

THE PASSOVER SEDER

PREPARING FOR PASSOVER BEDIKAT CHAMETZ: THE SEARCH FOR LEAVEN

There are preparations to be made before we begin our observance of Passover. Before we celebrate the Passover meal we are instructed to remove all the leaven from our houses, as it is written: "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel." So, on the day before Passover, after we have searched for and removed all the leaven from our homes, we pray this prayer, to make sure that our home is thoroughly cleansed of all leaven:

All leavened bread and leavening that is in my possession, whether I have observed it or not observed it, whether I have searched it out or not searched it out, shall be rendered null and accounted valueless as the dust of the Earth. Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us concerning the removal of leavened bread.

Why would eating anything with leaven be so severely punished, to the extent that one would be cut off from God's covenant people? The answer lies in the fact that Passover is a holiday rich in symbolism, and leaven is used throughout the Scriptures as a symbol for sin. In ancient times, before a batch of leavened dough was baked into bread, part of the dough was pinched off and set aside. Later, that piece of leavened dough was added to a new batch of flour, leavening the new batch. This symbolizes the generational cycle of sin, which began with our first parents, Adam and Eve, who alienated themselves from God. Their sin was transmitted to each ensuing generation. God designed Passover and the Feast of Matza to symbolize the breaking of this cycle of sin that has been transmitted from generation to generation. This observance reminds us that there is hope for mankind, and that through Messiah Yeshua, the forces of sin and death can be overcome, and one day we will be made completely and eternally righteous!

Rabbi Paul alluded to this ceremony of removing leaven from the home when he wrote to Messiah's Holy Community of Jews and Gentiles at Corinth: "Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough? Clean out the old leaven that you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened. For Messiah, our Passover Lamb, also has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the Feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

We must not allow sin to rule in our lives, fulfilling its desires. Just as we systematically cleanse our homes of leaven in order to celebrate the Passover, so we must search our hearts, asking God to reveal and remove any sin from our lives, in order that we break the cycle of sin, and enjoy all the blessings that come from Messiah Yeshua, our Passover Lamb, and the true Matza, who has made it possible to conquer sin and death.

THANKING GOD FOR KEEPING US ALIVE

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁהַחַיְנוּ
וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לְזִמַּן הַזֶּה!

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, she-heh-cheh-ya-nu v'kee-mah-nu v'hi-gee-yah-nu laz-man ha-zeh!

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us in life, sustained us and enabled us to reach this season!

LIGHTING THE PASSOVER CANDLES

It is appropriate that the woman of the home lights the candles that bring light to the Passover celebration. It reminds us that Messiah Yeshua, the Light of the World, is the promised "seed of the woman" who will restore truth and overcome the powers of darkness.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּיֵשׁוּעַ הַמָּשִׁיחַ אֹר הָעוֹלָם וּפְסַח שְׁלָנוּ.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'Yeshua HaMashiach, Or ha'olam u'Fesach shelanu.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us in Yeshua the Messiah, the Light of the World and our Passover Lamb.

KIDDUSH: THE FIRST CUP

Wine is a symbol of joy, since wine makes glad the heart of man. During the Seder we will drink four cups of wine. Each cup has its own meaning and name. Let us begin our Passover meal by thanking God for the cup of sanctification, which serves to set apart this meal to accomplish God's plans and purposes.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי
הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, Boray p'ree hagafen. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

URCHATZ: WASHING THE HANDS

It is traditional to wash our hands before the Passover food is eaten. At His Last Seder, "Yeshua was aware the Father had put everything in His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God. So He rose from the table, removed His outer garments and wrapped a towel around His waist."

"Then He poured some water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples and wipe them off with the towel wrapped around Him... He said to them, 'If I, the Lord and Rabbi, have washed your feet, you should also wash each other's feet. For I have set you an example, so that you may do as I have done to you.'" Knowing that He had been given all authority in Heaven and on Earth, knowing He had eternally shared the glory of God, and was soon returning to again share God's glory, Messiah Yeshua acted as a servant and washed the feet of His disciples. He set for all time the supreme example of servanthood and humility. Let us now wash our hands.

KARPAS: PARSLEY

Passover is observed in the spring when the Earth is green with life, and so the karpas represents life. We dip it into salt water, which represents tears, and we eat it. This reminds us that life as slaves in Egypt was miserable and full of tears because "the Egyptians appointed taskmasters over us to afflict us with hard labor. The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously; and they made our lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks and with all kinds of labor in the field, all their labors which they rigorously imposed on us." The karpas can also represent hyssop - the plant that was dipped into the blood of the Passover lamb and applied to the doorposts of our houses in Egypt.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי
הָאָדָמָה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, Boray p'ree ha'adamah.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the Earth.

YACHATZ: DIVIDE THE MIDDLE MATZA

Why do we have a Matzatash that contains three pieces of matza in one bag? Why do we take the middle piece out, break it in half and hide it? Some say that we have three pieces of matza in one bag to represent the Priests, the Levites and Israel. Another interpretation is that the three represent Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It's obvious that this matza does not represent Priests, the Levites and Israel, nor Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Why would we break the Levites or Isaac in half? As Messianic Believers we can see a greater Three-In-One: God the Father, Messiah Yeshua the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit.

The middle matza reminds us of Messiah Yeshua. It is the one that is removed from the middle of the Matzatash, just as the Son of God was the One who came from Heaven and was manifested on Earth. It is unleavened just as Yeshua lived a perfectly sinless life. Matza is called the "Bread of Affliction" because we were driven out of Egypt under duress and hastily so that there wasn't time for our bread to rise. In a similar manner, Messiah was afflicted. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

Just as one half of the matza is put back in the Matzatash, and the other half, the Afikomen, is wrapped up and hidden, so Messiah Yeshua was wrapped in grave-clothes and hidden in a tomb. It's likely that this ceremony about the Matzatash and the middle matza, which so clearly points us to Yeshua, was invented by early Messianic Jews.

Since we want everyone to be able to celebrate Passover and enjoys its blessings, regardless of their circumstances, we extend the following invitation and prayer: "This is the Bread of Affliction which our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt; let all those who are hungry enter and eat of it. All who are in distress, come and celebrate the Passover. At present we celebrate it here, but next year we hope to celebrate it in Israel with Messiah."

MA NISHTANAH: THE FOUR QUESTIONS

Passover provides a yearly opportunity to teach our children God's plan of redemption. It is written in the Torah: "You shall observe this service. And it will come about when your children will say to you, 'What does this service mean to you?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover service to the Lord.'" To make sure that the children fulfill this Scripture, there are four questions that the youngest son asks on Passover.

מה נִשְׁתַּנָּה הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מִכָּל הַלַּיְלוֹת? שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ
אוֹכְלִין חֲמִץ וּמַצָּה. הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כֵּלּוֹ מַצָּה? שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ
אוֹכְלִין שְׂאֵר יִרְקוֹת. הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה מְרוֹר? שֶׁבְּכָל הַלַּיְלוֹת אֵין אָנוּ
מִטְבִּילִין אֶפְלוֹ פְּעַם אַחַת. הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה שְׂתֵי פְּעָמִים? שֶׁבְּכָל
הַלַּיְלוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבֵין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין. הַלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה כֵּלּוֹ
מְסֻבִּין?

Ma nish-ta-nah ha-lie-lah ha-zeh mi-kol ha-lay-lot? She-b'chol ha-lay-lot ah-nu och-leen cha-metz u'matza. Ha-lie-lah ha-zeh ku-lo matza? She-b'chol ha-lay-lot ah-nu och-leen sh'ar y'ra-kot. Ha-lie-lah ha-zeh ma-ror? She-b'chol ha-lay-lot ayn ah-nu mat-bee-leen a-fee-lu pa'am eh-chat. Ha-lie-lah ha-zeh sh'tay f'ah-meem? She-b'chol ha-lay-lot ah-nu och-leen bayn yosh-veen u'vayn m'su-been. Ha-lie-lah ha-zeh ku-lah-nu m'su-been?

Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread; why on this night do we only eat unleavened bread? On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables; why on this night must we eat bitter herbs?

On all other nights we do not even dip once; why on this night do we dip twice? On all other nights we eat either sitting or reclining; why on this night do we only recline?

The answer to the last question is that we recline in contrast to our ancestors, who ate the first Passover Seder in haste, with their waists belted, their shoes on their feet, their staffs in their hands, ready to make a hasty departure from Egypt. That night we were slaves. Slaves aren't allowed to recline and relax. But God freed us that first Passover night. Since we are no longer slaves, now we purposely do the opposite and recline while observing the Passover.

THE FOUR SONS

Just as there are four cups of wine and four questions, so too there are four kinds of sons. Each son requires a response that is best suited to him.

What does the wise son say? He asks: "What are these testimonies, statutes and judgments which the Lord our God has commanded you?" Since he is genuinely interested in learning the truth and performing it, you shall instruct him in the laws of the Passover.

What does the wicked son say? He asks: "What do *you* mean by this service?" The question is similar, but the intent is different. By emphasizing the word "you" he makes it clear that he does not consider himself to be part of the Jewish community. He no longer wishes to be identified with God's Chosen People. Therefore the proper response to him is to answer, "This is done because of what the Lord did for me, when I went forth from Egypt - for me, and not for you, because if you had been there, but refused to identify yourself with Israel, you would not have been redeemed."

What does the simple son say? He asks: "What is this?" Because he is limited in his abilities, the simple son asks a simple question. Since he genuinely wants to know, you shall give him a simple answer and tell him: "With a mighty hand did the Lord bring us forth from Egypt, from the house of slavery."

But even for the son who has no capacity to inquire, you must still relate the Passover story, as it is said: "And you shall tell your son on that day: 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me, when I went forth from Egypt.'" Even a son who has no ability to inquire still needs to be told the wonderful events of the Passover story, and learn about the God who can save a nation of slaves from one of the most powerful nations on Earth.

MAGID: TELLING THE PASSOVER STORY

The children of Israel went down to Egypt in the time of Joseph. God used Joseph to save both the children of Israel and the children of Egypt. But years later a new Pharaoh arose who did not remember Joseph. Instead of showing gratitude he enslaved our people. The Lord raised up Moses who went to Pharaoh and demanded that he let the Jewish people go. Pharaoh was stubborn and refused to let Israel go. God poured out ten plagues on the land of Egypt. The tenth plague was the worst one of them all: death for all the first-born

sons throughout the land of Egypt, both the first-born of Israel and the first-born of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-born of the animals.

There was only one way a first-born son could survive that first Passover night. God instructed us to take an unblemished year old lamb, kill it, and drain its blood into a bowl. Then we were to take hyssop, dip it in the bowl of blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the top of the door of our homes. The Lord said: "when I see the blood on the door I will pass over that house." The Almighty went throughout the land of Egypt that night and struck every house. There was a great outcry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead. But as He had promised, on each door where He saw the blood of a spotless lamb, God passed over that home and spared the first-born son from death. The next day Israel was redeemed from Egypt. Then God took us by the hand, and led us through the wilderness to the promised Land of Israel.

Looking back, we can see that Passover was a prophecy of a greater Lamb, a more profound Redemption, and a greater Exodus that was to come. Messiah Yeshua is the Lamb of God who died on Passover to take away the sin of the world. Just as the Jewish people took the blood of the Passover lamb and applied it to the doors of our houses, by faith we must apply the blood of the Son of God, the perfect and final sacrifice, to our lives. Then God will deliver us from our "Egypt" - our slavery to sin, our servitude to self, our bondage to the world, our captivity to the flesh and our enthrallment to the adversary. The Lord will take us by the hand, walk with us through the wilderness of this world, and lead us to the New Jerusalem, where we will live forever with Him!

THE SECOND CUP: THE CUP OF PLAGUES

There was blood in all the waters of Egypt. The Egyptians couldn't bathe, swim or take a drink. Frogs hopped and croaked everywhere. No one could walk, sleep or play in peace. When the frogs died, there was a great stench throughout Egypt. Lice made the Egyptians very uncomfortable, causing them to scratch and scratch themselves, but with little relief. Swarms of animals or insects ravaged the land and terrified the people of Egypt. There were plagues and diseases that sickened and killed the Egyptians' livestock. Almost all of the horses, donkeys, camels, sheep, goats and cows died. Boils burst forth on the skin of the animals who survived the plagues, and on the skin of the Egyptians. It must have been very painful! Hail rained down as huge balls of ice and killed the servants who worked in the fields, and what remained of the Egyptians' livestock. The plants and trees were destroyed. Huge swarms of locusts came and devoured the trees, plants and grass. Nothing green was left growing; Egypt was stripped bare. Darkness blotted out the light of the sun for three days. It must have been cold and terrifying! Finally, every first-born son in every Egyptian family died.

These plagues not only humbled the Egyptians, but they demonstrated the superiority of the God of Israel over all the gods of Egypt. The Egyptians worshiped various animals, men like Pharaoh, the Nile River and the Sun, and when their gods were affected by the ten plagues, the God of Israel was shown to be more powerful than them all.

Since wine is a symbol of joy, we remove a drop of wine from our cup for each of the ten plagues. This teaches us that we are not to rejoice too much over the destruction of our enemies. They are human beings made in the image of God, and it is a tragedy when a human being is destroyed. We are to feel compassion towards those who mistreat us.

Blood	Dam	דָּם
Frogs	Tz'fardayah	צְפַרְדֵּי
Lice	Kee-neem	כְּנִים
Swarms Of Insects Or Animals	Ahrov	עָרוֹב
Plague	Dever	דָּבָר
Boils	Sh'cheen	שָׁחִין
Hail	Barad	בָּרָד
Locusts	Arbeh	אַרְבֶּה
Darkness shech	Cho-	חֹשֶׁךְ
Killing of the First-born rot	Makat B'cho-	מַכַּת בְּכוֹרוֹת

DAYENU: IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH FOR US!

If He had brought us forth from Egypt, and had not inflicted judgment upon the Egyptians, it would have been enough for us. If He had inflicted judgment upon them, and had not executed judgment upon their gods, it would have been enough for us. If He had executed judgment upon their gods, and had not slain their first-born, it would have been enough for us. If He had slain their first-born, and had not bestowed their wealth upon us, it would have been enough for us. If He had given us their wealth, and had not divided the sea for us, it would have been enough for us. If He had divided the sea for us, and had not drowned our oppressors in the sea, it would have been enough for us. If He had drowned our oppressors in it, and had not supplied our needs in the wilderness during forty years, it would have been enough for us. If He had supplied our needs in the wilderness during forty years, and had not fed us with manna, it would have been enough for us. If He had fed us with manna, and had not given us the Sabbath, it would have been enough for us. If He had given us the Sabbath, and not given us the Torah, it would have been enough for us. If He had given us the Torah, and not led us into the land of Israel, it would have been enough for us. If He had led us into the land of Israel, and had not built the Temple, it would have been enough for us. If He had given us the Messiah, and did nothing else, it would have been enough for us!

אֱלוֹ הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם ... דַּיְנוּ!

Ee-lu hotzee hotzee-ahnu, hotzee-ahnu mee-mitz-rah-yim,
hotzee-ahnu mee-mitz-rayim, dai-ye-nu!

אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת ... דַּיְינוּ!

Ee-lu natan natan lah-nu, natan lah-nu et ha Shabbat,
natan lah-nu et ha Shabbat, dai-ye-nu!

אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַתּוֹרָה ... דַּיְינוּ!

Elu natan natan lah-nu, natan lah-nu et ha Torah,
natan lah-nu et ha Torah, dai-ye-nu!

אֱלֹהֵינוּ הִכְנִיטֵנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל ... דַּיְינוּ!

Ee-lu hich-nee hich-nee sanu hich-nee sanu l'Eretz Yisrael,
hich-nee sanu l'Eretz Yisrael, dai-ye-nu!

אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ אֶת הַמָּשִׁיחַ ... דַּיְינוּ!

Ee-lu natan natan lah-nu, natan lah-nu et haMashiach,
natan lah-nu et haMashiach, dai-ye-nu!

THE HALLEL: THE PSALMS THAT PRAISE GOD FOR SALVATION

Passover reminds us that the God of Israel is able to intervene in history. He really is able to help, save and deliver us! The Hallel praises God for various aspects of His salvation.

PSALM 113

We praise God for being so great, yet able and willing to save the lowliest human being: Praise the Lord! Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord. Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets the name of the Lord is to be praised. The Lord is exalted over all the nations, His glory above the Heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the Heavens and the Earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; He seats them with princes, with the princes of their people. He settles the barren woman in her home as a happy mother of children. Hallelu-Yah! Praise the Lord!

PSALM 114

We praise God for being so great that He can deliver a nation that was enslaved to the most powerful nation on Earth, part a sea and a river, and miraculously provide water from a rock: When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of foreign tongue, Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel His dominion. The sea looked and fled, the Jordan turned back; the mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs. Why was it O sea that you fled, O Jordan that you turned back, you mountains that you skipped like rams, you hills like lambs? Tremble O Earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water.

In every generation each individual is bound to regard himself as if he had personally gone forth from Egypt, as it is written: "And you shall relate to your son on that day saying: 'This is on account of what the Lord did for me, when I went forth from Egypt.'" Thus, it was not our ancestors alone, whom the Most Holy One, blessed be He, then redeemed, but He redeemed us with them, as it is said: "And He brought us forth from there, in order to bring us in, that He might give us the land which He swore unto our ancestors." In the same way, it is not enough to know the facts about the Messiah. Each one of us must personally place our faith and trust in Yeshua. Each individual must personally identify with the redemption provided by the Messiah - with His death, His burial and His resurrection. It is as if we died with Him, as if we were buried with Him, and as if we rose with Him when He rose from death!

Therefore we are bound to thank, praise, laud, glorify, extol, honor, bless, exalt, and reverence Him who performed for our fathers, and for us, all these miracles. He spared us from the plagues that afflicted Egypt, and brought us from slavery to freedom; from sorrow to joy; from mourning to festivity, and from servitude to redemption. Let us therefore sing a new song in His presence. Hallelu-Yah!

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי
הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, Boray p'ree hagafen. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

**MATZA (unleavened bread), MAROR (bitter herbs), BETZA (the egg),
CHAROSET (the apple mixture), ZEROAH (the bone)**

Rabbi Paul's teacher, Rabbi Gamliel, said that whoever does not mention three things at Passover has not done his duty; namely: the Passover Lamb, the Unleavened Bread, and the Bitter Herbs.

The Passover Lamb, which our ancestors ate during the existence of the Temple, why was it eaten? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, passed over the houses of our ancestors in Egypt, as it is said: "You shall say, 'It is a sacrifice of the Passover unto the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians and spared our houses.'" The Lord was very specific about what kind of lamb was to be used. The lamb was to be a perfect male in the prime of its life, without any spot or blemish. It was brought in for observation four days prior to Passover. No bone of the lamb was to be broken. The Passover lamb was a symbol of the Messiah. Yeshua was a perfect male in the prime of His life. He was sinless and blameless in the sight of God. He was observed by Israel for three or four years during His public ministry. Not one of His bones was broken.

This Unleavened Bread which we now eat, what does it mean? It is eaten because the dough of our ancestors didn't have time to become leavened before the supreme King of Kings, the Most Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself unto them and redeemed them; as it is written: "They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened because they were driven out of Egypt, and could not delay; neither had they made any provision for themselves."

Matza is called "the bread of affliction" because we were driven out of Egypt so quickly that there wasn't time for our bread to rise. Messiah also was oppressed and afflicted. When the matza is striped and pierced it reminds us that Yeshua was "pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment for our well being fell upon Him and by His stripes we are healed." The matza reminds us that Messiah was tempted in all ways like we are, yet He never sinned.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מַצָּה.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzee-vah-nu al ah-chee-lat matza. Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to eat unleavened bread.

This Bitter Herb which we eat, what does it mean? It is eaten because the Egyptians embittered the lives of our ancestors in Egypt, as it is said: "They embittered their lives with hard bondage, in mortar and brick, and in all manner of labor in the field. All their labor was imposed upon them with rigor." The bitter herb reminds us that life in Egypt was full of bitterness.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל אֲכִילַת מָרוֹר.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzee-vah-nu al ah-chee-lat maror. Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to eat bitter herbs.

This Charoset which we eat, what does it mean? It represents the mud that was mixed with straw to make the bricks to build Pharaoh's cities. It reminds us that if we really know God and know that we are redeemed, there can still be sweetness even in the midst of the most bitter circumstances.

We must eat the dry matza and the bitter herbs, but we must also eat the delicious charoset. This reminds us that the sons and daughters of God, who are precious in God's sight, whom He purchased with the blood of His own Son, and for whom He has prepared an everlasting inheritance, must through much tribulation and many difficulties and trials enter into the kingdom of God. Though we may be despised by the world, we are a royal priesthood and joint-heirs of Messiah. Even if we are oppressed with a multitude of trials and sufferings, we are nevertheless the possessors of all things!

Thus did rabbi Hillel during the existence of the holy Temple: he took unleavened bread and bitter herbs and ate them together, in order to perform the commandment: "with unleavened bread and bitter herbs shall they eat it."

This Egg which we eat, what does it mean? The egg represents the sacrifices that were offered at the Temple in Jerusalem during the holidays. But since the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, we can not offer any animal sacrifices. That places us in a terrible situation, since God's Word demands a sacrifice from us, for without the shedding of blood there is no atonement. We dip the egg into saltwater because we are sorry and tearful that we can no longer bring the sacrifices that the Torah requires. But for the one who truly believes in the Messiah, it is comforting to know that Yeshua is the perfect and final and sufficient Sacrifice.

SHULCHAN ORAYCH: THE PASSOVER MEAL

Since we have prayed that God would sanctify the meal, and thanked God for the foods, let us now eat the Passover meal.

BARAYCH: BLESSING AFTER THE MEAL

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who, because of Your goodness, grace and love, feeds and supports all Your creatures.
May Your name be blessed now and throughout eternity!

TZAFUN: THE HIDDEN AFIKOMEN

After the meal the children search for the hidden Afikomen. It was removed from the middle of the Matzatash. It is unleavened, striped, pierced, broken, wrapped up and hidden. The child who finds it resurrects it and brings it to the father. The father ransoms the Afikomen and rewards the child who finds it. In this ceremony we see the Three-In-Oneness of God, Messiah Yeshua and His sinless life, His death, His burial, His resurrection, and the reward that our Heavenly Father gives to each one of His children that comes to genuine faith in the Messiah that God sent to save us.

Just as the father takes the matza, breaks it and gives a piece to his family, so at His Last Supper Yeshua took matza, broke it and gave it to His disciples, and gave it even more meaning when He said: "Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." At another occasion, also around Passover, Yeshua said: "Truly, truly I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of Heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of Heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of Heaven, and gives life to the world." They said therefore to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Yeshua said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst... I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of Heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die."

"I am the living bread that came down out of Heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh." For the Believer in Yeshua, the Afikomen represents Messiah Yeshua's body that was broken for us. Because of His sacrifice we have atonement, eternal life, and peace with God. For the one who does not believe, this is only the bread of affliction which our forefathers ate in Egypt.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ וְלֶחֶם הָאֱמֶת לֶחֶם הַחַי מִן
הַשָּׁמַיִם.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu, Melech ha'olam, Ha-Motzee le-chem min ha'ah-retz v'Lechem ha-Emet, Le-chem ha-Chai min Ha-shah-mah-yim. Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the Earth and the true bread, the living bread from Heaven.

THE CUP OF REDEMPTION AND BLESSING

The third cup symbolizes the miraculous way that God saved us out of Egypt. Yeshua took this third cup after supper, and gave it additional meaning when He said: "Drink from it, all of you; this cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." For the Believer in Yeshua, this cup represents Messiah's blood that was shed for our sins to bring us into the New Covenant with God that brings us complete and everlasting redemption. For the one who does not believe, this is only the cup of redemption from slavery in Egypt.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי
הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, Boray p'ree hagafen.
Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the
fruit of the vine.

THE CUP OF HALLEL: THE CUP OF PRAISE

At Messiah Yeshua's Last Passover Seder, He and His disciples sang to the Lord,
as it is written: "After singing a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives."

PSALM 115

We praise God that salvation comes only from the true God, the God of Israel:
Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory because of Your love,
because of Your truth. Why should the nations say, where now is their God? But
our God is in the Heavens; He does whatever He pleases. Their idols are silver
and gold, the works of men's hands. They have mouths but they cannot speak;
they have eyes but they cannot see; they have ears but they cannot hear; they have
noses but they cannot smell; they have hands but they cannot feel; they have feet
but they cannot walk; they cannot make a sound with their throat. Those who
make them will become like them, everyone who trusts in them.

O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield! O house of Aaron,
trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield! You who fear the Lord, trust in
the Lord; He is their help and their shield! The Lord has been mindful of us; He
will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron.
He will bless those who fear the Lord, the small together with the great. May the
Lord give you increase, you and your children. May you be blessed of the Lord,
Maker of Heaven and Earth! The Heavens are the Heavens of the Lord; but the
Earth He has given to the sons of men. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do
any who go down into silence; but as for us, we will bless the Lord from this time
forth and forever! Hallelu-Yah! Praise the Lord!

PSALM 116

We praise God that He is able to save us from the most dire circumstances: I love
the Lord because He hears my voice and my supplications. Because He has
inclined His ear to me, therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live. The cords
of death encompassed me, and the terrors of Sheol came upon me; I found distress
and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord; O Lord I beseech You, save
my life! Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yes our God is compassionate. The
Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me.

Return to your rest O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. For You have rescued my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed when I said, I am greatly afflicted. I said in my alarm, all men are liars. What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I shall lift up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I shall pay my vows to the Lord, O may it be in the presence of all His people!

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones. O Lord, surely I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your handmaid; You have loosed my bonds. To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon the name of the Lord. I shall pay my vows to the Lord, O may it be in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelu-Yah! Praise the Lord!

PSALM 117

We praise God that His salvation was designed to flow from Israel to the nations of the world: Praise the Lord, all you nations; extol Him, all you peoples! For great is His love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever! Hallelu-Yah! Praise the Lord!

PSALM 118

We praise God for the ultimate salvation that is found in the Messiah, the Stone that the builders rejected: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever! Let Israel say: His love endures forever! Let the house of Aaron say: His love endures forever! Let those who fear the Lord say: His love endures forever!

In my anguish I cried to the Lord, and He answered by setting me free. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me; He is my helper. I will look in triumph on my enemies. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes. All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the Lord I cut them off. They surrounded me on every side, but in the name of the Lord I cut them off. They swarmed around me like bees, but they died out as quickly as burning thorns; in the name of the Lord I cut them off. I was pushed back and about to fall, but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my Yeshua - my Salvation.

Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: the Lord's right hand has done mighty things! The Lord's right hand is lifted high; the Lord's right

hand has done mighty things! I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done. The Lord has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death.

Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter. I will give You thanks, for You answered me; You have become my Yeshua - my Salvation! The Stone which the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes! This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. O Lord, save us! O Lord, grant us success! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! From the house of the Lord we bless you! The Lord is God, and He has made His light shine upon us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will give You thanks; You are my God, and I will exalt You. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever!

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְרִי
הַגֶּפֶן.

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, Boray p'ree hagafen.
Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the
fruit of the vine.

THE CUP OF ELIJAH

One cup on the table is reserved for the prophet Elijah, who is the forerunner of the second coming of the Messiah. The Lord promised to send this great prophet who never died to prepare us for the Messiah's return, so we have a cup reserved for Elijah in case he should visit us this Passover. But someone already came in the spirit of Elijah, to prepare Israel for the first coming of the Messiah! John, the forerunner of the first coming, came and immersed people at the Jordan river. One day he saw Yeshua coming and testified about Him: "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John knew that God's plan to redeem not only the Jewish people, but all peoples, was again through a Lamb - the ultimate Passover Sacrifice - the Messiah.

Just as the Jewish people in Egypt applied the blood of a spotless lamb to our doors, we must keep the Passover and the smearing of blood today. We must acknowledge our guilt and our inability to save ourselves, and place our full confidence in Messiah Yeshua, the final and perfect Sacrifice who died on Passover. Each one of us must apply the blood of Yeshua to the doors of our hearts. Then God will pass over our sins and bring us from our Egypts of sin and death, and guide us to the Promised Land of eternal life! Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, passage through the Red Sea and arrival in the Land of Israel is a picture of the true and final deliverance from all evil, sin and death, from the

world and from Satan. We too must turn our back on the world, embrace the death of Yeshua, and go through the Red Sea of immersion. Just as the Jewish people girded up our loins and left Egypt, we must walk through this world in newness of life, clothed with Messiah's character and resurrection power. Then just as the Jewish people sang a song of rejoicing on the other side of the Red Sea, the Lord will put a new song of praise to God in our hearts. He will take us by the hand, and walk with us through the wilderness of this world, and lead us to the New Jerusalem, where we will live with Him forever and ever!

In light of these truths, here are some additional Passover questions that should be asked: Have you kept the true meaning of the Passover? Are you removing the leaven of sin from your life? Have you applied Messiah's blood to the doorposts of your heart? Have you left the sinful things behind that kept you in slavery? Have you passed through the Red Sea by being immersed in cleansing waters? Are you clothed with newness of life? Are you fighting your way, with God's help, through the wilderness of life in this fallen world? Are you singing a new song, a song of praise unto our God?

May each one of us experience the full reality of Messiah's Passover in our lives! May all Israel and the entire world be speedily redeemed. May Messiah Yeshua soon return to Jerusalem, build up His holy city Zion, rebuild the Temple, gather Israel from the four corners of the world, rule over the nations, bring peace to the Earth, and judge the world in righteousness, speedily and in our days. And let us say, amayn!

ELIYAHU HA-NAVEE: ELIJAH THE PROPHET

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִי אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי אֱלִיָּהוּ גִלְעָדִי
הַגִּלְעָדִי;
בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבֹא אֱלִינוּ עִם מָשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד, עִם
מָשִׁיחַ בֶּן דָּוִד!

Eliyahu ha-na-vee, Eliyahu ha-tish-bee Eliyahu Eliyahu Eliyahu ha-gil-ah-dee;
bim-hay-ra v'yah-may-nu yah-vo eh-lay-nu eem Mo-shi-ach ben David, eem Mo-
shi-ach ben David! Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite, Elijah the Gileadite;
speedily and in our days may he come to us with Messiah son of David!

**NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM!
L'SHA-NA HA-BA-AH BEE-RU-SHA-LA-YEEM!**

לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם!

**CONGREGATION SHEMA YISRAEL
P O BOX 804
SOUTHFIELD MI 48037
248-593-5150
SHEMA777@AOL.COM
WWW.SHEMA.COM**