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Passover



and

Unleavened Bread

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STATEMENT

Our Mission and purpose is to reach people around the world with the message of the revealed personal Names of Yahweh and His Son Yahshua the Messiah, as well as teaching the salvation truths that have been neglected for centuries.

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The First Harvest Season



The Fruit of the Vine and Unleavened Bread

In ancient times there were three harvest seasons – spring, summer and fall. One of the major crops in the spring was barley. In early summer it was wheat and in the fall it was many other field crops. It is true that other crops are harvested during each of these times, mainly because of the advances made in agriculture. It is interesting to note that these three times in a year coincide with the three times we are commanded to gather together to celebrate some of Yahweh's annual Holy Days.

Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before Yahweh Elohim, Ex 23:14-17.

During these three times there are five of the seven annual Sabbaths we are commanded to keep. The two that are not included are the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. Each of Yahweh's Holy Days point directly or indirectly to our Savior, Yahshua our Messiah.

Passover - Precedes Unleavened Bread

Ancient Israel was told to keep Passover as a day of remembrance and to celebrate it as a feast in Yahweh's honor.

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to Yahweh throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever, Ex. 12:14.

The word *memorial* comes from the Hebrew (Strong's #OT:2146) *zikrown* (zik-rone'); from OT:2142; a memento (or memorable thing, day or writing); and is translated memorial or record in the King James Version of the Bible.

The root word of *zikrown* is Strong's #2142, *zakar* (zawkar'). *Zakar* has numerous translations in the KJV, among them being remember or to make to be remembered.

Does Christianity today remember the day of Yahshua's death, once a year? No, certainly not. Instead, they celebrate the day of His birth as Christmas and the day of His resurrection as Easter. Each of these celebrated days has pagan origins. Celebrating these also counters Eccl. 7:1, which tells us which day is more important.

A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth, Eccl. 7:1.

The Encyclopedia Judaica tells us: "The Feast of Passover consists of two parts: the Passover Ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Originally, both parts existed separately, but at the beginning of the exile they were combined" (vol. 13, "Passover," p. 169).

Passover – A Vigil To Be Kept

Ex. 12:42 reads,

It [is] a night to be much observed unto Yahweh for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: this [is] that night of Yahweh to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

The Jewish Tanakh gives the following reading for this verse:

That was for [Yahweh] a night of vigil to bring them out of the land of Egypt; that same night is [Yahweh's], one of vigil for all the children of Israel throughout the ages.

The word translated "observed" is Strong's #8107 (*shimmur*), from #8104 (*shamar*), meaning an observance. On #8104 Strong says "A primitive root; properly to hedge about (as with thorns), i.e. guard; gen. To protect, attend to, etc.: beware, be circumspect, take heed, keep, mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, save, sure, wait, watch." Clearly the meaning is watchings.

<Harvest see page 18>

Unleavened Bread



Because we live in a physical world, Yahweh impresses lessons upon us that we learn only through physical activity. Our minds do not always retain many of the spiritual truths we have learned because of our fallibility. We often cannot recall the dates of some of the most memorable occasions in our lives. How many husbands forget such an all-important event as their wedding anniversary?

When Yahweh gave Israel His special holy days, He prescribes their observance with some acts to perform to make them more memorable. Before the death and resurrection of the Messiah, animal sacrifices were a part of worship even on the Sabbath day, Numbers 28:10. However, these sacrifices pointed to the great sacrifice by Yahshua and are done away in Him, Hebrews 10:1-10.

While the way a holy day is observed may be changed, the observance of the day itself continues. The weekly Sabbath and annual holy days (Unleavened Bread) will also be kept even after the Messiah returns to rule, Isaiah 66:23, Ezekiel 45:21.

Unleavened Bread Follows Passover

Immediately following the Passover observance, Yahweh commanded the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Exodus 12:15-20. The Days of Unleavened Bread were also a part of the Old Covenant, Exodus 23:14-15. What is the meaning of these days, and what is the New Testament believer supposed to do during this time?

Ancient Israel was told to keep the Passover as a day of remembrance and to celebrate it as a Feast in Yahweh's honor forever, Exodus 12:14. It commemorated the deliverance of Yahweh's people from the destroying angel because they had applied the blood of the lamb to their doors and lintels.

Immediately following that, they were to keep seven days during which they were to eat no leavened bread, nor were they to have any leaven in their houses, Exodus 12:15-20. Verse 17 says it is to be kept from age to age as an

irrevocable ordinance. Anyone eating leavened bread during this time was to be cut off from the community of Israel.

The Assembly at Corinth was undoubtedly the most worldly and paganized of all the groups Paul worked with. They were very cosmopolitan, and proud of their liberal and enlightened attitude of humanistic tolerance. Most Bible scholars contend they were not Israelites, but were of Gentile origin. They had just come out of heathenism, but carried some pagan, idolatrous ways into the Corinthian Assembly.

There was incest, and Paul scolds them for their obvious pride in tolerating a man having his father's wife. He tells them to remove such a man from among them so that he will come to his senses and repent. But the interesting point is that Paul makes an analogy to the leavening power of yeast working in the Assembly.

He uses it here in a bad sense, "The pride that you take in yourselves is hardly to your credit. You must know how even a small amount of yeast is enough to leaven all the dough, so get rid of all the old yeast, and make yourselves into a completely new batch of bread, unleavened as you are meant to be. Messiah, our Passover, has been sacrificed; let us celebrate the feast, then, by getting rid of all the old yeast of evil and wickedness, having only the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," I Corinthians 5:6-8, Jerusalem Bible.

Is Leaven Sin?

Exactly what is the meaning of leaven? Is yeast representative of something bad? Does it stand for sin, wickedness, and corruption? Or does it represent being "puffed up" as some teach?

If leaven is used in Scripture as evil, then we should never eat it, but avoid it entirely. Neither would it ever be allowed in any offering to Yahweh. Yet, we find that in Leviticus 23:17 leaven is to be placed in the two wave loaves offered at Pentecost. Also, Leviticus 7:13 shows leaven used in the cakes of the praise offering to Yahweh.

Yahshua spoke to His disciples in a parabolic discourse in Matthew 13, using many extended metaphors about the Kingdom. In verses 31-32 He likened the mustard seed to the Kingdom. In verse 33 He said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through," Jerusalem Bible.

If leaven or yeast is representative of sin, wickedness, and corruption, then how could Yahshua say the Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven? Do we not read in Scripture that the Kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, Romans 14:17?

The Pharisees and Sadducees came testing Yahshua and asked for a sign from heaven in Matthew 16:1. Rather than exercise His supernatural power for their benefit, Yahshua upbraids them for not observing the signs of the times. Then adds that there will no sign be given except the sign of Jonah. He abruptly left after that exchange and went on to the other side. Yahshua then says to be aware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

The disciples reason that He was chiding them for not bringing along any bread. He plainly reminds them of the feeding of the 5,000 and the later feeding of the 4,000 with baskets of surplus bread remaining. Plainly He tells them, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees," verse 11. Then it dawns on the disciples Yahshua is speaking about the doctrine or teaching of His critics.

Leaven -Both Kinds of Doctrine

If we understand leaven to mean a doctrine or influence, we will be on safe ground. It can be an influence for good or for evil. Matthew 15:14 shows that the perverse doctrine of the religious leaders threatens to misguide those for whom they are responsible. This Yahshua tells His disciples to watch for.

Note the three types He specifically calls attention to: religious hypocrisy in external ceremonialism was evident

with the Pharisees, Matthew 23:14, 16, and 28; a skeptical attitude toward the spirit realm was the leaven of the Sadducees, Matthew 22:23, 29; and the spirit of worldly compromise, political guile, and formalism was the leaven of the Herodians, Matthew 22:16-21, Mark 3:6.

In the warm countries around Palestine leaven would spring up spontaneously in a lump of dough. In the tepid climate of Syria, 24 hours was sufficient for a mass of dough to become thoroughly leavened, according to *Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*.

Leaven is that which produces fermentation in a mass of dough. In Hebrew it is *seor*. From this we get our word "sour." Physical leaven putrefies. It breaks down flour, causing decay or disintegration in the dough. Rabbinical writers often used leaven as a symbol of man's hereditary corruption.

There are, however, two verses in Leviticus stating that the showbread contains leaven (23:17) and the praise offering already mentioned (7:13).

An interesting comment is made in the New Testament where Yahshua speaks of the Kingdom of Heaven as being like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, Matthew 13:33. These verses show that leaven has a more symbolic meaning, as revealed by Yahshua in alluding to the pervasive character of leaven as it works slowly and surely until the whole lump is leavened. Paul stated the same in Galatians 5:9.

Patrick Fairbairn in *The Typology of Scripture* observes, "There can be no doubt that leavened bread was used in ordinary life by the covenant people, without apparently suggesting any idea of corruption. It is thought to be more natural and altogether more in accordance with the original prohibition of leaven, to understand by it simply the old, that which savored of the state of things to be done away, whereas the unleavened was the new, the fresh, the unmixed, consequently pure," p. 312.

Further, he says, "The putting away of the leaven, that there might be the

use only of unleavened bread, may also be regarded as carrying some respect to the circumstances of the people at the first institution of the Feast. And on this account it seems to be called 'the bread of affliction' (Deut. 16:3) because of the trembling haste and anguish of spirit amid which their departure was taken from Egypt. But there can be no doubt that it mainly pointed, as already shown in connection with the meat-offering, to holiness in heart and conduct, which became the ransomed people of Yahweh - the uncorrupt sincerity and truth that should appear in all their behavior. Hence, while the bitter herbs were only to be eaten with the lamb itself, the unleavened bread was to be used through the whole seven days of the feast, the primary sabbatical circle, as a sign that the religious moral purity which it imaged was to be their abiding and settled character."

Accept Blood, Remove Falsity

If we understand leaven to mean doctrine or influence for good or evil, then we can see the fuller meaning of Yahweh's command to Israel to eat unleavened bread for seven days.

Yahweh was redeeming a people for Himself as He brought the 10 plagues upon Egypt. Each of the plagues was directed against a pagan deity worshiped by the Egyptians. As Israel had been redeemed by the blood struck on their doorposts and lintels, they were now to leave the influence of pagan Egypt behind and for seven days eat only unleavened bread. On the last day of Unleavened Bread, Israel marched through the Red Sea and were forever free of the Egyptians.

No wonder Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians that they should purge out the old leaven - that old doctrine of tolerating sin and wickedness right in the Assembly at Corinth.

They were to be a new lump, untainted from the attitudes and influences of the wicked. He adds,

<Unleavened see page 23>

The Fruit of the Vine



Each year as Passover approaches, the question is debated: does wine or grape juice symbolize the blood of the New Covenant?

Many papers contending for one or the other substance appear each year and a few even argue that the cup contained water. (Yahshua specifically called the contents of the cup “fruit of the vine.” How can water be considered fruit of the vine?)

Some congregations use grape juice because of a fear of alcohol rather than because they have Scriptural proof for grape juice.

Perfect love casts out fear, 1 John 4:18. Therefore, if Scriptures indicate wine is the right choice, why fear the alcohol it contains? Technically, both are fruit of the vine. Surely, though, Scriptures verify one or the other and even though Yahshua’s reference to “fruit of the vine” is ambiguous, a Bible student should be able to determine which is the right choice.

Nave’s Topical Bible refers to Matthew 26:27-29 as proof that wine symbolizes Yahshua’s shed blood. These Scriptures read: “Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them saying, ‘Drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father’s kingdom.’”

This doesn’t prove that the cup contained wine. It just proves the contents of the cup was fruit of the vine which could either be wine or grape juice. The belief that Matthew 26:27-29 proves that the cup contained wine is a traditional belief.

The unreliability of tradition as a basis of belief is illustrated by the following anecdote:

A man’s wife always cuts off the ends of a steak before cooking it, so one day he asked,

“Why do you always cut the ends off a steak before you cook it?”

She replied, “I learned to cook from my mother and she always cut the ends off a steak before cooking it. She must have had a reason, so I do it, too.”

The man went to his mother-in-law and asked her why she always cut the ends off a steak before she cooked it.

“I learned to cook from my mother and she always cut the ends off a steak before she cooked it. She didn’t tell me the reason, and I didn’t ask her. I just do it because I believe she had a good reason.”

Because his wife’s grandmother was still living, he went to her with the same question. The elderly lady told him that when she was cooking for the family she seldom could cut a steak that fit the small pan she had, so she cut it down to fit the pan.

Wine: Yahweh’s Wrath

Red wine has been considered a symbol of blood since ancient times. It is a traditional belief that originated in Babylon and was passed down from generation to generation as unthinkingly as the woman who blindly repeated the culinary routine of her mother.

No doubt many people use wine at Passover because that is what their fathers traditionally used. Let’s not stand on tradition. We must base our belief and practice on what we can verify in Yahweh’s Word.

Paul writes in 1 Cor. 10:21, “You cannot drink the cup of Yahweh and the cup of devils: you cannot be partakers of Yahweh’s table, and the table of devils.” Paul refers to the cup that Yahshua gave to His disciples as the cup of blessing. Ps. 23:5 says, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.”

Overflows with what? The cup Yahweh gives to the righteous overflows with blessings, but to the wicked He gives the cup of wrath.

In Ps. 75:8 we read, “In the hand of Yahweh is a cup full of foaming wine [red wine, KJV] mixed with spices; he pours it out, and all the wicked drink it down to the very dregs.”

Jer. 25:15-16 says, “The Mighty One of Israel said to me: ‘Take from my hand this cup filled with wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. When they drink it they will stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send them.’”

Wine is the symbol of Yahweh's wrath! Would Yahshua be contradicting His Heavenly Father if He used wine in the cup of blessing as the symbol of the blood of the covenant? Job 19:29 tells us wrath brings punishment by the sword. The sword is a symbol of war! The sword makes blood flow and Paul tells us in Eph. 5:6 that it will be the blood of the disobedient (wicked) that will flow when Yahweh pours out His wrath.

Isaiah the prophet describes the end-time fury of a returning Savior:

I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and stained all my clothing. For the day of my vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redemption had come. I looked but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me. I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drink and poured their blood on the ground, Isaiah 63:3-6.

‘Wine’press and Grapes

“Winepress” is merely a figure of speech in these verses. The blood that spattered His garments flowed from the people upon whom His wrath fell, not from the winepress.

This indicates that the juice of the trampled grapes symbolizes the blood of the sin-tainted people, not Yahshua's sinless blood. The winepress (more properly, grape juice press) represents His fury and judgment as we read in Rev. 19:11-16,

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of Yahweh. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon

white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty Yahweh. And he had on this vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND RULER OF RULERS.

His vesture is dipped in blood, verse 13, the juice of the grape.

He makes grass grow for cattle, and plants for man to cultivate — bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart, Ps. 104:15.

Here wine is listed among the good things Yahweh provides from the earth. Paul could not say, “Stop drinking only water, and use the little wine for the stomach (1 Tim. 5:23) if wine was considered bad in itself.” But, he does warn us not to drink too much wine.

Excessive Wine Disrupts

“Do not get drunk on wine which leads to debauchery,” Eph. 5:18. And He says a drunkard will never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, 1 Cor. 6:9-10.

The dangers of alcohol are many, even in Scriptures.

We are told in Gen. 9:20-21 that Noah planted a vineyard after the flood and got drunk on the wine produced from it.

Prov. 4:14-17 says, *Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way. For they cannot sleep until they do evil; they are robbed of slumber till they make someone fall. They eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.*

The Bread of Life is symbolized by unleavened bread. Is the opposite, bread of wickedness, symbolized by leavened bread? Aren't wrath and violence the opposite of the peace of Yahweh?

In the Scriptures we have considered, wine is used as a symbol of the opposite of peace. Is it

reasonable to assume Yahshua would use wine as a symbol of the blood of the covenant?

Noah was not a drunkard. He slipped up once after the flood and lost control of himself, but the fact that he was saved from Yahweh's wrath and counted among the righteous in Hebrews 11 is proof that Noah did not walk in the way of evil men and eat the bread of wickedness.

Grapes Are Firstfruits

Fermentation of grape juice is caused by the same enzyme in grapes that is in yeast that leavens bread. Yahshua is sinless and is symbolized by the first fruits of the spring grain harvest. He is represented by the wave sheaf of maturing, unleavened grain cut from the field before the harvest begins. His body is sinless, therefore it is symbolized by unleavened bread eaten at Passover — bread unchanged by the fermenting process.

Pure, unfermented, unchanged grape juice is the first product obtained from crushing the fruit of the vine. It is the “firstfruit” of the process.

Wine is a byproduct. It is used in Scripture in reference to wrath and violence that causes sinful human blood to flow. In light of these facts alone, the correct Scriptural symbol for Yahshua's sinless blood of the covenant must be grape juice.

Fermenting Changes

In Luke 12:1 Yahshua likens hypocrisy of the Pharisees to leaven and in 1 Cor. 5:8 Paul refers to the leaven of malice and wickedness. Both are references to the influence of beliefs and practices that cause a change in the spiritual nature of people.

The dictionary defines leaven as an agent that acts in or upon something to produce a gradual change in the thing acted upon. Leavening is referred to as the fermentation of a new batch of dough. That fermentation is caused by the same agent, yeast, that induces fermentation in liquids during the production of alcoholic beverages.

In other words, fermentation of grape juice is the same change from

its original purity that occurs in the leavening of dough.

This last is a reference to a nonscriptural authority that is given to show that the conclusion drawn from the Scriptures can be verified by observation of things in this world that were made by Yahweh. A congregation that uses wine as a symbol of Yahshua's blood is not demonstrating understanding of the hidden wisdom in Yahweh's use of symbols!

Priestly Abstention

The Bible is full of warnings against overindulgence of wine or strong drink, but Yahweh does not advocate total abstinence from either. True, a person who has a problem with physical addiction or emotional dependence must exercise the self-control necessary to abstain from any use of alcoholic beverages at all times under all circumstances.

There are two occasions upon which normal people are to abstain from wine or strong drink and one occasion upon which we are not to drink even grape juice. The Scriptures that tell us about these occasions are Lev. 10:8-10 and Num. 6:1-4.

Then Yahweh said to Aaron, "You and your sons are not to drink wine or other fermented drink whenever you go into the Tent of Meeting, or you will die. This is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You must distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean."

Are we not told that everyone in the New Covenant is or will be a priest or king? Are we not in Yahweh's presence when we gather with brethren to partake of Passover? Wouldn't Yahshua have transgressed this commandment if He had given His disciples wine to drink at His last Passover with them?

Yahweh said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to Yahweh as a Nazarite, he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must

not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. As long as he is a Nazarite, he must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seed or skins."

A person partaking of Passover is in Yahweh's presence, but he is not taking a Nazarite vow in the Old Covenant sense; therefore, drinking grape juice at Passover would not be breaking this commandment. But drinking wine would break the commandment not to drink wine in His presence.

Symbolism In Worship

The New Testament mentions five things from which total abstinence is commanded, and neither wine nor strong drink is among them.

Acts 15:29 gives three of them:

- Food sacrificed to idols
- Blood
- Sexual immorality

We are literally to abstain from food sacrificed to idols and figuratively, not to feed our minds on false doctrines of paganism.

We must literally abstain from eating or drinking blood of animals. What about symbolically drinking the blood of human "animals"?

Literal sexual immorality? Yes! But Yahweh calls any Worship not directed to Him, adultery. In a spiritual sense, then, any worship borrowed from paganism is not directed to Him and is not pleasing to Him.

It would be spiritual immorality and Yahweh emphatically tells us in Deut. 12:30-31 not to worship Him in ways the pagans worshipped their idols,

Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their mighty ones, saying, How did these nations serve their mighty ones? Even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for every abomination to Yahweh, which he hateth, have they done unto their mighty ones; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their mighty ones.

The fourth thing from which we are to abstain is mentioned in 1 Peter 2:11,

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

The King James Version calls sinful desires lust of the flesh, meaning inordinate and perverse sexual desire literally, and figuratively, from the lusts of a carnal mind for worldly pleasures, treasures, and creature comforts.

We are told the fifth things from which we are to abstain in 1 Thes. 5:22. This verse says to avoid every kind of evil. The King James Version says to "abstain from all appearance of evil."

Obeying this commandment can put a person in a real bind to decide what is really evil and what only appears to be evil. When people are confronted with this decision, the action they choose is generally determined, whether they realize it or not, by whose eyes they wish to appear good in — Yahweh's or man's.

They decide on the basis of what they believe appears good to Yahweh and evil to man and what appears evil to Yahweh and good to man.

Yahweh says "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil," Isaiah 5:20.

Babylonian Corruption

Isaiah 29:1-8 is a veiled prophecy of Armageddon and what will happen to Jerusalem, poetically called Ariel. "Ariel" is a Hebrew word that means "altar of El" and is translated "altar hearth" in verse 2 in the NIV translation. Continuing from verse 9 to verse 12 we read:

Be stunned and amazed, blind yourselves and be sightless; be drunk, but not from wine, stagger, but not from beer. Yahweh has brought over you a deep sleep: He has sealed your eyes (the prophets); He has covered the heads of (the seers). For you this whole vision is nothing but words sealed in a scroll. And if you give the scroll to someone who can read, and say to him, "Read this, please," he will answer, "I don't know how to read."

This is not talking about literal drunkenness resulting from drinking

<Fruit see page 23>



There were only four days before the last plague was to come upon the once mighty kingdom of Egypt, and it was to be the worst plague of all.

Nine plagues, the first three of which Yahweh's chosen people had to go through, stripped the land, and those living on it, of their pride. Yet, Pharaoh's heart was hardened and his pride would not let the children of Israel go. This, however, would work to Yahweh's advantage, as He would bring the children of Israel out on the proverbial wings of an eagle.

The Elohim of Israel had a plan that was being worked out and the worst of the storm had to come before the sun would shine again.

Yahweh Himself said, *...there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more*, Ex 11:6.

It was a death sentence for all of the first born living in Egypt, not only of men, women, and children, but of the livestock as well, Ex 12:29.

In the near future there will be a similar devastating destruction coming upon the world (a type of Egypt), and just as before, there will be tribulation and darkness before the sun will shine again.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of Yahweh come, Acts 2:20.

There was protection, known as the Passover (*Pesach* in Hebrew), for Yahweh's people in ancient times and there will be a type of Passover protection for Yahweh's people in the near future.

As the children of Israel were to come out and be separate, so today the people are told to come out and obey that they may be protected from the coming plagues.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues, Rev 18:4.

There are also other significant parallels when looking at the Passover. We'll look into those parallels and consider their importance as we move forward.

We'll look at the memorial, tradition, and other details of the Passover that makes it one of the most controversial and most misunderstood *moeds* (appointed times) among both the Jews and Gentiles alike.

Tradition Of The Jews Rebuked

Many Jews today don't believe in the Messiah. For them the Old Testament Passover is what they follow, but many of them do not follow it according to what the Bible says, but rather to what their tradition says.

Things used in their *seder*-meal, such as having four cups of wine, using a shankbone, dipping an egg in salt-water, are not found in the Bible, but are found in traditions and customs of men.

Mishna and Talmudic commentaries, with oral laws, are what many Jews follow today.

“The Mishna states that the poor must also drink four cups of wine, even if it has to be provided by charity funds. People should drink the four cups even at risk of becoming intoxicated,” *PASSOVER*, by JPS Popular Judaica Library.

Even those Jews who believe in a risen Messiah will follow many of the traditions of their forefathers, and some gentiles blindly follow along. Check page 23 to obtain a printout of *Orthodox Followers*.

We invite those Jews and Gentiles alike who are coming to an understanding, or who already know of the errors of men, to join with us as we move forward following Yahshua the Messiah, and doing His Father’s will.

Yahshua had rebuked the Jewish leaders, called the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:2-3), for their traditions. Scribes and Pharisees — yet, knowledgeable of the Torah — still followed traditions of men, rather than Yahweh’s instructions. Notice one incident in which both went to Yahshua accusing Him of breaking their traditions; mark well what the Messiah told them:

Then came to Yahshua scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of Elohim by your tradition? For Elohim commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of Elohim

of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias (Isaiah) prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Matt 15:1-9.

The “elders” (Strong’s Greek #4245 “presbuteros”, meaning older men) mentioned by the Pharisees and scribes may have been the rulers and judges at that time called the Sanhedrin (or Great Council), since the members were older men.

The Sanhedrin were Jewish rulers who Deacon Stephen rebuked in the book of Acts chapter 7. Just as Yahshua said of the Pharisees and scribes, Stephen told the Sanhedrin that they, too, did not keep the commandments of Yahweh:

Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it, Acts 7:51-53.

The law, instructions, or even preparations that Yahweh gives us, are important. The question is, “What preparations should we make today?” First, let’s take a look at what was said from the beginning.

Preparations In Old Testament

Preparations, according to Yahweh’s instructions in the Old Testament, needed to be done to prepare for the Passover. They, that is, all the Israelites including the tribe of Judah, and any others, if they were circumcised (Ex 12:43-44), were to do things exactly as instructed. There was much at stake; the very life of their firstborn.

Before reading further, open your Bible and read Exodus 12:1-14 for an

overview of the preparations that had to be done.

On the 10th of the first Scriptural month of *abib* (fresh/early ears of grain, KJV says, “Green” ears), each household was to take a male lamb and keep it until (the point up to) the 14th in which they would kill it. They were to kill it at dusk (*JSP*, 1917), twilight (*TNK* 1985, *NAU*, *ESV* 2001, *NJB*, *NIB*, *NIV*, *NKJ*, *Berkley*), basically “between the evenings” (*YLT* 1862/1898, *Ferrar Fenton*) or “Between the two evenings” (*Darby’s*), sunset and dark (*Moffatt*), *ben ha arbayim* (son of the evenings).

If there was only one or two in a house then there would be no need to use a whole lamb, so the smaller households were commanded to share, Ex 12:4.

The lamb or goat (Ex 12:5), which was to be unblemished and without defect, had to be roasted with fire and then eaten, but how it was roasted and how it was eaten was very specific.

It was roasted whole with the entrails prepared (cleaned of grasses and waste material, then put back). This would prevent the small animal from exploding due to the internal methane gas that would otherwise build up, if they didn’t follow the instructions. What Yahweh says is for our own good.

The instructions had to be followed exactly, at the correct time, with the blood of the perfect little yearling brushed on the outside door posts and overhead beam (Ex 12:7), or there would be no passing over:

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, Ex 12:13.

The Passover was to be eaten quickly (Ex 12:11) that *laylah* (night) with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, Ex 12:8. It was all to be gone by the *boqer* (morning) of the 14th. Any leftovers were to be burned, Ex 12:10.

It was a long night for all those involved. Many screams and cries into the night on the one side, with

heightened emotions and relief on the other.

Preparations In The New Testament

New Testament references show that the *preparation day* or *day of preparation* was indeed in reference to the day of Passover:

And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on, Luke 23:54. See also, Matt 27:62; Mark 13:42; John 14:31-42.

What we must discern, though, as we go through this, is that many of the Jews were keeping the Passover “late,” at the “wrong” time.

We read in John 19:31,

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the stake on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

The Passover was not a High Day, but the first Day of Unleavened Bread was. It was the 15th of the first month of *Abib*.

Going on, we find there are other areas that specifically refer to the Jews' Passover, such as John 5:1; 6:4. It also says in John 11:55,

And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

The Biblical Passover, that Yahshua kept, was not called the Jews' Passover. He did not make preparation for it, but rather for the true Passover, at the correct time:

Now before the feast of the passover, when Yahshua knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end, John 13:1.

Notice, it is neither recorded that Yahshua's parents kept the Jews' Passover, but rather they also kept the correct Passover.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover, Luke 2:41.

Yahshua told His disciples, who would have known the difference between the two different times, since He was their Teacher, to keep “the” Passover:

Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be impaled, Matt 26:2. See also Matt 26:18-19.

They (i.e., Yahshua, His parents, and His disciples) never referred to the properly kept Passover, as the Jews' Passover.

In *The Companion Bible*, Dr. Bullinger points out, that, “After the revival under Ezra and Nehemiah corruption proceeded apace...what were once “the feasts of [Yahweh]” are spoken of as what they had become, “feast of the Jews.”

The New Jerusalem Bible, a study Bible by Henry Wansbrough, says, “...the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread were originally two separate festivals...”

In addition to the sources above, the *Encyclopedia Judaica* says, “The feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Originally both parts existed separately; but at the beginning of the Exile they were combined.”

Many things took place at the beginning, during, and after the exile. For example, even the month called “*Abib*” was changed to say, “*Nisan*.”

Preparations for the Day of Unleavened Bread

Some verses in the Bible don't seem to make sense, but will once looked at in context or when one actually takes a closer look at the original wording.

Sometimes translators, when trying to clarify the meaning of a verse, will actually lose the original meaning of what was being said. This is especially true when they have as a reference point the current teachings that crept in and are considered the norm, such as eating Passover and keeping the first Day of Unleavened Bread on the 15th, which is what many are doing today. Keeping with the

tradition of men was even in Yahshua's time, but as we've already seen, He did not keep their wrong time and neither should we.

Matt 26:17 is a test case in point of a verse that was changed to fit what many are doing even today; it has two major translation flaws taking away the original meaning.

Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Yahshua, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

The first word you'll find a problem with is “day,” because it was added. It's not in the Greek manuscript, at all. The second is the word “first,” it is Strong's # 4413 “Protos”, in context, literally meaning, “foremost,” “before,” or “former.” Basically “prior” to the Day(s) of Unleavened Bread

The same words should be looked at in parallel verses such as Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 in which the original meaning was lost in the translation.

Passover was commanded by Yahweh to be kept and eaten on the 14th day, “before” the Days of Unleavened Bread. In Matt 26:17 the point was to make preparations for Passover, and to eat of it, not the Days of Unleavened Bread which started on the 15th, a day later.

Yahshua kept the Passover according to His Father's instructions, as well as did the disciples. They prepared for it at the right time and so should we.

The Unleavened Bread Of Life

Though the timing is the same, preparing for Passover today is done a little differently for those in the Body of Messiah. Yahshua became our Passover Lamb by being a Perfect Sacrifice. He kept Passover and instituted some things we're told to do.

And as they were eating, Yahshua took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, Matt 26:26.

There are three things to point out in the verse above. Yahshua Himself ate of the Passover, in keeping it would have been kept in accordance with the law, eating with it unleavened bread (Ex 12:8), and He tells us to take of this bread and to eat it as a token of His flesh.

The bread is symbolic of the Savior's life that was given for us. John 6:33-35 says,

For the bread of Elohim is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Master, evermore give us this bread. And Yahshua said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

The Roman Catholic Church takes this to extreme. They believe that the unleavened bread, once prayed over, will become actual flesh. They call it transubstantiation. This type of thinking is wrong and is of human reasoning. Yahshua never said that we are to eat His "literal" flesh. Cannibalism was a curse in the Bible, not a blessing!

The Catholics who think the bread can turn into actual flesh also believe that the fruit of the vine can be turned into actual blood. Would Yahshua ask us to break the law? The drinking of blood is forbidden in the law:

Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water, Deut 12:16.

Yahshua's blood was poured out along with water from His side when He was pierced. There is no record that anyone tried to drink it...because no one did.

Yahshua was showing both the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine were "symbolic" of His flesh and blood. Yahshua said:

I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews

therefore strove among themselves [thinking by means of human reasoning], saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Yahshua said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye [symbolically] eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, John 6:48-53.

The Leavened Bread Of Death

It should be pointed out that unleavened bread is also symbolic of pure doctrine without hypocrisy. Can one have pure doctrine with hypocrisy? Yes, it's called self-righteousness.

The Pharisees and Sadducees (another Jewish sect which held false doctrines such as a teaching that there was no resurrection, Luke 20:27) not only had the self-righteous attitudes and ways of saying one thing but doing another, they were also steeped in false doctrines. They had the leavened bread of death.

Then Yahshua said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Yahshua perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, Matt 16:6-12.

Yahshua said it like it was even when addressing the Pharisees and scribes. He asked, how could they escape damnation:

Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter,

that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell (gehenna)? (Matt 23:26-33)

It's important that we don't do as they did, as some do today, bringing upon themselves the condemnation of the Messiah, who is the Judge of all, John 5:27; Acts 10:42; 1 Pet 3:22.

It's not those who just say, "Master, Master," but those who actually obey Yahweh the Father who sent His Son. Yahshua himself says,

Not every one that saith unto me, Master, Master, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, Matt 7:21.

We need the unleavened bread of life within our lives and not the leavened bread of death.

The Passover Cup

Today we commonly think of having bread with wine, but for the Passover it's not that way. The Biblical instructions are to take of the unleavened bread with "fruit of the vine."

Fruit of the vine is not fermented wine, but is actually unadulterated grape juice.

We prepare for Passover today by purchasing pure grape juice, and using it, or we get some grapes and squeeze the juice into the small cups normally found for a Passover service.

The first time we find mention of a cup in the Scriptures is in a vision told to Joseph by the imprisoned chief cupbearer:

And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand, Gen 40:11.

At the Passover we find Yahshua and His disciples partaking of the Passover:

And he [Yahshua] took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom, Matt 26:27-29.

Evidence that this was indeed grape juice, and not wine, is within Yahshua's own words. He said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

It is recorded that Yahshua had indeed received vinegar (John 19:28-30), which is an over-fermented cheap sour wine during the time of Yahshua. Roman soldiers and even the poor would drink this.

Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible says of vinegar, "Roman soldiers commonly kept vinegary wine on hand to quench their thirst, and this could be an act of kindness or an attempt to revive [Yahshua]."

The Greek terms for wine (*oinos*), vinegar (*oxos*), or even a type of intoxicating phrase such as "full of new wine," used once in Acts 2:13, were never used by Yahshua to describe the fruit of the vine (*genemma ampelos*) for the Passover cup. Fruit of the vine is "grape juice." It's not the by-product called wine.

All of this is fine and true. However, we must ask, "Is there anywhere in the Bible which shows that grape juice is symbolic of blood?"

Yes, and it is especially noteworthy concerning Jacob's son Judah, this possibly being an end time prophecy for the tribe of Judah:

"...he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes," Gen 49:11.

The NASB version is a little clearer:

"...He washes his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes."

Many of Judah reject the Messiah, but there is coming a day when they will accept Him, calling on His Name, and then they'll truly wash their robes in His blood, but first they'll have to go through the pouring out of the wine of wrath in the tribulation:

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev 7:14.

Judah of all people will certainly recognize the time of Isaiah chapter 24 when it comes to pass and then those who are called and chosen will start to proclaim Isaiah 26:9, in which is said:

And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our Elohim; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is YAHWEH; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Storing Grape Juice

Can grape juice be stored? Some claim ancient Israel, and those in New Testament times, could not store grape juice to be used throughout the year, but there were at least two ways and maybe more that it could be done.

One was to boil the grape juice down to a thick molasses and then reconstitute it back into grape juice by adding water later:

"The Holy Land has rightly been called 'the land of grapes'...the grapes provided juice that was boiled down to the consistency of molasses." — *Nelson's Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts.*

Raisins would have the same capacity to be dried, stored, and then used at a later date:

"Pesach is in the air. Housewives are already buying the raisins needed for the wine." — *The Jewish Festivals History and Observance*, by Hayyim Schauss.

Another way of storing, for later use, was to take something like goat skin containers of grape juice, sealing and then putting them under water. The pressure and coolness would preserve the juice without the fermentation process turning it into wine.

Wineries have been asked if grape juice could be preserved without it turning into wine. It has been pointed out that because of less pollutants and greater sugar content, around 35 brix, that indeed grape juice could be preserved from fall to spring.

Egypt had processes already figured out for preserving fruits and other food items for later consumption. No doubt the children of Israel would have had access to this same information.

Storing Up Wrath

Do "wine" and "wrath" mix? Wine is not only for merriment (Ps 104:15) and festive gatherings (Duet 14:26); it's also symbolic of the wrath soon to be poured out on this morally blind world who receive the mark of the beast:

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of Elohim, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb, Rev 14:9-10.

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before Elohim, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, Rev 16:19.

Interestingly enough, "wine" is also symbolic of "fornication" and that is something that will certainly bring wrath.

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the

kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication, Rev 17:1-2.

The point of bringing up these figurative symbols of wine is of course to show that such a symbol would not be used for our Savior at the time of Passover. Passover is a solemn memorial of His sacrifice and death for us.

It is not a joyous and festive time, but rather a somber and reflective time for all those who examine themselves before partaking. Would wine that symbolizes merriment, fornication, and finally wrath, be used for Passover? Is wine an appropriate symbol for Yahshua's blood? These are questions worth meditating upon and answering truthfully.

For more detailed information concerning this issue, please feel free to get a printout of *The Controversy: Wine or Grape Juice For Passover?* Go to page 23 for information.

More Verses In Focus

Ephesians 5:18 states that we can be "drunk," as in "intoxicated" by *oinos*. The actual word used for drunk is Strong's Greek #3182 *methusko*. Defining it within Scripture we find the word is used literally as intoxicated.

Another similar word is Strong's Greek #3184 *methuo*, which holds a dual meaning of "filled up" or "had plenty." One can have a drink after a meal and be "filled up." The word is used in 1Cor. 11:21 saying, "...one is hungry and another is drunk." It could have just as well been said, "...one is thirsty and another is a glutton (full)."

In John 2:10 the word holds the "filled up" meaning. It says,

And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk (#3184), then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

Here's the question we need to ask, "Would the Savior have given those that were already drunk (i.e., intoxicated, inebriated, befuddled, stupefied, etc.) more to drink?" Obviously, this would not be something our Savior would do.

There's one other point that needs to be considered, and that is, in the past, wine was forbidden to be drunk when assembling for worship by the priests (Lev 10:9), and in the future Kingdom we are told it will be the same:

Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court, Ezek 44:21.

The question is, "If we are striving to be a kingdom of priests (Rev 1:6; 5:10), should we drink wine at worship services today?" Unmistakably, the answer is, "No, we should not."

In this light, drinking wine, at those times, would be a sin for man, but grape juice would be innocent, just as Yahshua the Messiah was when He was killed:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, Heb 4:15.

Yahshua's Memorial

When we really think of what Yahshua did for us, we cannot be grateful enough. Not only did He die, taking upon Himself the death penalty that we deserve, but He also suffered intensely.

Consider the following things that He had to endure: He was betrayed, falsely accused, scourged and beaten, spit upon and ridiculed. A crown of thorns was put on His head and His clothes were stripped, except for a loin cloth. Nails were driven into and through His wrists and feet. The weight of all humanity was put upon Him, and finally, a lance was used to pierce His side in which then poured His blood onto the ground.

All this He did for you and me. The hardship that He endured was, in fact, prophesied, Ps 22:14-18; Luke 18:31-34. Yahshua truly knew what the greatest expression of love was:

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, John 15:13.

We can figuratively lay down our life for each other by serving, helping, and giving of our own time. Yet, when

we think about it, our time is not our time at all. Yahweh graciously gives us the time we have, so we are without excuse to share that time with others and in service to Yahweh through Yahshua.

Yahshua gave the ultimate sacrifice that we might have life itself. Our respect for the Passover service should be of the utmost importance.

The Apostle Paul addresses the issue quite plainly in 1 Cor 11:27-29 by saying,

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Master, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Master. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Master's body, 1 Cor 11:27-29.

Apostle Paul also said, "If anyone is hungry, then let him eat at home..." (1 Cor 11:34). When we come to a Passover service it's not to eat a meal, but to rededicate ourselves and acknowledge Yahshua's sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins, 1 Cor 11:26. We are to take of the emblems and do the act of foot washing, so that we might remember and learn.

A Lesson In Foot Washing

Foot washing is something that Yahshua included and instituted in the New Testament Passover. He told the disciples to do it, and therefore tells us the same. If we love Him, we'll do what He commands, John 14:15.

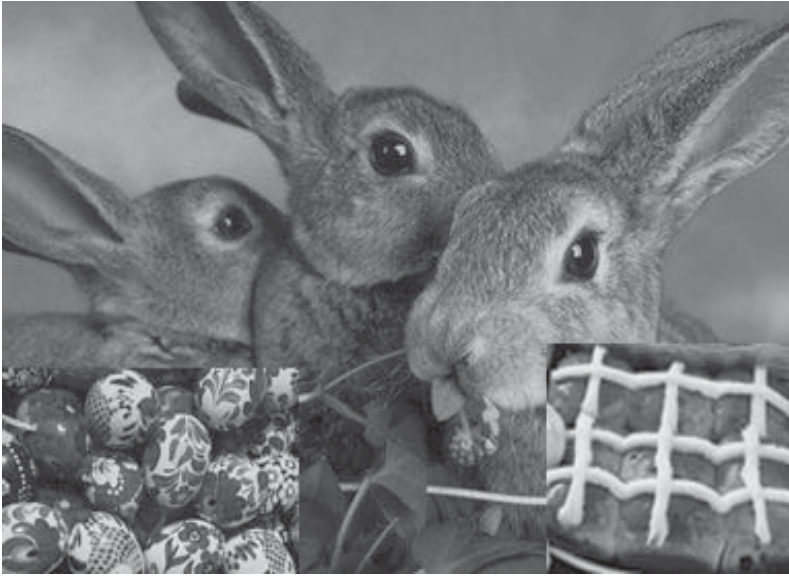
Read the example in John 13:3-17 before continuing.

Yahshua said, *If I then, your Master and Teacher, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet, John 13:14.*

He gave the example and says to do it. What's the reason, though? Was it because Yahshua saw that their feet were dirty?

At that time, the wearing of sandals was common place. Walking in sand and dust, feet would get dirty, so people needed to wash their feet (Gen

<Memorial see page 23>



Rabbits, Eggs and Hot Cross Buns

How are rabbits, eggs and hot cross buns related to the annual celebration of Easter?

The Name

"The name 'Easter' originated with the names of an ancient goddess and god. The Venerable Bede, (672-735 CE.) a Christian scholar, first asserted in his book *De Ratione Temporum* that Easter was named after Eostre (a.k.a. Eastre). She was the Great Mother goddess of the Saxon people in Northern Europe. Similar 'Teutonic dawn goddess of fertility [were] known variously as Ostare, Ostara, Ostern, Eostra, Eostre, Eostur, Eastra, Eastur, Austron and Ausos.' Her name was derived from the ancient word for spring: "eastre." Similar goddesses were known by other names in ancient cultures around the Mediterranean, and were celebrated in the springtime. Some were:

- Aphrodite from Cyprus
- Astarte, from Phoenicia
- Demeter, from Mycenae
- Hathor from Egypt
- Ishtar from Assyria
- Kali, from India

Ostara, a Norse goddess of fertility.

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"*Easter* is an English word derived from the name of a Germanic goddess, and you won't get any argument from me if you think the word should be deprecated because of its association with pagan fertility rites. On the other hand, the Old Testament book of Esther is named after a Jewish heroine who bore the name of the goddess Ishtar! In the ancient Church, the celebration of the Resurrection was called Passover. Today, Orthodox Christians call this holiday the *Pasch* (as in *paschal lamb*), which is the Greek word for Passover."

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The Date

"From 31 A.D. to 325 A.D. Easter Day was celebrated either:

(a) on or just after the first day of the Jewish Passover (no matter on which day of the week that Easter Day occurred), or

(b) on a Sunday close to or on the first Passover Day. Both of these methods existed continuously throughout this period."

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"Prior to A.D. 325, Easter was variously celebrated on different days of the week, including Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. In that year, the Council of Nicaea was convened by Emperor Constantine. It issued the Easter Rule which states that Easter shall be celebrated on the first Sunday that occurs after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox. However, a caveat must be introduced here. The "full moon" in the rule is the ecclesiastical full moon, which is defined as the fourteenth day of a tabular lunation, where day 1 corresponds to the ecclesiastical New Moon. It does not always occur on the same date as the astronomical full moon. The ecclesiastical "vernal equinox" is always on March 21. Therefore, Easter must be celebrated on a Sunday between the dates of March 22 and April 25."

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"Easter Sunday, from 326 A.D., is always one of the 35 dates March 22 to April 25. From 326 A.D. to 1582 A.D. Easter Sunday date was based on the Julian calendar in use at that time. It became defined as the Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon date for the year, using a simple "19 PFM dates" table. PFM stands for the Paschal Full Moon.

"The Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar in October 1582 to re-align March 20 (and therefore Easter) with the seasons by removing 10 dates October 5 to 14, 1582. This replacement did not occur until later in many countries e.g. in September 1752 in England. The Gregorian calendar very closely maintains the alignment of seasons and calendar dates by having leap years in only 1

of every 4 century years, namely, those divisible exactly by 400. One additional February 29 date will need to be removed in about 4140 A.D., therefore Easter calculations will need to use the changed Days of Week of PFM dates when the exact year for this removal is decided.

“From 326 A.D., the Easter Sunday Date for any given year is NOT determined by the March Equinox date for that year. March 20 (not March 21) is the most common Gregorian Equinox date from 1583 to 4099 A.D.

“Historically, references to March 21 have caused mistakes in calculating Easter Sunday dates. March 20 has become the important date in recent Easter dating methods. Despite frequent references to March 21, this date has no special significance to any recent Easter dating methods.”

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Pagan Origins

Since its conception as a holy celebration in the second century, Easter has had its non-religious side. In fact, Easter was originally a pagan festival.

“The ancient Saxons celebrated the return of spring with an uproarious festival commemorating their goddess of offspring and of springtime, Eastre. When the second-century Christian missionaries encountered the tribes of the north with their pagan celebrations, they attempted to convert them to Christianity. They did so, however, in a clandestine manner.

“As it happened, the pagan festival of Eastre occurred at the same time of year as the Christian observance of the Resurrection of [Messiah]. It made sense, therefore, to alter the festival itself, to make it a Christian celebration as converts were slowly won over. The early name, Eastre, was eventually changed to its modern spelling, Easter.”

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“Many, perhaps most, Pagan religions in the Mediterranean area had

a major seasonal day of religious celebration at or following the Spring Equinox. Cybele, the Phrygian fertility goddess, had a fictional consort who was believed to have been born via a virgin birth. He was Attis, who was believed to have died and been resurrected each year during the period MAR-22 to MAR-25. *‘About 200 B.C. mystery cults began to appear in Rome just as they had earlier in Greece. Most notable was the Cybele cult centered on Vatican hill ...Associated with the Cybele cult was that of her lover, Attis (the older Tammuz, Osiris, Dionysus, or Orpheus under a new name). He was an [idol] of ever-reviving vegetation. Born of a virgin, he died and was reborn annually. The festival began as a day of blood on Black Friday and culminated after three days in a day of rejoicing over the resurrection.’*

“Wherever Christian worship of [Yahshua] and Pagan worship of Attis were active in the same geographical area in ancient times, Christians *‘used to celebrate the death and resurrection of [Yahshua] on the same date; and pagans and Christians used to quarrel*

bitterly about which of their idols was the true prototype and which the imitation.’ Since the worship of Cybele was brought to Rome in 204 BCE, about 250 years before Christianity, it is obvious that if any copying occurred, it was the Christians that copied the traditions of the Pagans.

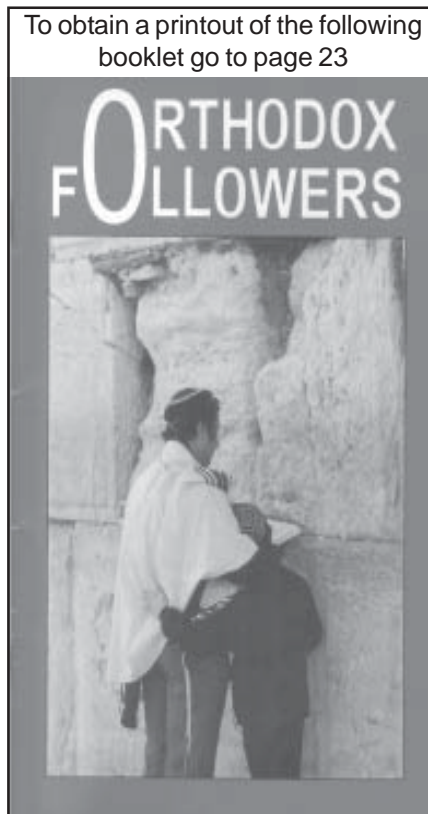
“Many religious historians believe that the death and resurrection legends were first associated with Attis, many centuries before the birth of [Yahshua]. They were simply grafted onto stories of [Yahshua’s] life in order to make Christian theology more acceptable to Pagans. Others suggest that many of the events in [Yahshua’s] life that were recorded in the gospels were lifted from the life of Krishna, the second person of the Hindu Trinity. Ancient Christians had an alternate explanation; they claimed that Satan had created counterfeit deities in advance of the coming of the Messiah in order to confuse humanity. Modern-day Christians generally regard the Attis legend as being a Pagan myth of little value. They regard [Yahshua’s] death and resurrection account as being true, and unrelated to the earlier tradition.”

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Easter and Pagan Celebrations

“The first thing we must understand is that professing Christians were not the only ones who celebrated a festival called ‘Easter.’ ‘Ishtar’, which is pronounced “Easter,” was a day that commemorated the resurrection of one of their gods that they called ‘Tammuz’, who was believed to be the only begotten son of the moon-goddess and the sun-god.

“In those ancient times, there was a man named Nimrod, who was the grandson of one of Noah’s son named Ham. Ham had a son named Cush who married a woman named Semiramis. Cush and Semiramis then had a son named him ‘Nimrod.’ After the death of his father, Nimrod married his own mother and became a powerful King.



"The Bible tells of this man, Nimrod, in Genesis 10:8-10 as follows:

And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before Yahweh: wherefore it is said, even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before Yahweh. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

"Nimrod became a g-d-man to the people and Semiramis, his wife and mother, became the powerful Queen of ancient Babylon. Nimrod was eventually killed by an enemy, and his body was cut in pieces and sent to various parts of his kingdom. Semiramis had all of the parts gathered, except for one part that could not be found. That missing part was his reproductive organ. Semiramis claimed that Nimrod could not come back to life without it and told the people of Babylon that Nimrod had ascended to the sun and was now to be called 'Baal,' the sun god.

"Queen Semiramis also proclaimed that Baal would be present on earth in the form of a flame, whether candle or lamp, when used in worship. Semiramis was creating a mystery religion, and with the help of Satan, she set herself up as a g-d-dess. Semiramis claimed that she was immaculately conceived. She taught that the moon was a g-d-dess that went through a 28 day cycle and ovulated when full. She further claimed that she came down from the moon in a giant moon egg that fell into the Euphrates River.

"This was to have happened at the time of the first full moon after the spring equinox. Semiramis became known as 'Ishtar' which is pronounced "Easter", and her moon egg became known as 'Ishtar's egg.' Ishtar soon became pregnant and claimed that it was the rays of the sun-god Baal that caused her to conceive. The son that she brought forth was named Tammuz.

"Tammuz was noted to be especially fond of rabbits, and they became sacred in the ancient religion, because Tammuz was believed to be the son of the sun-g-d, Baal. Tammuz,

like his supposed father, became a hunter.

"Ishtar, who was now worshipped as the 'Mother of God and Queen of Heaven,' continued to build her mystery religion. They ate sacred cakes with the marking of a "T" or cross on the top.

"Every year, on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, a celebration was made. It was Ishtar's Sunday and was celebrated with rabbits and eggs.

"The truth is that Easter has nothing whatsoever to do with the resurrection of [Yahshua Messiah]. The truth is that the forty days of Lent, eggs, rabbits, hot cross buns and the Easter ham have everything to do with the ancient pagan religion of Mystery Babylon. These are all antiMessiah activities!

"These customs of Easter honor Baal, who is also Satan, and is still worshipped as the 'Rising Sun' and his house is the 'House of the Rising Sun.' How many churches have 'sunrise services' on Ishtar's day and face the rising sun in the East? How many will use colored eggs and rabbit stories, as they did in ancient Babylon."

To obtain a printout of the following booklet see page 23

The Controversy

Wine or



**Grape Juice
For Passover?**

(Written in Last Trumpet Ministries International)

Easter and Pagan Traditions

"The Easter Bunny is not a modern invention. The symbol originated with the pagan festival of Eastre. The goddess, Eastre, was worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons through her earthly symbol, the rabbit. The Germans brought the symbol of the Easter rabbit to America. It was widely ignored by other Christians until shortly after the Civil War. In fact, Easter itself was not widely celebrated in America until after that time.

"As with the Easter Bunny and the holiday itself, the Easter Egg predates the Christian holiday of Easter. The exchange of eggs in the springtime is a custom that was centuries old when Easter was first celebrated by Christians. From the earliest times, the egg was a symbol of rebirth in most cultures. Eggs were often wrapped in gold leaf or, if you were a peasant, colored brightly by boiling them with the leaves or petals of certain flowers. Today, children hunt colored eggs and place them in Easter baskets along with the modern version of real Easter eggs — those made of plastic or chocolate candy."

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"Easter Rabbit and Eggs: The symbols of the Norse goddess Ostara were the hare and the egg. Both represented fertility. From these, we have inherited the customs and symbols of the Easter egg and Easter rabbit. Dyed eggs also formed part of the rituals of the Babylonian mystery religions. Eggs *'were sacred to many ancient civilizations and formed an integral part of religious ceremonies in Egypt and the Orient. Dyed eggs were hung in Egyptian temples, and the egg was regarded as the emblem of regenerative life proceeding from the mouth of the great Egyptian g-d.'*

"Easter Lilies: 'The so-called "Easter lily" has long been revered by pagans of various lands as a holy symbol associated with the

reproductive organs. It was considered a phallic symbol!

"Easter Sunrise Service: This custom can be traced back to the ancient Pagan custom of welcoming the sun g-d at the vernal equinox - when daytime is about to exceed the length of the nighttime. It was a time to 'celebrate the return of life and reproduction to animal and plant life as well.' Worship of the Sun g-d at sunrise may be the religious ritual condemned by [Yahweh] as recorded in Ezekiel 8:16-18:

...behold, at the door of the temple of Yahweh, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Yahweh, and their faces toward the east; and they were worshipping the sun toward the east. Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen (this), O son of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in wrath; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them. (ASV)

"Easter Candles: These are sometimes lit in churches on the eve of Easter Sunday. Some commentators believe that these can be directly linked to the Pagan customs of lighting bonfires at this time of year to welcome the rebirth/resurrection of the sun God."

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"Easter's connection with spring and nature. Diana (the Ephesian g-dess of sex, fertility, virginity and motherhood) was said to be the source of nature. Eostre (an Anglo-Saxon/Teutonic goddess) was the g-dess of the sunrise and spring. Ostara (a Norse/Saxon goddess) was the maiden g-dess of spring.

"Origins of Hares (Bunnies) and Eggs. According to Teutonic myth, the hare was once a bird whom Eostre

changed into a four-footed creature. Thus, it can also lay eggs. The hare is also the sacred companion and sacrificial victim of Eostre. Astarte (a Phoenician/Syrian goddess), on the other hand, was believed to have been hatched from a huge egg which fell into the Euphrates.

"Origins of Good Friday. Did you ever wonder why Good Friday is recognized as the day [Yahshua] died and Sunday as the day he arose but yet had trouble explaining how he could thus be buried for three days and three nights? (Matthew 12:40; Matthew 27:63; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:31; Mark 10:34) The answer is simple: He didn't actually die on 'Good Friday.' The Chaldeans offered cakes to Ishtar on the equivalent of the day we know as Good Friday. When the established church wanted to appease the paganistic people in order to 'convert' them to Christianity, they moved the dates accordingly.

"Origins of Hot Cross Buns and Fires. Cakes bearing a cross-like symbol representing the pair of cow-horns on the moon g-dess, Isis, were offered by ancient Egyptians. The cakes which Greeks offered to Astarte and other divinities were called bous or boun, from which the word 'bun' is derived. The Babylonians/Chaldeans offered similar cakes to the 'Queen of Heaven.' Fires were lit on top of mountains and had to be kindled from new fire, drawn from wood by friction. The fire was then used to bake cakes in sacrifice to Semiramis, the 'Queen of Heaven.' This practice, along with burning incense, was used in conjunction with baking the cakes and is mentioned specifically in the Bible (1 Kings 11:8; 2 Kings 17:7-16; 2 Kings 18:4; 2 Kings 23:4-15; Isaiah 17:8; Isaiah 27:9; Ezekiel 8:7-12; Jeremiah 7:16-19; Jeremiah 44:19, 25). In addition to the cross imprinted on these cakes representing the horns of the g-dess, it also sometimes represented the four seasons or four phases of the moon. Cakes were also offered to or eaten in honor of Apollo, Diana, Hecate, and the moon (also Diana's symbol).

"Origins of Lent. The word 'lent' is of Anglo-Saxon origin meaning 'spring.' Lent developed from the pagan celebration of weeping, fasting, and mourning for 40 days over the death of Tammuz (one day for each year of his life). Tammuz (the son/husband of the Babylonian idol Ishtar) was killed by a wild boar and then allegedly resurrected. This mourning of Tammuz is specifically prophesied by Ezekiel in the Bible and is characterized by [Yahweh] Himself as being detestable (Ezekiel 8:13-15).

"Origins of the use of the lily. Asherah (a Sidonian g-dess) was frequently represented as a nude woman bestride a lion with a lily (symbolizing grace and sex appeal) in one hand and a serpent (symbolizing fecundity) in the other.

"Origins of wearing new clothing for Easter. The tradition of wearing new clothing for Easter comes from the superstition that a new garment worn at Easter means good luck throughout the year."

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Elder Roger G. Meyer

<Harvest from page 3>

The Greek word translated "watch" is Strong's #1453, *gregoreo*, and means to be vigilant and wide-awake; to be alert: be or stay awake, to keep awake, be alert, i.e. watch.

Passover – A Night To Be Remembered

Can we fathom in our minds what the Israelites were feeling during the night of the Passover? It seems reasonable that they could not sleep because they knew that the destroying angel would be coming to kill the firstborn. They were told to place the blood of the sacrificial lamb on the doorposts and lintels. They were warned to remain within the protection of their blood-marked houses the entire evening. Ps. 30:5 is referring to this:

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

The Israelites did leave Egypt by night – the night after Passover:

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Yahweh thy Elohim: for in the month of Abib Yahweh thy Elohim brought thee forth out of Egypt by night, Deut. 16:1.

Some believe Deut. 16:1 says that the Israelites left the land of Egypt to start their trek to the Promised Land. However, the Israelites kept the Passover after the sun set beginning the 14th of Abib as recorded in the Scriptures.

Passover Day – Israel Prepares To Leave Egypt

During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship Yahweh as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me." The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. "For otherwise," they said, "we will all die!" So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing. The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. Yahweh had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians, Ex. 12:31-36 NIV.

After the Israelites spent the entire night portion of Passover in their houses they did as they were instructed to do by Moses.

The events of the day portion of Passover are relatively easy to reconstruct. On the morning of the 14th the remains of the sacrificial lamb were taken out, the people began gathering their family, flocks, and herds and assembled at Rameses, some 30 miles from Goshen (Num. 33:3). They also proceeded to spoil the Egyptians as Ex. 12:35 says.

First High Day Of The Feast Of Unleavened Bread

On the first High Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the time when they left Egypt,

The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, who were burying all their firstborn, whom Yahweh had struck down among them; for Yahweh had brought judgment on their elohims, Num. 33:3-4 NIV.

The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is then a memorial for the time when the Israelites left Egypt.

Last High Day Of The Feast Of Unleavened Bread

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years, Ex. 12:40.

We learn that the Israelites spent 430 years in Egypt before they left to return to the Promised Land. How did they know where to go?

And Yahweh went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people, Ex. 13:21-22.

When the Israelites left Egypt, where did they head?

So Yahweh led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle, Ex. 13:18 NIV.

In the parting of the waters of the Red Sea we find that Israel became completely free of Egyptian influence because Yahweh caused all of the Egyptians who followed Israel to die.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea, Ex. 15:4.

Passover – Yahshua Kept it

Yahshua kept the Passover at the right time and thus fulfilled all righteousness up to the time of His death. His disciples did not have any difficulty keeping Passover at the right time (Luke 22:8-14).

After Yahshua celebrated Passover with His disciples they went to the garden of Gethsemane to pray. Here Yahshua told them to be alert and watchful, just as the Israelites were told to do on the night of Passover.

And when they had sung a Psalm, they went out into the mount of Olives...My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with Me...And when He came unto the disciples, and found them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh is weak, Matt. 26:30, 38, 40-41.

Shortly, Yahshua was taken prisoner and then impaled the following day before the Jews had celebrated their late Passover.

Since Yahshua kept the law perfectly, should we not also keep Passover on the beginning of Abib 14?

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 23

Mini Study

The Passover Cup Should It Contain Wine or Grape Juice?

Many assume from their experience with "communion" that wine is the proper liquid to represent the memorial shedding of the Savior's blood. But is it? Have you ever really investigated the meaning of the cup and its symbolic contents?

Blood Atones for Sin

A basic principle in the Bible is that the only possible atonement for the act of sin is a giving up of life. And the only way we can be free of sin's death penalty, which we have all earned because of our sins, is through blood, which contains life, Leviticus 17:11.

Israel's sins were covered under an elaborate system of sacrifices in which animal blood was shed. That system gave way to a better sacrifice in the New Testament. Yahshua shed His blood on the torture stake as the perfect sacrifice. His blood paid the death penalty for our sins, just as the blood of animals was shed under the Old Covenant merely to cover Israel's sins (but not take them away, Heb. 9:13-15).

Contrary to what many believe, the principle of sacrifice remains, only now it is the sacrifice of the Savior and the shedding of His blood that we trust in.

What Represents Blood?

Our Savior instituted a new symbol at that New Covenant Passover—the cup. This symbol represented the blood of the perfect Lamb, which was Himself.

The question is, what was the liquid in that Passover cup which represented His pure, sinless life? Wine? Grape juice? Water? Is there any way we can know? Yes, there is! Does it really matter? It certainly does!

Passover – Paul Kept It

Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee. He was an apostle to the Gentiles and he taught them to observe what some call the “Feasts of the Jews.”

Corinth was a Hellenistic, metropolitan community and a crossroads of trade and commerce. In 1 Cor. 5:7-8 Paul tells the people of Corinth that Yahshua is the Passover Lamb sacrificed for us:

Purge out therefore the old leaven that you may be a new lump as you are unleavened. For even the Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast...

For Paul to write this it is quite evident that these days are not done away with by Yahshua’s death. It is obvious that Passover and the feast days referred to are still obligatory.

Passover – Preparation For Unleavened

Passover, Abib 14, is the day preceding the first High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The King James Version of Scriptures describes Passover as the preparation day, the day Yahshua was put to death for the sins of mankind.

It is indeed a preparation day. It is a day when one is to prepare for the days of unleavened bread by cleansing their houses of all leaven. The day following Passover is a High Sabbath and the day when the followers of Yahshua wanted to take His body down before the first day of Unleavened Bread began:

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the [tree] on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away, John 19:31.


Feast Of Unleavened Bread

Yahweh had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.

The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves, Ex. 12:36-39 NIV.

When the Israelites left the bondage of Egypt they did not have time for prepare leavened bread. From the time of their departure (first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) until they crossed over the Red Sea (the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) they ate unleavened bread.

To obtain a printout of the following mini-study go to page 23

Mini - Study 

Why Passover Is NOT A High Day

Perhaps because some Jews eventually and wrongfully combined the Passover with the first high day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, some believe that Passover on the fourteenth of Abib is also the high day, the first day of Unleavened Bread. But is it?

If these two observances don't stand on their own as distinct observances, why do they each have their own designation: "Passover" and "Feast of Unleavened Bread"? Similarly, the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles is separate from the last Great Day on the eighth, each having its own identification and meaning, even as one comes immediately after the other.

Overwhelming evidence in both Old and New Testaments shows that Passover was never considered a high day or kept as a Sabbath. The Passover was, however, a memorial of a certain event, and it was that particular event that was to be remembered in its own distinctive way separate from the Feast that follows.

Originally the Jews kept two separate observances, just as Yahweh had commanded in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23. But at the time of their exile to Babylon the Jews began to keep the two as a combined observance. It is this later, unscriptural practice that has contributed to much of the confusion, especially for New Testament readers who are forced to follow translators who allowed later Jewish practice to influence their translations.

Noteworthy, however, are the more Scriptural Karaites, Jews and Samaritans who still observe Passover on the 14th and the Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning the 15th (see *Which Day is the Passover?* by Phinehas Ben Zaidock).

This is what the *Encyclopedia Judaica* says: "The feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover

Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. 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, Ex. 12:17-20 NIV.

The first day and the last day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread are two of Yahweh’s seven annual Holy Days. During this period of time no leaven is to be found within the house nor is to be eaten. Any product containing leaven is also not to be found within the house nor eaten. Actually, these verses also state that one is to eat unleavened bread at this time.

Spiritual Housecleaning

To properly keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread we must do so both physically and spiritually. Physically, we are to remove all leaven products from our homes. Spiritually, we are to remove any and all things that may cause us to be led astray.

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Leaven – Physical

Physically, leaven is that which produces fermentation in a mass of dough.

A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, Gal 5:9.

The word *unleaveneth* is the translation of the Greek *zumoo* meaning to cause to ferment.

Leaven breaks down flour, causing decay in the dough.

On the other side, there are two verses, Lev. 7:13 and Lev. 23:17, which shows that the showbread and a praise offering to Yahweh both contained leaven.

Where leaven is the translation in the Old Testament of the King James Version it refers to the physical usage (yeast).

Leaven – Spiritual

Where leaven is the translation in the New Testament of the King James Version it may refer to the physical usage at times, but it usually will have a spiritual meaning also.

Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, Matt. 16:12.

And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod, Mark 8:15.

In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy, Luke 12:1.

From the first two Scriptures we learn that there are three groups of people that Yahshua tells His disciples to watch out for: the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Herodians.

Luke 12:1 speaks to the leaven of the Pharisees as the religious hypocrisy exhibited in their external ceremonialism. The leaven of the Sadducees was their disbelief in an afterlife and the coming of the Messiah. The leaven of the Herodians dealt with a political family who opposed Yahshua.

Matt. 16:12 specifies that the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees is their doctrine while Luke 12:1 says the same thing about the Pharisees.

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Cor. 5:8.

In the last two Scriptures there are three words of interest: hypocrisy, malice and wickedness. Through examination we will find that they are related to unhealthy attitudes.

Hypocrisy is a translation of the Greek "Hupokrisis" (Strong's #5272), whose root word means to play a part, deceitful pretending.

Malice is a translation of the Greek "Kakia" (Strong's #2549), whose root word means to have ill will, desire to injure.

Wickedness comes from the Greek "Poneria" (Strong's 4189), whose root word means to be hurtful or evil.

1 Cor. 5:8 then says that one must avoid those activities which centers on deceiving others or which have evil purposes directed towards others.

Sincerity is a translation of the Greek "Eilikrineia" (Strong's #1505), whose root word means to be genuine.

Truth comes from the Greek "Aletheia" (Strong's #225), whose root words means not concealing.

Our actions then, at time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, should be one who is genuinely truthful.

Wave Sheaf

That part of the Passover/Unleavened Bread season that is overlooked deals with the wave sheaf offering.

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before Yahweh, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it, Lev. 23:10-11.

The Sabbath spoken of here is the Hebrew "Shabbath" and speaks of the weekly Sabbath. The harvest spoken of here is barley. This wave

sheaf was not offered until the Israelites entered into the Promised Land and raised a crop as it was not possible for them to raise crops during their sojourn in the Wilderness of Zin after leaving Egypt. This wave sheaf offering was to be made on the day after the weekly Sabbath, on Sunday.

The Feast of Firstfruits is also called the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Harvest in the Old Testament (Pentecost in the New Testament). The grain harvested at this time was wheat. The harvest spoken of in Lev. 23:10 is barley. This sheaf is often referred to as the first of the firstfruits.

Pentecost points ahead to the time when the firstfruits will be gathered. Yahshua, Himself, is referred to as the first of the firstfruits because He arose during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end, Ex 34:22.

But every man in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits; afterward they that are Messiah's at his coming, 1 Cor. 15:23.

Just as the wave sheaf had to be presented unto Yahweh (Lev. 23:10-11) on the first day of the week, Yahshua could not let Mariam touch Him until He had presented Himself unto His Father as an acceptable sacrifice,

Yahshua saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my Elohim, and your Elohim, John 20:17.

Conclusion

Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are not celebrated by the Christian world today. Instead, they celebrate Easter, which has its pagan origins. The Christian world is more interested in Easter eggs, Easter bunnies and hot cross buns. Yahweh's Word tells us to remember Yahshua's death, not His resurrection. Without the sacrifice of Yahshua we would not have any hope for a future in the Kingdom. To be part of the coming Kingdom, Scriptures tell us that we are to be faithful to the end.

Elder Roger G. Meyer

LETTERS

I want to encourage all of you to stand steadfast in Yahweh and Yahshua. They know we have to fight in what we believe and stand up and be strong in them. I am missing the literature as I share it with others and have them calling so they could grow in wisdom and knowledge. I am going to keep on praying for the assembly. **CS, Delaware**

Enjoy your literature, a good example of the truth of Yahweh. **WS, Pennsylvania**

I rejoiced to hear you were back in the facility and that you are going ahead with a new name and magazine, which I would like to receive. **EW, Iowa**

May Yahweh be praised for the prayers that have been answered concerning the conflict over the property of the assembly. May all of our prayers for a prosperous and joyful success of "Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua" be answered. I am sorry that all I can offer are my sincere prayers for our new beginning with "Yahweh's Assembly in Yahshua."

GG, California

I thank Yahweh for the assembly in Yahshua. I love the new name. **RP, Virginia**

The new name is wonderful with both of the set apart names. Wonderful. **CM, Arizona**

Question & Answer

Q Does Numbers 33: 51-56, the "Promises of Conquest," hold true today for Israel?

A Israel never did drive the seven nations out of the land and the nations still there are not friendly to those in Jerusalem today. If there is to be a temple built in Jerusalem in our day, the outer court will be filled with Gentiles who are not Yahweh's people, neither do they follow Yahweh's laws. They may be the answer to your question:

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of Elohim, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months. And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." (Re 11:1-3 AV)

Q In Deut. 12:22 it states one could eat something considered unclean, if the blood was eliminated from it. Then in Chapter 14 it states "You shall not eat any abominable thing."

A Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 delineate the clean and unclean. Notice that swine and jackals, dogs, vultures are not to be eaten, and we note they are an example of the garbage eaters of the world as are shellfish. Carnivores such as the cat family, raptors, are unclean. The animals and fowl that eat grasses and grain are suitable fare. But we also are to avoid eating the blood even of clean animals. There is a curse placed on those consuming unclean swine food at the end of the age:

"They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one [tree] in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith Yahweh." (Isa 66:17 AV)

<Unleavened from page 5>

For even Messiah our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore, let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8.

We also are to keep the Passover as did Yahshua and His apostles once a year. Then we are to take all the leavened products out of our homes and eat unleavened bread each day. "Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread," Leviticus 23:6.

This is to remind us each year we are to examine all the doctrines we believe and follow, performing a "spring housecleaning" of what we have accepted as truth.

We first accept the shed blood of the Savior and then put out all the false ideas and erroneous doctrines so that we believe and follow the words of Yahweh with sincerity and truth.

Just as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, so we should seek the truth of the Bible without any hypocrisy, without worldly compromising with Scripture, without doubting Yahweh's truth. Each year we become a "new lump" from the bread of life.

Elder Donald R. Mansager

<Fruit from page 8>

too much wine or strong drink. It refers to a spiritual stupor that results from drinking (figuratively speaking) from the cup in the hand of Babylon the Great.

Most people who have a Bible can read, but John tells us the words of the book are shut and sealed until the time of the end.

The seal is broken and the mind is opened to understanding for only those to whom Yahweh has given His Holy Spirit because they believe His Son, Yahshua, is the Messiah and are willing to abide by every truth the Spirit reveals to them.

A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great. Which has made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.

With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries. I saw the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore the testimony of Yahshua," Rev. 14:8; 17:2-6.

Would wine or grape juice best symbolize the contents of the cup in the hand of Babylon the Great, the corrupted system?

What would be the best symbol for the blood of the saints (none of whom were without sin) — wine or grape juice?

Can there be any question on the basis of what Scriptures tell us about wine that the answer to both questions must be wine?

Erroneous Traditions

Some may use wine at Passover because the Jews do. Yahweh's Word was committed to Israel and wine has been used at Passover for centuries before Yahshua was born. Since the Jews use wine at Passover is wine what we should use also?

Drinking wine at Passover is a Jewish tradition that traces back through rabbinical teachings to long before Yahshua's birth.

Red wine is used in most Jewish Passover services because of its

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quality. Jews are required to drink four full goblets during the ceremony at the risk even of intoxication. The wine is drunk at four prescribed points during the service in commemoration of the four expressions of redemption found in the Book of Exodus.

The symbol of the paschal lamb in the Jewish Seder is a roasted shankbone. The Hebrew word for shankbone literally means "forearm" and the bone commemorates the fact that Yahweh said He brought Israel out of Egypt with an outstretched arm.

Nothing in the Jewish Passover relates to Yahshua's sacrifice for sin and the change in the Covenant that occurred on the Passover day He died.

They ignore the Savior's first coming, and so it is useless to look to the Jews for clues in choosing the Scriptural symbol for the blood of the New Covenant.

How can anyone who has given any thought to symbolism in Yahweh's Word use wine as a symbol of Yahshua's sinless blood of the covenant at Passover?

Elder Ralph Henrie

<Memorial from page 14>

18:4; 19:2; 43:24). One profound thing, though, it was a servant's position to wash feet.

International Standard Bible Dictionary says, "In the case of ordinary people, the host furnished the water, and the guests washed their own feet, but in the richer houses, the washing was done by a slave. It was looked upon as the lowliest of all services (1Sam 25:41)." See also Luke 7:44.

The plain lesson that the Messiah has for all of us is to be humble and to serve one another. Yahshua's final word on foot washing was, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*, John 13:17 (See also Ps 29:18).

Isn't it time that you find out more about the Passover Memorial. Go to page 23 to learn how to get a printout of *Passover: A Memorial for All Time*.

Elder David Brett

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