

Passover is the Believer's Festival of Freedom, for Jew and non-Jew alike, both being Believers in Yeshua, of course. The focus is on praising and thanking God for His marvelous redemption! We hope you will be blessed, as we have been, by carefully researching The Last Supper and then doing what Yeshua commanded all Believers to do.

"DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME!" by Roger Walkwitz

IT IS AMAZING, and discouraging, that there is so much confusion about "do(ing) THIS in remembrance of ME!" The confusion must be because the observance is so important. Otherwise, Satan would not bother to attack and corrupt it. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed by religious authorities because they did not observe this in the way the authorities dictated. Corruption came when pagans brought their pagan practices into the early *ekklesia*, instead of leaving them behind, and became leaders enforcing their paganism on all.

At the time of Yeshua, the dominant religions of the empire were pagan. Involved in most was a ceremony of "eating their god" in order to gain the life and attributes of their god, much as a cannibal eats his victim to (hopefully) gain the powers of his victim. Initiates or devotees would go to the temple of their god to eat a meal of meat offered to their god and drink the blood of this sacrificial animal. Sometimes it was modified to meat and wine, or bread and blood, or bread and wine. A pagan priest always officiated and had power (supposedly) to change whatever was to be eaten into the actual body and blood of the particular pagan god. You can recognize this as "transubstantiation" of the Roman Catholic church in their Mass, "eating Christ," a sacrament required for their "salvation," which is controlled by the priesthood.

Jewish Believers had no background doing this. But when non-Jewish people, beginning with Cornelius, came into the *ekklesia* directly, with no biblical background, they had a lot to learn! So did Jewish Believers about accepting non-Jewish Believers! The first big meeting of apostles and leadership was convened in Jerusalem to solve this conflict by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The conclusion reached was that non-Jews need no longer become Jews in order to be part of God's family, but that they must immediately drop off their basic pagan practices and go to the synagogue to listen as the Torah and Haftora are read every Shabbat. This way they will learn to know more of the true God

and how to live as a member of God's family.¹ Copies of God's Word were to be found only in the synagogues, so that was the place to go. Non-Jews are and have always been welcome at synagogues, and those who came quite regularly were termed those "who fear (respect) God" in the Tanakh and Book of Acts.

These basic pagan practices were 1) the required homo- and heterosexual relations at the temples with the temple prostitutes as part of the worship of the pagan gods, and 2) eating the meat and drinking the blood of the sacrificial animals: the pagan *eucharist*, communion, or lord's supper. As time went on, however, pagans who probably were not true Believers succeeded in bringing their pagan practices into the *ekklesia*, mixing them with biblical terms. By the time of Constantine, the pagan *eucharist* became official. Those who continued to observe the Last Supper Passover as Yeshua had instructed were outlawed, persecuted, and finally no mention of them occurs in history after about AD 600.²

This is tragic, since God had already warned the non-Jews through Paul in Romans 11 that the Life and Family of God was in the Jewish Good Olive Tree. Some Jews who did not put their trust in Yeshua were broken off. By the end of the 1st century it is estimated that about one million Jews did put their trust in Yeshua! Non-Jews who also put their trust in Yeshua were grafted in among these million Jewish Believers, sharing with them the life-style and Festivals that God had given them. Non-Jews were taken out from their wild olive tree. This meant leaving behind the pagan, worldly system of religious rites and sacraments, selfish greed, pride, ambition, etc.

As Believers in Yeshua, both Jew and non-Jew were born-from-above with New Life, which is to be expressed as the Bible describes, with love for God and love for one's neighbor. But as the *ekklesia* became the anti-

¹ Acts 15:19-21

² An exception might be the Pasaginians, probable descendants of the Messianic Jews of the First Century, who were mentioned in the records of the Inquisition until about 1400 CE.

Semitic church, religion was used for political ends, pushing Bible Truth aside, making their own traditions, and persecuting those true Believers who insisted on following Yeshua regardless of consequences. These faithful ones are in the same category as the "heroes of Faith" in Hebrews 11! Read *Foxes Book of Martyrs*!

EVEN TODAY, many churches expect Jewish Believers to abandon their Jewishness and become "Gentilized Christians." This is backwards from Romans 11! After the Six-Day War in 1967, when more Jews started Believing in Yeshua, Jewish Believers abandoned the "Gentilized Christian churches" and started their own Messianic Jewish congregations, which number in the hundreds in the USA, and dozens in Israel and other countries. In these congregations, Jewish and non-Jewish Believers worship and *koinonia* together, all nourished from the Good Olive Tree, like the early *ekklesia*. Being a rather new development, a lot of growth needs to take place in understanding biblical Truth and its implementation, which is taking place slowly.

At the time of the Reformation, 16th century, some reformers recognized the paganism of the Mass, the Roman Catholic Eucharist, and decided to make the celebration symbolic only. So began the current Communion, or Lord's Supper. Possibly because anti-Jewish attitudes prevailed, no one went back to the practice of the early *ekklesia*, which was Passover only. However, today we find more and more interest from Believers wanting to celebrate Passover in the way Yeshua commanded, a leisurely evening of worship as the details are recounted!

In Exodus 12-13, much emphasis is given about removing all traces of leaven (bread, yeast products) before the memorial Passover can be celebrated. God through Paul gives that same information in 1 Corinthians 5. Passover is approaching. The Believers in Corinth are tolerating known sinful behavior in their midst, and therefore are not prepared to celebrate the Festival of Passover. So Paul asks them to deal with it, and they did. Then, recognizing Messiah as their Passover Lamb, "Let us (a command to ourselves) celebrate the festival..." in the proper way, without leaven (known sin). This indicates that Passover was the celebration of the Believers in the early *ekklesia*.

It is surprising that so many commentaries and preachers think that "breaking bread" in the NT refers to the current practice of "Lord's supper"! They assume that Acts 2:42 indicates

that the early new Believers are having the Lord's supper every day! "Breaking bread" means today and has always meant: "Let's eat," nothing more, and is so indicated in Acts 2:46, also 27:35. Bread in ancient times was a flat pancake type, which would be broken by the host and passed around. I have clippings from magazines and newspapers of various famous people "breaking bread" together, or being invited to "break bread," including President Clinton inviting black members of Congress to "break bread" with him at the White House. Imagine Clinton serving Communion? I don't think so! Several pages in *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible* by Bullinger bring this out very clearly. "Hence to 'break bread'...means to partake of a meal. It is the common Hebrew idiom to this day... So 'to break bread' means not to partake of the Lord's supper, but to partake of an ordinary meal with others." (p. 627)



PASSOVER SEDER PLATE

Now take a look at 1 Corinthians 11. The term "Lord's supper" is in all English translations, but not in Greek. The footnote in my Interlinear says, "Note that *kuriakos* is an adjective, for which no exact English equivalent is available. Only other occurrence in NT, Rev. 1:10." *Kuriakos* means "lord" and *kuriakos* is the adjective form, used in 1 Cor. 11:20. The Interlinear suggests "on the imperial day" rather than "on the Lord's day" in Rev. 1:10, so maybe we should say "an imperial supper" to be more correct than "Lord's supper" since "Lord's" is a possessive noun, not an adjective as it is in Greek. You see the problem. Many people don't care about accuracy in Bible translation, but we do.

"In the night in which he was betrayed..." Why didn't God say "on Passover night"? Be-

cause the Corinthians already knew that, from chapter 5 and yearly practice. They had a special supper all right, but had corrupted it by their pagan practices. They were being rebuked for betraying Yeshua on the night when He is to be remembered in the Passover narrative, with the warning of celebrating in an unworthy manner.

Another misused expression is "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup..." in 1 Cor 11:26. Many assume it means "as often as you wish." This bread refers to *matzah*, the unleavened bread at Passover time, and this cup refers to the "cup after supper," which is the 3rd cup in a sequence of 4 at every Passover Seder today. The *matzah* comes before the festive supper, the 3rd cup after supper. This is a specific "bread" and a specific "cup" that occur together only once a year, at the Passover Seder.

"Unworthily" or "unworthy manner" is brought out in 1 Cor 11:27f. Certainly no one is worthy of anything that Yeshua has given us, or that we in ourselves could make ourselves worthy of God in any way. We definitely should put away all leaven before we celebrate Passover, and we should think carefully about the manner of our celebration. Is it what Yeshua did that Last Supper night, or close to it?

It is very easy to mix Truth with error, since error is all around us. Unless we are diligent in our study and practice, consistently thinking Jewish, we probably will be making mistakes. A literal translation of 1 Cor 10:21 is, "You are not able to drink a cup of YHWH and a cup of demons; you are not able to partake of a table of YHWH and a table of demons. Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?" When the Holy Spirit is in charge of our lives we certainly are "not able" to do both. The Table of the Lord is the Passover table, the only table at which eating a full meal is required for any of the Festivals of YHWH. For many ethnic groups, eating a meal together indicates friendship. An invited guest is under the protection of the host if there is any danger in the area. Such a guest would never go to eat at the table of his host's enemy, even if invited and enticed. So Believers are reminded of their friendship and relationship to Yeshua, being under His protection. So let us show our loyalty and love!

Tradition and peer pressure are hard to overcome. But after all, we individually and eventually will answer to God, not to religious authorities. "We must obey God, rather than men" if the "men" require us to do otherwise.

God has been VERY gracious to all of us...it behooves all of us to be very gracious to each other. Some will understand, some will not, but that does not mean we fight over it as in the Middle Ages! Let each be persuaded in his own mind and celebrate accordingly, with others of like mind, the *koinonia* of brotherly love.

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"VERY MYSTERIOUS"

MORAL FAILURE

Recently uncovered documents in the U.S. National Archives reveal that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) knew about Nazi Germany's "Final Solution" plan to exterminate European Jewry in October 1942 but declined to make a public statement.