



**CELEBRATE
MESSIAH**

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LESSONS FROM THE PASSOVER

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Passover

Lessons Learned and a Time to Remember

Dear friend in Messiah,

As you may already know, Passover is one of the most important, if not the most important, celebration of the Jewish annual cycle of fasting and feasting. With Passover, the emphasis is definitely on the feasting. If I close my eyes, I can still remember the aroma of the matzah ball soup and the other traditional dishes we enjoyed so much at our family Passover Seder as I grew up. I am so grateful that my wife Louise learned from my mother, how to cook all these wonderful traditional foods before my beloved mother passed away. In an age when families are scattered far and wide, Passover is particularly treasured, as it may be the only opportunity all year long that parents, children and grandchildren will have to gather under one roof.

As well, for many secular Jewish people, Passover is almost the only time of the year when they will give any thought at all to the religious side of their Jewish identity. Secular Jewish people often prize the Jewish heritage of education and accomplishment, which is not to be taken lightly, and what is identified as “Jewish values.” Rarely, however, does a significant percentage of the Australian Jewish community sit down and think about the relationship of God to Jewish identity. Passover is one of those times, for it is impossible to celebrate Passover without bumping into the covenant relationship God has created with the Jewish people.

Jewish Identity and the Four “I Wills” of Exodus 6:6-7

Passover is celebrated in as many ways as there are Jewish communities throughout the world. But some things have not changed, such as the eating of unleavened bread (*matzah*) and bitter herbs mentioned in Exodus 12. And although the Scriptures do not explicitly mention the four cups of wine around which the feast is

structured, this tradition would have already been established by the time Yeshua (Jesus) sat down to enjoy the Passover meal with His family and again with His disciples at the Last Supper.

These four cups correspond to the four “I Wills” of Exodus 6:6-7: *“I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians; I will rid you out of their bondage; I will redeem you with an outstretched arm; and I will take you to me for a people.”*

These acts on the part of God toward the children of Israel reveal so much. They form the foundation of true Jewish self-understanding. First of all, this passage reveals a God who enters history: at a specific time and place the Creator acted on behalf of a people whom He had already called, and changed their destiny. Next, the God of Israel is a deliverer: the suffering of the children of Israel moves Him to compassionate action on their behalf, liberating them from their bondage. Then, He is a Redeemer. He is a God whose redemptive will is revealed time and again throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and culminates in the greatest redemption of all through the cross and the empty tomb.

Finally, the God of Israel has drawn Israel into a covenant – a relationship deeply intimate and founded upon His love; holy, pure and everlasting. And through this same great love shown towards Israel, God draws all who believe into a *new covenant* relationship through the Messiah, who is the incarnation of the Redeeming, Delivering and Creating Lord of Exodus 6.

Passover – a Time to Remember

And Moses said to the people: “Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place” (Exodus 13:3).

The Scripture tells us that the mighty deeds of the Lord were not done merely for their own sake. There was a “take away” for the children of Israel to ponder ever after. Reflecting upon that first Passover, each year was designed to remind the children of Israel of the Lord’s claim upon the Jewish people – acknowledged or not. It is perhaps for this very reason that the history of my people has been so troubled. We, the Jewish people, are “prone to wander” from the God who created, called and loved us! This was true throughout the Old Testament period as the Jewish people rarely celebrated the Passover after leaving Egypt. In fact, my people probably observe the Passover festival more today than during days of the Bible! I am sure this would be true if God had called any other people, as we are all sinners and tend to forget God in the midst of the “business of life.”

Growing up in a Jewish home, we celebrated the Passover each year. It was always a beautiful time when we enjoyed family and food, and because my grandfather was an Orthodox Jew, we spent hours going through the entire home-based Passover service found in the special Passover guidebook that is traditionally used called the *Hagaddah* (literally, “the telling”). But, I always found the story of Passover compelling. It drew me back to the core of my identity as a Jew, even during those days when I was not even sure that the God of the Exodus existed.

Throughout the world, Jewish people will gather around the table to remember and retell this great story of redemption. Some Jewish people will be more skeptical about the role of God in the life of the Jewish people and others will be more certain. But every Jewish person will come face to face, through the beauty of the Seder, that while Pharaoh finally let us go, the *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will never let go of us.*

I love the expression of His faithfulness to Israel found in Jeremiah 31:35-36 where the prophet writes:

Thus says the Lord, Who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; The Lord of hosts is His name: “If this fixed order departs from before Me,” declares the Lord, “Then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever.”

Lessons from the Passover

When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:14-15).

Passover holds many wonderful life lessons for Christians as well. The most obvious is the understanding that the Lord’s Supper was a Passover meal and our Communion is rooted in the Jewish Seder service. The depth of the Lord’s Supper is impossible to understand without knowing more about the Passover. As followers of the Jewish Messiah Jesus we enter into the fulfillment of the Passover Festival every time we eat the unleavened bread, reminding us of His sinless nature and death for our sin. When we drink, we recall that He took the third of four cups, the Cup of Redemption, whereby He inaugurated the New Covenant through the shedding of His blood.

Experiencing Passover in Your Home

In the middle of this newsletter you will find a mini-Haggadah we have prepared for you. I hope you will use this to conduct your own Passover Seder. This experience will enlighten you to the great symbolism fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah. Knowing these things will also help you identify with and share the Gospel with your Jewish friends.

There are many other Passover resources that you can find on the back of this newsletter, or by visiting

www.celebratemessiah.com.au online store.



Photo by Asher Hirsch

Reaching Jewish People for Messiah

As you read and learn about the Passover, I want to urge you to pray for your Jewish friends, family and neighbours. Pray that my people will be open to hearing the Gospel. Perhaps your church or a church in your community would like to host a Celebrate Messiah Australia speaker and actually enjoy a Messianic Seder next year. You can find out how to do this by visiting www.celebratemessiah.com.au and going to the “invite a speaker” menu.

On behalf of the Celebrate Messiah family, serving together with Chosen People Global Ministries in 16 countries around the globe, I want to thank you for your prayers and generous financial support. You are such a vital part of our ministry!

May you and your loved ones have a blessed Passover and Resurrection Day as we rejoice in serving a risen Lord and Savior!

Yours in the Lamb,


Lawrence Hirsch



Lawrence Hirsch
Executive Director
of Celebrate Messiah
Australia

Messianic Passover

“Haggadah” means “the telling” of the story. The order in which the story of the Passover has been told throughout the centuries has changed so little that there are moments in the Passover, even as it is celebrated today, that we may recognise just as they are described in the Gospel accounts of “The Last Supper.” We are providing this abbreviated Passover service for you to use with your family. Enjoy the happy celebration!

I Brechat Haner - Lighting of the Candles

The woman of the house lights the candles with the following prayer:

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.

Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctifies us with His commandments and commands us to light the festival lights.

The Passover is structured around four cups of wine that are ritually drunk in the course of the Seder. They are taken from the Lord's four “I wills” in Exodus 6:6-7:

The Cup of Blessing – “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”

The Cup of Sanctification or “Plagues” – “I will rid you out of their bondage.”

The Cup of Redemption – “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.”

The Cup of Praise – “I will take you to me as a people and I will be your God.”

It is traditional to drink the cups leaning to the left. This “reclining” position symbolizes liberty to rest in the freedom the Lord has won for us through redeeming us from bondage.

2 Kiddush - First Cup: The Cup of Blessing

The wine blessing is offered and the cup is consumed:

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha-olam boray pri hagofen.

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

We read in the Gospel of Luke of the first cup, The Lord's Supper,

When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.” (Luke 22:14-18)

3 Karpas - Dipping of the Parsley in Salt Water

All take a sprig of parsley, dip it in salt water and eat it. The parsley symbolizes the hyssop used to place the blood of the Passover lamb upon the doorposts and lintels of the homes of the Israelites (Exodus 12:22) during the tenth and most terrible plague that the Lord visited upon Egypt – the slaying of the first born.



4 Yachutz - Breaking of the Middle Matzah

The Middle Matzah of the Matzah Tosh is broken in half. One half is returned to its place among the three and the other (called the “Afikomen”) is hidden away, only to reappear at the conclusion of the Passover meal.



5 Maggid - Story of the Passover

The story of Passover is read from the Scripture (Exodus 12:1-27). Its dramatic themes of danger, flight and deliverance are timeless – they continue to move us to this day.

6 Ma-Nishtanah – The Four Questions of Passover

A child reads the questions:

- 1) Why is it that on all other nights during the year we eat either bread or matzah, but on this night we eat matzah?
- 2) Why is it that on all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables, but on this night we eat bitter herbs?
- 3) Why is it on all other nights we do not dip even once, but on this night we dip twice?
- 4) Why is it that on all other nights we eat either sitting or reclining, but on this night we eat in a reclining position?

The leader responds to each of the questions (visit www.celebratemessiah.com.au/passover for the answers and more information).

7 Makkot - Second Cup: The Cup of Sanctification or “Plagues”

The second cup is filled. The leader of the Seder leads the group in a recitation of the list of plagues the Lord visited upon the wickedness of Egypt: Blood! Frogs! Lice! Flies! Pestilence! Boils! Hail! Locusts! Darkness! Slaying of the First Born!



Haggadah

It is traditional to spill a drop of wine for each plague as it is spoken in unison. The cup is consumed after the wine blessing.

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha-olam boray pri hagofen.

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



Photo by Carly Hennigen

8 Maror - Eating of the Bitter Herbs



The matzah is dipped into the bitter herbs and is eaten. As the first of the four questions reminds us, the matzah is the unleavened bread that the children of Israel carried with them, for they departed Egypt in such great haste that they did not have

time to add leaven to their dough so that their bread could rise (Exodus 12:39). The second question reminds us that the bitter herbs refer to our bitter hard labor in bondage to Pharaoh (Exodus 1:12-24).

Korech - Eating of the Charoseth

The Charoseth symbolizes the mortar the children of Israel used to make the bricks as they toiled under Pharaoh's harsh taskmasters. It is eaten with matzah.



In order to settle a controversy about how the Passover is to be eaten, a famous sage, Rabbi Hillel, began the tradition of the "Hillel sandwich," which today is made by eating the maror and the charoseth together between two pieces of matzah. It is also said that this combination of bitter and sweet reminds us that God's promise can bring joy in the midst of sorrow.

Shulchan Orech – The Set Table

The Passover meal can now be served. Eat, tell stories and enjoy!



II Tzaphun - Eating of the Afikomen

Traditionally, during dinner the children are seeking the hidden piece of unleavened bread (matzah), called the Afikomen. The finder brings it to the leader, who must "redeem" it with a gift

of money. The term Afikomen also means, "He who comes."

It was the unleavened bread that Messiah consumed before the cup of redemption over which He spoke the words,

This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me (Luke 22:19).

There are many who believe that the top piece of the unleavened bread symbolizes God, the middle piece of matzah symbolizes the mediator between man and God, and the bottom piece refers to the people of Israel. In another Jewish

tradition, the middle piece refers to the High Priests and the bottom piece of matzah refers to the Levites in general. Either way, it is middle piece that refers to a mediator.

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

The wine blessing is offered and the cup is consumed. This cup is the cup over which Messiah also spoke the words,

This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you (Luke 22:20).

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha-olam boray pri hagofen.

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

Drink the third cup.

It is fitting at this time to speak more about the *Zeroah* (shank bone of the lamb), *Beitzah* (hardboiled egg) and the empty seat that is traditionally set for the Prophet Elijah. In speaking of the *Zeroah* we usually mention and even read all of Isaiah chapter 53, as Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

13 Hallel – Fourth Cup: The Cup of Praise

The wine blessing is said and the wine is consumed, remembering the blessings of the Lord and the miracles He has wrought for us and for those who came before us.

Baruch atah adonai eloheynu melech ha-olam boray pri hagofen.

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

Drink the final cup.

14 The Cup of Elijah

We pause before concluding to invite Elijah to sit at our Passover table and ask the children to open the front door to invite the prophet to sit at the table. He is viewed as the one who would precede the coming of the Messiah (Malachi 4:5).

15 Next Year in Jerusalem

The service concludes with the hopeful prayer, "L'shanah habah b'yerushalim" – Next year in Jerusalem!

NEWS BRIEFS

MINISTRY TO HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN ISRAEL

I am always excited to be able to do ministry amongst Holocaust survivors because we do not have a lot of time left to reach out to them. Each year, there are fewer and fewer Holocaust survivors so I pray God will give more opportunities to share His love.

Recently, we organized a three-day trip to the Dead Sea where they could rest and, more importantly, hear about God. About fifty people took part – most of them were not believers, and some of them told me that they have begun to sense God's presence and that they are now open to Yeshua being the Jewish Messiah.

The most thrilling moment was on the last day of the project. After the final meeting, we separated into three groups and a volunteer prayed for each of the people within the group. It was such a great moment to see how they turned to God with their needs. I thank the Lord for all that He does. It is especially encouraging to see the fruit - I rejoice when I see people change and come closer to God. I am happy when I can minister to them, both physically and spiritually. - *Maxim*

TRAVELLERS HEAR ABOUT MESSIAH

Bondi Beach in Sydney is famous all over the world for its waves. For one South American Jewish couple it is where they recently met one of our Sydney outreach team and discussed their travels as well as discussed Yeshua. They accepted a copy of the scriptures to take with them to further read. Pray that S and M will meet Yeshua personally as they read the scriptures.

Jewish and Israeli travellers are everywhere. Our Sydney staff also travel everywhere, even Tasmania, where on Australia Day at a BBQ for backpackers and fruit pickers they prayed with two travellers to discover Yeshua as the Messiah.



Previous gatherings were in Berlin in 2009/10 and in Paris in 2012/13. Muchan is sponsored by Chosen People Ministries who subsidise the cost for young adults to participate.

The theme of the conference was "Ready to Go Viral", and the lessons have centred on the most viral message in history, the message of Yeshua. Dr Seth walked the young adults through an in-depth study of the Book of Acts putting the impact of the first Messianic believers in contemporary context.

Our passion is of course to see the message of Yeshua going viral AGAIN among Jewish people around the world.

Dr Zhava gave short but very informative lectures on the history of the Jews in Spain (including the Golden Years of Judaism in Spain and the Inquisition).

We were so encouraged to see young messianic believers, both Jews and Gentiles, networking together and inspiring each other towards mission to our Jewish people. From the people we met, I believe the Messianic movement has a very bright future." – *Lawrence Hirsch*

MUCHAN MADRID GOING VIRAL

From 29 December 2014 - 4 January 2015, Louise and I, together with Jahleel (Aus), Ryan Karp (USA) and Rachel David (Israel) had the privilege of leading the third international conference for young messianic believers from all around the world called *Muchan* (Hebrew for Ready!). This time 85 young adults, ages 18-35, gathered in Madrid, Spain from Israel, Europe, North America, South Africa and Australia.

HOSTING ISRAELIS IN NEW ZEALAND

Many Israelis came to travel in New Zealand in large numbers this season and we had the privilege of meeting and hosting many of them. The two key ways we meet our Jewish friends is through hosting, and by visiting the Israelis where they stay in our area.

I find that many young Israelis are as hungry for a spiritual experience as for fresh air. They try hard to take in the beauty of God's creation around New Zealand and experience spirituality through those special moments surrounded by nothing other than breathtaking views of nature.



Upon return back to Israel from their trip, they will so often relive and replay in their minds the awesome sceneries via memories and photos. Sadly, however, their experience will slowly fade away amongst the intense pressure that life in Israel entails, and they will face an inevitable feeling of emptiness. I, therefore, often talk to them about their desire for something spiritual that will last. During our times together, I introduce the exclusivity of Yeshua as being the only way to God through His redemptive work for the forgiveness of sin. With Yeshua there is a lasting spiritual fulfillment, no more emptiness. Yeshua is the answer, not only for the true joy in this life, but one that will eternally accelerate in the presence of God in glory. – *Zohar Gonen*



JOY AND WITNESS ON THE STREETS

As the sounds of *Hava Nagila* and the sight of people singing and dancing swept across the busy street, Jay and his enthusiastic outreach volunteers sought the Lord and asked, "... please create an opportunity if you want us to share the Lord." Jay started up a conversation with young Israeli Joel, who was from an ultra-Orthodox family. He shared that he liked listening to a particular rabbi and reading from the Tenach (the Old Testament). Jay boldly inquired, "You seem to have found joy and happiness, but do you have peace in your heart?" Joel replied that sadly he had not, and asked, "Where can I find this peace." Jay explained that it was only through the Sar Shalom, the Prince of Peace." Jay laid hands on Joel and prayed for him in the name of Yeshua, Sar Shalom, Yeshua Prince of Peace. Please pray for Joel, that as he explores further about the peace of Yeshua, he'll be drawn closer to Him. - *Jay*

HUSBAND AND WIFE BOTH PRAY

Recently at a visit to a Nursing Home in the Caulfield area, the Lord led us to minister comfort and pray for an elderly and sick resident. After comforting and talking to him, Rita prayed with

him, and by God's grace led him in the sinner's prayer - he gave his heart to Yeshua.

When his wife returned (as she had left the room earlier) Rita told her what her husband had just done. As she listened, God opened the door to her heart and she too prayed to receive Yeshua. What a glorious miracle God did right in our midst. Hallelujah!

IRANIANS BAPTISED IN MESSIANIC JEWISH CONGREGATION

It was certainly a very joyous occasion earlier this year when I had the great privilege of baptising 5 new Iranian believers who had come to faith in Jesus from a Muslim background at Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation. That day, only 3 people were pre-arranged to be baptised, but after I gave an opportunity for anyone else to follow Yeshua through the waters of the mikveh (baptism), two more enthusiastically joined in. After ensuring that they had indeed accepted Yeshua as the Messiah, they too were baptised in the clothes they were wearing that day. Fortunately it was a very hot day and they soon dried out. Praise the Lord for the power of the Gospel to make Jew and Gentile one in Him. - *Lawrence*

MESSIANIC RESOURCES

PLAN A PASSOVER MEAL AT YOUR HOME THIS YEAR! DISCOVER CELEBRATE MESSIAH'S TOOLS TO HELP YOU SHOW MESSIAH IN THE PASSOVER TO YOUR FAMILY!

Our special **Passover Set** from Israel has a Seder Plate, Matzah Tash, Kiddush Cup, and Messianic Haggadah. The *Seder Plate* helps tell the story of the Exodus and points to our Messiah. The *Matzah Tash*, or matzah cover, is a pouch with three compartments, each hold a piece of *matzah* (unleavened bread). It is a vivid illustration of the unity of God's nature. The *Kiddush Cup* (15cm tall) symbolizes the blood of the sacrificed paschal lamb, or the Lamb of God. It is filled four times during the Passover meal as the story of God's redeeming work among His people, the people of Israel, unfolds. **Items also available for individual purchase. Passover Set (4 pieces) • \$115^{AUD} plus p&h**

For phone orders call 03 9563 5544 or for more resources visit us online at www.celebratemessiah.com.au

"We would like to remember Celebrate Messiah in



our will, but we are not sure how to go about it."

Giving to Jewish Ministry in Your Will

When you remember Celebrate Messiah in your Will, you become a partner in our life-changing work amongst God's Chosen People world-wide as we await the Messiah's return.

If you would like to speak to a Christian solicitor about including Celebrate Messiah in your Will, please call our office on 61 3 9563 5544 for more information.



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Simcha

2015



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