

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



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MESSIAH *in the* PASSOVER

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dr. Mitch Glaser
President, Chosen People Ministries

MESSIAH IN THE PASSOVER

Passover and Easter
are like book ends
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of years.

Shalom!

Happy Passover and Easter season! I look forward to this time of year when we observe Passover, which is a foreshadowing of the most defining moment in human history—the death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. The two holidays are forever linked in much the same way as the Old and New Testaments are joined in one great story of God’s love and redemption. Yet, the historical distinctions between them are at the core of the religious self-understanding of so many Jewish people and Christians. It is thought that Passover is for the Jews and Easter is for the Christians. However, in the Bible and in the mind and heart of God, I believe they are twin sisters of the same redemptive truth. The cross only makes sense in the shadow of the blood-smeared doors of the Israelite slaves in Egypt.

How I pray that my Jewish family and friends might one day recognize the continuity of this one great story and its fulfillment in the Messiah of Israel—Jesus. Passover and Easter are like book-ends holding together a narrative of faith that spans thousands of years, dozens of authors, and Spirit-breathed texts (2 Timothy 3:16). Yet, it is still one grand story of God’s love and creation, of man’s fall and spiritual wanderings, and of the prophetic hope exquisitely fulfilled

when the Savior spoke these words at His last Passover supper with His disciples.

And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.” (Luke 22:19-20)

In order to help this season be all the more meaningful to you, I have some really good news!

Our staff has produced a 350-plus-page book entitled, *Messiah in the Passover*. It is a reference book and there is something in this volume for everyone! It includes an in-depth study of the Passover throughout biblical history, church history, and Jewish history—all of which leads to a deeper understanding of the Passover today and how the Jewish people celebrate this remembrance of the redemption from Egypt.

We also cover some very practical topics, such as how to use the Passover in sharing the Gospel with your Jewish friends, and linking the Last Supper, which was a Passover Seder, with the Lord’s Supper, where Jesus announced His death and resurrection through the traditional elements of the Passover meal.

We provide a Jesus-centered *Hagaddah*, or guide, to a family Passover that you can use in your own home and also provide Passover lessons for your children so that they can better grasp this great Old Testament story.

And, we included a number of delicious recipes so you can enjoy many of the traditional Passover foods yourself!

The book is hot off the press and available in print and as an e-book as well. All you need to do to order your copy of *Messiah in the Passover* is to indicate this on the enclosed card or visit chosenpeople.com/store. We are also happy to send you a copy of the book for your donation of \$200 or more. As you know, we depend upon

God and your generous support to continue our ministry of reaching the Jewish people with the message of redemption.

We have also developed a new website entitled—you guessed it...*Messiah in the Passover*. So please visit www.messiahinthepassover.com to enjoy a bundle of wonderful features including Passover “how to” videos and some additional detailed studies that will enable you to learn more about the Jewish heritage of our faith.



Please remember to pray for Your Mission to the Jewish People this month as we share the message of Messiah in the Passover with thousands of Jewish people, both online through our Facebook campaigns, and in person through our Messiah in the Passover presentations at churches, and banquets at our centers and Messianic congregations. Find out more by visiting our website and find a presentation near you—chosenpeople.com/passoverbanquet.

PASSOVER, PROPHECY AND JESUS

Allow me to share with you the following excerpt from my chapter written on the Passover in the Gospel of John from the *Messiah in the Passover* book:

Often referred to as His Passion, this last week is the most eventful of Jesus' short life. Certainly, it is the most significant from a human perspective, as it includes His death and resurrection—the penultimate moment of human history. His final week, according to John, also includes various teachings, which are unique to this Gospel [of John] such as His Upper Room Discourse, teaching on the Holy Spirit, High Priestly Prayer, etc. The last week of Jesus' life is also significant because many Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled during this week, especially those involving His atoning death and resurrection.

The agenda, goals, and purposes of His last week are outlined in both the Old and New Testaments and driven by the necessity for Jesus to fulfill all that is predicted about Him in the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, as well as His own predictions in the Gospels. In particular, three Old Testament passages heavily influence the agenda of the Messiah's last week on earth: Isaiah 53, Daniel 9:24–26, and Leviticus 23. These texts create a path for what Yeshua would do and when He would do it.

1. Isaiah 53—The prediction of the Messiah's suffering, death, and resurrection, along with Israel's response to His message.
2. Daniel 9:24–26—The prediction of the Messiah's death as detailed in the prophecy of the seventy weeks.
3. Leviticus 23—The pattern of the Messiah's passion as revealed through the Passover, which will especially influence the last week of Jesus' life.

The Jewish festivals found in Leviticus 23 appear to be prophetic types and in one way or another are fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus (we view the first four “spring” festivals as fulfilled in His first coming

and the three additional “fall” festivals as fulfilled in His second coming).

Additional Old Testament prophecies such as Psalm 22 and Zechariah 12:10 also help to paint a prophetic portrait of our Messiah's last days on earth. As the Apostle Peter writes,

As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. (1 Peter 1:10–11)

There is no doubt that the Savior of the world was born to die in order to fulfill many direct prophecies and types. Especially that of the Lamb of God, which is a direct comparison to the Passover lamb whose blood was smeared on the doorposts of the Israelite homes to protect their firstborn males from the tenth plague of the Exodus story.

The Apostle John, in the book of Revelation, describes Jesus as “the Lamb who has been slain” (Revelation 13:8). The Apostle Peter adds that we,

...were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold...but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you. (1 Peter 1:18–20)

The predicted role of Jesus as the suffering and sacrificial Lamb of God who will die for sin and rise from the grave is not peripheral to the plan of God, but rather is at the very heart of who Jesus is and what He came to accomplish. Isaiah had already used the prophetic imagery of the Passover lamb in his well-known chapter 53.

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)¹

This last week of the Savior's life would conclude with the Passover! Please keep reading and you will discover some additional portions of the new book inside. Enjoy the rest of the newsletter. I hope you will be blessed and enriched and that the Messiah of the Passover will be more precious to you than ever before!

Your brother,


Mitch

¹ Excerpted from chapter 5 of the book *Messiah in the Passover*—“Passover in the Gospel of John” by Dr. Mitch Glaser

DR. DARRELL BOCK

The following are small samples of the content you will find in the *Messiah in the Passover* book. We hope these excerpts will whet your appetite for the wonderful information you will discover within the pages of this excellent reference book, which is especially designed for believers to learn more about the festival and to be able to celebrate with their families.

Passover and the Gospel of Luke

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

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

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



Luke explicitly associates the Last Supper with the Passover meal and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Luke 22:1, 7, 15). He does this because the two feasts come back to back and were often combined or discussed together with either name used for the whole (Ezekiel 45:21; Matthew 26:17–18; Mark 14:1-2). Flavius Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, writes “the feast of unleavened bread, which we call the Passover”

(*Ant.* 14.21). The Passover connection is also seen in Mark's use of the terms in Mark 14:1, 12, where he similarly refers to both celebrations. This is an important observation to make as we prepare to discuss the topic.

The celebration of the Passover goes back centuries as other chapters in this book show. But the more controversial question is whether a specific Passover Seder was present or merely a liturgically structured meal with multiple cups. And where can we find more conclusive information regarding the meal, elements, symbolism, and traditions observed that evening? We will examine whether or not Jesus observed a more defined Seder, the nature of its internal elements and symbols, such as the cups mentioned in the account, and if what Luke describes is generally consistent with the elements of the Passover meal.

DR. MITCH GLASER

Introduction

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

This is the foundation for the Passover: it is a festival filled with opportunities for participation in the remembrance of our great deliverance from Egypt. We were told to recount the story year after year so that new generations of Jewish people would never forget what God did in delivering them from Egypt.

It is wonderful to observe the Passover because there are so many invaluable lessons preserved in the festival for the people of God. Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples



in light of His sacrifice for our sins. Similarly, Christians throughout the world, in one way or another, remember Jesus and give thanks for His sacrificial death through the Lord's Supper, often called Communion.

When Christians celebrate the Passover, they grow in their understanding of the Old Testament, affirm the Jewishness of the Gospel, deepen their understanding of the Lord's Supper, build community with fellow Christians, and develop a common experience that will enable them to better communicate the Gospel to their Jewish friends. Most of all, the glorious message of redemption is being passed along to future generations and linking our children and grandchildren to the Exodus. This will help our children develop a sense of continuity between the Old and New Testaments and between prophecy given and prophecy fulfilled. This will build the faith of our kids, giving them greater assurance that what the Bible said about the future has and will come to pass.

CATHY WILSON

Passover and Your Home

Should the Lord lead you to present a Passover Seder at your church or in your small group, it is wise to consider including an introduction about the significance of the Passover. You might even suggest that your fellowship invite a Chosen People Ministries staff person to instruct the group. Our Church Ministries staff would be happy to speak with you or your pastor. Request a representative at www.chosenpeople.com/site/invite-a-speaker.

Allow me then to share some of what I tell those who are interested in, but unfamiliar with, Passover to interest them in learning more and even celebrating a Seder. You will help your believing friends by introducing them to this great opportunity to better appreciate redemption!

The Lamb: Center Stage

At the first Passover in Egypt, lambs enter the lives of the family members and are scrutinized from the tenth until the fourteenth of the month of Nisan (Exodus 12:1–7). An attachment to the lamb, now a part of the Jewish household, naturally develops. To help His people understand the cost and value of redemption, it may be that God's intention was for the lambs to be cherished and then later mourned.

Can you imagine what the children of Israel really thought about God's instructions? "We're to do—what? Why?" The children of Israel may not have remembered what God had so graphically conveyed about a lamb years ago when He called Abram to offer his only son as a burnt offering. The father and son climbed one of the mountains in the land of Moriah, and Isaac asked about the whereabouts of the burnt offering. His father plainly stated, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" (Genesis 22:8). The Lord provided a ram (a male lamb) caught in the thicket by his horns as a substitute for Isaac (v. 13). This may well have been the first substitutionary sacrifice in the Bible. If not, it nevertheless dramatically displayed the biblical theme of substitutionary sacrifice.

We see this pattern emerge again in the Exodus when the time came for the first Passover, as God requires another lamb to be slain and its blood smeared upon the lintel and doorposts of each Israelite home as a substitute for the death of the firstborn sons of Israel. If the Israelites obey, their firstborn sons will not need to die. For the Lord will go through the land of Egypt to smite all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, but when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come into the Israelites' houses to smite them (Exodus 12:7, 12–13, 21–23).

The lamb of the Egyptian Passover presents a foreshadowing of the Lamb mentioned in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, where Isaiah speaks of a lamb to come as a substitute for His people, Israel:

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. (Isaiah 53:5–6)

The theme of the sacrificial lamb continues through Scripture, but can only be fully appreciated by first understanding the original Passover. By retelling the Passover story during the Seder, we deepen our connection to both the people and the God of Israel as we understand that the ultimate sacrificial Lamb is Jesus Himself.



Painting by Joséfa de Ayala - The Sacrificial Lamb

Hebrews 6:9-12

An Encouraging Word



Dr. Rich Freeman, D. Min. serves as the Vice President for Church Ministries and Conferences with Chosen People Ministries and lives in South Florida with his wife, Julia. Dr. Freeman works with churches throughout the country and abroad, helping to equip God's people to share the Gospel with their Jewish neighbors, friends and co-workers and grow in their understanding of the Scriptures.

Following the warning passage in Hebrews 6:4-8, the writer of Hebrews comes to a transition. In verse 9 he uses “But beloved,” a term of endearment likely intended to soften the severity of the warning just given. This is the only place in Hebrews where the readers are referred to as “beloved.” I believe this adds credence to the evidence that genuine Christians are in view throughout this warning passage. The “better things” reflect the writer’s confidence that his readers ultimately would not fall away from the truth. He believed that these Jewish believers would not turn back to the Judaism that had rejected Jesus. The attitude of the writer seems almost pastoral in nature as he writes of the confidence that the consequences of the apostasy would not fall upon them.

The “things that accompany salvation” refers to the full salvation awaiting them, which the writer had been discussing throughout Hebrews. At the end of Hebrews 1, in verses 13 and 14, the writer, quoting from Psalm 110, talks about the victory the King Messiah would attain through the Father, and how the believers would inherit that victory with their King. Hebrews 3 and 4 described the inheritance rest, which the believers would be allowed to enter. The writer of Hebrews is saying that his expectation was that these believers would ultimately persevere to the end and inherit those blessings. It was a message of encouragement. The statement, “though we are speaking this way,” reiterates that he recognized the harshness of the warning previously given to them.

This group of believers, though struggling in their faith sometimes, were still doing wonderful work in the name of the Lord, ministering to other fellow believers which the author considered an act of “love shown toward His name.” The writer knew that God is not unjust, which was a way of showing through use of the double negative that God is in fact eminently

just. Because God is just, He would justly reward their work and ministry to the saints. He would remember their work and the love they showed Him in helping other believers and in their continuing to do so. These words of encouragement were intended to exhort them to keep up the good work and rely on God to help them accomplish what they needed to continue to do in ministry.

Read Hebrews 6:9-12 NASB

⁹ But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation, though we are speaking in this way. ¹⁰ For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints. ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

The author’s desire was that they would diligently stick to the good course they were already pursuing and that they would live their lives for God with the same diligence with which they were serving others and of which God was fully mindful. Doing that, they would realize the full assurance of the hope given to those who persevere to the end. In contrast to this the author writes, “so that you do not become sluggish”, or some translations use lazy. Their immaturity earlier warned against was attributed to sluggishness or laziness. Their lack of prioritizing their Christian walk and their sluggishness and laziness in

the Word made them susceptible to immaturity and falling away. The remedy for this sluggishness was to be imitators of those “who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” The theme of imitation will occur again in Hebrews 13:7. Find a leader whose faith, through the way their lives are lived for Jesus, will encourage you to persevere to the end. Ultimately the goal should be the inheritance set before us.

Even though the reality of the danger of falling into apostasy his readers faced was real, the writer of Hebrews believed they would avoid it. These verses speak of “love,” “hope,” and “faith,” which we see together in many other portions of the New Testament. Therefore, he concluded this warning in Hebrews 6 with an encouraging word. A word intended to encourage them to persevere and receive the promised inheritance.

NEW ORTHODOX JEWISH BELIEVER RISKS EVERYTHING

Ethan* is a new Jewish believer who comes from an Orthodox background. He is hesitant to tell his religious family about his faith in Jesus since he knows there will be problems and they may even excommunicate him. Being only 22 years old, this could have serious consequences for him. As Ryan, our staff member, and Ethan were reading the New Testament together they came across a passage about baptism. Ethan was curious and asked "If this is a Jewish thing from the Torah what does it mean to Christians?" It was a golden question, the perfect chance for Ryan to encourage Ethan's step of faith in Jesus. Ryan described the significance of baptism in Judaism and in the New Testament and asked Ethan if he would like to be baptized.

The question hung in the air then Ethan responded matter-of-factly, "Yes, I would." Knowing the weight of such an action in the eyes of Ethan's Orthodox family, by his saying yes, it was apparent that Ethan truly is a disciple of Jesus and growing in maturity!

ISRAELIS REACHED THROUGH NEW ZEALAND BACKPACKING

Staff member Robin met Ran* backpacking in New Zealand. They talked for a long time about the difference between religion and knowing God personally and believing the Bible. Robin encouraged him to read the prophecies and to read the Gospel and see what Jesus says about Himself. The next day, Ran pulled Robin aside and said, "I want to talk to you." Ran shared that he was thinking about their previous conversation. He said in the army he sometimes read his Bible and found wisdom there, but saw it as moral fables. Robin talked about historic truth and God's faithfulness to Israel and prophecies foretold then fulfilled.

He decided it was time to read a gospel to explore if there is more to the Hebrew Scriptures and this book (the New Testament) than moral lessons. Pray that Ran will open his heart to the Messiah!

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Many seeds are being planted, as Doug, a seasoned missionary, and two Feinberg seminary students, minister at Queens College in New York City. The campus ministry team gives away free Old Testaments in Hebrew and English with a flyer containing the major Old Testament Messianic prophecies. Recently, at least half of the Jewish students who

stopped by and read Isaiah 53 were Orthodox Jews. When most Jewish students read Isaiah 53 at the table, they think that it is speaking about Jesus, even though they have never read it before! There was one Jewish student who lingered longer over the chapter than others. He said that he believed it was speaking about Jesus. Doug explained that the passage was written in 700 BC by Isaiah, the Jewish prophet in the Tanakh (Old Testament). Three of the seminary students and Doug got together in the dorm afterwards to pray for each one who signed our sheet to stay in contact with us.



Inside the new Tel Aviv Messianic Center

A NEW CENTER OPENS IN TEL AVIV

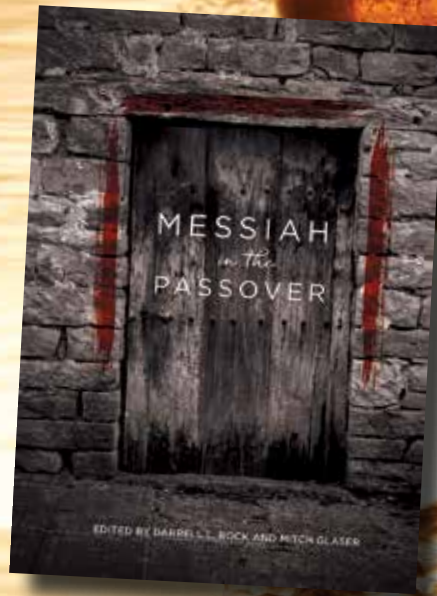
Very exciting things are happening in Tel Aviv! Staff member Jason reports, "During our renovation period, we had a lot of deliveries and technicians. They always asked about the purpose of the facility." One young man, David,* was very interested when Jason explained our team are Jewish people that believe that the Messiah has already come. David didn't want to take *Isaiah 53 Explained*, but he promised to read Isaiah 53 in the Bible. Around the same time, a delivery of new copies of *Isaiah 53 Explained* in Hebrew and Russian arrived. One of the delivery men, Moses,* wanted to know what the book was about, so Jason explained it to him and he asked for a copy. Most Israelis think that believing in Yeshua (Jesus) is a new fad. So Jason has been approaching conversations like these from a historical perspective and it has been very effective. Jason and the Tel Aviv staff look forward to the future ministry that this center holds.

*names have been changed

Messiah in the Passover, the newest book by Chosen People Ministries, covers a full range of topics including the biblical foundations for the Passover and the Lord's Supper, the Passover throughout Jewish and Church history, as well as how Jewish people celebrate Passover today.

The book, edited by Dr. Darrell Bock, professor of New Testament at Dallas Theological Seminary, and Dr. Mitch Glaser, president of Chosen People Ministries, provides all that is needed to conduct a Passover Seder in your home that glorifies the Messiah Jesus as the Lamb of God. Also included are crafts for the children, recipes so that you can make delicious Passover foods, and great detail on how to use the Passover as an evangelistic tool in reaching your Jewish friends.

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Passover

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