

"Think not that I come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17

Jewish Heritage Revival

One Heritage United by Messiah



"And When he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice"
John 10:4

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Passover - Past, Present and Forever!!!

Our journey of the Feasts of God given to Israel begins with the Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits. We will look at all three of them simultaneously in that even though they are separate, they are celebrated together. The story that is found in these three Feasts are in essence a trilogy...a three part story.

We will explore these Feasts from:

- **Biblical Account**
 - The Passover
 - Ordinances
 - The Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - The Feast of First Fruits
 - Other Accounts Depicting The Passover Celebration
- **Current Celebration (After the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD)**
- **Prophetic Significance / Fulfillment**

Please remember that it is important to remember that when reading this article, time and days are based on the Jewish lunar calendar, where the day begins and ends at sundown.

Passover isn't merely the feast celebrated in commemoration of God delivering Israel from the bondage it endured at the hands of the Egyptians. It is so much more than that. Not only is it a memorial, recognizing the one and only Passover, but God beautifully constructs His feasts as a prophesy of Yeshua, Messiah some 1400 years before events transpired. After His resurrection, Yeshua spent 40 days teaching His disciples:

"Then, starting with Moshe and all the prophets, he explained to them the things that can be found throughout the Tanakh concerning himself." Luke 24:27

Therefore, Moses was the first of God's prophets to speak of Yeshua, who received Torah from God. At this time, Israel is in the desert (out of Egypt) when God's instructions are given to Moses. Now let us look in detail at what God's Word says.

Biblical Account Leading To The First Passover

The story first begins in the book of Genesis. The children of Jacob, that became the nation of Israel, went into Egypt to escape the famine that was to strike the land (Canaan) that God had given them. We will focus on the main aspects of what will lead up to the Passover.

"The seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt ended; and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Yosef had said. There was famine in all lands, but throughout the land of Egypt there was food. When the whole land of Egypt started feeling the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food, and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Yosef, and do what he tells you to do." The famine was over all the earth, but then Yosef opened all the storehouses and sold food to the Egyptians, since the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. Moreover all countries came to Egypt to Yosef to buy grain, because the famine was severe throughout the earth." Genesis 41:53
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They went into Egypt as a free people in that Jacob's son Joseph had ascended to become the second most powerful person in the land, behind Pharaoh.

"Yosef found a place for his father and brothers and gave them property in the land of Egypt, in the best region of the country, in the land of Ra'amses, as Pharaoh had ordered. Yosef provided food for his father, his brothers and all his father's household, taking full care of even the youngest." Genesis 47:11 - 12

As the years passed, the descendants of Israel flourished in the land of Egypt.

"These are the names of the sons of Isra'el who came into Egypt with Ya'akov; each man came with his household: Re'uven, Shim'on, Levi, Y'hudah, Yissakhar, Z'vulun, Binyamin, Dan, Naftali, Gad and Asher. All told, there were seventy descendants of Ya'akov; Yosef was already in Egypt. Yosef died, as did all his brothers and all that generation. The descendants of Isra'el were fruitful, increased abundantly, multiplied and grew very powerful; the land became filled with them.

Now there arose a new king over Egypt. He knew nothing about Yosef but said to his people, "Look, the descendants of Isra'el have become a people too numerous and powerful for us. Come, let's use wisdom in dealing with them. Otherwise, they'll continue to multiply; and in the event of war they might ally themselves with our enemies, fight against us and leave the land altogether." So they put slavemasters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built for Pharaoh the storage cities of Pitom and Ra'amses. But the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more they multiplied and expanded, until the Egyptians came to dread the people of Isra'el and worked them relentlessly, making their lives bitter with hard labor -digging clay, making bricks, all kinds of field work; and in all this toil they were shown no mercy." Exodus 1:1 - 14

Some 350 years had passed since the children of Israel had come into Egypt when Joseph was in a position of power. The nation of Israel was under the rule of a Pharaoh that didn't know Joseph. The result, their fortunes would change from one of privilege and honor to one of slavery and affliction.

God heard the cries of His people...

"Sometime during those many years the king of Egypt died, but the people of Isra'el still groaned under the yoke of slavery, and they cried out, and their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov. God saw the people of Isra'el, and God acknowledged them." Exodus 2:23 - 25

God would raise up one whom He had chosen from birth to deliver His people from the grasp of bondage.

"ADONAI said, "I have seen how my people are being oppressed in Egypt and heard their cry for release from their slavemasters, because I know their pain. I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that country to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the place of the Kena'ani, Hitti, Emori, P'rizi, Hivi and Y'vusi. Yes, the cry of the people of Isra'el has come to me, and I have seen how terribly the Egyptians oppress them. Therefore, now, come; and I will send you to Pharaoh; so that you can lead my people, the descendants of Isra'el, out of Egypt."

Moshe said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and lead the people of Isra'el out of Egypt?" He replied, "I will surely be with you. Your sign that I have sent you will be that when you have led the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."" Exodus 3:7 - 12

Moses would have to overcome his own insecurity with regards to this enormous responsibility of leading Israel, through God's guidance out of bondage. He didn't consider himself to be a leader for a nation. God knew differently...

"Moshe replied, "But I'm certain they won't believe me, and they won't listen to what I say, because they'll say,

'ADONAI did not appear to you.'” Exodus 4:1

God's response to Moses' uncertainty as to whether the people will actually believe him, three signs that will most certainly affirm that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is with him:

"ADONAI answered him, "What is that in your hand?" and he said, "A staff." He said, "Throw it on the ground!" and he threw it on the ground. It turned into a snake, and Moshe recoiled from it. Then ADONAI said to Moshe, "Put your hand out and take it by the tail." He reached out with his hand and took hold of it, and it became a staff in his hand.

"This is so that they will believe that ADONAI, the God of their fathers, the God of Avraham, the God of Yitz'chak and the God of Ya'akov, has appeared to you!" Furthermore ADONAI said to him, "Now put your hand inside your coat." He put his hand in his coat; and when he took it out his hand was leprous, as white as snow. Then God said, "Now put your hand back in your coat." He put his hand back in his coat; and when he took it out, it was as healthy as the rest of his body. "If they won't believe you or heed the evidence of the first sign, they will be convinced by the second. But if they aren't persuaded even by both these signs and still won't listen to what you say, then take some water from the river, and pour it on the ground. The water you take from the river will turn into blood on the dry land." Exodus 4:2 - 9

Moses' second attempt to convince God that he was not the man for the job:

"Moshe said to ADONAI, "Oh, Adonai, I'm a terrible speaker. I always have been, and I'm no better now, even after you've spoken to your servant! My words come slowly, my tongue moves slowly." Exodus 4:10

God's response:

"ADONAI answered him, "Who gives a person a mouth? Who makes a person dumb or deaf, keen-sighted or blind? Isn't it I, ADONAI? Now, therefore, go; and I will be with your mouth and will teach you what to say." But he replied, "Please, Lord, send someone else - anyone you want!" At this, ADONAI's anger blazed up against Moshe; he said, "Don't you have a brother, Aharon the Levi? I know that he's a good speaker. In fact, here he is now, coming out to meet you; and he'll be happy to see you. You will speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and his, teaching you both what to do. Thus he will be your spokesman to the people, in effect; for you, he will be a mouth; and for him, you will be like God. Now take this staff in your hand, because you need it to perform the signs."” Exodus 4:11 - 17

Again, there was no wiggle room. Moses was chosen by God.

Now that the man whom God had chosen was prepared (without excuse) to proceed with the Word of God as his guide, the confrontation with Israel's oppressor would begin. As you might expect, the first meeting was anything but productive. Pharaoh would question Moses as to whom is this Lord God of Israel.

"After that, Moshe and Aharon came and said to Pharaoh, "Here is what ADONAI, the God of Isra'el, says: 'Let my people go, so that they can celebrate a festival in the desert to honor me.'" But Pharaoh replied, "Who is ADONAI, that I should obey when he says to let Isra'el go? I don't know ADONAI, and I also won't let Isra'el go. They said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go three days' journey into the desert, so that we can sacrifice to ADONAI our God. Otherwise, he may strike us with a plague or with the sword." Exodus 5:1 - 3

After their first meeting, Pharaoh would increase the burden of labor upon the children of Israel.

"That same day Pharaoh ordered the slavemasters and the people's foremen, "You are no longer to provide straw for the bricks the people are making, as you did before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. But you will require them to produce the same quantity of bricks as before, don't reduce it, because they're lazing around. This is why they're crying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Give these people harder work to do. That will keep them too busy to pay attention to speeches full of lies." Exodus 5:6 - 9

The first confrontation didn't go well. Moses returned to God stating:

" Moshe returned to ADONAI and said, "ADONAI, why have you treated this people so terribly? What has been the value of sending me? For ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has dealt terribly with this people! And you haven't rescued your people at all!" Exodus 5:22 - 23

Even with a negative report, the God of Israel was not defeated. Moses receives further encouragement in addition to his directive being reiterated.

"ADONAI said to Moshe, "Now you will see what I am going to do to Pharaoh. With a mighty hand he will send them off; with force he will drive them from the land!" God spoke to Moshe; he said to him, "I am ADONAI. I appeared to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov as El Shaddai, although I did not make myself known to them by my name, Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [ADONAI]. Also with them I established my covenant to give them the land of Kena'an, the land where they wandered about and lived as foreigners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Isra'el, whom the

Egyptians are keeping in slavery; and I have remembered my covenant. "Therefore, say to the people of Isra'el: 'I am ADONAI. I will free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians, rescue you from their oppression, and redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am ADONAI your God, who freed you from the forced labor of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov - I will give it to you as your inheritance. I am ADONAI.'" Moshe said this to the people of Isra'el. But they wouldn't listen to him, because they were so discouraged, and their slavery was so cruel.

ADONAI said to Moshe, "Go in; and tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to let the people of Isra'el leave his land." Moshe said to ADONAI, "Look, the people of Isra'el haven't listened to me; so how will Pharaoh listen to me, poor speaker that I am?" But ADONAI spoke to Moshe and Aharon and gave them orders concerning both the people of Isra'el and Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring the people of Isra'el out of the land of Egypt." Exodus 6:1 - 13

After his first encounter with Pharaoh, Moses reasserts his doubts regarding his leadership role for this task.

"On the day when ADONAI spoke to Moshe in the land of Egypt, he said, "I am ADONAI. Tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, everything I say to you." Moshe answered ADONAI, "Look, I'm such a poor speaker that Pharaoh won't listen to me." Exodus 6:28 - 30

Again, God would reaffirm Moses' position of leadership.

"But ADONAI said to Moshe, "I have put you in the place of God to Pharaoh, and Aharon your brother will be your prophet. You are to say everything I order you, and Aharon your brother is to speak to Pharaoh and tell him to let the people of Isra'el leave his land. But I will make him hardhearted. Even though I will increase my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my armies, my people the sons of Isra'el, out of the land of Egypt with great acts of judgment. Then, when I stretch out my hand over Egypt and bring the people of Isra'el out from among them, the Egyptians will know that I am ADONAI." Moshe and Aharon did exactly what ADONAI ordered them to do. 7 Moshe was eighty years old and Aharon eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh." Exodus 7:1 - 7

Encounter number two with Pharaoh would lead to many encounters whereby God would perform as He had promised...hardening of Pharaoh's heart.

"ADONAI said to Moshe and Aharon, "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a miracle,' tell Aharon to take his staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, so that it can become a snake." Moshe and Aharon went in to Pharaoh and did this, as ADONAI had ordered -Aharon threw down his staff in front of Pharaoh and his servants, and it turned into a snake. But Pharaoh in turn called for the sages and sorcerers; and they too, the magicians of Egypt, did the same thing, making use of their secret arts. Each one threw his staff down, and they turned into snakes. But Aharon's staff swallowed up theirs. Nevertheless, Pharaoh was made hardhearted; and he didn't listen to them, as ADONAI had said would happen. Exodus 7:8 - 13

This encounter would lead to the first of ten plagues that the God of Israel would inflict upon the nation of Egypt, ultimately showing this king whom the Lord God of Israel is, for he once scoffed of Him back in Exodus 5:2. These plagues are listed in the table below by the order in which they occurred:

Number	Plague	Account
1	Water turned into blood	Exodus 7:14 - 25
2	Frogs cover the land	Exodus 8:1 - 15
3	Lice	Exodus 8:16 - 19
4	Swarms of flies	Exodus 8:20 - 32
5	All livestock plague stricken (Except of Israel)	Exodus 9:1 - 7
6	Boils afflict man and animal	Exodus 9:8 - 12
7	Hail and fire	Exodus 9:13 - 35
8	Locusts	Exodus 10:1 - 20
9	Darkness	Exodus 10:21 - 29
10	Death of the first born - man and animal	Exodus 11:1 - 10; 12:1 - 36

In each instance, Pharaoh's heart was hardened, leading up to the tenth, and final plague inflicted upon Egypt. The tenth and final plague from the Lord would be the most costly, in that it would take from Pharaoh that which he treasured most - his firstborn son.

"Moshe said, "Here is what ADONAI says: 'About midnight I will go out into Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave-girl at the handmill, and all the firstborn of the livestock. There will be a horrendous wailing throughout all the land of Egypt - there has never been another like it, and there never will be again.'" Exodus 11:4 - 6

God would make a provision for His people. This is the Passover.

The Passover

Instruction was given, in order to prepare for what the Lord was about to do at midnight.

"ADONAI spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt; he said, "You are to begin your calendar with this month; it will be the first month of the year for you. Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household - except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats.'" Exodus 12:1 - 5

Each household was to select a male lamb that was without spot or blemish, perfect in every aspect. The chosen lamb was to be separated from the entire flock on the 10th day of Nisan. The separation of the chosen lamb from the flock was for several reasons:

1. Allow time prior to the Passover to make certain that the chosen lamb was truly without spot or blemish (defect)
2. Brought a personal aspect to the family in that the lamb chosen was not just a lamb, but, their lamb, for their family, thus emphasizing the price that was to be paid. A sacrifice of an innocent animal that was to die in their place.

"You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra'el will slaughter it at dusk. They are to take some of the blood and smear it on the two sides and top of the door-frame at the entrance of the house in which they eat it." Exodus 12:6 - 7

Notice the contrast of the instructions. First, the whole (entire) assembly will sacrifice the lambs. Everyone will be responsible for the death of the innocent lambs. In contrast, the second instruction is to each individual family, whereby each family is to put the blood on the doorposts and lintels of their home. This blood would be a visual sign of faith, that what Moses had proclaimed from the Lord would come to pass.

"That night, they are to eat the meat, roasted in the fire; they are to eat it with matzah and maror. Don't eat it raw or boiled, but roasted in the fire, with its head, the lower parts of its legs and its inner organs. Let nothing of it remain till morning; if any of it does remain, burn it up completely. "Here is how you are to eat it: with your belt fastened, your shoes on your feet and your staff in your hand; and you are to eat it hurriedly. It is ADONAI's Pesach [Passover]." Exodus 12:8 - 11

They were instructed to have a meal of the lamb that was sacrificed for them. They were to roast it by fire, eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Furthermore, they were to eat the entire lamb. There was to be nothing remaining. Anything that remained come morning was to be. Another instruction regarding this meal was that they were to eat their meal in a manner that they be prepared to leave in a moments notice. Notice...their belts and sandals were on. They ate with their staff in one hand and while they were on their feet.

The moment of judgment was at hand on the evening (beginning of the day) of the 14th of Nisan.

"For that night, I will pass through the land of Egypt and kill all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and animals; and I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt; I am ADONAI. The blood will serve you as a sign marking the houses where you are; when I see the blood, I will pass over [Hebrew: pasach] you - when I strike the land of Egypt, the death blow will not strike you." Exodus 12:12 - 13

The children of Israel would have not been spared had it not been for the instruction given by God to Moses regarding the sign of blood. The blood from the lamb that was sacrificed, was the sign that the Lord was looking for when His Spirit came, for every first born male (man and animal). Whereby, the lamb was a substitution for God's judgment to pass over them. The blood of an innocent lamb would redeem each family and ultimately an entire

nation.

On Nisan 13, the entire nation was oppressed and in bondage to Egypt.

On Nisan 14, an entire nation would be set free from 430 years of slavery.

This event would be remembered forever.

""This will be a day for you to remember and celebrate as a festival to ADONAI; from generation to generation you are to celebrate it by a perpetual regulation. ""For seven days you are to eat matzah - on the first day remove the leaven from your houses. For whoever eats hametz [leavened bread] from the first to the seventh day is to be cut off from Isra'el. On the first and seventh days, you are to have an assembly set aside for God. On these days no work is to be done, except what each must do to prepare his food; you may do only that." Exodus 12:14 - 16

What God had prepared for the children of Israel would become reality, just as He had cited to Moses...word for word.

"At midnight ADONAI killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. Pharaoh got up in the night, he, all his servants and all the Egyptians; and there was horrendous wailing in Egypt; for there wasn't a single house without someone dead in it." Exodus 12:29 - 30

Upon the death of the first born, the spirit of Pharaoh was ultimately broken to the point where he ordered them to leave Egypt in haste:

"He summoned Moshe and Aharon by night and said, "Up and leave my people, both you and the people of Isra'el; and go, serve ADONAI as you said. Take both your flocks and your herds, as you said; and get out of here! But bless me, too." The Egyptians pressed to send the people out of the land quickly, because they said, "Otherwise we'll all be dead!" The people took their dough before it had become leavened and wrapped their kneading bowls in their clothes on their shoulders. The people of Isra'el had done what Moshe had said - they had asked the Egyptians to give them silver and gold jewelry and clothing; and ADONAI had made the Egyptians so favorably disposed toward the people that they had let them have whatever they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians." Exodus 12:31 - 36

Not only did they leave quickly, they left with their flocks and herds. They were also given gold, silver and clothing. Pharaoh even considered their departure a blessing for him, because of all that he suffered as a result of their presence. With all that he suffered while they were in Egypt, that in contrast, if they were gone, the suffering would cease.

Biblical Ordinances Relating To Passover

Even before the events of the Passover transpire, God foreshadows the triumphant results by instituting a Feast to be remembered forever.

""This will be a day for you to remember and celebrate as a festival to ADONAI; from generation to generation you are to celebrate it by a perpetual regulation." Exodus 12:14

Upon their deliverance from slavery, God spoke to Moses and Aaron regarding the remembrance of this day. The children of Israel are instructed to remember this day. From generation to generation, the story of God's deliverance would be passed down.

The instructions below belong to Israel. However, provisions are made for those who are not born of Israel, but those who were servants for them or strangers who simply desired to be part of the Passover remembrance. We also see glimpses of Messiah's path in the instructions below. (more on that later)

" ADONAI said to Moshe and Aharon, "This is the regulation for the Pesach lamb: no foreigner is to eat it. But if anyone has a slave he bought for money, when you have circumcised him, he may eat it. Neither a traveler nor a hired servant may eat it. It is to be eaten in one house. You are not to take any of the meat outside the house, and you are not to break any of its bones. The whole community of Isra'el is to keep it. If a foreigner staying with you wants to observe ADONAI's Pesach, all his males must be circumcised. Then he may take part and observe it; he will be like a citizen of the land. But no uncircumcised person is to eat it. The same teaching is to apply equally to the citizen and to the foreigner living among you" Exodus 12:43 - 49

This is the first time that we read of the instruction given by God regarding the remembrance of this day, from

generation to generation, for ever.

""These are the designated times of ADONAI, the holy convocations you are to proclaim at their designated times. 5 ""In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between sundown and complete darkness, comes Pesach for ADONAI." Leviticus 23:4 - 5

Throughout Torah, the ordinance given by God is restated and therefore reaffirmed. Throughout these instructions, you will notice that the Passover lamb is the constant. It is the focal point, remembering all that had been completed by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob on that one night.

""Observe the month of Aviv, and keep Pesach to ADONAI your God; for in the month of Aviv, ADONAI your God brought you out of Egypt at night. You are to sacrifice the Pesach offering from flock and herd to ADONAI your God in the place where ADONAI will choose to have his name live. You are not to eat any hametz with it; for seven days you are to eat with it matzah, the bread of affliction; for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste. Thus you will remember the day you left the land of Egypt as long as you live. No leaven is to be seen with you anywhere in your territory for seven days. None of the meat from your sacrifice on the first day in the evening is to remain all night until morning. You may not sacrifice the Pesach offering in just any of the towns that ADONAI your God is giving you; but at the place where ADONAI your God will choose to have his name live - there is where you are to sacrifice the Pesach offering, in the evening, when the sun sets, at the time of year that you came out of Egypt. You are to roast it and eat it in the place ADONAI your God will choose; in the morning you will return and go to your tents." Deuteronomy 16:1 - 7

The significance of the Passover led to the month of Nisan (Abib) being known as the first month of the Jewish calendar.

Three Foods

There are three foods specifically mentioned during the instructions given by God to Moses. Israel was instructed to eat lamb that was roasted, matzah (unleavened bread / bread without yeast) and bitter herbs. Each was significant in its meaning regarding the Passover that would occur on that night.

Lamb:

Specific instructions were given to roast the lamb by fire and that it was to be completely consumed in that evening. If there were any remaining, it was to be burned by fire.

The significance of the sacrifice of the young lamb was to convey one of innocence.

The roasting of the lamb was to convey the judgment that it would receive, instead of the firstborn, whose death was imminent, without the sign of the blood from this innocent lamb.

Matzah (Unleavened Bread):

The unleavened bread represented the purity of the sacrifice. Leaven or yeast produces rising action within dough for bread through its souring of the dough, resulting in air pockets, thus causing the dough to rise. The nature of how leaven acts, by corrupting the other ingredients lends to its representation of sin. When sin is present, it can / will corrupt others.

In addition to its representation of sin, on the night of the Passover, when they were ordered by Pharaoh to leave the land immediately, there was no time to wait for the leaven to rise within the dough they had prepared, so they

Bitter Herbs:

The bitter herbs were a reminder of two things. First, it was to remind the children of Israel of the suffering of the lamb for their deliverance from the hand of slavery. Second, it was to remind them of the bitterness that was inflicted upon them by the Egyptians.

More can be read in our companion piece regarding Messiah and the Passover Seder.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Passover was one night, however the Feast is a total of eight days. The other seven days are known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The term for unleavened bread in Hebrew is Hag Hamatzot.

This Feast is to remind us of the nature by which Israel left Egypt, upon being granted their freedom. They left in haste. The unleavened bread is also known as the bread of affliction, in that it would be a reminder of the great

suffering they endured while in Egypt. The story would be told from year to year and from generation to generation, a reminder of how God delivered them from bondage.

The time of the Feast occurs the day after Passover - Nisan 15, (a Shabbat) through Nisan 21 (a Shabbat). In addition to the weekly Shabbat, there would be two Feast Shabbats, one on the first day and one on the last day of the Feast.

""For seven days you are to eat matzah - on the first day remove the leaven from your houses. For whoever eats hametz [leavened bread] from the first to the seventh day is to be cut off from Isra'el. On the first and seventh days, you are to have an assembly set aside for God. On these days no work is to be done, except what each must do to prepare his food; you may do only that. You are to observe the festival of matzah, for on this very day I brought your divisions out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, you are to observe this day from generation to generation by a perpetual regulation. From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month until the evening of the twenty-first day, you are to eat matzah. During those seven days, no leaven is to be found in your houses. Whoever eats food with hametz in it is to be cut off from the community of Isra'el - it doesn't matter whether he is a foreigner or a citizen of the land. Eat nothing with hametz in it. Wherever you live, eat matzah."" Exodus 12:15 - 20

"On the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of matzah; for seven days you are to eat matzah. On the first day you are to have a holy convocation; don't do any kind of ordinary work. Bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work." Leviticus 23:6 - 8

Not only were we not to eat any leaven during this Feast, but leaven within one's home is also prohibited. Earlier, when presenting the three foods at Passover, we described the significance of leaven as a representation for sin. The mere presence of leaven was considered to be a serious offense, according to Torah.

"You are not to eat any hametz with it; for seven days you are to eat with it matzah, the bread of affliction; for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste. Thus you will remember the day you left the land of Egypt as long as you live. No leaven is to be seen with you anywhere in your territory for seven days. None of the meat from your sacrifice on the first day in the evening is to remain all night until morning." Deuteronomy 16:3 - 4

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was considered to be a prominent Feast, in that it is known as one of the three pilgrimage Feasts, whereby all Jewish men were required to present themselves before God at the Temple.

""Three times a year, you are to observe a festival for me. Keep the festival of matzah: for seven days, as I ordered you, you are to eat matzah at the time determined in the month of Aviv; for it was in that month that you left Egypt. No one is to appear before me empty-handed. Next, the festival of harvest, the firstfruits of your efforts sowing in the field; and last, the festival of ingathering, at the end of the year, when you gather in from the fields the results of your efforts. Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Lord, ADONAI.."" Exodus 23:14 - 17

""Keep the festival of matzah by eating matzah, as I ordered you, for seven days during the month of Aviv; for it was in the month of Aviv that you came out from Egypt. "Everything that is first from the womb is mine. Of all your livestock, you are to set aside for me the males, the firstborn of cattle and flock. The firstborn of a donkey you must redeem with a lamb; if you won't redeem it, break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons you are to redeem, and no one is to appear before me empty-handed. "Six days you will work, but on the seventh day you are to rest - even in plowing time and harvest season you are to rest. "Observe the festival of Shavu'ot with the first-gathered produce of the wheat harvest, and the festival of ingathering at the turn of the year. Three times a year all your men are to appear before the Lord, ADONAI, the God of Isra'el. For I am going to expel nations ahead of you and expand your territory, and no one will even covet your land when you go up to appear before ADONAI your God three times a year." Exodus 34:18 - 24

""Three times a year all your men are to appear in the presence of ADONAI your God in the place which he will choose - at the festival of matzah, at the festival of Shavu'ot and at the festival of Sukkot. They are not to show up before ADONAI empty-handed, but every man is to give what he can, in accordance with the blessing ADONAI your God has given you." Deuteronomy 16:16 - 17

The Feast of First Fruits

The Feast of First Fruits is all but vanished from today's celebration of Passover. Since the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD and Israel's expulsion from their land, there was no place to bring one's First Fruits. The time of this Feast was spring time. In the land of Israel, it was the harvest of the cereal grains (barley). These were the first grains to ripen in that they were planted (sown) in the winter months. First Fruits was a day set apart by God to recognize first things.

Unlike the other Feasts, First Fruits was not observed on a specific calendar day, but rather instructed to be observed after Shabbat during the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

"ADONAI said to Moshe, "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the cohen. He is to wave the sheaf before ADONAI, so that you will be accepted; the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat. On the day that you wave the sheaf, you are to offer a male lamb without defect, in its first year, as a burnt offering for ADONAI. Its grain offering is to be one gallon of fine flour mixed with olive oil, an offering made by fire to ADONAI as a fragrant aroma; its drink offering is to be of wine, one quart. You are not to eat bread, dried grain or fresh grain until the day you bring the offering for your God; this is a permanent regulation through all your generations, no matter where you live." Leviticus 23:9 - 14

The following were to be brought to the priests at the Temple:

- A sheaf of the first fruits of one's harvest to be waved before the Lord
- An unblemished male lamb of the first year for a burnt offering
- A drink offering of wine
- A meal offering of the barley flour mixed with olive oil

Until the firstfruits were offered to God, people were not permitted to partake in any part of their harvest.

“ Since the days of your forefathers you have turned from my laws and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot. "But you ask, 'In respect to what are we supposed to return?' Can a person rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How have we robbed you?' In tenths and voluntary contributions. A curse is on you, on your whole nation, because you rob me. Bring the whole tenth into the storehouse, so that there will be food in my house, and put me to the test," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot. "See if I won't open for you the floodgates of heaven and pour out for you a blessing far beyond your needs. For your sakes I will forbid the devourer to destroy the yield from your soil; and your vine will not lose its fruit before harvest-time," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot. "All nations will call you happy, for you will be a land of delights," says ADONAI-Tzva'ot." Malachi 3:7 - 12

The order of the First Fruits ceremony:

“When you have come to the land ADONAI your God is giving you as your inheritance, taken possession of it and settled there; you are to take the firstfruits of all the crops the ground yields, which you will harvest from your land that ADONAI your God is giving you, put them in a basket and go to the place where ADONAI your God will choose to have his name live. You will approach the cohen holding office at the time and say to him, 'Today I declare to ADONAI your God that I have come to the land ADONAI swore to our ancestors that he would give us.' The cohen will take the basket from your hand and put it down in front of the altar of ADONAI your God. "Then, in the presence of ADONAI your God, you are to say, 'My ancestor was a nomad from Aram. He went down into Egypt few in number and stayed. There he became a great, strong, populous nation. But the Egyptians treated us badly; they oppressed us and imposed harsh slavery on us. So we cried out to ADONAI, the God of our ancestors. ADONAI heard us and saw our misery, toil and oppression; and ADONAI brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and a stretched-out arm, with great terror, and with signs and wonders. Now he has brought us to this place and given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Therefore, as you see, I have now brought the firstfruits of the land which you, ADONAI, have given me.' You are then to put the basket down before ADONAI your God, prostrate yourself before ADONAI your God, and take joy in all the good that ADONAI your God has given you, your household, the Levi and the foreigner living with you.

"After you have separated a tenth of the crops yielded in the third year, the year of separating a tenth, and have given it to the Levi, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow, so that they can have enough food to satisfy them while staying with you; you are to say, in the presence of ADONAI your God, 'I have rid my house of the things set aside for God and given them to the Levi, the foreigner, the orphan and the widow, in keeping with every one of the mitzvot you gave me. I haven't disobeyed any of your mitzvot or forgotten them. I haven't eaten any of this food when

mourning, I haven't put any of it aside when unclean, nor have I given any of it for the dead. I have listened to what ADONAI my God has said, and I have done everything you ordered me to do. Look out from your holy dwelling-place, from heaven; and bless your people Isra'el and the land you gave us, as you swore to our ancestors, a land flowing with milk and honey." Deuteronomy 26:1 - 15

Because there was no specific date mentioned in Torah as to when it was to be celebrated, many interpretations, not to mention considerable debate centered around which Shabbat was the proper Shabbat. There were the two Shabbats during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not to mention that a weekly Shabbat would likely fall on yet a different day. By definition, Shabbat, whether weekly or during a Feast was understood as meaning a holy day in which work was prohibited.

Weekly Shabbat:

"Work is to be done on six days; but the seventh day is a Shabbat of complete rest, a holy convocation; you are not to do any kind of work; it is a Shabbat for ADONAI, even in your homes." Leviticus 23:3

First Fruits Shabbat:

"On the first day you are to have a holy convocation; don't do any kind of ordinary work. Bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work." Leviticus 23:7 - 8

As you can see, there is no distinction regarding Shabbat.

The Sadducees considered the above scripture to reference the weekly Shabbat, while many others, including the Pharisees considered Shabbat to be the first Shabbat of the Feast. According to historical accounts, including the historian Josephus, the order of the aggregate Passover celebration was as follows:

Nisan 14	Nisan 15	Nisan 16	Nisan 17	Nisan 18	Nisan 19	Nisan 20	Nisan 21
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
	1st Shabbat	First Fruits					2nd Shabbat
Passover	Feast of Unleavened Bread - 7 days						

We will see a similar pattern later on when we look at the prophetic fulfillment, with one exception. More later.

Other Accounts Depicting The Passover (Pesach) Celebration

There was only one Passover. Every year since, has been in remembrance of that one miraculous night when God would deliver Israel from bondage, into freedom.

The Passover memorial celebration is the oldest continuously celebrated Feast today. It transcends over 3500 years of history. Other accounts of the Passover being celebrated can be found throughout Tenach.

A year removed from Egypt, we see the account regarding the remembrance and celebration of the first Passover as a nation that was now free from slavery.

"ADONAI spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert in the first month of the second year after they had left the land of Egypt; he said, "Let the people of Isra'el observe Pesach at its designated time. On the fourteenth day of this month, at dusk, you are to observe it - at its designated time. You are to observe it according to all its regulations and rules." Moshe told the people of Isra'el to observe Pesach. So they observed Pesach at dusk on the fourteenth day of the month in the Sinai Desert; the people of Isra'el acted in accordance with all that ADONAI had ordered Moshe." Numbers 9:1 - 5

The significance of the Passover was so very important, that God provided in Torah, if there were not sufficient time for preparation for those who were journeying or had been defiled by a dead body and could not purify themselves in time for the Feast, that it would be celebrated in the second month, on the 14th day.

"But there were certain people who had become unclean because of someone's corpse, so that they could not observe Pesach on that day. So they came before Moshe and Aharon that day and said to him, "We are unclean

because of someone's corpse; but why must we be kept from bringing the offering for ADONAI at the time designated for the people of Isra'el?" Moshe answered them, "Wait, so that I can hear what ADONAI will order concerning you." ADONAI said to Moshe, "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'If any of you now or in future generations is unclean because of a corpse, or if he is on a trip abroad, nevertheless he is to observe Pesach. But he will observe it in the second month on the fourteenth day at dusk. They are to eat it with matzah and maror, they are to leave none of it until morning, and they are not to break any of its bones -they are to observe it according to all the regulations of Pesach. But the person who is clean and not on a trip who fails to observe Pesach will be cut off from his people; because he did not bring the offering for ADONAI at its designated time, that person will bear the consequences of his sin. If a foreigner is staying with you and wants to observe Pesach for ADONAI, he is to do it according to the regulations and rules of Pesach- you are to have the same law for the foreigner as for the citizen of the land.'" Numbers 9:6 - 14

We further witness the observance of Passover in the second month by King Hezekiah:

"Then Hizkiyahu sent to all Isra'el and Y'hudah, and wrote letters also to Efrayim and M'nasheh, summoning them to the house of ADONAI in Yerushalayim, to keep the Pesach to ADONAI the God of Isra'el. For the king, his officials and the entire Yerushalayim community had agreed to keep the Pesach in the second month. They had not been able to observe it at the proper time because the cohanim had not consecrated themselves in sufficient number; also the people had not assembled in Yerushalayim." 2 Chronicles 30:1 - 3

Upon their entry in to Canaan, they would partake of their first Passover remembrance in the land they had been waiting to inhabit for 40 years.

"When all the nation had been circumcised, every one of them, they stayed where they were in camp until they had healed. ADONAI said to Y'hoshua, "Today I have rolled off from you the stigma of Egypt." This is why the place has been called Gilgal [rolling] ever since.

The people of Isra'el camped at Gilgal, and they observed Pesach on the fourteenth day of the month, there on the plains of Yericho. The day after Pesach they ate what the land produced, matzah and roasted ears of grain that day. The following day, after they had eaten food produced in the land, the manna ended. From then on the people of Isra'el no longer had manna; instead, that year, they ate the produce of the land of Kena'an." Joshua 5:8 - 12

There was a time in Israel's history that the Passover was not remembered. It wasn't until King Josiah had rediscovered Torah and read about the Passover, that it would be reinstated:

"The king issued this order to all the people: "Observe Pesach to ADONAI your God, as written in this scroll of the covenant." For Pesach had not been so observed since the days when the judges ruled Isra'el - not during the times of any of the kings of Isra'el or of the kings of Y'hudah. But in the eighteenth year of King Yoshiyahu this Pesach was observed to ADONAI in Yerushalayim." 2 Kings 23:21 - 23

A full account can be read in 2 Chronicles 35:1 - 19

During the Babylonian captivity, they were not permitted to keep the Passover.

"The people from the exile kept Pesach on the fourteenth day of the first month. For the cohanim and L'vi'im had purified themselves together; all of them were pure. So they slaughtered the Pesach lambs for all the people from the exile and for their kinsmen the cohanim and for themselves. The people of Isra'el who had returned from the exile and all those who had renounced the filthy practices of the nations living in the land in order to seek ADONAI the God of Isra'el, ate [the Pesach lamb]" Ezra 6:19 - 21

When we look at the fulfillment of the promises of the Passover by Messiah, we will recount many of the events that would occur during the Passover.

Current Celebration

Preparation:

Leading up to the Passover, whether today or thousands of years ago, there was a time of preparation. Prior to the Passover, one's home would have to be purged of any and all leaven. A thorough cleaning of the house from top to bottom would be performed. There could not be one spec of leaven in the house, in cloths or on the person. Everything is cleaned.

Other preparations includes changing dishes and cutlery to a set that is only used one week out of the year...Passover.

What do people do with their leaven?

- Sell it or give it away to a non-Jewish family
- Burn it
- Throw it away

There is significant symbolism by the burning of leaven, in that sin will lead to judgment.

The night before the Passover, the head of each house will do what is known as Bedikat Hametz - search for leaven. This is a ceremony that dates back many centuries.

During the Temple times, in addition to the house cleaning, selection of the Passover lamb was required by the 10th of Nisan as commanded:

"Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household" Exodus 12:3

Today, with no temple, this commandment can not be executed.

Passover:

The home Seder has been rooted within rabbinic Judaism since the destruction of the Temple in 70AD.

There are many accounts as to when the home Seder for Passover first began.

However, Torah instructs that the Passover meal be eaten in the home.

"It is to be eaten in one house. You are not to take any of the meat outside the house, and you are not to break any of its bones." Exodus 12:46

Part of the celebration of this feast is remembering what the Lord God of Israel did for His people in bringing them out from bondage.

The Passover of today is a total of eight days whereby you will have a Seder either on the first night or second night, while refraining from eating of any leaven for the entire eight days. There is no mention of the Feast of Unleavened Bread or the Feast of First Fruits, as the accounts presented in Torah.

For a full detailed account of the Seder, [click here](#).

Feast of Unleavened Bread:

Today's Passover celebration doesn't distinguish the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but groups it together as part of the Passover. However, during the Passover, we eat unleavened bread for eight days. Many of the practices that would have likely been practiced in biblical times, are still done today.

Mentioned during the preparation for the Passover, leaven would have been removed from the house with everything being cleaned from top to bottom.

Feast of First Fruits:

Today, the offerings and sacrifices associated with First Fruits are no longer observed in that there is no longer the Temple, where we are commanded to bring them. The only thing that remains from this Feast is what is known as the Omer. The Omer is the counting of days from First Fruits to Shavuot (Feast of Pentecost).

"From the day after the day of rest -that is, from the day you bring the sheaf for waving -you are to count seven full weeks, until the day after the seventh week; you are to count fifty days; and then you are to present a new grain offering to ADONAI." Leviticus 23:15 – 16

Prophetic Fulfillment of These Three Feasts

The presentation of the fulfillment of prophecies relating to these Feasts and Messiah will be presented in the order by which they occurred.

In order to place the events in to the order in which they transpired we must go back to when Messiah entered Jerusalem.

" Six days before Pesach, Yeshua came to Beit-Anyah, where El'azar lived, the man Yeshua had raised from the dead;" John 12:1

Six days prior to the Passover would have been Nisan 9, Yeshua was with El'azar (Lazarus)

"The next day, the large crowd that had come for the festival heard that Yeshua was on his way into Yerushalayim. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Deliver us!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of ADONAI, the King of Isra'el!" After finding a donkey colt, Yeshua mounted it, just as the Tanakh says -- "Daughter of Tziyon, don't be afraid! Look! your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt." John 12:12 - 15

On the following day, he would enter Jerusalem - Nisan 10. This day is important in that it is the day spoken of in Exodus 12:1 - 5

"ADONAI spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt; he said, "You are to begin your calendar with this month; it will be the first month of the year for you. Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats."

It is the day that the Passover lamb is separated from the rest of the flock. The table below provides additional information regarding the day prior to Messiah's entry into Jerusalem, up until the day of Passover. Within the circles of the church, the day of entry into Jerusalem is known as Palm Sunday

Time Line Relating to Messiah's Entry into Jerusalem					
Aviv (Nisan) 9	Aviv (Nisan) 10	Aviv (Nisan) 11	Aviv (Nisan) 12	Aviv (Nisan) 13	Aviv (Nisan) 14
Day 7	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
At Bethany (Beit-Anyah)	Entry into Jerusalem				Passover
Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday

On the tenth day a lamb is chosen and set apart, to make certain that it is without blemish. The lamb that was chosen was Yeshua...as proclaimed by John the Baptist:

"The next day, Yochanan saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, "Look! God's lamb! The one who is taking away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

On the Sunday Yeshua entered Jerusalem, was the tenth day of Nisan, for which he was to be set apart and His ministry of the last three and a half years would be tested by the religious authorities of the Sanhedrin, which included the Pharisees and Sadducees and would ultimately lead to His trials by the Sanhedrin and Roman Empire.

The account of these events can be found in the Gospel of Luke:

Entry into Jerusalem - Luke 19:28 - 40

Authority Challenged – Luke 20:1 - 47

During this time, Yeshua was set apart, just as the Passover Lamb, and was tested to see if He was without blemish. Throughout His testing, many saw no sin within Him, however, the religious factions, felt that His teachings would threaten their standing and authority.

Trials – Luke 22:66 – 23:25

The trials would lead to His sentence, and ultimately, God's plan for man would be fulfilled. Yeshua, proclaimed the

Lamb of God by John the Baptist, is put to death by Crucifixion on a Roman execution stake during the Passover - the 14th of Nisan. There is no doubt about this. The events are recorded in all four gospels.

A common misconception was that Messiah's death occurred on a Friday as the church has recognized for centuries. For this to occur, does not align with the time lines presented throughout this article. When Shabbat is mentioned, many construe it to be the weekly Shabbat. Few if any are truly aware that there is a second Shabbat after this Passover.

"It was Preparation Day, and the Judeans did not want the bodies to remain on the stake on Shabbat, since it was an especially important Shabbat. So they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies removed."

John 19:31

Notice the emphasis placed on this Shabbat, being especially important, thus setting it apart from the weekly Shabbat. Below is a table for the time line relating to the Passover celebrated by Messiah.

Time Line Relating to the Passover During Yeshua's Death Burial and Resurrection							
Aviv (Nisan) 14	Aviv (Nisan) 15	Aviv (Nisan) 16	Aviv (Nisan) 17	Aviv (Nisan) 18	Aviv (Nisan) 19	Aviv (Nisan) 20	Aviv (Nisan) 21
Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
	1st Shabbat	Weekly Shabbat	First Fruits				2nd Shabbat
Passover	Feast of Unleavened Bread - 7 days						
Wednesday Evening / Thursday	Thursday Evening / Friday	Friday Evening / Saturday	Saturday Evening / Sunday	Sunday Evening / Monday	Monday Evening / Tuesday	Tuesday Evening / Wednesday	Wednesday Evening / Thursday

To further expand on these events, according to Luke's Gospel:

"Then came the day of matzah, on which the Passover lamb had to be killed." Luke 22:7

Yet, according to Exodus 12:3 – 6:

"Speak to all the assembly of Isra'el and say, 'On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household —except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats. 'You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra'el will slaughter it at dusk."

The Passover Lamb is to be put to death on the 14th day and at dusk, before sunset. So, in Luke 22:7, this time is Passover and not the first day of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15).

In this manner, on the evening of Passover, in essence the start of the day, (Wednesday evening) Yeshua instructed His talmidim to prepare for their Seder meal:

"Yeshua sent Kefa and Yochanan, instructing them, "Go and prepare our Seder, so we can eat." They asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare it?" He told them, "As you're going into the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house he enters, and say to its owner, 'The Rabbi says to you, "Where is the guest room, where I am to eat the Pesach meal with my talmidim?" ' He will show you a large room upstairs already furnished; make the preparations there." They went and found things just as Yeshua had told them they would be, and they prepared for the Seder. When the time came, Yeshua and the emissaries reclined at the table, and he said to them, "I have really wanted so much to celebrate this Seder with you before I die! For I tell you, it is certain that I will not celebrate it again until it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God." Luke 22:8 - 16

The time line reflects the day after the Passover, being the first Shabbat of Unleavened Bread, with the next day being the weekly Shabbat.

There was to be an appointed time for Messiah to die for us. As the Passover Lamb, it could be no other day than Nisan 14. Therefore, when you bring into account the time line, presented in God's Word, it is proven that Passover (which occurred Wednesday evening / Thursday) is the day of our Lord's death, not "Good Friday" as the church has been lead to believe. However, that isn't where the story ends. We continue...

"On the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of matzah; for seven days you are to eat matzah. On the first day you are to have a holy convocation; don't do any kind of ordinary work. Bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work." Leviticus 23:6 - 8

The day after Passover, begins a seven day feast known as Unleavened Bread. (see chart above). Over the centuries, both Passover and Unleavened Bread have been combined and celebrated as Passover.

And He took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them saying "Also, taking a piece of matzah, he made the b'rakhah, broke it, gave it to them and said, **"This is my body, which is being given for you; do this in memory of me."**" Luke 22:19 During the Passover feast, the bread (matzah) is baked without leaven as required by God. With that said, the unleavened bread that Yeshua uses and speaks of represents Him perfectly.

How does this relate to our topic?

After Yeshua's Seder with His Talmadim, He would then proceed to the garden, whereby He would be arrested. What would proceed from the time of His arrest, would be the surreal events of His trials:

Trials – Luke 22:66 – 23:25

That would ultimately bring us to Him being sentenced to death:

"Pilate appealed to them again, because he wanted to release Yeshua. But they yelled, "Put him to death on the stake! Put him to death on the stake!" A third time he asked them, "But what has this man done wrong? I haven't found any reason to put him to death. So I'm going to have him flogged and set free." But they went on yelling insistently, demanding that he be executed on the stake; and their shouting prevailed. Pilate decided to grant their demand; he released the man who had been thrown in prison for insurrection and murder, the one they had asked for; and Yeshua he surrendered to their will." Luke 23:20 – 25

Yeshua would be on the execution stake for six hours - what we would know as 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Sundown occurred at approximately 5:30 - 6:00 pm, allowing approximately two hours for Messiah's body to be prepared and buried before Shabbat.

Shabbat that is talked about is not the weekly Shabbat, but rather Shabbat for Unleavened Bread. As stated above, it is said that you shall do no servile work. During that time, prior to the sundown, they were preparing his body for burial, while obtaining the borrowed tomb from Joseph of Arimathea. Messiah, proclaimed by God, to be without sin is buried prior to sundown of Unleavened Bread. A Holy Convocation (gathering) occurred. It was the burial of Messiah.

"From noon until three o'clock in the afternoon, all the Land was covered with darkness. At about three, Yeshua uttered a loud cry, "Eli! Eli! L'mah sh'vaktani? (My God! My God! Why have you deserted me?)" Matthew 27:45 - 46

"But Yeshua, again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit. At that moment the parokhet (veil) in the Temple was ripped in two from top to bottom; and there was an earthquake, with rocks splitting apart." Matthew 27:50 - 51

Towards evening, there came a wealthy man from Ramatayim named Yosef, who was himself a talmid of Yeshua. He approached Pilate and asked for Yeshua's body, and Pilate ordered it to be given to him. Yosef took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen sheet, and laid it in his own tomb, which he had recently had cut out of the rock. After rolling a large stone in front of the entrance to the tomb, he went away. Matthew 27:57 - 60

Notice the timing of the events as they occurred.

God's intention for this feast is the burial of Messiah. Yeshua was buried prior to Unleavened Bread, which would have begun at sundown Thursday night (Nisan 15) in order to honor and not defile the first Shabbat of Unleavened Bread. As mentioned previously, you must take into context the Biblical lunar calendar rather than the sun calendar.

Yeshua began Nisan 14 with a Seder in the evening, the beginning of the day, followed by arrest, trials and death, ultimately to be buried before sunset. All on one day, beginning in evening and ending just before sunset.

Some additional context regarding the method by which Messiah died. The time it would take for someone to die from crucifixion is typically three days. The cause of death is suffocation. You are hanging, and in order to breath,

you have to pull yourself up. The sheer strength that was continually required could not be sustained, thus leading to death by suffocation.

Yeshua was on the stake for only six hours. Was He not in good condition and therefore could have lasted longer? Yeshua was in His 30s and journeyed throughout Israel. He was in excellent physical condition. If this is so, then why was He on the stake for only six hours? The reason - He had a feast to attend, an appointed time, a moed. His burial occurred prior to Nisan 15 (Unleavened bread), a Sabbath day, prior to the sunset whereby Passover would end and Unleavened Bread would begin.

"Work is to be done on six days; but the seventh day is a Shabbat of complete rest, a holy convocation; you are not to do any kind of work; it is a Shabbat for ADONAI, even in your homes." Leviticus 23:3

Even in death, Yeshua remained obedient to God's commandments. Though we do not know what actually occurred in the spirit realm during His time of burial, yet while on earth, Yeshua honored Shabbat. He did no work himself on earth, while buried, allowing others to remain faithful to Shabbat.

By today's standards, the next feast has become somewhat lost. Today, Passover is celebrated as an eight day feast, combining both Passover and Unleavened Bread into one and identifying it as Passover. Little mention is made of the third feast ordained by God...First Fruits.

"ADONAI said to Moshe, "Tell the people of Isra'el, 'After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the cohen.

He is to wave the sheaf before ADONAI, so that you will be accepted; the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat.

On the day that you wave the sheaf, you are to offer a male lamb without defect, in its first year, as a burnt offering for ADONAI. Its grain offering is to be one gallon of fine flour mixed with olive oil, an offering made by fire to ADONAI as a fragrant aroma; its drink offering is to be of wine, one quart. You are not to eat bread, dried grain or fresh grain until the day you bring the offering for your God; this is a permanent regulation through all your generations, no matter where you live. Leviticus 23:9 - 14

On the day of Messiah's resurrection, He was the first fruits of the resurrection, thus honoring and fulfilling the prophecy of the feast of first fruits. He did not harvest fruits or vegetables, but rather Himself...He is a harvester of people, and His was the first one resurrected.

There was an offering required on first fruits. That offering was Yeshua himself, in that he was the first thing out of the ground on that day. He offered

To additional clarify, Messiah was in the ground for three days and nights. If you were to go by the account given by the church, you would be a day short. While speaking to the Pharisees,

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master we would see a sign from thee. But He answered and said unto them:

As you will notice, with the Passover commencing on the fifth day of the week, sets in motion the above time line where we witness back to back Shabbats, thus substantiating Yeshua's quote from Jonah:

"An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Matthew 12:38-41

Time Line relating to Death, Burial and Resurrection of Yeshua						
Death and Burial before Sundown	In the Grave	In the Grave	In the Grave	In the Grave	In the Grave / Resurrection	Seen by witnesses
Thursday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Saturday	Sunday
Day 1	Night 1	Day 2	Night 2	Day 3	Night 3	Day 4
Aviv (Nisan) 14	Aviv (Nisan) 15	Aviv (Nisan) 15	Aviv (Nisan) 16	Aviv (Nisan) 16	Aviv (Nisan) 17	Aviv (Nisan) 17
Note: Day begins and ends at sundown by the lunar Jewish calendar, not according to the sun (Gregorian calendar)						

An interesting point to make regarding the time line in relation to Scripture. Adonai identifies a complete day as follows:

“God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. So there was evening, and there was morning, one day.”
Genesis 1:5

Yet, Yeshua states the following as a sign:

“For just as Yonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the depths of the earth.” Matthew 12:40

As I have mentioned on several occasions, a day, from a Jewish perspective begins at sundown, yet Yeshua starts with day and not night when He makes His profession. Notice that Yeshua was buried before sunset, still Nisan 14, the day of Passover.

An empty tomb on the first day of the week, what we know today as Sunday:

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Miryam from Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb”. John 20:1

“After Shabbat, as the next day was dawning, Miryam of Magdala and the other Miryam went to see the grave. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake, for an angel of ADONAI came down from heaven, rolled away the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow. The guards were so terrified at him that they trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, “Don’t be afraid. I know you are looking for Yeshua, who was executed on the stake. He is not here, because he has been raised -- just as he said! Come and look at the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell the talmidim, ‘He has been raised from the dead, and now he is going to the Galil ahead of you. You will see him there.’ Now I have told you.” So they left the tomb quickly, frightened yet filled with joy; and they ran to give the news to his talmidim.” Matthew 28:1 - 8

We do not know the exact moment when Yeshua rose, but we do know it was after Shabbat (weekly) and was seen by both Miryams as the day was dawning.

To recall the events to this point we have proof:

- Yeshua entered Jerusalem on Nisan 10 (Sunday)
- He honored the Feast of Passover
- He was put to death by Roman crucifixion on Nisan 14 - The Passover (Thursday)
- He honored the feast of Unleavened Bread and its Sabbath
- He was in the ground three days and three nights
- He appeared to His disciples and witnesses after three days from His death.

To further emphasize, we include some examples of Messiah’s keeping of these Feasts:

As a child:

“Every year Yeshua’s parents went to Yerushalayim for the festival of Pesach. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the festival, as custom required.” Luke 2:41 - 42

As an adult:

“Now while Yeshua was in Yerushalayim at the Pesach festival, there were many people who “believed in his name” when they saw the miracles he performed. But he did not commit himself to them, for he knew what people are like -- that is, he didn’t need anyone to inform him about a person, because he knew what was in the person’s heart.”
John 2:23 - 25

Not to mention the four gospel accounts of Messiah’s final Passover:

Gospel	Chapters
Matthew	Chapter 26
Mark	Chapter 14
Luke	Chapter 22
John	Chapters 12, 13, 18

Little has been mentioned of Firstfruits, this day that always occurs on the first day of the week and Yeshua's resurrection. In addition to this day being Yeshua's resurrection, I believe something extremely significant happened.

On the first day of the week, you are to bring your firstfruits to the cohen and wave them before Adonai. The waving of the first fruits is recognition of what Adonai has provided. It would be at this time, on Firstfruits that Yeshua's mission in making atonement for Israel and the world would be completed.

As recounted in Yochanan's Gospel:

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Miryam from Magdala went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. With an empty tomb, a once grieving Miryam's tears of sadness likely became tears of joy...” Yochanan 20:1

“Yeshua said to her, "Miryam!" Turning, she cried out to him in Hebrew, "Rabbani!" (that is, "Teacher!") "Stop holding onto me," Yeshua said to her, "because I haven't yet gone back to the Father. But go to my brothers, and tell them that I am going back to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” Yochanan 20:16 - 17

To where Yeshua as Cohen ha Gadol would ascend to the Father on Firstfruits, offer Himself as a Kapparah (atonement) for us, ultimately completing His Passover mission. What transpired is conveyed in the Book of Hebrews:

“But when the Messiah appeared as cohen gadol of the good things that are happening already, then, through the greater and more perfect Tent which is not man-made (that is, it is not of this created world), he entered the Holiest Place once and for all. And he entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus setting people free forever. For if sprinkling ceremonially unclean persons with the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer restores their outward purity; then how much more the blood of the Messiah, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living God!” Hebrews 9:11 - 14

Yeshua was obedient in every aspect of Torah, from honoring all Shabbot to the requirement where we are not to appear before Adonai empty-handed during this Feast:

“Keep the festival of matzah: for seven days, as I ordered you, you are to eat matzah at the time determined in the month of Aviv; for it was in that month that you left Egypt. No one is to appear before me empty-handed.” Exodus 23:15

What was Yeshua's offering?

“Also the graves were opened, and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life; and after Yeshua rose, they came out of the graves and went into the holy city, where many people saw them.” Matthew 27:52
- 53

The only appropriate offering from the one who was the first resurrection, others who would be resurrected.

Now you are saying, that is all "old testament" what does that have to do with the church / believers today? As Yeshua himself stated He did not come to replace or do away with the law and prophets, but rather to fulfill what God had required. Regarding Passover, it is written in Exodus 12:14:

“This will be a day for you to remember and celebrate as a festival to ADONAI; from generation to generation you are to celebrate it by a perpetual regulation (for ever).

Had Passover remained only about the Exodus from Egypt of the Jewish people, then there is no reason for Gentiles to recognize Passover. However, because Yeshua relates Himself to the Passover, it bring forth a new and important meaning, not only for the Jewish believer (and non-believer) but also for the Gentile believer. Hence the questions isn't “Why would a Gentile believer celebrate the Passover?” but rather, “Why wouldn't a Gentile believer celebrate the Passover?”

Gentile believers were likely partaking in the Feast, but not in the same manner as was instructed in Torah to the Jewish people. For Passover, they likely didn't go to the Temple and offer their Passover lambs because in order to do so, circumcision was required. However, they likely celebrated Passover in a manner that recognized Yeshua as the only perfect Passover Lamb, possibly through a meal, like the Seder.

Throughout the book of Acts, we witness the first believers honoring God through His Feasts.

The Feast of Passover provides more meaning to the faith of believers than what is called Easter today...a pagan celebration that was converted to represent Messiah's resurrection. You will see throughout the history of this congregation of believers that trusted in Messiah, the Passover, was an important part of their lives.

Acts 12:3 - 4, During Peter's fifth persecution, it was the time of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

"When Herod saw how much this pleased the Judeans, he went on to arrest Kefa (Peter) as well. It was during the Days of Matzah, so when Herod seized him, he threw him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each, with the intention of bringing him to public trial after Pesach."

Acts 18:19 - 21 (New King James Version)- Paul speaking to the church at Ephesus:

"And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But bade them farewell, saying,

I must by all means keep this feast that comes in Jerusalem:

but I will return unto you if God will, and he sailed from Ephesus."

"...while we sailed from Philippi after the Days of Matzah. Five days later, we met them in Troas, where we spent a week." Acts 20:6

Paul writes to Corinth in his first letter, addressing evil in the church and the result of division, states:

"In the name of the Lord Yeshua, when you are assembled, with me present spiritually and the power of our Lord Yeshua among us, hand over such a person to the Adversary for his old nature to be destroyed, so that his spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Don't you know the saying, "It takes only a little hametz to leaven a whole batch of dough?"

Get rid of the old hametz, so that you can be a new batch of dough, because in reality you are unleavened. For our Pesach lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed. So let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover hametz, the hametz of wickedness and evil, but with the matzah of purity and truth." 1 Corinthians 5:4 – 8

Yeshua is the first fruits of the resurrection:

"But the fact is that the Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have died." 1 Corinthians 15:20

Conclusion

There was only one Passover.

Every year afterwards, the Passover celebration was done in remembrance of this moment in time, whereby God, in a single night brought the nation of Israel out of Egypt, out of bondage / slavery, making them a free nation.

Messiah would come as a Passover lamb to deliver not only the nation of Israel, but the world from the bondage of sin. There is no other time, but the time in which God declared to Moses in Torah. Messiah's Death, Burial and Resurrection occurred during the Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits Feasts.

Had Passover remained a memorial of the Exodus exclusively, there is no reason for others to recognize it. However, because Yeshua is associated with Passover and identified as the Lamb of God, Passover is now relevant to not only Israel but believers and followers of Yeshua.

As believers and therefore followers in Messiah, there is no other time more meaningful than that of the Passover. Because of anti-Semitism, the church created another time for recognizing Messiah's death, burial and resurrection...and therefore our redemption. You will be hard pressed to find what man has created, supported by God's Word. You won't be able to find it because it isn't there.

He says: **"God is spirit; and worshippers must worship him spiritually and truly."** John 4:24 There is no other way to worship in truth, then by God's Word.

By no means am I referring to a religious relationship, in terms of the recognition of these Feasts, but a personal relationship that is based on a desire to keep them. You live what you believe...not out of obligation, but out of desire to worship God from your heart. In order to do that, it must be done according to His Word...remember - Truly

(Truth). Justifying other means found within the church today are still contrary to God's Word.

We are to remember what Messiah did every day we live, yet to substitute God's Word with celebrations of pagan origin is also contrary to God's Word.

God's Word speaks for itself...first given to Israel, and now applicable to non-Jewish believers of Messiah, who have been grafted into the commonwealth of Israel...

"For you are a people set apart as holy for ADONAI your God. ADONAI your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his own unique treasure. ADONAI didn't set his heart on you or choose you because you numbered more than any other people - on the contrary, you were the fewest of all peoples. Rather, it was because ADONAI loved you, and because he wanted to keep the oath which he had sworn to your ancestors, that ADONAI brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from a life of slavery under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. From this you can know that ADONAI your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his mitzvot, to a thousand generations."

Deuteronomy 7:6 - 9

If you are a believer, you are holy unto God...He chose you. I encourage you to follow His Word and commandments. These Feasts are just as relevant today as they were 3000 years ago. As a believer in Messiah, they offer greater meaning to who He is, what He did and how it impacts you. Embrace your God given heritage that comes through the Jewish people and is intended to be a light to the world.

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Color Type	Indication
Blue	Bible Text
Red	Bible Text referencing Yeshua speaking
Black	General Text