JMJS Vol. 2, 2017 ISSN : ISSN 2379-836X

Journal of MESSIANIC JEWISH STUDIES

CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Volume 2, 2017

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The Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies

Volume 2
Summer 2017
On Passover

Journal of
Messianic Jewish Studies
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Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies

Executive Editor ~ Mitch Glaser, PhD
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Typesetting and Design ~ Ash Design (UK)

Typesetting

Times New Roman, Minion Pro, &
SBL (The Society of Biblical Literature) BibLit fonts
10.5pt on 14.5pt

Charles L. Feinberg Center, New York
ISSN : ISSN 2379-836X

The Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies

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CoreValues

Theology:

We believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, the Triune nature of God and full deity and sinless humanity of Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah, salvation through faith in Yeshua alone. We also believe that God is faithful to His covenants and promises to the Jewish people and in the importance of Jewish evangelism.

Editorial:

Our goal is to reflect the best of Evangelical and Jewish scholarship in our articles and to demonstrate how Christianity and Judaism intersect and inform one another on a variety of scholarly and practical areas of study. Therefore, submissions to *JMJS* are to be supported by a thoughtful, biblical, and theological analysis and relevant to Messianic Jewish thought, Jewish evangelism and the interplay between Judaism and Christianity.

Contributions:

The editors welcome contributions from all who respect the role of the Jewish people in the plan of God and who wish to explore the inter-relatedness between faith in Yeshua the Messiah and Judaism. Submissions are welcomed that are of interest and relevance to the aims and readership of the journal.

Editorial Limitations:

Articles appearing in the journal do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors but are intended to promote a better understanding of the Messianic Jewish movement and the ways in which Evangelical Christianity relates to Jewish history, tradition, biblical scholarship and practice.

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Journal of
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Introduction

Gregory Hagg

Welcome to this second volume of the *Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies*.

Passover is perhaps the best-known holiday of the Jewish people. Of course, the more Biblically (or culturally) literate one is, the more likely he knows about the Exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, the crossing of the Red Sea's dry riverbed, or the festive meal that has commemorated these events for centuries.

Very few people in the non-Jewish world, however, understand the depth of the theological significance found in the Passover. This includes the Church of Jesus Christ. Speakers on the topic are pleased to see the "light bulbs" come on in the minds of those who are introduced to the connections between Passover and the Passion Week in the Gospels. So, too, are students deeply moved when they encounter John's introduction of the Lamb who takes away sin, and the Apostle Paul's use of Passover terminology that points to Jesus as the Paschal Lamb. It is a defining moment

for believers when they grasp the imagery behind the truth that the sacrifice Lamb has been slain.

The five articles that follow are taken from the recently published book by Chosen People Ministries called *Messiah in the Passover*. The book devotes nineteen chapters to the Feast under the general headings of Biblical foundations, church history, Jewish traditions, communicating the Gospel via the Passover, and practical lessons on the celebration of Passover. It is hoped that the book will make a unique contribution to the appreciation of the history of the ancient feast and its contemporary observance among Jewish and Gentile believers.

In this volume of the *Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies* Mitch Glaser's introduction to the book, *Messiah in the Passover* is reproduced. It provides a more detailed synopsis of the book along with the rationale for studying Passover. This is a must-read article. Of particular interest is his discussion of the need for a sophisticated use of the Rabbinic sources to show the connection between the Last Supper and Jewish tradition. Much of the debate surrounding the Passover and the Lord's Table today concerns the use of the Mishnah/Talmud. Few western thinkers can fully appreciate the influence of oral tradition upon the Jewish people of the first century.

Next Robert Walter addresses the core passages in the Torah, which provide the seminal material from which the rest of the Bible draws in providing the themes of redemption. Darrell Bock applies his exceptional grasp of the Gospel of Luke to a discussion of the Passover as it appears in the Lucan account. Brian Crawford delves into the details of the Passover as it relates specifically to the Lord's Table. These articles on the Biblical foundations of Passover will challenge the reader as well as encourage and inspire.

One article is devoted to Passover controversies in the history

of the church, which will detail some of the anti-Semitic bias of the nominal church toward the Jewish people through the centuries. Finally, Zhava Glaser provides an excellent historical treatment of the Passover as it is found in Rabbinic writing, the primary source for Jewish tradition.

Rather than select chapters from the last two sections of the book for this volume of the *JMJS*, Chosen People Ministries has used those chapters to produce another book, *The Gospel in the Passover*, which focuses on how to share the Gospel through the Passover and how to celebrate the Passover as a family today. Many will use this abbreviated treatment of the Passover in learning to enjoy the feast in their homes and congregations.

Articles

The Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies

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Why Study the Passover?

Mitch Glaser

There are many reasons why followers of Jesus the Messiah—whether Jewish or Gentile—should deepen their understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures and Passover in particular. Perhaps the best way to explain this is to refer to a great passage in the New Testament where the Apostle Paul (Rabbi Saul) writes a letter to his half-Jewish son in the faith, Timothy, and explains the value of the Old Testament Scriptures.

The Apostle writes,

> All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. (2 Tim. 3:16)

In this instance Paul describes the law as "inspired by God," which may be more literally translated "breathed by God." If you hold your hand to your mouth and speak, you'll notice immediately that you feel breath upon your hand with every syllable uttered. This is a wonderful picture of the way in which

God's inerrant Word is communicated through the biblical authors while being inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The Law (Torah) is therefore profitable or useful for "teaching" (also sometimes translated "doctrine"), for "reproof" (learning what is wrong), for "correction" (learning what is right), and for "training in righteousness," where Paul uses the Greek word that usually refers to a child and therefore implies that the apostle is speaking of the ways in which parents train their children for life.

The five books of Moses include so much of the biblical information that a person needs in order to live in a way that pleases God. However, our motivation for applying the Law to our lives should not be that we would earn salvation by our efforts, but that we would grow into mature men and women who reflect the character of Christ.

Think about it for a moment with me. The five books of Moses include the creation account as well as the calling of Abraham and his sons to become a nation living in a promised land. These first five books of the Bible also include the Exodus, the laws given to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai, the sacrificial system, the role of the priests and the prophets, the lessons learned in the wilderness, and so much more! We would all agree that the five books of Moses—the Torah—are the very foundation for our faith.

Another very critical element of God's instruction for men and women in the Torah is the description of the seven great festivals of the Jewish people—mostly found in Leviticus 23. Each of these great festivals points to something unique about the planning character of God, reflecting His sovereignty over the past, present, and future. The festivals look back on the history of Israel, are often linked to the agricultural cycle, and point forward prophetically to the Messiah in the fulfillment of all of God's promises to the Jewish people.

The Jewish holidays not only include teaching but also special sacrifices that are made, such as the waving of sheaves, the baking of bread, the building of booths, and the blowing of the shofar (ram's-horn trumpet). The seven great festivals of Israel are replete with object lessons that help us better understand the story of redemption. These object lessons, woven into the very fabric of the feasts, enable the Israelites to "get their hands a little dirty" and to not merely hear or listen, but to *do* and *participate* so that the lessons of the festivals became ingrained in their very souls. It's no secret to modern experts on the process of learning that it is not merely children who learn better by doing—but adults do as well. Participating in the activities makes these lessons unforgettable.

This is the foundation for the Passover: it is a festival filled with opportunities for participation in the remembrance of our great deliverance from Egypt. We were told to recount the story year after year so that new generations of Jewish people would never forget what God did in delivering the people of Israel from Egypt. There are symbols, given from Sinai that were part of the Torah, and instructions to the Jewish people on to how to observe the Feast. Jewish traditions have also grown up around these biblical injunctions to further help the Jewish people remember this most formative and critical event of the nation's history.

It is wonderful to observe the Passover because there are so many invaluable lessons preserved in the festival for the people of God. Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples in light of His sacrifice for our sins. Similarly, Christians throughout the world, in one way or another, remember Jesus and give thanks for His sacrificial death through the Lord's Supper, also called Communion or the Eucharist.

When Christians celebrate the Passover, however, we grow in our understanding of the Old Testament, affirm the Jewishness

of the Gospel, deepen our understanding of the Lord's Supper, build community with fellow Christians, and develop a common experience that will enable us to better communicate the Gospel to our Jewish friends.

Most of all, when Christians celebrate the Passover, in one way or another, we are passing along the glorious message of redemption to future generations and linking our children and grandchildren to the Exodus. This will help our children develop a sense of continuity between the Old and New Testaments and between prophecy given and prophecy fulfilled. This will build the faith of our children, giving them greater assurance that what the Bible said about the future has and will come to pass.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

This book has something for everyone interested in the Jewish roots of the Christian faith and in becoming better equipped to tell their Jewish friends about Jesus. I hope you will be interested in reading every chapter, but we understand that you might find some chapters to be quite basic and others to be advanced. I believe you will glean great value from every chapter, but if you view the book as a reference volume that you keep coming back to, then you might read some of the material now and save other chapters for a future time.

The book has been organized into five parts to take you on a journey through Scripture so that you may learn what the Bible teaches about Passover and the Exodus. Part 1 of the book focuses on the biblical and theological issues related to the Passover throughout the Old and New Testament. We begin with the Hebrew Scriptures and then move into the days of Jesus

Messiah, including His death, life, and resurrection, and the role that Passover now plays in the life of the Body of Messiah, both in the New Testament Scriptures and the present day.

Part 2 will help you understand the importance of the Passover in both Jewish and church history, including the unfortunate use of the Passover as a tool to persecute the Jewish people. Our journey to understand the profound linkages between the Passover, the Exodus, and Jesus the Messiah takes us from the Early Church to later church history and into our current day. We focus not only on the ways in which Jesus fulfills the Passover, but also on the ways in which the Church continues to experience the Seder, which is fulfilled by observing the Lord's Supper. On our journey, we also look at the various controversies regarding the Passover throughout this period and focus attention on the theological and practical implications the Passover can have today in the lives of Christians and Messianic Jews.

Part 3 of the book looks at the Passover in light of Jewish tradition, and I hope this will give you further insight into the Jewish view of the Passover.

Part 4 will equip you to use the Passover to communicate the message of Messiah in the Passover to your Jewish friends.

Part 5 of the book provides all you need to celebrate Passover in your home or church, including a Messianic Family Haggadah (guidebook with readings for the Passover Seder), recipes, and even lessons for your children. This final part of the journey allows us to explore some of the many opportunities to experience and participate in the celebration of Passover. With the biblical and theological foundations coupled with the historical and traditional and Gospel-centered perspectives on the Passover, we can pray for opportunities to serve and bless others as well as to witness the glad and rich celebration of Messiah in the Passover to our family and friends.

At the back of the book you will find a number of appendices, including helpful lists, charts, and maps, along with a glossary, recommended reading list, bibliography, and indexes to help you better understand and use the material included in the book. We pray that the entire work will inspire your participation in celebrating the Passover in your own home or congregation, Bible study or home group, or even Sunday school class or homeschool group. Additionally, we have created a Messiah in the Passover website, www.messiahinthepassover.com, that will enhance your experience of the book. The website includes additional materials that will further equip and guide you and your family to celebrate this great festival of Passover.

Even if you never take part in a Passover celebration, we believe the information presented in this volume will enrich your life by helping you better understand your Jewish heritage in the Messiah.

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE PASSOVER

We have organized the book in a way that takes into consideration both the traditional Jewish and Christian views of the Old Testament canon. Even though the two are much the same, they are organized differently.

The Hebrew Scriptures

There is a Jewish acronym for the Old Testament canon—*Tanakh* (*TNK*). The three letters refer to the *Torah*, the *Nevi'im*, and the *Ketuvim*.

The five books of Moses—known by the Hebrew word *Torah*—are the same in both the Hebrew Bible and Christian Old

Testament (see appendix 1). These include the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

The *Nevi'im* refers to the "Prophets," which are divided in the Jewish canon between Former and Latter Prophets. The Former Prophets include Joshua, Judges, and Samuel in the books of First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings. The Latter Prophets include Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and what Christians call, "the Minor Prophets," which Jewish people simply call, "the Twelve." This corpus of Scripture includes the books of Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The *Ketuvim*, which translated means "the Writings," encompasses the Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Job, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and the books of First and Second Chronicles, which are united in one book entitled "The Chronicles." Within the Ketuvim, Jewish people recognize internal subgroups such as the Megillot—or in English "The Scrolls,"—which includes the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther.

Those books usually associated with the Apocrypha were generally not included in the Jewish canon. The Bible used in most synagogues as the source of our modern translations of the Hebrew Bible is based upon the Hebrew Masoretic text. This text was composed by the Masoretes, a term referring to Jewish scholars in the seventh through tenth centuries who copied the texts, added the vowels to the Hebrew, and in their meticulous practices of copying the text ensured the accuracy of the Hebrew canon.

For our purposes, this book follows a combination of the Protestant and Jewish canons.

The New Testament

We follow a similar path in approaching the New Testament and pay special attention to the Jewish backgrounds of the New Testament so that we can better understand the linkage between Jesus and the Passover. Therefore, we will journey through the Gospels and then the New Testament Epistles, again highlighting the links between Passover and the Messiah. We will keep in mind the themes of promise and fulfillment and first-century Jewish understandings, which will enable us to see the New Testament through Jewish eyes. Our goal is to better understand our Savior Himself and the ways in which He celebrated the Jewish holidays.

THE USE OF RABBINIC SOURCES

It is nearly impossible to understand Jewish life, culture, and history without coming to grips with the critical role of Jewish religious tradition. The Jewish people are like the proverbial pulling of the loose thread from a garment—if you begin tugging on your understanding of the Jewish people in one area, you will eventually discover that this area is attached to another. Perhaps the common visible thread, which held the Jewish people together for centuries, is the attachment of religious tradition to almost every area of Jewish life.

This tradition is found in what is known as the Talmud, which includes two major sections: the Mishnah and the Gemara. Jewish religious tradition is also found in the vast number of commentaries on the Torah as well as many other genres of religious literature: devotional books, manuals of spiritual discipline, and many similar works.

You will notice in various chapters in this book that Jewish religious tradition is explained, especially in relation to the Passover. We have also dedicated an entire chapter that surveys the discussions of the Passover within traditional Jewish religious literature (see chapter 10). It is our hope that this will enable you to better understand the Jewish people, Jewish religious practices, and how this impacts the Passover—especially the understanding of Jesus and the disciples.

THE LAST SUPPER AND JEWISH TRADITION

One of the critical questions addressed in this book is, "How similar was the Last Supper celebrated by Jesus and His disciples to the modern-day Jewish Passover?"

Is today's Passover celebration a transparent window into the way in which Jesus and His disciples celebrated Passover? Did Jesus observe the same Jewish traditions as Messianic Jews like myself who grew up in a Jewish home?

One of the immediate challenges we have to make clear is that the first part of the Talmud, the Mishnah, was compiled in written form during the third century C.E. The Gemara was compiled at the beginning of the sixth century C.E. Therefore; the New Testament could predate these important Jewish works by 150 years or more.

This century-plus gap in Jewish religious history makes us question whether or not the Mishnah in particular may be read back into the Last Supper—especially, the tractate Pesahim, which is all about the Passover and from which Jewish people developed the *Haggadah*, the Jewish guidebook for Passover.

On the other hand, we also understand that the traditions written down in the Mishnah were at one time oral. The term *Mishnah* comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to repeat," and

you will learn more about this critical Jewish document in Dr. Zhava Glaser's chapter on rabbinic literature and the Passover. We are simply not used to oral traditions having weight or authority, as our modern culture is dependent upon written documents. However, this written predominance is particularly a Western idea as many cultures today in various parts of the world still grant significant authority to oral tradition, even though they might also have written documents that are important as well.

Oral tradition was tremendously important in Israel, along with written documents of course, like the Bible itself. The writing of documents actually became more important between the first and fifth centuries, which is why the Mishnah was compiled in written form in the third century C.E. Yet, we still recognize that the written Mishnah nevertheless "repeated" traditions that were earlier transmitted orally.

So we ask ourselves again, "How much of our modern Passover Seder, as detailed in Jewish tradition, did Jesus and the disciples observe?"

The clear answer to this question is, "We do not know." Additionally, we understand that this question is not only important for the Passover but for the entirety of the New Testament since it was penned within a Jewish historical context. In fact, whatever principles we determine regarding the role of Jewish tradition in first-century Jewish life—especially in the words and activities of Jesus and His disciples—will help guide us in understanding not only the Passover, but also many portions of the New Testament. There is no question that the New Testament is a very Jewish book and that in order to understand it properly, we must do our best to understand the culture and context of the time, which is both religiously and culturally Jewish.

In general, we have taken a very cautious approach and will try and understand the Jewish backgrounds of the New Testament

as best we can and not simply presume that the mishnaic tractate Pesahim or today's Passover Haggadah can simply be read into the Last Supper. Yet, we point out where we do find striking parallels between the religious customs observed by Jesus and His disciples at the Last Supper with later Jewish religious developments, and so many of our authors will suggest that these traditions could have been practiced during the Last Supper.

We cannot assume that every author writing in this volume will be in agreement as to the degree that the later Jewish traditions can be read into the Last Supper. The editors of this book believe that it will be valuable for readers to see these multifaceted opinions and then come to their own conclusions.

There is an old Jewish joke that most Jewish people are well familiar with. It's usually told as an aphorism with a twinkle of the eyes and a smile: "Where there are two Jewish people, there are three opinions." Quite frankly, I do not always like Jewish jokes as sometimes they express prejudice towards the Jewish people. But in this instance, I believe the joke expresses a profound truth that is critical to understanding the book you are about to read. Jewish religious tradition prides itself on having a variety of viewpoints on the same issue, and Jewish people view this as healthy. This reflects our approach to the challenge of understanding the level at which later Passover traditions may be read into the final Passover of Yeshua the Messiah.

We do not want you to be confused, but it is important to understand that there is a variety of opinion within Jewish tradition, as you will see throughout the chapters of this book. Where possible, we have tried to align the various positions of the authors, but you should expect to find differing viewpoints. In summary, there is not just one answer to the question, "What traditions did Jesus and the disciples observe during the Last Supper?"

Our hope is that your reading of this book will be the beginning of a lifelong journey in exploring the ways in which Jewish religious tradition helps you better understand the life and times of Jesus the Messiah.

PASSOVER AND THE EXODUS

You will notice as you read through the book that the authors often equate the Exodus with Passover. This is common and makes sense as the Exodus was the basis for the Passover. But we must remember that these are two separate events that are often intertwined in Scripture.

Some scholars use the term "the Egyptian Passover" in reference to the first Passover event that is directly tied to the Exodus event, and in particular to the slaying of the lamb in Exodus 12. The celebration of subsequent Passovers Seders, however, is a celebration of a very different event—though linked by a common origin and therefore having very similar themes. It is important as you read this book that you keep these original and subsequent events separate in your own understanding. Essentially, the Exodus refers to the redemption event, and the Passover refers to the retelling of the Exodus story! The first Passover is unique in that it prepared the way for the Exodus that occurred in history.

PASSOVER AS A SOURCE OF TYPES, SYMBOLS, AND PROPHECIES

The Exodus, the first (Egyptian) Passover, and subsequent Passovers are often used by the biblical authors to point towards a greater redemption. This is sometimes accomplished in the

Scriptures through literary types, symbols, and prophecies. However, the Bible student must take great care in the ways biblical types and symbols are understood. There is no question that the Exodus and the first Passover look forward to similar but greater events, but care must be given in the interpretation of the various composite elements of the Exodus event. We should refrain from reading prophetic fulfillment into every aspect of the festival.

It is best, first of all, to understand the Exodus and first Passover as the participants might have viewed them at the time of the event. When interpreting prophecy, we should always consider the way in which the original hearers might have understood the prophetic word—even when the prophecy refers to future events the hearers might not expect nor understand. I am sure that the Israelites who were delivered from bondage did not realize that the lambs slain for the redemption of the firstborn nor the Exodus itself would have additional meaning in reference to an understanding of salvation or of the work of the future Messiah (1 Peter 1:10–12).

Yet the Lord would fill these original events with greater meaning at a later day. But this fulfillment could obviously only be understood in retrospect. For example, we would not suggest that the Israelites slaughtering the lamb for the first Passover in any way knew that the lamb would find ultimate fulfillment in the shed blood and sacrifice of Jesus. Yet in hindsight we know this is true, which leads us to the second principle of interpretation we would suggest you to consider.

A second rule of thumb is to view Passover and the Exodus as a type seen through the lens of the New Testament writers. Because the Apostles Peter, John, and Paul refer to various elements related to the observance of Passover as a foreshadow of the Messiah, we have a solid, biblical basis for looking back

at these great events in the Old Testament and viewing them as types, symbols, and prophecies of events to come. Perhaps one of the clearest passages in the New Testament that helps us see this principle at work is in 1 Peter 1:18–19:

> . . . knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Our authors will help you discern how the Bible uses the Exodus and the Passover as types so that you will be careful not to go beyond the text, because we cannot simply interpret every detail as prophecy or we might find ourselves forcing Scripture to mean something that was never intended, just so it fits with a pattern we envision ourselves.

One might ask the question, "Did Moses have the sacrifice of Jesus in mind when he asked the children of Israel to offer a spotless, unblemished lamb and smear the blood of the lamb on the lintel and doorposts of their homes on the night when the firstborn of Egypt were judged?" This remains to be seen as we journey through this volume, but for now, you might consider the following: it seems that the writers of the New Testament understood the Passover and the sacrifice of a lamb in this Messianic way—especially John the Baptist who cried out, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Yet there is much more to be uncovered!

Some of our authors believe that the way the lamb was selected is also prophetic of the schedule Jesus kept during the last week of His life and that the choosing and testing of the lamb and the time of the lamb's sacrifice follow the dates of the Jewish calendar as well, making the calendar itself prophetic.

Many scholars also see the the seven days of Unleavened Bread fulfilled in the perfect, sinless life Jesus lived before He

was crucified. How purposeful was God in linking the Messiah to the Jewish calendar? Most believers in Jesus see these links, but how can we know that seeing the feasts fulfilled in Jesus to this degree is a correct biblical interpretation? These are just some of the questions we will try to answer throughout this book.

Some of your ideas about the Passover will be reaffirmed in reading this book, and in other areas you will be challenged! Our prayer is that you will be open to the Lord and to the Scriptures and read the chapters with an open Bible, using great discernment so that you will learn more and that your faith will grow through better understanding the redemption we enjoy through Jesus the Messiah.

THE FESTIVALS AS A ROADMAP TO REDEMPTION

It is as impossible to study the Passover in a vacuum, as it is the first festival among the seven great holy days detailed by God in Leviticus 23. It would be difficult to understand Passover without the associated festivals of Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, and the Feast of Weeks. These four festivals make up the first section of the festivals listed in Leviticus 23 and fall within the first few months of the Hebrew calendar. The final three festivals—the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles—are observed in the seventh month of the Jewish calendar, which is a lunar calendar, not a solar calendar like our own.

We have utilized a number of charts and illustrations for you to better understand Passover and you would do well to take a quick look at the chart that describes the Hebrew months (see appendix 2).

The seven great festivals of the Jewish year—and the weekly

Sabbath—look back at a great event in biblical history, are often tied to the agricultural calendar of Israel, and call for various ceremonies and sacrifices to bring attention to the theme of a given festival. They also seem to point to a greater fulfillment. Leviticus 23 itself does not inform us of this greater fulfillment, but other Scriptures in the Old and New Testaments do.

As you will see in reading through the various chapters, Passover is clearly used by the biblical authors to point to something greater. Commonly, the first four spring festivals are thought to point to the first coming of Jesus and the last three festivals in the seventh month are usually associated with His second coming. Once again, we understand this from later passages in the Old and New Testaments. You will not find this taught in the earlier chapters of the Torah—including Leviticus 23—as we understand this in retrospect through the words of Jesus and the actions of the writers of the New Testament. As you will read, Passover is the clearest and most common festival to be understood by the New Testament writers as being fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus. Yet the other festivals are alluded to in various ways as well.

ENJOY THE FESTIVAL AND THE BOOK

Will many Jewish believers in Jesus be celebrating Passover this year? Of course! As believers in Jesus, the festivals are more meaningful to us than ever before—especially Passover. We hope you and your family will find a way to celebrate the Festival as well.

Eating matzah and avoiding bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a powerful reminder of Jesus's sinless nature, purity, and innocence. We are reminded of our need to

live pure and holy lives before God as well. Then there is the Passover Seder itself, enabling us to have a new and exalted view of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. When we find the hidden piece of matzah called the *afikoman*, we can hear echoes of our Savior's voice reverberating through time as He tells His disciples at the Last Supper, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). As we drink the four cups of the fruit of the vine, we will be especially drawn to the third cup when He said to His disciples, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood" (Luke 22:20).

Passover is more important to us now as believers in Jesus than it was for many of us who grew up in traditional Jewish homes. Passover has its natural and glorious fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

This book should be viewed as a reference book filled with a variety of information about the Passover. We will cover the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, other ancient writings, church history, Jewish traditions, and then help you learn how to celebrate a Messianic Seder yourself—recipes included! Finally, we will also help you learn how to share the message of the Gospel through the Passover.

May the Lord bless you as you dig into the Jewish roots of your faith and learn more about the wonderful heritage you have been given through your faith in the Jewish Messiah.

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Passover in the Torah

Robert Walter

The earliest chapters of Genesis record God's initial dealings with humanity. He creates Adam and Eve, enjoys close fellowship with them, seeks them out after they had willfully disobeyed in the Garden of Eden, and promises to send a deliverer to redeem humankind and restore creation from chaos to peace. The thread of this promise is woven into all of the earliest events in Genesis, as if the Patriarchs are rehearsing the great deliverance that God will later bring about.

PASSOVER IN GENESIS

In Genesis, Egypt is consistently portrayed as "a place that needs to be gotten out of, by God's help, for the sake of preserving God's people."[1] And His ultimate goal is to bring them into the Promised Land. This has caused some scholars to sug-

1. Peter Enns, *Exodus*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 285.

gest that Genesis was actually written with Exodus in mind, as a prelude to show God's choosing of Israel as His people and to demonstrate that He is the supreme God, two vital elements in the Exodus account.[2] While there are no specific mentions of the Passover in Genesis, there are allusions to the Exodus. Therefore, as we embark on this study of the Passover in the Torah it's important to examine these Genesis passages to gain a greater understanding of the Passover's Exodus context.[3]

Abram

The first of these occurrences in Genesis is in the account of Abram. God makes a covenant with Abram in Genesis 12:1–3 where He calls him to get up and go. Abram is to follow God to a specific Land and is promised that he will be made into a great nation and receive a great name, and that through him all the families of the earth will be blessed. In Genesis 15, God further establishes the covenant, promising to provide him a son, and giving boundaries for the aforementioned Land. This text also provides the first hint pointing to the Exodus:

> God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. . . . Then in the fourth generation they will return here . . . ." (Gen. 15:13–16)

Perhaps to show His sovereign faithfulness to His promises, or to indicate the troubled future that Abram's descendants would endure, God chooses to reveal to Abram certain details about the Exodus. His descendants will be oppressed and enslaved, strangers in a foreign land for four hundred years. God himself will judge

2. Enns, *Exodus*, 285.

3. For a more detailed overview of the Exodus as a paradigm for salvation as found in Genesis, see Enns' comments on Exodus 13:17–14:31 in Enns, *Exodus*, 279–89.

the nation oppressing them. The descendants will leave that foreign land with many possessions and return to the Land of Promise. There is no mention of the Passover, but there is a prediction of national deliverance and return to the Land, two major themes in the Exodus from Egypt.[4]

Joseph

Perhaps the strongest foreshadowing of the Exodus in the Torah is found in the life of Joseph. In Genesis 37–50, we learn that Joseph is beloved by his father, rejected and hated by his brothers, sold into slavery for silver, wrongly accused, and convicted of crimes. Though he is blameless, he enters the depths of suffering in an Egyptian prison. It is from that lowest point that God turns Joseph's situation around, raising him from the pit and exalting him to a position that is answerable to Pharaoh alone.

Later in the account, famine strikes the region and Joseph encounters his brothers face to face, this time possessing the authority and ability to strike them down for what they had done to him. He instead shows mercy. As the brothers stand awestruck and afraid, Joseph comforts them with his understanding of God's sovereign hand at work in all that has happened. Joseph assures them,

> Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. . . . God sent

4. It should be noted that the covenant event of Genesis 15 between God and Abram, and the covenant event of Exodus 20 between God and Israel at Sinai have striking similarities. Sailhamer points out a number of these: (1) the similar wording of Genesis 15:7 and Exodus 20:2, "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of . . . ," introducing the covenant action of God that appeals to an earlier act of divine salvation; (2) fire and darkness accompanying God's presence at Sinai (Exod. 19:18; 20:18; Deut. 4:11) compared with the fire and darkness of Abram's vision (Gen. 15:12, 17); and (3) the common thread of the Exodus from Egypt that joins the two covenants (Gen. 15:14). See John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis–Leviticus*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 1:173–74.

> me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. (Gen. 45:5, 7)

In Joseph's view, God has used his trials for good. He highlights three results of his suffering: (1) the preservation of life, presumably for Egypt and others; (2) the preservation of a remnant, best explained as the Hebrew people; and (3) the coming of a great deliverance, which most likely points to the Exodus from Egypt.[5] Joseph later provides a similar reflection as he gives his brothers final instructions before his death:

> As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. . . . I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. . . . God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here. (Gen. 50:20, 24–25)

Here Joseph reiterates God's sovereignty throughout his trials, which has resulted in the preservation of life for many people, both Egyptians and descendants of Jacob. He also begins to prophesy concerning God visiting His people at a future time to bring them out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. We again see the redemptive pattern of the Exodus presented to us in Genesis as Joseph appeals to the covenant promises that God made to the Patriarchs.[6]

5. While this final point on the "great deliverance" can be seen as finding its fulfillment in the rescue from the current famine in Joseph's time, the preservation of the covenant family carries with it the purpose of future promise fulfillment, especially in the Exodus. Hamilton suggests as much in Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 576. This view also makes sense when comparing the parallel statements of Joseph in Genesis 50:20, 24–25, with the preservation of life and a remnant of 45:5 paralleling what Joseph says brought about "this present result" in 50:20; and the "great deliverance" of 45:7 paralleling God's future "visit" in 50:24–25.

6. See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:18–21; 26:3–5; 35:12.

THE GENESIS–EXODUS BRIDGE

As the story unfolds in the early chapters of Exodus, it is important to note the ongoing connections between the Genesis and Exodus narratives. There are three particular points that warrant mention, as they tie Joseph's experiences in Egypt and his dying words in Genesis 50 to the Passover and Exodus more than 400 years later. First, the word for "take care of" or "visit" in 50:24–25 is a form of the Hebrew verb, פָּקַד *paqad*. The connotation is that God's presence will be with Israel as He will visit them with the intent to aid and change their fortunes. Moving forward, this same Hebrew word is only used at key points throughout the Exodus narrative to describe God taking action to deliver. It is used in Exodus 3:16 when Moses is commissioned to go to the leaders of Israel and announce that God has remembered His people and *taken note of* their afflictions. In Exodus 4:29–31, as Moses and Aaron address the elders and proclaim that God has *taken note of* their afflictions, the people believe, bow low, and worship God. And in Exodus 13:19, as the exhumed bones of Joseph are being carried off with the redeemed nation, Moses quotes Joseph's dying words from Genesis 50:25. It appears that Moses understood that Joseph's prophetic words were coming to pass. We can surmise with a certain level of confidence that the author of Exodus uses פָּקַד, *paqad*, in these key texts to demonstrate the promise-fulfillment relationship and build a bridge between the patriarchal narratives of Genesis and the redemptive Passover event in Exodus.[7]

Next, the word for "to bring up" in Genesis 50:24–25 is the Hebrew verb עָלָה, *'alah*, which Joseph uses to indicate how God *will bring* Israel *up* from Egypt and also how the Israelites *will bring* Joseph's bones with them at their deliverance. The word is used a number of times in the Exodus narrative to refer to God's

7. See Bruce K. Waltke, with Cathi J. Fredricks, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 627; and Claus Westermann, *Genesis*, trans. David Green (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 324; and K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005), 1B:930. Also, for the rabbinic tradition that views פָּקַד, *paqad*, as a sort of password passed on from generation to generation in Egypt, see note on Genesis 50:24 in Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Chumash: The Torah, Haftaros and Five Megillos*, ArtScroll Series (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 1993), 289.

intentions to set Israel free and *bring* His people *up* to the Land, most notably in Exodus 3:8 as He speaks to Moses from the burning bush.

Lastly, the first biblical mention of the three Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—all together is found in Genesis 50:24. In combining the three, Joseph encapsulates the covenant promises that God has made to them and begins to prophesy how God will fulfill those promises by visiting and transferring Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. Joseph casts the hope of the Patriarchs onto the deliverance from Egypt as he predicts the Exodus (cf. Heb. 11:22). Just like the limited use of the word פָּקַד, *paqad*, so also the only mention of the three Patriarchs together is included at the end of Genesis, which later appears at key points in the Exodus narrative (Exod. 2:23–25; 3:6–8, 16–17; 6:1–5, 8).

Words matter and it appears that leading up to the redemption experienced through the Exodus, פָּקַד, *paqad*; עָלָה, *'alah*; and "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" are used to demonstrate the promise-fulfillment relationship between Joseph's dying words and the redemptive events of the Exodus. It's safe to say that with his dying words, Joseph stands as the covenantal bridge between the family under the leadership of the Patriarchs and the nation under the leadership of Moses. His words set the stage for how God would take redemptive action, visit His people to set them free, and transfer them from a place of bondage to a place of freedom.

Passover in Exodus

The first five chapters of Exodus trace the path toward the great deliverance that will ultimately come at the first Passover. Israel has grown in number while living in Egypt, and their situation takes a turn for the worse when a new Pharaoh arises who knows nothing of Joseph (Exod. 1:8). Great persecution and affliction ensues for Israel, and in the midst of it, Moses is born. God sovereignly chooses and prepares Moses from birth to serve as the redemptive figure through whom He will fulfill His promises.

Israel's cries are heard by God and He begins to take covenant action (2:23–25). He speaks with Moses from the burning bush, and gives him a divine mission to go to Pharaoh and the elders of Israel to proclaim Israel's liberty (3:1–22). When the elders hear Moses' report, they immediately believe and worship (4:29–31). Pharaoh, on the other hand, questions the identity, nature, and character of the God of Israel and hard-heartedly refuses to acquiesce to God's bidding (5:2). Under the duress of increased labor, even Israel begins to question Moses' intentions (5:21).

The Four Promises

As the now distressed and confused Moses seeks understanding and insight from God, God answers by pointing to what He is about to do. In Exodus 6:6–7 we read:

> Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, "I am the LORD, and *I will bring you out* from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and *I will deliver you* from their bondage. *I will also redeem you* with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then *I will take you* for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians." (emphasis added)

The four highlighted promises serve as the basis for the four cups used during the traditional Jewish celebration of the Passover Seder. Jewish sources interpret these four promises as the backbone of the entire Passover experience, each one representing a stage in the progressive unfolding of Israel's redemption.[8] The first two promises, that God will bring Israel out and deliver His people from Egyptian bondage, speak of how He will physically transfer Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land,[9] and in

8. See note on Exodus 6:6–7 in Scherman, *The Chumash*, 319.

9. See Kaiser's comments on the use of "to bring out" in Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Exodus," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Genesis–Leviticus*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 1:394.

the process change the status of His people from slave to free.

The third promise is that God will redeem Israel. The Hebrew verb גָּאַל, *ga'al*, used here can carry the sense of repurchasing something that once belonged to you. It points to a transaction between parties where the purchaser pays a price, and as a result takes ownership and possession of that which is purchased.[10] Likewise, through the Passover, God will pay a price (the Lamb) to repurchase Israel His firstborn (Exod. 4:22) from slavery, taking ownership and possession of His people and bringing them into the Land.[11]

The fourth promise is that God will take Israel to Himself. The Hebrew verb לָקַח, *laqach*, used here is found over one thousand times in the Old Testament and means "to take, or receive," but often its nuance is determined by the words with which it is used.[12] Here God takes Israel to be His people; He will be their God. This promise ultimately points to the close, special relationship that God and His people will enjoy beyond their redemption.[13] Christian and rabbinic sources view this promise being fulfilled at Sinai when God "takes" Israel, entering into a covenant contract, even a "marriage," with His people as they accept His Torah.[14]

As we keep reading, we see that there are two more promises in Exodus 6:8 that refer directly to God bringing Israel into the Promised Land and giving His people the Land as a possession:

> *I will bring you* to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and *I will give it to you* for a possession; I am the Lord. (emphasis added)

To summarize the six promises in Exodus 6:6–8, the first three (bring you out, deliver you, redeem you) relate to Israel's

10. R. Laird Harris, "גָּאַל," *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 1:300.

11. See Kaiser's comments on the use of גָּאַל, *ga'al*, in Kaiser, "Exodus," 1:394.

12. Walter C. Kaiser, "לָקַח," *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 1:1125.

13. Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, , New American Commentary (Nashville: B&H, 2006), 2:172.

14. See note on Exodus 6:6–7 in Scherman, *The Chumash*, 319.

condition in Egypt before the crossing of the Red Sea, and the fourth promise (take you to Myself), plus the fifth and sixth promises (bring you to the Land, give Land as a possession) relate to Israel's experience beyond the crossing of the Red Sea.

Faithful Obedience and the Promises

When we consider divine promises, it is important to ask a couple of questions: When God makes us a promise, what is our responsibility? What are we to do with that promise? Pause to think about that for a moment. The simple answer is to believe. We are to believe and have faith that God will indeed come through on the promise that He has made. In light of the fact that the redemptive act at Passover is based on God's promises to the Patriarchs, to Moses, and to all Israel, we conclude that faith has always been a key element in redemption. From the moment the promises are mentioned in Exodus 6 through the crossing of the Red Sea in Exodus 14, the faithful obedience of Israel is on display as God faithfully fulfills His promises (see Heb. 11:28–29).

The Passover

The tenth and final plague begins the climb to the Torah's redemptive crescendo. In Exodus 11 God pronounces judgment upon Egypt, namely through the slaying of all firstborns in the land. God then gives the specifics of the final plague to Moses in three sections in chapters 12 and 13. He describes how Israel is to observe the first Passover in Egypt (12:1–13), how His people are to observe it throughout their future generations (12:14–20; 13:1–16), and who is to observe it (12:42–49). Moses then relays God's instructions to Israel (12:21–27), and we see the event unfold as God has described (12:28–41).

The Israelites are to choose a one-year-old, unblemished male lamb, bring it into their homes to examine it from the

tenth day to the fourteenth day of the first month. When twilight on the fourteenth comes, each household will sacrifice their lamb, take its blood in a basin, dip hyssop into the blood, and apply the blood to the lintel and two doorposts of their home, remaining inside the home for the remainder of the night. They will roast the entire lamb and eat it in haste, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, burning whatever remains the following morning.

This is Israel's moment of truth. All of the promises of deliverance for God's people are narrowing down to this moment. The blood of the Passover lamb is the hinge upon which their fulfillment turns. They have received the instructions; now the people have to exercise their faith that God will come through. By faith they have to examine and slay the lamb. By faith they have to take its blood and put it on their doors. By faith they have to wait upon the Lord. The blood stands as a testimony to their faith in God's redemptive promise and power.

That night the destroyer slays the firstborn of every human and beast in Egypt. When it comes to the homes marked by the blood of the lamb, God promises to "pass over" (פָּסַח, *pasach*) those homes. This verbal form of the noun פֶּסַח, *pesach*, where we get the name "Passover," appears only four times with this sense in the Tanakh (Exod. 12:13, 23, 27; Isa. 31:5). Elsewhere, it can be translated as "to have compassion," "to protect," "to skip over," or "to hedge, straddle." Some scholars suggest a more protective nuance in these passages and see God as protecting the entrances of the homes, not allowing the destroyer to enter.[15] A passage like Exodus 12:23 makes more sense then, as it reads:

> For when the Lord goes through to smite the Egyptians, He will see the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, and the Lord will *protect* the door and not let the Destroyer enter and smite your home.[16] (emphasis added)

This view ultimately puts God in a more active position as

15. Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 156; Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 3A:285.
16. Translation quoted from Levine, *Leviticus*, 285.

defender. Rather than skipping over and passing homes by, He is instead standing between the plague and the faithful, between the judgment and the redeemed, with the shed blood serving as the basis for His sparing the firstborn males of that home. This is why we believe that the blood of the lamb is a prophetic portrait or type of the "Lamb of God" to come.

The next morning Pharaoh arises and expels Moses and Israel from Egypt. The first three Exodus 6 promises have been fulfilled. Israel's redemptive price is paid with the blood of the lamb. She is released from bondage, and promptly departs that land, with Joseph's bones in tow, plundering the Egyptians of silver and gold as she leaves.

As Israel departs Egypt, Pharaoh's heart is hardened and he pursues Israel with the intent to enslave the people once again. God leads Israel to the Red Sea, protecting and guiding His people with the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. The Egyptian army draws closer to the seemingly vulnerable Israelites, when God steps in and executes one final act of judgment and deliverance. As Pharaoh and the Egyptian army are held at bay by the pillar of fire, God miraculously parts the Red Sea, allowing Israel to cross over on dry ground. Pharaoh gives chase through the sea, the waters envelop the army of Egyptians, and the people of Israel watch their former oppressors finally defeated as their corpses are washed upon the shore.[17] Israel rejoices greatly as the people enjoy their first taste of freedom and nationhood.

PASSOVER IN THE TORAH BEYOND THE EXODUS

The Passover and Exodus have become a reference point in the nation's history and identity throughout the rest of the Torah. Often when specific commandments are given in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, God is referred to with a qualifying reference to how He has brought Israel

17. While Exodus 14:28 does not explicitly mention whether or not Pharaoh himself was in the sea, Psalm 136:15a suggests that he may have been. It states, "But he overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea."

out of Egypt.[18] These books also chronicle the development of the annual memorial celebration of the Passover. Specific guidelines for when, where, and how to observe the Passover are laid out and warrant further attention as they impact much of what we read in the rest of Scripture.

Passover in Leviticus

Leviticus 23 lays out the annual cycle of God's appointed times that the people of Israel are to observe throughout their generations. The list of these appointed times includes the weekly Sabbath, followed by four specific celebrations in the spring and three in the fall. Passover is the first of these annual feasts mentioned. Leviticus 23:4–8 reads:

> These are the appointed times of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.

With the central elements of the lamb and unleavened bread both commemorating the Passover event in Egypt, there is some uncertainty as to whether or not the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread refer to two separate appointed times or if they refer to the same appointed time. They seem to be held as distinct in Leviticus 23:4–8. However, many scholars view them as distinct celebrations that are joined together and used

18. See Exodus 16:6; 18:1; 20:2; 29:46; 32:11; Leviticus 11:45; 19:36; 22:33; 25:38; 26:13; Numbers 15:41; 20:16; 21:5; 23:22; 24:8; Deuteronomy 4:20; 5:6, 15; 6:12; 7:18–19; 8:14; 9:26; 13:5, 10; 16:1; 20:1; 26:8; and 29:25.

interchangeably very early on.[19] One Jewish view sees more of a grammatical distinction and suggests that the term "Passover" refers to the specific offering and the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" to the appointed time itself.[20] The Passover sacrifice will be offered at twilight on the fourteenth, which in Jewish tradition is somewhere between 3:00 and 3:30 P.M. (m. Pesaḥ. 5:1), and then prepared and eaten during the festive meal that follows as the evening of the fifteenth is ushered in. The earliest portions of Scripture show more of a distinction between the two, while they are clearly merged in Deuteronomy and consistently referred in this way afterwards.[21]

This helps us better understand the place of Passover in the shaping of Israel's national worship, as the first and seventh days will be Sabbaths marked by holy gatherings, with Israel making daily burnt offerings during that time. Also, each of these appointed times has both a material and spiritual significance. The feasts are tied to the various agricultural harvest times when Israel will offer the best fruits, produce, and livestock and thank God for providing for them.

The celebration during these eight days highlights some of the great themes of Scripture, including sanctification, repen-

19. Rooker, *Leviticus*, 285. On the separateness of the two festivals, see J. Licht, s.v. "*pesaḥ*," in *ʾEntsiklopediah Mikraʾit* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1950–88), 6:523–24; A. Rofé, *Mavoʾ le-sefer Devarim* (Jerusalem: Akademon, 1988), 38–40; Nahum M. Sarna, *Exodus*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), at 12:14–20 (p. 57). For examples of how the two were used interchangeably by the time of the New Testament, see Luke 22:1, 7, and Mark 14:12.

20. For comments on the traditional Jewish view, see Levine, *Leviticus*, 156. The ArtScroll translation of Leviticus 23:5–6 (Scherman, *The Chumash*) is also informative of this view. It reads, "In the first month on the fourteenth of the month in the afternoon is the time of the pesach-offering to Hashem. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the Festival of Matzos to Hashem; you shall eat matzos for a seven-day period."

21. For specific mentions of Passover and Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament, see Exodus 12:1–13, 14–20, 21–28, 40–51; 13:3–10; Leviticus 23:5–8; Numbers 28:16–23; Deuteronomy 16:1–7; Ezekiel 45:21; Ezra 6:20–22; 2 Chronicles 30:2–15; and 35:17. A case could be made that the command in Exodus 12:14 for Israel to celebrate the Passover as a "feast" (חַג, *chag*) shows the intent to combine them from the inception, due to the limited use of this term when paired with specific appointed times. Normally, in the Passover context only Unleavened Bread is designated as a feast. They become more clearly fused beginning in the Leviticus 23 portion. See Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 371.

tance, atonement, and God's presence with His people. Through these appointed times the nation will gather together to honor God for His bountiful spiritual and material provision, making the connection between Israel's relationship with God and the bounty produced by the Promised Land.

These appointed times contain prophetic significance as well, and we find major events take place on or around them in the New Testament. Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection all take place in relation to the Passover, Unleavened Bread, and the Feast of First Fruits. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurs during the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost). In the context of Leviticus 23, Passover is the first of the annual appointed times. It reminds the children of Israel of their deliverance from Egypt and points forward to ultimate deliverance from sin through Yeshua, "our Passover" (1 Cor. 5:7).

Passover in Numbers

Interestingly, Numbers 9:1–14 records the Torah's only mention of Israel's observance of the Passover beyond Egypt. This section also mentions an added measure of grace for those who are ritually unclean and unable to observe the Passover at the prescribed time. Instead of observing it on the fourteenth of the first month, they will celebrate it on the fourteenth of the second month. This tradition became known as *Pesach Sheni* (Second Passover), and we see it observed in the Bible only during the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. 30:1–27). It's also important to note that this exception only applies to the Passover sacrifice on the fourteenth and not to the observance of the weeklong Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is probably the strongest biblical evidence that shows the two as distinct.[22] They are otherwise viewed as one and the same.

Later in Numbers 28–29, specific details are provided for how Israel is to offer particular sacrifices at the various prescribed times. These include the regular daily, the weekly Sabbath, the monthly New Moon, and the different annual festival sacrifices.

22. Milgrom, *Numbers*, 371.

The daily burnt offerings to be offered during the seven days of Passover, as mentioned in Leviticus 23:8, are expanded upon in Numbers 28:16–25. Each day two bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs will be offered as whole burnt offerings (עֹלָה, *'olah*), along with their accompanying grain offerings. Unlike the Passover lamb offered on the fourteenth, these burnt offerings are not to be eaten by the priests or the people.

The people will also offer one goat as a sin offering (חַטָּאת, *chatta't*) to make atonement (Num. 28:22), which is eaten by the priests only. This atoning sin offering is most likely meant to assure the ritual purity of the people as they worship, and is distinct from the Passover lamb offered on the fourteenth.[23] According to Numbers 29:39, these special festival sacrifices are in addition to the daily votive, freewill, burnt, grain, drink, and peace offerings. These festival sacrifices serve as the basis for the Rabbinic tradition developed later regarding the *hagigah* sacrifice, referring to the one Lamb offered for the entire nation.[24]

Passover in Deuteronomy

In Deuteronomy 16:1–17, we find three components of Passover addressed: (1) the sacrifices offered during Passover and Unleavened Bread; (2) the specific location where the nation will offer these sacrifices; and (3) that Passover will be one of the three pilgrim feasts, along with *Shavuot* (Weeks) and *Sukkot* (Tabernacles). Each of these demonstrates how the Passover became more of a national celebration as Israel entered the Land.

The sacrifices mentioned in 16:1–4 use wording that is unique compared to the previous passages under discussion. Here the Passover offering is to be taken "from the flock and the herd" (v. 2), which will include sheep, goats, and oxen. The Passover offering is also the object referred to in verse 3, where

23. Milgrom, *Numbers*, 242.

24. See chapter 10, "Passover in Rabbinic Writings," by Zhava Glaser; see also Joseph Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah: Historical Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2008), 9–10.

the text states that "seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread." This implies that the Passover would be eaten for seven days. If the Passover offering is to be a sheep or goat (Exod. 12:5), and offered only on the fourteenth and completely consumed before the next morning (Exod. 12:10; Deut. 16:4), then how do we reconcile what's stated here in Deuteronomy? There is no clear answer other than suggesting that the word "Passover" is being used as a general umbrella term under which all of the special festival and daily sacrifices fall, including the burnt offerings and peace offerings mentioned in Numbers 28–29.[25]

This portion also mandates that Israel celebrate and offer the Passover at a specific location. Here it is designated as the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name. This phrase is used a number of times in Deuteronomy (12:5; 14:23; 16:2, 6, 11; 26:2), looking ahead to Israel's conquest and settlement of the Land when worship will be centralized in one location. Clearly Jerusalem is in view, as 2 Chronicles 12:13 states later, since the Tabernacle and Temple will be located there. In that place God's presence will be manifest as he draws near to the people and they draw near to Him.

Finally, in Deuteronomy 16:16–17 we see that Passover is one of the three pilgrim feasts, along with Shavuot and Sukkot, when all the males are to go up to Jerusalem to bring their offerings, not coming "empty-handed":

> Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

There are a number of similarities between the Deuteronomy 16 passage and Exodus 23:14–19 and 34:18–25. Looking at all three sections together we learn that Israel is to eat unleavened bread for seven days to remember the Exodus from Egypt

25. This explanation may also help in interpreting John 18:28. See chapter 5, "Passover in the Gospel of John," by Mitch Glaser.

(Exod. 23:15; 34:18; Deut. 16:3), offer the blood of the sacrifice without unleavened bread and leave none of its fat overnight (Exod. 23:18; 34:25; Deut. 16:4), and rest on the seventh day (Exod. 34:21; Deut. 16:8). Only Exodus 34:19–20 contains the additional command to redeem the firstborn of every womb, memorializing the tenth plague.

Perhaps the most important point here is that Passover/Unleavened Bread, Shavuot, and Sukkot are each designated with the word usually translated "feast" (חַג, *chag*), but more is literally "pilgrimage." This designation, which is also used for only these three appointed times in Leviticus 23, implies an actual journey that a worshipper takes to a specific cultic site.[26] With the command in each section not to come empty-handed, and cast in the context of Deuteronomy, these three pilgrim feasts portray God as Israel's sovereign King, and the pilgrim Israelite males as His humble servants visiting His residence to pay homage.[27] That Passover is included as one of these pilgrimages at such an early stage in Israel's covenant history again emphasizes how the focus of Passover observance shifted from individual homes to a national celebration in Jerusalem as time went on.

PASSOVER AND REDEMPTION IN THE TORAH

This "great deliverance" of Israel from Egypt is a blueprint for how God redeems His people throughout Scripture. In this section we will briefly look at how the pattern found in the Torah is fulfilled for individual believers in Yeshua today, and even points to the final redemption of the nation of Israel in the future.

Personal Redemption through Yeshua

God has used the shed blood of the spotless lamb to purchase and regain ownership of the enslaved Israelites, as their

26. Levine, *Leviticus*, 156.

27. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 159.

true owner. It is precisely this pattern that is followed in the New Testament. Yeshua, God's only begotten Son, bursts onto the scene to pay the necessary redemptive price with His own blood, and to proclaim liberty and set free those enslaved to sin—transferring them from the kingdom of darkness into His kingdom. The sacrificial death of Yeshua is brimming with Passover connections. John declares that Yeshua is the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua all took place during the Passover / Unleavened Bread week.[28] And Paul boldly declares, "For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed." (1 Cor. 5:7 ESV).

The entire New Testament portrayal of Yeshua's sacrifice also seems to follow the pattern of the four promises from Exodus 6:6–7 outlined above. Through Yeshua, God sets His people free from slavery to sin, brings His people out from under the burdens of sin, and pays the redemptive price for sin. Even the later promise from Exodus 6:8 of God taking His people to Himself and bringing them into the Promised Land serve as a template for the experience of the New Covenant believer as we are His possession as well, being guided toward our promised inheritance (Eph. 1:14).[29]

Israel's National Redemption through Yeshua

There is a method of Bible interpretation known as *typology,* or pattern fulfillment. It suggests that Old Testament ideas, events, objects, or people serve as a pattern for a greater fulfillment that comes later in God's redemptive history.

It appears that Israel's national redemption at Passover may serve as a type for both the redemption experienced by believers and also for Israel's future national redemption through Yesh-

28. For further details on Yeshua's death during the Feasts of Passover / Unleavened Bread, see chapter 4, "Passover in the Gospel of Luke," by Darrell L. Bock, and chapter 5, "Passover in the Gospel of John," by Mitch Glaser.

29. I suggest that going through the waters of baptism relate to, and, in a way, reenact the crossing of the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:2); and the parallels between the giving of the Torah at Sinai and the giving of the Spirit in Acts 2 are too many to mention here, but they reinforce the similarities shared by those redeemed by the lamb in Egypt and those redeemed by Yeshua.

ua. Crucial to this suggestion is viewing the Joseph narrative in Genesis and Passover narrative in Exodus as bound together in one continuous narrative that holistically points to the larger redemption achieved through the Messiah. We can trace the events from Joseph through the Passover and compare them to the Messianic ministry of Yeshua to help flesh out this idea.

Both Jewish and Christian sources view Joseph as a type of the Messiah. While the New Testament does not explicitly refer to Joseph as a type, many Christian sources point out the numerous parallels between Joseph and Yeshua, highlighted by God's use of the suffering of each to achieve His purposes.[30] In Jewish thought, the concept of the *Mashiach ben Yosef* (Messiah son of Joseph) took shape during the Talmudic era, between 200 and 500 C.E. In rabbinic theology, this Messianic figure is believed to suffer and die in the eschatological battle between the people of Israel and their enemies, only to be resurrected by the kingly messiah figure, *Mashiach ben David* (Messiah son of David), at the inauguration of the Messianic age (b. Sukkah 52a). In both views, Joseph serves as a suffering-servant-type figure.

With this in mind, we can highlight some key points in the Joseph and Exodus narratives. First, Joseph is rejected by his brothers because of his prophetic dreams that foretell his exaltation and their submission to him. As a result, he suffers greatly but rises to prominence due to God's sovereign hand working to preserve life, to preserve a remnant, and to bring about a great deliverance (Gen. 45:5, 7; 50:20, 24–25). The rejection of Joseph ultimately results in God's covenant people leaving the Promised Land and residing in a foreign land for more than 400 years. As mentioned above, with his dying words Joseph utters a statement of prophetic hope and promise for Israel. The chosen people will not remain in Egypt, but instead God will reverse their exile. Through the Passover, Israel experiences a national redemption and deliverance. Israel is freed from slavery and brought back to the Promised Land.

There are striking similarities between this outline and the outworking of the New Covenant through Messiah's two com-

30. For example, see comments in K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, outline section XII, "Jacob's Family: Joseph and His Brothers (37:2–50:26)."

ings. Like Joseph, Yeshua is beloved by the Father. Just as Joseph is rejected by his brothers because of his exalted role,[31] Yeshua goes to His own and His own do not receive Him, instead rejecting His claim to be Messiah (John 1:11; Mark 14:62). In John 15:25, Yeshua describes this rejection as "baseless hatred," claiming that it fulfills what is written in Psalm 69:4 (verse 5 in the Hebrew Bible).

Just as he has done with Joseph, God has sovereignly used the suffering of Yeshua to bring blessings and life (Acts 4:17). And just as Israel's leaving the Promised Land is somehow related to Joseph's rejection by his brothers and the redemptive role he eventually plays in Egypt, so the nation of Israel has experienced exile from the Promised Land as a result of their leadership's rejection of the Messiah Yeshua.[32] Within a generation of Yeshua's rejection by Israel's leadership, the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., and the Jewish people were dispersed as the Romans leveled Jerusalem in 135 C.E. Interestingly, one of the primary reasons given by Rabbinic sources to explain this expulsion of the Jewish people from Israel is the "baseless hatred" each man had for his neighbor (see b. Yoma 9b). There is truth in that statement, as evidenced by the many factions of Jewish people during the Second Temple period. Further the Jewish leaders were guilty of a far greater *baseless hatred* of the one who claimed to be the promised Messiah.

Thankfully, for the past two thousand years God has not left Israel without hope. Just as Joseph transmitted words of hope about a visit from God and a great deliverance for His people, so too there are a number of words of hope for the nation of Israel in the New Testament beyond their rejection of Messiah. In Matthew 23:37–39 (cf. Luke. 13:34–35), Yeshua asserts that Jerusalem will see Him again when she greets Him with blessings. In Acts 3:19–21, Peter looks forward to the return of Yeshua and the full restoration of all things as God told through the holy prophets of old, a reality that includes the fulfillment of all of Israel's national promises. And in Romans 11:25–27, Paul

31. Sailhamer notes that Joseph's brothers rejected him specifically because they despised his dreams, which cast them as bowing down to Joseph. See Sailhamer, "Genesis," 274.

32. Michael L. Brown, *The Real Kosher Jesus* (Lake Mary, FL: FrontLine, 2012), 55.

clearly speaks of the future redemption that the nation of Israel will experience at the return of Yeshua.

Joseph's words of hope find fulfillment through the blood of the lamb at Passover as Israel is set free from Egypt and brought back to the Promised Land. The New Testament's words of hope will find fulfillment through the blood of Yeshua our Passover Lamb when the nation of Israel returns to the Land and is redeemed by His blood (Deut. 30:1–10; Ezek. 37:1–14; Rom. 11:25–27). This includes the redemption already provided through Yeshua in the first coming, characterized by many nations experiencing the blessings of the New Covenant, and it will find its completion when God visits once again to release the nation of Israel from bondage to sin at the second coming of Messiah. God will once again use what was meant for evil to bring about a great deliverance for Israel.

CONCLUSION

The Passover is the fundamental act that defines the very meaning of redemption in the Torah. It is the story of how God sets His people free from slavery and bondage, how He reacquires that which is His, and how He brings His people to Himself to enjoy a close covenant relationship. As members of the New Covenant, we have much to consider when we read, study, and celebrate the Passover. Not only are we looking back to this event as a remembrance of what God did for Israel in the past, and what God has done for us through Yeshua, but we are also rehearsing what God will do at the Messiah's return. We are looking ahead to that glorious moment when the nation of Israel, that for so long has rejected the Messiah, will experience its ultimate release from sin, slavery, and death.

The Passover as described in the Torah has become the pattern whereby all of Israel will understand the meaning of redemption. The national redemption of the Jewish people from Egyptian bondage looks forward to a greater redemption that has come through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, who takes

away the sin of the world. Therefore, the entirety of the Exodus may be viewed as a type of what was to come and has now come to be. The Exodus and the Passover are the redemptive reference point for the Jewish people throughout the ages and are even viewed in this way by the Messiah Himself in the Gospels.

Our journey continues as we now turn to the historical books of the Old Testament, the *Ketuvim*, or the Writings, and we shall look at the way the Passover is observed in this great section of Scripture.

Joseph	Yeshua
Beloved by his father (Gen. 37:3–4)	Beloved by the Father (Matt. 3:17)
Rejected by his brothers (Gen. 37:18–35)	Rejected by His own (Luke 19:14; John 1:11; 15:24–25)
Suffering yields preservation of life for nations (Egyptians, Israelites, etc.) (Gen. 45:5, 7; 50:20, 24–25)	Suffering yields life for nations (John 3:16; Rom. 11:11–12, 15)
Suffering yields preservation of remnant of Hebrew people (Gen. 45:5, 7; 50:20, 24–25), albeit exiled from Promised Land	Suffering yields preservation of remnant of Jewish believers (Rom. 11:5), albeit exiled from Promised Land
Suffering sets the stage for great deliverance for nation of Israel, and visit from God (Gen. 45:5, 7; 50:20, 24–25)	Suffering sets the stage for future great deliverance for nation of Israel, through return visit from God (Matt. 23:37–39; Acts 3:19–21; Rom. 11:25–27)
Israel's national redemption through the Passover (Exod. 12–13)	Israel's national redemption through Yeshua "our Passover" (Rom. 11:25–27)

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Passover in the Gospel of Luke

Darrell L. Bock

The events of the Last Supper are critical as it is the basis for what is commonly known as the Lord's Supper or Communion. The Apostle Paul considers this meal to be important as he makes direct reference to the words spoken by Jesus at the table, which most Christians today hear regularly. (1 Cor. 11:23–25).

However, the issues related to this meal are numerous and complex, leading to a host of debates and discussions, each of which could fill this chapter.[1] However, our concerns are narrow.

We will attempt to answer the question, "What does the first-century Jewish background of the Passover holiday contribute to our understanding of what Jesus did with His disciples at this evidently special meal?" Specifically, we will need to establish if a Passover or Passover-like meal took place, what can be known about the way in which it was celebrated, and how Jesus transformed this celebration by His words and actions.

1 Perhaps the most complete recent discussion is by I. Howard Marshall, "The Last Supper," in *Key Events in the Life of the Historical Jesus: A Collaborative Exploration of Context and Coherence*, ed. Darrell L. Bock and Robert L. Webb, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 247 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 481–588. What is amazing about this one-hundred-page article is how many issues are compressed into this discussion.

Luke explicitly associates the Last Supper with the Passover meal and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Luke 22:1, 7, 15). He does this because the two feasts come back to back and were often combined or discussed together with either name used for the whole (Ezek. 45:21; Matt. 26:17–18; Mark 14:1, esp. 14:2). Flavius Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, writes "the feast of unleavened bread, which we call the Passover" (*Antiquities of the Jews* 14.21).[2] The Passover connection is also seen in Mark's use of the terms in Mark 14:1, 12, where he similarly refers to both celebrations. This is an important observation to make as we prepare to discuss the topic.

As is common within the Jewish community today, one could use "Passover" or "Unleavened Bread" in reference to any part of the eight days of this period (Lev. 23:5–6). Yet, the Synoptic Gospels' timing for Passover seems to differ from John's, who links the day of Jesus's crucifixion with Passover, a connection that could make the Passover mentioned by John's Gospel lag a day behind the Synoptic Gospels (John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14). This seeming difference in timing has been vigorously discussed in New Testament studies throughout the years and is our first topic of concern in this chapter.

Our second concern is to decide if the meal described in Luke chapter 22 is actually a traditional Passover Seder. The celebration of the Passover goes back centuries as other chapters in this book show. But the more controversial question is whether specifically a Passover Seder was celebrated or merely a liturgically structured meal with multiple cups. And if it was a Seder, where can we find more conclusive information regarding the meal, elements, symbolism, and traditions observed that evening at that particular first-century time? We will examine whether or not Jesus observed a defined Seder, the nature of its internal elements and symbols, such as the cups mentioned in the account, and if what Luke describes is generally consistent with the elements of the Passover meal. So we are asking two questions: (1) Was this a Passover meal? (2) If it was a Seder, do we know enough about the Seder at that time to suggest what took place when?

2 Similarly, see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 2.317; 17.213; and 20.106; see also *Jewish War* 5.99, where Josephus says Unleavened Bread starts on Nisan 14, which is Passover.

The Seder question introduces the question of indiscriminately viewing the Passover in Jesus's time through the lens of Jewish tradition developed centuries later. We are referring specifically to the mishnaic tractate Pesahim (10), developed around 200 C.E. as the earliest rabbinic source of information about the traditions of the Seder. Certainly we must be careful not to read the modern Seder, found in the traditional Haggadah, into the events of Luke chapter 22. However, there might very well be some traditions that parallel and have persisted through time. Being conclusive will be difficult as we have very limited historical resources about the Passover Seder from the first century.

Whatever we think about these two issues—(1) the Synoptic-John chronological issue around the exact timing of Passover and (2) about the question of a specific Passover and its accompanying Seder—the association of this meal with this time period in general is full of significance. Interestingly, even those who think the meal was not a Seder or some type of Passover meal recognize the shadow cast by the Passover season over the Last Supper. The Passover's proximity to the meal colors what is said and done in chapter 22 of Luke, no matter how some of the details might be understood. Part of the beauty of this issue is that, as complex as some of the details are that we shall cover, the larger outline is still fairly clear. This is because Passover was a prescribed feast leading into a week's celebration whose symbolism was well established by the time Jesus sat down with His disciples for this event (Exod. 12:1–49).

Regardless of how this meal aligns with the mishnaic Seder or today's Passover celebrations, Jesus clearly connects it to the Passover and gives the symbolism of the evening a greater meaning. So what Jesus does with the Passover imagery will be our third stopping point and will conclude our look at the Passover in Luke 22.

THE TIMING AND NATURE OF THE MEAL: ON OR BEFORE PASSOVER?

How do we explain the seeming discrepancies in chronology between the Synoptics and John's Gospel? The Apostle John appears to speak of the Last Supper as happening a day before the Passover lambs were slaughtered (John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14), while Mark 14:1 and 12 place the meal on the Passover. In fact, John 19:14 speaks of Jesus's trial with Pilate being on the day of preparation for the Passover, while 18:28 speaks of the Jewish leaders not entering Pilate's Praetorium for fear of becoming defiled and thus unable to eat the Passover. If John's dating is correct, Jesus's meal might not even have been a Passover meal, as the Last Supper would have been held a day before the Passover, *if* John 18:28 is referring to the Passover sacrifice and meal. It is dealing with the *if* that drives the options people suggest.

Three major options are suggested to bring the references in line. Option 1 argues that one writer is referring to the season as a whole either in terms of general timing (usually John) or in some symbolic way (either the Synoptics or John). Option 2 is an appeal to distinct calendars with Jesus on His own Passover schedule in the Synoptics distinct from the official calendar that John appeals to.[3] Option 3 makes an appeal to a Passover-like meal or a Passover meal taken early.[4]

At the center of the discussion are several contested elements. Is there evidence of a Passover meal in the descriptions? Is there a case for the use of multiple calendars? How do we explain the remarks made in John, especially 18:28, that in light of the Passover, the Jewish leaders did not want to contract uncleanness during Jesus's examination by Pilate? We will consider these elements next.

3 For example, the study by Annie Jaubert, *La date de la Cène: Calendrier biblique et liturgie chrétienne* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1957); English translation: Annie Jaubert, *The Date of the Last Supper*, trans. Isaac Rafferty [Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965]), argues that Jesus followed the distinct calendar of the Dead Sea Qumran community. However, no evidence really exists for Jesus following this separatist sect on matters in general, much less on matters tied to the calendar.

4 For details on an array of options, see Marshall, "The Last Supper," 552–60.

Two of John's references are to the Passover in general in 13:1 and 19:14. The reference in 13:1 is generic, simply noting that before the time of the Passover feast Jesus knew His time to depart this world had come. This reference does not help us with our question. On the other end of the passage sequence stands John 19:14, which says, "It was the day of the preparation for the Passover" as Pilate presents Jesus to the crowd after examining Him. This is after the Last Supper in the Synoptics and the Upper Room discourse in John. One of the issues here is that John does not present a discussion of the meal and its liturgy at all. This does not mean that John does not hold to a Last Supper meal because by the time he wrote, this practice had been formalized into the Lord's Table (1 Cor. 11:23–26, plus the traditions that fed into the Synoptic portrayals). John simply chose not to present it, probably because it was an already well-known event in the Church.

The phrase in John 19:14 could mean one of two things: the day of preparation for the Passover meal itself, placing it in tension with the Synoptic timing, or it is shorthand for the day of Sabbath preparation during Passover week, as the Sabbath begins with sundown on Friday night leading into Saturday. The additional reference to the Passover points to a sacrifice during the time of Passover and could refer to other sacrifices tied to that feast, either daily sacrifices (Deut. 16:2–8)[5] or the *hagigah* (Num. 28:18–19). The Synoptics show this latter meaning of preparation day for the Sabbath in other texts (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54).[6] Part of what is complicating the discussion of this event is that the Sabbath of a feast week is a High Sabbath, a kind of twofer holiday, doubly sacred because it is a Sabbath tied to a feast.

This last reference is the most crucial for our discussion. I cite the controversial part of John 18:28, "They did not go into the governor's residence so they would not be ceremonially de-

5 Mishnah, Pesahim 5.1 alludes to the timing of the sacrifice on Passover day, but points to the fact that other sacrifices were taking place throughout this period. This passage alludes to the sacrifices tied to the daily times of prayer.

6 Leon Morris, who will argue in contrast to the view taken in this chapter for John's Passover chronology, also accepts that the reference here in John 19:14 is to the Friday before the Sabbath ("the Friday of Passover week") versus a Passover reference; *The Gospel according to John*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 800.

filed, but could eat the Passover meal" (NET). The avoidance behavior in this verse takes place as the examination of Jesus by Pilate begins. The leaders do not want to contract uncleanness by going into a Gentile's residence. Most take this location to be the tower of Antonia, the fortress where Pilate stayed when he was in Jerusalem that also housed the troops protecting the city. This location overlooked the Temple complex from the northwest corner of the Temple mount in such a way that the troops could see Temple activity without defiling the Temple space proper. Only closed spaces like these were thought to create an environment where one could contract uncleanness, as colonnades were in the open air and viewed as not having the same level of risk (m. Ohalot 18:7–10). Uncleanness in such a case lasts for a week, because of the belief that Gentiles did not take proper care of the dead (Num. 19:14). Issues tied to uncleanness were important because contamination would preclude these priests from observing any part of the feast.[7] Other forms of uncleanness lasting for a day could be related to the presence of yeast (m. Pesahim 1.1; 2.1) or to contaminated road dust from foreigners (m. Berakhot 9.5). They wanted to avoid these possibilities in any form and so they remained outside. Pilate kindly came out to address them.

For our purposes it is the seeming reference to eating the Passover meal in John 18:28 that contains the difficulty. If this is the Passover meal, then John and the Synoptics are not in sync, since Luke 22:15 presents Jesus as eating the Passover with the disciples (also Mark 14:12). New Testament and Johannine scholar Dr. Leon Morris defends John's chronology, and his explanation is worth noting. He first cites an observation: "That the expression could apply to the Passover plus the feast of unleavened bread is, in my opinion, clear."[8] He then goes on to say, "That it could be used of the feast of unleavened bread without the Passover, which is what is required if John 18:28 is to be squared with the theory, is not."[9] So, for Morris, John must be referring to the Passover meal. Passover has to be in the

7 Morris, *John*, 763.
8 Morris, *John*, 689.
9 Morris, *John*, 689.

reference for him. If Morris is correct, then what do we do with the references in Mark and Luke? Morris opts for Jesus's use of a different, more sectarian calendar to solve the seeming contradiction. Above, it was suggested that the evidence for the use of a different calendar is not strong.

But what are we to do if the reference is to the High Sabbath Passover *season* sacrifices? Morris never mentions this possibility, yet the chronology permits it with an expression already shown to be ambiguous. Passover is not excluded here, and can be referred to because the holiday colors the whole week. The sentence is not merely specific to the Passover sacrifice at the beginning of the feast, but refers to any of the events tied to the opening of the celebration. Morris is seeing a technical term that involves a reference to a specific meal that in fact may have been used more broadly in terms of other events tied to the week.

However, the reference to the Passover can be used of a period of time, covering the entire week, with more than one meal eaten during that entire season, any part of which could be called Passover. The term in such contexts is being used in a popular, less technical way, a kind of shorthand to point to what kicked off this special time and an event that worked as kind of a shadow over the whole week.

All of these options would require cleanliness during this time, especially as people approached a Sabbath.[10] The internal chronology within John itself also may suggest this broader use of the phrase and a timing like that of the Synoptics. If, while noting the array of events, we simply count back from Nisan 14 to the six days "before the Passover" that John 12:1 mentions, then Nisan 14 *is* the day of Passover (Thursday night/Friday day) *within* John's Gospel just as the Synoptics present it.[11]

10 John 19:31 might seem to raise questions about our claim about ambiguity, as it refers clearly to the day of preparation and does not call it Passover. But we are still in the Passover day at this point of the story, and now the issue is getting the body off the cross before the Sabbath actually comes. The aside in the verse that this Sabbath was a "great one" is the allusion to the Passover High Sabbath. It was the Passover season that made this Sabbath an even more special day than a normal Sabbath. Passover is still indirectly in view even in 19:31. John may be only using a shortened form here.

11 One has to work back one event at a time to the events of John 12 using both the Synoptics and John's hints about dating and timing of events to get here, but it does work. The details on this argument are found in the companion chapter in this

What makes the chronology work in this way in John is that we also are dealing with a late-day meal in John 12,[12] which by the counting and description looks to be an evening meal held on Friday night, Nisan 8, rather than a late afternoon meal.

So we are contending that the Synoptics and John are in agreement and the confusion comes from failing to see (1) that the reference to Passover is to the entire eight days referred to as the Feast of Passover / Unleavened Bread and (2) that reference to eating Passover meals could refer to the Passover meal at the start of this period, but also to the sacrifices that are offered on the next sacred day–especially the Festival (hagigah) sacrifices.

If this is correct, then all the other discussions about different calendars or other kinds of meals kept in the shadows of the Passover are no longer necessary. This means we can now consider the issue of the Seder used in relationship to the meal.

volume, chapter 5, "Passover in the Gospel of John," by Mitch Glaser. Complexity exists, and being dogmatic is not permitted. Even Morris says that the alternative I am contending for and that he rejects "cannot be ruled out as impossible" (*John*, 779). Morris in adopting the chronology of John that argues for Jesus observing the Passover on a different calendar, something that Qumran shows is possible (Morris, *John*, 779–85). This explanation is also conceivable, but I see it as less likely (see n. 3 above). Other explanations tied to a simple association with the Passover time also could work by arguing that the Synoptics have painted a meal with the symbol of the season and Jesus turning a meal into a Passover-like event. This approach rests on an excessive skepticism about our sources and understates the chronological links we have pointed out.

12 There is another issue wrapped up in this discussion, as the evening meal in John 12 where an anointing occurs is placed next to a note that we are six days before the Passover in John. Virtually all agree that the anointing in John is the same as the one in Mark 14 that is placed in a context where both Mark 14 and Matthew 26 have just mentioned that we are two days from the Passover. However this chronological note has to do more directly with the plotting by the leaders (Mark 14:1; Matt. 26:2), not the meal as described in Mark 14:3–9 and Matthew 26:6–13. So John's six-day note on the timing may well be correct. The meal in the Synoptics is simply introduced in Mark 14:3 and Matthew 26:6 with a note about it being held while Jesus was in Bethany. If originally these events of plotting and the anointing meal circulated independently in the tradition, then this beginning for the meal does not give a specific date and time to the event and John's timing is likely more precise. The Synoptics prefer a more topical arrangement where the anointing woman senses Jesus's peril given the leaders' desire to be done with Jesus. The plot has been juxtaposed to an earlier meal.

THE SEDER AND THE LAST SUPPER

Although the Synoptics seem to be clear that this is a Passover meal (Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:15), we might examine some other indications that this is true. We have a meal in Jerusalem (all Gospels), at night (Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:7 with 22:14; John 13:2; all Gospels), a reclining meal that points to a special occasion (John 13:12), singing hymns pointing to the *Hallel* psalms (Pss. 113–118) of the meal (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26), the presence of interpretation of the elements of the bread and wine (Synoptics), and remarks tied to giving to the poor (Matt. 26:9; John 13:29) since the giving of alms were a part of the Passover season.

When one discusses the Seder, the source of recorded tradition is found in the Mishnah (m. Pesahim 10), compiled around 200 C.E. This mishnaic tractate suggests that the Seder uses four cups of wine during the meal. The order of the cups is as follows: a blessing with the first cup of wine; the recitation between the father and the son reviewing the events of Exodus with the second cup of wine; the consumption of the food with the third cup of wine; and the singing of the *Hallel* psalms with the fourth cup of wine. Scholars have associated Jesus's remarks in various ways, tying them to the second, third and fourth cups. The third cup is the more common association.[13]

However, as we mentioned earlier, it is hard to determine if this tradition dates back to the time of Jesus. That the Seder we have in the Mishnah goes back to Jesus's time is less than certain because we do not have any references or sources contemporary to Jesus or predating him that give any details about any Seder.[14] Some lines in Pesahim 10 clearly have a post-destruction of the Temple perspective showing them to come after Jesus's time as

13 Marshall, "The Last Supper," notes that the third cup is the most common view (544 n225). Dissent on this comes from Rabbi D. M. Cohn-Sherbok, "A Jewish Note on τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας," *New Testament Studies* 27, no. 5 (1981): 704–9, who argues for the fourth cup, while Phillip Segal, "Another Note to 1 Corinthians 10:16," *New Testament Studies* 29, no. 1 (1983): 134–39, considers Cohn-Sherbok's arguments and opts for the second cup.

14 I have in mind here the writer of the OT pseudepigraphal book of Jubilees, Josephus, or Philo, who simply do not address the topic.

it refers back to "in the time of the Temple." They speak about what took place in the Temple before the Temple's destruction, given that the end of Pesahim 10.3 talks about the pre-destruction practice in terms of the sacrifice, not merely the uttering of the Seder.[15] In fact, the Seder's language itself has no direct reference to a sacrifice, which those who regard the Seder as a post-Temple (after 70 C.E.) liturgical construction take as more evidence of it being a later development. Nevertheless, the three essentials of the meal according to Pesahim 10.5 are (1) to discuss the Passover event of God passing over the houses as he judged (Exod. 12), (2) the symbolism of the unleavened bread (picturing redemption; Exod. 13:7–9; Deut. 16:3), and (3) the symbolism of the bitter herbs (picturing the bitter life in Egypt; Exod. 12:8; Num. 9:11). As the listing above shows, all of these symbols are explicit in the Torah. These elements seem to be included in the Seder mentioned in Luke chapter 22.

Adding to this uncertainty about the level of developed Jewish Passover tradition present at the Last Supper is that Matthew and Mark only refer to one cup and one taking of bread, while Luke alone mentions two cups. The Seder itself has four cups. So it becomes very hard to be conclusive about what exactly took place and in what order. The variety of views tied to which of the four cups in particular is present at the Last Supper shows the difficulty here (see note 13 above).

The New Testament does not focus on the details of the ancient Seder nor the traditions associated with the event, but rather on the association between the Passover and the deliverance of the nation from Egyptian slavery. In Exodus 12:27 the gathered family is told, "It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, for He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and spared our homes" (HCSB).

This first-century scene involving Jesus certainly included a meal with elements recalling the Exodus and reflected whatever liturgy was in place at the time, even if we do not know all the details. The Exodus is clearly the background for the Passover

15 Baruch M. Bokser, "Was the Last Supper a Passover Seder?" *Bible Review* 3, no. 2 (1987): 24–33, argues that the Seder we have in the Mishnah is post destruction of the Temple.

meal. It appears very likely to have been a Passover meal, but exactly what kind of Seder attached to it, along with how the individual elements were viewed, is not as clear.

This brings us to our third topic, Jesus's recasting of this meal and its longstanding significance.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS RECASTING THE MEAL

One of the unique features of the Lucan portrayal of the Last Supper is the potential mention of multiple cups, an issue tied to a famous problem about the exact wording of the original Lucan text. That question is whether Luke 22:19b–20 is an original part of Luke's Gospel.[16] The longer version of the text picks up from the mention of "this is My body," shared with the other Synoptics, and adds to it, 'being given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And the cup likewise after dinner, saying, 'This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, being shed for you'" (author's translation). Thus the longer version does several things: (1) it makes the point about a substitutionary sacrifice for both the bread and the cup ("for you"), (2) it calls for a repetition of the observance ("Do this in remembrance of me"), (3) it makes for the use of multiple cups unique to Luke, and (4) it explicitly ties Jesus's act to the New Covenant ("new covenant in My blood").

The major reason to accept the longer reading is that its manuscript evidence is extensively distributed across key early witnesses and most textual families.[17] Another feature is that

16 The problem is covered in detail by Marshall, "The Last Supper," 529–41. He works through several internal arguments. I will only focus on the external evidence in this chapter.

17 This includes strong Alexandrian and Byzantine support, a rare but important alliance. Here we have $\mathfrak{P}^{75}$, A, B, as well as E, G, H, and N. The only family presenting the shorter text involve the Western texts. The only Greek witness to the shorter text is the sometimes idiosyncratic D, a manuscript that often goes its own way in giving readings of the Greek. Textual families are manuscripts that belong together because they show the same shared readings in many places.

there are next to no variants for the longer reading, while the shorter version appears in various forms. Multiple variants are often an indication of later changes, that is, the introduction of a variety of attempts to fix the text. It also would be odd for the scribes to make an addition that goes in a direction away from the mention of a single cup shared with Matthew's and Mark's versions. So multiple cups looks original because of its uniqueness, since a scribe would tend to bring texts into agreement and so act to remove the differing number of cups. It also would be odd to have an original version with no words said over the cup that relate to Jesus's death. If the longer text is original, as we are arguing, then the multiple cups are part of what points to a special Passover meal.

What makes this meal so different is that Jesus not only refers to the Exodus and ties the meal to Israel's history, but also completely recasts the meal as a vehicle for describing His coming death as a substitutionary sacrifice. The Lucan reference "for you" points to the substitutionary nature of the sacrifice. In Mark 14:24 Jesus speaks of his shed blood given "for many," an allusion to Mark 10:45, presenting the idea that Jesus will die as a "ransom for many." This is in fact a very likely Messianic allusion to Isaiah 53:12, where the Servant bears the sin of the many.[18]

In the Lucan version, the bread is His body and the wine pictures His blood shed for His disciples. Whether Jesus spoke of "the many" as in Mark 14:24 or of the sacrifice being "for you" as in Luke 22:19–20, the point is crystal clear, as Jesus is about to die as an offering made on behalf of others.[19] The allu-

18 On Mark's meaning, see Darrell Bock, *Mark*. New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 342–43. Paul also refers to this meal as a part of Early Church tradition in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26. Paul's version mirrors that of Luke on the issue of the death being "for you." Matthew 26:26–28 is the other Synoptic account of this meal. Matthew's version is similar to Mark's with the death being "for many."

19 Such variations in wording at the same point of an event are not uncommon in the Gospels, but they are not a problem, since a writer can choose to quote or give the force of what is meant. So such differences may simply make explicit what was implicit. The core point in both versions is the same. In speaking of Jesus's act for the many, Mark surely was including His death for the disciples, just as the disciples are but a portion of those Jesus intended to die for on the cross. On this phenomenon in the Gospel accounts, see Darrell L. Bock, "Precision and Accuracy: Making Distinctions

sion to establishing a covenant (Mark 14:24) or a new covenant (Luke 22:20) also assumes a sacrifice and the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:15–22) to inaugurate a covenant.[20]

So in both versions the meal is portrayed as a commentary on Jesus's forthcoming work, which is the ultimate act of deliverance the Passover anticipated. What started as Israel's deliverance, God also had in mind the ultimate blessing for the world (Gen. 12:1–3). In places within the meal and service where you would naturally expect to hear about the deliverance of Israel through the first Exodus, we see Jesus pointing His disciples to His substitutionary death for sinners—a second and even greater Exodus deliverance.

Now an important question arises: Who has the right to transform the meaning of a Feast prescribed by the Torah? The Passover liturgy became part of Israel's historical narrative and had been developing continually since the Exodus as previous chapters in this book have shown.[21] The focus of course in those developments was always the Exodus from Egypt. Yet Jesus takes matters for His disciples further than expected by such customs. He does not simply look back on the original deliverance from Egypt, but rather takes center stage Himself and turns the gaze of His disciples to a new and greater act of deliverance. In this He claims rightful authority over the sacred calendar, not by subtraction but by addition. Jesus also adds to the symbolism of the celebration of Passover and by doing so claims authority over Jewish tradition, similar to His claiming to be Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:1–5). Jesus declares Himself to be the full realization of the Passover. He contends that the symbols of the meal have their fulfillment in His sacred work.

This is a significant Christological and soteriological claim. It

in the Cultural Context That Give Us Pause in Pitting the Gospels Against One Another," in *Do Historical Matters Matter to the Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier, Dennis Magary (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 367–82.

20 Again, the difference here is not significant. The only covenant left to establish when Jesus spoke was the eschatologically hoped for New Covenant. Luke makes explicit what Mark says implicitly.

21 To develop liturgy around the same event is common in Israelite worship. This book is showing as much about the Passover imagery. However, the extension of liturgy is not what we have here with Jesus. We have fresh symbolism built around a distinct event.

also is an assertion about His role to Israel and the world involving the hope of eschatology. Jesus is about to fulfill hidden hopes residing in the hearts of His chosen people for ages. Jesus's death would bring a greater salvation than the Exodus and initiate the New Covenant predicted by Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. 31:31–34).

The Messiah's fresh approach to the symbolism of the Seder is also a claim to greater authority over divine acts and deliverance. The disciples sat down to this meal expecting to again look back on what God did, but were now urged to see their Master in a new light as the Sacrificial Lamb, the penultimate peak of God's program having revelatory authority over the divine calendar and Jewish tradition.[22] In this Jesus claimed far more authority than any rabbi before or after Him.

Passover transformed becomes a statement about God's ultimate act of deliverance. Jesus's coming death and resurrection reflects God's vindication of the claims made at His final meal. Jesus reveals His right to create revelation, as God Himself did when He inaugurated the Feast in Exodus 12. The Last Supper becomes a commentary on what God was doing in and through the work of the Messiah. The Last Supper is a commentary rooted in the history of Israel presenting Jesus as the Savior. He uniquely stands at the very nexus of God's plan for saving a broken world.

CONCLUSION

The question of Luke's portrayal of the Last Supper as a Passover meal is both complex and subject to a variety of difficult questions. We only touched on some critical concerns enabling us to better understand the significance of Jesus's statements in these final moments with His disciples. We believe it was a Passover meal and that the significance of the event is often underappreciated, regardless of how one views the degree to which His Seder meal reflected the later written traditions found in the Mishnah.

22 We say "penultimate" because after the death comes resurrection, which is the guarantee of everything claimed about the death.

We may now ask ourselves, "What does it mean if some of these historical judgments about the Last Supper, its details, or its specific chronology, are wrong?" Ironically, it means little. Many scholars who do not see a Passover meal here still view the Passover as relevant to understanding the backdrop for Jesus's activities at the event.[23] The actions would perhaps not have the same intensity as if a more traditional understanding of a Passover meal was accepted, but His choice to add fresh symbolism, connected to the Passover, should still be viewed as a bold innovation.

All that has been said would apply regardless. Jesus was giving the Passover season deeper significance. A new deliverance, a fresh Exodus, had come. However, if what we have argued is the case, and we are witnessing a Passover meal of some sort, then Jesus's act may be viewed as doubly provocative. His pointing to a new and greater salvation as well as new revelatory authority over salvation and the Feast will only add to the majesty of His person.

All of this means that when we celebrate the Passover with Jesus in mind we are considering two events: (1) one linked to Israel and God's deliverance of the Jewish people from Egypt to begin the journey to the Promised Land and (2) the act of God forgiving our sin and vindicating Jesus through His resurrection and ascension, thereby distributing gifts of salvation to those who trust in His divine work (Acts 2:16–39). Of course, we also can recall that in doing this God fulfilled promises made to Israel that also were about how the people of Israel were a source of blessing for the world through their Messiah. The two events (Exodus and Cross) are powerful bookends. They represent the foreshadowing and the fulfillment. God validates Jesus's once-for-all atoning sacrifice through His resurrection and ascension. In doing so, He shows the ultimate point of the original Exodus for the world.

Passover calls upon God's people to look back. This is a blessing

23 A good example of such an approach is Jonathan Klawans, "Was Jesus's Last Supper a Passover?" *Bible Review* 47 ,33–24 :(2001) 17, http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/jesus-historical-jesus/was-jesus-last-supper-a-seder/, who argues against the meal being a Passover meal and yet the proximity of the meal to Passover would not be dismissed as a mere historical coincidence.

and spiritually enriching for the Jewish community. But when Jesus's followers better understand the Passover, then we are able to affirm our connection to all that Jesus proclaimed at this meal. He is with us as we celebrate the Feast. Whether we recall this during a Passover Seder or at the Lord's Table, we proclaim the Lord's death until He returns and completes what He started at this meal with His disciples (1 Cor. 11:26). To participate in this celebration is to engage in a covenant affirmation. He has initiated the New Covenant with all of its benefits, because He is Lord of the Passover, the Lamb of God, and the One to whom Passover pointed all along.

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Passover and the Lord's Supper

Brian Crawford

Once we leave the Gospel accounts of the Passover and come to 1 Corinthians, we find ourselves in the unusual position of going back to the future. Although the Gospels are the written accounts of Yeshua's life, it is likely that they were not written down until after the Apostle Paul penned the letter of 1 Corinthians in 54 or 55 C.E.[1] Consequently, even though the historical setting of 1 Corinthians is *later* than the Gospels, the letter contains our *earliest* written reports of Yeshua's Passover Seder and the Early Church's celebration of Communion.[2]

1 For the dating of the Gospels, see P. L. Maier, "Chronology," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 187–88. For the dating of 1 Corinthians, see D. A. Carson and Douglas J. Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 448; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 32; C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black's New Testament Commentary (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968), 5; and Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Norman Perrin, rev. ed., New Testament Library (London: SCM Press, 1966), 188. Citations of *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* in this chapter refer to the SCM Press edition.

2 However, see Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 186–89, where he

FIRST CORINTHIANS, THE PASSOVER EPISTLE

Paul refers to or alludes to Passover in three separate sections of 1 Corinthians, each of which we will investigate further below. This recurring Passover theme is striking due to Paul's silence on the matter in his other letters. Why did Paul have Passover on his mind in this letter? The most likely reason is due to the season of his writing.[3] At the end of his letter, Paul tells his readers that he "will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost" (1 Cor. 16:8), the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which occurs fifty days after Passover in May/June (Lev. 23:15–16). Additionally, he tells them that he hopes to come to Corinth "soon" (1 Cor. 4:19). The combination of these time markers makes it very likely that Paul wrote his letter in the spring, before Pentecost, and near the time of Passover.

Other material encourages us to consider the real possibility that Paul and his Corinthian audience were celebrating Passover in a manner that pointed to the Messiah. Early Church sources report that the second-century churches in Paul's region celebrated Passover and Messiah's crucifixion on the fourteenth of Nisan.[4] Some second-century believers even claimed that the Apostles themselves encouraged the celebration of this Messianic Passover.[5]

PAUL AND THE FEASTS

Some think that if a church celebrates Passover, this contradicts Paul's teachings elsewhere on the Feasts. Paul is the one

identifies Mark as recording the earliest version of Yeshua's eucharistic words, despite Mark being written after 1 Corinthians. According to Jeremias, "Mark with his numerous semitisms stands linguistically nearest to the original tradition" (188).

3 Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 407–8.

4 See Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.23 (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, *Series 2* 1:241–42). For a discussion of the chronology of Yeshua's final week of life, see chapter 5 in this book, "Passover in the Gospel of John," by Mitch Glaser.

5 See Polycrates' letter to Victor in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.24 (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, *Series 2* 1:242–44). He identifies the Apostles Philip and John as the originators of the Passover observances in Asia Minor, and then identifies six others, including himself, who have retained that practice until Polycrates' own day.

who called the dietary laws, the Feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths "a mere shadow" compared to "the substance," which belongs to Messiah (Col. 2:16–17). He is the one who chastises the Galatians for observing "days and months and seasons and years" (Gal. 4:10). How can Paul celebrate the old Jewish Feast of Passover when the Messiah has already fulfilled the Feast?

This misconception may be dismissed by a closer look at the intended audience of these passages. In both Colossians and Galatians, Paul's primary audience is Gentile believers. In Colossians, Paul is addressing those who were uncircumcised in their flesh (Col. 2:13). Paul encourages the Gentile Colossians to disregard Jewish critics who *require* them to observe special days, since Gentiles were never obligated by God to follow the Mosaic calendar. In Galatians, Paul is addressing Gentile believers who are choosing to get circumcised in order to be justified before God (Gal. 5:2–6). He tries to dissuade them from undergoing this rite lest they forfeit Christ Himself and the justification He achieved on their behalf (v. 2).

There is nothing in these passages that speaks against *Jewish* believers celebrating the Feasts, or anything that speaks against Gentiles celebrating them with a heart of faith. In fact, Paul's wording in Colossians 2:17 implies that the "shadows" still have present-day importance because he uses the present-tense verb ἐστιν, *estin*—"Things which *are* a mere shadow of what is to come" (emphasis added). Many commentators ignore the present tense and jump to the conclusion that the Jewish observances *were* shadows that have been made obsolete.[6] But Paul did not believe that the Feasts were a thing of the past, but rather a shadow with present-day anticipatory features.[7] Cele-

6 On the issue of ignoring implications of the present tense verb in Colossians 2:17, Martha King cites Bible commentators F. F. Bruce and Peter T. O'Brien as saying that the shadows "were only temporary." Similarly, Ralph P. Martin says that "their observance is antiquated." Also, N. T. Wright says, "Now that the reality is here, there is no point in holding on to things which are only a shadow." Martha King, *An Exegetical Summary of Colossians*, 2nd ed., Exegetical Summaries 12 (Dallas: SIL International, 2008), 180.

7 Jeremias remarks, "Rather oddly, the Church took over only two of the great feasts in the Jewish calendar, namely, the Passover and Pentecost, but not Tabernacles." The omission of Tabernacles need not be surprising if we consider that Paul believed that some of the shadows still pointed forward to unfulfilled "things to come." Perhaps, in the Early Church's mind, Tabernacles was not emphasized

brating the shadow without the substance of Messiah would be foolish, and celebrating Messiah without the shadow would be adequate for the Gentile Colossians, but Paul's use of the present tense shows that he sees continuing value in the shadows, including the Feasts. This continuing importance of the Feasts will explain other passages, indicating that Paul continued to keep the Feasts.[8] In Paul's mind the Feasts still hold significant relevance to believers. With Paul's positive stance towards the Feasts in mind, let us now return to 1 Corinthians.

MESSIAH, OUR PASSOVER (1 COR. 5:6–8)

The context for 1 Corinthians 5:6–8, our first of three Passover-themed passages in this epistle of the Apostle Paul, is that the Corinthian church was accepting the presence of an unrepentant sexual deviant in their midst, and accepting him in prideful arrogance (5:1–2). Paul's first response is to exhort the church to take decisive action against the offender, casting him out from the church community (vv. 2–5). However, it is relatively easy to expel an unbeliever from the church; it is much harder to deal with the sin in the hearts of believers. For this reason, Paul pivots to draw a principle from the Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:6.

After calling the Corinthians "arrogant" (5:2), he again warns them, "Your boasting is not good" (v. 6). This remark signals that Paul is no longer addressing the sin of the sexual offender, but rather the pride of the church community that was boasting about retaining him. Paul continues, "Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough?" (v. 6) Paul's reference to leaven may arise from two parallel directions. First, leaven ferments and puffs up bread just as human

because its fulfillment awaits a future era (Zech. 14, Rev. 21:3). Joachim Jeremias, "πάσχα," *(pascha) Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,1968), 5:901.

8 See Acts 20:6, 16; and 27:9. See also Reidar Hvalvik, "Paul as a Jewish Believer: According to the Book of Acts," in *Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries*, ed. Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 143–45.

pride puffs up a person with sin. Both Paul's contemporaries and later Jewish rabbis use leaven as an analogy for pride.[9] Secondly, if Paul is writing near the time of Passover, then the thought of leaven would be at the forefront of his mind as a Jewish believer (Exod. 12:19). Consequently, Paul's use of the leavening theme is a vivid word-picture that speaks to the time and situation of his audience.

In contrast to the greater sin of the sexual offender, the Corinthians' sin of boasting may be just "a little leaven," but it still makes the whole dough unfit for Passover. The analogy is that the sin of pride has infected the whole Corinthian church, which is inconsistent with their justification in Messiah. Paul clearly believes that the Corinthians are saved and justified in Messiah because he calls them "unleavened" (1 Cor. 5:7). Their status as sinless, righteous, and pure in God's eyes through Messiah is a fact in Paul's mind; however, the Corinthians' prideful actions are springing from "the old leaven" of "malice and wickedness" (v. 8), that is, their old sinful nature. The only proper response is to remove the pride from their midst like the Jewish people remove the leaven from their homes at Passover.

In the second half of verse 7, Paul gives the reason *why* the Corinthians are "unleavened" and righteous believers: "For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed." The Passover sacrifice of Yeshua is the only reason why the Corinthians have clean hearts. Yeshua's sacrifice is greater than any previous Passover lamb, providing complete atonement for all-time to all who believe (John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:24). The Corinthians have already been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, but their boasting is taking them back to Egypt. Paul commands the Corinthians to turn back from that treacherous road and to instead clean out

9 The Jewish philosopher Philo, Paul's contemporary, makes the connection in at least two places: *On the Special Laws* 1.293 and Fragments from an Unpublished Manuscript in the Library of the French King. According to Ronald L. Eisenberg, *JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*, "The Rabbis regarded *hametz* [leaven] as the symbol of the evil inclination. The 'yeast in the dough' (the evil impulse that causes a ferment in the heart) prevents human beings from carrying out the will of God (Ber. 17a). *Hametz* also represents human haughtiness and conceit. Just as leaven puffs up dough, so human arrogance cause[s] us to believe that we, not God, control our destiny." Ronald L. Eisenberg, *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 269.

the leaven of pride and thereby celebrate the Festival of Passover correctly.

Many interpreters see the figurative language in this passage and assume that the reference to "the feast" (1 Cor. 5:8) must be figurative as well. "Celebrate the feast," or "keeping the festival," means holy living or consecrated lifestyles or some other universalized notion that removes the context of actual Passover observance.[10] But we need not jump to an exclusively spiritual meaning here. We have previously argued that believers did celebrate a Messiah-focused Passover in the Early Church and that Paul was writing in the spring, during Passover season. Both points should lead us to consider that Paul has an actual Passover festival in mind here. We must remember that Paul was still *Sha'ul,*[11] and that he continued to identify himself as a Pharisee from the Diaspora (Acts 23:6). The Apostle viewed himself as still Jewish (Acts 22:3) and as part of the Messianic remnant (Rom. 11:5). In such a case, Paul is exhorting the church to enter the Passover season with as much zeal to remove sin from their midst as his fellow Jews are zealous to remove leaven from their homes. Believers in Yeshua, made unleavened through His sacrifice, should not approach the fourteenth of Nisan, the yearly reminder of their redemption, without living in accordance with their new nature.

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD THROUGH COMMUNION (1 COR. 10:14–22)

The second Passover passage we will consider, 1 Corinthians 10:14–22, does not derive its Passover themes from Old Testament observance, but rather from Yeshua's use of the Pass-

10 Ronald Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of 1 Corinthians 1–9* (Dallas: SIL International, 2008), 211. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 406.

11 Many believe that *Saul* (Hebrew, שָׁאוּל, *Sha'ul*; Greek, Σαῦλος, *Saulos*) was Paul's Jewish name, which he left behind once he "converted" to Christianity. This narrative, although popular, is not correct. As late as Acts 13:9, Paul is still called "Saul." The simple solution is that *Saul* was his Hebrew name, and *Paul* (Greek, Παῦλος, *Paulos*; Latin, *Paulus*) was his Greek/Latin name. The Apostle was known by both names in different contexts.

over to institute the celebration of Communion.[12] This is the earliest written reference to believers participating in "the cup of the Lord" (v. 21; cf. v. 16) and "the bread that we break" (v. 16).[13] Paul does not explain the Passover origin of these practices here since they are already so integrated into the Corinthians' rhythms. Paul assumes that his audience knows what he is referring to.

"The cup of blessing" has a blessing spoken over it (v. 16a), which may have been the same blessing as recorded in the Mishnah: "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, the Creator of the fruit of the vine" (m. Ber. 6:1). In this passage, Paul emphasizes that the Corinthians are united together in fellowship, "a sharing" (κοινωνία, *koinōnia*), when they participate in the Lord's Supper. Κοινωνία, *Koinōnia*, refers to a "close association involving mutual interests and sharing."[14] Just as the Jewish people who sacrifice at the Temple are made participants or "sharers" (κοινωνοὶ, *koinōnoi*) with the God of "the altar" (v. 18),[15] so too the Corinthians are united together in fellowship or "a sharing" (κοινωνία, *koinōnia*) in the blood of Messiah (v. 16a) and in the body of Messiah (v. 16b). The practice of Communion is meant to foster an attitude of brotherhood and unity within the community of believers, reminding all that they are spiritual brothers and sisters who have been united with God and each other through the sacrifice of Yeshua.

Paul draws out the practical implications for the Corinthians in verses 19–22. If participating in "the table of the Lord" means that believers are united with the Lord, then why are they practicing things that make them participants or "sharers" (κοινωνοὺς, *koinonous*) with demons (v. 20)? Believers should run from such

12 See in the next section the discussion of 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and the Lord Yeshua's use of the Passover to institute the celebration of Communion, also witnessed in the Gospels (Matt. 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:14–23; cf. John 13:21–30).

13 See note 1 above for the dating of 1 Corinthians and the Gospels.

14 "κοινωνία," in Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 552.

15 "The altar" is Paul's Jewish substitute for the name of God. Many Jews used the name of God sparingly due to the commandment to not use his name in vain (Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11). The technical term for this is *circumlocution*.

practices because being united with the Lord excludes any other kind of religious participation. Believers cannot adopt the worship of foreign religions and anti-Yeshua worldviews without provoking the Lord to jealousy (v. 22), which has serious consequences as shown in the narrative of the Exodus and wilderness wanderings in the Torah (1 Cor. 10:1–13).

Although Paul does not refer to the idea of the New Covenant here, it surely influences his exhortations. It is by means of the New Covenant in Messiah's blood that believers are brought into fellowship with the Lord and are betrothed to Messiah, and we await a great marriage supper in the last days (Rev. 19:6–9). Marriages are exclusive, admitting no foreign lovers. So too with the New Covenant. Messiah Yeshua owns the hearts and deserves the total affections of His people, and the cup and the bread are His reminders to us that we are united with Him and no other.

THE TRADITION AND APPLICATION OF COMMUNION (1 COR. 11:17–34)

The third Passover-themed passage we will consider is 1 Corinthians 11:17–34. After a brief aside from the previous discussion, Paul returns to the subject of Communion and Passover in verse 17. In this section, he expands upon his exhortation to unity in 1:10 by addressing a particularly shameful expression of factionalism in the Corinthians' practice of Communion. Paul acknowledges that there will always be factions whereby true believers may be distinguished from believers in name only (11:19), but that is not the factionalism that grieves him. Paul has heard that the Corinthians' practice of Communion has turned into a frenzy where some overeat, some go hungry, and some get drunk (v. 21). This frantic and factionalized atmosphere is not at all reflective of a supper named after the Lord Yeshua (v. 20). Instead of Communion being an opportunity for fellowship and worship, the church is sinning by disrespecting itself and humiliating the poor among them (v. 22). The Lord's Supper is not the appropriate place for partying and drinking.

THE EARLY TRADITION OF COMMUNION (1 COR. 11:23–26)

After establishing the grounds for his rebuke, Paul transitions to remind the Corinthians in verses 23–26 of the solemn origins of Communion and why their practice of it was so inconsistent with the Lord Yeshua. "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you," says Paul, the Pharisee (11:23; cf. Acts 23:6). Before we continue to the content of the message Paul received from the Lord, we must first recognize the particularly Jewish pairing of "received" with "delivered," which is reflective of Paul's Pharisaic background.[16] In ancient Jewish understanding, the authority of the teacher came not from his charisma or his success, but from his office as a conduit for official tradition.[17] With this introduction, Paul is preparing to remind the Corinthians of the tradition that he did not invent himself, but which he received "from the Lord."[18]

The tradition begins by referring to the night when the Lord Yeshua "was betrayed" (1 Cor. 11:23). Most English translations use the word "betrayed" here, which is certainly appropriate, but the Greek word (παραδίδωμι, *paradidomi*) is the same as the one just used for the tradition Paul "delivered." Just as tradition is "handed over," so too Yeshua was "handed over." However, the use of this word probably harkens back to the Greek version of Isaiah 53, where the same word is used to describe the Messiah being "given over" for our sins (Isa. 53:12 LXX).[19] Consequently,

16 On this verse Thiselton (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 867) says, "'Received' and 'handed on' in 11:23 (cf. 15:1–3) were virtually technical terms in Jewish culture for the transmission of important traditions . . . (cf. m. Abot 1:1)."

17 Gerhard Delling, "παραλαμβάνω," (*paralambánō) Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 4:12–13.

18 This is probably a reference to Paul receiving the tradition about the Last Supper from other believers or from disciples who were present at the Last Supper. This is strengthened by the nearly verbatim wording in 1 Corinthians 11:24 and Luke 22:19. He probably does not mean that he received the tradition about the Last Supper through direct revelation.

19 The Greek version of Isaiah 53:12 is καὶ διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν παρεδόθη, *kai dia tas hamartias autōn paredothe*, which means "and because of their sins he was given over" (author's translation). Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta: With Morphology*, electronic ed. (1935; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), ad loc.

the early believers probably understood Judas' act of betrayal as a fulfillment of the prophecies in Isaiah 53.

On the night that Yeshua is handed over, he takes bread, gives thanks, and breaks it (11:23–24). It is possible, but not certain, that this bread is the *afikoman* bread that figures so prominently in later Jewish Passover tradition. Whether or not this is the *afikoman*, Yeshua gives a radical new meaning to the bread: "This is My body, which is for you" (1 Cor. 11:24). These very few words are overflowing with meaning. We must note that Yeshua says these words about His own human body of flesh and blood. He also says these words in the context of a Passover Seder in which food and other elements have memorial and symbolic meanings. The unleavened *matzah*, called "the Bread of Affliction," is not literally affliction and not literally sinless, but representative and symbolic of affliction and sinless purity.

When we consider Yeshua's actual body and the memorial nature of Passover, this should lead us to view the bread of Communion in a similarly symbolic way. The bread is Yeshua's body in symbolic form, not in nature. We should also note in verse 24 that Yeshua's body is "for you [all]" (plural pronoun). This is a beautiful reminder once again of Isaiah 53, but with the audience and speaker reversed. In Isaiah 53, the Prophet Isaiah speaks on behalf of believing Israel about the Messiah who was "pierced through for our transgressions" and "crushed for our iniquities" (v. 5), but now it is the Messiah who is speaking to Jewish believers—His disciples. Yeshua confirms what Isaiah has declared previously: the Messiah's death will be "for us."

Yeshua continues, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:24).[20] Just like the celebration of the original Passover was meant to be a memorial (Exod. 12:14), so too is the fulfilled Passover of Communion. The Lord wants his followers to see the bread of Communion as a reminder of Him, just as the lamb and bitter herbs were reminders of the Exodus. By partaking of the broken bread, we are to remind ourselves of the broken Messiah who gave Himself for our sins. Any partaking of the Communion bread without remembering the sacrifice of Yeshua

20 These words τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν, *touto poieite eis tēn emēn anamnēsin*, are identical to the Greek of Luke 22:19, showing that Luke and Paul are drawing on common tradition.

is an affront to Yeshua Himself, as Paul explains in the verses that follow.

The tradition continues by saying that Yeshua gave a new meaning to the cup of the Passover Seder (1 Cor. 11:25), just as he did with the bread (v. 24). The tradition only mentions the cup "after supper," which most likely refers to the third of four Passover cups, the cup of redemption. This cup is the only one mentioned because of its supreme importance in the life of a believer. Yeshua says, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (v. 25). Here, the symbolic nature of the Communion is made most apparent. The cup in a Passover Seder is filled with wine—not blood—and yet it is given symbolic meaning. The origin of wine at the Passover Seder is shrouded in mystery,[21] but in Jewish culture, wine symbolizes "the essence of goodness" when used appropriately.[22] Here, Yeshua is saying that this cup of wine symbolizes His own blood, which inaugurates the New Covenant that had been foretold by Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31–34). What had been prophecy to Jeremiah is now reality through Yeshua's blood.

The tradition concludes, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). We learn several things from this remark. First, Paul and the early believers expect congregations to celebrate Communion often. We cannot tell *how often*—that decision is left up to the congregation itself—but it needs to be part of the life of the congregation. Secondly, the practice of Communion is an act of proclamation—a visible, tangible exclamation of the work of Yeshua in the lives and hearts of believers. Why? The bread and the wine have embedded within them the message of the Gospel! Although unbelievers should not be admitted to Communion, they should be able to see the practice of Communion in the life of a congregation and thereby be exposed to the proclamation of the Gospel. Thirdly, the practice of Com-

21 The earliest reference to wine used at Passover is in a pre-Yeshua pseudepigraphal book, Jubilees 49:6.

22 Judah David Eisenstein and Emil G. Hirsch, "Wine," *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, ed. Isidore Singer (New York; London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1906), 12:533, http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14941-wine.

munion encourages a forward-thinking hope in the return of our Lord Yeshua. Practicing Communion is not merely about remembering the Lord's death, but also being eagerly expectant about celebrating Communion "until he comes."

According to Jewish tradition, the Messiah is supposed to arrive on the night of Passover.[23] This understanding was retained by the early believers, since we learn from extrabiblical Christian sources that there was an annual tradition of fasting until midnight on Passover, staying up late in case Yeshua returned![24] As to be expected, this Messianic anticipation about the yearly Passover also made its way into Communion. According to the first-century Messianic Jewish work the *Didache*, or the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," the Early Church ended their Communion prayers with the Aramaic phrase, "Maranatha!" (Did. 10.6), which means, "O Lord, Come!" Paul also uses this word at the end of this Passover epistle (1 Cor. 16:22). This early remnant of Jewish-Christian liturgy depicts how Communion was intended to be an eager expectation of the Lord Yeshua's return.

The modern Jewish Passover Seder shares in this eager expectation for the future. A Seder does not merely look backward to the Exodus event, but rather, every Jewish family hopefully proclaims at the end of the Seder, "Next year in Jerusalem!" The season of Passover is the season of redemption, yesterday and tomorrow, as both Paul and the modern Seder remind us.

THE TRADITION APPLIED (1 COR. 11:27–34)

Now that Paul has reminded the Corinthians of the solemn origin of Communion, he turns in 1 Corinthians 11:27–34 toward the factionalized congregation to apply its meaning to their situation. He concludes that partaking of Communion

23 Commenting on Exodus 12:42, the Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha school of *midrash* says, "In that night were they redeemed and in that night will they be redeemed in the future." Jacob Z. Lauterbach, trans., *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2004), 1:79. See also *Targum Neofiti* to Exodus 12:42, and *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* Exodus 12:42.

24 Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 123.

"in an unworthy manner" makes the participant "guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (11:27). This is a severe accusation that no believers should want to be true about themselves. Yeshua is our Lord and our Messiah and our Bridegroom—we should do all we can to avoid participating in Communion "in an unworthy manner." What does this mean?

This phrase cannot mean "celebrating Communion with sin in your life." Likewise, it cannot mean "celebrating Communion when you are unworthy of it." Not a single believer is worthy of the grace of God—that's why it's freely given grace—and all believers continue to struggle with sin. Our sins do not disqualify us from taking Communion; rather, our acknowledgment of our sin is what leads us *to* take Communion! We need to be reminded of our Savior who redeemed us from the power of sin and who gave us the Spirit to progressively sanctify us from our sinful nature. If we think that we need to be sinless to partake of Communion, then not only do we have a works-based view of God and salvation, but we also have disqualified everyone from ever partaking of Communion themselves.

Instead, Paul uses an adverb in the Greek to say that we should not partake of Communion "unworthily," that is, in a way that dishonors or shames the noble meaning of Communion itself.[25] The bread and the wine receive their symbolic meaning from the Lord Yeshua himself, so dishonoring Communion is a personal attack on the Lord himself. Because of this, "let a person examine himself" (1 Cor. 11:28 ESV), says Paul, to ensure that each of us is properly honoring the Lord of the Communion in the practice of Communion. Anyone who does not properly "judge the body rightly" only brings judgment upon oneself (v. 29). Judging the body rightly or "discerning the body" (ESV) can refer to acknowledging the body of Yeshua in

25 The word for "unworthily" (ἀναξίως, *anaxiōs*) is used only here in the entire New Testament. However, other Greek sources use the word. The Jewish apocryphal work 2 Maccabees talks about a man of noble birth who is abused "in a way unworthy of his own nobility" (2 Macc. 14:42). Rick Brannan, Ken M. Penner, Israel Loken, Michael Aubrey, and Isaiah Hoogendyk, eds., *The Lexham English Septuagint* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), ad loc. Plato uses the word in *Apology of Socrates* 38, and Herodotus uses it in *Histories* 7.10.5. In all these cases, the word is used to describe actions that dishonor or shame the nobility of someone or something that deserves better.

the memorial bread, or it can refer to recognizing the unity of the congregation as the body of Messiah (cf. 10:16–17). Either way, the Corinthians' lack of self-reflection and self-judgment has led God to bring weakness, illness, and even death upon some members of the congregation (11:30). According to Paul, just as God judged Israel for neglecting him (10:1–13), so too God will bring earthly consequences upon a congregation that dishonors the Lord in Communion. This might sound unbelievable and superstitious to many people today, but "[s]uch an attitude reflects the extent to which the modern world has lost the biblical understanding of God's transcendence and fearsome holiness."[26] God takes His holiness and the actions of His Son seriously; therefore the misuse of Communion can bring with it severe divine consequences.

"But," Paul says, "if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:31). Believers need not come under the temporal judgment of God, if only they would self-judge themselves before coming to the Communion Table. Are we properly honoring the work of Yeshua? Are we remembering the sacrifice of His body and blood? Are we acting in fundamental unity with the other believers around us? These are the kinds of questions that every believer should ask himself or herself upon coming to the Lord's Table. God wants us to judge ourselves so He does not have to do it against our will. Even so, Paul says, God's judgment of believers serves a redemptive purpose (v. 32). God disciplines His people to keep them from being condemned along with the world. Like a loving Father, He brings temporal punishments upon His children so they can learn wisdom and properly inherit their eternal destiny with Him.

With all of this tradition and admonition complete, Paul now gives some concluding applications that remind the Corinthians of where they started. They are not practicing the *Lord's* Supper but rather a corruption of it. This is inconsistent with the reality of Communion and the reasons for it. "So then, my brethren," Paul concludes, "when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that

26 Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Nottingham, UK: Apollos, 2010), 557.

you will not come together for judgment" (11:33–34). Communion is meant to foster an atmosphere of unity and community. Instead of judgment, Communion is supposed to bring blessing.

The Corinthians were failing at this because they had forgotten the origin, purpose, and symbolism of Communion itself. They were using Communion to fulfill their own personal appetites rather than to remember the Lord and thank Him for His sacrifice on their behalf. Congregations today need to be wary of making the same mistakes. Instead, they should give Communion the solemnity and reverence it deserves, as well as foster an attitude of unity in Messiah among the participants.

CONCLUSION

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians contains rich Passover and Communion imagery that is intended to deepen the Corinthians' understanding of the Gospel (1 Cor. 5:6–8), to inspire them to spiritual unity in one body (10:14–22), and to remind them of the Passover-sacrifice basis of their unity (11:17–34). These three passages serve as a rebuke of the Corinthians' congregational life, but they can serve as precious encouragements to us. By learning from the Corinthians' failures, we can strive for a more intimate relationship with the Messiah, our Passover, who gave His body and blood for our sins, uniting us into one body for His eternal glory and praise.

Based upon these passages we should be reminded why it is important to see the Bible—especially the New Testament—through Jewish eyes and why understanding the Passover enriches our celebration of the Lord's Supper. The following five lessons are important for us to recall and for you to share with your home group or church—whether you are a pastor or a member of a congregation:

Nearly all of the books of the New Testament (except, perhaps, Luke's Gospel and Acts) were written by Jewish believers, who presumably continued to identify as Jews

and live like Jews. This is implied throughout the New Testament. A key example of this is how greatly the Early Church struggled with the enormous changes created by the influx of believing Gentiles described in the book of Acts. This resulted in a major decision made in concert with the Holy Spirit not to require non-Jews to be circumcised or to observe the Law of Moses, aside from a few "essentials" (Acts 15:28–29). Overlooking the Jewishness of the New Testament and most of its writers can lead to misunderstanding its message to us.

Paul continued to see relevance in celebrating the Feasts found in Leviticus 23, since they point to the Messiah.

The tradition concerning Communion in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 is based upon ideas and events found in the Hebrew Bible and Jewish tradition. Therefore, understanding the Jewish backgrounds regarding Passover will deepen our thankfulness for what Yeshua accomplished on our behalf.

The practice of Communion is meant to be a visual and experiential reminder of the unity of believers with each other and with their Lord. As believers we should do everything possible to make that unity a meaningful reality by forgiving and asking forgiveness of each other and rebuking the spirit of factionalism within our own hearts.

On a personal level, the practice of Communion should not only look backward to the Cross in thankfulness, but should also look forward to the day that Messiah returns. Our Lord is not dead—He is risen!—and He will come to take us to His side. Communion should lead our hearts to exclaim, "Next year with Yeshua in the New Jerusalem!"

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Passover Controversies in Church History

Gregory Hagg

The Passover controversies form an important part of the story of church history, especially in shaping the relationship of the Church with the Jewish community. This chapter will provide an overview of only a few of the more notable controversies related to the Feast in relation to the Church's attitudes and actions. Three examples have been selected: the Quartodeciman debate, the *Novellae* of Justinian I, and the blood libels.

THE QUARTODECIMAN DEBATE (155–325 C.E.)

The Quartodeciman controversy, introduced by Scott Nassau in the previous chapter, focuses on the Early Church and the key role Messianic Jews played in the formation of the Post-Apostolic Church.[1] In this chapter we will recap some of what was

1 See chapter 7, "Passover, the Temple, and the Early Church," by Scott P.

detailed earlier and show the ongoing impact of this early controversy and how it shaped the Church's discussion and understanding of its relationship to the Jewish people.

As noted earlier, the term *Quartodecimans* comes from the Latin term *quarta decima*, which means "fourteenth," referring to the fourteenth day of Nisan in the Jewish lunar calendar. This, of course, is the biblical date of the beginning of Pesach, the Feast of Passover.

The early Jewish believers understood that the death of Yeshua, the Lamb of God, took place on the fourteenth of Nisan, so the celebration of His resurrection should occur in close proximity to the Passover. The obvious problem was that this date did not fall on the same day of the week each year, so the church leaders eventually required that a Sunday be selected for the date of Easter.

In a letter to the church at Philippi, Ignatius of Antioch (30–108 C.E.) says, "If any one celebrates the Passover along with the Jews, or receives the emblems of their feast, he is a partaker with those that killed the Lord and His apostles" (*To the Philippians* 14 [*ANF* 1:119]). This was a very early indication that the parting of the ways between an emerging early Christianity and post-Temple Judaism was in beginning to be established.

Hippolytus of Rome (170–236 C.E.), who attacks the Quartodecimans in a rather combative way later in the controversy, says,

> There are others, fractious by nature, individualistic in their understanding, pugnacious over the point, who maintain that it is necessary to keep the Pascha on the fourteenth of the first month in accordance with the provision of the law, on whatever day it might fall. They have regard only to that which is written in the law that whosoever does not keep it as it is commanded is accursed. They do not notice that the law was laid down for the Jews, who in time would destroy the true Passover, which has come to the gentiles and is discerned by faith, and not by observation of the letter. By keeping to this one commandment they do not notice what was said by the apostle, namely "I bear

> witness to everyone who is circumcised that they are obliged to keep the entirety of the law." In other things they conform to everything, which has been handed down to the church by the apostles. (*Refutation of All Heresies* 8.18)[2]

Clearly, this is not simply a discussion of which day to observe an event. Rather, it is a polemic against the practice of Jewish believers and others who agreed with this emphasis upon the Passover.

It should be noted that before the final decision of the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E., when Easter officially replaced Passover, there were various Church Fathers and Apostles before them who could be called Quartodecimans.

Eusebius Pamphili (ca. 264–340 C.E.) was a bishop and church historian known as Eusebius of Caesarea. His *Ecclesiastical History* is the principal source for the history of Christianity (especially in the Eastern Church) from the age of the Apostles until 324. He carefully listed many names of those who "observed the day [Easter] when the people [the Jews] put away the leaven" (*Ecclesiastical History* 24.6).[3] The names included those of the Apostles John and Philip along with Polycarp, all of whom "observed the fourteenth day of the Passover, according to the Gospel" (24.2–6). He also recorded pertinent communication concerning the Quartodeciman controversy between Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 120–202 C.E.) and Victor I, who had become the bishop of Rome in 189 C.E. (*Ecclesiastical History* 24.9–17). To summarize that interchange as described by Eusebius, Victor had become quite harsh in his treatment of those who continued to observe Easter on the fourteenth of Nisan. He excommunicated them! Irenaeus, even though he agreed that the resurrection should be celebrated on the Lord's Day only, reprimanded Victor for his desire to cut off whole churches of God for observing the ancient traditions. He stated that there had always been differences in the observance

2 Translation of Hippolytus of Rome, *Refutation of All Heresies*, quoted from Melito of Sardis, *On Pascha: With the Fragments of Melito and Other Material Related to the Quartodecimans*, ed. John Behr, trans. Alistair Stewart-Sykes, Popular Patristics Series 20 (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001), 83.

3 For citations of Eusebius in this section, see Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History,* 22–25 (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2 1:240–44).

of days and the manner of the fast surrounding Easter. In fact, the general rule was to maintain peace between both groups. Irenaeus mentioned how Polycarp and Anicetus (in 155 C.E.) had been able to put aside their differences on the issue and commune together in peace. They evidently observed the Lord's Table together. In reflection on Irenaeus' letters, Eusebius remarked that Irenaeus was aptly named, since his name comes from the Greek word for "peace."

There is no clear evidence that the Quartodecimans were overemphasizing the death of the Lord or downplaying the resurrection. It seems rather to be a combination of both aspects in much the same way as Good Friday and Easter have come to be observed in the Church. (Many a Good Friday sermon cannot contain the truth of the Resurrection Day that follows!) However, this controversy gave rise to the complete elimination of the Judaic roots of Easter. The final decision came at the Council of Nicaea, which was called, at least in part, to resolve this issue. A synodal letter was circulated to the effect that the Church would not tolerate the position of the Quartodecimans, and the official day of observance would follow the Roman calendar, abandoning the connection with Pesach.

Emperor Constantine supported the decision and attacked the Quartodecimans. He ordered a severe persecution of those who refused to comply.[4] Furthermore, his successor and son, Constantinius, attempted "to disrupt the order of Jewish festivals and to prevent those Christians who wished to do so from celebrating Easter on the first day of Passover."[5] What is essential to keep in mind, however, is that Constantine, his son, and emperors to follow were further motivated by their anti-Jewish policies as expressed in the language of Constantinius: "To this legislator the Jews were nothing but a 'pernicious' or 'despicable sect' that used to meet in 'sacrilegious assemblies'. Such terminology was to become a permanent feature in the decrees of later

4 Constantine's anti-Judaic attacks against the Quartodecimans can be found in Eusebius, *On the Keeping of Easter* (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2, vol. 14).

5 H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed. *A History of the Jewish People*, coauthored by A. Malamat, H. Tadmor, M. Stern, S. Safrai, H. H. Ben-Sasson, and S. Ettinger (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 350.

Christian emperors."[6] He seems to speak not merely of Jews who reject the Messiah, but also of Jewishness in general.

THE *NOVELLAE* OF JUSTINIAN I (553 C.E.)

Although there were many other skirmishes between the growing Gentile-dominated Church and Jewish believers, one period stands out from the others. Jewish people who did not "convert" became the objects of scorn and vitriol from the Church. The persecution of non-Christian Jewish people, of course, widened the gap that began with the parting of the ways in the first century.

Justinian I (reigned 527–565 C.E.), was one of the greatest emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire, but was also "a virulent and consistent persecutor of all non-Orthodox Christians, heretics, pagans, and also of Jews and Judaism."[7] He added edicts called *novellae* (lit., "new laws") to the restrictions already placed upon the Jewish people by those who preceded him (cf. Theodosius II, r. 408–450). A complete discussion of Justinian's anti-Jewish measures is beyond the purview of this chapter, but those measures included confiscation of synagogues, prohibition of Jewish participation in local governments or even holding office in their own religious communities, and refusal to sell property to be used as places of Jewish worship.

In *Novellae* 146, Justinian countered the prevailing Jewish conviction that all readings must be done in Hebrew in the synagogue. Instead, he encouraged the additional use of the Greek Septuagint (LXX) or a Latin version. He also forbade the use of the Mishnah, as the Church generally took the position that the Jewish understanding of the Bible was woefully inferior to the Church's interpretations and could lead people astray. His work *Corpus Juris Civilis*[8] combined with his anti-Judaic *novellae* "virtually fixed the status of the Jews in Byzantine society for the

6 Constantinius, quoted in Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*, 350.
7 Andrew Sharf, "Justinian I," *EncJud*, 11:579.
8 Justinian I, *Corpus Juris Civilis* [Body of Civil Law] (529–34).

next 700 years."[9] His interference in the synagogue "attempted to impose a Christian interpretation of what Judaism and its holy texts should be."[10] These are important considerations as these decisions created a future anti-Jewish trajectory for the Church.

More specific to the Passover controversy was that Justinian "allegedly prohibited the celebration of Passover if its date fell before the date of Easter."[11] This may have been an early expression of a more punitive replacement theology[12] based on the undercurrent of deicide.[13] Everything in the Church was considered superior to the synagogue—the rules of Bible interpretation (hermeneutics), the rituals, the celebrations, the practices, the leadership, the sacred texts, and all that differentiated the two. Rather than building bridges, the Church under Justinian I burned the bridges of connection with its Jewish heritage. This, of course, was hardly a way of endearing the Jewish people to the Jewish Messiah and set the stage for further disputation and controversy and increased persecution of Jewish people by the medieval Church.

THE BLOOD LIBELS (12TH CENTURY–PRESENT)

The blood libels deserve a special place in the discussion of the ongoing conflict between the Jewish community and Chris-

9 Sharf, "Justinian I," 11:579. The term "Byzantine" when used of Christianity or of society at large relates to the churches in that region using a traditional Greek rite in worship and being subject to the canon law of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the church of the Eastern Roman Empire having its center in Constantinople.

10 Sharf, "Justinian I," 11:579.

11 Sharf, "Justinian I," 11:579.

12 Punitive replacement theology argues that God replaced the Jewish people with the Church because of Israel's sins, and therefore the nation of Israel had forfeited its biblical promises. Some would argue that these promises of blessing were always focused on the Church.

13 Deicide is the act of killing God. The Jewish people were accused of this because of the participation of the Jewish leaders in calling for Jesus's death. This false charge became the basis for terrible antisemitism throughout church history.

tianity.[14] The Jewish people were accused of murdering Christian children and using their blood to prepare the Passover *matzot*. Jewish historian Solomon Grayzel reflects on the irony of these tragic and resurgent accusations:

> It is one of the saddest aspects of Jewish experience that on the very evening when the Jew is supposed to recall the joys of freedom, he has frequently been made to feel the bitterest sorrows of exile. It is no less strange that a people so restricted in their choice of food should have been accused of eating human flesh and drinking human blood. Yet the charge has been made hundreds of times, in lands and periods which we consider fairly civilized.[15]

Modern minds recoil at the possibility that such accusations could even be made, as the alleged crime is so outrageous. Yet it is even possible that the Church inherited some of its antisemitic positions from pagan, pre-Christian history.[16] Alluding to ancient Alexandrian writers, historian James Parkes observes that some people thought that "[t]he Jews worshiped the head of an ass; and they ritually indulged in cannibalism."[17] In the Maccabean period as well, there was negative propaganda from Antiochus, the Syrian, which said "the Jews were accustomed to kidnap a Greek man . . . and later sacrifice him to their God and eat of his entrails."[18]

Similarly, superstitious ideas about the mystical power

14 For more on the blood libels and other forms of antisemitism, see chapter 9, "Passover and Antisemitism," by Olivier Melnick.

15 Solomon Grayzel, "Passover and the Ritual Murder Libel," in *The Passover Anthology*, ed. Philip Goodman, JPS Holiday (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 17–18.

16 For what is perhaps the most comprehensive study in the origins of antisemitism, see James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue: A Study of the Origins of Antisemitism* (1934; repr., New York: Atheneum, 1977).

17 Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, 16.

18 Grayzel, "Passover and the Ritual Murder Libel," 18. See also Yehuda Slutsky and Dina Porat, "Blood Libel," *EncJud*, 3:774–80. In a similar way, the same antisemitic tropes were also used against the Early Church, especially in regard to the Christian practice of Communion, which some authorities interpreted not as eating bread and wine to commemorate the sacrifice of Jesus's body and blood but as cannibalism.

of blood were also circulated during the Middle Ages. It was thought that Jews wanted to rid themselves of diseases unique to their race by comingling the "redeemed" and "innocent" blood of Christian children with the ritual elements of the Passover meal. After the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the Roman Catholic teaching of transubstantiation—that the Communion bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Jesus—fostered the notion that the blood of Jesus was flowing through the bodies of Christians. It was thought that since non-converted Jews refused baptism, an act according to medieval superstition that could heal disease, "Christianized blood" could effect the same result in place of baptism. The underlying theory leading to allegations of blood libel accused the Jewish community of "trying to . . . cure themselves by the application or the intake of the blood, the heart or the liver of a simple, sinless Christian, a male child by preference."[19]

Although none of this was true, these lies were still perpetuated by superstitious medieval Christianity. It was not until the time of the Crusades, however, that this libelous accusation became a frequent form of defamation. Perhaps the first occasion was in Norwich, England, in 1144. The allegation was as follows: "It was on the second day of Passover that the boy William was said to have disappeared, and a number of Jews were soon accused of having caused his death. . . . since the Jews performed the sacrifice of a Christian every year at about the time of the original Crucifixion."[20] Interestingly, it was a "converted" Jew who evidently provided the details about the supposed custom. Author and syndicated columnist Michael Freund says, "A Jewish convert to Catholicism, Theobald of Cambridge, was quick to corroborate the calumny, falsely claiming that rabbis and Jewish leaders would gather each year in Spain and draw lots to decide in which country they would kill a Christian child to use his blood in ritual practices."[21]

19 Grayzel, "Passover and the Ritual Murder Libel," 20.

20 Grayzel, "Passover and the Ritual Murder Libel," 19. See also Cecil Roth, *History of the Jews in England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941), 13.

21 Michael Freund, "Passover Blood Libels, Then and Now," *The Jerusalem Post*, April 13, 2014, http://www.jpost.com/Jewish-World/Judaism/Passover-blood-libels-then-and-now-348382.

In the decades that followed, other such incidents were alleged which were specifically connected with Passover. "In 1171, the Jewish community of Blois was accused of crucifying a Christian child for Passover and tossing his body into a local river. The entire community was imprisoned and then sentenced to be burned to death. When the Jews were taken to the *auto-da-fe* [ceremony for pronouncing judgment], they were told they could save themselves by converting, but nearly all of them refused to do so, preferring to die and sanctify God's name."[22]

Most of these alleged ritual murders were crucifixions. "The motif of torture and murder of Christian children in imitation of Jesus's Passion persisted with slight variations throughout the 12th century (Gloucester, England, 1168; Blois, France, 1171; Saragossa, Spain, 1182), and was repeated in many libels of the 13th century."[23]

Although found in its most virulent form during the Middle Ages, it should be noted that blood-libel accusations persisted through the centuries. In Spain, the Jews who had allegedly converted to Catholicism were called "Conversos"[24] and were said to collaborate with the chief rabbi of the Jewish community to crucify, abuse, and curse a child in the manner that Jesus was treated.[25]

Even when it was not directly related to Passover, members of the Jewish community were frequently accused of murdering Christians, and invariably the blood-libel charge was invoked. Such was the case when in 1840 Jews were blamed for the murder of a Capuchin monk and his servant, which became known as the Damascus Affair. The church leaders brought out various points of evidence to convince the authorities of the alleged Jewish actions, including "treatises which set out to prove the truth of the libel from the records of past accusations and Jewish sources. . . . Another way of implying the truth of the blood-libel charge was

22 Freund, "Passover Blood Libels, Then and Now."

23 Slutsky and Porat, "Blood Libel," 3:775.

24 Conversos were Jewish people who converted to Christianity under pressure but continued to practice Jewish traditions clandestinely in their homes, and were the focus of the Inquisition.

25 Slutsky and Porat, "Blood Libel," 3:775. See also Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jews*, 590.

to state it as a fact without denying it."[26]

False accusations were repeatedly made against the Jews of Russia. When there were Christian victims, there were Jewish suspects, usually linked to the libel that Jews required Christian blood for one reason or another. From 1799 to the Bolshevik Rebellion of 1917, there were numerous blood libels, but the cases were dismissed for lack of evidence. While the authorities may have declared that these were unsubstantiated charges of murder, the Russian populace engaged in an unrelenting persecution of the Jewish people. "With the growth of an antisemitic movement in Russia in the 1870s, the blood libel became a regular motif in the anti-Jewish propaganda campaign conducted in the press and literature."[27]

Of particular interest is the role played by the church leaders. "The chief agitators of the blood libels were monks. At the monastery of Supraśl crowds assembled to gaze on the bones of the 'child martyr Gabriello,' who had been allegedly murdered by Jews in 1690."[28] Many of the victims were considered martyrs complete with shrines, tombs, and even subsequent canonization by the Church (declaring a deceased person an officially recognized saint), all of which served to perpetuate the lie of ritual murders by the Jewish people.

It is no surprise that the Nazi propaganda in Germany used this insidious ploy to dehumanize the Jews. Disgusting cartoons depicting Jews collecting the blood of the innocents were combined with reinvestigations of previous baseless cases in which Jews had been acquitted. This fanned the flames of German antisemitism that had been seething for centuries. Links between the antisemitism of Adolf Hitler and the writings of Martin Luther are well known and vigorously discussed. In like manner Hitler used the sad history of the blood libels to fuel his campaign against the Jews. What was a Passover controversy in church history became the grounds for slander in the political realm.

It is obvious that the blood-libel component of the Passover controversy in church history has been used by Satan to instill fear,

26 Slutsky and Porat, "Blood Libel," 3:778.
27 Slutsky and Porat, "Blood Libel," 3:779.
28 Slutsky and Porat, "Blood Libel," 3:779.

suspicion, and hatred in the hearts of influential non-Jewish people throughout the ages. What else could account for the irrationality of these charges and their wholesale acceptance by huge swaths of otherwise civilized human beings? The growing distance between the Church and its Jewish roots, lack of understanding of Jewish beliefs and practices, and other related factors created the climate in which these irrational charges maintained credibility. One of the striking features of this history is the lack of evidence and the Church's repeated official denials that there were grounds for the blood-libel slanders. In an attempt to be fair and balanced, some of those declarations by church leaders should be included here.

Even though incidents of blood-libel accusations occurred repeatedly after the first one in 1144 in Norwich, there were no papal pronouncements about them until the middle of the thirteenth century. Jewish leaders sought help from ecclesiastical leaders due to the increase in the false charges and the resulting crimes against the Jewish populace. "On May 28, 1247, Pope Innocent IV wrote to the Archbishop of Vienne, in France, pointing out that various noblemen as well as the Bishop of Trois Chateaux had perpetrated against the Jews of Valrias cruelties of a most inhuman kind."[29] A young girl had been murdered, and the Jews were blamed. They had been arrested and tortured, and their property had been confiscated. In his letter, Pope Innocent IV said this was merely a concocted story used to steal Jewish property. He demanded the release of the prisoners and the restoration of the property.

Similar attempts to end the libels were issued by the church hierarchy in the form of papal bulls of protection, "which this and later popes used to issue to the Jews. . . . that the Christians themselves were the kidnappers and the murderers and had the sole object of robbing the Jews, or taking over the property of those killed."[30] This was a most unusual strategy! Did it work, we might ask, and did these edicts and pronouncements have any effect on the peasantry? Evidently, they did little to dissuade

29 Goodman, *The Passover Anthology*, 21. See also Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIII Century: A Study of Their Relations During the Years 1198–1254, Based on the Papal Letters and the Concillar Decrees of the Period* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1933), 263, 265.

30 Goodman, *The Passover Anthology*, 22.

the general populace from escalating their attacks at Passover time. Massacres and expulsions became the rule rather than the exception.

In 1422, another pope, Martin V, "accused Christian preachers of fomenting hatred of the Jews, but also spoke with horror of the libel that Jews mixed blood with the dough of the Passover *matzah*."[31] So on the one hand the pope wanted to protect the Jews, but on the other hand he perpetuated the blood-libel myth.

The children allegedly murdered for their blood were viewed as saints. For example, a Franciscan named Bernardino da Feltre accused the Jewish people of blood libels, which led to the Trent blood libel of 1475 in northern Italy. It seems that a two-year-old child named Simon disappeared. As expected, the Jews were accused of killing him, and the whole community was arrested and tortured until "confessions" were forthcoming. Many were executed and the rest expelled. "The pope at first refused to authorize the adoration of this 'victim of the Jews', but in due course he withdrew his opposition. In 1582 the infant Simon was officially proclaimed a saint of the Catholic Church."[32] In a too-little-and-too-late response centuries later, Rome attempted to make amends. In 1965, the Catholic Church withdrew its canonization and acknowledged that a judicial error had been committed against the Jews of Trent in this trial.[33]

When we consider Europe in the sixteenth century, one might ask about the ways in which the Jewish people were treated during the time of the Protestant Reformation. It is well known that Martin Luther (1483–1546) engaged in horrible antisemitic rhetoric. He began by attacking the practices of the Church against the Jews in *Jesus Christ Was a Jew by Birth* (1523),[34] but he ended by attacking the Jews in *About the Jews and Their Lies* (1543).[35] What is little known, however, is that other Reformers maintained a much more positive relationship with the Jews.

31 Goodman, *The Passover Anthology*, 22.

32 Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*, 580. See also Shlomo Simonsohn, "Trent," *EncJud*, 20:131.

33 Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*, 580.

34 Martin Luther, *Jesus Christ Was a Jew by Birth* (Wittenberg, 1523).

35 Martin Luther, *About the Jews and Their Lies* (1543).

Prior to Luther's publication of his diatribe against the Jews, "the Reformer Andreas Osiander issued an anonymous work that attacked the blood libels and their charges of ritual murder. In this pamphlet he disproves, item by item, the so-called 'proofs' of Jewish guilt and responsibility for slaying Christian children."[36] His attacks were against the Roman Church in this regard, and in spite of Luther's vicious preaching against the Jews, the anti-Jewish riots were greatly reduced in number during that time. His words may have been a glimpse of light in those dark ages due to the Reformation.

In 1540, Pope Paul III also spoke out against the rank-and-file Catholic treatment of the Jews. He believed that many Catholics were enemies of the Jews because they were blinded by avarice, which caused them to accuse the Jews of murdering children and drinking their blood. Unfortunately, even when the Roman Catholic authorities spoke against the blood libels, it had little effect on the superstitions of the people, who claimed that miracles occurred at the graves of the presumed martyrs. The Church could not afford to dispute the spurious miracles nor did it bother to refute the libels that surfaced over and over again.[37]

Yet another apparently positive response came from Pope Clement XIII in 1759 when he investigated accusations against the Jews of Poland and declared the charges to be false. However, the process took over a decade. The wheels of progress in protecting the Jews always seemed to "grind exceedingly slowly." So even though efforts were made to thwart the antisemitism of the libels, they were slight and made little difference among the masses.[38]

CONCLUSION

The Passover controversies have remained a blight on the Church. It has been a rather one-sided affair in which the Jewish

36 Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*, 650.
37 Goodman, *The Passover Anthology*, 22.
38 Goodman, *The Passover Anthology*, 22–23.

community has endured tragic mistreatment by the very people whose Savior is Jewish. In every era, the Enemy has waged war on his ancient foes, the Jewish people—from the very beginning when the importance of Passover was minimized through the changing of the calendar, to the edicts of the emperors and the popes who undermined the rightful place of Jewish tradition in the Church, to the slaughter of innocent Jewish people due to the malicious lies of the blood libels. It is incumbent therefore upon all who name the name of Yeshua to resist the temptation to turn a deaf ear to these things whenever they rear their ugly heads and spout their venomous lies. The old refrain comes to mind:

> How odd
> Of God
> To choose
> The Jews.
> But not so odd
> As those who choose
> A Jewish God
> Yet spurn the Jews.[39]

As followers of the Jewish Messiah, we must be vigilant in safeguarding God's chosen people and constantly call upon the Church and society in general to treat the Jewish people with respect. The Church, though, has an even greater responsibility. As followers of the Messiah, we are to shine the light of the Gospel so that our Jewish friends and neighbors can both hear and see the Gospel message and believe (Matt. 5:14–16; Rom. 10:14–17; 2 Cor. 4:3–5). We have centuries of darkness to overcome and so should approach this task with prayer and with our souls filled with the love of God that enables us to impart His love to the Jewish people (Rom. 5:5; 10:1). At times this will mean apologizing on behalf of our spiritual ancestors who mistreated the Jewish people. There might simply be no other way for the Church to overcome the past and "make the Jewish people jealous" of the Jewish Savior who lives in our hearts.

39 The first four lines of this poem are attributed to William Norman Ewer, whereas the remaining lines are attributed to Cecil Brown or Ogden Nash.

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Passover in Rabbinic Writings

Zhava Glaser

With the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., Judaism by necessity had to adapt to the fact that sacrifices could no longer be made. Unable to offer sacrifices to atone for sin, the rabbis suddenly needed to face a new reality if they wanted Judaism to survive.

According to legend, Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai escaped from Jerusalem in 70 C.E. and established a rabbinic center of learning in the city of Yavneh on the southern coastal plain of Israel (b. Gittin 56b). From there, he and his fellow rabbis founded what is known today as rabbinic Judaism, which centered on the *Torah*[1] and rabbinic teachings rather than on the Temple sacrifices and political jurisdiction.

1 The Torah refers to the five books of Moses. Note that key terms are usually italicized at first mention (sometimes a second time) even if mentioned in earlier chapters, and are generally set in roman type thereafter. Many such terms can also be found in the index and glossary at the back of the book.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RABBINIC TRADITION

When studying the Jewish roots of the Christian faith, we must be careful not to serendipitously weave together first-century and twenty-first-century Jewish traditions. We must not attempt to read medieval or modern-day Jewish practices into the time of Jesus and the disciples. Ancient Jewish literature is a vast and complex field that is often difficult to understand and must be navigated carefully. A respectful and cautious use of Jewish writings, however, can provide an enriching lens to help us see the New Testament in light of its Jewish background.

To gain an insight into how the Feast of Passover was celebrated in Jesus's day, we must turn to the oldest historical evidence. The very early history of the celebration of Passover is difficult to reconstruct; our richest source of information is in the *Talmud*, which forms the core of Jewish law. The Talmud is made up of sixty-three tractates or sections that contain the (often divergent) opinions of thousands of rabbis on a large variety of subjects, including history, ethics, exegesis, traditional lore, and religious practice.

The central core of the Talmud is known as the *Mishnah*. Originally, rabbinic discussions of the Torah were transmitted orally and thus are known as the Oral Torah and seen as a revelation in their own right. These traditions were committed to writing by Rabbi Judah HaNasi[2] before his death around 220 C.E.[3] The rabbis quoted in the Mishnah are known as *Tannaim*, or "repeaters," because they repeated the memorized discussions of earlier rabbis. The Mishnah is concise in its language and contains many of the traditions of the Pharisees, a religious political party from the time of Jesus. Because

2 The term *HaNasi* means "the Prince," and is the title of this rabbi, indicating that he was a key leader of the Jewish community.

3 Judah Goldin, "The Period of the Talmud," in *The Jews: Their History*, ed. Louis Finkelstein, 4th ed., 3 vols. (New York: Schocken, 1970–71), 1:170. Solomon Schechter and Wilhelm Bacher, "Judah I.," in *Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, ed. Isidore Singer (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1904), 7:333, accessed February 5, 2017. http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/8963-judah-i.

of this, a critical reading of the Mishnah can give us an insight into how Passover was celebrated in Jesus's day.

A later commentary, the *Gemara*, recorded the attempts of subsequent rabbis to adapt the teachings of the Torah and the Mishnah into their life situation. Thus, the Gemara analyzes, expands upon, and explains the Mishnah. The rabbis quoted in the Gemara (200 to 500 C.E.) are known as *Amoraim*, or "those who say," because they talked about and expounded the teachings of the Oral Torah. Together, the Mishnah and Gemara make up the Talmud.

The Gemara actually exists in two independent compilations from the two main centers of Jewish scholarship: the Jerusalem Gemara, which forms the Jerusalem Talmud,[4] is dated 350 to 425 C.E., and the Babylonian Gemara, forming the Babylonian Talmud,[5] is dated around 500 C.E.[6] The Babylonian Talmud is much more extensive and is considered to be more authoritative regarding Jewish law; but the Jerusalem Talmud often gives us greater insight into practices in the land of Israel in the first century.

An entire tractate of the Talmud, Pesahim (lit., "Passovers"), is devoted to discussions on the Passover. The first four chapters of Pesahim address the laws of leaven, chapters 5–9 tell of the laws relating to the Passover Lamb, and chapter 10 describes the laws of the actual Passover *Seder*.[7] Scholars believe Pesahim to be

4 The Jerusalem Talmud, or *Talmud Yerushalmi* (i.e., the Gemara written in Israel), is the older and actually originates from the Galilee area (Tiberias and Caesarea) rather than from Jerusalem, and because of this is also known as the Palestinian Talmud. The Jerusalem Talmud is more difficult to read and is incomplete, only covering thirty-seven of the sixty-three tractates of the Mishnah.

5 The Babylonian Talmud, also known as the Talmud Bavli but usually referred to as just "The Talmud," reflects the discussions of the Jewish academies in the Mesopotamian cities of Pumbedita and Sura, in modern-day Iraq.

6 The date of the Babylonian Talmud is a matter of debate among scholars; opinions range from 500 to 700 C.E. For further discussion on the dating of the Talmud, see H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, trans. and ed. Markus Bockmuehl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996). See also Shmuel Safrai and Peter J. Tomson, eds., *The Literature of the Sages. First Part: Oral Tora, Halakha, Mishna, Tosefta, Talmud, External Tractates*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

7 *Seder* means "order" and refers to the order of service followed in Passover celebrations.

the kernel of what later became the Passover *Haggadah*, which gives the precise order of the Passover Seder meal.

Between the seventh and eighth centuries, the *Geonim*, the Jewish sages in ancient Babylonia, compiled a version of the Passover observance on which today's Haggadah is based. Fragments of the ninth-century prayer book of Amram Gaon, a famous Jewish leader of the time, were found in the Cairo Genizah, a collection of more than three hundred thousand bits of ancient documents preserved by chance behind a wall of the Ben Ezra synagogue near Cairo, Egypt. These fragments, which date from 870 C.E. to the nineteenth century, contain the earliest known version of the Haggadah.[8]

Also in the Cairo Genizah we have the prayer book of Saadiah Gaon, one of the greatest Jewish sages of the tenth century, containing fragments of an additional Haggadah. At this early stage, many versions of the Haggadah existed, and it was not until the invention of the printing press in the late fifteenth century that the first printed Haggadah was produced and what we have come to know as the modern Passover Haggadah began to be standardized.

THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE

If we want to learn how Passover was celebrated between the Old and New Testaments, so we can gain an insight into how the feast was observed in the time of Jesus, we need to look at ancient historical records.

The observance of Passover was instituted in the Torah and consisted of eating the Passover lamb and unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The only rule that the Torah gives for the actual eating of the Passover lamb is found in Exodus 12:11:

8 For a masterful study of the Cairo Genizah, see S. D. Goitein and Paula Sanders (vol. 6, indexes), *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–93).

> Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD's Passover.

The rabbinic sages have considered this command to be applicable only to the first Passover, when the Israelites were fleeing Egypt. Passovers after that were to be festive occasions, celebrating the freedom that God had granted the Israelites and serving as opportunities for parents to instruct their children, reminding them of the story of the Exodus lest they forget that God brought them from slavery to freedom (Exod. 12:26–27; 13:8).[9]

After the closing of the Old Testament, the book of Jubilees,[10] reflecting practices at the latest one hundred years before Jesus, expands on the biblical commandment. Though it is not authoritative,[11] Jubilees nevertheless gives us an insight into how Passover was celebrated before the destruction of the Temple. Chapter 49 of the book mentions that "all Israel was eating the flesh of the paschal lamb, and drinking the wine, and was lauding and blessing, and giving thanks to the Lord God of their fathers . . ." (Jubilees 49:6).[12] Thus we see that the Passover lamb was still being sacrificed at this time.

The book of Jubilees also makes note of the passage in Deuteronomy 16:2 that states that once the Temple was established, the Passover sacrifice could only be offered there, as opposed to in individual homes:

> You shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God from the

9 See also b. Pesahim 114 for discussion on *karpas*, or the vegetable.

10 Jubilees is part of the Old Testament pseudepigrapha, an early extrabiblical source, and is dated at the latest as 100 B.C.E.

11 Jubilees is not considered part of the Bible by Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Eastern Orthodox Churches, but is considered canonical by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as well as by Ethiopian Jews. For lists of the books in the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, see appendix 1, "The Jewish and Protestant Canons of the Bible." The Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches include additional books in their editions of the Bible.

12 See R. H. Charles, trans., *The Book of Jubilees; or The Little Genesis*, Translations of Early Documents (1902; repr., London: SPCK; New York: Macmillan, 1917), 208. For another translation, see Joseph B. Lumpkin, trans., *The Book of Jubilees, [or], The Little Genesis, The Apocalypse of Moses* (Blountsville, AL: Fifth Estate, 2006).

> flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to establish His name. (Deut. 16:2)

Jubilees highlights the changed nature of the Passover celebration:

> And they may not celebrate the passover in their cities, nor in any place save before the tabernacle of the Lord, or before His house where His name hath dwelt; and they will not go astray from the Lord." (Jubilees 49:21)[13]

Jewish people living far from the Temple would participate by sending their half-shekel Temple tax to Jerusalem by "sacred envoys" that represented their community, and celebrating Passover as a social occasion in the home or synagogue.[14] First-century Romano-Jewish historian Flavius Josephus writes:

> Accordingly, on the occasion of the feast called Passover, at which they sacrifice from the ninth to the eleventh hour, and a little fraternity, as it were, gathers round each sacrifice, of not fewer than ten persons (feasting alone not being permitted), while the companies often included as many as twenty . . . . (*Jewish War* 6.423 [Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library])

The rabbis of the Mishnah (Tannaim) use similar language, referring to the observation of Passover as a fellowship, or in Hebrew, a *havurah*.[15] Many scholars believe the first-century Greek world influenced these early rabbis. These scholars view the first-century Passover Seder as an early rabbinic version of the Greek symposium, a dinner in the home in which people gathered to share sophisticated arguments over wine.[16] However, others argue that

13 Charles, *The Book of Jubilees; or The Little Genesis*, 211.

14 Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder*, 8.

15 See Aharon Oppenheimer, *The 'Am Ha-aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, trans. I. H. Levine, Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 118–56.

16 See, for example, Jordan D. Rosenblum, *Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 167–69. See also Siegfried Stein, "The Influence of Symposia Literature on the Literary Form of the Pesaḥ Haggadah," *Journal*

these meals occurred in the synagogue instead, basing this on a passage from a first-century inscription found by archaeologists that refers to the synagogue as a location where communal meals took place.[17] Still other scholars see the Mishnah as taking pains to differentiate the Seder from the Greek symposium.[18] Whether the Seder was influenced by Greek practice or not, it is clear that by the first century, the celebration of Passover took place among groups of family members or friends. Thus, Jesus's Last Supper, a celebration of the Passover with His disciples, is in line with what we know of Jewish customs of the time.[19]

Scholarly opinions differ, however, as to the degree to which the mishnaic description of the Passover represents the observance of the feast during the time of Jesus, and how much was added subsequently, after the Temple's destruction in 70 C.E. Once sacrifices could no longer be offered, the sacrificial lamb was omitted and the Passover celebration by necessity reverted back to one in the home and synagogue, as older traditions were assigned new meanings to make up for the inability to offer sacrifices. One scholar has argued that while the Mishnah depicts pre-70 C.E. observances of Passover, their portrayal is biased by the rabbis' desire to maintain continuity with the past as the rabbinic leadership learned to cope with the catastrophic loss of the Temple.[20]

of Jewish Studies 8, no. 15 :(1957) 2–1.

17 See discussion on the Theodotos inscription in M. Martin, "Communal Meals in the Late Antique Synagogue," *Byzantina Australiensa* 15 (2004): 55, http://www.aabs.org.au/byzaust/byzaus15/, reprinted in M. Martin, "Communal Meals in the Late Antique Synagogue," in *Feast, Fast or Famine: Food and Drink in Byzantium*, edited by W. Mayer and S. Trzcionka, Byzantina Australiensia 15 (Brisbane: Australian Associate for Byzantine Studies, 2005), 135–46; see also Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005), 54–56, 129.

18 Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder*, xiv.

19 For a discussion of Jesus's Last Supper with His disciples related to the celebration of Passover in the Gospel of Luke, see chapter 4, "Passover in the Gospel of Luke," by Darrell L. Bock. For a related discussion of the same in the Gospel of John, see chapter 5, "Passover in the Gospel of John," by Mitch Glaser.

20 Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder*, xiii.

THE FOUR CUPS

The first mention of the traditional four cups of wine to be taken during the Passover meal is found in the Mishnah. Because the Mishnah was written over many years, scholars have looked carefully at the various passages, trying to reconstruct the oldest depiction of the Seder. One talmudic scholar, Joseph Tabory, looking for the earliest core of the tradition, believes that the oldest passages are those that state a practice in the past tense, immediately followed by the present tense. Thus, he focuses on these passages and builds a detailed depiction of the oldest layer of the ceremony surrounding the eating of the Paschal lamb. Using those criteria, the passages listed below would be among the earliest passages describing the celebration of a Passover meal in the home or synagogue and can perhaps give us an insight into how Passover was celebrated in the time of Jesus. According to Tabory, the earliest sources show that the ceremony was originally organized around four cups of wine, and each cup had a text to be spoken along with it (emphasis added to verbs to show past versus present tense):

> They *poured* him [the leader of the Seder] the first cup . . . he *recites* the blessing for the day (v. 2).
>
> They *brought* him unleavened bread, lettuce, and haroset (fruit purée or relish) . . . they *bring* him the Paschal lamb (v. 3).
>
> They *poured* him the second cup, he *begins* with the disgrace (or: lowly status) [of our ancestors], and *concludes* with glory and he *expounds* the biblical passage "my father was a fugitive Aramean" until the end of the section (v. 4).
>
> They *poured* him the third cup; he *recites* the grace after meals (v. 5).
>
> The fourth [cup], he *recites* the *Hallel*,[21] and *says* over it the bless-

21 Psalms 113–118 are known as the *Hallel*. Some scholars have speculated that Psalms 77, 78, 105, and 106 may also have been recited during very early Passover

ing of the song (v. 8).[22]

The blessings over the first and third cups were also recited on nonfestival days, such as weekdays and the Sabbath. We know this is an early practice because in the Mishnah we see disagreements between Hillel and Shammai (two very famous and influential rabbis in the first century B.C.E.) about these weekday prayers, showing that they were in existence before the destruction of the Temple (see, e.g., m. Pesahim 10:2). However, the blessing over the second cup, after which the leader relates the story of Passover, and the fourth cup, the *Hallel* (or praise), are not part of the daily blessings, and were specifically added for the Passover.[23]

It was customary in mishnaic times, in the period before 220 C.E., to precede a festive meal with the serving of hors d'oeuvres, or what we practice today as the different dippings during the Seder (these are possibly the "dippings" referred to in Matthew 26:23 and John 13:26–30). This would explain the statement by Rabbi Nachman[24] in which he says that reclining was only necessary for two of the four cups of wine. The first two cups would be taken in an anteroom before the meal, and cups three and four would be taken after the meal, which was eaten in a reclining position. The majority of rabbis disagreed with Rabbi Nachman, and decreed that all four cups should be taken while reclining to the left, as reclining was associated with the notion of freedom, because only free men could drink in such comfort while slaves would have to stand to serve them (b. Pesahim 108a).

Baruch Bokser, who taught Talmud and rabbinical studies

celebrations. For example, see Judith Hauptman, "How Old Is the Haggadah?," *Judaism* 51, pt. 1 (2002): 9, http://www.globethics.net/gel/9770555.

22 These verses are taken from m. Pesahim 10, quoted in Joseph Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah: Historical Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2008), 6. For a discussion on the different methods of discerning dating in early Jewish exegesis, see David Instone Brewer, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 30 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [P. Siebeck], 1992).

23 Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah*, 7.

24 Rabbi Nachman bar Yaakov, usually known just as Rabbi Nachman, was one of the greatest sages of his time, part of the third generation of Amoraim, sages who wrote the Gemara in Babylon (b. Pesahim 108a).

at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City, points out that the tradition of the four cups was given several additional meanings in the Talmud, citing these talmudic passages:

> Drawing on the example of Egypt: the four cups correspond to the four terms and dimensions of redemption used in Exodus 6:6–7.
>
> Drawing on the example of Joseph, an individual redeemed from prison: the four cups correspond to four instances that the cup is mentioned in conjunction with the cupbearer's dream.
>
> Drawing on the Daniel motif of four successive world empires: the four cups correspond to the four world empires, after which the kingdom of God will come.
>
> Drawing on the prophetic references to a cup: the four correspond to "four cups of retribution that the Holy One, praised be He, will give to the nations of the world to drink . . . and corresponding to them [i.e., the four cups of retribution], the Holy One, praised be He, will give Israel four cups of consolation to drink" (y. Pesahim 37b–c on Mishna 10:1).[25]

From these very early examples, we can see that the tradition of four cups taken at Passover can credibly be dated to the time of Jesus and could very well be the cups that Jesus mentioned at the Last Supper Passover celebration in Luke 22.

THE PASSOVER MEAL

After the destruction of the Temple, when sacrifices could no longer be offered, the lamb was replaced by an ordinary fes-

25 Quoted in Baruch M. Bokser, "Ritualizing the Seder," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 56, no. 3 (1988): 456–57.

tive meal centered around the four cups described above, and the telling of the Passover story became the more central part of the celebration.

The festive meal itself consisted of lettuce, *charoset* (a sweet mixture), and "two cooked foods," as opposed to just one dish served in a regular meal (b. Pesahim 114b).[26] According to later tradition, after the writing of the Talmud, and following extensive rabbinic discussion, the "two cooked foods" became symbolic of the two sacrifices that could no longer be offered: the Paschal lamb, later represented by a shankbone, and the *hagigah* sacrifice,[27] later represented by a roasted egg. These two "dishes" were the minimum to be served at the Passover Seder; Rabbi Saadiah in the tenth century suggested four dishes, and today, many more are often served.[28]

The earliest mention of the requirements of the Passover meal were in a quote attributed to first-century Rabbi Gamaliel I,[29] who declared that whoever did not discuss *pesach* (the Passover sacrifice), *matzah* (the unleavened bread), and *maror* (the bitter herbs) during the meal did not fulfill his Passover duty (m. Pesahim 10:5). The Passover sacrifice was meant to remind the children of Israel of the "angel of death" passing over their homes in Egypt, the matzah reminded them of the hurry in which they left Egypt, and the maror of the bitterness of their lives as slaves.

Matzah

Bokser points out that whereas the Torah makes the *eating*

26 Babylonian Talmud Pesahim 114a does not specify the kind of vegetable to use for the "lettuce."

27 The *hagigah* was the additional festive offering that was to be brought by Jewish males to Jerusalem during the holidays of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot. See more on this under the subheading "Hagigah" that follows.

28 Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah*, 12. For more on the foods prepared and dishes eaten during a traditional Passover Seder meal, see chapter 19, "Passover Foods and Recipes," by Mitch Forman.

29 Rabbi Gamaliel I (also spelled Gamliel), who is mentioned in the book of Acts, was a leading rabbi in the early first-century Sanhedrin, and grandson of the great Rabbi Hillel. He is known for advising his peers not to persecute the believers in Jesus, lest they possibly find themselves fighting against God (Acts 5:33–42).

of the Paschal lamb central, Rabbi Gamaliel elevates the matzah and maror to equal importance, so that the mere *mention* of them was deemed sufficient to fulfill the obligation, rather than the physical eating. The Gemara further increases the importance of the matzah and maror by specifying that these should be lifted up while they are being discussed, but forbidding the lifting of the representation of the sacrifice, lest a person appear to be eating a sacrifice outside of the Temple (b. Pesahim 116b).[30]

Bokser notes that in attempting to maintain the relevancy of the Passover meal in a post-Temple world, when a lamb could no longer be offered, the Mishnah elevates the significance of the matzah to a central place in the Passover observance. Thus, the rabbis portray the Passover sacrifice as important but not crucial, while the presence of matzah became essential. In other words, according to Bokser, the Mishnah's response to the Temple's destruction represents "resisting the trauma," or "working through the traumatic disruption to find a new basis for religious life."[31] Judaism, which had revolved around the Temple and its sacrifices, now needed another, more relevant focus.

As a side note, talmudic scholar Judith Hauptman has pointed out that women were actually given a crucial role in the talmudic observance of Passover, since they were entrusted with baking the Passover matzah, a process filled with very detailed and crucial regulations. Hauptman points out that in m. Pesahim 3:3–4, the careful instructions about baking matzah are stated in the feminine gender.[32] This is significant because if the matzah were not prepared correctly, both the men and women consuming it were liable to the punishment of *karet*, or being cut off from their people (m. Pesahim 3:5).

30 See also Bokser, "Ritualizing the Seder," 449–50.

31 Bokser, *The Origins of the Seder*, 2.

32 Judith Hauptman, "The Talmud's Women in Law and Narrative," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues*, no. 28, no. 1 (2015): 37, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/nashim.issue-28.

Maror

According to the *Tosefta*,[33] even the poorest person in Israel was required to recline during the Seder (m. Tosefta 10:1).[34] However, because *maror* was eaten as part of the hors d'oeuvres, the eating of these bitter herbs did not require one to recline. Rashi[35] explains this in the eleventh century by pointing out that since reclining was a symbol of freedom, the maror, as a symbol of the bitterness of slavery, was not to be eaten while reclining (b. Pesahim 108a, 116a).

The Gemara discusses how the commandment of eating matzah and maror was fulfilled in the days of the Temple. Rabbi Hillel advocated eating them together in the form of a sandwich, to fulfill the passage in Numbers 9:11, "They shall eat it with unleavened bread [matzah] and bitter herbs [maror]," where both items (matzah and maror) appear together with just one verb ("shall eat") (b. Pesahim 115a). Other rabbis advocated eating them separately, so the compromise was made to first eat them separately, and then again together (Shulchan Aruch 475:1).[36] According to Rashi (eleventh century) and Maimonides (twelfth century),[37] the Hillel "sandwich" also included the Passover lamb before the destruction of the Temple when a sacrifice could still be made. While we do not know exactly how this was done at the time of Jesus, the Hillel sandwich today consists of matzah, maror, and charoset eaten together.

33 The *Tosefta*, meaning "supplement" or "addition," is a compilation of writings from the time of the Mishna (pre-220 C.E.) that are not included in the Mishna but appear as fragments in other rabbinic sources.

34 Joshua Kulp, "Mishnah Tosefta Pesahim," *Shiurim Online Beit Midrash*, accessed December 2, 2015, http://learn.conservativeyeshiva.org/haggadah-and-the-seder-0-mishnah-tosefta-pesahim, based on the Kaufman manuscript: http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/talmud/mishna/selectmi.asp.

35 Rashi is an abbreviation of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040–1105 C.E.), a medieval French rabbi who wrote extensive authoritative commentaries on the Bible and the Talmud.

36 Shulchan Aruch is known as the Code of Jewish Law. Joseph ben Ephraim Karo, *Code of Jewish Law* (קיצור שולחן ערוך)*: A Compilation of Jewish Laws and Customs*, comp. Solomon ben Joseph Ganzfried, trans. Hyman E. Goldin, rev. ed., 4 vols. (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1927).

37 Moses Maimonides (1135–1204) was a Sephardic rabbi, philosopher, physician, and astronomer, as well as a major influential Jewish scholar.

Charoset

While there is no mention in the Bible of *charoset*, the sweet apple mixture that is eaten at Passover, it is included in the Mishnah as part of the Passover observance, which means it was possibly a practice dating back to the time of Jesus. Rabbi Eleazar ben Zadok, a first-century rabbi, claimed that eating charoset at Passover was a *mitzvah*, i.e., a commandment. Because the Mishnah records both sides of rabbinic discussions, we know that the other sages of his time disagreed that it was a commandment, but did agree that it ought to be part of the observance of the Passover (m. Pesahim 10:3).

What exactly was charoset? The Mishnah mentions it, so we know it was part of the Passover tradition at least by the third century, but it does not tell us exactly what charoset was. It is only later, in the Babylonian Talmud, that we learn that it was a dip for the lettuce, and consisted of an apple mixture that resembled mortar, a reminder of the building materials used by the Israelite slaves in Egypt (b. Pesahim 115b, 116a). The rabbis of the Talmud also found symbolism not only in the appearance of the charoset but in the apple itself—one of the many traditional explanations was that an apple was eaten in remembrance of the Israelite women in Egypt. This is from a story in the Talmud that the Israelite women used to give birth under apple trees in Egypt to protect their newborns, thus continuing to experience God's blessing in the midst of persecution (b. Sotah 116a).[38]

The Jerusalem Talmud describes the charoset differently, noting that its consistency was more liquid, and thus was symbolic of blood (y. Pesahim 10:3, 37d.). Joseph Tabory, who authored the Jewish Publication Society commentary on the Haggadah,

38 Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov says that giving birth under the apple trees removed them "far from the notice of the Egyptians, who had decreed death on all newborn Jewish males." The Jewish sages explain, says Kitov, that unlike other fruit trees, the apple tree first produces its fruit and then its protective leaves; likewise the Israelite women, who concealed their pregnancies and gave birth in the fields, under the apple trees, trusting God to reveal Himself and protect them and their newborn children. Eliyahu Kitov, הגדה של פסח; *The Heritage Haggadah: With Laws, Customs, Traditions, and Commentary for the Seder Night*, trans. Gershon Robinson (1961; Jerusalem: Feldheim Publishers, 1999), 62–63.

offers several other interpretations, suggesting that the reminder referred to the blood of Israelite children killed by Pharaoh; or the shed blood leading to divine deliverance, symbolizing either the first or last plague; or the redemption brought by the blood of the lamb that was smeared on the doorposts of Israelite homes. Tabory notes further that eminent sixteenth-century talmudic scholar Rabbi Moses Isserles (1520–1572), as a compromise, concluded that the charoset should be thick, but red wine should be added in memory of the blood.[39] Essentially, however, we do not know how early the tradition of the charoset was practiced, or how it was understood at different points in time.

Hagigah

The *hagigah* was the voluntary offering that was to be made on the three main Israelite festivals: Passover (*Pesach*), the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost (*Shavuot*) and the Feast of Booths (*Sukkot*). An entire tractate of the Talmud is devoted to the laws of the hagigah.

While the Temple stood, the hagigah was originally a separate sacrifice, at Passover eaten before the lamb, according to the rabbis, so that the Passover lamb would not be eaten in great hunger, lest a bone of the sacrifice be broken in the rush to satisfy one's hunger (y. Pesahim 6:4, 33c.). In a different passage, the rabbis suggest that the Passover sacrifice was to be eaten solely to obey the commandment of God, and must not be eaten to satisfy one's hunger at all (b. Pesahim 115a).

This posed a problem in that the Torah specified that none of the Passover lamb was to be left for the following day. In that case, the rabbis said, if the size of the group was small, there was to be no hagigah sacrifice, lest the Passover lamb not be entirely consumed because the people were already full.[40] We have no record in the New Testament of Jesus or His disciples specifically offering the hagigah sacrifice; however, Leviticus 23:8 does mention

39 Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah*, 8–9.
40 Tabory, *JPS Commentary on the Haggadah*, 9–10.

a daily "offering by fire" to be made on each day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and we can assume that this sacrifice was being offered at the time of Jesus. After the destruction of the Temple, the hagigah came to be symbolized at Passover by a roasted egg, and is still part of the modern-day Passover celebration.

THE "FOUR SONS" AND THE CHANGING RABBINIC VIEWS OF REDEMPTION

A fundamental change had to be made in Judaism after the destruction of the Temple and the loss of national independence, as the traditional concept of redemption in the Passover—liberation from Egyptian bondage to the freedom of an independent nation—contradicted the daily reality of the Jewish people after 70 C.E. In order to reconcile the original meaning of Passover redemption with the reality of Jewish life once the Temple was destroyed, the rabbinic leadership chose to spiritualize the concept of divine redemption as potentially present in every Israelite's daily life.

The concept of redemption evolved in many directions among the three main branches of Judaism. Orthodox Judaism believes in a personal Messiah who will redeem humankind and usher in a Messianic era of peace, which will include an eventual resurrection of the dead.[41] Conservative Judaism generally believes more in a Messianic era (although some Conservative Jews still believe in a personal Messiah) in which humankind will be redeemed from the evils of this world. In this view, each individual has the responsibility to bring about the Messianic age through good deeds in this present life.[42] Reform Judaism,

41 See Moses Maimonides, "Thirteen Principles of the Jewish Faith." The twelfth principle asserts belief in the coming of the Messiah and the thirteenth speaks of the belief in the resurrection of the dead. For more on these principles, see Aryeh Kaplan, *Maimonides' Principles: The Fundamentals of Jewish Faith;* י"ג עקרים של הרמב"ם, 2nd ed. (New York: National Conference of Synagogue Youth; Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, 1984).

42 The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, The Rabbinical Assembly, and United Synagogue of America, *Emet Ve'emunah* (אמת ואמונה): *Statement of*

the more liberal of the branches, believes that a personal Messiah is not needed, but rather that human beings will be redeemed by their own intellect, and will through their efforts bring about a Messianic era in which humanity will live in peace.[43]

The various rabbinic views of redemption evolved from a single event in history, the Exodus, to an experience affecting every Jewish person in every age, as well as something that would conceivably come in the distant future. The early transformation of the concept of redemption can be seen in the evolution of rabbinic interpretation regarding the "four sons."[44]

During the Passover Seder, four symbolic sons ask four different questions,[45] and the answers to those questions provide the structure for the retelling of the Passover story.

The *wise son* asks the meaning of the statutes that the Lord commanded Israel. The response is the telling of the story of the Exodus, the signs and wonders wrought by God, and the culmination in the commandments given by God to His people (Deut. 6:20–25).

The *simple son* merely asks, "What is this?" In response, he is told the story of the slaying of the firstborn of the Egyptians, and the redemption of the firstborn among the Israelites (Exod. 13:11–16). There is also a *son who does not know how to ask*, and who is given a similar answer (Exod. 13:8).

The *wicked son*, however, asks, "What does this mean to *you*?" (Exod. 12:21–28; esp. v. 26). It is the (later) talmudic mention of the wicked son's question that displays a small but significant change in interpretation. An early commentary, the *Mekhilta*,[46] says:

Principles of Conservative Judaism (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1988), 28–32.

43 See Union of American Hebrew Congregations, *Reform-Liberal-Progressive Judaism: Its Ideals and Concepts, as Set Forth in the Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1937).

44 See also the discussion on the Four Nights in Targum Neofiti in Clemens Leonhard, *The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions in Current Research*, Studia Judaica 35 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006).

45 These were originally three questions, based on three Torah passages: Exodus 12:26–27; 13:14–15; and Deuteronomy 6:20–23.

46 The *Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael* is a rabbinic commentary to the book of Exodus; the identity of its author, "Rabbi Ishmael," is a subject of debate among scholars. Its date, also difficult to establish, is estimated to be some time in the

> Because he excludes himself from the group, you also should exclude him from the group, and say unto him: "It is because of that which the Lord did for me" (v. 8)—for me but not for you. Had you been there, you would not have been redeemed. (Mekhilta on Exod. 12:26)[47]

The Jerusalem Talmud adds an interesting nuance:

> The wicked son, what does he say? "What mean you by this service?" (Exod. 12:26) What is this bother that you have troubled us with each and every year? Because he excludes himself from the group, you also should say to him: "It is because of that which the Lord did for me" (v. 8)—for me but He did not do for "that man" (the wicked son). Had "that man" been in Egypt, he would not have been fit to be redeemed from there ever. (y. Pesahim 10, 37)[48]

The Jerusalem Talmud declares that by asking in this way, this wicked son has removed himself from the community, thereby excluding himself from Israel's redemption as well. A *beraita*[49] in the Jerusalem Talmud says, "If that person had been in Egypt, he would never have been worthy to be redeemed from there."[50] In saying this, the Jerusalem Talmud differs from other rabbinic writings, making the redemption from Egypt conditional upon the worthiness of the recipient. This is key, because in doing so it then empowers every single Israelite with the ability to choose

third or fourth centuries. For more on the Mekhilta, see Jacob Z. Lauterbach, trans., *Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael: A Critical Edition on the Basis of the Manuscripts and Early Editions with an English Translation, Introduction and Notes*, 2nd ed., 2 vols., JPS Classic Reissues (1933–35; repr., Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 2004).

47 Quoted from Mordechai Silverstein, trans., "The Four Sons of the Haggadah—Introduction to Rabbinic Midrash," *Shiurim Online Beit Midrash*, accessed December 2, 2015, http://learn.conservativeyeshiva.org/introduction-to-rabbinic-midrash-10-lesson-10-the-four-sons-of-the-haggadah.

48 Quoted from Silverstein, "The Four Sons of the Haggadah."

49 A *beraita* is a rabbinic quote from the mishnaic period that was not included in the Mishna but was quoted by later sources.

50 See Fred O. Francis, "The Baraita of the Four Sons," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 42, no. 2 (1974): 280–97.

to become worthy of redemption if they are careful to obey the commandments.

This *beraita*, although not grounded in Scripture, reflected the common rabbinic perception of life. Faced with the absence of the Temple and the reality of life under Roman rule, the rabbis of the Jerusalem Talmud provided a way for each individual to merit spiritual, and not political, redemption.[51]

After all four sons ask their questions, the Mishnah states that the father is to begin his answer with the humiliation faced by the wandering Aramean, and to finish with the redemption from Egypt (m. Pesahim 10:4; b. Pesahim 116a). In its reference to Joshua 24:2–4, where Joshua refers to God taking Abraham from idolatry to belief in Himself, the Jerusalem Talmud is continuing to reinterpret redemption in a spiritual manner, as meaning to go from idolatry to belief in the one true God. Thus once again the Jerusalem Talmud spiritualizes the concept of redemption, to make it relevant to every person in every generation as part of Judaism's reinvention of itself following the destruction of the Temple.

In addition, in closing with the *Hallel* praise psalms, the participants in the Passover meal give praise to God for bringing them as individuals from idolatry into true worship, thus making the concept of redemption relevant no matter what the physical reality of the Jewish people might have been.[52]

After the loss of the Temple and the sacrificial system, Passover in rabbinic teachings was transformed from a celebration centered on the sacrifice of the Lamb, to a home celebration. This shift recreated the holiday as a teaching tool reminding individual Jewish people and families of the importance of being faithful to the one true God and rejecting idolatry, that one might merit a future redemption of a more spiritual nature. Thus, the Jerusalem Talmud and other early rabbinic writings, through their reinterpretation of the Passover, recast redemption from merely a historic experience to a more spiritual reality available to those within the Jewish community who were loyal

51 See Francis, "The Baraita of the Four Sons."

52 Baruch M. Bokser, "Changing Views of Passover and the Meaning of Redemption According to the Palestinian Talmud," *AJS Review* 10, no. 1 (1985): 11–12.

to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This background could well have created the atmosphere within first-century Judaism enabling the Jewish faithful standing on the banks of the Jordan River to grasp the truth of John's testimony, that a greater redemption had now come through Jesus, the Lamb of God and Messiah who had come to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Passover, both in Scripture and rabbinic tradition, from the first century onward pointed the Jewish community towards a greater Messianic hope. The question the Jewish people needed to answer both then and now is whether or not Jesus embodies this hope.

Reviews

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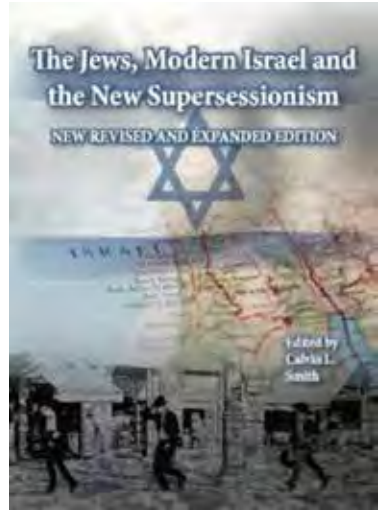
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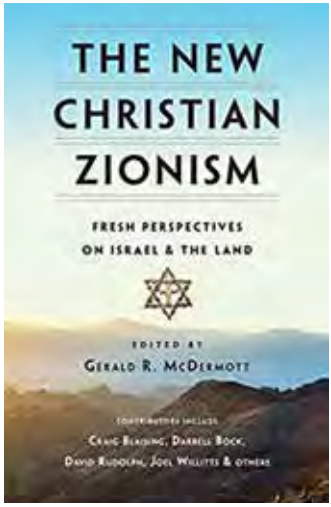
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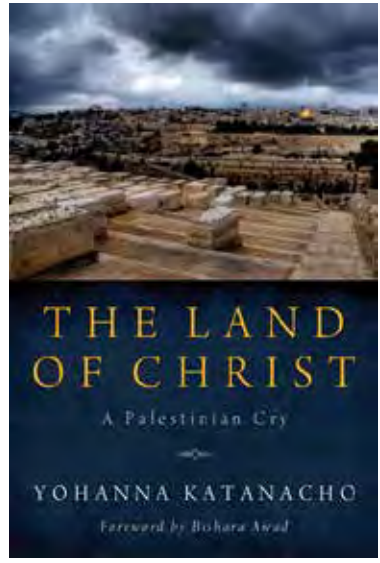
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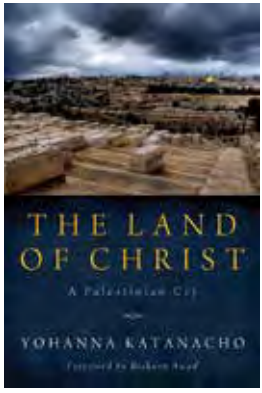


Review by Richard Flashman

Yohanna Katanacho was born in June of 1967, now serves as the academic dean for Bethlehem Bible College in the Central West Bank region of the Jordan River under the political control of the Palestinian National Authority. Dr. Katanacho is a Palestinian Evangelical Christian, the son of an Armenian Catholic mother and a Roman Catholic Palestinian father. Although an atheist in his teen years, Dr. Katanacho decided to follow Jesus Christ when he was twenty years old. He then went on to earn a B.S. at Bethlehem University, an M.A. at Wheaton College and an M.Div. and Ph.D. at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, IL. He has authored several books including: *A Commentary on Proverbs, The Seven "I am" Sayings in the Gospel of John*, and *The King of Jews and His Young Followers*.

Clearly he has the background and academic credentials to present a Palestinian evangelical perspective on the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants (going forward referred to as "the promised land").

Katanacho sets out to provide what he considers to be a biblical view of the land that is rooted in biblical love, faithful to the Bible, and seeks justice for both Palestinians and Jews (6). He challenges the Jewish people's right to the land believing the promise of "Land" to the "people of God" is fulfilled in the New Testament. To back his position he challenges Jewish claims to the land. Katanacho believes that the land known as Israel belongs to Christ, and that the promises of the land now apply wholly to the New Testament people of God, essentially espousing a replacement theology (i.e. The church replaces Israel as the people of God).

He challenges those who would claim Israel's continual divine right to the land by attempting to demonstrate how biblically untenable that position has become. First he claims that the biblical borders of the land are unclear, citing various Old Testament texts, which do not appear to agree with each other. Then he tries to show that the term Israel seems to change in definition throughout the Bible. Finally, he argues that God gave the land through Christ, the greater "Israel"- the Israel who actually kept faith with God the Father. He insists that the land cannot be given to a faithless, disobedient, and Messiah rejecting people based on the teachings of Moses in Deuteronomy 28:63-68, etc. He makes much of this point throughout his book. Katanacho has a particular problem with dispensationalism and dispensationalists. He believes it to be of late historical development, adhered to by corrupt and undereducated people, and founded on a highly problematic literal hermeneutic.

The author insists the land belongs to Christ, and citing

passages like Proverbs 2:21-22 says he will give it to his faithful and obedient people (and certainly not to unbelieving and wicked oppressors). In the author's eschatological understanding, righteousness precedes a return to the land. God will not tolerate an unrighteous people to possess the land (Dt. 28:36-37, 63-68).

Katanacho asserts that the land was the initiation of the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God on earth. After the land's curse (Gen. 3:17) God determines to restore it (Isa. 51:3; Eze. 36:35) to be a land of faith, a land of peace, a land of reconciliation, a land that serves as a gateway to heaven, and a land of refuge and safety for the endangered (56-58).

The author argues that none of those sacred purposes are accomplished through the Israeli occupation. In fact, for the author, the Israeli occupation of lands "taken" in 1967 (not 1948) is the great sin and obstacle to peace, which foments the Arab-Israeli Conflict. If it were not for the "occupation" there would not be all the anger and violence associated with the land (47). The occupation is sin because it dehumanized people whom God created (53, 60). Since according to Katanacho the 1967 occupation is the great sin, Biblical resistance to that sin is justified. For Katanacho this means bringing non-violent economic pressure on Israel. That in turn will cause Israel to end of the 1967 occupation and create the conditions necessary for an equitable one or two state solution to be reached (60).

This theme is addressed in *The Palestinian Kairos Document: A Moment of Truth*, which the author includes in the books addendum. This document decries the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the wall that Israel erected separating the West Bank from Israel, Israeli settlements, military checkpoints, the separation of some families, the restricted access to the holy site for Palestinians, the Palestinian refugee camps, Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, the exclusion of many Palestinians

from living in Jerusalem, various and unspecified human rights violations, the unspecified discrimination of Israeli Palestinians, the emigration of Palestinian young people from the land, the Israeli overreaction to Palestinians who resist Israeli occupation, the excuse of terrorism used to distort the true nature of the conflict, and the failure of the international community "to deal positively with the will of the Palestinian people expressed in the outcome of the democratic and legal elections of 2006" (74-76). After addressing the issues of hermeneutics and a theology of the land, the Kairos statement calls the U.N. partition of the land in 1948 "a new injustice" (78), and any theology or biblical interpretation, which argues against that premise strips "the Word of God of its holiness, its inclusiveness and truths" (73).

Therefore, "the occupation is a sin against God and humanity because it deprives the Palestinians of their basic human rights" (79). The Kairos document puts its hope in the love of God for the Palestinian people, finds solace in the support and prayers it has received from like-minded people around the world, and believes one day justice will be served for the Palestinian people (80-83).

While the document celebrates the anti-retaliatory love of Scripture (Mt. 5:45-47; Rom. 12:17; I P. 3:9), that love does not mean accepting evil or aggression. In fact the Kairos document insists that the evil of the Israeli occupation must be resisted – love demands it (p. 84). But how can it be resisted in a loving way? The Kairos document calls the world to "engage in divestment and in economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation" (85). Thus the Kairos document is a call to inflict economic pain on Israel until they unilaterally end the occupation (85). Since the root of so-called terrorism springs from the injustices of the occupation, pretending to end terrorism first is not a valid approach (85).

The Kairos document ends with a call to settle the Jerusalem question first but does not offer a suggestion as to how that vexing issue might be resolved (89).

While one can appreciate the approach and the passion of the author's position, it seems to this reviewer there are certain assumptions, omissions, and biases that seem to undercut the author's arguments and assertions. First the author claims that the various Biblical descriptions of the borders to what might be called "greater Israel" calls into question the notion of fixed literal borders for national Israel. The author sees these descriptions as *literary*, "a spacial merism that refers to the whole world" (39). This, of course, requires that one abandon a grammatical-historical hermeneutic in favor of a more spiritualized approach to Scripture.

While most would agree that "the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it," that fact does not preclude that God can give what is his to whomever he chooses. Instead of abandoning the plain sense of the biblical text, biblical authority might be better served by a more thorough and respectful exegesis. Could there be other explanations for the various boundaries of the Promised Land mentioned in Scripture? Might there be another way to harmonize the various descriptions? For instance, one could just simply argue that all the various descriptions should be "added" together to come up with the final configuration of the "greater Israel" being promised by God. Certainly this approach is at least as valid as abandoning the plain (grammatical-historical) sense of the text. Especially as such abandonment clearly leads to a meaning foreign to the author's original intent.

The same is true for the author's problem with the various identifications of "Israel" and Jewish people in the Bible. What does it matter if those terms include more and more people throughout biblical history? The promises of the land belong

exclusively to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The land is literally promised to no one else. This is not to say that others would not benefit from the land promised to physical Israel, many certainly will, but biblically speaking they will do so through the agency of a national ethnic Israel under the rule of the King Jesus. Again, there is nothing in the biblical text that demands the abandonment of the literal meaning of the text, the author's original intent, or a grammatical-historical hermeneutic.

The same is true for the author's concern about how the land is given. True the land and the world belong to God through the Messiah Jesus. But this does not preclude his giving the land to Israel. And it's true that ultimately, a righteous people will inherit the land. But there is now no one righteous but God alone - certainly not Israel or the Palestinian people. The land will never be inherited by righteous people this side of the second coming of the Messiah Jesus!

So where does that leave us now? The author insists that contemporary Israel is an illegitimate occupier of Palestinian lands because Israel is unrighteous on so many levels. He assumes the land will (or should) "spew them out" (Dt. 28:63-68) one way or another. But Israel lived "unrighteously" in the land for nearly 1000 years before the Babylonian captivity in 586 BC, and then another 500+ years until the destruction of the second temple by the Romans in AD 70. "Unrighteous" Israel has only been back in control of the land since 1948 (or 1967 depending on ones perspective). Biblically speaking, it could be another 1500 years until they are ejected from the land again. God has shown great patience with Israel in past "occupations."

This of course assumes that God is not now dealing or will not deal with "unrighteous" Israel while they are actually in the land, as they are now. There is Scripture which seems to indicate

the recalling of a spiritually lifeless people to the land and then once in the land, the coming of a great spiritual renewal (Eze. 36:24-32; Eze. 37:1-14; Hosea 3; Zech. 12:10ff). Israel was hardly a "righteous" nation when the remnant of Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 9-10; Neh. 5, 9, 10, 13).

Biblically speaking it is entirely possible for these current generations of "unrighteous Israelis" to finally realize their true condition, repent, receive their Messiah, have their sins removed, their spirits revived (Eze. 36:24-32), and be the restored and righteous nation they were always meant to be (Acts 1:8; 3:21). There is no biblical necessity to replace Israel with the church. Especially in light of the New Covenant teaching that the redeemed Gentiles do not replace Israel but are added to Israel (Eph. 2:11-22). According to the Apostle Paul, they are now fellow citizens of God's Kingdom with God's people (believing Israel) and (fellow) members of God's household (Eph. 2:11-22). Clearly the Gentiles will enter into all the blessings promised to them in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3) and throughout Scripture (Isa. 49:6; 9:2; 42:6, 51:4, etc.).

Yes, for a time National Israel will remain in unbelief, rejecting her Messiah. But the day will come, writes the Apostle Paul, after the full number of Gentiles comes in, that "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:25)! Interestingly, the author does not interact with any New Testament references, which seem to indicate Israel's future restoration (Mt. 19:28; Luke 1:32-33; 21:24; 22:25-30; Acts 1:8; 3:21; etc.) The reader is left to wonder why.

As noted, the Kairos document bemoans the building of the separation wall and military checkpoints but never acknowledges why the wall was built or the reason for military checkpoints, or what those security measures have done for Israel's safety. The document asserts it's the "occupation" which inspires Palestinian

violence. If Israel were to end it, the violence would stop. This of course ignores history. There was no post-1967 style "occupation" in 1948, or in pre-war 1967 for that matter. But the Arab world attacked Israel none-the-less. In the mind of this reviewer, the Kairos signers betray either a dangerous disregard for the safety of the Israeli population or a breathtaking naiveté of radical Palestinian hatred and intentions for Israel. Either way Israel would do well not to entrust their future to the Kairos signers' approach to peace.

The disputed lands of the West Bank belonged to Jordan (not any Palestinian entity) in 1967. In that year, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt conspired to attack Israel. Israel defended itself, and in so doing took the West Bank (along with the Sinai, Gaza, and the Golan Heights). Now the Kairos authors want the West Bank to be given to a previously non-existent entity – the Palestinian Authority (PA) whose very charter calls for Israel's destruction.

In 2000-2001, and In exchange for real peace, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered Yasser Arafat and the PA 91% of the disputed territory, but Yasser Arafat turned it down. Was the deal perfect for the PA? Of course not. But it could have been the beginning of a real Palestinian state and a real peace. Yet none of these historic realities is ever mentioned by the Kairos authors – just lovely sounding appeals to justice for the Palestinians through the unilateral handover of the West Bank to the PA.

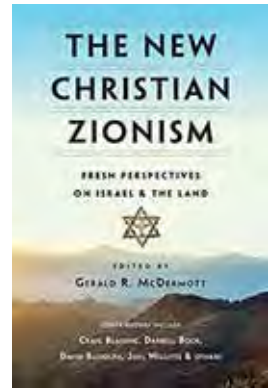
Katanacho's book was quite helpful in gaining an insight into the Palestinian Christian perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Katanacho is squarely in the evangelical camp (we share the same seminary training) and is a first class advocate for his position.

It is good to hear this particular "cry" no matter what your position is on the subject. That being said, the author's failure to interact with the historical realities of the last 70 years and the very real security concerns of the Israeli people undercut the

credibility of the author's arguments and caused this reviewer to wonder if this was merely a nicely written propaganda piece for an economic boycott of Israel.

Journal of
MESSIANIC
JEWISH STUDIES
CHARLES L. FEINBERG CENTER

Gerald R. McDermott (editor).
The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel and the Land.
Downer's Grove:
InterVarsity Press,
2016 (349 pages)



Review by Mitch Glaser

INTRODUCTION

The New Christian Zionism, edited by Dr. Gerry McDermott, provides a new and needed approach to the current theological controversies swirling round Israel in the Bible and as a modern nation. The genesis for the book is biblical and yet the chapters also cover some of the more difficult issues related to the current Middle East crisis and especially the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

The 349 pages, include chapters by well known Christian scholars and Messianic Jews who touch on some of the major

points of the controversy including the hermeneutics needed to read the Biblical material, the history of Christian Zionism, Zionism in the New Testament, and the theology and politics of the anti Christian Zionism movement.

Gerald McDermott's introductory material is excellent as he both defines and traces the history of Christian Zionism for the reader who might have little experience with the topic. McDermott assures the reader that a theology that includes ethnic Israel and the land in God's story found in Scripture is not particular to any Christian denomination.

> Christian Zionism is bigger than any denomination, theological tradition or period. It focuses on the character of God and the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Those at the start of the Christian faith argued that God will keep his promises to Israel. This confidence also provides a basis for assurance about his promises to us. Those promises point to a reconciliation God has worked through his Messiah for the life and the Shalom of the world.[1]

McDermott explains what he means by the new Christian Zionism,

> So what do the scholars and experts in this book mean by "the New Christian Zionism"? The best answer to this question, we think, is the rest of the book. This introduction will telegraph, as it were, the basic implications of what we mean by this term. The first is that the people and land of Israel are central to the story of the Bible.[2]

He continues,

> The burden of these chapters is to show theologically that the people of Israel continue to be significant for the history of redemption and that the land of Israel, which is at the heart of

1 Gerald R McDermott, The New Christian Zionism: Fresh Perspectives on Israel & the Land, 2016, 317.
2 Ibid., 11.

> the covenantal promises, continues to be important to God's providential purposes.[3]

And further,

> We are also convinced that the return of Jews from all over the world to their land, and their efforts to establish a nation-state after two millennia of being separated from controlling the land, is part of the fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Further, we believe that Jews need and deserve a homeland in Israel— not to displace others but to accept and develop what the family of nations— the United Nations— ratified in 1948. We would add that this startling event climaxed a history of continual Jewish presence in the land going back at least three thousand years.[4]

McDermott readily admits he has a prejudice against the more traditional Dispensational or as he would describe an older version of Christian Zionism that he believes is not relevant for today. McDermott writes,

> This book has tried to unfold a new vision for the relationship between the church and Israel. It has argued that the old Christian Zionism was married to premillennial dispensationalism— for better or for worse. Traditional dispensationalists exhibited a certain theological ingenuity that rightly insisted, against many cultured despisers, that God's covenant with Israel had not been severed. They were right about that. But we are proposing a New Christian Zionism that departs from traditional dispensationalism in some important ways, as I have already explained in the introduction. Now it is time to think about what difference this new approach to Israel and the church might make.[5]

I believe that the tone with which he jettisons his Christian Zionist forefathers who expressed their hope in the future of

3 Ibid., 13.
4 Ibid., 12.
5 Ibid., 319.

Israel in the theological terms available to them in that day is stronger than necessary. In fact, the very name of the book is indicative of McDermott's attempts to break with the past. It would have been more helpful to point out the weaknesses of the position without borderline disparaging the Dispensational pioneers who blazed the path upon which McDermott and his co-authors now journey.

In fact, from the above statements it would seem that McDermott sounds very much like an "old fashioned" Christian Zionist with more Dispensational theological leanings. Certainly McDermott and many of his authors would not fit into the Dispensational mode, but they would find agreement with those who have gone before in their understanding of God's ongoing plan for Israel and the Jewish people, which includes the divine deed to the Land of promise.

The care with which McDermott chose his authors is evident from the quality of their work. I especially appreciated the denominational analysis of those Christian groups that have taken up the mantle of anti Christian Zionism written by Mark Tooley. Robert Nicholson's chapter examining the legal issues of the controversy is superb, especially his section where he appraises the moral equivalency arguments of those who believe that the nation of Israel does not deserve the land because of their behavior towards the Palestinian community in Israel.

Dr. Blaising, who has written on these topics previously and reflects a progressive version of Dispensationalism in his chapter, grapples with some of the more challenging hermeneutical issues at the heart of the conflict. Commenting on the argument that the "fulfillment citations" in Matthew write ethnic Israel out of the divine story, he writes,

> But the claim that Matthew is thereby teaching that Israel's identity as an ethnic, national, territorial reality is ending as

> such and being replaced by the singular person of the Christ and/or a new mixed corporate body to be created by him reads too much into the text. It belongs to an anti-Semitic, anti Judaic interpretation of Matthew that is generally rejected today.[6]

Bock summarizes the new Christian Zionism position by simply stating,

> In this book we have presented an outline of a case for Israel as a nation in the land. That case is theological, moral, historical, biblical, political, and legal. But this book has put its greatest emphasis on the biblical and theological case to be made. The writers are convinced that this story needs to be heard. They believe that Christian Zionism is not an oxymoron. We are convinced it is a sound humanitarian and theological position.[7]

Bock continues,

> As we look to make the case as Christians that Israel has a right to the land, we also tell Christian Zionism is bigger than any denomination, theological tradition or period. It focuses on the character of God and the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Those at the start of the Christian faith argued that God will keep his promises to Israel. This confidence also provides a basis for assurance about his promises to us. Those promises point to a reconciliation God has worked through his Messiah for the life and the shalom of the world.[8]

CONCLUSION

We are grateful for the vision of Gerald McDermott in undertaking this project. Additionally we applaud the courage of Intervarsity Press who for the longest time has published books

6 Ibid., 84.
7 Ibid., 316–17.
8 Ibid.

on Israel written by Stephen Sizer and others who take an extreme anti Christian Zionist and anti Israel position. The dialogue has now been balanced with the publishing of a The New Christian Zionism. We look forward to additional volumes addressing these significant issues that are both biblical and geopolitical in nature. We live in a complex and challenging world where we must apply Scripture to every area of life, including the Middle East conflict. The New Christian Zionism is a good beginning to a new day of discussion. Most of all, we hope that this new book will inspire Christians to pray for the peace of Jerusalem as the Psalmist encourages us to do in Psalm 122:6.

Journal of
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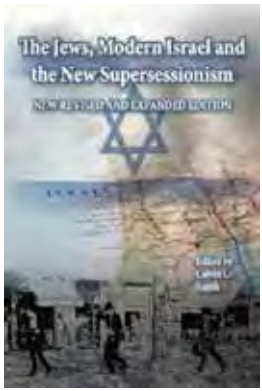
Calvin L. Smith. *The Jews, Modern Israel and the New Supersessionism* Kent, United Kingdom: King's Divinity Press, 2013. Pp. 290

Review by Daniel Kayley



False representations, crude caricatures, and monolithic portrayals of Israel and pro-Israel Christians lacking nuance and objectivity are the things that Smith seeks to rebalance in his second edition of The Jews, Modern Israel and the New Supersessionism. With six new essays, several essays reworked and material from the first edition re-visited and updated, the book is internally coherent, multi-disciplinary and focused in its overarching aim, (loc.463). The introduction effectively sets out the books fourteen chapters and three divisions, also offering the reader a definition of the new Supersessionism as follows: a political agenda where the theology is made to fit, not vice versa, (loc.402). This

second edition exuberates nuance, assisting the reader to reflect honestly and objectively upon Israel historically, contemporarily and eschatologically, (loc.4984). The book's contributors come from across the Evangelical theological spectrum, therefore the disingenuous claim that all non-Supersessionists are a narrow minded, peripheral and fanatical segment of the church is undermined (loc.449).

The book is aimed at the lay Christian to supplement a scarcity of resources available to the non-theologically trained (loc.432), nevertheless, this collection of scholarly essays exhibits anything but straw man arguments proof texting and Christian Zionist rhetoric. Rather, Smith aims for the middle ground between what has been a highly polarized and at times tumultuous topic, neither idealizing nor demonizing Israel, but portraying God's faithfulness to Israel, (loc.295). Smith takes this approach as he believes that triumphalist Supersessionism harms evangelistic endeavors to the Jewish people, not only undermining the continuing relevance of the gospel for Jews but also delegitimizing a manifestly Jewish form of Christianity. Smith then seeks to differentiate between hardline or punitive Supersessionism and soft or economic Supersessionism; he rejects the notion of Israel being sinless, rejects two ways of salvation i.e. one for gentiles and one for Jews; and rejects an Israel right or wrong approach but equally rejects an Israel always wrong approach. Smith also rejects that God loves Jews more than Arabs, and therefore highlights the importance of distinguishing between corporate Israel and individual Jews and Arabs. Smith in taking this middle ground approach rejects the apartheid language so often used to describe Israel's action toward Arabs, showing this not to be the case and eschewing the pejorative nature of the current debate regarding Supersessionism. Smith believes a lot more nuance is needed in this discussion, challenging stereotypical attitudes which tar all

non Supersessionists with the same brush. Such stereotypical attitudes Smith believes fail to differentiate between various non Supersessionist theological positions because they are often rooted in biblical illiteracy, though Smith does believe that there are problems of biblical illiteracy in both Supersessionist and non-Supersessionist camps. Throughout this revised edition it is clear that Smith does not make ones position on Israel a test of orthodoxy, however he does view it as an important issue and one which deserves honest reflection and careful thought and analysis.

In the first division Maltz illustrates how the early church fathers e.g. Justin Martyr (135AD) saw no danger as they sought to construct a Platonic Christian worldview, for purposes of evangelism and fueled by anti-Semitism, (loc.645). Horner builds upon Maltz theological platform showing the uninterrupted line of Jewish church leadership until 135AD when the Romans prohibited Jewry, also demonstrating the parallel trajectories of Supersessionism and non-literal interpretations of Scripture, (loc.1018). Chapter two finishes with a good example of Augustine's eisegetical and arbitrary interpretation of Ps.59.11, associated with Neo-Platonism and a more allegorical interpretative approach, (loc.1188). All of this may challenge the ordinary and untrained Christian reader to reexamine their Bible to avoid eisegetical interpretations based on a Platonic dualistic Christian worldview, inherited from an anti-Semitic biblical interpretative tradition, (loc.660, 752). In ch.3 most readers will be left disturbed as Barnes describes how reformers like Martin Luther instigated violence toward the Jews, and how Germany's churches supported and praised religiously motivated anti-Semitic laws, (loc.1396). At this stage of the book the powerful realization is reached that Supersessionism is more than ivory tower theorizing, but has had horrific implications in the lives of millions of Jews, (loc.1442-1464). In ch.4 Wilkinson brings the

first ray of hope when the UK church after much post holocaust theological reflection helped reestablish the nation of Israel in 1948, through key influential people, (1890).

The second division investigates Supersessionism in light of the Bible.

Cheung explains throughout ch.5 the recent move by scholars toward the view that the "Israel" of Rom.11:26 refer to ethnic Israel, thus remaining consistent with its usage elsewhere in the book, (loc.2252). In ch.6 Diprose critiques economic Supersessionism and also examines a key verse employed to support punitive Supersessionism (John 8:30-47), without which the arguments supporting punitive Supersessionism would be groundless, (loc.2489). Diprose also discusses the nature and scope of Galatians 3:26-29, highlighting its soteriological not Supersessionist context (loc.2606). I found particularly useful the chapter on Apostolic Jewish Christian hermeneutics and Supersessionism by Prasch contrasting the westernized dualistic either / or approach, against the more holistic Jewish Christian hermeneutical approach. Smith in the third division throughout ch.13 presents the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as complex and far from homogenous, undermining straw man arguments presenting Arab Christians as monolithically anti-Israel, or blanket claims of the Israeli government protecting or persecuting Christians among other points. Ch.14 ends with Taylor's somber warning to the church that it has a responsibility in the way it witnesses to the Jews and the nation of Israel, in the same way that it is responsible to accurately represent Christ to any other people group, (loc.5237).

Cheung's very effective and coherent essay should nullify any reservations that Rom.11:26 refers to anything other than ethnic Israel, nevertheless, Andy could have elaborated more upon the use of the term Israel in 1 Corinthians 10:18. The historical

survey in section one is an excellent primer to the subject, as was the second division examining the subject from a biblical point of view. However, most contemporary Supersessionists disassociate themselves from such anti-Semitic traditions, and see no discord between Supersessionism and Philo-Semitism. Therefore, a response to the likes of N.T. Wright's views on modern Israel would have been beneficial. N.T. Wright also interprets Israel from an Christological perspective and argues not only from Romans and Galatians but also from Hebrews, from a covenantal perspective charging pro-Israel Christians with heresy. In this respect Smith could have provided a defense of why ones position on Israel isn't a test of orthodoxy, as a response to Wright. Finally, Smith contributed a most excellent chapter regarding modern Israel and Israeli politics leaving the reader doubtless as to the necessity of a more nuanced approach to this topic. However, as contemporary non-Supersessionist arguments revolve around social justice, more may have been said in this respect, e.g. many immigrants to Israel in 1948 were homeless, and those Jews who attempted to return to post holocaust Europe found themselves unwelcome. Notwithstanding the many Jews ejected from Arab countries in 1948 that were dispossessed and sent into exile, despite many of them wishing to stay in their countries of origin. Therefore the twin-tale of tragedy for Jews and Arabs resulting from the establishment of Israel in 1948 could have been introduced and elaborated upon as an issue of social injustice, as it affected both Jews and Arabs.

This second edition is a valuable resource to the Evangelical community to contribute to the scarcity of resources dealing with Supersessionism. Furthermore, it is effectively pitched for the layman only very infrequently assuming familiarity with theological jargon, e.g. words like Semi-Pelagianism, (loc.1054) and soteriological, (loc.2382).

Appendix

The Journal of Messianic Jewish Studies

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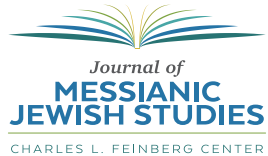

Charles L. Feinberg Center for Messianic Jewish Studies

The *Charles L. Feinberg Center for Messianic Jewish Studies* in Brooklyn, New York is a partnership between Chosen People Ministries and Biola University's Talbot School of Theology. Several years ago, the leadership of Chosen People Ministries recognized a tremendous need within Messianic Judaism and Jewish missions for more seminary-trained leadership. Through this partnership with Biola University's Talbot School of Theology we were able to develop this cutting-edge new Master of Divinity program with an emphasis on Messianic Jewish Studies. After receiving accreditation through the New York Board of Regents and the Association of Theological Schools, we began classes in summer of 2007.

The Feinberg Center program contains 98 credits and awards a Master of Divinity degree in Messianic Jewish Studies from Talbot School of Theology. Our program is still the only one of its kind in the world; it offers unique coursework to prepare leaders for Jewish ministry as missionaries, Messianic congregational leaders, non-profit leaders, and educators. Three key components

of the program make it unique: the coursework, field ministry, and cost.

COURSEWORK

We have designed the curriculum for the Feinberg Center to incorporate both a typical Jewish studies program and an evangelical seminary program, while also catering each specific class towards the current needs of Jewish ministry. Each of our Jewish studies courses, like *Rabbinic Literature and Theology*, *Theology of the Siddur* (Jewish prayer book), and *Jewish History*, contains practical elements on how a better understanding of Jewish tradition can enhance our work in Jewish missions. Additionally, each of the traditional evangelical seminary courses, like *Pastoral Studies*, *Church History*, and *Apologetics*, provides a unique Jewish perspective for the context of Jewish ministry. Our professors are all excellent scholars with a long history of personal experience in Jewish ministry.

FIELD MINISTRY

We placed the Feinberg Center in New York City because it is the center of Jewish life in America. With close to two million Jewish people, the city provides endless possibilities for students to immerse themselves in Jewish culture and ministry while completing their coursework. In fact, each semester we organize various Jewish-focused field ministry programs to help each student put what they have learned in the classroom into practice.

We have designed the different field ministry opportunities to expose our students to several aspects of Jewish ministry over the course of their studies. These aspects include direct

evangelism, discipleship, leading Bible studies, Messianic congregation leadership, and non-profit administrative training. We also provide other unique projects each semester, such as our evangelistic Jewish holiday celebrations, interfaith benevolence projects, debates, and café-style youth outreaches. These numerous field ministry programs take students into several areas of New York City, including Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn.

COST

We established the Feinberg Center to provide our students an affordable education and give them the opportunity to graduate debt-free, enabling them to enter vocational ministry without the tremendous burden of student loans. To achieve this affordability, we offer a wide range of scholarships and subsidies to offset student costs. Not only is our tuition a quarter of what it would normally cost, we also provide student housing for single students and offer students with families a housing scholarship to make their rent affordable. The generous and regular support from our ministry partners makes an affordable education possible.

THE CHARLES L. FEINBERG MESSIANIC JEWISH CENTER – HISTORY, PURCHASE, AND PROGRAMS

While we have hosted classes for the Feinberg Center in our Manhattan administrative offices since it launched in the summer of 2007, we knew we would eventually need to find a larger and more suitable space to house the seminary. In 2010, as God continued to bless and develop the seminary, we began a search for the right facility to house the program—and the Lord miraculously provided the perfect location.

Brooklyn is home to more than 750,000 Jewish people, making this borough of New York City one of the highest concentrations of Jewish people in the United States. We discovered a building in Brooklyn that had previously functioned as a Jewish funeral home. This rare, 14,000 square foot facility, which provides three floors, a basement and a sanctuary on the first floor, is located in the heart of an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood. We thought it seemed too good to be true.

This facility gives us significant opportunities to expand our ministries. It sits right on the borders of Orthodox Jewish, secular Jewish, and Israeli communities. It is within an even larger neighborhood of Russian Jewish immigrants. We believe this facility provides unprecedented opportunities for evangelism, as there is no other Jewish ministry in the area. God has clearly placed us at the center of this key location.

After extensive renovation, the building floors allow the following functionality:

> 1st Floor – Sanctuary for Messianic Congregations, reception area, kitchen, and multi- purpose ministry room
>
> 2nd Floor – Three classrooms, study areas with computers, professor and missionary offices
>
> 3rd Floor – Separated living quarters for students, guest bedroom for visiting professors and missionaries
>
> Basement – The 12,000-volume Feinberg Center Library

In addition to housing the seminary, the facility gives us increased ministry space. The sanctuary has allowed us to plant a new English-speaking Messianic congregation, along with hosting our current Russian-speaking congregation. The kitchen and multipurpose room has allowed us to host special meals and event, coupled with other benevolence work, like ESL classes

and addiction care ministries. As the only Jewish missions organization in the heart of this strategic area, we pray the Lord will continue to use this space for His glory.

The Passover is a picture of God's love and salvation.

Messiah in the Passover will give you a deeper appreciation for the Passover celebration within the Jewish community and enable you to share the message of the Lamb of God through the Passover with your Jewish Friends.

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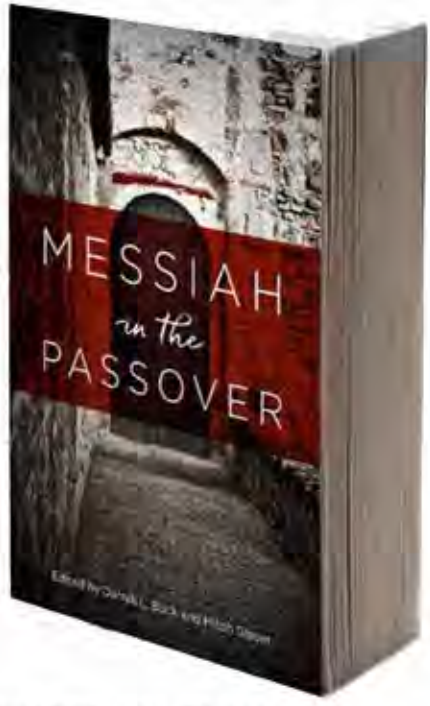

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Charles L. Feinberg Center, New York
ISSN : ISSN 2379-836X
2017

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