



This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

[https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon\\_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf](https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf)

<b>Gen 21</b>	<b>Judges 18-19</b>	<b>Ps 45-47</b>	<b>Mat 26</b>
---------------	---------------------	-----------------	---------------

## The Birth of Isaac (Genesis 21)

Finally, after 25 years, God fulfilled His promise to provide a son and heir to Abraham and Sarah! The wait had been difficult, sometimes dispiriting, sometimes frustrating. But, true to His word, God did just as He promised—and just when He promised the previous year (18:10, 14).

But the birth of the promised son did not lead to peace and joy. Instead, the fruit of Abraham and Sarah's attempt to fulfill God's promise through Hagar was now beginning to be borne. Strife rent the household of Abraham, with Sarah seeking to ensure Isaac's preeminence and resenting Abraham's love for Ishmael, his other son. Although the narrative presents the entire transaction in a relatively brief space, it is likely that the tensions in the household had been building for quite some time. Ishmael's ill treatment of Isaac was merely the straw that broke the camel's back.

Abraham was distressed by the entire affair. He truly loved Ishmael (17:18) and, given God's pointed mention of Hagar in 21:12, Abraham may have had tender feelings toward her. He probably tried everything he could to keep peace in the house. But it was to no avail. In this circumstance, God told Abraham to heed the words of Sarah. Whether or not Sarah had a right to feel and behave as she did, God's plan necessitated the separation of Ishmael from the household.

In requiring the separation, however, God reassured Abraham that Ishmael would be blessed, "because he is your seed" (verse 13). In other words, although God had not obligated Himself to provide for Ishmael, nor bless him, God would graciously bless Ishmael because God loved Abraham and Abraham loved Ishmael. God's grace sometimes falls on others because of His love toward His people. When we become His children, God's love and affection is extended to more than simply ourselves. Because He loves us and we love others, God, for our sake, sometimes extends His protection and blessing to those we love. This is born out explicitly in 1 Corinthians 7:14, where Paul tells us that an unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believer—an extension of God's love toward us. So, though we are separated from the world by the plan and call of God, nevertheless we are

given the sure knowledge that because of our separation to God, our unconverted loved ones will often share in the overflow of God's grace.

We should also stress in this context the kinds of problems that can arise whenever we depart from God's pattern for marriage—that a man and woman unite for life in a loving monogamous relationship (Matthew 19:5-6). As we see from the example of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar— here in Genesis 21 and earlier in chapter 16—relationships contrary to this pattern lead to heartache, jealousy, bitterness and misery. We see many of the same problems again when we come to the life of Abraham's grandson Jacob. These stark examples should remind us of the kinds of consequences we saddle ourselves and others with when we decide to ignore God's laws and instructions.

## **Dan Adopts Micah's Error and Takes Laish (Judges 18)**

---

When the Danite force moved north from Judah through Ephraim on their way to conquer Laish, they moved through the highlands of Ephraim, probably because the lowlands were still occupied by Canaanites. To aid them in their battle, the Danites decided to take the shrine of Micah and the Levite with them, probably in imitation of the Israelite practice of having a priest head their fighting forces (compare Deuteronomy 20). We are told that Laish was "far from the Zidonians, and they had no ties with anyone" (18:7). Thus, they appear to have lived an isolated life, having neither trading nor diplomatic relations with outsiders. In such a condition, without allies, Laish fell to Dan.

After the conquest of Laish, the men of Dan set up Micah's idolatrous figures and consecrated Jonathan, who may very well have been the grandson of Moses (see earlier highlight on Judges 17, "History Out of Sequence"), as their priest, and his sons as their priesthood. The northern Danites retained this idolatrous worship until the time of the captivity of northern Israel around 722 B.C. Moreover, all Israel knew about it, but did nothing to stop it, as required by the law God had given (see Deuteronomy 13:12ff.).

## **Prelude to the War Against Benjamin (Judges 19)**

---

The disastrous war against the Benjamites began with a single incident, the brutal gang rape of a Levite's concubine. As horrible as this incident was, we still might wonder how it was able to spark such a major war.

There are two major relevant factors involved in what happened, one cultural and the other historical. The cultural factor involves proper treatment of a guest. Life in the Middle East has always been difficult, and to cope with the arduous conditions of nomadic life an elaborate system of social customs was developed. One social custom required every person to kindly entertain a guest, to provide comfort, lodging and food for a brief period to any stranger who happened upon one's camp, even if that stranger was a member of an enemy tribe in a time of peace. If the due benevolence was

not shown, it was deemed an act of hostility and impiety before God. If the offence was serious enough, clan or tribal wars could be ignited.

A second factor was the persistent memory of what God had done to Sodom and Gomorrah— not only from the Pentateuch but even, no doubt, from regional stories passed down through generations. The filthy, abominable behavior of the inhabitants of these cities and others around them was a major factor in the cry that went up to God against them. The destruction against Sodom and her neighbors was so complete that even today their exact whereabouts remain unknown. By comparing the behavior of the Gibeahite “sons of Belial” (19:22) and the old man (19:23) with the conduct of the men of Sodom (Genesis 19:4-5) and Lot (verses 6-8), one should be able to see a very clear parallel.

Factoring the understanding of these elements into the story, one can see why an incident of this nature could ignite such a war. The Levite was a representative of God, to whom the Gibeahites were extremely inhospitable and showed open and flagrant impiety. Knowing the social requirements to care for the traveler, the natural conclusion was that such an affront would be repaid with vengeance by the One the Levite served—God. Therefore action needed to be taken.

Of course, the Levite does not appear very God-oriented, surrendering his concubine to be abused as he did and being so cold and uncaring toward her the next morning before he knew she was actually dead. The Ephraimite’s offer to surrender up his own daughter does not paint him any better. We see here the low status that women had in that society. Truly, this story is utterly horrendous all the way around. It illustrates how low things had sunk—to the depravity of Sodom and Gomorrah. The prophet Hosea later cited this episode as one of the most corrupt events in Israel’s history (Hosea 9:9; 10:9).

## **Psalm 44**

---

Psalm 44, another maskil of the sons of Korah, is written as a community lament and plea.

The perspective throughout is normally first-person plural (i.e., we, our, us), yet verses 4, 6 and 15 use first-person singular (I, my and me). It could be that the singular usage is intended to denote the nation collectively—or just to have each person singing the prayerful song identify with it personally. It is also conceivable that these verses were intended to be solo parts. Or they may simply indicate a single author praying collectively throughout the psalm using “we” but sometimes speaking personally using “I”—just as each of us does in our own prayers today. For instance, you as an individual might pray collectively, “Our Father...give us...our daily bread,” and yet also ask personally in the same prayer, “Help me to do your will.”

The occasion of this psalm is a time of military defeat wherein people have been captured by the enemy (see verses 9-12). It may be one of those taken captive who wrote the song in Psalms 42-43.

Psalm 44 begins with the people rehearsing a portion of Israel’s history that their parents

taught them (verse 1)—that their ancestors didn't gain the Promised Land because of their own military strength and actions, but because God drove out the nations who lived there and planted the Israelite ancestors there instead (verses 2-3). The psalm further eschews trust in military might and expresses faith that God, as Israel's King and commander, is the One through whom the nation will gain victory against its enemies now and in the future—just as in the past (verses 4-8).

Yet for the moment things look terribly bleak—in the face of military defeat, scattering, shame and enemy taunts (verses 9-16, 19). The song bemoans God having sold His people away for almost nothing (verse 12). Despite this, the people have remained faithful to God and His covenant, mindful that He would know of any idolatry on their part (verses 17-18, 20-21).

Indeed, the song maintains that it is because of the people's refusal to compromise with God's way that they are suffering and in danger among their enemies (verse 22). The statement here about being sheep for the slaughter applied in the greatest sense to the Messiah, who would come as the Lamb of God to be sacrificed, as the prophet Isaiah foretold in similar wording (see Isaiah 53:7). Yet this metaphoric description would also characterize all Christ's followers, His flock, who would be persecuted for their faith. And in fact the apostle Paul quotes Psalm 44:22 in this very regard (see Romans 8:36)—speaking of the fact that we endure this for the sake of the wonderful outcome God has in mind for us.

The people beseech God to awake out of sleep and rise up to help them (verses 23, 26). Since they know He does not actually sleep (see Psalm 121:4), their words here have a sense of pleading with God to focus His awareness on their need and to rouse Himself into action. And where the song spoke before of God having sold His people away (44:12), it ends with a plea for Him to redeem them (verse 26)—to buy them back.

## **Psalm 45**

---

Psalm 45, another maskil of the Korahites, is, according to its superscription, a love song set to the tune of another song. The perspective is first-person singular (see "My" and "I" in verse 1), with the psalmist unusually declaring his excitement over the writing of the psalm. This is evidently a royal wedding song—celebrating a marriage of David or one of his later successors but with a very clear focus on God's marriage to His chosen nation (ultimately the Messiah and His Bride). The song may have become customary for royal weddings.

In verses 2-9 the psalmist addresses the king. Verses 2-5 portray him as a mighty warrior and majestic, just and godly ruler. As Israel's king ruling at God's appointment, David enjoyed glory, majesty, prosperity, blessings and military victories. Yet David was only a stand-in for Israel's true King, God Himself. And this God who interacted with Israel as its divine King was the One who would later be born into the world as Yeshua Messiah (see 1 Corinthians 10:4 and our free booklet *Who Is*

God?). The glories laid out in Psalm 45 were fulfilled in Him when the psalmist wrote: “God has blessed You forever” (verse 2); “O Mighty One” (verse 3); “You are fairer than the sons of men” (verse 2). And they will find complete expression when Yeshua takes over David’s throne at His return and reigns over all mankind.

In verse 6 we find the direct statement, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.” Since it is clear in context that this is the same person being addressed throughout verses 2-9—the King—some have thought that the psalmist is referring to the human king as God. Others, seeing this as rather problematic, which it certainly is, do not accept the verse as written and assume some missing words must be read into it. The confusion here is cleared up if we realize that the psalmist is throughout these verses primarily addressing the true King, God, in His marriage to Israel—and the physical ruler in only a secondary, representative sense.

Yet many do not like what the next verse then implies. To “God” the King (verse 6), the psalmist says, “Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You...” (verse 7). Thus there are two Persons referred to here as God. In fact, it could even read, “Therefore, God, Your God has anointed you...,” making the point even clearer. The New Testament quotes verses 6-7 to prove the divinity of Christ (see Hebrews 1:8-9). That is, God the Father anointed God the Son.

Indeed, the title Christ means “Anointed”—equivalent to the Hebrew derivative Messiah. Anointing with oil represented special consecration for service to God—this being symbolic of the application of God’s Spirit. David and his successors were all anointed—yet his ultimate successor bore the title of Anointed (Messiah or Christ) in a special way.

Verses 7-8 of Psalm 45 speak of the anointing with fragrant oils making the king glad. That is, he enjoyed the feeling and the smells. Yet this would seem to be symbolic of the Messiah receiving joy through the consecration and application of God’s Holy Spirit through various experiences. This also tells us something about the Messiah’s personality. Because He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3), some have the impression that Yeshua went through His human life always mournful, dour and gravely serious. Yet here we learn that Yeshua was “anointed with the oil of gladness more than [His] companions”—the truth expressed here being that Yeshua was actually happier and more joyful than other people. And, of course, why would He not be? For He lived God’s law perfectly—the way of true happiness in life—and He understood God’s plan and purpose in detail in full faith without worry or fear. The sorrows He experienced from and for others were within this overall context.

In verse 9, “kings’ daughters” evidently refers to the queen’s attendants (see verse 14) and may signify a representation of other nations at the wedding (just as “daughter of Tyre” in verse 12 does not refer to an actual daughter but a national power). Perhaps verse 9 means that of all the women before Him on earth, the King has chosen the queen, who is dressed in “gold from Ophir” (meaning from Africa, India or the Americas—denoting the finest quality). On a higher level, this would mean

that of all the nations on earth, God has chosen Israel. Yet the psalm does not seem to be merely reflecting on the past relationship of God (the preincarnate Christ) and the physical nation of Israel. Rather, the focus appears to be forward-looking to the future marriage of Christ to spiritual Israel, chosen from among all nations and adorned in the true riches of godly character.

In verses 10-12 the psalmist addresses the bride. He tells her to shift her allegiance from her father's house and people to the king—her Lord. She is even to worship Him, again showing that the King here is divine, as only God is worthy of worship (compare Revelation 19:10; 22:89). Those of God's Assembly are to put our relationship with Yeshua Messiah above our loyalty to human parents—and we are to forsake entirely all ties with our former spiritual “father,” Satan the Devil (compare John 8:44).

The “daughter of Tyre” (Psalm 45:12), besides meaning the city of Tyre at the time of David and his successors, is likely the end-time power bloc of Ezekiel 27, also referred to in Revelation 18 as Babylon. Those who escape its destruction at the end will present a gift or offering in honor of the messianic King and His glorified Bride.

Verses 13-17 of Psalm 45 again address the King. Verses 13-14 speak of the preparation of the queen's bridal attire. Related imagery is found in Revelation 19:7-8: “For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”

The final two verses (Psalm 45:16-17) speak of children as a product of the king and queen's marriage who will continue as royal leaders in Israel. In the greater picture, the marriage of the Lamb brings sons and daughters into the family of God, resulting in praise of God forever and ever.

## **“The City of the Great King...He Is Known As Her Refuge” (Psalms 46-48)**

---

We come now to the next grouping of psalms, also composed by or for the sons of Korah. As The Nelson Study Bible states: “There is reason to believe that Ps. 46-48 form a trilogy that focuses on God's special love for Jerusalem....three great psalms of praise to God for his kingship and his love for the holy city.... [which] has led many scholars to speak of these psalms as ‘Songs of Zion’” (notes on Psalms 46; 48). The Zondervan NIV Study Bible explains: “Following the cluster of psalms that introduce Book II of the Psalter (...Ps 42-45), the next thematically related cluster of psalms all express confidence in the security of God's people in the midst of a threatening world. Ps 46 and 48 focus on the security of Jerusalem, ‘the city of {our} God’ (46:4; 48:1), and Ps 47 on the worldwide reign of ‘the great King’ (47:2) whose royal city Jerusalem is (48:2)” (note on Psalms 46-48).

The superscription of Psalm 46 says this song is “for Alamothe” or “according to alamothe” (NIV). Note the occurrence of this word in 1 Chronicles 15:20, where a list of Levitical musicians is said to perform “with strings according to Alamothe.” The word appears to mean “maidens” or “young women.”

Some have suggested that it is a musical notation for soprano voices or highpitched flutes or pipes. Others see it as a reference to women assigned to play accompaniment on tambourines (Psalm 68:25).

The Zondervan NIV Study Bible suggests that in public worship, “the citizens of Jerusalem (or the Levitical choir in their stead) apparently sang the opening stanza (vv. 1-3) and the responses (vv. 7, 11) [i.e., the repeated refrain], while the Levitical leader of the liturgy probably sang the second and third stanzas (vv. 4-6, 8-10)” (note on Psalm 46).

Each stanza here ends with the Hebrew word *Selah*, which, as noted before, may indicate a musical interlude. “This term is derived from the verb *salal*, ‘to lift up.’ It occurs in 39 psalms and in the ‘psalm of Habakkuk’ (Hab. 3). No one is certain of the exact meaning of this word— that is, what is to be lifted up. Some think that *Selah* is an emphatic word, marking a point in the psalm for ‘lifting up’ one’s thoughts to God. But most scholars think it is simply some form of musical notation, such as a marker of a musical interlude, a pause, or a change of key” (Nelson Study Bible, WordFocus on Psalm 39:5).

The opening stanza of Psalm 46 begins powerfully: “God is our refuge and strength” (verse 1). The Protestant Reformer Martin Luther appropriately translated these words in his famous hymn as “A mighty fortress is our God.” It could be rephrased to say that God is “our impenetrable defense” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 1).

Three times the psalmist repeats the theme that God is with His people to help and defend them—in the opening words and in the repeated refrain (verses 1, 7, 11). Because of this extraordinary assurance, he confidently asserts, “We will not fear” (verse 2). The poet intensifies this confidence in the first stanza, maintaining that it will endure through the worst of circumstances: even if the earth gives way and the mountains tumble into the sea; even if the oceans surge and roar; even if tidal waves rattle the mountains (verses 2-3). It matters not— there is still no cause to fear.

The song’s second stanza mentions a river that brings happiness to God’s city and tabernacle (verse 4). “Jerusalem had no river, unlike Thebes (Na 3:8), Damascus (2Ki 5:12), Nineveh (Na 2:6, 8) or Babylon (137:1)—yet she had a ‘river.’ Here the ‘river’ of [Psalm] 36:8 [of God’s pleasures flowing from Him as the fountain of life]...serves as a metaphor for the continual outpouring of the sustaining and refreshing blessings of God, which make the city of God like the Garden of Eden (see [46:] v. 5; Ge 2:10; Isa 33:21; 51:3; cf. also Eze 31:4-9)” (Zondervan, note on Psalm 46:4).

This would also seem to be prophetic. Later prophecies foretell an actual river that will eventually flow out of Jerusalem when Christ returns to rule the earth—the river also symbolizing the outpouring of God’s Spirit and blessings (Ezekiel 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:8). Flowing from beneath the temple and dividing to east and west, the river’s water will miraculously heal all it touches. Ever-bearing fruit trees with healing leaves will grow along its banks. Truly this river “will make glad the city of God.”

Jerusalem, then a peaceful city, will be the location of God's temple and the seat of Christ's rule on earth.

The great blessing of the city of God is that "God is in the midst of her" (Psalm 46:5). Today we have the same blessing. For spiritual Jerusalem or Zion is the Household of God, also referred to as the spiritual temple of God. Ephesians 2:20-22 explains in this context that the Temple is "a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." And no power in heaven or earth can separate us from Him and His love for us (Romans 8:31-39).

The judgment on the nations at the end of the second stanza and through the third likely refers in part to God's past victories on behalf of His people. But the primary picture here is of Christ's return in power and glory to establish God's Kingdom, when He will defeat the physical and spiritual forces arrayed against Him and truly "make wars cease to the end of the earth" (Psalm 46:9).

In verse 10, God Himself is quoted within the words of the psalm, calling for stillness and to know that He is God. This message appears to be directed to God's enemies, telling them to give up their vain fight against Him. Yet it might relate to delivering a court judgment, telling all the world to be quiet and hear the sentence from the Judge (see Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 1:7; Zechariah 2:13). Or it could perhaps be a word of encouragement to God's people, as when Moses told the Israelites at the Red Sea: "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today.... The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace" (Exodus 14:13-14).

On the other hand, some interpret these words in Psalm 46:10 in conjunction with the call in verses 8-9 to come and behold God's works of destroying the enemy and bringing peace. That is, that after the victory is accomplished the people are to settle down and think about what has transpired, reaching the conclusion that God is God.

Whatever the specific intent here, it is clear that God will be exalted among all nations and His people will find an eternally secure future with Him. This psalm is a great comfort to all who trust in God for daily help and protection, for deliverance from hardship and trials and for ultimate salvation.

In theme, Psalm 47 follows right on from the previous psalm. Where Psalm 46 ended with God coming in the person of Messiah Yeshua to establish His authority and peace throughout the earth, Psalm 47 speaks of not only the subduing of the nations (verse 3) but also of the enthronement of God as the Great King over the entire earth. While God is already the King of all creation, this psalm focuses on His future intervention to assume direct rule over the kingdoms of mankind (compare Revelation 11:15).

"This psalm belongs to a group of hymns to the Great King found elsewhere clustered in Ps 92-100. Here it serves to link Ps 46 and 48, identifying the God who reigns in Zion as 'the great king over all the earth' (v. 2; see v. 7; 48:2...)" (Zondervan, note on Psalm 47).



The clapping of hands and shout in verse 1 is to applaud Christ's victory as well as His coronation and enthronement (as when Joash was crowned king of Judah in 2 Kings 11:12). God having "gone up" (Hebrew 'alah) in Psalm 47:5 speaks in context of His ascending the throne—where we afterward find Him seated (verse 8). The words "greatly exalted" at the end of verse 9 are also translated from the word 'alah. Furthermore, in verse 5 we again see the shout of verse 1 as well as the sound of a trumpet or ram's horn. Such a trumpet blast was part of Solomon's coronation (see 1 Kings 1:32-39). It seems likely that trumpets and applause were regular features in the crowning of Davidic kings—as it will be in the enthronement of the ultimate King in David's lineage, Yeshua Messiah. In later Jewish worship, Psalm 47 became associated with the Feast of Trumpets—symbolic of the future time described here.

In verse 7, where the NKJV has "understanding," the Hebrew word is actually maskil, a term seen in the titles of other psalms (most recently other Korahite psalms, 42-45) that may designate an instructional psalm or, as the NKJV usually translates this, contemplation.

Verse 9 tells us that in His reign over the whole world, "the shields of the earth [will] belong to God." Nations will no longer strive to thwart God's power. They will lay down their armaments and take up implements of peace (Isaiah 2:4). It should be noted, however, that the Greek Septuagint translators instead of "shields" understood this as "kings"—perhaps because kings served as the protectors of their people (compare 89:18). In any case, all will submit to God's rule.

## Matthew 26

---

2 Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Note that Yeshua speaks of a connection between Passover and His destiny. All of the feasts of the Lord have some bearing on His cosmic plan. They are a "shadow" of what is to come (Hebrews 8:5, 10:1; Colossians 2:17). The study and observance of these Feasts (and the rest of Torah – Romans 2:13; James 1:22), is fundamental to faith in God.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people

Although the leadership was clearly instigating matters against Yeshua, He does not miss the people as a whole, as we will see in the next chapter. This generation was given more blessing than any other as they had the Messiah in their midst (Hebrews 11:39-40). Some, like John the Baptist were fortunate in this respect (Luke 7:28), but the generation as a whole failed to respond to what God had given them (Matthew 25:15) and thus their punishment would be great (Luke 12:47).

6 Now when Yeshua was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

This is a mistranslation. Lepers were not permitted to live in the city (see Leviticus 13:46). Since ancient Hebrew and Aramaic were written without vowels, there was no distinction between the Aramaic words GAR'BA (leper) and GARABA (jar maker or jar merchant). Since in this story a woman pours oil from a jar it is apparent that Simon was a jar merchant or jar maker and not a leper.<sup>1</sup>

7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment,

This ointment is called "spikenard," as revealed in Mark 14:3.

17 Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Yeshua, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

Again, the Lord's Feasts play an important role and still should for anyone following Yeshua and the ways of God. The modern religious holidays of Christmas and Easter are pagan in origin and are alien and contrary to what God has established. (The King James version of the Bible even has the audacity to replace Passover with "Easter" in Acts 12:4 — a clear case of tampering with the Word of God.)

God commanded His people to keep the Feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread in Exodus 12:14-20; 13:6-10; 23:15; 34:18, Leviticus 23:5-8; Numbers 28:17-18, Deuteronomy 16:8,16).

In addition, all males who were able, were required to appear at the Temple in Jerusalem for three feasts: Pesakh (Passover), Shavout (Pentecost), Succot (Tabernacles), as found in Deuteronomy 16:16.

23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

This would indicate that Judas was sitting on one side of Yeshua (with John on the other). As dipping in the bowl (at Pesakh/Passover) is done to the left, this places Judas to His right, in the seat of honor at the seder table.

This alludes to one of the Psalms:

Psalm 41:9 – Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

26 And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

Another incorrect translation that has led to erroneous doctrine. Yeshua does not bless the bread. "Blessing things" as such is foreign to Judaism. Rather, Yeshua blessed God, the maker of the bread, as is still done today at Passover seders.

This the blessing He would be reciting at this point of the meal:

Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu Melech haOlam, hamotzi lehem, min ha'aretz.

Blessed are you Lord God, King of the Universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Exodus 24:6-8 -And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient. "And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words."

This Exodus passage shows that Israel accepted the covenant that was being offered to them. They were to do this by faith in the same way we accept a relationship with Yeshua. Both require a commitment, sprinkling of blood to institute, and faith.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Blood was sprinkled on the people at the initiation of the Covenant in Exodus 24.

"New Testament" is a term that takes away from a correct understanding. Yeshua is referring to what is also called the "New Covenant" in English, but according to the Tenakh, is more correctly considered a "renewed Covenant." This Covenant renewal is found in the book of Jeremiah and also referred to in other places in the Tenakh. Unfortunately, the English word "new" in either case, falsely implies that the "old" covenant, with Torah as its foundation, is done away with. We know from Yeshua's own words that this is not the case. None of God's covenants have been disposed of.

It would seem in verse 29, that Yeshua Himself does not drink of this cup. This is because the "New Covenant" is not fully established by Him at this time. The Hebraic understanding is that of a "Renewed Covenant" that God will make when Judah and Ephraim are reunited one day at the time of Messiah's coming — hence He will drink of the cup only, "... in my Father's kingdom."

There are specific conditions for the New Covenant, and these were not in place at the time of Yeshua, nor are they yet in place today. They will come to fruition only upon His return.

31 All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

Not long after this came a series of altercations between the Jews and Rome, including major wars around 70 and 132 AD. The result of these actions was not only the further dispersion of Jews across the empire, but also the suppression of the faith of the original Messianic

(Nazarene) community. This led to the development of a “faith” that was decidedly “anti-Torah,” and incorporated many pagan elements, that eventually organized itself into the Catholic/Christian religion and its “spinoff” Protestant children.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.

It is interesting to note the change in Peter before and after the giving of the Ruach haKodesh (Holy Spirit). He goes from being impetuous and rebuked by Yeshua (Matthew 16:23), even denying the Messiah to save his own skin (at the end of this chapter), to being a chief spokesperson for the Lord among his Jewish brethren (as seen in the book of Acts).

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.

63 And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

The text implies that the high priest had an understanding of Scripture that correlated the Messiah to the “Son” of God. This is not easily found in Scripture when read at the literal level. Our Revelation study will reveal the deeper aspects (“sod” level) of Hebraic understanding of concepts such as “the living God,” Messiah, and “Son of God.”

64 Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Daniel 7:13 – I was seeing in the visions of the night, and lo, with the clouds of the heavens as a son of man was [one] coming, and unto the Ancient of Days he hath come, and before Him they have brought him near.

One of the “puzzles” that concerned the Jewish sages was that some parts of the Tenakh seemed to indicate that the Messiah would arrive triumphantly on the clouds, while others said he would come on a donkey. The conclusion they reached was that if Israel merited it, he would come on the clouds, but if they failed, he would come on a donkey:

Yeshua, as we know, first came to his people on the back of a donkey (Matthew 21:5), and is destined to return in the clouds.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy;

Again, the reaction of the High Priest is that of someone claiming in some fashion to be God, as all Jews were considered “sons of God” in a greater sense.

1. Credit to James Trimm of [www.nazarene.net](http://www.nazarene.net) for this corrected translation.