is believed that at this time, destinies were fixed for the coming year; men wore anonymous garb, and they exchanged gifts. There was a recital of the myths of creation and the legends of the beginning of the tribes; perhaps there was also ritual dancing, and finally, there was the exodus into the desert. These rites are common in varying degree and form to the whole region of the Near East, but there is a fundamental difference of approach between the Passover and the New Year festival of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Hittites. The full moon of the spring equinox was worshiped at Athens with the sacrifice by the king Kronios, perhaps to be identified as the spirit of the New Year on the fifteenth day. Also, in the spring month, Xanthicus, the Macedonians performed a solemn illustration of the army. The soldiers passed between the body parts and several carcasses of dogs, and the ceremony was followed by a simulated battle.²⁷

The Passover in the Biblical Period

²⁷J. B. Segal, *The Passover from the Earliest Times to AD 70* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1963), 156-7, 124-5.

The Passover²⁸ (*Pesah*) is the name of the sacrifice that is slaughtered on the fourteenth day of Nisan and eaten toward evening, at the end of the day or soon after sunset, marking the beginning of the fifteenth day of Nisan. Scripture presents the Passover as the key element and a rite commemorating the exodus from Egypt and the bounty of divine redemption. The term “Unleavened Bread” is the name of an originally distinct seven-day festival that began at sunset on the fifteenth day of Nisan. Scripture combines the Passover sacrifice with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in postbiblical times, the two festivals were fully integrated as a single holiday. Also, the Hebrew Bible uses three terms in connection with the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread: *Pesah*, *hag*, and *Mazzoth*. The term *Pesah* denotes the Passover offering and, more generally, the feast centering on that sacrifice, which was eaten at night (the Passover meal) and which comprised a holiday in its own right. The Passover is the festival of the Passover offering. This term appears beside another technical term for a “festival,” *hag*, only in Exodus 34:25. The word *Mazzoth*, appearing with or without the word *hag*, denotes either “unleavened bread” or “the Feast of Unleavened Bread.” The Hebrew Bible employs the terms *Pesah* and *Mazzoth* to refer to two celebrations.

²⁸“The whole history of the patriarchs is directed towards Passover on the night of the exodus. Until that crucial night, Yahweh interacts only with individuals, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and their individual destinies. The Passover night in Egypt subsumes that history of individuals and is its climax in which the role of the Lord’s chosen person, the executor of his will and the occupant of history is transferred from individuals to the whole people, from an individual plane to a collective plan, from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph to the people of Israel. The Passover night and the killing of the Egyptian firstborn are a particular theophany of Yahweh before every Israelite. Passover laws in the context of the exodus are, in fact, the first laws that Yahweh gives to Israel as a collective being.” Prosic, “Origin of Passover,” 87.

Scripture assumes they are combined, marking the exodus from Egypt. In postbiblical times when the two festivals were fully intertwined, the terms were used interchangeably.²⁹

Other scholars argue that the Passover is a spring festival beginning on the fifteenth day of Nisan, lasting seven days in Israel and eight in the diaspora. It commemorates the exodus from Egypt. The first and seventh days (the first two and last two in the diaspora) are *Yom Tou* (a festival on which work is prohibited), and the other days are *hol ha-mo'ed* (intermediate days on which work is permitted). Also, *Pesaḥ* is the Paschal Lamb, offered as a sacrifice on the eve of the feast (fourteenth of Nisan). In Temple times, it was eaten in the family group after having been roasted completely (Exod 12:1-28; Deut 16:1-8). A person who was unable because of ritual impurity or great distance from the sanctuary to keep the first Passover could keep it a month later—*Pesaḥ sheni* (the second Passover, also called the minor Passover, Num 9:1-14). As far as can be ascertained, the Passover festival was kept throughout the period of the second Temple.³⁰

In addition to the biblical period, the Passover was likewise celebrated at the first of the month; it was connected to the harvests and the harvest of life in ancient Palestine. The Festival of Passover symbolized the beginning of the barley harvest each year in Palestine. Also, the Festival of the Passover offerings (*Hag HaPesaḥ*) and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (*Hag Hammatzot*) in Deuteronomy 16:3 through

²⁹Baruch M. Bokser, "Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Passover," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1922), 755-756.

³⁰Fred Skolnik, ed., "Passover," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 15 (Jerusalem: Thomson Gale, 2007), 678.

Exodus 12:39 presumably had a twofold origin. The unleavened bread was made from new grain that could not be eaten before the festival and was therefore made quickly without the use of leaven. The festival pointed to an agricultural civilization that was already in existence prior to the period after the entrance of the Hebrews into Palestine. The Festival of the Passover offering on the other hand was subsequently merged with the former, indicating a nomadic period at the time of its origin. The original character of this latter Passover festival is obscure.

Moreover, the biblical narrative seems to distinguish between the Passover, which is set for the fourteenth day of the month and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Luke 22:1). However, other scholarly schools yet point to the fifteenth day. The festival occurred in the month of Abib (Exod 12:4; Deut 16:1), where the new moon was given as the memorial day of the exodus, later named Nisan, and lasted seven days, from the sunset of the fourteenth day to the sunset on the twenty-first day. The first and the seventh days were set aside for holy convocation, no work being permitted on those days, except such as was necessary in preparing food (Num 28:16-25). On the second day, the omer of new barley was brought to the Temple (Lev 13:10-16). Slaughtering and eating of the Paschal Lamb was introductory to the celebration of the festival. According to Exodus 12, Moses in Egypt instituted this rite in anticipation of the judgment about to be visited on Pharaoh and his people. Among the details of this rite in Egypt were that no bone was to be broken, the meal was to be eaten in one house, no alien could participate, and circumcision was a prerequisite in the case of servants bought for money and of strangers desiring to participate (Exod 12:43-48). Also, purity was another prerequisite (Num 9:6). For those in an unclean state, a second Passover was instituted on the fourteenth day of the second month (Num 9:9). In Deuteronomy 16:2, 5, the

slaughtering and eating of the lamb appears to be restricted to the central sanctuary.³¹

With respect to the type of the sacrifice, all civilizations of the ancient Near East had many animal sacrifices. Their preference for an animal as a ritual offering over some sacrifice of vegetable origin did not have anything to do with the way food was provided, that is by cattle breeding or farming. Its source, in fact, lies in the blood for which it was very difficult to find an equivalent in the world of plants. Leviticus 17:11 says, "For the life of every creature is the blood of it." The choice of animal as the most appropriate offering for religious purposes was governed by this obvious connection between blood and life. The introducing of wine established the time line for substitution for blood; however, the Semites never lost their preference for blood and animal sacrifices, regardless of whether they were mainly shepherds or farmers because blood was a symbol of life.³²

The Passover from Moses to Canaan

The Bible associates the holiday of the Paschal Lamb and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (*Mazzoth*) with the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. The various biblical descriptions have led to hypotheses of the existence of two separate holidays that may have existed even before the exodus from Egypt. To trace their independent origins and to suggest how they were later combined in the Bible, chapters 12 and 13 of Exodus describe the Israelites in remembrance of their experience. Exodus 12:1-20 presents God's command to Moses and

³¹Singer, 548-549.

³²Prosic, "Origin of Passover," 88.

Aaron on the eve of the exodus. In Exodus 12:21-27, Moses conveys God's instructions to the people, enjoining them to establish the rite as a permanent institution. Exodus 12:43-50 deals with those people who in the future will be eligible to partake of the paschal sacrifice. Exodus 13:1-16 presents additional methods on how one is to remember the exodus experience. Exodus 13:18-21 deals with the holiday of Unleavened Bread, the law, and the firstborn. According to Baruch M. Bokser, God does not mention the Passover offering.³³

To summarize, Exodus 12 and 13 give commands concerning the eating of unleavened bread and regulations for the consecration of the firstborn, animals, and humans. All three practices, the Passover sacrifice, the unleavened bread, and the consecration of the firstborn are connected by the Hebrew Scriptures to the escape of Israel from Egypt. The separate regulations for each practice and the independent internal coherence of each mode of worship show that these feasts and practices were not originally connected to the exodus from Egypt but that they have been adapted to fit new circumstances in Israel.³⁴

In short, Leviticus 23:4-8 is a list of holidays and mentions the Passover offering on the fourteenth of the month and then the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. Numbers 28:16-25 lists sacrifices for holidays and mentions the Passover offering and the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, but Numbers 9:1-15 has a distinguished element, namely the implication that the people cannot or may not celebrate the holiday without the paschal offering. The text presents God's command to the Israelites in the second year

³³Baruch M. Bokser, *The Origins of Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 14-15.

³⁴Saldarini, 10.

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following the exodus. In addition, it designates what people were to do when they were unable to participate because of ritual impurity or physical distance. In such cases, the text instructs those individuals to bring their offering one month later.³⁵

Furthermore, Deuteronomy 16:1-8 locates the Passover rite in the sanctuary that God will choose. It, therefore, changed the character of the celebration, which was no longer to be a domestic rite, but instead part of a national gathering through which families might celebrate together in that central location. The text mentions that one could leave to go home only in the morning and that one should eat unleavened bread both with the sacrifice and on the following days. Also, verse 6 specifies that the sacrificial animal should be slaughtered at sundown. Joshua 5:10-11 describes the first Passover on the western side of the Jordan River. After the Israelites circumcised themselves,³⁶ they were eligible to partake of the Passover offering. The text specifies that the sacrifice was carried out toward evening and mentions the eating of unleavened bread and the cessation of manna.³⁷

The Passover During the Monarchy

When King Solomon ruled, he offered the Passover according to the commandment of Moses:

³⁵Saldarini, 16.

³⁶"The rite of circumcision, which appears to have been neglected during the wilderness period, was re-established, and the Passover was celebrated." Charles F. Pfeiffer, *Ancient Israel from Patriarchal to Roman Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1965), 19.

³⁷Saldarini, 17.

In the accounts about the construction of the temple, Passover is mentioned along with other cultic ceremonies as a conclusion to the works on the temple (1 Kgs. 9:25; 2 Chron. 8:12-13). Hezekiah's Passover came after sanctification of the temple and the long period of kings who worshipped other gods (2 Chron. 30). Josiah's Passover follows the religious purge which eradicated pagan idols, sacred places, and priests (2 Kgs. 21-23; 2 Chron. 35:1-19). Finally, there is the Passover celebration held after the people returned from the exile and the temple was rebuilt (Ezra 6:19-22). In all these situations, the Passover celebration is differently described. In the book of Exodus, it is presented as a rite with the main function of enabling Yahweh to recognize the homes of Israelites and pass over them in his deadly mission. The inhabitants of the house are to remain for the rest of the night in the house. The Passover held immediately after entering Canaan presents a completely different picture. People must be circumcised before they are allowed to observe the festival. The celebration is kept in the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, and in a sacred place.³⁸

Finally, as the culmination of Josiah's³⁹ reform, 2 Kings 23:21-23 records the celebration of a unique Passover Festival. The Passover Festival was transformed from a private family feast into a pilgrimage feast to be celebrated only at the national sanctuary in Jerusalem. According to Simkins, the sociological explanation for Josiah's transformation of the Passover can be analyzed in terms of its infrastructure (economic and social), superstructure (political

³⁸Tamara Prosic, "Passover in Biblical Narratives," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 82 (March 1999): 49. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (11 July 2007).

³⁹"Since the reform of Josiah, 621 BC, it had been lawful to stop the Passover laws in Jerusalem only." Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 57.

and ideological instances), and according to its historical development. In short, Josiah's reform progressed in two stages: the exclusive worship of Yahweh, which seems to have been related to anti-Assyrian movements and the centralization of the cult, which had its sociological roots in the court circle.⁴⁰

Calendars and Festivals in the Near East and the Passover

The survey of the New Year Festival in the ancient Near East is necessarily important to review. It makes no allowance for social and economic differences between one region or another within a single area that is between one period and another. Nevertheless, certain features may be peculiar to one or more communities; others appear to belong to a general pattern. The New Year is fixed by the calendar. In all communities, there is a ritual going forth from the city to the open country. Thus, there are phenomena common to New Year festivals throughout the Near East. The Israelites were derived from this area and developed within it.

They were heirs to the same traditions as their neighbors. However, adaptation of ritual was done in some cases but not innovation in the narrow sense. Despite that fact, the Passover was a popular festival always. From the beginning of its history and before the settlement in Canaan, a prominent part was taken at the *Pesah* by the heads of families, most of whom were, of course, laymen. Also, there is a significant difference in procedure between the primitive *Pesah* and all other sacrifices in the Israelite calendar. With other sacrifices at which the flesh of the victim was eaten, a portion was set

⁴⁰Ronald A. Simkins, "Reviews of the Book Josiah's Passover: Sociology and the Liberating Bible," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 57, no. 2 (April 1995): 359. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (18 July 2007).

aside under the ordinance for the priest, and the celebrants ate the rest. At the *Pesah* nothing was given to the priest; the celebrants ate all. Indeed, the priests themselves slew and ate their own *Pesah* victims.⁴¹

Further, at all times and in all places, almost without exception, people have celebrated, though with diverse traditions and rites, the ingathering of the increase of field and fold. There is abundant evidence that from the earliest times, the Hebrews celebrated a harvest festival. These traditions are preserved in Genesis 4:3, “in the course of the time,” or “at the end of the year.”⁴² It is generally assumed that Cain and Abel brought their offering together at the same period of the year. Further, Wellhausen explains that “It is out of a simplest, most natural, and most wide-spread offering, those of the first-fruit of the flock, herd, and field, the occasion for which recur regularly with the seasons of the years, that the annual festival took their arise. The Passover corresponds with the firstlings of Abel the shepherd, the other three with the fruits presented by Cain the husbandman.”⁴³

Moreover, the three pilgrimage feasts of Unleavened Bread (the Barley Harvest Festival), Harvest (the Wheat Harvest Festival), and the Ingathering (the Vintage Harvest Festival) were pilgrimages in that the custom was to go up every year to make the offering to God, worship, and eat of the sacred meal at the local shrine. The ingathering festival marked the end of one agricultural year. The Hebrews adopted

⁴¹Segal, 157-158.

⁴²Norman H. Snaith, ed., *The Jewish New Year Festival, Its Origins and Development* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1947), 12.

⁴³Julius Wellhausen *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885), 89.

all three festivals when they entered Palestine. There they found new reasons for observing them, just as they did with the observation of the Passover rites. They associated all three agricultural festivals and the apotropaic Passover with the great acts of deliverance found in the exodus and the wandering in the wilderness. Perhaps, before the Hebrews had entered Canaan, the Passover rites had tended to coalesce with those of the Barley Harvest Festival, since both were associated with the full moon and both ultimately belonged to the same full moon. Thus, the centralization and the reinterpretation of all the festival rites tended to belong to the Deuteronomic period.⁴⁴

Calendars in Ancient Israel Related to the Passover

According to Exodus 12, Nisan will be the head of the months. Thus, whoever counts the months in years to come shall count them only from Nisan. Before the children of Israel came out of Egypt, the counting of months began with creation, then the Noah flood, and finally Abraham's birth or with the covenant with him. However, as soon as the redeemed came out of Egypt, they abandoned their reckonings system and counted from the redemption, Nisan. According to the Jewish calendar, there are three names for each month: the week of the month (*hachodesh harishon*, "the first month"), the month of spring (*chodes haAviv*'), and Nisan. The name Nisan is Babylonian in origin.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Snaith, 23-24.

⁴⁵"During the Exile the Babylonian system was adopted, the names of the months being derived from the common Babylonian calendar." Isaac Landman, ed., "Month," *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 7 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc. 1969), 633.

The Israelites brought the name back with them when they returned from their exile in Babylonia. This name too is connected with spring, for the word Nisan is similar to the word *Nita* meaning “a bud.” The later sages found a hidden meaning in the name *Aviv* (spring), in Hebrew it means “the head of twelve.” Thus, it is the head of all the twelve months of the year. Finally, the sign of the zodiac for this month is *Aries*,⁴⁶ “a ram,” which is reminiscent of the lamb for each household in Exodus 12.⁴⁷

There is historical evidence that at different periods in ancient Israel, there were three different festival calendars or calendar systems employed. The first of these is called the Canaanite calendar (Calendar I), which was composed of the old Canaanite names.⁴⁸ The second calendar (Calendar II) is

⁴⁶“Before the Israelites were commanded to take the land for the sacrifice in *Nisan*, other nations, and especially the Egyptians, used the ram, which is clearly visible in the start during the month of *Nisan*, to symbolize the power that is present in *Nisan*. For the ram is a sign more specific than at any other time and the source of blessing, and life for the whole year is found therein.” Also, “the Egyptians made the ram into a god, bowed down to it, and worshiped it. But the Israelites were commanded to take the god of the Egyptians, their master, to slaughter it in that very month and bring it as an offering to God. For there is no riches and there is no strength except that which comes from God. The sign of the zodiac for the month of *Nisan* is a ram, both for the Israelites and for the Egyptians, but for Israel it is a symbol of the service of God and for the Egyptians it is a symbol of idolatry.” Nachman Bulman, *The Book of Our Heritage*, vol. 2 (Spring Valley, NY: Phillipp Feldheim, Inc., 1988), 128.

⁴⁷Bulman, 123, 127-128.

⁴⁸“The four ancient Hebrew month names are known: *Abid* (Exod 13:14; Deut 16:1) and *Ziv* (1 Kgs 6:1) in the spring and *Bul* (1 Kgs 6:38) and *Ethanim* (1 Kgs 8:2) in the fall. The months of the years were lunar and began with the new moon (*hodesh*, which came to mean ‘month’). Here the beginning of the year was fall (which included ingathering, sowing, late sowing, etc.). Thus, the year of the year of the Israelites began in the fall, since the Festival of the Ingathering (*Sukkot*) is said to take place at the end of the year (Exod

characterized by the fact that it refers to the month by number instead of by name, as in the first month, the second month, and the like. In 1 Kings 6:1, *Zip* is indicated as the second month. While the third calendar (Calendar III) used the Babylonian names for the months, the newly borrowed Babylonian names of the months supplanted the numeric month calendars.⁴⁹

The Transition from Calendar I to Calendar II

Four of the old Canaanite months are preserved in the Bible: *Abide*, *Zip*, *Ethane*, and *Bul*. Unquestionably, the latest reference to

these Canaanite months is found in Deuteronomy 16:1. No equivalent in the numerical designation of the months of Calendar II is given, but by the years 621 BC and 586 BC, Calendar II seems to have completely supplanted Calendar I due to the strong influence of Babylonian culture. Thus, the transition was in all likelihood the result of the ascendancy of the Babylonian culture and religion. This affected the festival and other calendar institutions among the Israelites. The one exception was the fixing of the Passover Festival, which was kept “in the month of *Abide*.”⁵⁰

23:16).” Isaac Landman, ed., *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1969), 631.

⁴⁹“The Babylonian names are: *Tishri*, *Marsheshvan*, *Kislev*, *Tebeth*, *Shebat*, *Adar*, *Nisan*, *Iyar*, *Sivan*, *Tammuz*, *Ab*, and *Elul*. In the course of time *Tishri* was universally observed as the beginning of the year although *Nisan* was still called the first month.” Isaac Landman, ed., “Calendar,” *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, 632.

⁵⁰Julian Morgenstern, “The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 1 (1924): 13-19. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (12 July 2007).

The Transition from Calendar II to Calendar III

“Accordingly, the only historic truth in the Talmudic tradition is the consciousness that the names of the months in Calendar III were of Babylonian origin and name.”⁵¹ However, the date of the Passover festivities was not changed. In the earliest period of Israel’s history, the Passover was celebrated at the very beginning of the month of *Abide*, this date still being the same at the new moon of *Abide*. During the early Israelite period, the Passover and the *Mazzoth* festivities had the same relation to the spring equinox as the New Year Festival, *Sūkkôt*, had to the fall equinox. In the writing of Josephus, he agreed with the *Mishnah* that the first of Nisan marked the beginning of the year as far as the festival calendar was concerned. Nevertheless, Deuteronomy 16:1 fixed the Passover celebration of *Abide* but did not state the exact days of the month upon which the festival began or ended, which possibly had a double significance.⁵² As verse 9 implies, a determining

⁵¹Morgenstern, “The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel,” 21.

⁵²“It is interesting and even significant to note that in the pre-Deuteronomic literature, reckoning by month plays practically no role at all. In all of the J and E codes of the Hexateuch, and in Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah the expression ‘month’ is not used a single time to convey the idea of a fixed moment in the year, but only to indicate duration of time (so. Gen. 29.14; Num. 11. 20 f.; Hos. 5.7 one month; Jud. 11.37 ff. two months; II Sam. 24.13 three months; Jud. 19.2; 20.47 four months; I Sam. 6. x six months, and the like). On the other hand the moment in the year was indicated in this literature usually by reference to the season, as in I Sam. 12.17 (‘at the time of the wheat-harvest’), II Sam. 2.21.9 ff. (‘at the time of the barley-harvest,’ and ‘from the beginning of the harvest season until the water was poured down from heaven’); I Sam. 2. x (‘at the time of the “turning of the year,” i.e., the equinox, at the time when the messengers [?] go forth’). Even the time of the festivals it would seem was fixed in this manner, cf. Ex. 23.16 (the festival of ingathering, at the end of the year ‘when thou gatherest in thy produce from the field’). The one exception in this practice seems to be the fixing of the

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factor in fixing the date for the *Mazzoth* Festival in the pre-Deuteronomic period of Israel's history was the state of their crops. During this period the omer, or first sheaf, was brought as a sacrifice on the day following the close of the entire *Mazzoth* Festival. In other words, this day was actually the eighth and last day of an eight-day period of the festival celebration. It is important to note, there is evidence showing that the early period of the old Palestinian agricultural calendar and the days intervening between two new months constituted a definite unit of measure of time within the year. These periods were designated as moon or month, and each had its particular name. The calendar concerning the Book of Jubilees was based upon a double reckoning of the year, a civil reckoning and a religious reckoning. Thus, there were two calendars employed simultaneously, a civil calendar and a religious calendar.⁵³

Finally, the Jewish calendar based on a moon, or lunar calendar, was arranged according to the movement of the moon around the earth. The days on this calendar begin at sundown (approximately 6:00 p.m.) and last for twenty-four hours. The Jewish calendar also has a leap year. Instead of adding an extra day every fourth year as on the Gregorian calendar, which is a solar calendar, an extra month is added at the end of every third year. This month is called the intercalary month. This adjustment enables the Jews to keep their feast days in the seasons called for by the Bible. Jews had two concurrent calendar years. One was a sacred calendar year that God established when He brought them out of Egypt.

Passover festival 'in the month of Abib.' But, as we shall see, it is quite probable that this expression is used in a technical and not a literal sense." Morgenstern, "The Three Calendars of Ancient Israel," 13-19.

⁵³Julian Morgenstern, "Additional Notes on 'the Three Calendars of Ancient Israel,'" *Hebrew Union College Annual* 3 (1926): 86-88. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (12 July 2007).

Nisan was the first month of the year of this calendar. Nisan was called *Abide* and corresponds to the months of March and April in the Gregorian calendar. The other calendar year was a civil calendar based on the Jews' agricultural season. This calendar began with the month of *Tishri*, which corresponds to the months of September and October and was the beginning of the agricultural season. Passover was the first feast celebrated and represented the first of the three major encounters with God in the lives of His covenant people. Therefore, the second calendar began with the Passover in the month of Nisan (March-April), which was celebrated during the barley harvest.⁵⁴

The Passover in Jewish Literature

The earliest full description of the Passover celebration in the *Mishnah* was called the Seder, found in *Mishnah Pesachim* 10 (Feast of the Passover).⁵⁵ The *Tosefta* is the *Tosefta Pisha* and is keyed to *Mishnah Peshim* and glosses, complements, and supplements the teaching of the *Mishnah*.⁵⁶ The Midrash⁵⁷ contains anthologies and compilations of

⁵⁴Richard Booker, *Jesus in the Feasts of Israel* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, Inc., 1987), 9-11.

⁵⁵Herbert Danby, trans., *The Mishnah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 136-151.

⁵⁶Jacob Neusner, *The Tosefta*, vol. 2 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1981), 115-166.

⁵⁷"The term Midrash itself derives from the root *drsh* which in the Bible means mainly, 'to search,' 'to seek,' 'to examine,' and 'to investigate' (Lev. 10:16; Deut. 13:15; Isa. 55:6). It is very possible that the earliest Midrash to come down is the Passover Haggadah, the earliest and chief element of which is a Midrash to Deuteronomy 26:5-8. A great part of the Midrashic *aggadah* of the Tannaitic period is included side by side with the Midrashic *halakhah* in the *halakhic Midrashim*." Fred Sholnik, ed., "Midrash," *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 14 (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2007), 182-183.

homilies, including both biblical exegesis and sermons delivered in public. For instance, in chapter XIX (BO) the Midrash gives some explanation: "This is the ordinance of the Passover."⁵⁸

The Talmud says, "The lessons drawn from the ancient Egyptian bondage of the children of Israel and their exodus from the land of oppression were taught again and again by the Jewish sages in the vast literature of the Talmud and Midrash. Through commentary, interpretation, and legend, the Passover story was given new and added meanings. An entire tractate of the Talmud containing 120 folios, *Pesachim* (Paschal Lamb), details the law of Passover and presents homiletic material."⁵⁹ According to the Talmud, "It was taught when the Temple was in existence there could be no rejoice save with meat as it is said, 'And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God. But now that the Temple is no longer in existence, there is no rejoicing save with wine, as it is said, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man.'"⁶⁰

Pesikta Rabbati

"The tabernacle which Moses built was finished in *Kislev* but dedicated in Nisan in order to bring the rejoicing over the tabernacle into Nisan, into the month in which Isaac was born" (*Piska* 6). In addition, *Piskas* 17, 18, 19, [48], and [49] contain discourses on the lesson for the Passover. Two of

⁵⁸Rabbi S. M. Lehrman, *Midrash Rabbah: Exodus*, vol. 3 (New York: The Soncino Press, 1983), 229-236.

⁵⁹Goodman, 145-146.

⁶⁰B. Talmud *Pesachim* 109a.

these *Piskas* (*Piska* 17 and [49]) focus on the recurring rhythm in Jewish history of deliverance at the midnight of the Passover. Two are concerned with the offerings to God on Passover: one with the offering of a sheaf of barley as a token of gratitude (*Piska* 18) and the other with the offering of lambs as symbols of obedience and good deeds (*Piska* 48).⁶¹

Sifre on Deuteronomy

Sages in *Sifre on Deuteronomy* examined the vision of Israel's future to uncover the rules that explain what happens to Israel.⁶² Also, related to the observance, they say, "Observe the month of *Abid* (16:1): Observe the month nearest to spring, so that spring will come in its proper season. . . . Scripture discusses the festivals in three places: in Leviticus, in regard to their chronological order; in Numbers, in regard to the prescribed sacrifices; and in Deuteronomy, in regard to the intercalation of the year."⁶³

The Passover in Postbiblical Writing

Philo, the Greek Jewish thinker from first-century Egypt, asserts that all of the Israelites were in a state of purification before their departure from Egypt and were

⁶¹Leon Nemoy, ed., *Pesikta Rabhati*, vol. 18 (Dallas: Judaica Research at Yale University, 1968), 13, 117.

⁶²"Essentially, as a master of both logic and topical programs, *Sifre on Deuteronomy* has reread the legal portions of the book of Deuteronomy and turned scripture into what we now know as the orderly and encompassing code supplied by Mishnah." Jacob Neusner, *Introduction to Rabbinic Literature* (New York: ABRL Doubleday, 1994), 328-329.

⁶³Reuven Hammer, *Sifre on Deuteronomy*, vol. 24, ed. Leon Nemoy (Binghamton, NY: Yale University, 1986), *Piska* 127.

therefore able to slaughter and offer the paschal sacrifice. All of the people of Israel were therefore elevated to the spiritual status of priest.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the houses of the Israelites resembled temples: "On this day every dwelling-house is invested with the outward semblance and dignity of a temple."⁶⁵

According to Bokser, the Wisdom of Solomon was probably written around 37-41 AD and attempted to demonstrate that divine wisdom and justice were at work during the exodus. For instance, "Wisdom 18:2-25, points out the striking antithetical details associated with the destruction of the Egyptian firstborn and the protection and glorification of the Israelites in Egypt. God punishes one and correspondingly rewards the other."⁶⁶

Josephus, the Jewish historian in the first century AD who wrote in Greek but lived first in Palestine and then in Rome frequently mentioned the Passover. He linked the Passover with the feast of Unleavened Bread and saw the festival as a thanksgiving for the deliverance from Egypt. Millions gathered in Jerusalem every year, "accordingly, on the occasion of the feast called Passover, at which they sacrificed from the ninth to the eleventh hour and a little fraternity, as it were, gathers round each sacrifice, of not fewer than ten persons (fasting alone not being permitted), while the companies often include as many as twenty, the victims were

⁶⁴Philo, *The Decalogue*, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 7, sec. 159 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1958), 85-87.

⁶⁵Philo, *The Special Law II*, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 7, sec. 148 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1958), 397.

⁶⁶Bokser, 22.

counted and amounted to two hundred and fifty-five thousand six hundred; allowing an average of ten diners to each victim, we obtain a total of two million seven hundred thousand.”⁶⁷

Exegetical Analysis in Exodus 12:1-13

Background: Authorship, Provenance of Writing, and Content.

The English name Exodus is derived from the Greek title *Exodos*, short for *Exodos Aigyptou*, meaning “departure from Egypt” and is used in the Septuagint. The Hebrew title *Sefer Ve’eleh Shemot* means the book of “Now These Are the Names” (usually abbreviated to *Shemot*) is based on the opening words of the book. The Bible indicates Moses was the primary author of this book.⁶⁸ The controlling motif of the Book of Exodus is the revelation of God’s power in His victory over Pharaoh. Also, Exodus belongs to the five books of Moses and has forty chapters (adopted from the Vulgate in the fourteenth century). The book is devoted to the events leading up to the exodus, the circumstances of the exodus itself, the experiences of the wilderness that include a covenant at Sinai, the corpus of legislation, and the construction of the tabernacle.⁶⁹

⁶⁷Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, VI, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. 3, sec. 423-424 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 499.

⁶⁸Max Anders, ed., *Holman Old Testament Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 1982), 2-3.

⁶⁹George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 834-835.

Setting

This section constitutes an intrusion into the narrative of the tenth mighty act. Before the final climactic conflict between Yahweh and the powers of Egypt, the narrator introduces a series of laws covering three of Israel's socio-cultic observances: the Passover (vv. 1-13), Unleavened Bread (vv. 14-20), and the dedication of the firstborn (vv. 21-28). Exodus 12:1-10 is simply a manual for what must have been a consensus of right practice. The instructions of the Passover express a certain kind of blood and a certain kind of food. The festival concerning food and blood revolved around the importance of the lamb, its supply, its distribution, and its use. During the celebration, each family unit had to have a lamb.

In Exodus 12:11-13, the twofold account of food and blood is again maintained. Verse 11 suggests the dramatic intention of the eating. In the event of the Exodus, those who shared in this festival meal had to be ready to go, ready to travel, and ready to depart from the empire. Being ready to go required that traveling clothes be worn, that shoes be on, and that staff be in hand. The entire drama had to be done in a hurry in order to reenact the memory that leaving Egypt is a dangerous anxiety-ridden business.⁷⁰

In addition,

Verses 12 and 13 connect the blood, for the first time, with Exodus. The Festival of Passover (פסח *Pesah*) marks the time when

⁷⁰Neil M. Alexander, ed., *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 1 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 776-777.

Yahweh “passes over” (עָבַר ‘ābar) the community of Israel. The two Hebrew terms for “Passover” (*Pesah*) and “pass over” (‘ābar) are not the same, and it is only in the English translation that the terms appear to be equivalent. Moreover, the blood of the lamb has now become a sign, which quite concretely, publicly, and explicitly marks those who are to be exempt from destruction. It is a sign that makes visible the promise of God and assures the protection of Israel.⁷¹

Textual Examination

The passages examined have not differed greatly from the Hebrew and Greek, making a parallelism between the Passover in the work of Josephus and Exodus 12:1-13. Colautti has found the following:

Josephus discards the instructions about the calendar found in Exod. 12:2, which clearly states that the year begins with the month of *Nisan*. He then indicates the period of preparation for the sacrifice as in Exod. 12:3 and adds a translation of the name *Nisan*. Also, Josephus says that they were divided into “fraternities” (εἰς φαρτριάς), interpreting the phrase “according to their fathers’ houses (κατ’ οἴκους πατριῶν) in this way” (Exod. 12:3). However, he does not stop to consider the possibility that a family might not be large enough to consume the sacrificial meat, and might have to combine with their neighbor, as is laid down in Exodus 12:3-4. He does not indicate that it must be an animal without blemish and one year old, nor that it can either be a younger sheep or goat nor that it will have to be kept apart from the tenth until the fourteenth day, or that it must be sacrificed in the evening (Exod. 12:5-6).⁷²

⁷¹Alexander, 776-777.

⁷²Federico M. Colautti, *Passover in the Works of Josephus* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 25-28.

Hebrew Text of Exodus 12:1-13

- 12** וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל־אַהֲרֹן בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵאמֹר:
- ² הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֹאשׁ חֳדָשִׁים רֹאשׁוֹן הוּא לָכֶם לְחֹדֶשׁ הַשָּׁנָה:
- ³ דַּבְּרוּ אֶל־כָּל־עַדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּעֲשֹׂר לְחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם אִישׁ אִשָּׁה לְבֵית־אָבֹת שָׁה לְבֵית:
- ⁴ וְאִם־יִמְעָט הַבֵּית מִהֵיכַל מֹשֶׁה וְלָקַח הוּא וּשְׁכֵנוֹ הַקָּרֵב אֶל־בֵּיתוֹ בַּמִּכְסֹּת נִפְשֹׁת אִישׁ לִפְיָ אָכְלוּ תִכְסּוּ עַל־הַשָּׁה:
- ⁵ שָׁה תַמִּים זָכָר בֶּן־שָׁנָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם מִן־הַכֹּבָשִׁים וּמִן־הָעִזִּים תִּקְחוּ:
- ⁶ וַיְהִי לָכֶם לְמִשְׁמֶרֶת עַד אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה וּשְׁחָטוּ אוֹתוֹ כָּל קָהָל עַדַּת־יִשְׂרָאֵל בֵּין הָעֲרֻבִים:
- ⁷ וְלָקַחוּ מִן־הַדָּם וַנִּתְּנוּ עַל־שְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוֹזֹת וְעַל־הַמִּשְׁקוֹף עַל הַבְּתִיִּם אֲשֶׁר־יֹאכְלוּ אוֹתוֹ בָּהֶם:
- ⁸ וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־הַבָּשָׂר בַּלֵּילָה הַזֶּה צְלִי־אֵשׁ וּמִצּוֹת עַל־מֶרְרִים יֹאכְלֶהוּ:
- ⁹ אֶל־תֹּאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ נָא וּבָשָׂל מִבָּשָׂל בְּמַיִם כִּי אִם־צְלִי־אֵשׁ רֹאשׁוֹ עַל־כָּרְעָיו וְעַל־קַרְבּוֹ:

¹⁰ וְלֹא-תוֹתִירוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד-בֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּתָר מִמֶּנּוּ עַד-בֹּקֶר בָּאֵשׁ
תִּשְׂרְפוּ:

¹¹ וְכִכָּה תֹאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ מִתְּנִיכֶם חֲגָרִים גַּעְלֵיכֶם בְּרִגְלֵיכֶם
וּמִקְלַכֶּם בְּיַדְכֶם וְאָכַלְתֶּם אֹתוֹ בְּחִפְזוֹן פֶּסַח הוּא לַיהוָה:

¹² וְעִבְרָתִי בְּאֶרֶץ-מִצְרַיִם בְּלִילָה הַזֶּה וְהִפֵּיתִי כָל-בְּכוֹר
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מֵאָדָם וְעַד-בְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֲעַשֶׂה
שְׁפָטִים אֲנִי יְהוָה:

¹³ וְהָיָה הַדָּם לָכֶם לְאֹת עַל הַבָּתִּים אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם שָׁם וְרֵאִיתִי
אֶת-הַדָּם וּפִסַּחְתִּי עֲלֵיכֶם וְלֹא-יְהִיָּה בְּכֶם נֶגֶף לְמִשְׁחִית
בְּהַכֹּתִי בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

Translation of Exodus 12:1-13

And Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying: This month shall be unto you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying: On the tenth of the month, they shall take for themselves every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house, And if the household is too small for the lamb, he shall take with himself his neighbor that live near to him, as the number of the souls, every one according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

The lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You shall take it from either the sheep or the goats. And it shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the month, and all the assembly of the congregation of Israel shall slaughter it in

the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and they must put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they shall eat it. And they shall eat the meat in that night, roasted over fire, and unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat raw or boiled in water, but roast with fire his head with his leg and its entrails. And you shall let nothing of it remain until the morning, any remnant of it you shall burn before morning in the fire. And you shall eat it with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand you must eat it with haste. This is the Yahweh's Passover. And I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and I will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and best, and against all the gods of Egypt I will bring judgment; I am Yahweh. And the blood shall be a sign to you and the houses in which you are and I will see the blood and I will save⁷³ you, and there should not be on you the plague of destruction when I smite the land of Egypt.

Explanation

According to Josh Durham, the passage on Exodus 12:1-13 is an intrusion into the narrative of the tenth mighty act, the death of the firstborn of Egypt. The purpose of this section can be seen in its location as well as in its content. Yahweh's passing over of Israel's houses occurs as further proof of His powerful presence in the land of Egypt. The explanation indicates that the blood is a protective sign:

⁷³“The verb *pāṣab* occurs three times in the Passover narrative of Exodus 12:13, 23, and 27, and it can come as something of a surprise to discover that at least six different interpretations of its meaning were already current in antiquity. However, it is quite possible that the understanding of *pāṣab* in Isa. 31:5 (‘save,’ ‘deliver’) was also applied to Exodus 12:13, 23, and 27.” J. A. Emerton and Stefan C. Reif, eds., *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, UK: University of Cambridge Oriental Publication, 1982), 27-28.

“Yahweh, upon seeing it, will pass over the Israelites and so save them from the fatal blow he is about to strike against Egypt.” The verb “pass over” is $\pi\sigma\sigma$, and it explains the purpose of that blood that established the ritual of commemoration, and its name is $\pi\sigma\sigma$, “Passover.” Finally, the name $\pi\sigma\sigma$, “Passover,” is used as a ritual of sacrificial animals and may simply be taken from the verse describing Yahweh’s protection of His own people, whom He is about to deliver.⁷⁴

⁷⁴Josh I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 3 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 155-156.

CHAPTER 3

THE PASSOVER IN JESUS' TIME AND THE LAST SUPPER

The Nature of the Last Supper

Joachim Jeremias argues that behind the four accounts of the institution of the Eucharist (Mark 14:22-25; Matt 26:26-29; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26; John 6:51b-57) can be discovered a “primitive Semitic tradition . . . traceable back [to] the first decade after the death of Jesus with the assistance of exact philological observation.”⁷⁵ Thus, the Synoptic Gospels present the Last Supper as a Passover meal. Some suggest the Last Supper was held a day earlier than the actual Passover date.⁷⁶

Whether this is true or not, it was viewed by the participants as a Passover meal, and the words and actions of Jesus,

⁷⁵Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Norman Perrin (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), 8, 173, 196.

⁷⁶According to Stephen Wylen, “the Apostle John saw the Last Supper as an ordinary meal, not a Passover Seder. Jesus apparently was crucified the next day, which is the eve of Passover. Thus, Jesus died in mid-afternoon, at exactly the hour when the Passover lambs were sacrificed in the Temple. Finally, to John, Jesus is the paschal lamb, whose sacrifice takes away the sins of the men.” Stephen M. Wylen, *The Jews in the Time of Jesus* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1966), 102-103.

including the institution of the Lord's Supper, would have been understood within that context. Further, David Flusser states, "According to the first three Gospels, the Last Supper was a Paschal meal. Jesus had, therefore, already offered the Paschal Lamb.⁷⁷ As it was prescribed that the roasted lamb be eaten within the walls of the Holy City on the last evening, Jesus did not return to Bethany, but remained in Jerusalem. We have no record of the host's name for in those days pilgrims were gladly received everywhere and anywhere."⁷⁸

Furthermore, there are more positive evidences that the Last Supper was a Passover. The Last Supper took place in the evening and extended into the night. The tradition usually allowed a main meal to be taken in the late afternoon, but it was obligatory for the Passover to be eaten at night. Jesus and His disciples reclined at their last meal together (Mark 14:18; Matt 26:20; Luke 22:14; John 13:12, 23, 25, 28), whereas the Jews in the time of Jesus sat at ordinary meals. It was a Passover ordinance that they recline as a symbol of their liberty (see Jerusalem Talmud, Pesahim 10.1). A dish preceded the breaking of bread only at the Passover (see Mishnah. Pesahim 10.3). This preliminary dish was referred to in Mark 14:20 and Matthew 26:23; the meal was already in progress (Mark 14:18; Matt 26:21) when Jesus took bread, offered a blessing, and broke the bread. Wine was drunk at the Last Supper, and the drinking of wine was obligatory at the Passover (see Mishnah. Pesahim 10.1 and 49.6, 9).

⁷⁷"The Passover lamb was killed in the time of the second temple in the court where all other 'kodashim' were slaughtered, in keeping with the Deuteronomistic perspective, and it was incumbent upon every man and woman to fulfill this obligation." Isidore Singer, ed., "Passover," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 9 (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1901), 553.

⁷⁸David Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2001), 143.

In addition, the wine that was drunk at the Passover had to be red wine. The Last Supper concluded with the singing of a hymn (Mark 14:26; Matt 26:30), which would have been the second part of the Hallel (Psalm 114-118), which closed the Passover meal. After the meal, Jesus did not return, according to His custom, to Bethany but went to the Mount of Olives. This was in accordance with the Passover regulation that after the Passover had been eaten within the walls of Jerusalem, the rest of the night might be spent inside a large area, which excluded Bethany but included Gethsemane. A suggestion of considerable force is that the very fact that Jesus spoke of His body and blood in connection with the bread and wine is an indication of the Passover character of the Last Supper, because in the Passover Haggadah, the person presiding explained the various elements in the meal.⁷⁹ It is almost impossible to imagine anything more evident than that Jesus wished to let everyone understand that He was about to celebrate the ordinary Jewish paschal supper. The designation is exactly that of the commencement of the *Pascha*, which was the fourteenth Nisan, and the description that of the slaying of the Paschal Jesus (Luke 22:7). Luke 22:8 is in exact accordance with it, and in full agreement with this is the narrative of the two synoptists, Matthew 26:17-20 and Mark 14:12-17.⁸⁰

Furthermore, Jesus and His disciples were among millions of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover⁸¹ (the Last

⁷⁹Angus J. B. Higgins, *The Lord's Supper in the New Testament* (Cambridge, UK: SCM Press, 1964), 19-21.

⁸⁰Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company, 1886), 480-481.

⁸¹"A vivid eye-witness account of the vast numbers of pilgrims making their way to Jerusalem, was written by Philo, a leader of the greater Jewish community of Alexandria, Egypt, toward the second temple era. Philo stated

Supper for Jesus). The company of the Lord's Supper consisted of Jesus and His disciples. Two of them, Peter and John, the master had sent forward early to prepare the Passover, that is, to see to all was supplied for the due observance of the Paschal Supper. While Jesus still tarried with the other disciples outside the city, Peter and John were completing their preparation. They followed the crowd, all leading their sacrificial lambs up the Temple Mount. Ordinarily, it was slain at 2:30 p.m. and was offered at about 3:30 p.m. The priests drew a threefold blast from their silver trumpets when the Passover lamb was slain.

While this was going on, a solemn hymn of praise was raised, the Levites led in song. It was probably as the sun was beginning to decline on the horizon that Jesus and the other disciples descended once more from the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem. According to Jewish ordinance, the Paschal Lamb was roasted on a spit of pomegranate wood, and not a bone of the Paschal Lamb was to be broken; the entire lamb was to be served up, none was to be left over, and those gathering were from one family.⁸²

Besides, the use of wine in the Paschal Supper, though not mentioned in the law, was strictly enjoined by tradition. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, it was intended to express Israel's joy on the paschal night, and even the poorest must have at least four cups. The head of the company must take the first cup of wine in his hand and give thanks over it (Luke

that a multitude of people from a multitude of cities flowed in an endless stream to the Holy Temple for this festival, the pilgrims come from the east and west, from the north and south." Chaim Richman, *The Holy Temple of Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: The Temple Institute and Carta, 1997), 71.

⁸²Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1997), 141-156.

22:17). The first cup of wine was then drunk, and each washed his hands. However, Jesus also gave meaning to the observance when He expanded the service fellowshiping over His broken body by rising from the Supper and began to wash the disciples' feet (John 13:4-5). In Luke 22:20, Jesus took another cup, the cup of blessing, which was the third cup, and formed part of the new institution of the Lord's Supper. Further, Jesus first gave thanks and then broke the bread.

Then, pieces of the broken bread with bitter herbs between them and dipped in the *Haroseth* were handed to each in the company. This probably was the "sop" that, in answer to John's inquiry about the betrayer, the Lord gave to Judas (John 13:25; Matt 26:21; Mark 14:18). The unleavened bread with bitter herbs constituted the beginning of the Paschal Supper. Now, Judas, after having received the sop, went immediately out; he could not even have partaken of the Paschal Lamb. The solemn discourses of the Lord recorded by John (John 13:31; 14) may, therefore, be regarded as His last meal with the twelve disciples and the intercessory prayer that followed (John 17) as His grace after meat. Again, immediately afterward the third cup was drunk, a special blessing was spoken over it. Paul called it the cup of blessing (1 Cor 10:16), partly because it and the first cup required a special blessing and partly because it followed on the grace after meat. The service concluded with singing a song Hallel, consisting of Psalms 115-118 (Matt 26:30).⁸³

In addition, the Passover meal as scholars reconstruct it from rabbinic texts (only codified in the post-New Testament period) comprised four parts: before the meal prayer, the Passover liturgy, the main meal, and the conclusion. It is understood that in an interpretation of the Last Supper as a

⁸³Edersheim, *The Temple*, 156-158.

Passover meal, it must be presupposed that the course of the Passover meal was taken for granted; Luke reports only those parts of the meal that he wanted to emphasize. The Passover meal and the Last Supper have some features in common. The Passover meal had to be celebrated in Jerusalem. Although Jesus had His lodgings in Bethany, He celebrated His last meal in Jerusalem. The Passover meal was consumed at night, whereas at other times, the main meal was usually eaten in the late afternoon. Jesus' Last Supper took place at night; people were not to leave the city of Jerusalem on Passover night. Jesus, too, remained within the limits of the city (in Gethsemane) after His Last Supper.

However, in the Last Supper, Jesus established some new revelation upon the Passover. During the Last Supper, Jesus interpreted the bread and wine while they were being distributed. Jesus gave a general interpretation of both elements: He interpreted bread and wine as a whole. Jesus made His disciples drink from one cup, and in doing so, Jesus interpreted the tearing of the *Mazzoth* (the bread of affliction) in terms of His violent death and the red color of the wine in terms of His blood that was to be shed.

Finally, according to the Jewish background of the Lord's Supper, it related to a wealth of biblical references. For instance, the meal was (1) a Passover meal with reference to Exodus 12 (the supper brought Christians into being the people of God); (2) a covenant meal with reference to Exodus 24 (at this meal, Israel's twelve tribes were represented, which happened at Jesus' Last Supper through His twelve disciples); (3) a meal for the people that was promised in Isaiah 25:6-8 for the end time (Isa 24:23; the meal for the people was typologically continued with the covenant meal; Exod 24:9-11); and (4) the meal of the suffering

servant (Jesus celebrated the Last Supper in the awareness of fulfilling Isa 53:11).⁸⁴

Jesus' Life and the Passover

Alfred Edersheim agrees that it was in the spring of AD 9 that Jesus as a youth, for the first time, He went up to the Paschal Feast in Jerusalem. Coponius would have been there as the Procurator, and Annas ruled in the Temple as High Priest when Jesus appeared among its doctors. Also, according to ancient wisdom (Isa 30:29), by this time, the festive company from Nazareth soon joined other festive groups and went up to Jerusalem, chanting those ancient Psalms (Ps 120; 134) to the accompaniment of the flute. Probably, the first Passover in Christ's ministry must have taken place in the spring (about April) of the year 780 BC from the building of Rome or in AD 27 of the present reckoning. His last Passover took place again on the fourteenth of Nisan, that is, from the appearance of the first three stars on Wednesday evening (the evening of what had been the thirteenth) and ended with the first three stars on Thursday evening (the evening of what had been the fourteenth day of Nisan).⁸⁵ According to James Ussher, Jesus celebrated four Passovers during His whole ministry. The first Passover of Christ's ministry is recorded in John 2:13 (also see John 3:22; 4:1-3; 4:54), the second Passover is in John 5:1, the third Passover is in John 6:4, and the fourth Passover is in

⁸⁴Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 423-426.

⁸⁵Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 480.

John 13:1 (it was in the fourth Passover of His ministry when Christ was sacrificed).⁸⁶

Everyone in Israel was thinking about the feast of the Passover by the month of Nisan, and necessary preparations had to be made. For the previous month, it had been the subject of discussion in the academes and for the last two Sabbaths at least, that of discourse in the synagogues. Everyone from everywhere was going up to Jerusalem. It was a gathering of the whole Israel, and Jesus, as a true Jew, had to keep the feast in the city itself. He began preparations for the Last Paschal Supper, and “. . . Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father . . .” (John 13:1).⁸⁷

The Passover in Jesus’ Time

Flavius Josephus says that on the fourteenth day of the month *Xanthicus* (this month is called *Pharmuth* by the Egyptians and *Nisan* by the Hebrews, but the Macedonians call it *Xanthicus*) is when all of the Israelites were ready to depart, and they offered the sacrifice and purified their houses with the blood, using bunches of hyssop for that purpose. When they had supped, they burned the remainder of the flesh just as they were ready to depart. Israelites still offer this sacrifice in like manner to Josephus’ Day and call this festival *Pascha*, which signifies the Feast of the Passover because on

⁸⁶James Ussher, *The Annals of the World, A Classical Survey of World History* (Green Forest, AR: Master Book, 2003), 805-815.

⁸⁷These phrases occur frequently in Jewish writings for dying: “the hour has come” and “to depart out of this world.” In Targum in cant. i.7 is “when the hour had come that Moses should depart out of the world and Shem. R. 33, “what hour of the time came for our father Jacob that he should depart out of the world.” Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 481.

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that day, God passed over the Israelites' houses and sent the plague upon the Egyptians. The destruction of the firstborn came upon the Egyptians that night. So, in the month of Xanthicus, which is the beginning of the Jewish year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, the Lord ordained that Jews should every year slay that sacrifice. This was called the Passover, and Jews were to celebrate this in companies, leaving nothing of what was sacrificed until the day following. The Feast of Unleavened Bread succeeded that of the Passover and fell on the fifteenth day of the month⁸⁸ and continued seven days, wherein they fed on unleavened bread. Finally, Josephus agreed that later the Feast of Unleavened Bread was also called the Passover.⁸⁹

In addition, the Passover was originally celebrated among the families (Exod 12:21) in tents and after the territorial occupation, in houses. After the cultic centralization of King Josiah, the celebration of the Passover was transferred to the central sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut 16:2, 7; 2 Kgs 23:21-23). The requirement that the slaughtering, preparing, and eating of the paschal animal was to take place in the forecourts of the Temple was maintained after the Exile (2 Chr 30:1-5; 35:13-14). Later, because of the large numbers of participants, the paschal animal was killed at the Temple place but boiled

⁸⁸"Passover lasted several days (sometimes seven or eight). Passover marked the start of the festive season. However, Passover itself lasted only half a day, from midday until evening (began at midday and ended at midnight as the day ended at sundown. Thus, Passover was part of 14th and part of 15th of Nisan)." Alec Garrad, *The Splendour of The Temple* (Jerusalem: Moat Farm Publications, 1997), 91.

⁸⁹William Whiston, trans., *The Works of Flavius Josephus* (Philadelphia: The John E. Winston Co., n.d.), 83-84, 410, 518.

and eaten in the houses of Jerusalem.⁹⁰ In addition, the transfer of the Feast of Passover in the Temple entailed an end of the rite of blood. The blood of the paschal animals was, like other sacrificial blood, and then poured on the base of the altar (2 Chr 30:16; 35:11). Also, the combined Passover- *Mazzoth* New Testament can be understood as (1) the celebration of the Passover (Matt 26:18; Mark 14:1; Heb 11:28); (2) the whole feast (Matt 26:2; Luke 2:41; 22:1; Acts 12:4, especially in John 2:13, 33) for this name “Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Mark 14:1, 12; Luke 22:1, 7; Acts 12:3; 20:6; and (3) as in the Old Testament (Exod 12:21), the Passover Lamb (Mark 14:2, 14, 16; Luke 22:8, 15; John 18-28; 2 Cor 5:7).

Further, Emil Schürer explains that “according to Jubilee 49:20, the Passover must be eaten in a courtyard of the sanctuary and halakhah (Jewish law) permits its consumption anywhere in Jerusalem” (mZeb 5:8; mMak 3:3).⁹¹ Additionally, according to the rules of Exodus 12 as interpreted by Jews at the time of Jesus, the Passover lambs were slain in the Jerusalem Temple on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (March/April). Exodus 12:6 directs that the killing of the lambs was to take place between the two evenings, which perhaps originally meant during the evening twilight. In the first century AD, however, “The sacrifice took place between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., according to Josephus (J. W.

⁹⁰“When he had slit the carcass and removed the sacrificial portions, he put them on a tray and [the priest] burned them on the altar. When the first group went out, they remained within the Temple mount [if the 14th fell on Sabbath], and the second group in the rampart, and the third group remained where they were [within the Temple court]. After nightfall, they went out and roasted their Passover offering.” Mishnah *Peshim* 5:10; 7:12.

⁹¹Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC-AD 135)*, ed. Geza Vermes and Ferqus Millar, vol. 3, part 1 (Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, Ltd., 1973), 312.

6.9.3, 423),”⁹² though the hour may have been moved up some when the fourteenth of Nisan fell on a Friday. Exodus 12:8 may show that the Passover lamb was eaten that night, which in context must mean after sundown on the day the lambs were slain.

The *Pesah* in the Second Temple Days

The highest point in the evolution of the *Pesah* came in the last century of the second Temple. It was during this period that the Messianic hope soared higher than it had ever before, and in the minds of Jews, their deliverance of the future became bound up with the first redemption in Jewish history, which was the deliverance from Egypt. Jews began to believe that the Messiah would be a second Moses and would free the Jews the self-same eve, the eve of the *Pesah*. The ritual of the *Pesah* eve had, by that time, developed rich proportions and was entirely different from the spring festival of the Jewish shepherds of old. The great Greco-Roman civilization ruled almost the entire known world and influenced the Jews to observe their holiday in a richer, more luxurious fashion. They adopted the wine and the soft sofas and the other luxuries that in those days were part of a feast. Jews still partook of the meat of the sacrificial lamb, but not in haste, as the Samaritan sect does to this very day. The Israelites in the Second Temple days, ate the Passover leisurely and reclined on the softest of cushions.⁹³

⁹²John P. Meier, *Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 388.

⁹³Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Times of Jesus*, 56-57.

Observance of the *Pesah*

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The observance of the Passover was divided into two main parts and was celebrated in two different places, the Temple and the home. Jerusalem was never so crowded as during the *Pesah* holiday. Every inn was filled to over flowing, and whoever had a bit of room in his house made it available to the visiting pilgrims and never accepted any payment. It was customary, however, for the pilgrims to offer their hosts the skins of the animals they had sacrificed in the Temple. It is estimated that Jerusalem, at that time, had a permanent population of close to one hundred thousand. In addition, not all of the pilgrims came to Jerusalem solely because of pious motives. Many merchants arrived laden with wares, ready to do business, for a holy city that attracted so many pilgrims offered a fine opportunity for sale and barter.

Jerusalem was a ready market, even during ordinary times. There was always trade in cattle and other livestock, which were needed for the sacrifices and in raw materials and finished products of all kinds. Also, Jerusalem was an especially fine sheep and cattle market before the *Pesah* since so many animals were needed for the *Pesah* sacrifice.⁹⁴ There was also a large sale of the spices needed for the *Pesah* eve (generally imported from Mesopotamia).⁹⁵

Preparation for the *Pesah*

For the celebration of the Passover, Jerusalem was always crowded with people and tumultuous with their noise.

⁹⁴At Passover there was a great demand for beast for sacrifice (around 256,500 sacrifices). Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 57.

⁹⁵Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festival* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregation, 1938), 48-50.

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The Roman Procurator usually came from Caesarea (his headquarters) with additional soldiers, and they were quartered in Herod's Palace. The morning services were completed in the Temple, and the worshipers left the synagogues. The marketplace was then filled with people; everything was on sale. The greatest noise and the greatest crowds were in the cattle market near the Mount of the Temple. Sheep and goats were sold there by the thousands. Poor Jews bargained over the prices of the animals in order to be ready for the *Pesah* eve. The sacrificial animals were not eaten alone, but in groups that were made up in advance, since one person could not eat an entire animal, and it was forbidden to leave any part of the animal for the next day. A group could not consist of fewer than ten people, for it took at least that many to eat an entire sheep at one setting. In addition, thousands of Jews marched through the town with a sheep or goat riding high on their shoulders. All went to the Temple to offer their *Pesah* sacrifices, and at about three o'clock, the people began the slaughtering of the *Pesah* sacrifice.⁹⁶ The ritual was repeated three times. When the court of the Temple was filled with the first comers, the gates were shut. The Levites blew the ceremonial sound (a threefold blast) on their trumpets, and the sacrifice began. The owner himself slew the animal. The priests stood in rows, and the Levites stood on a platform and sang Hallel, Psalms of praise for holidays, to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Moreover, thousands of Jews rushed from the Mount of the Temple through the streets of Jerusalem, each bearing on his shoulders the sacrificial animal wrapped in its own skin. All were busy and expectant, prepar-

⁹⁶“When a lamb or any animal is slaughtered in this way, the bleeding does not stop immediately and the lamb does not die straight away. Thus, blood would be flowing all over the Court of the Priests and the Court of the Women. When it was all over, the priests swilled down the Court to wash away all the blood. It must have been a horrible sight.” Garrad, 92.

ing themselves for the great night of the year, the night of redemption.⁹⁷

Everywhere sheep and goats were fixed on fragrant of pomegranate wood, resting in the clay stoves, which stood in the courtyards of the homes. These stoves were called *Pesah* ovens and were movable. Relatives and friends were then gathering. Every large room was a meeting place for a group. Nobody was omitted. All were dressed in white, festive clothes. When the celebration began, all was quiet in the streets. After eating the sacrificial animal, no entertainment was allowed. The feasters satisfied themselves with going from one group to another, greeting and hailing friends. Once more, the streets of Jerusalem were filled with natives and pilgrims. Many of them were on their way to the Mount of the Temple, for the Levites now opened the gates of the Holy House, and Jews would spend the rest of the night there, praying and singing hymns of praise to God.⁹⁸

Calendar and Chronology in Jesus' Time

According to the Jewish way of calculating liturgical days at the time of Jesus, sundown would mean the beginning of a new day, the fifteenth of Nisan, Passover Day proper. "This type of calculation for liturgical days is already witnessed in the Old Testament (e.g., for the Day of Atonement, in Lev 23:27, 32) and is explicitly applied to Passover in the Book of Jubilee 49:1 (written in the 2d century B.C.)."⁹⁹ Finally, the Synoptic

⁹⁷Schauss, 50-54.

⁹⁸Schauss, 54-55.

⁹⁹Meier, 389.

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Gospels portray the Last Supper on Thursday evening as a Passover meal (specifically in the story of the preparation of the meal, Mark 14:12-17; also Luke 22:15). Hence, the story of the preparation of the meal had to take place on Thursday in the daytime, which is the fourteenth of Nisan, when the Passover lambs were being slaughtered (Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7). The Passover meal (Mark 14:20-30) held in the evening after sundown would take place on the fifteenth of Nisan. Passover Day proper began, therefore, according to the Synoptic Gospels (the arrest trial, crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus) on a Friday, which was (until sunset) the fifteenth of Nisan, Passover Day. The Sabbath, which followed, was the sixteenth of Nisan.¹⁰⁰

In short, the Day of Atonement falls on the tenth day of the month and is specified to last, from sunset on the ninth, until sunset on the tenth. The seven day festival of unleavened bread beginning on the fifteenth day of the month is likewise supposed to last from sunset on the fourteenth day of the month until sunset on the twenty-first day of the month. As the fifteenth day of the first month starts at sunset of the preceding day, however, Passover will inevitably overlap the beginning of the festival of unleavened bread.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, several passages in the Gospel of John has cast some doubt on this identification. These texts seem to imply that the Jews were not scheduled to partake of their Passover meal until Friday evening (after Jesus had died). However, some scholars argue that the Jews may have used two different methods of reckoning time. One followed by the Synoptic writers, the other by

¹⁰⁰Meier, 389-390.

¹⁰¹ Jan A. Wagenaar, "Passover and the First Day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread in the Priestly Festival Calendar," *Vetus Testamentum* 54, no. 2 (2004): 250-268. *ATLA Religious Database*, EBSCOhost (11 July 2007).

John and that Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples a day ahead of the official Jewish date. However, this does not fully and satisfactorily reconcile the Johannine and Synoptic accounts. Whatever chronology of the Last Supper is adopted, it seems clear that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper by associating it with the third cup of wine, which came after the Passover meal was eaten (1 Cor 11:25). It was known as the cup of redemption, which rabbinic tradition likened to the third of the fourfold promises of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7 saying, "I will redeem you."¹⁰²

In addition, at the time of Jesus, the Jews still had no fixed calendar, but on the basis of purely empirical observation, they began each new month with the appearance of the new moon. Similarly, on the basis of observation, they intercalated one month in the spring of the third or second year in accordance with the rule that in all circumstances, Passover had to fall after the vernal equinox. Schürer stated, "Wieseler championed the view that the Jews already had a fixed calendar at the time of Christ."¹⁰³ Moreover, the rule according to which it was decided whether to intercalate one month in the spring was very simple: the Feast of Passover, to be celebrated at full moon in the month of Nisan (14 Nisan), must always fall after the vernal equinox when the sun stood in the sign of Aries. If, therefore, it was noticed toward the end of the year that Passover would fall before the vernal equinox, the intercalation of a month before Nisan was decreed.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²The Mishnah, which is a philosophical law code covering topics of both theoretical and practical character, explains that on the eve of Passover, even the poorest in Israel must not eat unless he sits down to table, and they must not give them less than four cups of wine to divide. Mishnah *Pesachim* 10:1-7.

¹⁰³Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 BC-AD 135)*, ed. Geza Vermes and Ferqus Millar, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, Ltd., 1973), 590-592.

¹⁰⁴Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, vol. 1, 593.

Connection Between Jesus' Death and Passover

The connection of the day of Jesus' death with the Passover is important. Apparently, according to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus was crucified on the fifteenth day of Nisan, the first day of the feast. Further, according to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, the Synoptic Gospels:

Understand the Last Supper of Jesus as a Passover meal during which the salvational meaning of Jesus' death is disclosed (Mark 14:22, 24). The Gospel of John, on the other hand, dates the death of Jesus to the fourteenth of Nisan (John 19:14; 18:28) to the hour of the Passover slaughtering (John 19:14, 31; Mark 15:33-34, 37; Pes. 5:1; Jos. Wars 6:423) and the meal to the night of the thirteenth of Nisan. This does not have calendric (Jaubert), but theological reasons. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John interprets Jesus as the Passover lamb (John 1:29; 19:36).¹⁰⁵

Further, Jesus associated this cup of wine with His atoned death (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25); "He refused, however, to drink the fourth cup (Mark 14:24; Mishnah, *Pesahim* 10:7), referred to as the 'cup of consummation' (Exod 6:7) based on the promise that God will take His own people to be with Him."¹⁰⁶ The unfinished meal of Jesus was a pledge that redemption would be consummated at that future messianic banquet (Mark 14:25; Matt 26:29; Rev 3:20; 19:6-9). The Lord's Supper concluded with the singing of a hymn (Matt

¹⁰⁵Cecil Roth, ed., "Passover," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 170-171.

¹⁰⁶Marvin R. Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 245-246.

26:30; Mark 14:26), doubtless the second half of the Hallel (Ps 113-118).¹⁰⁷

Definitively, even if the Last Supper was eaten the day before the Passover, the language of the Synoptic Gospels indicates that Jesus and His disciples celebrated it as a Passover meal. The only difference then would have been the absence of the lamb, and since this does not figure in the symbolism of the meal, the substance of what follows still stands.¹⁰⁸ Again, it is a clearly argued issue whether the Last Supper was a genuine Passover meal or not, but whichever view of the matter is taken, it is impossible to escape the obvious paschal significance that Jesus gave to the bread and the wine. There is thus a close and dominant stand of New Testament teaching that associated Christ with the Exodus tradition and in particular that viewed His death as a fulfillment of the meaning of the original Passover.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷Wilson, 247.

¹⁰⁸R. Routledge, "Passover and Last Supper," *Tyndale Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (2002): 4.

¹⁰⁹J. K. Howard, "Passover and Eucharist in the Fourth Gospel," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 20 (1967): 329-330. *ATLA Religious Database*, EBSCOhost (30 March 2007).

CHAPTER 4

PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The Lord's Supper Celebrated in the Early Church

The fellowship of the early Church was expressed not only in caring for each other, but also in corporate worship. They supplemented the Temple services with more informal and spontaneous meetings in their homes. In both cases, they devoted themselves to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:42-47). "The breaking of bread" probably refers to the communion services, while the "taking of food" refers to the social interaction that they enjoyed.¹¹⁰ Also, an early name (Κυρίακόν δεῖπνον) for the celebration of the Eucharist, is found in the New Testament only in 1 Corinthians 11:20. The adjective κυριακός (belonging to the Lord, the Lord's) that is employed here in place of the more usual noun in the genitive κυρίου (of the Lord; Rev. 1:10) is borrowed from Hellenistic governmental and legal language with the meaning "pertaining to the Lord (Emperor); imperial." In Paul's use, the supper "pertains to the Lord" primarily and fundamentally as a liturgical repetition of the Last Supper of the historical Jesus, whom the Christians now recognized as risen Lord (1 Cor

¹¹⁰Hans-Josef Klauch, "Lord's Supper," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 4, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 362-363.

11:23). The Jewish Passover meal made ritually presents the post redeeming action of God.¹¹¹

The Transition from Jewish Worship to Christian
Before AD 70

The standard pattern of first century Jewish worship was the use of the *sheva* twice each day, in the morning and evening, and the use of the *tephillah* three times each day, in the morning, afternoon, and evening, with an addition *tephillah*, which might be at any hour on the Sabbath. When the use of the *sheva* and *tephillah* in the morning or evening was combined, as in corporate use, as it naturally was, this resulted in three daily hours of prayer, with a fourth on the Sabbath. Also, teaching and reading of the Scripture existed in the home from day to day, in the synagogue and Temple on the Sabbath (in the home, they were unregulated except by the injunctions and exhortations of the Old Testament to read and meditate continually on God's law: Deut 17:19; Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2; 119:97). Thus, all centuries of worship for Jewish Christians before AD 70 were the same as those for other Jews: namely, in Temple, synagogue, and the homes. Furthermore, the Jewish Christians attempted to maintain the ordinances of Judaism alongside their Christian counterparts.

Christians observed the Jewish pattern of worship on weekdays and Sabbaths and on the annual festivals of Judaism, and they did it in much the same way as other Jews except where there were Christian truths to which to witness. Examples are Peter and John's visit to the Temple for the afternoon hour of prayer, Paul's agreement to offer the sacri-

¹¹¹Berard L. Mathaler, ed., "the Lord's Supper," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 8 (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2003), 784-785.

fice for Jewish Christians who were accomplishing a vow, and his permission to Jewish Christians to keep Jewish holy days (Acts 3:1; 21:23-26; Rom 14:5). As long as Jewish Christians were not expelled from the synagogues and the Temple was still standing, this remained the custom, and when they were expelled from the synagogues, it was perfectly possible for them to form Christian synagogues in the same ways as other groupings of Jews did (Acts 6:9).¹¹²

However, their Christian allegiance did not allow them to be content with Jewish worship alone. Their daily visit to Temple became an occasion of evangelistic preaching as well as prayer (Acts 2:46-3:26; 5:42); similarly, it happened in synagogues on the Sabbath and in ordinary observances in homes, teaching and the breaking of bread were added (Acts 2:42, 46; 5:42). Probably due to a lack of food in Jerusalem, a high degree of community of goods and especially of food was observed there (Acts 4:32-5:11; 6:1). This was the rather unusual background of “the daily *agapes*” or “*agapes-cum-eucharist*,” which the Jerusalem Church seems to have held (Acts 2:42, 46) and which were held only in churches less severely afflicted by poverty (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:7-22). Though in both cases, the *agape* took the place of the feast meal at which the Eucharist was instituted and gave the Eucharist its own much greater frequency.¹¹³

Determining the Passover/Easter Dates

Jewish Passover had a strong influence in the Apostolic tradition. It is not only historically meaningful, but also

¹¹²Roger T. Beckwith, “Calendar, Chronology, and Worship,” *Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* 61 (2005): 181, 189-190.

¹¹³Beckwith, 190-191.

contributes to an ever-deepening appreciation of that rich heritage shared by Judaism and Christianity. Early Christians determined Easter's date in different ways. However, it always was through obtaining information from a local Jewish community about the date when they were to celebrate the Passover.¹¹⁴ It would be impossible for Christians to know exactly how many days ahead the Passover Festival lay until the local Jewish community knew whether or not an extra month was to be intercalated that year before the month of Nisan and until the start of the month Nisan itself had been officially determined. Both those Christians who celebrated Easter on the fourteenth of Nisan, at the time of the Jewish Passover, and those Christians who celebrated Easter on the Sunday after the Jewish Passover would be basing their dates for Easter on information received from local Jews.¹¹⁵

Nevertheless, according to the consultation, which produced the Aleppo document, the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) decided that Easter/Pascha should be observed on the Sunday following the first vernal moon. They did not aim at celebrating Christ's Passover with the Jews.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, the early rabbis were cognizant of the Christianization of the Passover; therefore, some rabbinic traditions bespeak

¹¹⁴Sean E. Kinsella, "The Transportation of the Jewish Passover in an Early Christian Liturgy: The Influence of the Passover in the Apostoli," *Science et Esprit* 52 (2000): 217.

¹¹⁵Timothy C. G. Thornton, "Problematical Passovers: Difficulties for Diaspora Jews and Early Christians in Determining Passover Dates during the First Three Centuries AD," *Studia Patristica* 20 (1989): 406-407.

¹¹⁶Issa, J. Khalil, "A Common Date for the Celebration of Pascha/Easter," *The Patristic and Byzantine Review* 16-17, no. 1-6 (1998): 163. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost (4 December 2007).

strong negativity toward Christianity.¹¹⁷ The reason is simply “that the Passover was a means of strengthening the Jewish national and ethnical identity. Even today it represents a very special celebration.”¹¹⁸

The Origins of the Seder and Haggadah

“Three main forces stimulated the rabbis to develop innovative Seder rituals and to generate new, relevant exegesis to the biblical Passover texts: (1) the twin calamities of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple and the *Bar Kokhba* revolt; (2) competition with emerging Christian groups; (3) assimilation of Greco-Roman customs and manners.”¹¹⁹

The word Seder¹²⁰ means “order” in Hebrew. The Passover Seder is the order of prayers and events that make up the Passover meal. Haggadah is the retelling of the story of the exodus from Egypt or a redacted written work containing the text of that which is recited on Passover eve. After the destruction of the second Temple (70 AD), the followers of Jesus were developing their own rituals to be observed on the eve of Passover. Thus, rabbis of the second century might have felt

¹¹⁷Michael J. Cook, “Christian Appropriation of Passover: Jewish Responses Then and Now,” *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (1999): 14.

¹¹⁸Federico M. Colautti, “The Celebration of Passover in Josephus: A Means of Strengthening Jewish Identity?” *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, no. 41 (2002): 285-287. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (11 July 2007).

¹¹⁹Joshua Kulp, “The Origins of the Seder and Haggadah,” *Currents in Biblical Research* 4, no. 1 (2005): 109. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (24 July 2007).

¹²⁰“The Seder keeps alive the memory and reality of the first Passover just as Easter brings close Jesus’ own Passover sacrifice.” Saldarini, 41.

the need to offer compelling answers to such challenges. Many elements of the rabbinic Seder were reframed in order to distinguish their rituals from the parallel Christian Easter celebration and to respond to Christian theological claims. Later, rabbis began to tell the story of the exodus as an implicit polemic against the messianic Jews who transformed the memory of the exodus into their new Passover account of the crucifixion of Jesus.

Further, it was required for Jews to observe the symbolic explanation of the three central Passover foods, Paschal lamb, *Mazzoth*, and herbs, and those who did not say these three things on Passover had not fulfilled their obligation. It is intended to exclude from Judaism those who impart Christological meaning to the food. However, similarities have been identified between Jews and Christians. Just as Christians learned to cope with the loss of Jesus by giving a potent symbolism to the bread and wine of the last supper; so Jews learned to cope with the loss of the powerful Temple ritual at the *Pesah* by giving a symbolic value to the main food. Also, rabbis and early Christians alike had to search for nonsacrificial replacements for the Passover.¹²¹

The Development of Easter

The earliest Christian documents call the death and resurrection of Jesus and the celebration of it *Pesah*. This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *Pesah*, which means "Passover." The earliest followers of Jesus who lived in Jerusalem until the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 celebrated the Passover sacrifice and subsequent evening meal in the ordinary way. During the second century, many Jewish

¹²¹Kulp, 120-122, 124, 129.

and Gentile Christians celebrated the Christian Passover at the same time as the Jewish Passover, beginning on sundown of the fourteenth of Nisan, which is the beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan. For this reason, they are called *Quartodecimans*, which is the Latin for “fourteeners.” They did not eat the Jewish Passover meal but rather fasted in memory of Jesus’ death. This is the earliest account for the Christian celebration of Jesus’ resurrection. Further, Easter grew from the Passover, but during the second and third centuries, it broke off from Judaism. The separation of Christianity from Judaism can be understood theologically as a logical consequence of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. During the second century, the Christian Passover began to be celebrated on Sunday rather than the fourteenth day of Nisan, and the celebration of the Lord’s Supper became the most important part of the Easter celebration.¹²²

In addition, following the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, two competing interpretations were found for the Passover, one Jewish and one Christian, to replace the rituals of the paschal sacrifice; each religion adopted the strategy of mandating the telling of a story. Jews adhered to the original meaning of the festival as deriving from the initial redemption from Egypt that served as a sign of a second deliverance still to come. Christians narrated the tale of a second redemption already in place: the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. Both stories offered an alternative to the old sacrificial rite. Both began with degradation, either Egyptian servitude or the crucifixion, and concluded with praise, holding out hope for the future. However, this similarity was less obvious in Rome

¹²²Saldarini, 94-99, 106.

and the West, which tended to detach itself from its Jewish origins by fixing Easter on a Sunday.¹²³

The Separation of Christianity from Judaism

According to Roy B. Blizzard, Jr., the non-Jewish believers lacked the Jewish spiritual heritage on the Passover. It was thus difficult for them to grasp the spiritual significance of the Lord's Supper. They were so far removed from the history, culture, and traditions of the Jewish believers that it was necessary for someone to instruct them. The Lord's Supper was meaningless to them because the Passover was meaningless to them. In fact, in 1 Corinthians the Lord's Supper had been reduced to nothing more than an unruly common meal.¹²⁴

In addition, sociologically the separation of Christianity from Judaism resulted from the influx of Gentiles who believed in Jesus. These non-Jewish believers gradually changed the character and center of the Christian community. The Gentile converts absorbed enormous amounts of Jewish belief and practice: a weekly day of worship, the Bible, hymns of prayers, public reading of the Bible, worship services, festivals, and so on, but they gave them a new meaning. Gradually the Gentile Christians developed the Christian way of life and theology, which has led to present forms of Christianity.¹²⁵

¹²³Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffman, eds., *Passover and Easter, Origin and History of Modern Times*, vol. 5 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 98-103.

¹²⁴Roy B. Blizzard, Jr., *A Believer's Guide to Passover* (Austin, TX: Biblescholars Press, 2004), 104-105.

¹²⁵Saldarini, 96, 105-106.

Eucharist and Passover

The title “Eucharist” (thanksgiving) for this rite is not used in the New Testament, though the verb form, to give thanks, has a place in the accounts of the Lord’s Supper (Mark 14:23; Matt 26:27; Luke 22:17, 19; 1 Cor 11:24). In addition, Paul is the source of three biblical titles: “Holy Communion,” derived from the translation of *koinonia* (1 Cor 10:16), “Table of the Lord” (1 Cor 10:31), and the “Lord’s Supper” (1 Cor 11:30). Another early title recorded by Luke is “The Breaking of the Bread” (Luke 24:35; Acts 2:42).¹²⁶

According to Kreider, the Jewish blessing was the historical background of the Christian Eucharist. There was a “Jewish benediction,” a *berakah* (*berakoth*, plural).¹²⁷ For almost every moment of action of the day, a *berakah* and a “benediction” called a *hodayah* were important prayer forms in Jewish worship. A *berakah* included a call to praise, a declaration of motive for that praise and an acknowledgment of God’s benevolence. Everything Jewish people did called

¹²⁶Jerome Kodeel, *The Eucharist in the New Testament* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 11-12.

¹²⁷“A whole chapter in the *Mishnah* and an entire corresponding section in the *Toseftah* (the two parts of the *Talmud*) are devoted to all these *berakoth*. Also, there are two types of *berakoth* in Jewish tradition. One type is a brief formula that became very soon stereotyped and is comprised merely of a praise-thanksgiving, a blessing in the narrowest sense. The other is a more developed formula in which the prayer of supplication has its place, although always in a blessing context. The first is destined to accompany every action of the pious Jew from his awakening in the morning to the moment that sleep overtakes him in the evening. The second has its place either in the synagogue service (in the morning, at noon, and at night) or in the meal prayers, particularly those accompanying the final cup shared by all the participants.” Lois Bouyer, *Eucharist* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 50.

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them to remember and thank God. Also, they would not think of eating or drinking without first saying the appropriate grace or benediction. This was truly a discipline for thankfulness. The best known Jewish thanksgiving of all is surely the Last Supper benediction of Jesus when He had given thanks over the bread and the cup. Thus, the Jewish tradition believed the earliest Christian memorial fellowship meal was one that emphasized praise and thanksgiving.¹²⁸ Every action, every moment of the day was related to the gracious God who protected and provided for the dependent community.¹²⁹ In addition, the Eucharist can only be understood in its most profound sense, following the liturgical tradition of the Old Testament. For instance, the expressions employed by Christ to enjoin of the Eucharist (“Do this in remembrance of me”) were part of the current liturgical language of Judaism of the Passover.¹³⁰

Further, the roots of the Christian Eucharist lie in the tradition of Jewish meal fellowship and, in particular, in the meals that Jesus shared with His disciples and others. At Jewish meals, there is a special blessing recited at the breaking

¹²⁸“The words of institution of the eucharist back into their own context which is that of the ritual *berakoth* of the Jewish meal. The words announcing everything that was to follow in the Last Supper, as preserved by Luke, are connected with the preparatory *berakoth* over the first cup. The blessing over the body (or the flesh) of Christ is connected with the initial *berakoth* of the breaking of bread, and that over the blood of the New Covenant with the second and the third *berakoth*. Finally, the penitence about the ‘memorial’ corresponds to the feast day interpolations in the third *berakoth*.” Bouyer, 106.

¹²⁹Eleanor Kreider, *Communion Shapes Character* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997), 28-30.

¹³⁰Max Thurion, *The Eucharistic Memorial* (London: Lutter Worth Press, 1962), 16, 17, 20.

of bread by the head of the household or the host at the beginning of the meal. At festive meals, a special blessing is also recited over the wine cup at the conclusion of the meal.¹³¹ For instance, Jeremias argues that by all accounts the Lord's Supper is the detailed description of the action of Jesus in connection with the bread, using three verbs (He took the bread, blessed, broke), which are known from the rabbinical literature as technical terms for the grace at table before the meal. In the case of the Passover meal, this grace was spoken at the beginning of the main meal, which followed upon the preliminary course of the first part of the Passover Liturgy.¹³² At the time of Jesus, this grace was probably worded as follows: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who feedest the whole world with goodness, with grace, and with mercy. We thank thee, O Lord, our God, that thou hast caused us to inherit a goodly and pleasant land. Have mercy, O Lord, our God, on Israel, thy people, and on Jerusalem, thy city, and upon Zion, the dwelling place of thy glory, and upon thy altar and upon thy Temple. Blessed art thou, O Lord, thou who buildest Jerusalem."¹³³

¹³¹William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 1-2.

¹³²"(A) Preliminary Course: Word of Dedication (blessing of the feast day and of the cup) spoken by the *pater* families or host, over the First Cup (the sanctification cup); this blessing worked the separation of the sacred period from the profane at its beginning. (B) Passover Liturgy: Passover Haggadah by the *pater* families (in Aramaic). The first part of the Passover Hallel (in Hebrew). Drinking of the second cup (Haggadah cup). (C) Main Meal: Grace spoken by the *pater* families over the unleavened bread. Meal, consisting of the Passover Lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herb (Ex 12:8), with fruit puree and wine. Grace (*birkat hammason*) over the third cup (cup of blessing). (D) Conclusion: Second part of the Passover Hallel (in Hebrew). Praise over the fourth cup (Hallel cup)." Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 85-86.

¹³³Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 108-110.

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In addition, the standard Old Testament formula for blessing God is found in third person, "blessed be the Lord" (*baruk YHWH*); only in a few late texts (1 Chr 29:10; Ps 119:12; 1 Macc 4:30) is the formula found in second person, "Blessed be you, O Lord" (*baruk atta, YHWH*). Also, the short formula of the liturgical blessing in the synagogues is, "Blessed are you, O Lord our God," called *hatimah*. In Mark and Matthew, Jesus blessed the bread, recited the short blessing formula, or *hatimah*, at the start of the meal.¹³⁴ He gave thanks over the cup¹³⁵ because He recited, at the close of the meal, the lengthy *birkat ha-mazon*, "grace after meal," which consisted of three parts: blessing, thanksgiving, and supplication or petition. Paul and Luke dropped the blessing terminology because like the early Christian text called the *Didache*, they sensed that God's new act in Christ requires

¹³⁴"Whatever chronology of the Last Supper one adopts, it seems clear that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper by associating it with the third cup of wine, which came after the Passover meal was eaten (1 Cor 11:25). It was known as the 'cup of redemption,' which rabbinic tradition linked to the third of the fourfold promise of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7, 'I will redeem you.' Jesus associated this cup of wine with His atoning death in saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you' (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25). He refused, however, to drink the fourth cup (Mark 14:25; *Mishnah Pesahim* 10:7), referred to as the 'cup of consummation' (Exod 6:7) based on the promise that God will take His own people to be with Him. The unfinished meal of Jesus was a pledge that redemption would be consummated at that future messianic banquet when He takes the cup and drinks it anew in the Kingdom of God (Mark 14:25; Matt 26:29; Rev 3:20; 19:6-9). The Lord's Supper concluded with the second half of the Hallel (Ps 115-118)." Wilson, 246-247.

¹³⁵"The accepted explanation for drinking four cups is that they express the four promises of redemption stated in Exodus 6:6-8: VEHOIZETI ('I will bring you out'), VEHITZALTI ('I will rescue you'), VEGAALTI ('I will redeem you'), and VELAKACHTI ('I will take you to be my people')." Blizzard, 21.

thanksgiving first and then only secondarily blessing and petition.¹³⁶

Moreover, James H. Charlesworth and Loren L. Jolius state in *Hillel and Jesus*:

“The normal Christian Eucharistic service is commonly and rightly said to derive from the synagogue service. This is especially true for the first of its two parts, the Service of the Word, which consists of scriptural readings surrounded by blessings and psalms, then usually a sermon, and often a creed. This last could be said to correspond to the recitation of the *Shema* in the synagogue. But the second part, the Eucharistic meal proper, does not derive from the synagogue order of service, but from the Jewish meal blessing, particularly the long grace after meal.”¹³⁷

Furthermore, the Eucharist was not an annual celebration like the Passover, but a weekly one.¹³⁸ Also, its development in the early Church is studied in three steps. The Last Supper period was AD 30. Jesus solemnly declared the renewal of table fellowship with His disciples in the consummated Kingdom of God, consequent upon His death. The earliest Palestinian church (AD 31-40) celebrated a daily meal that began with the blessing and distribution of bread and wine. This meal was characterized by the “invocation,” *Maranatha*, by the mood of *agalliasis*, and by the thought of the covenant in which the community participated proleptical

¹³⁶James H. Charlesworth and Loren L. Jolius, eds., *Hillel and Jesus* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 453-454.

¹³⁷Charlesworth and Jolius, 455-456.

¹³⁸Angus J. B. Higgins, “Origins of the Eucharist,” *New Testament Studies* 1 (1955): 208. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (24 July 2007).

ly. Also, from AD 31 the Christian community additionally celebrated an annual Passover. This celebration began with a fast and culminated in a (Christianized) Passover meal. The meal itself began with the *azuma* and concluded with the cup of blessing. The redemptive event of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ replaced the exodus as the object of the memorial and was a marked expectation of the *Parousia*.¹³⁹

Antioch and the Hellenistic communities celebrated a weekly *agape* and Eucharist. Here the bread and wine came together at the end of the meal. Also, the future eschatological motif diminished, while the bread and cup words were increased.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the form of meal known as the *agape*, or “love feast,” seems to have developed along with the Eucharist. However, Clement of Alexandria referred in his writing to the separation of the Eucharist from the “communal meal,” or *agape*.¹⁴¹

Similarities Between Passover Seder and the Lord's Supper Today

Both Judaism and Christianity share the same salvational symbol in their sacred celebrations. For instance, the use of *Mazzeoth* at the Passover Seder once functioned as a salva-

¹³⁹“An eschatological promise is made to the disciples in Luke 22:29-30 in the context of the Last Supper discourse.” Christopher Rowland, “Parousia,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 167.

¹⁴⁰Reginald H. Fuller, “Double Origin of the Eucharist,” *Biblical Research* 8 (1963), 71-72. *ATLA Religion Database*, EBSCOhost (24 July 2007).

¹⁴¹Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 285-286.

tional symbol. Since Passover is known biblically as the Festival of *Mazzoth* (*clisp Hamatzot*), it is to be expected that *Mazzoth* would play a large role in the Seder. By the first century, *Mazzoth* had acquired a symbolic value that went far beyond the role allotted to it in the biblical narrative. From a historical recollection of the exodus to the past, it had been transmuted into a symbol of salvation for the future. By the third century, *Mazzoth* was equated with the *Pesah*. Thus, *Mazzoth* alone had taken on the additional significance of symbolizing the *Pesah*. The most obvious reason of this would seem to be the destruction of the temple cult, when, in fact, the Passover offering ceased. However, evidence from the New Testament raises the possibility of an even earlier origin (1 Cor 11:23-26). Furthermore, Paul was using *Mazzoth* as a redemptive symbol. Paul used the bread as a salvational symbol, and such a conception of bread was common to Jewish circles in Paul's time.

Finally, the Paschal Lamb was, above all, a symbol of deliverance (from Egypt). In addition, a link existed by the time of the Gospels (because the Last Supper is definitely a Seder) where the bread (*Mazzoth*) is Jesus' body, and Jesus' body, in turn, is the Paschal Lamb. Thus, both Christians and Jews now had a cohesive system of salvational symbols. For the Jew, this meal, characterized originally by the *Pesah* and now by *Mazzoth*, recalled the deliverance out of Egypt. For the Christian, it marked the salvation of the new covenant under the saving grace of the new Paschal Lamb, whose body was the *Mazzoth*.¹⁴²

¹⁴²Paul F. Bradshaw and Lawrence A. Hoffman, eds., *Passover and Easter, the Symbolic Structure of Sacred Season*, vol. 6 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 109-116.

Conclusion

From early times, the Passover was performed by the Hebrews on a pilgrimage on a fixed calendric date—the spring equinox. It was carried out in the light of the full moon at a prescribed shrine or shrines. The assembly was organized according to family unit. Therefore, the Passover in the spring was a festival performed by the whole people. The *Pesah* was followed by a period of seven days called the *Mazzoth* Festival during which the people abstained from work, sacrifices were offered, and the most characteristic feature was that leaven was not eaten. The prohibition of leaven at the spring festival was maintained by the fact that it was customary in the Near East to abstain from leaven at the time of the spring harvest.

Some scholars have postulated a prehistory to the Passover from references in Exodus (Exod 5:1, 10:9). This reference may be to a shepherd's festival kept by Semitic nomads in the spring, as they would head for new pastures before the start of the dry season. The Feast of Unleavened Bread perhaps had its origin in an agricultural festival related to the spring barley harvest. After entering Canaan, the Hebrews may have adopted aspects of this feast from the Canaanites. Nevertheless, the exodus was the redemptive event par excellence in the life of God's covenant people. The Passover reenacted annually the greatest miracle the Lord performed out of grace for His chosen people.

The Passover celebration retold the story of freedom after more than 400 years of Egyptian bondage. In the original institution, the blood of the sacrifice was to be sprinkled with hyssop on the lintel and the two doorposts of the house. Then the whole animal, without breaking a bone of it, was to be roasted and eaten by each family or, if the number of its members was too small, by two neighboring families, along

with unleavened bread and bitter herbs to symbolize the bitterness of their bondage and the haste of their deliverance and also to point forward to the manner in which the true Israelites were in all times to have fellowship in the Paschal Lamb (1 Cor 5:7-8). Some ordinances concerning the Passover were afterward modified during the journey in the wilderness. In fact, in the long historical process of shaping the festival known as the Passover, there were many moments of change and growth. The crucial moment came when these desperate sets of feelings about the new births in the flock of sheep, the newborns in the clan and family, and the birth of political freedom were fused into a single extraordinary ceremony.

Nevertheless, what was remembered as a great transformation of symbols in the intense emergency of the Exodus was preserved as a teaching of those transformed symbols ever afterward. Also, late in the period of the second Temple, under the influence of Hellenistic Roman culture, the *Pesah* feast became a carefully ordered meal that borrowed from the pattern of the Greek and Roman symposium. As this pattern developed, the *Mishnah* (a collection and codification of those traditions and practices of Jewish life approved by the early rabbis) laid out how to do the order, the Seder, of the *Pesah* meal. Essentially, this Seder became the pattern that was put into the Haggadah, the telling of the Passover, and thus became the pattern for the meal as it is today.¹⁴³

Finally, despite all the changes in the first few centuries of Christian life and the even greater changes in subsequent centuries, the Lord's Supper, Easter, Eucharist, and many of its practices remain rooted in the Passover. The New Testament and later Christian writings use Passover symbol

¹⁴³Arthur Waskow, *Seasons of Our Joy: A Handbook of Jewish Festival* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 135-137.

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ism and allusions to the Passover to explain the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection. The goals of these festivals remain similar, and the central symbolic importance within each tradition is comparable.

Appendix A:

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Joachim Jeremias argued that behind the four extant accounts of the institution of the Eucharist (Mark 14:22-25; Matt 26:26-29; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26; John 6:51b-57) there can be discerned a “primitive Semitic tradition traceable back the first decade after the death of Jesus with the assistance of exact philological observation.”¹⁴⁴ The Synoptic Gospels present the Last Supper as a Passover meal. Some suggest the Last Supper was held a day earlier than the actual Passover date. Whether this is true or not, it was viewed by the participants as a Passover meal, and the words and actions of Jesus, including the institution of the Lord’s Supper, would have been understood within that context. Further, Dr. David Flusser stated, “According to the first three Gospels, the Last Supper was a Paschal meal. Jesus had, therefore, already offered the Paschal Lamb. As it was prescribed that the roasted lamb be eaten within the walls of the Holy City on the last evening Jesus did not return to Bethany, but remained in Jerusalem. We have no record of the host’s name for in those days pilgrims were gladly received everywhere and anywhere.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Norman Perrin (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1966), 8, 173, 196.

¹⁴⁵David Flusser, *Jesus* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2001), 143.

Flavius Josephus said that on the fourteenth day of the month Xanthicus (this month is called Pharmuth by the Egyptians and Nisan by the Hebrews, but the Macedonians call it Xanthicus) when all of the Israelites were ready to depart, the Israelites offered the sacrifice and purified their houses with the blood, using bunches of hyssop for that purpose; and when they had supped, they burned the remainder of the flesh just as they were ready to depart. Whence it is that Israelites do still offer this sacrifice in like manner to Josephus Day and call this festival *Pascha*, which signifies the Feast of the Passover because on that day God passed over the Israelites' houses and sent the plague upon the Egyptians, and the destruction of the firstborn came upon the Egyptians that night. So, in the month of Xanthicus, which is the beginning of the Jewish year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, the Lord ordained that Jews should every year slay that sacrifice. This was called the Passover, and Jews were to celebrate this in companies, leaving nothing of what was sacrificed till the day following. The Feast of Unleavened Bread succeeded that of the Passover and fell on the fifteenth day of the month and continued seven days, wherein they fed on unleavened bread. Finally, Josephus agreed that later on the Feast of Unleavened Bread was also called Passover.¹⁴⁶

In addition, at the time of Jesus, the Jews still had no fixed calendar, but on the basis of purely empirical observation, they began each new month with the appearance of the new moon. Similarly, on the basis of observation, they intercalated one month in the spring of the third or second year in accordance with the rule that in all circumstances Passover had to fall after the vernal equinox. Schürer stated “Wieseler

¹⁴⁶*The Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Winston (Philadelphia, PA: The John E. Winston Co., no date listed), 83-84, 410, 518.

championed the view that the Jews already had a fixed calendar at the time of Christ.”¹⁴⁷ Moreover, the rule according to which it was decided whether to intercalate one month in the spring was very simple: the Feast of Passover, to be celebrated at full moon in the month of Nisan (14 Nisan), must always fall after the vernal equinox when the sun stood in the sign of Aries. If, therefore, it was noticed toward the end of the year that Passover would fall before the vernal equinox, the intercalation of a month before Nisan was decreed.¹⁴⁸ Finally, Schürer explained that “according to Jubilee 49:20, the Passover must be eaten in a courtyard of the sanctuary and after halakhah permits its consumption anywhere in Jerusalem” (mZeb 5:8; mMak 3:3).¹⁴⁹

Besides that, the Passover was originally celebrated among the families (Exod 12:21) in tents and after the territorial occupation, in houses. After the cultic centralization of King Josiah, the celebration of the Passover was transferred to the central sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut 16:2, 7; 2 Kgs 23:21-23); the requirement that the slaughtering, preparing, and eating of the Paschal animal was to take place in the forecourts of the Temple was maintained after the Exile (2 Chr 30:1-5; 35:13-14). Later, because of the large numbers of participants, the Paschal animal was killed at the Temple place but boiled and eaten in the houses of Jerusalem.¹⁵⁰ The transfer of the

¹⁴⁷Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-AD 135)*, ed. Geza Vermes and Ferqus Millar, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, England: T & T Clark, Ltd., 1973), 590-592.

¹⁴⁸Schürer, 593.

¹⁴⁹Schürer, 312.

¹⁵⁰“When he had slit the carcass and removed the sacrificial portions, he put them on a tray and [the priest] burned them on the altar. When the first group went out, they remained within the Temple mount [if the 14th fell on

Passover fest to the Temple entailed the end of the rite of blood. The blood of the Paschal animals was, like other sacrificial blood, poured on the base of the altar (2 Chr 30:16; 35:11). Also, the combined Passover- Mazzoth Feast is presupposed in the New Testament and can be understood as: (1) the celebration of the Passover (Matt 26:18; Mark 14:1; Heb 11:28); (2) the whole feast (Matt 26:2; Luke 2:41; 22:1; Acts 12:4, especially in John 2:13, 33) for this name “Feast of Unleavened Bread” (Mark 14:1, 12; Luke 22:1, 7; Acts 12:3; 20:6; and (3) as in the Old Testament (Exod 12:21) the Passover Lamb (Mark 14:2, 14, 16; Luke 22:8, 15; John 18:28; 2 Cor 5:7). The connection of the death of Jesus with the Passover is important. Apparently, according to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus was crucified on the fifteenth day of Nisan, the first day of the feast; “they understand the Last Supper of Jesus as a Passover meal during which the salvational meaning of Jesus’ death is disclosed (Mark 14:22, 24).

The Gospel of John, on the other hand, dates the death of Jesus to the fourteenth of Nisan (John 19:14; 18:28) to the hour of the Passover slaughtering (John 19:14, 31; Mark 15:33-34, 37 Pes. 5:1; Jos. Wars 6:423) and the meal to the night of the thirteenth of Nisan. This does not have calendric (Jaubert), but theological reasons. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John interprets Jesus as the Passover lamb (John 1:29; 19:36).”¹⁵¹

Sabbath], and the second group in the rampart, and the third group remained where they were [within the Temple court]. After nightfall, they went out and roasted their Passover offering.” See *The Mishnah* (Pesahim) 5:10; 7:12. (*The Mishnah*, trans. Herbert Danby [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933], 143).

¹⁵¹Cecil Roth, ed., “Passover,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 170-171.

Furthermore, Dr. Alfred Edersheim agreed that it was in spring A.D. 9 that Jesus for the first time went up to the Paschal Feast in Jerusalem. Coponius would have been there as the Procurator, and Annas ruled in the Temple as High Priest when Jesus appeared among its doctors. Also, according to ancient wont (Isa 30:29), the festive company from Nazareth soon joined other festive groups, and went up to Jerusalem, chanting those ancient Psalms (Ps 120; 134) to the accompaniment of the flute. The first Passover in Christ's ministry must have taken place in the spring (about April) of the year 780 B.C. from the building of Rome or in A.D. 27 of the present reckoning. Christ's last Passover took place again on the fourteenth Nisan, that is, from the appearance of the first three stars on Wednesday evening (the evening of what had been the thirteenth) and ended with the first three stars on Thursday evening (the evening of what had been the fourteenth day of Nisan).

Necessary preparations might have had to have been made. Everyone in Israel was thinking about the feast. For the previous month, it had been the subject of discussion in the academies, and for the last two Sabbaths at least, that of discourse in the synagogues. Everyone was going to Jerusalem. It was a gathering of universal Israel and the memorial of the birthright of the nation and of its exodus. Jesus had to keep the feast in the city itself. It was probably after the early meal, and when the eating of leaven had ceased, Jesus began preparations for the Paschal supper: “. . . Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father . . .” (John 13:1).¹⁵²

¹⁵²These phrases occur frequently in Jewish writings for dying: “the hour has come;” “to depart out of this world.” In Targum in cant. i.7, “when the hour had come that Moses should depart out of the world; Shem. R. 33; “what hour of the time came for our father Jacob that he should depart out of the world.” (Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* [McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Company, 1886], 481).

It is almost impossible to imagine anything more evident than that Jesus wished to let everyone understand that He was about to celebrate the ordinary Jewish Paschal supper. The designation is exactly that of the commencement of the Pascha, which was the fourteenth Nisan, and the description that of the slaying of the Paschal Jesus (Luke 22:7). Luke 22:8 is in exact accordance with it, and with this, fully agrees the narrative of the two synoptists, Matthew 26:17-20 and Mark 14:12-17.¹⁵³

In addition, the Passover meal as scholars reconstruct it from rabbinic texts (only codified in the post-New Testament period) comprised four parts: before the meal prayer, Passover liturgy, main meal, and conclusion. It is understood that in an interpretation of the Last Supper as a Passover meal, it must be presupposed that the course of the Passover meal was taken for granted; Luke reported only those parts of the meal that he wanted to emphasize. The Passover meal and the Last Supper have some features in common: (1) the Passover meal had to be celebrated in Jerusalem. Although Jesus had his lodgings in Bethany, he celebrated His last meal in Jerusalem; (2) the Passover meal was consumed at night, whereas at other times, the main meal was usually eaten in the late afternoon. Jesus' Last Supper took place at night; (3) people were not to leave the city of Jerusalem on Passover night. Jesus, too, remained within the limits of the city (in Gethsemane) after His Last Supper.

However, in the Last Supper Jesus established some new revelation upon the Passover: (1) at the Last Supper, Jesus interpreted the bread and wine while they were being

¹⁵³Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing Company, 1886), 480-481.

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distributed; (2) Jesus gave a general interpretation of both elements: He interpreted bread and wine as a whole; (3) Jesus made His disciples drink from one cup. In doing so, Jesus interpreted the tearing of the loaf of bread in terms of His violent death and the red color of the wine in terms of His blood that was shed.

Also, another Jewish background on the Lord's Supper is related to a wealth of biblical references. For instance, the meal was (1) a Passover meal with reference to Exodus 12 (the supper brought Christians into the people of God); (2) a covenant meal with reference to Exodus 24 (at this meal Israel's twelve tribes were represented, which happened at Jesus' Last Supper through His twelve disciples); (3) a meal for the peoples that was promised in Isaiah 25:6-8 for the end-time (Isa 24:23; the meal for the peoples was typologically continued with the covenant meal, Exod 24:9-11); and (4) the meal of the suffering servant (Jesus celebrated the Last Supper in the awareness of fulfilling Isa 53:11).¹⁵⁴

Additionally, according to the rules of Exodus 12 as interpreted by Jews at the time of Jesus, the Passover lambs were slain in the Jerusalem Temple on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (March/April). Exodus 12:6 directs that the killing of the lambs was to take place between the two evenings, which perhaps originally meant during the evening twilight. In the first century, A.D.; however, "The sacrifice took place between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., according to Josephus (J. W. 6.9.3, 423),"¹⁵⁵ though

¹⁵⁴Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 423-426.

¹⁵⁵John P. Meier, *Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 388.

the hour may have been moved up some when the fourteenth of Nisan fell on a Friday. Exodus 12:8 goes on to direct that the Passover lambs be eaten that night, which in context must mean after sundown on the day the lambs were slain. Again, according to the Jewish way of calculating liturgical days at the time of Jesus, sundown would mean the beginning of a new day, the fifteenth of Nisan, Passover Day proper. "This type of calculation for liturgical days is already witnessed in the Old Testament (e.g., for the Day of Atonement, in Lev 23:27, 32) and is explicitly applied to Passover in the Book of Jubilee 49:1 (written in the 2d century B.C.)."¹⁵⁶ Finally, the Synoptic Gospels portray the Last Supper on Thursday evening as a Passover meal (specifically in the story of the preparation of the meal, Mark 14:12-17; also Luke 22:15). Hence, the story of the preparation of the meal must take place on Thursday in the daytime, which is the fourteenth of Nisan, when the Passover lambs were being slaughtered (Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7). The Passover meal (Mark 14:20-30) held in the evening after sundown, would take place on the fifteenth of Nisan. Passover Day proper began, therefore, according to the Synoptic Gospels (the arrest trial, crucifixion, death, and burial of Jesus) on a Friday, which was (until sunset) the fifteenth of Nisan, Passover Day. The Sabbath, which followed, was the sixteenth of Nisan.¹⁵⁷

Nevertheless, several passages in the Gospel of John have cast some doubt on this identification. These texts seem to imply that the Jews were not scheduled to partake of their Passover meal until Friday evening (after Jesus had died). However, some scholars argue that the Jews may have used two different methods of reckoning time. One followed by the

¹⁵⁶Meier, 389.

¹⁵⁷Meier, 389-390.

Synoptic writers, the other by John and that Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples a day ahead of the official Jewish date. But it does not fully and satisfactorily reconcile the Johannine and Synoptic accounts. Whatever chronology of the Last Supper is adopted, it seems clear that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper by associating it with the third cup of wine, which came after the Passover meal was eaten (1 Cor 11:25). It was known as the cup of redemption, which rabbinic tradition likened to the third of the fourfold promises of redemption in Exodus 6:6-7, "I will redeem you."¹⁵⁸

So Jesus associated this cup of wine with His atoning death (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25); "He refused, however, to drink the fourth cup (Mark 14:24; Mishnah, Pesahim 10:7), referred to as the 'cup of consummation' (Exod 6:7) based on the promise that God will take His own people to be with Him."¹⁵⁹ The unfinished meal of Jesus was a pledge that redemption would be consummated at that future messianic banquet when He takes the cup and drinks it anew in the Kingdom of God (Mark 14:25; Matt 26:29; Rev 3:20; 19:6-9). The Lord's Supper concluded with the singing of a hymn (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26), doubtless the second half of the Hallel (Ps 115-118).¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸The Mishnah, which is a philosophical law code covering topics of both theoretical and practical character, explains that on the eve of Passover, even the poorest in Israel must not eat unless he sits down to table, and they must not give them less than four cups of wine to divide. See Mishnah (Pesahim) 10:1-7. (*The Mishnah*, trans. Herbert Danby [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933], 150-151).

¹⁵⁹Marvin R. Wilson, *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 245-246.

¹⁶⁰Wilson, 247.

Finally, even if the Last Supper was eaten the day before Passover, the language of the Synoptic Gospels indicates that Jesus and His disciples celebrated it as a Passover meal. The only difference then would have been the absence of the lamb, and since this does not figure in the symbolism of the meal, the substance of what follows still stands.¹⁶¹ Again, it is a clearly argued issue whether the Last Supper was a genuine Passover meal or not, but whichever view of the matter is taken, it is impossible to escape the obvious Paschal significance that Jesus gave to the bread and the wine. There is thus a close and dominant stand of New Testament teaching that associated Christ with the Exodus tradition and in particular that viewed His death as a fulfillment of the meaning of the original Passover.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹R. Routledge, "Passover and Last Supper," *Tyndale Bulletin* 53, no. 2 (2002): 4.

¹⁶²J. K. Howard, "Passover and Eucharist in the Fourth Gospel," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 20 S (1967): 329-330. *ATLA Religious Database*, EBSCOhost (30 March 2007).

Appendix B:

THE PASSOVER

Passover, named in Hebrew *Pesach*, is the oldest and most widely celebrated holy day of all Jewish festivals. According to a statistic from Academic Search Premier, the percentage of American Jews who attend a Passover Seder is 73 percent, followed by the Fast of Yom Kippur with 59 percent.¹⁶³

Passover is celebrated in the Hebrew month of *Nissan*, which comes from the Babylonian word *Nisanu*, which means “to start.” The entire events that narrate the freedom of Israel from Egypt condensate in a Passover book called the *Haggadah*, which is read during a special meal called the *Seder*.¹⁶⁴ On Passover eve, the whole family gathers at the dinner table for the traditional *Seder*. Both a meal and a worship service, the *Seder* is celebrated with prayers, songs, and blessing performed in a given order. In fact, *Seder* is the Hebrew word for “order.” The appointed order for *Seder* ceremonies is contained in the *Haggadah*. The word comes from the Hebrew word which means “telling,” and the Passover service is based on the Biblical passage of Exodus 13:8.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³“Passover Is Peak Jewish Observance,” *USA Today* 14 April 2003 in *Academic Search Premier* [database on-line], accession no J0E251 290208103, accessed September 21, 2005.

¹⁶⁴Rev. J. A. Pike, *Your Neighbor Celebrates* (New York: Friendly House Publishers, 1957), 106.

¹⁶⁵B. Rush, *The Jewish Year* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1992), 41.

Once more, the *Seder* is a meal as well as a religious service, and very special foods adorn the table. Food and ceremonial objects help retell the history of the Jews' liberation from slavery. For instance, the unleavened *matzoth* represents the bread which the Jews ate on their hurried flight from Egypt. The bitter herbs are a reminder of the bitterness of slavery. The mixture of chopped apple, nuts, cinnamon, and wine represent the mortar with which the Jews made the bricks for Pharaoh's great cities, and so on.

The *Pesach* began as a simple shepherd feast and later became a national holiday, marking the birth of the Jewish nation. At the same time, the *Pesach* was developed into an agricultural festival.¹⁶⁶ Originally, *Pesach* was a seven-day festival, but the roots of *Pesach* came from "those pre-historic days when Jews were still tribes of shepherds wandering in the desert."¹⁶⁷ Every member of the family took part in the observance of this festival, which was featured by the sacrifice of a sheep or goat from the flock. The primitive nomads knew why the sacrifice that was so hastily eaten and the festival with which it was connected were called *Pesach*. It was not till a long time later that the meaning of the word was lost and a new interpretation given to it.¹⁶⁸ The earlier ceremony was held at night and ended in the morning. Also, it was a family festival, conducted by the head of the family. Another form of spring festival was observed, called "the Festival of Matzos" (Unleavened Bread), and a new meaning evolved from the *Pesach* eve ceremonies.

¹⁶⁶B. H. Edidin, *Jewish Holidays and Festivals* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1993), 131.

¹⁶⁷H. Shauss, *The Jewish Festivals* (New York, Schocken Books, 1996), 39.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 40.

Moreover, the real importance of the holiday, however, centered in the ceremony of the *Omer*, the first sheaf of barley that was offered to the priest on the first day of the harvest as a sacrifice, as a gift to God, for all people in those days had the belief that everything that man used belonged to the gods and they must, therefore, offer the best of everything, the very first, to these gods as a gift. Again, there was more than just this one seasonal, agricultural festival observed by the Jews in Palestine. In addition to the Festival of Unleavened Bread they also observed the Festival of Harvest (*Shovuos*) and the Feast of Ingathering (*Sukkos*). These three occasions were the greatest and most festive holidays of the year and were always observed in a sanctuary. So, when the Jews came to Egypt, the transition of a new meaning of *Pesach* took place. The memory of exodus from Egypt burned brightly in the minds of the Jews. It was in their memory that they left the land of Pharaohs in the first spring month of the year. All the customs and ceremonies that were bound up with *Pesach* and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were then reinterpreted and became associated with the deliverance from Egypt. *Pesach*, for instance, was declared to mean "passing by" or "passing over," and the holiday was called by that name because God passed over the Jewish homes when He slew the firstborn of Egypt.¹⁶⁹

The quickly baked Matzos, according to the new interpretation, were eaten because the Jews were in such a hurry to get out of Egypt that they had no time to leaven their bread and bake it properly. The bitter herbs eaten on *Pesach* eve were declared to be reminders of the bitterness of the Jewish lot in Egypt. Even the fruit salad of the *Pesach* night, the *Charoses*, was in later times bound up with deliverance. It

¹⁶⁹Ibid., 41.

was considered symbolic of the mortar mixed by the Jews when they were slaves in Egypt.¹⁷⁰

Further, in order to remember *Pesach* as the Festival of Freedom, the Hebrews observed the *Paschal* lamb ceremony. This feast reminded them of the sacrifice every family offered on the night preceding the departure from Egypt. So *Pesach* became a two-fold holiday—the Feast of Freedom and the Spring Agricultural Festival, with both meanings symbolized by the *Paschal* lamb, by the *Omer* ceremony, as well as by the *Matzot*.¹⁷¹ In short, the Hebrew Passover has a chronological origin that involves the whole issue in two special ways. The first allusion to the Passover narrated in the historical documents occurs at the very outset of Israel's settlement in Canaan. The children of Israel are said to have performed ceremonies of ritual purification and to have crossed the Jordan by means of a miracle on the tenth day of the first month. This was the time of the spring harvest. The second allusion to the Passover is in what are called the traditional documents founded in the *Pentateuch*.¹⁷²

However, the most exhaustive analysis of the Passover in recent times is by Beer.¹⁷³ Beer maintains that the Israelites in Canaan celebrated simultaneously, but independently, three springtime festivals. One was the *Pesach*, a nocturnal firstlings sacrifice held at the full moon; another was the *Massoth* festival at the full moon before the spring harvest; and the third spring festival was the offering of a Sheaf of

¹⁷⁰Ibid., 44.

¹⁷¹Eididin, 133-134.

¹⁷²J. B. Segal, *The Hebrew Passover* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 3, 42, 78.

¹⁷³Ibid., 78.

Barley at local shrines held whenever the crops were sufficiently advanced.¹⁷⁴ In addition, the problem of the origin of Passover has been a subject of considerable interest in a variety of academic disciplines. It has been said that the Jewish Passover was seen as an amalgam of two distinct festivals, one typical of the Israelites with nomadic-pastoral features, and the other typical of the Canaanites and their sedentary way of life and agricultural custom. The period of using the unleavened bread was usually taken to represent the agricultural feast, while the ritual performed on its preliminary day with the characteristic animal sacrifice was explained as a heritage from the nomadic pastoral part of the Israelites.¹⁷⁵ Further, there is also the possibility that Passover sacrifice was a family feast while Unleavened Bread was a temple festival and that the two were combined.¹⁷⁶

It has been said that the Passover represents three symbols: first, *Pesach* (the bone or beet) which is the Passover of sacrifice. Here the Hebrew word for sacrifice is *korban*, from the root meaning "near." So, offering a sacrifice draws people closer to God. Second, *Matzah*, the uncooked dough is a reminder that when the opportunity for liberation comes, people have to seize it even if they do not feel fully prepared. And third, *Maror* (the bitter herbs), which mean that people do not have to pass onto others the cruelty that was done to them.¹⁷⁷ Moreover, the document literary called *Mishnah* says

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 79.

¹⁷⁵Tamara, P. "Origin of Passover," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 13, no. 1 (1999), in *Academic Search Premier* [database on-line], accessed September 21, 2005.

¹⁷⁶Ibid.

¹⁷⁷Rabbi Michael Lerner, "Tikkun Passover Supplement 2004" *Tikkun* 19, no. 2 (2004), in *Academic Search Premier*, accession no 12509167, accessed September 21, 2005.

that *Pesach* is equal to the *paschal* lamb, because the Omnipresent skipped over the houses of the Israelites' ancestors in Egypt. *Massah* is equal to unreleased bread because they were redeemed, and *Merorim* is equal to bitter herbs because the Egyptians embittered the lives of their Israelite ancestors in Egypt. In addition, three distinct forces were involved in shaping the Passover *Seder* and the formation of earlier rabbinic Judaism in general. The first force was the Bible; the second was the historical situation, which meant that Jews in general and early rabbinic authorities in particular had to adjust to the end of the temple cult while maintaining a sense of continuity with the past and a faith in the viability of essential cultic elements; and the third force was that the Jews naturally participated in the wider culture, employing and adapting various Hellenistic forms, which to them may not have seemed foreign.¹⁷⁸

Objectives of Passover

The religious and educational objectives of both phases of Passover are given in the Bible as follows:

1. To teach our children that they have the intervention of God, which brought about the redemption of the Jews in Egypt (Ex. 10:2; Deut. 7:18).
2. To recount the wondrous miracles God performed in Egypt as evidence of His intervention (Ex. 10:2; 13:14; Deut. 4:34, 10:21).
3. To recall the miraculous escape of the Jews from the plagues which had smitten the Eryp-

¹⁷⁸B. M. Bokser, *The Origin of the Seder, The Passover Rite and Earlier Rabbinic Judaism* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 12.

- tians as further evidence of God's divine intervention (Ex. 12:13, 14:23-24; Deut. 7:22-23).
4. To remember that God's intervention was the result of the Jewish profession of faith (Ex. 13:8).
 5. To acknowledge that God's intervention was a result of His promise to the patriarchs upon the conclusion of the covenant (Deut. 4:37, 7:8).
 6. To perceive the ultimate objective of the exodus as a preliminary to Israelites' attainment of nationhood in their own land and the exercise of freedom of religion (Deut. 11:8).
 7. To realize that the account of the exodus must be an everlasting reminder of their duty to observe God's commandments (Deut. 10:20-21).
 8. To realize that the account of the exodus is an everlasting assurance that the Almighty will smite all enemies of the Jews, provided the covenant remains inviolate (Deut. 7:19).
 9. To be ever appreciative of one's status and material condition by recalling the poverty of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt (Deut. 6:12).
 10. To be ever sympathetic to the destitute and the enslaved by recalling the bitter lot of our ancestors in Egypt (Deut. 5:15, 16:12).
 11. To relate the story of the exodus to our children in order to implement the historic objectives of Passover (Ex. 13:8).

The greater part of the foregoing objectives was reflected in the symbolism of the *paschal* lamb, *matzah*, and bitter herbs.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹Ibid., 79.

The Jewish religion affirms that life is the here and now. At the same time, Jewish traditions insist that the final good of paradise regained is equally worthy of our loyalty and efforts. Judaism is the Jewish way of getting humanity from the world as it is now to the world of final perfection. To get from here to there, both the goal and the long haul of history is needed. In Judaism, the holidays supply both. The exodus is the core event of Jewish history and religion. The central moment of Jewish-religious history is *yetziat mizrayim*, exodus from Egypt. The exodus is brought into life and incorporated into personal and national values.¹⁸⁰ Again, Passover is the marking of liberation, and *Sukkot*, commemorating the journey; both are the alpine events in the Hebrew calendar. However, *Shavout* marks the second great historical experience of the Jews as a people—the experience of revelation. “Shavuot is the closure of the Passover holiday.”¹⁸¹ On this day the constitution of the newly liberated people, the *Torah*, was promulgated.

The Passover laws are intended to make this festival a significant experience for young and old and, on occasion, to express to God gratitude for the bounteous freedom that He has given to His people.¹⁸² So the laws of Passover aim to rule all things related to the wheat for unleavened bread, the breaking of the unleavened bread, the enriched unleavened bread, and the order of the Passover eve.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰A. P. Bloch, *The Biblical & Historical Background of the Jewish Holy Days* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1978), 117-118.

¹⁸¹Rabbi I. Greenberg, *The Jewish Way* (New York: Summit Book, 1988), 24-25.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, 26

¹⁸³P. Goodman, *The Passover Anthology* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 168.

Passover curiosities

Names. The festival of Passover is generally known by three names, each with a distinctive significance: *Hag ha Matzot*, feast of the unleavened bread (Ex. 23:15); *Hag ha Pesach*, festival of the *paschal* offering; and *Zeman Herutenu*, season of their freedom. The “Passover of the crushed” is a strange designation given in two particular years during the times of the temple. The *calendrical formulations* refer to the Jewish calendar formulation so that the first day of Passover never falls on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday. The number four plays a significant role in the *Haggadah* and the *Seder* ceremonial.¹⁸⁴ Further, the *paschal* sacrifice, the sacrificing of a lamb on the eve of the Passover, was introduced during the first century of the common era by Theudas. Theudas was the most prominent member of the Jewish community of Rome, and though well-intentioned, was apparently void of Jewish learning. This led the rabbinical authorities in Palestine to rebuke him for this practice. It was permitted only in the temple of Jerusalem.¹⁸⁵

Passover in biblical narratives

Passover appears in a variety of texts in the Old Testament. It is a concern of some narrative, instruction, list, and law. “In narrative there are the Passover in Egypt before the exodus (Ex. 12), the Passover on Sinai (Num. 9:4-6), the Passover immediately after entering Canaan (Jos. 5:10-12), the mentioning of the Passover within the context of the account of Solomon’s reign (Kgs. 9:25; 2 Chron. 8:12-13), Hezekiah’s Passover (2 Chron. 30), Josiah’s Passover (2 Kgs. 21-22; 2 Chron. 35:1-19), and the Passover after the return from exile

¹⁸⁴Ibid., 176.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., 376.

(Ezra. 6:19-22). The legislative texts all come from the *Pentateuch* with the exception of the one in Ezekiel (Ezek. 45:21-24).¹⁸⁶ Further, there is a mention of a second Passover in the Bible (Num. 9:9-12). The mention of the second Passover is registered in the days of King Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:1-5, 13-27).¹⁸⁷

Finally, it is an important highlight that the culmination of Josiah's reform (2 Kgs. 23:21-23) records the celebration of a unique Passover festival. The Passover festival was transformed from a private family feast to a celebration only at the national sanctuary in Jerusalem. The sociological explanation for Josiah's transformation of the Passover is the subject of Naka-Nose's study. He concludes that Josiah's reform progressed in two stages: the exclusive worship of Yahweh, which seems to have been related to anti-Assyrian movements; and the centralization of the cult, which had its sociological roots in the court circle. So Josiah's reform is present as a religious movement undertaken in pious and exclusive loyalty to Yahweh, ignoring the way the reform translated the Passover into socioeconomic, political, and ideological power for the ruling elite's control over the present populace. In short, Naka-Nose's study is invaluable for drawing attention to the economic, social, and political dimensions of Josiah's Passover and reform.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶Preston, V. "Passover in Biblical Narratives," *Tamara Prosic, Australia*, in Academic Search Premier [database on-line], accessed September 21, 2005.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸Ronald A. Simkins, "Book Reviews and Short Notices" 57, no. 2 (1995), in *Academic Search Premier*, accession no 0008-7912, accessed September 21, 2005.

Appendix C:

A THESIS PROPOSAL ON: THE HISTORICAL
BACKGROUND OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AND ITS
OBSERVANCE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The present study focuses on the Hebrew meaning of the Lord's Supper in the Old Testament and its observance among the Early Church. Chapter one focuses on portraying the Passover in the historical documents, biblical and post-biblical, that give account of it. The Passover rites were divinely ordained as a permanent reminder of God's deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage. However, there is a critical viewpoint to two distinct festivals in the Hebrew Bible: the Feast of the Unleavened bread, a pastoral feast; and the Passover, an agricultural feast. Chapter two depicts the observance of the Passover in Jesus' time and its direct connection with the last supper. Jesus used the occasion of the Passover meal to establish the fulfillment of it; henceforth, the Lord's Supper would replace the Passover feast as a commemoration of an even greater deliverance. Chapter three explains the way the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the Early Church. The Early Church was faithful in observing this ritual, with right understanding and enjoyment of its benefits. Also, this chapter focuses on the Passover in the current time.

OUTLINE OF THESIS PROPOSAL

- I. Introduction
 - A. Statement of the Problem
 - B. Significance of the Study
- II. Origin of Passover
 - A. Evolving process
 - B. Exegetical analysis in Exodus 12:1-11
 - C. The Passover from Moses to Canaan.
- III. The Passover in Jesus' time
 - A. Factors that had influence in the observance of the Passover as a pilgrimage festival
 - B. The Passover through the Gospels
 - C. The elements of the Passover related to the elements of the Lord's Supper and its actual meaning
- IV. The Lord's Supper in the Early Church
 - A. The Lord's Supper celebration in the Early Church (every week communion).
 - B. Contrasting Good Friday versus Passover
 - C. The Passover in the current time
- V. Conclusion and Reflections

THESIS PROPOSAL

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AND ITS OBSERVANCE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Statement of the Problem

The Hebrew Bible uses different terms in connection with the Passover. Scripture combines the Passover sacrifice with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in post-biblical times, the two festivals were fully integrated as a single holiday.¹⁸⁹ On the other hand, in the New Testament, the Passover or “*to pavsca*” denotes different observances.¹⁹⁰ That is why it is a relevant topic to be investigated, in order to provide a better understanding of the origin and meaning of the Lord's Supper.

The Hebrew Bible uses different terms in connection with the Passover. Scripture combines the Passover sacrifice with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in post-biblical times, the two festivals were fully integrated as a single holiday.¹⁹¹ Generally speaking, the Passover, or *Pesah* in Hebrew, is the most ancient of all Jewish festivals. It is a national festival celebrating the freedom won by the Hebrew slaves from the Pharaoh of Egypt during the time of Moses.

¹⁸⁹Roth Cecil, ed., “Passover,” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 13 (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem, 1972), 170.

¹⁹⁰Friedrich Gerhard. “pavsca.” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 897.

¹⁹¹Roth Cecil, ed., “Passover.” *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, vol. 13, 170. (Jerusalem, Israel: Keter Publishing House Jerusalem, 1972), 170.

Although the Passover is connected with this event, it is apparent that long before the Exodus, pastoral tribes observed a festival in which they made sacrifices to God (Exod 5:1-13). However, the description of the Passover celebration in Exodus 12 contains several elements that may be seen as cult-like, and lay people acted as priests.

Thus, Exodus 12 provides a model for a home celebration around a meal, in which the central element is eating part of the paschal lamb. It was God Who gave explicit instructions about the sacrifice which would save Israel from the death of their firstborn children. Each family was to sacrifice a perfect lamb; also, each family was to mark its dwelling in a certain way with the blood of the sacrificed lamb (Exod 12:7). The Israelites were to prepare the lamb according to the detailed instructions and eat it ritually with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. A remarkable thing is that the regulations for celebrating the Passover scattered throughout the early books of the Bible, vary somewhat and they show signs of development. For instance, the Passover during Jesus' time seems to have been regulated by a different tradition than its origin.

On the other hand, in the New Testament, the Passover or "*tó pavsca*" denotes different observances.¹⁹² On the eve of Jesus' death, He showed to His disciples the full meaning and symbolism of the Passover memorial. The picture of that Last Supper will be investigated in thesis because the account of the Scripture is compared with an ancient order of the Passover service:

The Gospel account of the Last Supper mentions only two of the four Seder cups – the first and the third. According

¹⁹²Friedrich Gerhard, "*tó pavsca*," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5, 897.

to early Jewish tradition, these two were the most important. The first cup was special because it consecrated the entire Passover ritual that followed. But the Mishnah states that the third cup was the most significant of all.¹⁹³ That is why this thesis is a relevant topic to be investigated and answered in order to provide a better understanding of the origin and meaning of the Lord's Supper.

Thesis statement

This thesis investigates the historical background of the Lord's Supper and its observance in the Early Church in order to provide a better understanding of the practice, meaning, and benefits of this Christian ritual today.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to analyze the relation between the Passover and the Lord's Supper. The objective of this analysis is to bring a better understanding of the observance of the Lord's Supper. Because the Passover is a powerful symbol in the Bible and has a direct connection with the Lord's Supper, the Christian community that celebrates the Passover in the Jewish context should realize that celebrating the Passover with Jesus as the Passover sacrifice must engage in behavior appropriate to the Passover festival. Thus, the purpose of this research is to analyze the relationship and connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper. Also, this thesis will analyze the practice of the Lord's Supper among the Early Church. The objective of this analysis is to bring a better understanding of the observance of the Lord's Supper.

¹⁹³Cecil Rosen and Moishe Rosen, *Christ in the Passover, Why is this Night Different?* (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute, 1978), 59.

Objectives and Significance

The Bible states: “Get wisdom! Get understanding!” (Prov 4:5), and “A man of understanding walks uprightly” (Prov 15:21). Getting a better understanding of what the Lord’s Supper means will improve the commemoration of this Christian ritual and reinforce the relationship between God and the believer. Christians will approach this observance with faith, receiving the life and healing it provides. This better understanding will help to embrace a true devotion, developing an intimate relationship with the living God.

The Passover and its customs should serve as a model for Christian community and life because Jesus Christ stands at the middle of the Passover. Christians should eagerly clean out the old leaven and zealously guard their pure, unleavened state in preparation for Passover, because the climax of the Passover meal is ready to be consumed. That sacrificial victim ready for consumption is, of course, Christ. The Passover meal celebrated by Christians as their main act of worship remembers the death and resurrection of Jesus, Who is now available to the community in the new Passover, called by the Catholic Church, the Eucharist. The Gospel interpretation of Jesus’ death and resurrection through the Passover feast is expanded by Paul in his letters to the Corinthians. As Jews prepare their houses for the Passover each year, Christians must prepare their communities.

Delimitations

This thesis attempts to show the origin of the Lord’s Supper in the Hebrew observance of the Passover and how it has been passed on to the Early Church to be celebrated. The passage selected from the Scripture to depict this important connection between the Lord’s Supper and the Passover is Luke 22:15-20. The reason for this selection, and no other Gospel, is because Luke has a number of traditions concerning

the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus which are not found in the other Gospels. For example, Luke tells the story of Jesus giving His disciples the bread and wine twice (22:15-20).

From this passage in Luke, this thesis will investigate the historical relationship between the Lord's Supper and the Passover. This study will go back to the primitive origin of the Passover until Jesus' time in order to bring a better understanding on the Lord's Supper observance, and also to highlight the importance of this observance among Christians. Because the Passover has a Hebrew background, this thesis will focus primarily on Jewish literature or documents with authoritative knowledge on the Hebrew context of the Passover. Finally, this thesis does not intend to discuss any doctrinal viewpoint about the Lord's Supper and does not assume any presumption about it. The main motif in this study will primarily be with its historical background.

Limitation of Study

The sources available about the Passover during the New Testament era come largely from the writings of Josephus: the *Mishnah (Pesahim)*, and the *New Testament* itself. There is a limitation on primary sources available for Jesus' time and the Passover. This fact, eventually, will become a hindrance to this thesis.

Definition of Terms

What is called the Lord's Supper in the Gospels was really the last supper of Jesus with His disciples. In Jewish background, it was really the commemoration of the Passover. In the Catholic Church, it is also called Eucharist.

The phrase "the Lord's Supper" is derived from the Greek *kyriakon deipnon*, which is found in First Corinthians

11:20. *Kyriakos* means something like “belonging to the *kyrios* (lord)” or “owned by the *kyrios*.” *Deipnon* was what the Greeks called the “meal of the day,” eaten in the late afternoon or evening.¹⁹⁴ *Deipnon* also designated the festival meal or banquet (in the New Testament, e.g., Mark 6:21; Luke 14:16, 17, 24). In First Corinthians 11:17-34, Paul based the Lord’s Supper on the last supper Jesus ate with His disciples, right before his crucifixion. According to the New Testament, Jesus of Nazareth was present at a final meal with His disciples. This was the Last Supper (Mark 14:22-25; Matt 26:26-29; Luke 22:15-20). Generally speaking, *kyriakon deipnon* (1 Cor 11:20) is also closely related in meaning to the phrase the “table of the Lord” [*trapeze kyriou*] (1 Cor 10:21).¹⁹⁵

The institution of the Lord’s Supper has handed down to the Christian Church in the following scripture passages: Mark 14:22-25; Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22:15-20; and First Corinthians 11:23-25. The Lord’s Supper in the primitive Church was certainly not just the continuation of the disciples’ daily table-fellowship with the earthly Jews. The Synoptic Gospels identify the Last Supper as a Passover meal (Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:15). Thus, Jesus ate His final meal in a Passover atmosphere. The Last Supper took place in the evening and extended into the night (1 Cor 11:23; Mark 14:7; John 13:30), when it was obligatory that the Passover be eaten. In fact, Jesus and His disciples reclined at the Last Supper right before Jesus’ crucifixion. Biblical references to

¹⁹⁴David N. Freedman, “Lord’s Supper,” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 4 (New York: ABD Doubleday, 1992), 362.

¹⁹⁵Colin Brown, “Lord’s Supper,” *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), 522.

how it was celebrated make the suggestion that it was really done in a Passover context (Mark 14:20; Matt 26:23; John 13:26).¹⁹⁶

In addition, the Lord's Supper, comprised of word and action, is a realistic proclamation of the past death of Christ on the cross. There, the present Lord is the crucified and the coming one at the same time. Thus, the practice of the Lord's Supper in the Early Church was based on a historical event in the life of Jesus. One important thing to take into account is that it was the farewell banquet that Jesus celebrated with His disciples in the face of His death and which He used as the occasion to explain the sacrificial service of His life in word and action. At the same time, this last meal constituted the final point in the continuous practice of participation in meals throughout the public ministry of Jesus.

Moreover, the riches and importance of the Lord's Supper in Christianity are conveyed by the various names given to it. It has been called both a sacrament and an ordinance of Christ. In terms of its origin in history, it is called "the last supper." As an act of thanksgiving by the Church, it is called the Eucharist, from the Greek term *Eucharistein/eulegein*. From its Jewish-Christian origins, it is the breaking of bread and the memorial of the Lord's passion and resurrection. In patristic development, it is the Holy Sacrifice because it mysteriously makes present the one unique sacrifice of Christ and includes the Church's offering. It is also called the Holy and Divine liturgy because the whole worship of the Church finds its center in the celebration of this sacred mystery. Within the liturgy, it is called the bread of angels, the bread from heaven, and the medicine of immortality. It is also holy communion since it is union with Christ. Finally, since the liturgy ends with the sending forth of the faithful to fulfill

¹⁹⁶Freedman, "Lord's Supper", vol. 4, 236.

God's will in their lives, it is called the mass. Again, the majority opinion has been and remains that the Lord Jesus ate the Passover meal with His disciples on Thursday evening (the beginning of Nissan 15), and when doing, so instituted the Lord's Supper. He was then crucified on Friday. However, since John's Gospel affirms that Jesus was crucified in the afternoon of Nissan 14 when the *paschal* lambs were being sacrificed in the Temple (18:28), the last supper seems to be a pre-Passover meal the night before—at the beginning of Nissan 14. Nevertheless, it is assumed that the Lord's Supper originated in the context of the Passover.¹⁹⁷

Another important consideration of the Lord's Supper is taken from the *New Theological Dictionary*:

In the NT to *pavsca* denotes a. the (seven day) Jewish feast of the Passover, b. Only rarely does it have a narrower sense and on the basis of OT usage denotes the actual Passover (held on the night of the 15th Nissan), c. As in the OT, it may then be used for the Passover lamb slain at mid-day on the 14th of Nissan in the forecourt of the Temple at Jerusalem and then eaten after sundown, d. In Christian usage, Easter is called *pavsca*, and figuratively (from the time of Luke 22:15f.), the term can also be used for the 'eschatological banquet' (from the time of Marcion) for the 'Lord's Supper,' and (from the time of Dg.) for the *Parousia*.¹⁹⁸

The last term that needs to be defined due to its relevant importance in this thesis is the Passover. The word Passover comes from the Hebrew word *Pesaḥ*. The basic meaning of *Pesaḥ* expands to refer to the cultic observance during the night of Passover. In early traditions, quite inde-

¹⁹⁷ Walter A. Elwell, ed., "Lord's Supper," *Theological Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 49-493.

¹⁹⁸ Freedman, "pavsca," vol. 5, 897-898.

pendent of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread and after the two observances, the Passover came to be associated with or functioned as a dual celebration along with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was only in popular usage during the late Israelite period that Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread came to be designated collectively as *Pesaḥ*. Also, the term *Pesaḥ* can be transferred to the animal slaughtered in this cultic observance. The LXX translates *Pesaḥ* in Exodus 12:13 and 27 as *skepavzein* (protect), and in 12:23 as *parevrchesthai* (pass by), and *pāsōah* in Isaiah 31:5 as *peripoiēsetai* (rescue). Finally, the LXX transliterates Hebrew word *Pesaḥ* as *phavsek/phavsech* (2 Cor 30:25), and the Aramaic *Pesaḥā* (late form *Pesaḥā* as *pavscha*).¹⁹⁹

Moreover, the Hebrew Bible uses three terms in connection with Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread: *Pesaḥ*, *hag*, and *Mazzoth*. The term *Pesaḥ* denotes the Passover offering and, more generally, the feast centered in that sacrifice, which was eaten at night (the Passover meal) that comprised a holiday in its own right was Passover or the Festival of the Passover Offering. This term appears beside another technical term for a festival, *hag* = *Feast* (only in Exodus 34:25). The word *pesah* has been connected with a Hebrew verb meaning “protect” (Isa 31:5) or “limp” or “skip” (2 Sam 4:4; 1 Kgs 18:21, 26) as well as with roots in other languages such as the Akkadian, *passahu*, which means “makes soft, supple, soothe, placate” or the Egyptian masculine article followed by *sh/=*, meaning the “commemoration,” as *’sh/* (*poseh/*), the “harvest,” *ś/h/*, “the blow,” or the Arabic *fsh/* “separate.” The word *massōt*, appearing with or without

¹⁹⁹Johannes G. Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, Fabry Heinz-Josef, eds. “*Pesaḥ*” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 7-9.

the word *hag*, denotes either Unleavened Bread or the Feast of Unleavened Bread.²⁰⁰

The Hebrew Bible employs the terms *pesah* and *massôt* to refer to two celebrations that mark the Exodus from Egypt, and the Scripture assumes they are combined. These Festivals became not only powerful symbols of hope and redemption but also central religious experiences in the life of Israel and of people who identified with biblical Israel. In post-biblical times, when the two festivals were fully intertwined, the terms were used interchangeably. In the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Passover is portrayed through six stages in the history of the festival that fall within the understanding of the Passover Feast: (1) the pre-history of the festival of *pesah* and *massôt*, (2) the biblical joining of the two festivals, (3) the transformation of the festivals into aspects of a pilgrimage holiday, (4) later biblical trends enhancing the character of the festivals as national celebrations, (5) New Testament and early Christian development, and (6) early rabbinic transformations adapting the holiday to the loss of the Passover offering.²⁰¹

Methodology

This thesis will examine the origin of the Passover in history, then in Hebrew Biblical records, and finally, in its observance in the New Testament. In order to depict the historical connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper, the scripture chosen in this thesis is Luke 22:15-20. Luke here is using his narrative technique to report the historical event of the Last Supper celebrated by Jesus and His

²⁰⁰David N. Freedman, "Unleavened Bread and Passover, Feast of," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6 (New York: ABD Doubleday, 1992), 755.

²⁰¹Freedman, "Unleavened Bread and Passover, Feast of," vol. 6, 755-756.

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twelve disciples. From this historical event, this thesis will explore the interrelation between the Passover and the Lord's Supper in three main sections.

The first section will deal with the allusion to the Passover in the historical document that gives account of the Passover and its origin and its evolving process in becoming an important festival among the Jews. The Passover in Exodus 12:1-11 will be exegetically analyzed. In this investigation, an analysis within the observance of the Passover from Moses to Canaan following the biblical narrative will be made.

The second section will deal with the observance of the Passover in Jesus' time. This section will portray the socio-economical, cultural, and religious factors that had influence in the observance of the Passover as a pilgrimage festival. Also in this section, the author will study the Passover sacrifice and the meal that was celebrated only in Jerusalem at this time because the animal eaten at the meal (a lamb or a goat) had to be slaughtered in the Temple. Briefly, this section will explore what elements of the Passover are related to the Lord's Supper and its actual meaning to the Church. Finally, in this second section, an analysis of Jesus' Last Supper as narrated through the Gospels and a detailed comparison that is parallel with relevant rabbinic literature will be made.

The third section of this thesis will focus on how and when the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the Early Church. Also, this investigation will explore the origin of Good Friday as an annual celebration in the Christians' world as an equivalent transference from the annual Hebrew celebration of the Passover. Finally, this thesis will conclude with a brief investigation regarding the Passover in the current time.

Presuppositions

This thesis presupposes that the Last Supper of Jesus with His disciples, narrated in the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, was really the celebration of the Passover. It also presupposes that the Passover was originally a domestic ceremony and not a pilgrimage feast. Finally, it is presupposed that the understanding of the Hebrew background as a heritage of the Lord's Supper, is the key to understand its meaning and significance.

ANNOTATED/WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

Danby, Herbert, ed. *The Mishnah*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1933.

The Mishnah is a philosophical law code, covering topics of both a theoretical and practical character. It was produced about 200 C.E. under the sponsorship of Judah. It comprises sixty-two tractates, divided by topics among six divisions: (1) Agriculture (zraram—seeds), (2) Appointed times (moed—set feast), (3) Women (nashim—women), (4) Damages or civil law (nezikin—damages), (5) Holy things (kodashim—hallowed things), and (6) Purity (tohoroth cleanliness). The Mishnah may be defined as a deposit of four centuries of Jewish religious and cultural activity in Palestine, beginning at some uncertain date (possibly during the earlier half of the second century B.C.) and ending with the close of the second century A.D.

Flusser, David. *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Hebrew University, 1988.

In this book, the author compared various aspects of Jewish background to Christianity. It is divided into three parts. In Part I, the author aims to show a parallelism between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament. In Part II, Dr. Flusser reveals how the Christian Apocalyptic message is rooted in the context of the Jewish belief. And in Part III, vivid examples are given that show how Ancient Judaism influenced Christianity. The author works with the fact that Christianity emerged from Judaism. For both Jews and Christians, the Old Testament was (and is) an old doctrinal, saintly document and both peoples endeavored to interpret it in a similar humanistic way. Each of the three parts that compound this book represent a significant help in bringing understanding about the origin of Christianity in the first century.

Jeremias, Joachim. *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*. Translated by Norman Perrin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966.

Joachim Jeremiah in this book aims to present the historical evidence as the basis for a careful exegesis of the Eucharistic words. He divides his book into five main chapters. The author begins with an acute explanation about the major problem of the Lord's Supper and its relationship to the Passover and concludes with a detailed explanation of the meaning of the Eucharistic words of Jesus. Professor Jeremiah's work is by its nature rich in quotations from foreign languages, ancient and modern. Also, this present book has been thoroughly revised and much enlarged. Finally, it is a good source for research and a valuable help to those who carry on the ministry of the Word.

_____. *Jerusalem in the Times of Jesus*. Translated by F. H. and C. H. Cave. *Jerusalem Zur Zeit Jesu*. Philadelphia—Great Britain, 1969.

This book is an investigation into economic and social conditions during the New Testament period. It is divided into four parts. Part one depicts the economic conditions in the city of Jerusalem; part two points out the economic status. Part three is focused on the social status *per se* in the capital city of Jerusalem, and in part four, professor Jeremias concludes with a historical narrative about the maintenance of racial purity among the whole community of Judaism at the time of Jesus. This is a valuable source on the social condition during Jesus' time.

Josephus, Flavious. *The Life and Works of Flavious Josephus*. Translated by William Whilson. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Wnston.

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This original document that Josephus wrote has two main sections. The first is called "Antiquities of the Jews," which is compounded by twenty chapters. This first section begins with topics from the creation to the death of Isaac and ends with the topic of "from Fadus the Procurator to Horus." The second main section, called "Wars of the Jews," is compounded by seven chapters, beginning with the narrative of the taking of Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes to the death of Herod the Great. The last chapter of this book is developed with the narrative of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus to the sedition of the Jews at Cyrene. The works of Josephus may be placed on a level with the most esteemed monuments of ancient learning. This is a very good first source for any historical research.

LeCornu, Hilary with Joseph A. Shulam. "Acts 1:15." *A Commentary on the Jewish Roots of Acts*. Jerusalem, Israel: Academon, 1977.

This author wrote this commentary with the purpose of providing a reading of the text of Acts in its Jewish context. Volume I covers Chapters 1 through 15, and Volume II covers Chapters 16 through 28. The author assumes that the New Testament is a Jewish document reflective of the lifestyle and theology of the Jewish community of the Second Temple period. Thus, Hilary LeCornu in this commentary endeavors to demonstrate the Jewishness of the Book of Acts by demonstrating its first-century Jewish literary, historical, cultural, and theological context.

Schauss, Hayyim. *The Jewish Festival, History and Observance*. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregation, 1938.

Eight major festivals among the Jewish people are described in this book. Each major festival is introduced by its origin, followed by its development and an explanation in how

it is observed in modern times. Also, the author describes in the last chapter the minor festivals among the Jews and briefly explains why they are called minor. Most of the book's notes refer to the Babylonian Talmud. It is an authoritative book translated into English by Samuel Jaffe in 1938.

Segal, J. B. *The Hebrew Passover*. Vol. 12. London, England: Oxford University Press, 1963.

The author divides the content of this book into two parts. In Part I, the first two chapters depict an overview of historical sources and the tradition that represents relevant texts about the Passover, and in chapter three the author gives an exposition of modern theories on the origins and development of this important festival called Passover. Finally, in the second and last part of this book, the author writes four chapters. He portrays the Passover based on his own hypotheses concerning the festival, its origins, and development; also, through this book is given references of several works that treat some aspects of the Passover.

Shurer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)* Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, eds. Volumes I, II, III Part 1, and Vol. III Part 2). Edinburg, Great Britain: T. & T. Clark LTD., 1973.

These four volumes originally written by professor Schurer, at the present, offers good material for historical research. In volume I, the author depicts a first period designated from Antiochus Epiphanes to the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey and a second period designated from the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey to the Hadrianic war. Volume II depicts the cultural, political, and the religious situation in the age of Jesus. In volume III part one, the author's focus is upon the Jewish literature and the writing of the Qumran community, and finally, volume III, part two, professor Schurer wrote about the Jewish literature making a profound revision in

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completion of biblical literature, pseudepigraphic apocalypses, biblical Midrash, and upon the Jewish philosopher Philo.

Wilson R. Marvin. *Our Father Abraham*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989.

In this book, Dr. Wilson Marvin reveals how the roots of Christianity run deep into Hebrew soil, showing the Hebrew heritage of the Christian Church to be rich and extensive. The book describes at the outset how this heritage has been largely unexplored/ignored by Christians through a biblical, historical, and cultural study. Also, the book examines what predecessors in the Judeo-Christian faith have delivered to the Church of today. The opening chapters of this work provide a historical perspective on the Jewish origin of the Church with the book going to great lengths to emphasize the fundamental truths that "Jesus Christ Himself was a Jew" and that the Bible declares "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:24). The work says that as far as the Gospel record is concerned, Jesus spoke from within Judaism and never abandoned His ancestral faith. The book also describes how a prime facet of Old Testament/Jewish thought was the promise and fulfillment of biblical prophecy in relation to the coming Messiah. Finally, it reveals the in-depth relationship of Christianity and its roots.

Appendix D:

A MESSIANIC PASSOVER HAGGADAH

The Order of Service as it appears in
the Haggadah (taken from different sources)



The Plate of Passover

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A MESSIANIC PASSOVER HAGGADAH

The Order of Service as it appears in the Haggadah

Kaddaysh: Recite the Kiddush	קדש
Urechatz: Wash the hands	ורחצ
Karpas: Eating of a green vegetable dipped in salt water	כרפס
Yachatz: Breaking of the middle matzah	יחצ
Maggid: Telling of the Passover story	מגיד
Rachatz: Washing of the hands before the meal	רחצ
Motzi: Blessing before eating bread	מוציא
Matzah: Blessing before eating unleavened bread	מצה
Maror: Eating of the bitter herbs	מרור
Korech: Hillel sandwich	כורך
Shulchan Orech: Eating of the meal	שלחן צור
Tzafun: Eating of the afikomen hidden during dinner	צפון
Boraych: Blessing after the meal	ברך
Hallel: Reciting of the Hallel	הלל
Nirtzah: Concluding the Seder	נרצה

Introduction:

The Scriptures intent of the Passover account sets forth that the narrative of God's people freedom must begin with the tale of their degradation and enslavement. It is only when we recall how bad things were that we can then realize how good things are. Originally, God's people were idol worshippers, but now the Omnipresent has brought them near to his service. Everyone must recognize that there is slavery, degradation: one that is not of maters holding whips, enforcing production quotas, murdering children and separating families. Idolatry, too, is a form of enslavement. When people choose idols that suit their own desires and concerns, such as the love of money, they are truly slaves – to their own passions.

To believers in Messiah Yeshua, the Passover feast has a meaning. Though we are not slaves to men, we were slaves to our own wants and desires. Sin had become our taskmaster. We had attend to its every want and desire, never experiencing rest, until Yeshua, our Passover Lamb, delivered us from our Egypt. We are told that when we tell the Passover story to our children, we should tell the Passover story to our children, we should tell the story as though we were there (Exodus 12:26-27) – as if we had actually made the bricks and taken the Exodus journey.

So, as we tell the Passover story, we should think we have all made that journey (Exodus 13:8). The Seder is a celebration of history – the past and the future. As God cared for the children of Israel in ancient times, he cares for all who are His today, as well as for those yet to come. Before we begin with the traditional Seder, here is some explanations about the

Passover. Why should we, as believers in Jesus, celebrate a biblical holiday - Passover?

- There are several reasons. God chose to reveal himself through a People--Israel, through creation, and through His Son Jesus.
- God Promised that through Abraham He would bless all nations, and through the nation of Israel would come the Messiah. Scripture says: "We know who we worship, salvation is of the Jew" (Genesis 12:1-3, John 4:22).

Passover was and is a shadow of what is to come. Through prophecy, God foretelling the future, that we may believe Him! (1 Corinthians 5:6-8). Scripture says all things that happened to Israel was an example for us (1 Corinthians 10:11).

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

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

The Bible tells us God did not choose Israel because they were the mightiest of nations or the largest. He simply chose them, as one would walk into an orphanage and say "I will take that child" (Deuteronomy7:8). We remember that Jesus is Jewish – And the early church was made of many Jews believers. It was at Jesus' last Passover that He instructed believers to keep the Lord's Supper, in remembrance of His sacrificial death on the Cross. The biblical Passover of today still points to Yeshua, the Hebrew way to say Jesus, as the Messiah. Yeshua, Jesus and Joshua are all the same word, meaning Salvation, Yahweh Saves.

The order of service

The order of service we will follow is from the Haggadah. Haggadah means "the Telling ". The Torah, the Five books of Moses, says in Exodus (13:8) "You shall tell your son of the Exodus.... ". Haggadah is the name of the many versions of books that Rabbis have written which tell of the Passover through the Seder dinner.

There are over 2000 versions, some dating back to the 1st century. The Passover Haggadah: A New English Translation and Instructions for the Seder by Rabbi Nathan Goldberg is one of the most recognizable Haggadah in English.²⁰² This has become a standard for most synagogues, schools, and homes. In this presentation we will take some suggestions from Rabbi Nathan Goldberg's Haggadah and others sources and authors such as Elisa Norman²⁰³, Barry Rubin and Steffi Rubin²⁰⁴, Susan Perlman²⁰⁵, Moishe Rosen and Ceil Rosen²⁰⁶,

²⁰² Rabbi Nathan Goldberg, Passover Haggadah: A New English Translation and Instructions for the Seder. Thousand Oaks, CA: BN Publishing, 2012.

²⁰³ Elisa Norman, Messianic Passover Haggadah: A family oriented Seder. Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Publishing, 2010.

²⁰⁴ Barry Rubin and Steffi Rubin. The Messianic Passover Haggadah. Clarksville, MD: Messianic Jewish Publisher, 2005.

Daniel W. Merrick²⁰⁷, Eric Lipson²⁰⁸, and Rav. David Pollina.²⁰⁹

The word Seder means "Order", as in order of service. This meal will be celebrated in the same ancient tradition that it has been through thousands of years, since the first Passover. In a Jewish Home, Passover is a special time of preparing and celebrating. The Mother cooks special foods, and brings out special plates and utensils. She also clears the house of all leavening materials. The children look forward to the Search for Leaven bread and the Seder Dinner.

Suggestions: Opening Prayer

Offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for the precious gift of God's only Son, Yeshua, and the powerful and deep symbols He has given to us in the Passover. Pray that each one is touched in a profound way by the message of redemption through the blood of the Lamb. This is Passover Seder. The word Seder is of Hebrew origin and it means "the order of service." This Passover observance is referred to as a Haggadah. The word Haggadah means "the telling". This comes from the Hebrew word that is found in the passage of Exodus 13:8: "On that day tell your son, I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt". Originally, the

²⁰⁵ Susan Perlman (Editor), *Messianic Family Haggadah*. San Francisco, CA: Purple Pomegranate Productions, 2007.

²⁰⁶ Moishe Rosen and Ceil Rosen. *Christ in the Passover*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2006.

²⁰⁷ Daniel W. Merrick. *Messianic Haggadah: Passover Seder Dinner*. Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Publishing, 2012.

²⁰⁸ Eric Lipson. *Passover Haggadah: A Messianic Celebration*. San Francisco, CA: Jews for Jesus, 1986.

²⁰⁹ Rav. David Pollina. *haRabah Haggadah - The Great Story: A Messianic First Century Passover Haggadah*. Mosta, Malta: Tushiyah Press, 2009.

Haggadah was brief, but each successive generation has added their own interpretations and embellishments. This Haggadah is different because it not only revolves around the story of redemption from slavery in Egypt, but it also celebrates Christian's redemption from sin by the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua (Jesus).

Jewish tradition teaches that in each generation, we must consider ourselves as having personally been freed from slavery in Egypt.

However, Jewish-Christina view will not only focus on the Exodus from Egypt but also to a large upper room in Jerusalem, Israel during the time of Jesus where we will re-enact the inauguration of the New Covenant. The Passover Seder is a family event and usually takes place in the home. In the days preceding Passover, a religious Jewish family would search their whole household and remove all leavened items (products with yeast) from their home. This is in keeping with the Biblical command that describes the steps necessary to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These commands are found in Exodus 12:19-29: "For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread". In addition to these preparations, it would also be necessary to purchase various foods and items to celebrate the Passover.

As followers of, and believers in Jesus, we should be reminded of the fact that the Scriptures often use leaven as a symbol of sin. As it is written in the first book written to the believers in Corinth: "Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast- as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival,

not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth." This is a call to make preparations in our heart. So, Passover is the Biblical feast from which we derive our Communion service. Therefore, it is important that we search out the leaven of sin in our lives and in doing so, we may keep the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. For it is written: "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup" (1 Cor 11:28).

In keeping with the Biblical commandment our Messiah, Yeshua (Jesus) also had preparations made in order to keep the Passover:

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover". "Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked. He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guestroom, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there." They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover (Luke 22:7 - 13).

Searching out the Chametz

In the Bible, leaven (chametz) is frequently used as a symbol for impurity or sin. Food items like bread, which contain leaven, are not permitted to be eaten on Passover because they are considered impure (Exodus 12:17-19). The Talmud says that leaven represents the evil impulse of the heart (Berachot 17a). We are told to examine ourselves to see if there is any leaven in our lives. 1 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) "Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be

a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”

One traditional, symbolic ritual of searching for chametz begins at nightfall on the evening before the Passover. The leavened bread is removed from the household with the exception of ten pieces which the woman or children of the house hide throughout the rooms of the house. The man of the house lights a candle, takes a feather, a wooden spoon, and a paper bag to search the house for chametz. When a piece is found, he uses the feather to sweep the chametz crumb onto the wooden spoon and then places it into the paper bag. This is done until all ten pieces are found. The bread is then taken outside and burned.

Afterwards this ceremonial prayer is said:

“Any chametz which is in my possession which I did not see and removed, nor know about, shall be nullified and become ownerless, like the dust of the earth.”

The lighting of the candles

According to tradition, Israel was redeemed from Egypt because the women of that generation were considered to be more righteous than the men. So, to begin the Seder, the woman of the household has the honor of lighting the festival lights.

Honored woman (Wife) will say the blessing in Hebrew then English.

(LIGHT the CANDLES and read blessing in Numbers 6:24-26).

(Woman's Lighting of candles)

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sent Thy Son, Thine Only Son, Yeshua the Messiah, to be the light of the world and our Paschal Lamb, that through him we might live. Amen.

(The opening Blessing) (Numbers 6:24-26 is read)

“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”.

According to tradition, the Passover Seder begins with the woman of the house lighting the Holiday candles and saying the blessing. (In lighting the candles the woman covers her head with a veil, lights the candles, encircles her hands over the lights three times, and then places her hand over her eyes and says the blessing.)

(A woman from each table lights the candles.)

Mothers:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו נמצוהו
וצונו להדליק נר של {שבת ו} יום טוב אמן

Baruch atah Adonai elohenu, melech ha olam, asher kidshanu b'mitz votav, v'tzvanu l'hadlik ner shel (Shabbat v') yom tov. Amen.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us through his Commandments and commanded us to kindle the (Sabbath and) festival lights. Amen.

(On the first night of Passover the Shehecheyanu is recited.)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקימנו והגייצנו
לזמן הזה

Baruch atah Adonai elohenu, melech ha olam, shehecheyanu,
v'kimanu, v'higianu lazman hazeh.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has
granted us life, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Let the Seder Begin

Introduction:

There are Four Cups of Wine

As we read through the Haggadah we see that we partake in
drinking from the cup of wine four times. These four cups
stand for the four "I wills" recorded in Exodus 6:6,7:

The Cup of Sanctification: "I will bring you out from under
the burdens of the Egyptians."

The Cup of Judgment: "I will rid you of their bondage."

The Cup of Redemption: "I will redeem you with an out-
stretched arm."

The Cup of Praise or Cup of consummation: "I will take
you as my own people."

The four cups of wine: (A brief explanation)

1) The Cup of Sanctification

All: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the
Egyptians."

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Host: For the believer, this represents freedom from the burden of sin.

2) The Cup of Deliverance or Judgment

All: "I will rid you of their bondage."

Host: There are none so enslaved as those who are slaves to sin.

3) The Cup of Redemption

All: "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm."

Host: Just as God redeemed us from Egypt with his outstretched arm, Yeshua redeemed us from the bondage of sin with his outstretched arms and the shedding of his blood.

4) The Cup of Praise or Cup of Consummation

All: "I will take you to me for a people and I will be your God."

Host: At Passover, we praise the Lord and celebrate these promises of redemption and relationship by drinking from our cups four times.

1. KIDDUSH

The first Cup: Cup of Sanctification

(Please fill the first cup).

Kiddush - First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification

The first cup is called "kiddush." Kiddush is Hebrew for sanctification. The act of sanctification is akin to an act of

separation. God said that He would bring the Israelites out (or separate them) from the burdens of the Egyptians. Indeed, it is an act of sanctification!

Instruction: At this point, the Host shall ask the people to people to raise the cup of the fruit of the vine. At this time it

should be explained that this cup will be drunk from four times during the evening - two times before the actual meal and two times after the meal, so they should take small sips.

The blessing over the wine:

Host:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, boray p'ree hagaphen

All:

Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Host:

The events that took place between Jesus and His disciples during the first cup are recorded in the Gospel according to Luke (Luke 22:14 - 18):

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God". After taking the cup, he gave thanks (he said the blessing) and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Host: The cup of sanctification represents the first “I will.” “I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians.” God promised here to deliver his people from the cruel laws of the Egyptians. It is also a promise to believers that God will bring us out from under the bondage of our sin. Every one of us at one time was a slave to sin. Though we may not have been slaves to men, the Scriptures tell us that we were servants to sin:

Romans 6:20 “For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness.”

(All raise the first cup.)

All: With this cup we now commit our observance of the Seder to the Lord and pray for his blessing on the rest of the service to follow.

Host: (Chants the Hebrew blessing.)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, boray pree hagafen.

All: (Recite the blessing in English):

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Kind of the Universe, who creates of the fruit of the vine. Amen.

Host: Let us drink the fruit of the vine together.

(On this night we recline. Reclining is the sign of a free man. While we were in our “Egypt”, we could not rest or be free from the bondage of the “Egyptians”. So it was with all of us before we accepted the Messiah).

2. URECHATZ

The Washing of Hands

Host: Concerning the events regarding the washing of the hands the following is recorded in John 13:5, 12-14.

After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

Instruction: For this ceremony, you will need (at the head table only...to save time) a small container of water, a small plate or basin, and a towel. The Host at the head table will take some of the water from the cup and pour it over his hands at the wash basin. Then he will wipe his hands with the towel.

NOTE: In very large groups, only the Host may want to wash.

Now for the Washing of Hands: (Exodus 40:29-32)

Blessed art thou, o Lord our God, king of the universe, who has sanctified us with Thy commandments and commanded us to wash the hands.

At the time of the first cup, during Yeshua's Last Passover, (Supper), the Bible tells us:

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“ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes" (Luke 22:13-18).

The washing of hands was customarily done by the servant or the slave of the house. But, it was at this time during the washing of hands the Bible tells us Yeshua.

Please read on the Washing (John 13:4-12).

So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them (John 13: 4-12).

Teaching:

Host: The ritual washing of the hands has been a part of the Jewish lifestyle since God commanded Aaron to wash his hands and feet before approaching the altar of the Lord.

Therefore, we wash our hands as a token of our desire to live a life of acceptable service to our Almighty God (Psalm 24:3-4). It was during the Passover Feast that Yeshua used this custom to teach his disciples a lesson in servant hood. John 13:5 tells us, “He laid aside His garments and took o towel, and girded Himself and began to wash the disciples’ feet.”

Ephesians 5:26 (KJV) “That He might sanctify and cleanse [the Believers] with the washing of water by the word.”

The story of Passover is not only a story of our physical deliverance from bondage; it is also a story of our spiritual deliverance. All the elements of the Passover Seder paint a portrait of that redemption.

Teaching:

(Lifting the basin of water)

Let us now offer the bowl of water to one another and share in this hand-washing ceremony. Please pass the bowl now.

As we lift the Seder plate, behold all the traditional symbols. The story of Passover is not only a story of our physical deliverance from bondage; it is also a story of our spiritual deliverance. All the elements of the Passover Seder paint a portrait of that redemption.

3. KARPAS

Eating of The Green Vegetable Dipped in Salt Water

(Karpas - Dipping of the Parsley)

Instruction: Instruct the "leader" at each table to locate the parsley, break off a sprig and dip it into the saltwater and give to each person at the table.

Host (leader): (Lifting up the parsley) The wine we drank was red in color and represents the blood of the Passover lamb.

This parsley represents the hyssop which the Israelites used to place the blood of the Passover Lamb upon the sides and tops of the doorframe of their house. It also represents life. The saltwater represents the tears shed in Egypt because life there was full of pain, suffering and tears (so, it represents the tears of life). Let us take a sprig of parsley and dip it into the salt water, remembering that life is sometimes immersed in tears.

The blessing of the Karpas:

ברוך אלהינו מלך הצולם בורא פרי האדמה

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, boray pree ha-adamah.

Let dip the parsley into the salt water, for truly, a life unredeemed is a life immersed in tears. (All participants take a piece of the parsley and dip it into the salt water).

All:

Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the earth.

Host: Now let us together eat the karpas.

Teaching:

The Eating of the Green Vegetable. Parsley to salt water. Green is a symbol of life and Springtime. The salt water is to remind us of the tears shed by the oppressed house of Israel in Egypt. With hyssop branches they sprinkled the blood of the lamb to their doorpost (Exodus 1:22). **This is the appetizer of the meal.**

The Symbols of Passover:

In the center of the Seder is the Seder Plate, a special plate. Each food on it has special symbolic meaning (hold up items).

- The Matzah, The Unleavened bread. The Israelites fleeing Egypt had no time for it to rise. It is the bread of affliction or the humble bread. The bread without leaven, made of fine wheat flour, water and oil (Exodus 29:7 & Deuteronomy 16:3).
- The Roasted Lamb Bone is a reminder of the Temple Sacrifice and the first Passover Lamb.
- Bitter Herbs recall the bitterness of slavery. Traditionally made of Horseradish, grated by hand by the man of the house till he sheds a tear. This makes up for the ones shed by the wife during the year.
- A Green Vegetable represents the hyssop branches used to apply the blood of the lamb to the doorpost. It is also considered a bitter herb (Exodus 12:22a). [The Rabbis say that sin like the bitter herb tastes sweet at first, then bitter (Hebrews 12:15 James 3:14)]
- The Clay of apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine, represents the bricks and mortar the Israelites were forced to

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make under Pharaoh's taskmasters [In ancient times, if no apples were available figs and dates were used] (Exodus 1:14).

- A Roasted Egg is a reminder of the Temple Holiday Sacrifice and also a symbol of life. It was offered at the Temple during the Feast of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:16).
- Salt Water symbolizes the blood of the first Passover lamb, also the tears shed by the Israelites slaves. We also recall Israel's baptism in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:22).

NOTE: Only the Lamb, MATZAH, and Bitter Herbs are commanded by the Torah for Passover, but the other foods have been part of the Passover tradition for centuries.

Host: (Chants the Hebrew blessing.)

ברוך אלהי יי אלהינו מלך הצולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, boray pree hagafen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

4. YACHATZ

Breaking the Middle Matzah

Yachutz - Breaking of the Middle Matzah

Three matzahs sit prominently on the Passover table. Why three? some see them as symbolic of the three divisions of the Jewish people: Priests, Levites, and Israelites. Others see them as a reminder of the three Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The middle matzah, the one broken, the one symbolizing the Passover Lamb, would correspond to Isaac. How interesting that Isaac, the miraculously born son of Abraham, was taken to what would become the Temple Mount to be offered as a sacrifice! (See Genesis 18:13-14, 21:1-2, 22:1-18 and 2 Chron. 3:1.)

Instruction: (Each "leader" should do this) Take the middle matzah and break it in two, leave one half between the whole ones and wrap the other half in a linen cloth (the participants can use a napkin) for the "Afikomen." This linen-wrapped matzah is called the Afikomen. The Afikomen should be hidden. (The children will try to find it later).

Host:

The matzah (unleavened bread) is found in its special covering which is called a Unity, even though it has three sections. Bypassing the first section and the third section, the middle piece of matzah is removed; it is broken in half and one half is hidden in a small napkin and is called the Afikomen. The Afikomen becomes an important part of the Seder service.

The reason why the middle matzah is broken and the other two are not is not clear in Jewish tradition. Some rabbis claim that the Unity stands for the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. As believers in Messiah Yeshua, we realize that the unity is a

symbol of a unique unity manifested in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The significance of the breaking of this middle matzah will be seen later in the service.

(show 3 matzos wrapped in white covering [napkin])

Teaching:

Now comes one of the most interesting parts of the Seder for believers in Yeshua, the breaking of the middle matzah. Three Matzos are placed in a special white covering called the "matzo toff" (Matzo Tosh). The middle matzah is removed and broken. The larger piece is wrapped and hidden, it is called the afikoman meaning that which comes later [in Greek]. The Afikoman is hidden, or buried, to be found and redeemed later for a reward. The smaller piece is eaten before the meal. Why are there three matzos? Some rabbis say it represents the High Priest, Levites and People of Israel. The three forms of worship in temple times. But why is the middle broken? Other rabbis say that it represents Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But this, too, does not explain why the middle matzah is broken. Still other rabbis say that in the wilderness God gave daily manna, but on Friday a double portion was given and one is added for Passover, making three. But why is the middle matzah broken, buried and brought back? This tradition has been celebrated for thousands of years. For us who believe in Yeshua, it is no mystery. It is a beautiful picture of Jesus and the one and only God revealed in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Son left the Holy of Holies, heaven, was broken, buried, and brought back. He who finds Him receives a great reward, Eternal Life.

(Uncover the matzah and lift up the plate [or smaller middle matzah] for all to see. Then recite following:)

This is the bread of affliction which People of Israel ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry-let them come and eat. All who are needy-let them come and celebrate the Passover with us. We were tails; now we are heads walking to our Promised Land. We were slaves; now we are free men.

(break matzah)

(The plate is put down, the matzah is covered. Note that in the recital, Israel is still looking for the messiah to free them. Only some were slaves in Egypt, but all are enslaved and in bondage to sin, in need of the deliverance only Yeshua can give). [This recital over the matzah is traditionally chanted in Aramaic, Jesus' mother tongue.]

Please pour in perpetration for Second Cup coming later.

Now we will hide the afikoman. The entire Children's eyes are closed..... (Hide Afikoman, the larger piece and return the other to cover).

Teaching on: Breaking the middle matzah

Host: Let us now remove the middle matzah from its place among the others and make it visible to our eyes.

(The fathers remove the middle matzah and perform the following activities while they are described.)

Let us break it in half and set it aside. This broken piece of matzah is called "the Afikomen". This is a Greek word meaning "that which comes after" such as the dessert of a meal. The Afikomen is wrapped in white linen and hidden from view. Some teach that the *matzah tash* represents the three patriarchs of Israel. Yet another strong Jewish tradition is that the two outside matzah represent the two challot on Shabbat. The middle matzah symbolizes the lamb. However,

there is one explanation that does line up with scripture. The matzah tash forms a unity of One out of three – a unity which speaks of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The middle part which was broken, Yeshua, was wrapped up in cloth, buried and brought forth again as the bread of life brought forth from the earth.

IMPORTANT:

From “Maggid” to the end of the Passover Seder, there are two traditional ways to proceed. You will first learn one way which includes from Maggid to the end of the Passover; then, you will learn another traditional way of ending Passover Seder which we will once again start with the Maggid step. (We recommend to take the second way to finish the Passover Seder).

**5. MAGGID (From here on, is a way to celebrate
Passover Seder from Maggid to the end.)**

The Story of Passover

Instruction: Ask or pre-arrange for a volunteer to read.

Reader:

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, "This month is to be for you the first month of the year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of the month, each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.... The animals you choose must be year old males without defect and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. They are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with the bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire.... Do not leave any of it till morning. If some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. On that night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every first-born; both men and animals and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt" (Exodus 12:1-13).

Host:

As God saw the blood and passed over the houses of the Israelites, so does He pass over sins when He sees Yeshua's blood shed on our behalf.

We keep Passover to remember the physical deliverance God gave us from our "Egypt" and we keep Messiah's Passover (communion) to remind us of the spiritual deliverance He brings us from sin.

Instruction: The matzot are uncovered and are lifted as all the guests recite the following words:

All:

This is the bread of affliction which People of Israel ate in the land of Egypt. All who are hungry, let them come and eat. All who are needy, let them come and celebrate the Passover

with us. We were tails; now we are heads walking to our Promised Land. We were slaves; now we are free men.

Instruction: The plate is put down, the matzot is covered, and the second cup of wine is filled. The youngest asks the four questions.

Ma-Nishtanah - The Four Questions

Instruction: Traditionally the youngest member of the family rises to ask the four questions. Select the youngest that is willing and able to read the four questions.

The youngest:

"Why is this night different from all other nights?":

"On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread; why on this night do we eat only matzah which is unleavened bread?"

"On all other nights we eat vegetables and herbs of all kinds; why on this night do we eat only bitter herbs?"

"On all other nights we never think of dipping herbs in water or in anything else; why on this night do we dip the parsley in salt water and the bitter herbs in charoseth?"

"On all other nights we eat either sitting upright or reclining why on this night do we all recline?"

Host: "I am glad you asked these questions. This night is different from all other nights, because on this night we celebrate the going forth of the Jewish people from slavery into freedom."

Host:

"Why do we eat only matzah tonight?"

When Pharaoh let our forefathers go from Egypt they were forced to flee in great haste. They had no time to bake their bread and could not wait for the yeast to rise. The sun which beat down on the dough as they carried it along baked it into unleavened bread called matzah.

"Why do we eat bitter herbs tonight?"

Because our forefathers were slaves in Egypt and their lives were made very bitter.

"Why do we dip the herbs twice tonight?"

We dip the parsley in salt water because it reminds us of the green of springtime. We dip the bitter herbs in sweet charoseth to remind us that our forefathers were able to withstand bitter slavery, because it was sweetened by the hope of freedom.

"Why do we recline at table?"

Because reclining was a sign of a free man long ago, and since our forefathers were freed on this night, we recline at the table."

Said Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, "Behold, I am almost a seventy-year-old man, yet I never understood why the story of the outgoing from Egypt is told at night; until Ben-Zoma explained it. As the Holy Scriptures say, 'so that you will remember the day you left the land of Egypt all the days of your life.' The 'days of your life' means the present world; 'all the days of your life' includes the days of the Messiah." And so, we, who are believers in Messiah, can rejoice that we can keep the Passover in the days of our Messiah, Jesus. We can rejoice that in His death we have found life. In Messiah's coming is the Passover completed. **Instruction:** Ask or pre-arrange for two volunteers to read: Reader 1 and Reader 2.

Makkot - Second Cup

The Cup of Judgment or Deliverance

The Story of the Plagues

Reader 1:

God raised up Moses to lead the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. Moses was to go to Pharaoh to demand that the children of Israel be released so that they may worship the Lord their God. God reminded Moses that he would encounter resistance from Pharaoh:

But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform

among them. After that, he will let you go.
(Exodus 3:19,20).

Reader 2:

Each time that Moses approached Pharaoh to gain the release of the children of Israel, Pharaoh refused. With each refusal, God sent as a judgment, a plague to the land of Egypt. The Egyptians became afflicted with discomfort and disease, bane and blight. With each plague Pharaoh hardened his heart all the more. Ten plagues were delivered in all. The tenth plague was, by far, the worst. With this plague Pharaoh finally relented. Of the tenth plague it is written:

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every first born - both men and animals - and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD”. (Exodus 12:12)

Instruction: At this point have the "father" at each table fill all the cups to the top.

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Teaching on The Ten Plagues

Host:

A full cup of wine is considered a symbol of joy. It is indeed good to be joyful of God's mighty deliverance. Our joy should be tempered at the recognition of the great cost at which redemption was purchased. For the Israelites, many lives were sacrificed to bring about their release from the slavery of Egypt. In Proverbs 24: 17-18 we are reminded "Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, or the LORD will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from him." As believers in Jesus we recognize that a far greater price purchased our redemption from slavery to sin...the death of our savior Jesus.

We will be reciting the ten plagues that Egypt was afflicted with because of Pharaoh's hardened heart. As we do so, we will dip our little finger into the cup, allowing a drop of wine to fall (on a napkin or plate). We do this to reduce the fullness of our cup of joy this night:

All:

Blood

Frogs

Gnats

Flies

Pestilence

Boils

Hail

Locusts

Darkness

Death of the first born

Dayenu

Host:

In light of this redemption we acknowledge God's goodness to us.

For each of His acts of mercy and Kindness we declare
"Dayenu!."

Dayenu is the Hebrew word which means it would have been sufficient.

Host:

Had He brought us out from Egypt

And not judged them.

Had He judged them

And not judged their idols.

Had He judged their idols

And not slain their first-born.

Had He slain their first-born

And not given us their property.

Had He given us their property

And not divided the sea for us.

Had He divided the sea for us

And not brought us through on dry ground.

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Had He brought us through on dry ground

And not drowned our oppressors.

Had He drowned our oppressors

And not helped us forty years in the desert.

Had He helped us forty years in the desert

And not fed us manna.

All: Dayenu!

Had He fed us manna

And not given us the Sabbath.

All: Dayenu!

Had He given us the Sabbath

And not brought us to Mount Sinai.

All: Dayenu!

Had He brought us to Mount Sinai

And not given us the Torah.

All: Dayenu!

Had He given us the Torah

And not brought us into the Land of Israel.

All: Dayenu!

Had He brought us to the Land of Israel

And not built us the Holy Temple.

All: Dayenu!

Host:

As followers of the Messiah, we can add a further "Dayenu," knowing that if God had only provided atonement for us through the death of the Messiah, it would have been enough for us. But He did much more. Yeshua said, "I have come that you might have life, and have it in abundance." He gives us peace within when we know Him as our Messiah.

Also,

Rabbi Gamaliel I, who was the teacher of Paul the Apostle (Acts 22:3) taught that in recounting the Passover story one must be certain to mention three things: the Passover Lamb, the Unleavened Bread, and the Bitter Herbs.

Passover Lamb – The Bone

Host:

THE PASSOVER OFFERING: The Passover offering which our forefathers ate in temple times...what was the reason for it? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, spared the lives of our forefathers in Egypt, as it is written, and when your children ask you, ‘what does this mean?, then you tell them, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when He struck down the Egyptians’ (Exodus 12:26-27).

Concerning the Messiah it is also written: “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is silent before her shearers, so He did not open His mouth” (Isaiah 53:7). Also, “John saw Yeshua coming to him and said, ‘Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world’” (John 1:29).

Matzah - Unleavened Bread

Host:

THE MATZAH (lift the matzot) This matzah which we eat, what is the reason for it? It is because there was not enough time for our fathers dough to rise when the Holy One, blessed be He, redeemed them, as the scriptures say, "They baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they did not have time to prepare food because they had been driven out of Egypt" (Exodus 12:39).

The matzah is unleavened; in its baking, it is pierced and striped. Unleavened, because it is to be without contamination, a symbol of sin. Pierced and striped, it illustrates the Messiah, who being without sin, was pierced and striped, as the scriptures say, "And I will pour out on the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him as one grieves for a first-born son (Zechariah 12:10).

The prophet Isaiah said, "But He was pierced for our transgression, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and with His stripes, we are healed" (Isaiah 53).

Maror - Bitter Herbs

Host:

MAROR (lift the maror) This bitter herb which we eat, what is the reason for it? It is because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt, as it is written: "So they put slave drivers over them to oppress them with forced labor ... but the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with hard labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their hard labor, the Egyptians used them ruthlessly (Exodus 1:11-14). The bitter herb reminds us of the sorrow, persecution, and the suffering of our people.

Instruction: Raise and replace the cup and say: Therefore, we are bound to thank, praise, laud, glorify, extol, honor, bless,

exalt and reverence Him who performed for our fathers and for us all these miracles. He brought us from slavery into freedom; from sorrow to joy; from mourning to festivity; and from servitude into redemption. Let us therefore sing a new song in His presence.

Host: Praise the LORD. Praise, O servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

All: Let the name of the LORD be praised, both now and forevermore.

Host: From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the LORD is to be praised.

All: The LORD is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens. Who is like the LORD our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth?

Host: He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of their people.

All: He settles the barren woman in her home as a happy mother of children. Praise the Lord.

Host: When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of foreign tongue, Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his dominion.

All: The sea looked and fled, the Jordan turned back; the mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs. Why was it,

O sea, that you fled, O Jordan, that you turned back, you mountains, that you skipped like rams, you hills, like lambs?

Host: Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water. Truly, we can praise God for the redemption. He has brought us: Redemption from slavery, through the death of Egypt's first-born. Redemption from sin, through the death of God's Son. It is written: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life".

Instruction: Raise the cup say the blessing:

The Third Cup: The Cup of Redemption

The blessing of the wine:

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, boray p'ree Hagaphen.

All: Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Instruction: Ask the "father" at each table to follow you by taking the "Unity," raising it up and saying the blessing.

The blessings of the matzah:

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Hamotzi Lekhem Min Ha-aretz.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Instruction: Place the "Unity" back on the table. The remaining middle and upper matzot should be broken into small pieces and distributed to the participants at the table.

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Asher Kiddshanu B'mitzvo-tav, Vitzee Vanu Al A-khee-lat Ma-tzah.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who made us holy in His commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of matzah (eat the matzah).

Instruction: Half of the bottom matzah from the "Unity" container is broken into small pieces, and the "father" will distribute it among the table. The "father" will then pass the dish of horseradish from the Seder plate. Each person will put some horseradish on the matzah and wait for the blessing. Tradition says that enough horseradish should be put on the matzah to make tears come to the eyes, reminding everyone of the tears shed in Egypt.

Maror - Eating of the Bitter Herbs

The blessing of the bitter herbs:

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Asher kiddshanu B'mitzvo-tav, Vitzee-vanu Al A-khee-lat Maror.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who made us holy in His commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of bitter herbs.

Host: The bitter herb speaks of the sorrow, the persecution and the suffering of our people under the hand of Pharaoh; and as the horseradish brings tears to the eyes, so also did the great affliction of our people bring tears to their eyes.

Instruction: The remaining half from the bottom matzah of the "Unity" container is broken into small pieces, and the "father" will distribute it among the table (two small pieces to each person) (if no matzah is left from the "Unity" use the extra matzah). The "father" will then pass the dish of charoseth from the Seder plate. Each person will put some charoseth on the matzot in a sandwich-like fashion (and wait for the blessing). Eating of the bitter herbs with the charoseth is optional. At the head table, the Host shall hide the left over.

Korech - Eating of the Bitter Herbs with Charoseth

Host:

As the bitter herb is a symbol of suffering, the salt water a symbol of tears, the greens a symbol of hyssop, the wine is a symbol of blood, so the charoseth is a symbol of mortar, representing the clay bricks which were made by our people in Egypt.

(See picture / illustration on page 238)

Shulchan Orech - The Passover Supper (The Meal)

Instruction: After the Passover meal, the children search for the afikomen. The Host redeems it by giving the child a coin. The matzah that was hidden ("fathers" should also do this) is broken and distributed to the people at the table.

Tzaphun - Eating of the Afikomen

Host: Concerning the Afikomen, it is written:

"And He took bread. And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.'"

"Yeshua said to them, 'I tell you the truth, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. 'Lord', they said, 'from now on, give us this bread.' Then Yeshua declared, 'I am the Bread of Life, he who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never go thirsty...I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven. If a man eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my body, which I give for the life of the world'".

Host: Is it not significant that it is this middle matzah, which was broken and then hid away, finally to be brought back, broken and distributed, that Jesus points to and says, "this is MY body which is given for you"? Is it not significant that

Afikomen (Afikomen is a Greek word) means - "I have come"?

As the matzah is unleavened, striped and pierced, so was our Messiah without sin, striped by the Roman's whip and pierced by nails and the soldier's spear. For the believer in Yeshua, that He is the Messiah, and our atonement, this Afikomen symbolizes His sacrifice of atonement for our sins, that we might have peace with God.

If you are a believer tonight in the Jesus the Messiah, you can eat this piece as a communion service, reminding yourself of what has happened in the upper room at the Last Supper. Also, as you eat, it will remind you of what the Messiah did for you, in that He came and gave Himself for your sins.

Blessing for the Afikomen:

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Hamotzi Lekhem Min Ha-aretz:

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Hamotzi Lekhem Min Ha-sha-ma-yim:

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who brought forth bread from heaven.

Ha-Geulah - The Third Cup: The Cup of Redemption

Host: This cup, the cup of redemption symbolizes God's promise of redemption from slavery. It was this cup, after supper, in the upper room that Yeshua raised and said, "This

cup is the New Covenant in my blood, which is shed for you." He died to give us atonement from sin, and new life with God, just as the Passover lamb was sacrificed to bring us redemption. For the believer in Yeshua, this cup symbolizes our participation in the New Covenant, that God has forgiven our sins because of Yeshua's sacrifice.

Blessing of the wine:

Host: Baruch Atah Adonai, Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ree Hagaphen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, king of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Elijah's Place

Instruction: (Elijah's cup is filled with wine and the door is opened.)

Host: You will note that one place setting has not been touched throughout the meal. This is the traditional place for Elijah. This door is opened to see if the prophet Elijah will come,- John, the baptizer who Jesus spoke of as the forerunner of Himself, was indeed the prophet Elijah - had he been accepted by his people. It was the same John who looked upon Jesus and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world."

Instruction: (The door is closed.) Sing Eliyahu Hanavi

The remaining symbols

Host: You will also note some items on the Seder plate which have not been touched. One, the Betzah, or roasted egg; and two, the shankbone of the lamb.

The egg

Host: The roasted egg speaks of sacrifice, which can no longer be made because the Temple was destroyed. Is it not strange that an egg is used to represent sacrifice? But one must remember that sacrifice not only means death; it also means life.

The shankbone

Host: The shankbone of the lamb is untouched, because lambs are no longer sacrificed. As believers in the Messiah, we recognize that sacrifice is no longer necessary, because the death of our Messiah satisfied the need for sacrifice. In His death there is life. In the shedding of His blood there is remission of sin.

Hallel - Fourth Cup: The Cup of Praise or Cup of Con- summation

Instructions: Psalm 136 is usually recited. Optionally, Psalm 136, the version by Israel's Hope, may be sung. Matthew 26:30 indicates that Jesus and His disciples sung a hymn before going out into the garden.

Host: We come to the fourth last drinking of the cup. This cup represents the fourth "I will" - "I will take you to Me for a people." This speaks of the time when the Lord will gather

Israel again in the Lord. To the believer in the Messiah this cup also represents the great hope that someday the Messiah is coming back to take up His followers to be with Him. It is written: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

(Raise the cup)

The Blessing of the wine:

Host:

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ree Hagaphen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
Creator of the fruit of the vine

(Drink the fourth cup).

Concluding remarks

Host: The Seder of Passover is now complete, even as our salvation and redemption are complete. Just as we were privileged to celebrate it this year, so may we be privileged to do so in the future.

All: O Father in Heaven, Restore the congregation of Israel in Your love, speedily lead Your people, redeemed, to Zion in joy.

Instructions: Have the people say in unison -

All: Next Year in Jerusalem!

(Thank those that helped. Ask for help tearing down).

Traditional Songs

Dayenu!

Ilu hoti hotzi onu

hotzi onu mi Mitzrayim

hotzi onu mi Mitzrayim

Dayenu

(Chorus)

Ilu notan notan lanu

Notan lanu et ha Torah

Notan lanu et ha Torah

Dayenu

(Chorus)

Ilu notan notan lanu

Notan lanu et Yeshua

Notan lanu et Yeshua

Dayenu

(Chorus)

Translation:

Had God done nothing
but save us from the land of Egypt,
for that alone we should have been grateful.
Had God given us nothing more
than the Torah (the Scriptures),
for that alone we should have been grateful
God gave us Yeshua,
and for this we are grateful
Eiliyahu Hanavi (Elijah the Prophet)

Part I:

Ei-li-ya-hu ha-na-vi, Ei-li-ya-hu ha-tish-bi
Ei-li-ya-hu, Ei-li-ya-hu, Ei-li-ya-hu ha-gil-adi
Bim-hei-ra v'-ya-mei-nu, ya-vo ei-lei-nu
im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid,
im Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
(2 times)
Come return to us Yeshua,

born to set thy people free
From our sins and fears release us,
let us find our rest in Thee
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth Thou art
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing heart

Part II:

Bim-hei-ra v'-ya-mei-nu, ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid, Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid
Bim-hei-ra v'-ya-mei-nu, ya-vo ei-lei-nu
Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid, Ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid

Translation:

Part I:

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite,
Elijah from Gilead, may he come soon
and in our days with Messiah the son of David

Part II:

Soon and in our days,
Messiah the son of David will come (again) to us.

Page 175 is the end of a way to celebrate Passover Seder.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The following sequence or order is another way to celebrate Passover Seder (from MAGGID to the end of Passover Seder). This section is the most traditional way.*

5. MAGGID

The Exodus Story

(The wineglasses are filled for the second time.)

Teaching:

Mah Nishtanah

The Four Questions

Now it is time for the Four Questions to be read.

The youngest present asks the Four Questions. In a Jewish household, this is read in Hebrew, then English.

One can easily assume that the women who came with Jesus from Galilee were present at the last Supper. It is very possible one of their children asked the customary four questions much like those to be asked tonight.

Child or youngest present asks:

[Name] please ask the 4 questions.

Why is this night different from all other nights?

1. On all other nights we may eat either leavened or unleavened bread; but on this night why only unleavened bread?
2. On all other nights we eat herbs of any kind; but on this night why only bitter herbs?
3. On all other nights we do not dip our herbs even once; but on this night why do we dip them twice?
4. On all other nights we eat our meals sitting or reclining; but on this night why do we eat in a reclining position?

(Uncover the matzah and begin the reply.)

Before we read the Haggadah which tells in detail the whole story, I will answer your questions one by one.

1. We eat matzah because when our ancestors were told by Pharaoh that they could leave Egypt, they had no time to bake bread with leaven, so they baked it without leaven.
2. At the Seder, we eat bitter herbs to remind us of the bitterness our ancestors experienced when they were oppressed by the Egyptian taskmasters.

3. At the Seder, we dip food twice: the parsley in salt water, as we have already explained, and the matzah into bitter herbs, as we shall later explain.
4. As a sign of freedom, we lean to the left when we partake of the cup. In ancient times, slaves ate hurriedly, standing, while royalty, and the wealthy in Egypt, and other empires, dined on couches. To show that Israel was now free, they too reclined while eating. Since we do not have couches for each person, the Host has a pillow to lean on and everyone leans to the left when drinking the cup and eating the matzah.

[In the time of the temple the last question used to be, "why do we eat lamb?" After the destruction of the Temple, as Jesus foretold, lambs were not sacrificed nor eaten at the Seder and the last question was changed.]

Blessed Is God Who gave the Torah to His people, Israel.
Blessed is He.

The four Sons

Four times the Torah declares that a father should tell his son the story of Passover. Thus the Rabbis infer that there are four types of children. The Torah tells of the Four sons:

1. The Wise son asks, "What is the meaning of the laws and customs which God has commanded us?" (Deuteronomy 6:20). Tell him all the laws of Passover to the last detail about the Afikoman.
2. The rebellious son asks, "What does this service mean to you?" (Exodus 12:26).

Tell him it is because of what the Lord has done for me when I came out of Egypt. (Exodus 13:8) Not for him for he excludes himself and denies God by asking what is the meaning to you. If he was in Egypt he would not have been redeemed.

3. The simple son asks "What does this mean?" Tell him with a mighty hand, the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of bondage (Exodus 13:14).
4. As for the shy son who does not even know how to ask, you must begin for him. As it is written in the Torah, "You shall tell your child on that day: I do this because of what the Lord did for me, when I came out of Egypt. (Exodus 13:8) Thus one must arouse his interest in what the Lord has and will do.

Blessed Is God Who keeps His promises to Israel. Blessed is He.

(The wineglasses are filled for the second time).

Mah Nishtanah

The Four Questions

The Scriptures states, "...when your children ask you, "What does this ceremony mean to you? Then tell them..." Exodus 12:26

Then, a young child rises and asks the Host the four questions. Tradition holds that there are four types of sons:

The Wise Child is curious.

- We teach him everything we know about Passover and God.

The Selfish child disassociates himself from the redemption of slavery.

- We teach him his need to repent.

The Simple child is naïve or innocent.

- We teach him in a straightforward simple manner...The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.

The Timid child is the one who doesn't know how to ask a question.

- We instruct him on how to ask and remind him that redemption was meant for him along with everyone else.

Ma nishtanah ha-laila ha-zeh mi-col ha-leylot? Mi-col ha-leylot?

- 1. Shebekol haleylot anu okhlin chametz umatzah. Halaila hazeh kulo matzah?*
- 2. Shebekol haleylot anu okhlin she'ar yerakot. Halaila hazeh maror?*
- 3. Shebekol haleylot eyn anu matbilin afilu pa'am ekhat. Halaila hazeh shteyf'amin?*

4. *Shebekol haleylot anu okhlin beyn yoshevin uveyn mesubin. Halaila hazeh kulanu mesubin?*

Translation:

“Why is this night different from all other nights?”

1. Why do we eat unleavened bread on this night when on all other nights we eat either leavened bread or matzah?
2. Why do we eat only bitter herbs on this night when on all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables?
3. Why do we dip our vegetables twice on this night when we do not dip our vegetables even once on all other nights?
4. Why do we eat our meals reclining on this night when on all other nights we eat our meals sitting or reclining?

Host: We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord our God took us out from there with his mighty hand and outstretched arm. Had not the Holy One, blessed be he, taken our fathers out from Egypt, then we, our children and our children's children would have remained enslaved to Pharaoh in Egypt. The story of Passover is a story of miracles, a story of redemption, and a story of the mighty power of God to overcome evil. In gratitude, let us worship our God and recount the story of Passover.

Reader 1: As the result of a great famine in the land of Canaan, the sons of Israel journeyed to Egypt to purchase food. When they arrived in Egypt, they were united with their brother Joseph, whom they, out of jealousy, had sold into

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Egyptian slavery. However, God had been with Joseph, and eventually he found favor in the eyes of the Egyptian Pharaoh, rising to a position second in power to him. Joseph used his influence, and the children of Israel were permitted to dwell in the fertile plains of Goshen.

Reader 2: In time the house of Israel, which started out with less than eighty souls increased and became a mighty people. Then a new Pharaoh came to power, one who came after Joseph. He realized how mighty the children of Israel had become and feared that in time of war, they might join with Egypt's foes. So the Pharaoh enslaved the children of Israel and placed taskmaster over them. The taskmasters made life difficult and compelled them to build the Egyptian storage cities.

Reader 3: Though their lives were ones of hardship, the Jewish people were strong and proud and thrived just as God had promised. So the Pharaoh ordered that all the male children of Israel should be killed. Under the continued harsh rule of the Egyptians, and in the anguish that resulted from the male child massacre, the Jewish people cried out to God for deliverance. God raised up a deliverer, a redeemer – one child who survived the massacre – Moshe. God sent Moshe with a message of deliverance to Pharaoh: LET MY PEOPLE GO.

Reader 4: However, the Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he refused to obey God's command. So Moshe returned to pronounce God's judgment on Egypt and the house of Pharaoh. Ten plagues came upon Egypt, including the death of the first-born of both man and beast.

To protect the children of Israel, God instructed that each household should sacrifice a spotless lamb and place its blood on the doorway of the home – applying it first to the side posts and then to the top of the lintel (Exodus 12: 1-7).

Host: In summary, the story of the Exodus reveals the meaning of this night and answers the four questions:

This night is different because several thousand years ago on this night the Lord passed over the homes of the children of Israel sparing their firstborn. At the same time they were to prepare to depart quickly for their journey to freedom.

1. We eat only unleavened bread (matzah) on this night because the children of Israel had to leave Egypt so quickly that their daily bread did not have time to rise. The lack of leaven (chametz) is also a symbol of god's sanctifying those people for a special purpose.
2. Tonight we only eat bitter herbs as a reminder of the bitterness of Israel's life in slavery to the Egyptians.
3. We have already dipped the karpas into salt water. We will soon dip herbs into charoset, a sweet mixture of apples, honey, nuts and wine. This will remind us that even the most bitter of circumstances can be made sweet by hope and by our faith in the Lords.
4. The children of Israel once lived in slavery, a back-breaking life of forced labor. Then the Lord set them free. Passover is about that freedom, so we recline at ease tonight to celebrate freedom and to commemorate the Lord's easing of Israel's burdens.

“Let My People Go”

When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go.
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go.

(Chorus) *Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land.*

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Tell ole' Pharaoh, let my people go.

Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said, let my people go.

If not, I'll smite your first-born dead, let my people go.

(Chorus)

No more shall they in bondage toil, let my people go.
Let them come out with Egypt's spoil, let my people go.

(Chorus)

O let us all from bondage flee, let my people go.
And in Messiah all be free, let my people go.

(Chorus)

Host: Exodus 12:13 (KJV) "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Exodus 12:14 (KJV) "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever."

By the blood of the lamb, Israel was spared.

What mighty act redemption! This was a picture of a greater future redemption that was to come.

All: For just as the first Passover lamb was slain and the blood applied by faith to the doorposts of Israel's homes, so

the blood of the Messiah must be applied by faith to the doorposts of our hearts.

Host: Tonight we worship God not only because he passed over us and redeemed the Jewish people, but because all of us, whether Jewish or Gentile, may be redeemed from an even greater bondage to sin through faith in the Messiah of Israel.

All: We once were slaves, but now we are free.

Host: Through the Messiah Yeshua we pass over from death to life.

All: Amen.

(The Host raises the second cup of wine.)

Host: We are privileged to thank, praise, glorify and reverence him who wrought all the miracles for us. He brought us forth from bondage to freedom, from sorrow to joy, and from blindness into light.

(The Host places the cup back for later use.)

The ten plagues

Host: These are the plagues which the Holy One, blessed be he, brought upon the Egyptians.

Each plague represents God's triumph over an Egyptian false god.

As each of the ten plagues is read, a drop of wine is taken from the cup with the little finger of the right hand or a knife and dropped onto the plate of each plague.

Each Plague is recited together:

Blood

Frogs

Lice

Flies

Pestilence

Boils

Hail

Locusts

Darkness

Death of the first born

Host: We will partake of the fruit of the wine in just a moment.

“Dayenu”

LLu llu, hotzianu, hotzianu mi mitzrayim

Hotzianu Mi Mitzraim Dayenu.

Ilu natan, natan lanu, antan lanu

Et Ha Torah

Natan lanu el Ha Torah Dayenu.

Ilu shalah, shalach lanu, shalach

Lanu et Yeshua

Shalach lanu et Yeshua Dayenu.

If only he'd redeemed us out of Egypt,
It would have been enough
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If only he's given us the Torah,
It would have been enough!

If only he'd sent us the Messiah
It would have been enough!

The Three Pesach Symbols:

The Shankbone, the Matzah and the Maror.

The Shankbone

(The Host holds up the shank bone.)

Host: The bone is a symbol of the Passover lamb slain in Egypt. Its blood sprinkled on the doorposts is a sign that the Son of God himself (John 1:29, 36), of whom no bone was broken, died for our sins that we might have eternal life. The Messiah, who is our Passover lamb and our Peace Offering, has been sacrificed for us.

Reader 1:

Exodus 12:7, 13, 46 “And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, wherein they shall eat it...And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plagues shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt...In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not be broken.”

Reader 2:

John 19:33, 36 “But when they came to Yeshua, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs...For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.”

Host: How right to trust in God whose z’roah (arm) is stretched out to save his people today as in days of old!

We are reminded by Moshe that it was the Lord himself who redeemed the children of Israel from slavery.

“So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders” Deuteronomy 26:8.

Host: “On that same night I will pass through Egypt...”

All: I, and not an angel.

Host: “and strike down every firstborn – both men and animals...”

All: I, and not a seraph.

Host: “and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt...”

All: I, and not a messenger.

Host: “I am the Lord.”

All: I myself and none other.

Host: Leviticus 17:11 “For the life of the flesh (is) in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an

atonement for you souls; for it (is) the blood (that) maketh an atonement for the soul.”

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, who offers redemption from death and atonement from sin. Amen.

The Matzah

(The Host lifts up the matzah)

Host: By eating unleavened bread, we show our desire to be cleansed of our sin and to live lives that are entirely devoted to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) “Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even [Messiah] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

The Maror:

(the Host lifts up the maror.)

Host: The Egyptians made our lives bitter with hard labor, with mortar and with bricks, and with all manner of labor in the field. Whatever service they made us performed was hard labor. As the horseradish brings tears to our eyes, so did the great affliction of the Egyptians bring tears to our eyes.

Teaching:

The following section on *italic* could be reading before section 5. MAGGID - TELLING THE PASSOVER STORY. Purpose: To get more understanding on Section 5. MAGGID.

Responsive Reading

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Now we will read the telling of THE PASSOVER STORY Responsively from our Seder program.

READER: The Bible teaches that during a great famine in the land of Canaan, the sons of Israel journeyed to Egypt to purchase food. There they were reunited with their brother Joseph. Because of his influence, they were permitted to dwell in the fertile plains of Goshen. At first, the House of Israel numbered less than 80 souls. But in time, their numbers swelled, their flocks increased, and they became a mighty people.

ALL: And then there arose a new Pharaoh, one who did not know Joseph. He beheld the might of Israel, and he feared that in time of war, the sons of Jacob might join themselves with Egypt's foes.

READER: And so he subdued the Israelites, and he afflicted them with cruel labor. Task masters were placed over the Israelites, to compel them to make bricks and to build Pharaoh's great storage cities of Ramses and Pithom.

ALL: But despite their hardship, they continued to thrive, just as God had promised. This caused Pharaoh even greater alarm, and he ordered the slaughter of Israel's infant sons. By his command, every male child born to the Hebrews was to be cast into the Nile and drowned.

READER: How sober were the afflictions of the Jewish people. In anguish, we cried to the God of our Fathers. And God heard our cry. God remembered His covenant. And God raised up a deliverer, a redeemer, the man Moses. And He sent Moses to Pharaoh's court to declare the commandment of the Lord...

ALL: Let my people go.

READER: But Pharaoh would not hearken to the Lord of Hosts. And so, Moses pronounced God's judgment on Pharaoh's house and on Pharaoh's land. Plagues were poured out upon the Egyptians, upon their crops, and upon their flocks.

ALL: But Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He would not yield to the will of God. He would not let the House of Jacob depart.

READER: Then the tenth plague fell upon the land of Egypt: the death of Egypt's firstborn. "And all the first born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh who sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first born of the maid servant who was behind the mill; and all the first born of beasts...and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment." But to protect the children of Israel, God commanded the head of each Jewish household to sacrifice a spotless lamb, without breaking any of its bones, and to apply it's blood to the doorway of our homes, first to the top of the doorway, the lintel, and then to the two side posts.

ALL: "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plagues shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt."

READER: By the blood of lamb was Israel spared.

ALL: By the blood of the lamb was Jacob redeemed. By the blood of the lamb was death made to pass over.

READER: Passover. The night when death passed over the houses of Israel because of the blood of the Passover lamb. What a mighty act of redemption. And what a beautiful picture of redemption destined to come. For just as no bones of the

first Passover lambs were broken, so none of the Messiah's bones were broken.

ALL: And just as the blood of those first Passover lambs was applied in faith to the doorposts of Israel's homes, so the blood of the Messiah must be applied in faith to the doorposts of our hearts.

READER: Tonight, we worship God not only because the angel of death passed over our ancestors homes, but because all of us whether Jewish or Gentile, may be redeemed from an even greater bondage through our faith in the Messiah of Israel, the Messiah Jesus. Through Him, we may pass over from death to life.

The Second Cup also refers to the Ten Plagues.

Please lift up the second cup, the cup of the TEN PLAGUES.

So this promise made to our forefathers holds true also to us! For more than once has the enemy risen up to destroy us. But the Holy One, blessed be He, The Lord and God, He Saves us!

(Put down the cup! Jewish humor and anticipation, cup up and down)

THE TEN PLAGUES

Less than full is our JOY because our redemption involved the suffering of the Egyptians. Though their suffering was a result of their own evil, God has taught us to love our enemies. Proverbs (4:17) says "Rejoice not when your enemy falls". For God's love is for everyone. A full cup is a symbol of joy and we rejoice tonight. But we shall diminish our cup to show that our joy is not complete.

[Neither as believers in Yeshua, is are joy complete so long as so many are still in bandage to sin.]

[I will say the plagues in Hebrew, then] we will all say them together in English and diminish our cup.

These were the TEN PLAGUES which the Holy One, praised He be, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt.

We should spill one drop out of our cup of each of THE TEN PLAGUES. With your little finger dip into your cup to remove a drop, one for each of the Plagues placing it onto your plate [napkin]. Repeat after me.

ALL: Red the list of the ten plagues.

[Through Jewish logic and reasoning some rabbis argue and they love to argue there were more than ten plagues suffered by the Egyptians in fact there could have been up to 300 plagues....counting in the red sea. I will not read all of their reasoning and logic to you tonight.]

DAYEINU (Enough)

How thankful must we be to God, the All Knowing, All loving, for all the good He has done for us. For each blessing we give thanks!

If God had only delivered us from Egypt, It would have been enough for us. That is it would have been sufficient.

The Hebrew word for "It would have been enough" is DAYEINU. Please say DAYEINU with Me. (pronounced: Day e inu)

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Had He brought us out from Egypt and not executed judgment against them, DAYEINU

Had He executed judgment against them and not done justice to their idols, DAYEINU

Had He done justice to their idols and not slain their first-born DAYEINU

Had He slain their first-born and not given us their property DAYEINU

Had He given us their property, and not divided the sea for us DAYEINU

[In the orthodox Haggadah I counted 26 verses to this recital. I say DAYEINU at five.] (laughter -- joke)

[The 22nd verse in the orthodox Haggadah gives thanks for the temple to atone for sin. But the temple was destroyed as Jesus said it would be. Where does a Jewish turn for atonement today? Jesus said destroy this Temple and 3 days I will raise it up. He was speaking of the Temple of His body (John 2:19,1)]

It would have been enough for us "if through Jesus, we received eternal salvation and not received His Holy Spirit. It would have been enough for us. (DAYEINU)

Had He given us His Holy Spirit and not bestowed us with the fruit of the Spirit. It would have been enough for us. (DAYEINU).

Had He bestowed us with the fruit of the Spirit and not given us His peace. It would have been enough for us. (DAYEINU).

[Let us Sing for joy to Our Lord! [(optional)]]

[SING DAYEINU SONG Optional]

The THREE SYMBOLS

(the rabbi Gamaliel of temple times, Saul's {Paul's} teacher)

The Rabbis say: Whoever does not explain the following three symbols at the Seder on Passover has not fulfilled his duty:

- *THE PASSOVER OFFERING (The Shankbone)*
- *THE MATZAH*
- *THE BITTER HERBS*

[questions can be asked of the Host]

The Passover Offering (The Shankbone) which our fathers ate in Temple days, what was the reason for it? It was because the Holy One, blessed be He, passed over the houses of our forefathers in Egypt, as it is written in the Bible: "And you shall say it is the Passover offering for the Lord, Who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and spared our houses. And the people bowed their heads and worshipped."(Exodus 12:27)

[We do not lift up the lamb bone less it remind us there are no temple offerings today.]

(Hold up a Matzah:)

This matzah which we eat, what is the reason for it? It is because there was not time for the dough of our ancestors in Egypt to leaven, before the Ruler of all, the Holy One, blessed

be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them, as it is told in the Bible: "And the dough which they had brought out from Egypt they baked into cakes of unleavened bread, for it had not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and they could not tarry, nor had they prepared for themselves any provisions." (Exodus 12:39)

(Hold up the Bitter Herbs)

These bitter herbs which we eat--what is their meaning? They are eaten to recall that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our forefathers in Egypt, as it is written: "And they embittered their lives with hard labor: with mortar and bricks, with every kind of work in the fields; all the work which they made them do was rigorous." (Exodus 1:14)

In every generation one must look upon himself as if he personally had come out from Egypt, as the Bible says: "And thou shalt tell thy son on that day, saying, it is because of that which the Lord did to me when I went forth from Egypt." For it was not alone our forefathers whom the Holy One, blessed be He, redeemed; He redeemed us too, with them, as it is said: "He brought us out from there that He might lead us to and give us the land which He pledged to our forefathers."

[In Romans 6:6-8,11 we are to think of ourselves as crucified with Christ, putting aside the old self.]

(Raise the cup and say:)

Therefore, it is our duty to thank and to praise in song and prayer, to glorify and extol Him who performed all these wonders for our forefathers and for us. He brought us out from slavery to freedom, from anguish to joy, from sorrow to festivity, from darkness to great light.

(Set Cup down, again)

[Let us therefore sing before Him a new song. Praise the Lord.]

[Optional: (A Song of praise. With cup down, traditionally Psalm 136, the Great Hallel is sung or read responsively, as by the temple choir during Passover.)]

THE SECOND CUP - PLAGUES

(Raise the cup and say:)

*Ba rook Ah-ta Ah-do-ni El-olhay-knew Mel-ick How-o-lam
Borea Parie Ha gawo-fen*

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord Our God, Ruler of the universe,
Creator of the fruit of the Vine*

Drink the second cup, leaning to the left.

(End of the section 5: The Maggid).

6. MAKKOT

The Second Cup of Deliverance or Judgment

Host: The second cup is the cup of deliverance, sometimes called the cup of judgment. It is the second “I will.” It is the promised of God to deliver his people from the hand of the Egyptians.

Let us all raise the second cup.

ברוך אלהי יי אלהבו מלך הצולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, boray pree hagafen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Host: Let us all drink the second cup together at this time.

7. RACHATZ

Washing of the Hands Before the Meal

(The Host alone washes his hand before the ceremonial meal and then recites the following blessing.)

Host:

ברוך אתה יי אלהבו מלך הצולם אשר קדשנו במצוהיו
וצונו על-נטילה ידיים

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, asher
kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al n'teelat yadayim.

All: Bless are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who has sanctified us through his commandments and com-
manded us concerning the washing of hands.

8. MOTZI MATZAH

Blessing Before eating the Bread

(The Host lifts up the matzah on the Seder plate and recites
the following blessing.)

Host: This is the bread of affliction that our ancestors ate when
they left Egypt. They left hurriedly, and the bread did not
have time to rise. The matzah was baked by the hot desert
sun.

More important, the Scriptures teach us that leaven represents
sin. This matz is a picture of the Messiah. Looking at
today's unleavened bread we see the stripes reminding us of
the stripes borne by the Messiah on His back.

Isaiah 53:5 (KJV) "But he was wounded for our transgres-
sions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of
our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

We also see that the matzah is pierced just as the Messiah was pierced in his hands, feet and side.

Zechariah 12:10 (KJV) “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Host: (Chants the Hebrew blessing.)

ברוך אלהי יי אלהינו מלך הצולם המוציא לחם מן-הארץ

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, mee ch ha olam, ha motzi lechem min ha-eret z.

All: Bless art Thou, O lord our God, King of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

(After replacing the matzah back on the table, the father breaks off olive-sized pieces of matzah and distributes them.)

Host:

ברוך אלהי יי אלהינו מלך הצולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו
נצונו צל-אכילת מצה

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, mele ch ha olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al acheelat matzah.

All: Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us through his Commandments and commanded us concerning the eating of the unleavened bread.

Host: Let us all partake of the matzah.

More teaching on MOTZI - MATZAH, MOROR & BITTER HERBS:

KORECH - MATZAH, BITTER HERBS SANDWICH

MOTZI - MATZAH

Pass out the middle and top Matzah if needed. (For large groups the Matzah at the table may be used).

Say the two blessings over the matzah:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who made us holy with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the eating of matzah.

Eat the matzah. [a pinch of salt may be added Numbers 18:19] (salt: Leviticus 2:13, Mark 9:5, Matthew 5:13).

9. MAROR

Bitter Herbs

Host: Let us now distribute the Matzah and the Maror (Horse-radish) among ourselves, taking a small piece of Matzah and Maror and dipping it into the charoset.

As the horseradish brings tears to our eyes, so also did the betrayal of the Son of Man:

John 13:26-30 (KJV) “Yeshua answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a piece of bread, when I have dipped it. Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon...As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.”

ברוך אתה יי אלהבו מלך הצולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו
נצונו צל- אכילה מרור

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al acheelat maror.

All: Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us through his Commandments and commanded us concerning the eating of the bitter herbs.

Host: let us all eat the bitter herbs.

10. KORECH

The Hillel Sandwich

Host: Let us make a sandwich using two pieces of matzah with a good portion of the bitter herbs and some charoset.

Number 9:11 “They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.”

(Lifting the matzah with the maror and charoset)

All: As we eat of the bitter herbs and the charoset, let us be mindful that even the most bitter of circumstances can be sweetened by the hope we have in God.

Host: Let us all eat the sandwich.

Since the Temple in Jerusalem no longer stands, lamb is not eaten at Passover. The shank bone remains to remind us of the sacrificial lamb. Likewise, a roasted egg has been added to the Seder. It is called the chagigah, a name signifying the special Holiday offering. The egg is regarded as a symbol of mourning reminding us of the destruction of the second Temple. The egg at your table may be eaten later during the meal.

Let us prepare to eat dinner.

More teaching on: KORECH - MATZAH, BITTER HERBS SANDWICH

EATING THE BITTER HERBS AND MATZAH sandwich

In remembrance of the holy Temple, we do as the rabbis did in Temple times: He put matzah and bitter herbs together and ate them as a sandwich, in order to observe literally the words of the Torah: "They shall eat it [the Passover offering] with matzah and bitter herbs. (Exodus 12:8 & Numbers 9:11)

Make a sandwich of matzah, bitter herbs [and mortar, the apple mix.] (Eat the sandwich.)

This sandwich was eaten with Lamb during temples times in Jerusalem, it is also known as the sop. It is still the custom today to give this dipped sop with affection to a loved one. [give sop to loved one]

(It was with the dipped sop Yeshua spoke of his betrayal):

The reader of the betrayal please read:

(betray & dip) (John 13:21-28).

("One of you shall betray me" Peter motioned John to ask who he was, Jesus answer: " He it is, to whom I shall give a sop" After he dipped sop, Judas left to betray Him.)

[As the Passover lamb was the last item eaten at the Seder, this combination of bitter herbs, matzah and lamb, emphasized the significance of the matzah specially, the afikoman, to come later after the meal. Also the lamb was not eaten outside of Jerusalem, so the afikoman took on much of the significance of the Passover lamb for them. Jesus foretold the destruction of the Temple and thus the end of Passover sacrifices. Thus for Him to desire his followers to remember Him in the broken afikoman in the future was appropriate. The Passover sacrifice which could be offered only by, dwellers in, or travelers to, Jerusalem was soon to cease. When Jerusalem fell, lamb was no longer eaten at the Seder. With afikoman alone we can remember the Lamb, our Messiah.]

Jewish custom is to have Grace after meal and we will. Jesus gave thanks before He eat many times. Lifting up the food He gave thanks. (Matthew 14:19 & Luke 9:6 & John 6:11)

Let us give Thanks. (Personal prayer of thanks)

11. SHULCHAN ORAYCH

The Meal

(Before the meal begins, the Host recites the blessing.)

Host:

מבורך ומובן, הו אדוני אלוהינו, מלך היקום, אשר
יוצר את פרי האדמה

Baruch atah Adonai Ehohenu, melech ha olam, boray pree ha adama.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

More Teaching on the meal:

EGG DIPPED

It is customary to start the meal by Eating an egg dipped in salt water. A reminder of the temple sacrifice in the temple days and to remind us of the temple destruction. Also the need to rebuild Zion today.

MEAL (Dinner for everyone).

Let the meal begin. Tonight we are having....In addition, all of the ceremonial foods and drink may be eaten with the meal.

BAREICH - GRACE AFTER THE MEAL

Let us continue the Seder.

Let us read Responsively the Grace.

READER: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

ALL: May the name of the Lord be blessed from this time forth and forever.

READER: We praise You, O God, from whose abundance we have partaken.

ALL: We praise You, O Lord our God, our Savior and our King who gives bread to all flesh, for Your loving-kindness endures forever.

Please fill your cup in preparation for the cup of Redemption.

12. TZAFUN

TZAFUN - EATING THE AFIKOMEN

Host: The children are now dismissed to search for the Afikomen. The child who finds the Afikomen must bring it to the Host to redeem it with a gift. (Children find and present the Afikomen to the Host).

Now that the Afikomen is redeemed, let us break it up and distribute it in small portions to each person present. Please hold on to your Afikomen for we will eat it in just a moment.

(The wine glasses are filled for the third time.)

More Teaching on: Tzafun

TZAFUN - EATING THE AFIKOMEN

Since the meal cannot be completed without eating the AFIKOMAN, the AFIKOMAN, the broken middle matzah that was hidden and now will be brought back, must be found. The one who finds it receives a great reward.

The children must now get up and find the Afikoman. No one can leave till it is found...

(Warm-cold hints OK. Found and return continue...)

("Thank you. I will give you your reward later, please see me after the Seder is over"; ... to the children.)

The AFIKOMAN is our substitute for the Passover Lamb, which in days of old, was the final food of the Seder feast. Jesus took this portion of the Seder to establish the Lord's supper, Communion.

[Jesus is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.] (John 1:29)

This is the Bread of affliction, the humble Bread.

The Bread itself reminds us of Him. The Rabbis have rigid codes as to the appearance of the matzah. It must have stripes, be pierced and without leaven. Yeshua was afflicted, striped, pierced and without sin.

[The Prophet Isaiah, inspired by God, said of the Messiah to come. Please read from the Prophet Isaiah. (Isaiah 53) What perfect description of Yeshua tolled 700 years before his birth.]

[The Prophet Zechariah inspired by God said of the Messiah; {Please read from the Prophet Zechariah} (Zechariah 12:10) ("And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication.

They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve

bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. (Zechariah 12:10)]

(There are 60 major direct prophecies predicting the birth, life, death and resurrection of the messiah and another 270 implied references to the coming of the messiah all written hundreds to thousands of year before His birth. Only Yeshua, Jesus of Nazareth, has or could fulfill these predictions foretold by the prophets of God).

The Afikoman has been buried and risen. A reward is given for the finder of the Afikoman.

(In peacefully commentary voice read)

It was during the blessing after the meal and the eating of the Afikoman that the Bible tells us:

Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. (1 Corinthians 11:23-24)

(Each person is given a portion. pass to left & right)

Jesus said:

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35)

[The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."] (1 Corinthians 11:28). Let us pause for moment of thought. (pause for moment) Let us eat the bread. His sacrifi-

cial death on the cross fulfilled the prophetic symbolism of the Passover lamb.

13. BORAYCH

The Third Cup: The Cup of Redemption

Host: This cup represents the third “I will.” “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.” It is called the Cup of Redemption. God made a promise that he would redeem his people with an outstretched arm.

It was by the arm of the Lord that the children of Israel were brought out of Egypt. It was by Yeshua’s two outstretched arms and his shed blood that he redeemed us from our sin.

We believe it was this cup to which Yeshua referred when he said:

Matthew 26:39 (KJV) “And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt”.

Matthew 26:42 (KJV) “He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done.

It was this cup that Yeshua raised and said,

Luke 22:20 (KJV) “Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

It is from the Cup of Redemption and the Afikomen that the Lord's Supper has its origin.

Host: We will now partake of the Lord's Supper.

All: In memory of the Passover sacrifice.

Host: Messiah broke matzah and gave thanks to the Lord.

ברוך אתה יי אלהבו מלך הצולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו
נצונו על-אכילת מצה

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, asher
kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al acheelat matzah.

All: Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who sanctified us through his Commandments and command-
ed us concerning the eating of the unleavened bread.

Host: It was then that Messiah added the words:

"This is my body given for you: do this in remembrance of
me" (Luke 22:19).

Let us now eat the Afikomen meditating on the broken body
of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Let
us allow the taste to linger in our mouths.

Let us lift up the third cup. This is the Cup of Redemption,
symbolizing the blood of the Passover Lamb. Yeshua the
messiah lifted the cup saying:

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured
out for you" (Luke 22:20).

Just as the blood of the lamb brought salvation in Egypt, so Messiah's atoning death can bring salvation to all who believe.

Host:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך הצולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam, boray pree hagafen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who created the fruit of the vine.

Host: Let us all gratefully drink.

More Teaching on The Cup of Redemption:

The Third Cup: The Cup of Redemption

The Cup of Redemption: The Cup of Blessing: With this cup Israel remembers their deliverance from 430 years of slavery, and their redemption from the plague of death by the blood of the first Passover Lamb.

(In peacefully commentary voice read)
It was with this cup The Word of God tells us:

In the same way, after the supper he, (Yeshua, the Lord Jesus) took the cup, saying, " This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. (Luke 22:20)

This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1 Corinthians 11:25b)

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I will lift up the cup of salvation, The Cup of Yeshua and call on the name of the Lord. Remembering that Jesus' blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Let us be thankful.

*[personal prayer]
(pause for moment of thought)*

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Our God, King of the universe,
Creator of the fruit of the Vine.*

Let us drink the cup.

(We drink the third cup)

The apostle Paul wrote of this Cup and this Bread:

Please read of the Cup and Bread. (or Host read..

*(1 Corinthians 10:16 & 11:20&26)
("The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Corinthians 10:16)*

When you come together, is it not the Lord's Supper you eat...

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes") (1 Corinthians 11:20 & 26)

In Egypt had they not trusted God and applied the blood of the Lamb to their doors, They would have died. So also, God must see the blood of the Lamb, Yeshua our Savior at the door of our heart. That we may Passover from death to life.

It was by God's Grace and for His name sake that Israel was redeemed, not by their own righteousness. So it is also with our redemption from sin and spiritual death, for those who have put here faith in Yeshua, the Lamb of God.

Let us sing a song of praise to Him.

([song of worship , sing Hallelujah to the Lord.])

We are witnesses to God's power to deliver us from slavery and sin. God calls us, Do not go back to bondage in Egypt nor back to the bondage of sin. There is a Redeemer, Jesus our Lord. We have partaken of the afikoman and the Third cup of redemption, remembering the One who was to come, has already come and will come again.

Christians and Jews have a belief in common, yet with this difference: The Torah-based Jew believes the Messiah is to come: the Torah-based Christian, believes that he is to come again.

Please fill the fourth cup of Thanksgiving and Completion.

14. ELIJAH THE PROPHET

Host: We have chosen a young person to check and see if Elijah the prophet is at door.

You will notice that one place setting has not been touched during the Seder. This place is reserved for the prophet Elijah who, it is said, will come to announce the Messiah.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and
the heart of the children to their fathers.

A type of Elijah, John the Baptist, proclaimed Yeshua as the
“Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” John
1:29-30 (KJV)

(If the prophet does not appear, we close the door and wait for
him next year. If he does appear, we rejoice knowing that our
Messiah will soon be here!)

“Elyahu Hanavi”

Eliyahu ha-navi, Eliyahu ha-Tishbi,
Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Gilabi

Bim hera b'yameynu yavo eleynu,
Im Mashiach Ben David, Im Mashiah Ben David.

Come Thou long expected Yeshua, born to set Thy people
free,

From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in Thee

Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou
art,

Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart

Bim hera b'yamenu yavo eleynu
Im Mashiach Ben David, Im mahiach Ben David.
Eliyahu ha-navi, Eliyahu ha-Tishbi,
Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Gilabi

Bim hera b'yameynu yavo eleynu,

Im Mashiach Ben David, Im Mashiah Ben David.

(Elijah the prophet, the Tishbite, from Gilead. Come quickly in our days with Messiah, Son of David.).

More Teaching on:

ELIJAH THE PROPHET

Please fill the special cup. The cup of Elijah.. and hold it up. Someone please open the front door and everyone please rise.

Elijah is the bearer of good tidings of joy and peace. His name is especially associated with the coming of the Messiah, whose advent he is expected to announce.

[read or have reader]

[I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; (Malachi 4:4-6a)]

Legend declares that Elijah visits every Jewish home at the Seder and sips the cup. When Israel was exiled from the land, the cup of Elijah was filled, but not drunk. It remains on the table as a sign of God's further messianic promise of renewal.

We recall Jesus saying of John the Baptist:

Please read of John the Baptist (Mark 9:13)&(Matthew 11:14).

(And they asked him (Jesus), "Why do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected? But I tell you, Elijah has come, and they have done to him everything they wished, just as it is

written about him." (Mark 9:11-13)

(For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear. (Matthew 11:13,14,15)

"Elijah has come" This was certainly true in the person of John the Baptist.

So please close the door and be seated. Elijah and the Messiah have already come and we await His return.

At this time we also remember the promises of God to Israel. He who blesses the Jews will be blessed, he who curses the Jews will be cursed. (Genesis 27:29)

History speaks for itself that this is true. Many a mighty nation has fallen when they began to persecute God's people. Nations like Babylon, Egypt, Rome, Spain, Germany and more have fallen. God is faithful and true to His promises. We can trust in Him!

Let us Praise the Lord Our God, Our Redeemer.

15. THE HALLEL

The Fourth Cup: The Cup of Praise or Cup of Consummation

(Pour the fourth wine cup.)

Host: The fourth cup is the cup of praise and represents the fourth "I will." "I will take you to me for a people." This is God's promise that he will again gather Israel together. He will be their God and they will be his people.

During temple times when the priest offered a sacrifice, the people would collectively sing songs called the Hallel (meaning praise).

Matthew 26:30 (KJV) “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”

Let us sing Psalm 136.

For His Mercy Endures

To Him who alone does great wonders,
For His mercy endures forever,
To Him who by wisdom made the heavens.
For His mercy endures forever,

(Chorus)

Oh give thanks to the Lord.
Oh give thanks to the God of gods.
Give thanks to the Lord.
For His mercy endures forever,
For His mercy endures forever.

To Him who created the earth and sea,
For His mercy endures forever,
To Him who made the heavens' great lights,
For His mercy endures forever.

To Him who struck Egypt's firstborn ones,
For His mercy endures forever,
And brought up from bondage Yisrael's sons,
For His mercy endures forever.

To Him who divided the Red Sea in two,
For His mercy endures forever,

And made all His people pass safely through,
For His mercy endures forever.

With a strong hand, with His might power,
He conquered all our foes,
He gave their land, and inheritance,
To His children, Yisrael.

To Him who remembered our lowly state,
For His mercy endures forever.
And gave Yisrael her heritage,
For His mercy endures forever.

Host:

ברוך אלהי יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch atha Adonai Elohenu, melech ha olam. Boray pree
hagafen.

All: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine.

Host: Let us all drink the fourth and final cup.

More Teaching on it:

HALLEL - PSALMS OF PRAISE

[The Passover Hallel is the Psalms of praises, Psalm one hundred thirteen to one hundred eighteen (113 to 118) are the Passover Psalms. The Great Passover Hallel is Psalms one hundred thirty six (136). These were sung in the Temple by the Temple Choir during Passover.]

Let us read Responsively a Hallel of Praise.

READER: Praise the Lord!

ALL: Praise, O servants of the Lord. Praise the name of the Lord.

READER: Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forever. When Israel went forth from Egypt, the House of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah became His sanctuary, Israel His dominion.

ALL: The sea looked and fled. The Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

READER: You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?

ALL: I shall lift up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

READER: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

ALL: For His loving-kindness is everlasting.

READER: I shall give thanks to Thee, for Thou hast answered me; and Thou hast become my salvation.

ALL: The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Host: This is the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

ALL: This is the day which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

READER: O Lord, do save, we beseech thee!

ALL: O Lord, do save, we beseech thee!

READER: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. We have blessed you from the House of the Lord.

ALL: Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. For His loving-kindness is everlasting.

Also:

THE FOURTH CUP OF PRAISE IS CALLED OF COMPLETATION or Cup of Consummation

*Lift up the fourth cup of praise and completion.
(raise the cup and recite:)*

*Ba rook Ah-ta Ah-do-ni El-olhay-knew Mel-ick How-o-lam
Bore a Parie Ha gawo-fen Amen*

*Blessed art Thou, O Lord Our God, Ruler of the universe,
Creator of the fruit of the Vine.*

[Let us sing to the Lord!]

[ANY PASSOVER SONGS]

[2-4 songs of praise and worship]

At This Time of the last Super, the Word says: Please read the end of last supper. (Mark14:26,27,28)

(When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: "I will strike

the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee." (Mark 14:26,27,28)

[Jesus after singing and closing the Passover dinner had to leave the city for the atonement Lamb's body was always offered up to God outside the city's walls. (Hebrews 13:11-14)]

16. NIRTZAH

CONCLUSION OF THE SEDER

Host: May our hearts now hearts now be joined in gratitude to God for sending the Messiah, for his death, burial, resurrection and for the promise of his return. The Passover Seder is now complete. Its traditions, rules and ceremonies have all been faithfully observed. As we were privileged to celebrate it tonight, so may we always be worthy to do so. Thou, Pure One, Who dwells on high, gather us into a mighty congregation. Soon may Israel, the seed of Thy planting, be redeemed and come singing unto Zion.

All: Lashanah Haba'ah bi Yerushayim! (Next year in Jerusalem!)

Host: Aaronic benediction. Number 6:24-26

יְבָרֶכְךָ יי וישמרך יאר יי פניו אליך ויחנך ישא יי פניו אליך וישם לך שך שלום

“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace”.

Have compassion, O Lord our God, upon us, upon Israel Your people, upon Jerusalem Your city, on Zion the dwelling place of Your glory, and upon Your altar and Your Temple. Rebuild Jerusalem, Your holy city, speedily in our days. Be gracious to us and give us strength.

Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. We thank Thee for sustaining us all to this day. Blessed be the Lord.

Ended is the Passover Seder according to custom, statute and law. As we were worthy (by faith in Christ) to celebrate it this year, so may we perform it in future years.

O Pure One in heaven above, restore the congregation of Israel in Your love, [and bring them to the knowledge and love of the everlasting Redeemer, Yeshua, the Anointed one, King of Kings, Lord of Lords. For before Him every knee will bow and every tongue confess, Jesus Christ is Lord. And we will be with Him in the New Jerusalem. He will be our God and we will be His people forever more (Revelation 21:1-4).

[Revelation 5:17 worthy is the lamb]

Speedily lead Your redeemed people to Zion in Joy.

The Seder customary ends by everyone saying:

Next Year in Jerusalem!

And everyone said:

Next Year in Jerusalem!

(Because of God's promises to Israel and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can know there is only one God and one Savior in which we can and must trust in. God has kept all his promises to Israel, and Scripture tells us He still has future blessings and covenant promises to give to the remnant Israel).

I hope to see all of you in the New Jerusalem!

Briefly a Review:

Afikomen: This is actually not Hebrew, it's Greek. It means "desert" or "that which comes after."

Bedicot Chametz: The search for leaven.

Chametz: Leaven; any items made with yeast.

Dayenu: "It would have been enough" – a popular Passover song.

Eliyahu Hanvi: Elijah the Prophet; a popular Passover song.

Haggadah: The telling; the book narrating the Passover.

Hallel: Praise; Psalm 136 is called the "Great Hallel"

Kiddush: Sanctification; the cup of sanctification.

Lashana Haba'a: "Next year in Jerusalem"; the traditional hope with which believers end the Seder; a popular song.

Maggid: The narration of the Passover story from Exodus.

Ma Nishtana: "How Different" – the four questions asked by a young child.

Matzah: Unleavened Bread.

Matzot: Plural for Matzah.

Messianic: Pertaining to Messiah or a believer in the Messiah.

Pesach: Hebrew for Passover; the paschal lamb.

Torah: The five books of Moses; the Pentateuch.

Yeshua: Hebrew for Jesus; literally means “salvation”.

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ILUSTRATIONS ON PASSOVER MEAL

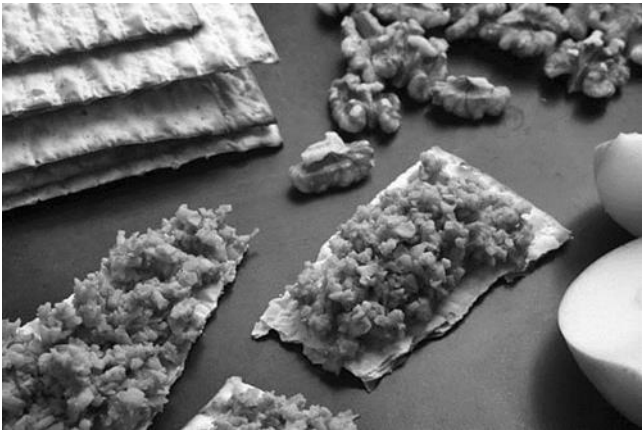
Charoseth



Sephardi-style charoset made from apples, pears, raisins, figs, orange juice, red wine, pine nuts and cinnamon.

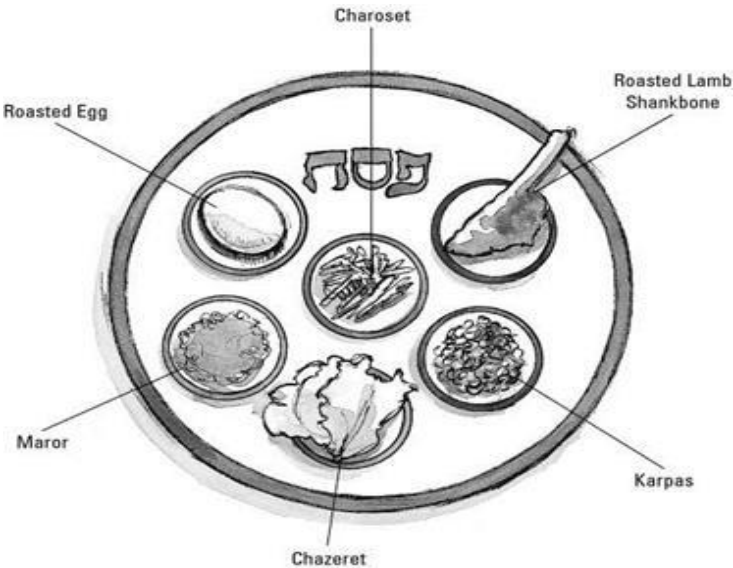


Ashkenazi-style charoset made from apples, walnuts, red wine and cinnamon.



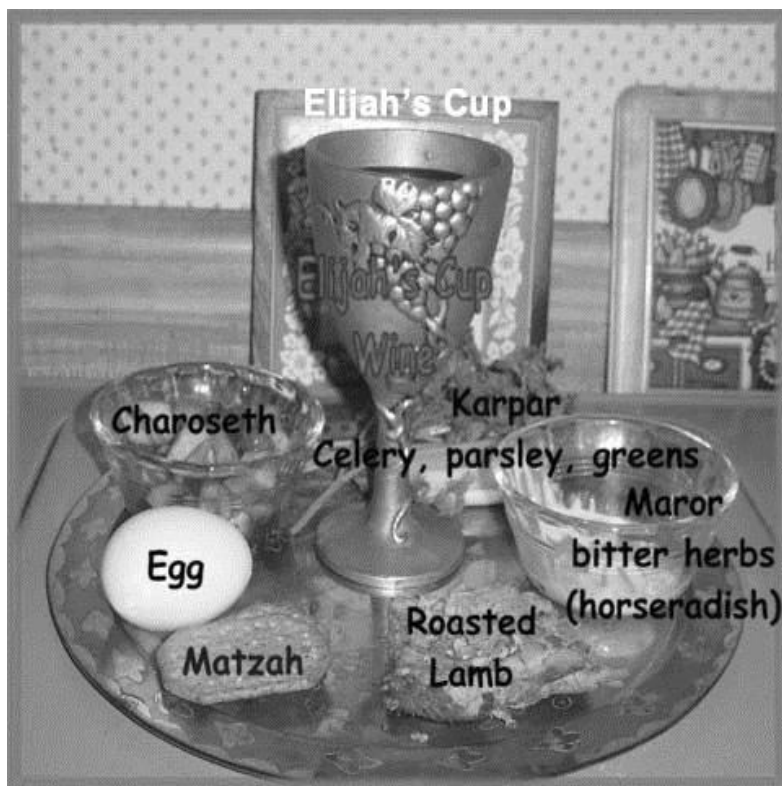
Other way of Charoseth (ready to eat)

Different Arrangements of Passover Plate



THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
AND ITS OBSERVANCE IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY

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Elijah also plays a part in the Passover Seder. Every year in Jewish homes around the world, families set out Elijah's Cup (Kos Eliyahu in Hebrew) as part of their Seder. The cup is filled with wine and children eagerly open a door so that Elijah can come in and join the Seder. Though it makes sense to assume that Elijah's Cup is simply an honorary remembrance of the prophet, Elijah's Cup serves a practical purpose. When determining how many cups of wine we should drink during the Passover Seder, the ancient rabbis couldn't decide whether that number should be four or five. Their solution was to drink four cups and then pour another one for Elijah (the fifth cup). When he returns it will be up to him to decide whether this fifth cup should be consumed at the Seder!

Moreover, There is an open question in the Talmud whether we are obligated to have four or five cups on the night of Passover. Since the issue was never resolved, we pour a fifth cup, but do not drink it. After heralding the coming of the Messiah, one of Elijah's tasks will be to resolve all hitherto unanswered halachic questions. The fifth cup set on the table that we don't drink from, called Elijah's Cup. In a traditional Passover Seder, Elijah's Cup is filled, and placed on the table. At a certain point, after dinner, it is traditional to open a door for a few minutes, in the hope of Elijah the prophet coming to join the Seder. What's the reason for all of this? Let's recall the last verses of the last chapter of the last book of the Hebrew Scriptures, the book of Malachi: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." The belief is that, if Elijah does come, then he will usher in the coming of the Messiah. In fact, when the door is opened for Elijah, the following song is sung:

Eliyahu Hanavi, Eliyahu hatishbi Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu hagiladi. Bimhera b'yamenu yavo elenu Im mashiah ben David, Im mashiah ben David.

..which, translated, means:

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah the Gileadite. Come speedily and in our day. Come to us, Messiah, son of David.

You see, built into the Passover is an inherent understanding that there is more to the celebration than an acknowledgement of the past. There is the recognition that the redemption of the Jewish People from the physical bondage of Egypt is a picture of the ultimate redemption which would come through the Messiah.



It was Matzah like it that was probably served to His disciples by Christ. They were having their Passover meal just prior to Christ being arrested. It was no doubt unleavened bread that was broken to represent the body of Christ. Today, many Christians use Matzah when they celebrate the Lords Supper. It is broken into small pieces and served as the bread during communion.

Prayer to receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior

If you want to receive Jesus Christ as your only personal Savior, and begin to live a new life, repeat this prayer with faith and loudly:

"Today I come before you, God, my Creator, in the Name of Jesus, your begotten son: Today I confess that Jesus is LORD and my personal Savior. Your Word says that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved, according to Romans 10:13. I believe it with my heart and I confess that Jesus is my Lord and ask you for forgiveness for my sins. Amen. "

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‘May the Lord bless you
and protect you.

May the Lord smile on you
and be gracious to you.

May the Lord show you his favor
and give you his peace.’

Numbers 6:24-26