

The Chosen People



Volume VIII, Issue 3 March 2002

From

EGYPT

to the

Messiah

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ISSUE:

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Passover in Prophecy

Dear friend,

Shalom from New York City. Jewish people around the world will be celebrating Passover within the next few weeks. The first night of the holiday falls on Wednesday evening, March 27th—so it's not too late to send Passover cards to friends and family!

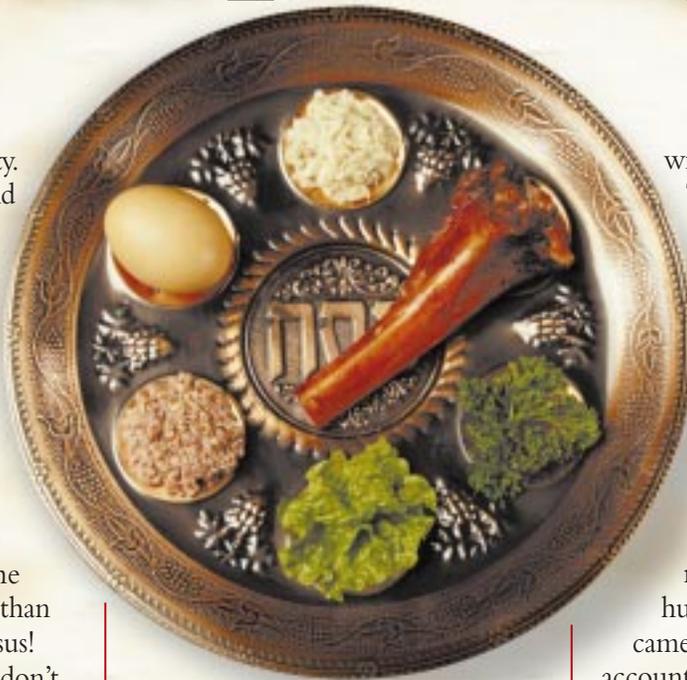
I look forward to Passover every year. I enjoy the food and the time with my family. But what I love most about the holiday is that Passover, more than any other festival, points to Jesus!

In fact, without Passover, I don't think I could ever have understood the Gospel.

First Encounters with Isaiah 53

I can still remember the first time I read Isaiah chapter 53. This crystal-clear prophecy of the death and resurrection of Jesus has been around for thousands of years, but it was new to me! I never studied the passage in Hebrew school, and we do not regularly read the passage in synagogue. I had never heard the chapter discussed by any Jewish people or by any of the rabbis I knew.

In fact, I simply never knew the passage existed—until I was eighteen years old, and a friend of mine who



had become a believer in Jesus told me that I should read this chapter.

Reluctantly, I read Isaiah chapter 53 and was astounded...amazed! Could this passage of Scripture have been in our Bible for all of these years? And yet my people—my family and all the Jewish people I knew—did not believe in Jesus!

The details of the Savior's death and resurrection and what that meant for a lost world and a lost me did not have much of an impact just then. I could not yet comprehend that I was a sinner worthy of judgment and that Jesus died an atoning death for me. The notion of blood atonement seemed archaic. After all, the sacrificial system ceased

with the destruction of the Temple more than two thousand years ago.

Yet the parallels between Isaiah 53 and the Gospel accounts of the death of Jesus that I was reading seemed far too close! I finally came to the conclusion that either Jesus was the Messiah and His death and resurrection were predicted hundreds of years before He came, or else the New Testament account was fraudulent.

I could not imagine that the Gospel writers conspired so carefully with one another about the details of Jesus' death and its striking relationship to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. This seemed too far-fetched!

The Prophets and the Passover

Although I was by now open to the Gospel, I still did not really understand the redemptive work of Jesus. It was the link between Passover and Isaiah chapter 53 that finally gave me the understanding I needed to accept Him as my Messiah and Lord.

Let me give you a little background.

On the first two nights of Passover, Jewish people celebrate a

Seder. This is a Hebrew word which means “order” and it simply refers to the order of service found in the Jewish service guide utilized at the Seder, which is called a *Haggadah*.

“*Haggadah*” literally means “the telling.” It is a booklet that leads the family through the story of Passover.

The Seder includes a wonderful meal and a full range of activities that help recount the deliverance of the Jewish people from Egyptian bondage. This is done through the reading of Scripture, the telling of stories, singing songs and even playing special Passover games with the children.

We display and eat various items including parsley, bitter horseradish and a hardboiled egg. These serve as symbols to help us describe the various elements of the story of redemption.

My understanding of salvation is based on the Passover! Every year I was reminded through the Seder that my people were slaves in Egypt and that God delivered us from bondage by His miraculous power. He parted the Red Sea, provided food for our ancestors in the wilderness and brought us to the Promised Land!

But it was remembering one of the most critical moments of the Passover Seder that unlocked the meaning of redemption for me.

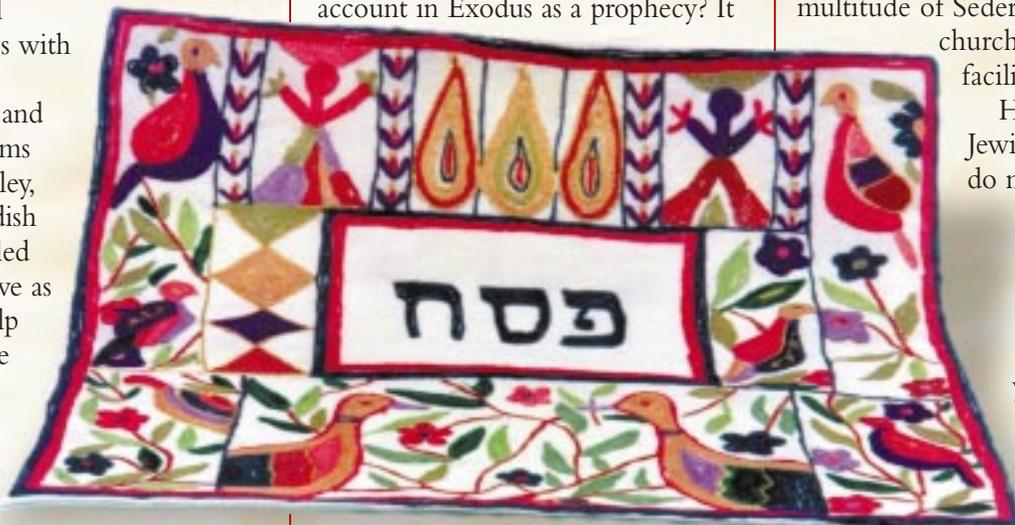
During the Seder, the leader of the celebration raises the shank bone of a lamb and reminds the family of the story found in Exodus chapter 12. Moses asked the Jewish people to take a spotless, unblemished lamb and kill it. Afterwards, they were to pour the blood of the lamb into a basin and

apply the blood to the two doorposts and the lintel of the homes.

The Lord would then pass over the homes protected by the blood of the lamb and spare the firstborn males of the Israelites. Those homes, Egyptian or Hebrew, which were not covered by the blood of the lamb, became a morgue that night. Their firstborn males were all killed, but the homes protected by the blood were spared this awful judgment (Exodus 12:21-28).

Painted in Crimson

Have you ever thought of this account in Exodus as a prophecy? It



really is! The slaying of the Passover lamb was a prophetic portrait of our redemption—painted in crimson and fulfilled when Jesus gave His life at Calvary.

The words of the prophet, couched in the rituals of the Passover Seder and rooted in the events of the Exodus, opened the eyes of my understanding to see that Jesus died for me! As Isaiah wrote, “*He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth*” (Isaiah 53:7).

He is the Lamb Who was slain! I believe this is exactly what the Jewish people who were gathered on the banks of the Jordan River understood when John saw his cousin approaching the waters,

requesting to be baptized. He is the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

Passover Today

And now another year has passed and once again we will celebrate Passover—my 50th—each of them beautiful and rich in tradition, but none so meaningful as the one that day when I realized that my sins were forgiven and I was forever free. Around the globe, your Chosen People Ministries workers will be conducting a multitude of Seders in local churches, public

facilities and homes. Hundreds of Jewish people who do not yet know the Lord will attend—often invited by their Christian friends. Would you pray for these upcoming events and consider attending one of these

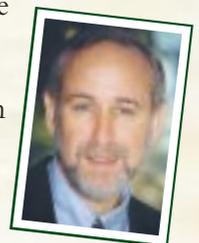
Seders—either a demonstration or a full banquet? Bring along a Jewish friend or two to see how the ancient Passover and the Hebrew Scriptures point to Jesus!

Call 888-405-5874. This is our **new Passover Hotline**. We will do our best to find you a Seder to attend where you can learn more about Passover and can bring a Jewish friend to hear the Gospel message through the Seder.

Happy Passover
and Resurrection
Day!

Your brother,

Mitch
Mitch



Mitch Glaser
President

The Rituals of Passover: Portrait of Messiah's Ministry

PASSOVER is a time to reflect on the road that takes us from Egypt to the Promised Land—both physically and spiritually. As believers in Messiah, we are privileged to remember the connection between the sacrificial Passover lamb and Jesus, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.

The rituals of Passover are a wonderful illustration of this. As we look into Luke 22, we find Jesus celebrating the Passover in much the same way as today; the essentials remain unchanged. They call to us across the centuries and draw our hearts toward the One Who redeems us from bondage and imparts to us a life of true freedom as His disciples.

Hand Washing: A Symbol of Purity

To this day, hand washing is an important part of the purification rituals of the Jewish faith, just as it was in Jesus' time. We see something of the Pharisees' emphasis on hand washing reflected in Mark 7—*"Now when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault"* (Mark 7:2).

At Passover, hands were washed not once, but twice, showing that special care was taken to maintain ceremonial purity. As in so many instances, though, the underlying purpose was so easily lost amid the ritual. As John 13 records, Jesus showed the true meaning of



ceremonial purity by incorporating into the Passover celebration the hospitality custom of washing the feet of His guests.

This often unpleasant task was normally assigned to a lowly servant. When Jesus, as the leader of the Passover Seder, washed the disciples' feet, He was making an important statement to them and to us. He told them, *"...he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves"* (Luke 22:26-27).

The Bitter Herbs: A Taste of Suffering

The presence of bitter herbs on the Passover plate is a reminder of the bitterness of slavery in Egypt. When celebrating the Passover, it is customary to take some of the unleavened bread and dip it into the bitter herbs. The taste brings tears to our eyes. It reminds believers not only of the bondage in Egypt, but of the suffering of Messiah.



Suffering may take many forms—and surely betrayal is among the most bitter. When asked the identity of his betrayer, Jesus simply answered, *“It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish”* (Mark 14:20). Or, as Luke writes, *“But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”* (Luke 22:21-22).

Jesus’ own prophetic words were about to come true: *“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him...”* (Mark 10:33-34).

The Unleavened Bread of Affliction

This “bread of affliction,” known as *Matzah*, embodies the suffering of God’s people in their bondage under Pharaoh in Egypt. They were in such haste to escape that they did not have time to wait for the dough of their bread to rise and it literally baked on their backs as they marched out of Egypt under the blazing sun.

Luke 22:19 records, *“And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’”*

Jesus took the *Matzah*, the already existing symbol of the suffering of



God’s people, and applied it to Himself. In doing so, He brought home the truth that He had come indeed as the “Suffering Servant of God” foretold by the prophet Isaiah. It was none other than Jesus Whose life would be offered up for our atonement. *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed”* (Isaiah 53:5).

Redeemed By the Blood of the Lamb

How many references to “the Blood of the Lamb” are there in our hymnals or songbooks? This ancient theme may be directly traced to the celebration of Passover. Exodus 12 records how the children of Israel were instructed to sacrifice the lamb: *“And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it”* (Exodus 12:7).

So it was that the homes of the Jewish families were covered by the protection of the blood of the innocent Passover sacrifice and protected from the wrath of God’s judgment in the tenth, most terrible plague—

the slaying of the firstborn. Passover is celebrated around four ritual cups of wine that reflect the

four “I wills” of Exodus 6:6-7. The third cup is called the “Cup of Redemption.” It was this cup that Luke



refers to when he writes, *“Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you’”* (Luke 22:20).

Here we find Jesus the Messiah taking the third cup, the well-known symbol of the blood of the Lamb, and fulfilling its true meaning. It is through His shed blood that you and I enjoy the forgiveness of our sins (Ephesians 1:7).

Messiah’s Passover Ministry

The hand washing, the bitter herbs, the unleavened bread and the cup of redemption all have special meaning for us today. Each of these Passover rituals points to a unique aspect of Messiah’s ministry to us—His servanthood, His suffering, His atoning, sacrificial work and His redeeming love. Through our faith relationship with Him, each of these aspects of His life comes alive for us each year, as we remember the Passover. ☆

See the Through Jewish Eyes Bible

by Dr. Daniel Goldberg



ZECHARIAH'S FIRST VISION: COMFORT AMID DISTRESS

Five months after work on the Temple was resumed, on the 24th day of the month of Shevat, in the second year of Darius (520 BC), Zechariah received a series of eight visions (1:1-6:8). The first of these visions is presented in Zechariah 1:1-17. It took the form of a man riding upon a red horse among myrtle trees, followed by red, sorrel and white horses.

The myrtle trees are mentioned no less than three times in 1:8-11. It is known that myrtle-covered glens surrounded Jerusalem and the myrtle trees in a low place may well represent Israel in her degraded position among the Gentile nations.

The emphasis is altogether on the rider of the red horse. While not indicated, we may surmise that the company of horses following also had riders.

Who Are They?

The red-horse rider was an angel in human form: "...the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees..." (1:11). Many believe that this heavenly messenger is none other than the second person of the Godhead, who in Old Testament times may also have appeared to Abraham (Genesis 18), Jacob (Genesis 31:11, 13), Moses (Exodus 3) and others.

There is another messenger, who may be called "The Angel Who Interprets." This angel explained the meaning of the visions to Zechariah, who asked at least ten questions throughout the series of visions (see 1:9, 19, 2:2, 4:4). The prophet inquired and received answers from this "interpreting angel."

The other three "angelic riders" were "...the ones whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth" (Zechariah 1:10). They were conversing with the "Angel of the LORD" (1:11).

The "LORD of Hosts" (1:12, 13) is seen to be in full control of the horsemen and the host of angels who carry out His commands. He communicates a word of comfort to the interpreting angel who, in turn, communicates it to Zechariah.

The Word of the Lord to Zechariah

God's army of angelic horsemen was patrolling the earth (1:11) carrying out its divine orders. The horsemen reported that the Gentile nations were resting at peace and ease (1:11). It was not so with the Jewish people, however. They were scattered and in distress, except for a small remnant. But who will intercede for Israel?

The answer comes in 1:12. Here the Angel of the Lord pleads with God Almighty, "...O LORD of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah...?"

The reply comes with "good and comforting words" (1:13)—"I am zealous for Jerusalem...I am...angry with the nations...I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it, says the LORD of hosts..." (1:14-16).

God's Comforting Promise

God's Word is truth for every age. Although circumstances may seem to be against us, the same Lord Who comforted Zechariah is our Lord also. His comfort comes to us through His Holy Spirit, Whom He has promised to give forever to those who place their faith in Jesus, the Jewish Messiah (John 14:16-17). ✨

Subway Evangelism Leads to Salvation

When he entered the subway in New York City after midnight, Chosen People Ministries' Stewart Jefferson was tired after a long day of outreach evangelism. But as it turned out, the Lord was not yet finished that day. A young man named Greg* approached Stewart, asking for money. Stewart engaged him in conversation and began to share the Gospel with him. It turned out that Greg had AIDS and was living in a facility. Greg expressed sadness at his hopeless state, but Stewart was able to encourage him with the Messiah's message of salvation. After riding around with him for three hours, Stewart prayed with Greg to receive the Lord.

"My Jerusalem" Begins Publication

Roll out the presses! The first issue of "My Jerusalem," the first Israeli evangelistic magazine printed in the Russian language, has begun publication under the oversight of Chosen People Ministries' Israel staff. It will contain articles written by Messianic leaders on a variety of subjects, such as Bible teaching and current events. It will also carry a feature titled "Through Jerusalem with the Bible," which is based on the ministry of staff member Leonid B.—our "Gospel Guide" of the holy sites. We pray that the magazine will be used of the Lord for the evangelization of Russian-speaking Jewish people, not only in Israel, but around the world.

Hasidic Summit Brings HOPE

The ultra-Orthodox Jewish community is a traditionally closed door for Jewish evangelism. But recently it appears to have opened a crack due to the efforts of a particularly gifted couple on the Chosen People Ministries staff. For this reason, the first "Hasidic Summit" was held in Brooklyn to seek an expanded vision of what the Lord is doing for His Kingdom. People from various ministries and churches with a burden for reaching ultra-Orthodox Hasidic Jewish people gathered together to pray and plan. As a result, HOPE (Hasidic Outreach Partnership for Evangelism) was established. Please pray for HOPE to become effective in reaching out to the Hasidic Jewish community.

A Growing Work in Philadelphia

Philadelphia has been a destination for many thousands of Russian Jewish people. Ilya Lizorkin, who recently relocated to that city, has begun a work that shows great promise. Starting with a monthly worship service in December, the outreach has begun to attract increasing numbers of people. At a recent worship service, 65 people came to worship—many of them first time visitors. Pray that this outreach may continue to flourish and that God will bring many people into the Kingdom through Ilya's ministry.



Ilya and Pnina Lizorkin

Baptism Leads to Salvation

Chosen People Ministries' outreach in Germany continues to reap a harvest of souls. At a baptism service held not long ago, eleven people took this step of obedience—eight of them Jewish—in the presence of many relatives and friends. Before being baptized, every one of the eleven witnessed about how they came to faith in Jesus and publicly confessed their faith. After the service one woman who was a friend of one of those baptized came to Vladimir Pikman, the congregational leader, with the words, "Please, I want to repent!" Vladimir prayed with her to receive the Lord. Then she started to pray herself, "Jesus, I want to serve you all my life." Vladimir shares, "She prayed with such conviction!" Praise the Lord!

*name has been changed

SIMCHA

Sharing God's Joy with God's People

It isn't too early to mark this Memorial Day weekend on your calendar for fellowship with God's people at the gracious and restful setting of Word of Life/Schroon Lake conference grounds in the spectacular Adirondack Mountains of New York State.

Simcha begins on Thursday evening, May 23, and concludes on Sunday, May 26. This year our featured speaker will be Rev. Stuart Rothberg, one of the finest Bible expositors in the country today! So says our president, Dr. Mitch Glaser, who has known Stuart for many years. Stuart is an associate pastor at Sagemont Church in Houston, one of the largest churches in the area.

We have planned dynamic children's and teen programs, along with nursery care during most of the sessions. Russian translation will also be available throughout the conference.

Please call 212-223-2252 to make a reservation. You can also register online at www.chosenpeople.com/simcha.



Take a STEP of Faith for Jewish Evangelism

STEP

Chosen People Ministries' Summer Training and Evangelism Program (STEP) is the number one way to get a first taste of Jewish missions. This short-term summer program from June 9-July 7 begins with two weeks of detailed instruction in the "how to's" of Jewish evangelism at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Then it's off to New York City to put into practice what was learned. This opportunity is open to those between the ages of 18 and 35.

Teen STEP

In addition, Teen STEP programs will be held in New York City from July 13-21 and in Boston from July 21-28.

STEP in a Week

Only have a week? Don't let that stop you! Our new "STEP in a Week" program from July 7-13 is designed just for you! Join us for a week of outreach, evangelistic training, prayer walks, Jewish cultural experiences and more in the heart of New York City. And oh...the corned beef sandwiches!

eXperience Israel

Chosen People Ministries' popular two-week, life-defining missions trip to Israel. This is especially geared for those between the ages of 18 and 30. The dates are July 14-28.

Call Stewart at 212-223-2252 for more information about any or all of these wonderful opportunities.

NEW! Items to Celebrate Passover

Passover lasts through early April ... or shop for next year.

The Matza tash (unity) is a pouch with three compartments—each one holds a piece of unleavened bread. The Matza tash binds the three into One—a vivid illustration of the unity of God's nature. This white Matza tash cover is beautifully embroidered and is made in Israel.

Matza tash # 5026 \$17.95^{us}

The Seder plate helps to tell the story of the Exodus and points to our Messiah. This brass plate is a centerpiece that will grace your table as your family gathers at Passover. Made in Israel.

Seder plate # 5024 \$18.95^{us}

The Kiddush cup - At Passover, the contents of the kiddush cup symbolize the blood of the Lamb of God. Each of the four times it is filled, the story of God's redeeming work among His people is unfolded. This silver cup fashioned in Israel is almost 5 inches high.

Kiddush cup # 5025 \$18.95^{us}

Complete Passover Set (includes plate, cup and Matza tash) # 5027 \$49.95^{us}

Deluxe Passover Set (includes plate, cup, Matza tash and the Passover kit*) # 5028 \$64.95^{us}

*The Passover kit (not pictured) includes the *Messiah in the Passover* video, *How to Prepare for a Passover Dinner*, *Messianic Passover Haggadah*, and a poster.



The Chosen People Newsletter

Chosen People Ministries has been taking the love of the Messiah to Jewish people worldwide since 1894.

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Visit us on the web at www.chosenpeople.com

Please remember Chosen People Ministries in your will. "I will bless those who bless you." (Genesis 12:3)