


Thinking about His Mercy as we Deleaven our Homes

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By Joseph F. Dumond

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News Letter 5848-055

26th day of the 12th month? 5848 years after the creation of Adam

The 12th Month in the Third year of the third Sabbatical Cycle

The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle

The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

This is also the end of the Fiftieth week of this the Third Tithing Year for the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow? Deuteronomy 26:12

March 9, 2013

Shabbat Shalom to the Royal Family of Israel,

In the mail this week;

Dear Joseph,

Since 2 weeks I want to say THANKS to you for the clear and abundant explanations about Pessach, Barley etc. It seems that finally I can GET it.

In the same time it saddens me a lot not knowing how and with whom I might celebrate these Festivals. I leave this to our Father. He will provide.

I am thanking daily for being able to profit of your teaching and bless you for it in His almighty power.

Shabbat Shalom!

Thailand

Brother Joseph,

I LOVE getting the newsletters then reading the scriptures and it reveals the truth of the matter. May Our Yah continue to bless you with sharing His Word to those who desire to follow after the meat of the scriptures.

Thank you for the quick response. I'm sure you receive many emails regarding various subjects. So, I thank you for your time.

I just want to encourage you to keep faith in what Yah has placed upon you. Your insights into the meat of the scriptures are hard to swallow for some who are set on what they have previously been taught. Like Yeshua told his disciples when they went to preach the good news:

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

Many blessings,

Jennifer

We are now just days away from learning if the Barley is Aviv and also from learning if the new Moon will be sighted on Tuesday evening or not. Nehemiah did send out a notice that he did find a small amount of barley. He is still looking to make sure he has found enough for the wave offering.

I remind you of what Nehemiah said last week.

If the barley is Aviv by March 12, this will put the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) in late March and early April. If the barley is not Aviv by March 12, the Feast of Unleavened Bread will fall out at the end of April and the beginning of May.

A slight complication this year is the timing of the new moon at the end of the 12th Hebrew month. This is one of those "borderline" sightings that cannot be predicted with any reliability. Specifically, the moon on March 12, 2013 will have 0.90% illumination and 47 minutes lag time. Visibility might be possible although in my experience unlikely. This means there are three possible sets of dates for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover): If the barley is Aviv by March 12 and the new moon is sighted on March 12, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) will be from sunset March 26 through sunset April 2.

If the barley is Aviv by March 12 and the new moon is NOT sighted on March 12, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) will be from sunset March 27 through sunset April 3. If the barley is NOT Aviv by March 12, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) will be from sunset April 25 through sunset May 2.

If the Barley is Aviv then this means we have just two weeks to delevaen our homes and vehicles and work areas.

Year by year as we grow in our understanding of the Passover, as we grow in our relationship with Yehovah, we should love Him more and more. We are coming into a very special time of the year, the spring festivals, we're nearing the beginning of another cycle of Yehovah's holy days, Yehovah's festivals lay out for us step by step His plan for salvation.

We look forward to the arrival of every holy day, every festival because the meaning of the holy days becomes a vital part of our life, they mean that much to us.

Our lives revolve around Yehovah's festivals and holy days and it's always necessary to review their meaning so we never forget exactly what Yehovah's plan is and where we are in that plan. There's always more to discover, they always have more to teach. We'll never in this lifetime exhaust all there is to know from the bible or from the festivals, there's always more to learn, to grow, to understand and to grasp about Yehovah and His plan.

Eze 20:12 And also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah who sets them apart.

Yehovah is reviewing the time that He brought Israel out of captivity, actually out of Egypt and He explains what His holydays are for and what they picture and why He gave them and what they're supposed to accomplish.

This is a very helpful scripture.

Eze 20:12 And also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am Jehovah who sets them apart.

“Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths...and we'll notice that that's plural, meaning not only the weekly Sabbath but the annual Sabbaths or holy days and festivals and Sabbatical and Jubilee Years, as well.

So we see very clearly part of the purpose for Yehovah's holy days is so that we as His people can get to know certain things about Him. We keep each Holy Day so that we get to KNOW Him.

To know what He stands for, what His character is like, and then we see what we need to become more like.

Passover teaches us certain things about Yehovah's character. Right away we come face to face with the fact that Yehovah the Father is very merciful. One of the first things we learn from the Passover is Yehovah's mercy and His forgiveness. One of the first things that comes to our mind when we think of Yehovah and what He's like, that He's very forgiving, very merciful.

Our ancestor Abraham and then again, our ancestors at Mount Sinai agreed to obey the terms and conditions of the Covenant and shortly thereafter they broke it and we have continued to break down to this time.

Yehshua as the lamb of Yehovah, the Passover Lamb, shows us Yehovah's mercy, His grace as Yehshua steps in and pays the penalty that we were going to have to pay. And that penalty was death. He paid the death penalty in our stead. He redeemed us.

Notice what is said of John the Baptizer.

Luk 1:76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest, for you shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways,

Luk 1:77 to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins,

So the concept of salvation cannot be separated from Yehovah's forgiveness and mercy. It's an inspiring concept to all of us of how Yehovah and Yehshua has this plan to bring the rest of humanity, the rest of us into the family of Yehovah. But the way Yehovah demonstrates His love and mercy and forgiveness is absolutely inspiring as well as humbling to us when we understand what they've done.

Joh 1:29 The next day John sees Yehshua coming to him and says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

In John's word we have a summary of the greatest possible act of mercy and forgiveness that's possible and of course this should inspire us year after year, more so every year as we understand it and become more aware of it, of how incredibly wonderful Yehovah's plan is and what They've done in order to enable us to become part of the family of Yehovah.

It's interesting as we read Paul's letters to see how often he refers to this subject of being thankful to Yehovah and being reminded of Yehovah's forgiveness and mercy. It's almost every time he wrote a letter, he included that, numerous times. As though he couldn't thank Yehovah enough for what He's done. In I Tim. 1:15 we have an example of someone who demonstrated the principle "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." He was so full of this principle, of thankfulness for what Yehovah had done for him, that he had to write about it, he had to say it.

I Tim. 1:15 – This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Yehshua came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Everyone is so busy, we're distracted in so many ways and it's easy for us to kind of slide in or stumble in if we don't put the right focus and give enough time and preparation to the Passover season. Begin to ponder its ramifications now.

The New Testament Last Supper where we take the wine and the bread, pictures Yehshua's suffering and His dying for our sins, that pictures us accepting Yehovah's sacrifice. We really need to deeply appreciate the understanding, but also the tremendous sacrifice that was made for us personally. But we also have a part in showing Yehovah our appreciation by responding appropriately to that gift. It's amazing to see how many scriptures in the bible talk about it, whether it be David or whoever it is, talking about how often and how meaningful it was that Yehovah was involved in their lives. I wonder what this means to us because one of the great challenges and responsibilities we have is to be aware of and to learn more deeply the grace, the mercy, and the forgiveness that Yehovah has toward all people. Because the more we see what Yehovah is like, the more hopefully it would affect us to want to become like Him.

Mathew 23-24"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

You're coming up to the time of the year when Yehshua gave His life because of your sins. He did this even before you were called. Are you willing to forgive those who have hurt you?

As you delevien you home think on this. Are you going to come to the Passover with hate and malice towards a brother in the faith, or your own mother or Father who mistreated you as a child? How much hatred do you carry with you to each Feast towards someone else?

Mathew 6:14-15 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Mat 18:23 Therefore the kingdom of Heaven has been compared to a certain king who desired to make an accounting with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to count, one was

brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he had nothing to pay, his lord commanded that he, and his wife and children, and all that he had, be sold, and payment be made. 26 Then the servant fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me and I will pay you all. 27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. And he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what you owe. 29 And his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay you all. 30 And he would not, but went and cast him into prison until he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry. And they came and told their lord all that was done. 32 Then his lord, after he had called him, said to him, O wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have pitied your fellow servant, even as I had pity on you? 34 And his lord was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also to you, unless each one of you from your hearts forgive his brother their trespasses.

We're all familiar with the Lord's Prayer, which part of it says that if we want Yehovah to forgive our sins we have to be willing to forgive everybody else their sins.

Passover's coming, Yehovah forgives me, I've got to forgive them, let's move on.

What else can we learn from the Spring festivals about Yehovah's character and what Yehovah is like? This is the second lesson we can learn and that is that Yehovah hates sin.

This is emphasized and burned into our minds year by year as we go through the process of deleavening our homes every year during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Let's go back to Exodus.

Exo 12:15 You shall eat unleavened bread seven days; even the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

During the Spring festivals, leavened products and leavening agents that produce fermentation, things like yeast, baking powder, baking soda, they represent sin, sin that we're supposed to be learning to hate as Yehovah does.

We see here what Yehovah is saying about what we should be doing prior to and during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

There are some who will tell you that you do not need to put leaven out of your homes today. But you just read that those who do not, that that soul will be cut off from Israel.

Very damning stuff. And yet we read more in verse 19; even those aliens and those native. So this includes all people.

Exo 12:19 Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses. For whoever eats that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, among the aliens and among the natives of the land.

In essence the command is that leavened bread needs to be put out before the seven days of Unleavened Bread begin, so we clean our houses, our kitchens, our cars, anyplace we would have had leaven whether it be our lockers at school, or our places of work, we delevaen, we clean out the leaven, crumbs and all. One important note of course in this area that is very important for us to understand is that we do not impose this delevaening on unconverted mates or unconverted adult children that might be in our homes. This is a personal set of beliefs and therefore the way everybody would individually delevaen his house, depending on who's in your house, might be individual and if you have questions about what is appropriate or not you can ask.

Many of us may have already started delevaening our homes because it can be a big project, a huge job and we do try to be very thorough, we try to get the crumbs under this, under that, besides whatever, we've probably kind of got a routine by now but it pictures the fact that we're to be that thorough about looking for sin in our lives, that it's physically representing what we're should also be doing spiritually. And like so many things in Yehovah's plan, it gives us something physical to do to help us to understand the spiritual more deeply.

James tells us he is going to show us his faith by his works. Here you are doing something physical to show your faith in order to learn a spiritual lesson.

Jas 2:17 Even so, if it does not have works, faith is dead, being by itself. 18 But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith from my works. 19 You believe that there is one God, you do well; even the demons believe and tremble. 20 But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Do you see how faith worked with his works, and from the works faith was made complete? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God." 24 You see then how a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. 25 And in the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

And as we look for physical leaven, we're thinking about sin and we realize how easy it is for sin to hide, behind or under something. But also, we begin to think about how our sins have caused Yehshua incredible suffering and even His death and that should result in us hating sin even more.

We need to be reminded that Yehshua's suffering and death for us year by year to help us to understand that we need to learn to hate sin.

Psa 97:10 You who love Jehovah, hate evil; He keeps the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.

People who love the Eternal hate evil. How are we doing in that area of life? Have we come to the point where we really do hate evil? Do we hate sin? Or have we gotten comfortable with it? Is your tolerance of sin so tolerable that you have become in-tolerable to Yehovah?

Are you allowed to take part in the Passover if you are not circumcised?

ANSWER: While Exodus 12:43-49 sounds “unyielding,” we must understand it and the New Testament scriptures in context.

In Exodus 12, a mixed multitude had gone out of Egypt with Moshe. YHVH, now has to bring the entire group back toward righteousness. In Exodus 12:43, the command is that no foreigner is to eat the Passover lamb. But Exodus 12:44 provides an expanded guidance that those “in your house” – that is, those whom are bound to you (such as slaves)- must then “do as you do” – and they should be circumcised. Verses 45 and 48 make this even clearer as (45) “neither a traveler nor a hired servant may eat it” and (48) “If a foreigner staying with you wants to observe ADONAI’s Pesach, all his males must be circumcised. Then he may take part and observe it; he will be like a citizen of the land. But no uncircumcised person is to eat it.” In these verses, you can see two types of people. First, there is the Isra’eli, who is already obedient and Torah observant; and then there are those who are volunteering to be obedient to YHVH – choosing YHVH over the other “gods” of the mixed multitude. That second group, we are told (Exodus 12:48) are “like a citizen of the land.”

The entire Bible is a continuous revelation of YHVH, and at this point in Exodus, we are pretty much seeing only the image of obedience without really being able to understand why. So here in Exodus 12, the commands are pretty much without explanation as to why. In Genesis 17, when YHVH is making His covenant with Avraham, YHVH tells Avraham that the circumcision is a sign, everlasting, and pretty serious!

Much later, in Jeremiah, something new about circumcision is revealed:

Jeremiah 9: 25 “The days are coming,” says ADONAI, “when I will punish all those who have been circumcised in their uncircumcision – 26 Egypt, Y’hudah, Edom, the people of ‘Amon and Mo’av, and all those living in the desert who cut the edges [of their beard]: “For although all the Goyim are uncircumcised, all the house of Isra’el have uncircumcised hearts.”

Here we learn that YHVH is expecting more than the outward, visible, physical circumcision. He is expecting that the circumcision be a sign of your heart; that your obedience be honest and toward seeking righteousness. (See Jeremiah 9:13-14.)

Then, in Acts, Romans, and 1 Corinthians, we have Rav Shaul expanding on this lesson that the physical act of circumcision is not the important factor. It is, instead, the result of one’s having come to faith, setting their heart on the Word. Then, the act of circumcision comes to the Gentile only after he has gelled his faith and understanding that to be obedient to YHVH means to abandon the ways of the world. Paul says in Romans 4:12 that blessedness is not due the circumcised, but to those who “fulfill the steps of the faith of our father Avraham in his uncircumcision.”

Knowing how important circumcision is as part of the covenant, Paul would have never taught against it. If he was against it, as many like to insist, he would not have made Timothy go through with the physical circumcision (Acts 16:3). Paul desired this one to go forth with him, and therefore, he circumcised him, because of the Jews who all knew that Timothy's father was Greek....

So, let's go back to the two types of people. The Isra'eli (today commonly referred to as the "Jew") who is circumcised at birth has no choice in his circumcision, but still has to choose to be obedient to the Word, otherwise his circumcision is "nothing." Similarly, for the Gentile, he should not be circumcised for the sake of being circumcised (1 Cor 7:18-19). For both, the key is to keep YHVH's commands (but willingly, not by rote or by tradition.) (1 Cor 7:19.)

So concerning your question as to whether or not "non-Jews are supposed to be circumcised," the answer is "yes" – however, but that answer carries with it a caveat. If the non-Jew has decided to obey YHVH, follow His Word, and become obedient to Torah, then that person becomes obligated to obey as many of the commandments as he can, and this includes circumcision. This circumcision, however, should not occur until "the heart is right."

Concerning the attendance of the uncircumcised at Passover:

Certainly in the days of Moshe, since it had not been revealed to the Isra'elis the greater meaning of obedience to Torah (and since the Messiah had not yet come to be the Final Sin Sacrifice, and the participant in Passover was consuming the lamb which had been slain for them), it was a requirement for the attendee to be circumcised prior to the Passover. Today, we: (1) observe the Passover as the "forever" command it is (Exodus 12:1); and (2) commemorate its purpose, which is to remember the exodus, the deliverance, and the celebration of YHVH "passing over" the homes of the Israelites in Egypt. But the observance itself is different for us because our Lamb has already been sacrificed.

Today at Passover, we marry the attributes of the Messiah with the original attributes of the Passover, and our celebration is one of learning and growing closer to YHVH. If an uncircumcised man in attendance is learning and seeking to understand and preparing his heart for "the writing of the Torah" then – according to Paul (Romans 2:24-29) – there is probably nothing wrong with his presence at the Passover meal. If this uncircumcised man is committing himself to letting go of his "old nature" and seeking the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor 5:7-8) then he is sure to reach that point, that epiphany, that wisdom, where he will realize that he can obey YHVH in the fullness YHVH expects, and he will want to observe all the mitzvot he can observe, and he will want to become circumcised. This man then, will have come to this point righteously, being filled with a deeper understanding, having grown closer to YHVH, rather than "just doing what Torah demands." Afterwards, his NEXT Passover will be fuller, greater, and a more Ruach-filled experience. By no means should any man become circumcised just to comply with Torah. Rav Shaul taught this clearly.

Circumcision comes after Faith as it did for Avraham (Romans 4:12). While the wise Rabbis may disagree with the idea of the uncircumcised being allowed to partake in the Passover meal, the fact is, the Apostles taught that one is to bring the Gentiles into the fold slowly, by not levying on them ALL the Torah at once, and helping them build and grow in their understanding, observing their growth, and allowing them to change their hearts such that

when they reach that “ah-ha!” moment (i.e., when they “get it”), they no longer have to be taught by man, but by the Ruach haKodesh (Holy Spirit). Since the Messiah, the Living Word, was given to all, then the participation in the Passover by a seeking, uncircumcised Gentile is not only permitted, but highly desired.

As this question was raised a few weeks ago about the Torah portion, and it is related to this subject of circumcision I submit a study we did a few years ago now about when Yehovah sought to kill Moses for not having his son circumcised.

When we come to Exodus 4:24, it is shocking to read that Yehovah sought to kill Moses! Why? Notice the account in chapter 4 of the confrontation between Moses and his wife. Part of Yehovah’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the acknowledgment of that covenant through the act of circumcision. Whoever was not circumcised among the males of Yehovah’s people would be “cut off,” or destroyed, from among them. When we review to whom the covenant promises were made, we can see that they did not extend through the lineage born to Abraham and Keturah. The Midianites were the descendants of Abraham and Keturah through Midian. And while Midian himself may have been circumcised, as Ishmael was, it is apparent that after the children of Keturah were sent away (Genesis 25:5), they did not continue the practice of circumcising their children. Rather, “the Midianites practiced circumcision on a groom right before his marriage instead of circumcising male infants.... Many of Israel’s neighboring peoples practiced circumcision, but none except Israel circumcised infants” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 24).?Now let’s put together verses 24 through 26. It is apparent that Yehovah was holding Moses responsible for circumcising his son, but Moses had delegated that to his wife, Zipporah, who was objecting to doing it. She finally did it, but with reluctance and resentment, calling Moses a “bloody man.” We might wonder why only one son was at issue when Moses had two sons (verse 20; 18:4). One suggestion is that, “most likely, Moses had kept one of his sons uncircumcised, despite what Yehovah had commanded” (same note). Perhaps Zipporah was so upset by the circumcision of one son that she demanded her next son not be circumcised. In any event, Moses was not following Yehovah’s instructions. And this involved the very sign of the covenant people— being violated by the one who was to be the national leader. Moses’ disobedience in light of these factors made it a capital offense. So we find this brief insert—the recording of an incident that, no doubt, had a great impact on Moses.

These two verses troubled me so I then found the following explanation of what is going on here.

[http://jbq.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/332/332_Chatan1.pdf?HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD, JEFFREY M. COHEN, Exodus 4:24-26](http://jbq.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/332/332_Chatan1.pdf?HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD, JEFFREY M. COHEN, Exodus 4:24-26 has been justifiably described as “arguably the single most bizarre and baffling passage in all of the Hebrew Bible.”) has been justifiably described as “arguably the single most bizarre and baffling passage in all of the Hebrew Bible.”

1 Moses has just been given the charge to journey to Egypt, there to commence the most audacious, awesome and dangerous mission of demanding that the great Pharaoh release his vast cadre of Israelite slaves.

According to the text, these were not the usual motley group of slaves, dragged back in bonds as the booty of a victorious battle. They had been resident in Egypt for generations, albeit

ethnically alien, and consciously singled out and enslaved because they were deemed to constitute a direct threat to the security of the realm (Ex. 1:9-10). Without God's assured promise of protection, providence and ultimate victory, such a mission was a recipe for disaster, spelling suicide for its instigator and bitter consequences for those it had intended to benefit.

The relationship between God and the leader chosen to undertake such a mission must have been exceptionally close, and the spiritual credentials of the latter so impeccable as to justify the trust placed in him by God. And yet, no sooner has he set out on the journey, disaster strikes:

And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. The Zipporah took a flint and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said: 'Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me.' So He let him alone. Then she said: 'A bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision' (Ex. 4:24-26).

What it was that caused God to launch that fearsome attack on His chosen leader is mystifying in the extreme. Moses had hardly had time – or opportunity, given that he was escorting his wife and young children – to do anything to offend his God so heinously during the few days that had elapsed from the time he left Midian to the time he arrived at the inn in the desert.

HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD, Vol. 33, No. 2, 2005. If, as the text seems to suggest, Moses' sin was neglect of the circumcision of his son, then we also need to understand why, at that critical moment, with Moses' momentous mission about to be launched, it was just circumcision that loomed so large in the scheme of Divine priorities. Was God prepared to abort His great plan for Israel's deliverance through the taking of the life of the leader He had chosen to carry it out? If circumcision was, indeed, the issue, then one might also question why Moses deserved the death penalty and why it was being administered without any prior warning (even Pharaoh was forewarned, time and again, before the punishment of the plagues was administered!) and why mitigating circumstances were not taken into consideration.

After all, Moses was reared and lived until this time in total isolation from the traditions of his Hebrew brethren, and may well have been completely ignorant of that precept, its significance and the precise time in the life of the infant that it had to be performed.

The precise meaning of Zipporah's outburst, 'A bridegroom of blood art thou to me,' also needs to be clarified. Why "bridegroom" and not "husband?"

Also, what additional point, if any, did she mean to convey by unnecessarily repeating that pejorative description, 'a bridegroom of blood in relation to the circumcision'?

The whole episode is complicated even further by the absence of subjects for the verbs employed. We are told that God met him and sought to kill him, but we are not told to whom this refers. Yes, we have assumed above that it was Moses who was the object of the attack, but it might also have been one of the two sons that accompanied him, presumably the one who was peremptorily circumcised by Zipporah in order to save his life. But which son was that? Again, that fact is suppressed. The reference is merely to "her son," so it could have been either Gershom, the firstborn, or the second son named in 18:4 as Eliezer.

We are also told that Zipporah cast the foreskin "at his feet," though we know not whether this means the feet of the circumcised son or of Moses.

Indeed, there is also the possibility that her outburst was addressed to the former, and that he is the one being referred to by the phrase bridegroom of blood. And, as if we were not short of problems, there is that of the strange formulation that God “sought to kill him” – as if this were some difficult and protracted challenge in which God was engaged.

For an elucidation of this most enigmatic episode we would instinctively turn to the wisdom, insights and tradition of our classical commentators.

Quite surprisingly, most of the above issues are ignored. Nachmanides allows the episode to pass without a single observation, almost like an angel fearing to tread where others might readily rush in.

Rashi, quoting the Talmud, 2 views Moses as the victim of the Divine attack because of his failure to circumcise his younger son, Eliezer. (Rashi clearly follows the Midrash in its identification of the son, 3 whereas Targum Yonatan identifies him as Gershom, the firstborn?4). The Talmud excuses Moses’ delay in performing that mitzvah on the grounds that he considered his first priority to be responding to the Divine summons mandating him to set out immediately into the desert, rather than to circumcise his son first. Although the act of circumcision only took a few minutes, Moses was cognizant that he could be jeopardizing the life of a weak, circumcised child by subjecting him to a journey through the desert. Rashi explains that the foreskin was cast at the feet of Moses, but that Zipporah was addressing her son Eliezer when she made her subsequent outburst.

Rashi therefore renders Hatan damim attah li as, “You [attah] were (almost) the cause [gorem] of Moses, my beloved’s [hatan li] blood [damim] being shed.” The repetition of that outburst, according to Rashi, took the form of an act of realization, when the heavenly attacker withdrew [Vayiref mimmenu], that the attack had indeed been occasioned by the failure to circumcise? [la-mulot].

A bracketed gloss on Rashi’s last point reveals that Zipporah was confused as to the precise offense that her husband had perpetrated against his God to evoke this terrible retribution. It was only when, subsequent to her circumcision of Eliezer, the heavenly attacker withdraws, that she realizes [az amrah] that it was the failure to circumcise, and not any other sin, that had been the cause of the attack.

The text implies that Zipporah did not know that the cause of the heavenly attack was the lack of circumcision until after she had performed that emergency operation. This begs the question of what it was that alerted her to just that course of action as a means of saving her son. A commentator 5 offers the suggestion that Zipporah was always troubled by Moses’ marriage with her, the daughter of an idolatrous priest, and feared HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD Vol. 33, No. 2, 2005 some retribution. At this moment she instinctively assumed that this might well have been the real reason for the attack on Moses, and that he could not presume to become Israel’s liberator if he retained her as his wife. When she saw the attack subside immediately after her act of circumcision, she breathed a sigh of relief and cried out, A bridegroom of blood on account of the circumcision – and not for the other reason!

This purely speculative explanation does have the benefit of offering a reason for Zipporah’s use of the otherwise abstruse nomenclature “bridegroom” to describe Moses. Psychologically, she is returning to, and articulating, her long-standing apprehension; namely, that Moses, her

bridegroom, had chosen a bride from a family of idolaters, rather than from his own monotheistic people.

The usually incisive and original Ibn Ezra is of little help in unraveling the mystery of this episode, and in offering a solution to all the difficulties which we have enumerated. He is unusually expansive, and merely reiterates the Talmudic presentation of Moses' dilemma over taking a circumcised child on a journey. He quotes R. Samuel ben Hofni, who could not bear the thought [chalilah!] that God would attack Moses, the agent of His mission on behalf of Israel. According to him, the attack could only have been leveled, therefore, at Eliezer. ⁶ It is most perplexing, however, that neither R. Samuel nor Ibn Ezra was troubled by the terrible injustice that would have been perpetrated, if they were right, on an innocent babe. I believe that the key to resolving all the problems we have raised above lies in the relation of this episode to the verses that precede and, I believe, introduce it. It is important in this context to note that our "bloody bridegroom" episode runs on from the previous verses, with none of the usual textual indicators that would demarcate it as a separate episode.

In those introductory verses, Moses is commanded to tell Pharaoh: 'Israel is my firstborn son, and I tell you to let my son go and serve Me [v'ya'avdeni]; and if you refuse to do so, I shall kill your firstborn son. Service of God is emphasized here as being so vital that its prevention is a capital offense.

It is against that background that the very next episode is set. Moses cannot deliver that religious message to Pharaoh because he himself is guilty of that identical act of prevention of religious practice through his failure to circumcise his own firstborn son, Gershom. ⁷ The latter is being prevented from serving his God in the prescribed manner through the failure of his father to initiate him into the sacred covenant of circumcision.

It stands to reason, therefore, that Moses is on course to suffer the prescribed consequences of that sin. That is, his own firstborn, Gershom, should have his life forfeited. It is him that God encounters and seeks to slay.

Zipporah rescues her son's life, literally in the nick of time. Her thrusting of the foreskin at the feet [vatagga' leraglav] of her husband is indicative of the fearful haste she felt impelled to employ and her profound anger at Moses for having endangered their son's life. She verbalizes this anger in the problematic cry, 'ki hatan damim attah li [literally: For a bridegroom of blood you are/were for me].'

I offer here two possible explanations of this most puzzling condemnation.

The first takes account of the fact that, in the cognate early Semitic languages, one of the nuances of the basic meaning of the verbal root underlying the word "hatan [son-in-law]" is "to circumcise." This was retained in classical Arabic where "hatana" has the meaning "to circumcise" and "hitun" means "circumcision" or "circumcision feast." The lexicons elucidate the relatedness of these two meanings by explaining that "circumcision [is] performed on young men just prior to marriage."

⁸ Hence, the particular nuance of Zipporah's condemnatory cry hatan damim attah li: You should have been the circumciser for me! You should have done it, not me!

A second possible interpretation takes account of the usage of the word "damim" in the sense of "guilt," or "responsibility." Hence, in the legislation providing for the establishment of cities of refuge, where the manslayer can escape the revenge of the near relative, the Torah states that

[it is] so that no innocent blood be shed in the midst of thy land [v'hayah alekha damim] – nor shall any blood be upon you (Deut. 19:10). Damim here is clearly a synonym for “guilt,” “responsibility” for the taking of innocent life.

And this may well be the condemnation that Zipporah was levelling against her husband, *hatan damim attah li*: A guilty groom you've proved to me! You have let me down by jeopardizing the life of our child! She may well have employed the term *hatan* here pejoratively and idiomatically, underlying the fact that, through his neglect of the circumcision, Moses had behaved more like an inexperienced groom than a mature and responsible husband. The Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:24 says that “Gershom was not circumcised, on account of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, who would not permit Moses to do so, though Eliezer was circumcised, according to the agreement made between them.” This is an allusion to the tradition contained in the Mekhilta, that Jethro's condition for giving his daughter in marriage to Moses was that the first son should be brought up in the idol-worshipping tradition of Midian, whereas the second son could be reared according to Israelite tradition.

9 Now, circumcision was already practiced among the ancient Egyptians as early as 4000 BCE, as well as in many other Middle-Eastern societies. “Wherever the operation is performed as a traditional rite it is done either before or at puberty, and sometimes, as among some Arabian peoples, immediately before marriage.”

10 We may assume, therefore, that the delay in circumcising his firstborn son was, as the Midrash suggests, prompted by Jethro's insistence that Midianite practice be observed, and that Gershom would eventually have been circumcised at puberty or as a prelude to marriage. Thus, Zipporah's oblique reference to Moses as a *hatan* [son-in-law] who had concocted an unseemly – and clearly dangerous – pact with his father-in-law.

Hence, once the immediate threat had passed, she breathed an audible sigh of relief [*az amrah*], reflecting, a little more calmly, though also more specifically, on the precise issue wherein her husband had let her down: *hatan damim la-mulot* [a bridegroom guilty (of dereliction) in relation to circumcision.]

Ironically, it is Zipporah who stands out here as the one brimming with righteous indignation, and Moses, the future law-giver, is cast as the religious compromiser!

As to the difficulty of God's attack on an innocent child, I believe that the inclusion of the word “*vayyevakesh* [And He attempted (to slay him)], is highly significant. It clearly betokens a roleplay, a symbolic and harmless acting-out of the slaying of a firstborn. It was a charade with a double purpose: to reassure Moses that every threat he was to aim at Pharaoh would be carried out, even to the extent of the slaying of Pharaoh's firstborn, as referred to in God's most recent communication to Moses. This was calculated to embolden Moses so that he would undertake his most hazardous mission without any reservations or fears for his own safety. At the same time, it was a not-so-subtle reminder to Moses that he had to put his own house in order and circumcise his firstborn without a moment's delay. NOTES 1. J. Kirsch, *Moses: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998) p.130.?2. Talmud Nedarim 31b.?3. See Midrash Shemot Rabbah 5 (8).?4. See Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:25.?5. See the eclectic commentary contained in *Mikra'ot Gedolot Rav Peninim* (Jerusalem, Brothers Levin-Epstein, 1955) vol. II, *Sefer Shemot*. Essay entitled, “*Inyan pegishat ha-mal'akh*,” on Exodus 4:24.?6. See Ibn Ezra, *Commentary on Exodus 4:24*.?7. Brown, Driver Briggs, *Hebrew and English*

Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907) p.368.78. See Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:24?9. Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, Masekhta d'Amalek, ed. Jacob Z.Lauterbach, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976) p.168, ll. 96-101.?10. "Circumcision" in Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1970 ed., Vol. 5, p. 799.

In conclusion of what has been presented.

AS you remove the leaven from your homes symbolic of you putting sin out of your house. You do not take your sin and give it to your neighbor for the week. You GET RID OF IT, throw it out and do not go back to bring that sin back into your house after.

Forgive those who have hurt you. Just as you have been forgiven which is what this time of year represents. This is extremely important and vital to your health.

Keep the Passover with a circumcised heart. And circumcised flesh also. You want to be part of the family of Yehovah? Abraham was not circumcised when the covenant was made. Nor when the angels came at that Passover. But eventually he when he was 99 he did circumcise himself.

Again as you clean your houses; also consider what Paul said as you get ready for Passover. Do not take this time lightly.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; 24 And giving thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way He took the cup also, after supping, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood; as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me." 26 For "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show" the Lord's death until He shall come. 27 So that whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, he will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 33 So that, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 But if anyone hungers, let him eat at home, so that you do not come together to condemnation. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Last year I sent this out so that you all can plan your Last Supper meal with some friends in the faith and do the foot washing and the drinking of the wine and breaking the bread. The Last Supper foot washing is done the night before Passover, from the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th.

The next night is the Passover after the 14th when the lamb is killed late in the afternoon of the 14th and as the 15th begins. This is done with your family or again with some friends in which you eat the Passover meal and remember this day in history. Because you are eating

this on the 15th it is a Holy Day and no leaven is to be in your home at this time. You can read this at https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=721

Please feel free to print this out and use it.

During this Passover season as you meet others from other groups, please share with them what you have learned from The Prophecies of Abraham and Sabbatical years. You are now a watchman too and responsible to share this information so they can also prepare for the coming curses by keeping the Sabbatical year. But if they don't know because you won't tell them, then...

I have received many request on how to delevan your home and how to keep the Passover and what is the foot washing. So I have sent this out early in hope to help some to understand this special time of year better. The thing to do is do your best and learn as much as you can. Yehovah will bless you with more understanding and next year you will grow in knowledge and understanding even more. But the most important thing is to take the first step and just do it. On the evening at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th day of Aviv is the customary night of washing each other's feet and the drinking of wine and the breaking of bread in remembrance of the last supper Yehshua had with the Apostles. This is not the Passover meal.

After supper Yehshua and His apostles went over to the Mount of Olives also known as the Mount of Offence where He prayed that this cup He was about to bear might pass from Him. He was arrested this night and brought before the Sanhedrin and found guilty of blasphemy. They then brought Him to Pilot which is where the Dome of the Rock now is, who then sent Him to Herod which is up near where the Jaffa Gate now is who then sent Yehshua back to Pilot at what is now the Dome of the Rock, the Pavement. This all took place through the night and it is now morning of the 14th day of Nisan.

Pilot gave in to the demands of the crowd and ordered Yehshua crucified. They then led Him and two other criminals back to the Mount of Offence, Calvary, Golgotha, the Skull or the place where the head count was done, where He was nailed to the wood that went across between His hands and then hoisted Him up and nailed Him to the Almond tree having already cursed the Fig tree so that He would not be nailed to it.

On the 14th of Nisan from about Noon to the ninth hour it was dark. At the ninth hour Yehshua said it was finished just as the High Priest does when he has finished sacrificing the lambs that were to be slaughtered this day. And just as the sheep were slaughtered so was Yehshua as our Passover sacrifice at the exact same time 3 in the afternoon.

Once the lamb is sacrificed then the blood of the lamb is smeared on the doorpost and lintel. This is now the time to eat the Passover lamb as the sunsets and as the 15th day of Nisan begins. This is the night when the death Angel passed over those who had placed the blood on the doors. But those who had not the blood lost the first born at midnight.

In the morning after all the first born of Egypt had been killed, it is then when Israel up and left. This is the first day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan the first Holy Day of this New Year. I have told you this for all the new people now starting to keep Passover and the rest of the Holy Days for the very first time. It is truly awesome to see so many going back to the Torah and the ways of our Ancestor who came out with Moses and crossed the Red Sea. Many are asking how do we do this? Most of those who call themselves Christian do not keep Passover even though Yeshua did. Let me tell you what I do. It is not the end all be all way. It is what I try to do. You may develop your own customs.

At the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th in the Evening is the Memorial of the foot washing.

To begin with I read 1Co 11:23 For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you: that the Master Yeshua in the night in which He was delivered up took bread, 24 and having given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat, this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the renewed covenant in My blood. As often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Master until He comes. 27 So that whoever should eat this bread or drink this cup of the Master unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Master. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

This is why we do the de-leavening of our homes and of ourselves. We are examining ourselves and finding out that we are guilty of sin and need this Passover sacrifice. We do not take part in it halfheartedly.

It is a somber time. This is not a night to be talking about this or that. It is not a night to be joking around. It is the memorial of the night Yeshua was betrayed and then killed. And the more you think about it the more somber the night is. Imagine yourself at the funeral home and it is your best friend in the casket.

Without this first step pictured by the Passover, there would be no hope for humanity. But because Yeshua gave His life as our Passover sacrifice, we have a potential beyond human imagination! All the holy Days as told to you in Lev 23 explain this great potential. I myself will watch again the Passion by Mel Gibson and the Ten Commandments.

If you're in a group then explain briefly why you all are here and set the tone for the night. I begin in Mathew 26:26 And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and having blessed, broke and gave it to the taught ones and said, "Take, eat, this is My body." 27 And taking the cup, and giving thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 "For this is My blood, that of the renewed covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 "But I say to you, I shall certainly not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on till that day when

I drink it anew with you in the reign of My Father.” 30 And having sung a song, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

This is briefly the outline for the evening.

The Foot Washing

We begin with the foot washing.

Notice this is before Passover and after the supper they were gathered for, had taken place. So this is not and was not the Passover meal as some teach.

I then read John 13:1 And before the Festival of the Passover, Yeshua knowing that His hour had come that He should move out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. 2 And supper taking place, the devil having already put it into the heart of Yehuah from Qerioth, son of Shimon, to deliver Him up, 3 Yeshua, knowing that the Father had given all into His hands, and that He had come from Elohim and was going to Elohim, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, and having taken a towel, He girded Himself. 5 After that He put water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the taught ones, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 And so He came to Shimon Kepha, and he said to Him, “Master, do You wash my feet?” 7 Yeshua answered and said to him, “You do not know what I am doing now, but you shall know after this.” 8 Kepha said to Him, “By no means shall You wash my feet, ever!” Yeshua answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” 9 Shimon Kepha said to Him, “Master, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!” 10 Yeshua said to him, “He who has had a bath does not need to wash, except his feet, but is clean altogether. And you are clean, but not all of you.” 11 For He knew who would deliver Him up, so He said, “You are not all clean.” 12 So when He had washed their feet and taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13 “You call me Teacher and Master, and you say well, for I am. 14 “Then if I, Master and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 “For I gave you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 “Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is an emissary greater than he who sent him. 17 “If you know these teachings, blessed are you if you do them. I have had the distinct pleasure of doing this with a couple of men on the Mount of Olives last year and another friend the year before. It surely has a very special meaning to me now having done this there at this place at this time.

After reading this part of John we would then go and wash each other’s feet; Men doing the men’s feet and women doing the women’s feet. If you’re with your own family you can do each other’s. In your own family this will help to teach the children to serve each other in love and not to always think of themselves. This is a very humbling thing to do, especially as a father to allow your son to do your feet or you do his. It can be emotional as you submit in humility.

Tremendous lessons learned in doing this one exercise.

After the foot washing we come back and read the next section with the Bread; Matzos.

The Bread-Unleavened

As you break the bread in front of your group listen to the breaking of each piece. Know and understand this represents Yeshua's body being ripped apart for you, Because of your sins. We will explain this in next week's News Letter so that you understand this breaking of the bread. Once you do each piece broken is like thunder claps as you listen, I weep at this time. Mathew 26:26 And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and having blessed, broke and gave it to the taught ones and said, "Take, eat, this is My body."

Heb 10:10 By that desire we have been set apart through the offering of the body of Yeshua Messiah once for all. 11 And indeed every priest stands day by day doing service, and repeatedly offering the same slaughter offerings which are never able to take away sins. 12 But He, having offered one slaughter offering for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of Elohim,

Again what is sin? 1Jn 3:4 Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 1Pe 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we, having died to sins, might live unto righteousness¹ – by whose stripes you were healed. Footnote: 1Rom. 6:2, 1 Peter 4:1-2.

Joh 6:48 "I am the bread of life. 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. 50 "This is the bread which comes down out of the heaven, so that anyone might eat of it, and not die. 51 "I am the living bread which came down out of the heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever. And indeed, the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

1Co 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Messiah? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Messiah?

Now let me ask you when is the lamb ever beaten as Yeshua was? The answer is it never is. So what is beaten? It is the barley which is beaten to give up the grain which is then roasted as a grain offering on the wave sheaf day which is the day after the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened bread, or in other words the first day of the week.

This same grain is made into bread which is what Yeshua represents; The Bread of life. Yeshua said the bread represented His body, which He voluntarily gave to be beaten and to die as part of His complete sacrifice for us. He suffered that He might take our infirmities and bear our sicknesses (Mat 8:16 And when evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, 17 that it might be filled what was spoken by Yeshayahu the prophet, saying, "He Himself took our weaknesses and bore our sicknesses.") as our Healer. Bread is also associated with life, and Yeshua is the Bread that makes eternal life possible as we allow Him to live in us (Gal 2:20 "I have been impaled with Messiah, and I no longer live, but Messiah lives in me.¹ And that which I now live in the flesh I live by belief in the Son of Elohim, who loved me and gave Himself for me. Footnote: 1Rom. 8:10, 2 Cor. 6:16, 2 Cor. 13:5, Eph. 3:17, Col. 1:27, 1 John 4:4.). And the fact that His followers all partake of this symbol of Him highlights the unity He wants us to have.

Isa 53:2 For He grew up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or splendor that we should look upon Him, nor appearance that we should desire Him – 3 despised and rejected by men, a man of pains and knowing sickness. And as one from

whom the face is hidden, being despised, and we did not consider Him. 4 Truly, He has borne our sicknesses and carried our pains. Yet we reckoned Him stricken, smitten by Elohim, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our crookednesses. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, went astray, each one of us has turned to his own way. And Yehovah has laid on Him the crookedness of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, but He did not open His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, but He did not open His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment. And as for His generation, who considered that He shall be cut off from the land of the living? For the transgression of My people He was stricken. 9 And He was appointed a grave with the wrong, and with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was deceit in His mouth¹. Footnote: ¹See 1 Peter 2:22. 10 But Yehovah was pleased to crush Him, He laid sickness on Him, that when He made Himself an offering for guilt, He would see a seed, He would prolong His days and the pleasure of Yehovah prosper in His hand. 11 He would see the result of the suffering of His life and be satisfied. Through His knowledge My righteous Servant makes many righteous, and He bears their crookednesses. 12 Therefore I give Him a portion among the great, and He divides the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His being unto death, and He was counted with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Once you have broken the unleavened bread share it with everyone and let them think about this the body of Yehshua.

The Wine

We now move on to the wine part of this service.

Luk 22:14 And when the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve emissaries with Him. 15 And He said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before My suffering, 16 for I say to you, I shall certainly not eat of it again until it is filled in the reign of Elohim." 17 And taking the cup, giving thanks, He said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves, 18 for I say to you, I shall certainly not drink of the fruit of the vine until the reign of Elohim comes."

Luk 22:20 Likewise the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the renewed covenant in My blood which is shed for you.

Because we broke the covenant made with Abraham which we then confirmed at Mount Sinai, which was a blood covenant. A blood covenant means that if one or the other party breaks this covenant that person will pay for breaking it with their very own life.

We broke it and we were to pay for it with our lives. Yehshua volunteered to die in our stead. Think about it as you watch the Passion. That should be you there not Yehshua. So this cup is the same covenant that was made before only now ratified with the blood of Yehshua and not

a lamb. His own blood. Those who do not repent and return to the Torah will still have to pay with their own lives unless they repent.

The 4 glasses of red wine that are drunk during the Seder symbolize Yehovah's four statements of redemption in the Torah:

1. "I took you out" 2. "I rescued you" 3. "I liberated you" 4. "I took you to Me for a people" The wine represents redemption. Although this meal Yehshua is eating is not the Passover meal he is showing them what the symbols of that meal mean.

The cup of Elijah derives from a problem in Talmudic Law. The problem is not knowing exactly how many cups of wine to drink at the Seder, four or five. The number of cups is based on the four expressions of deliverance, but there is actually a fifth expression of deliverance. So, the rabbis came up with the perfect Jewish compromise. We fill the fifth cup, but we don't drink from it. And since Elijah will precede the Messiah, who will be able to tell us whether four or five cups are correct, we make the fifth cup of wine Elijah's cup.

In some Seder services, each person at the Seder contributes some wine to the fifth cup, symbolizing everyone sharing in the messianic hope. At other Seder services, wine from the cup of Elijah is mixed with the fourth cup.

You can learn more about the 4 or 5 cups at <http://www.sichosinenglish.org/cgi-bin/calendar?holiday=pesach10474>

Now notice what Yehshua said after the meal; Luk 22:20 Likewise the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the renewed covenant in My blood which is shed for you.

Notice it is AFTER the meal.

Is this not the 5th cup that Judah had a problem figuring out? "This cup is the renewed covenant in My blood which is shed for you.

Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sets apart for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the everlasting Spirit offered Himself unblemished to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?

Heb 10:16 "This is the covenant that I shall make with them after those days, says Yehovah, giving My laws into their hearts, and in their minds, I shall write them,"¹ Footnote: 1Jer. 31:33, Heb.

8:8-12. 17 and, "Their sins and their lawlessnesses I shall remember no more."

Heb 10:19 So, brothers, having boldness to enter into the Set-apart Place by the blood of Yeshua, 20 by a new and living way which He instituted for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the House of Elohim, 22 let us draw near with a true

heart in completeness of belief, having our hearts sprinkled from a wicked conscience and our bodies washed with clean water.

The wine of the New Testament Passover represents Yeshua's shed blood. His sacrifice made the forgiveness of our sins and the removal of our guilt possible. This opened the way for the New Covenant that Yehovah makes with believers, writing His laws on our hearts. We make this covenant when we are baptized and renew it each year at the Passover. This is why Passover and Atonement are tied together. Though the High Priest was the only one allowed to go into the holiest place in the temple, the "Holiest of All" or the "Most Holy Place," and only once a year, the blood of Yeshua opened the way for us to pray directly to our Father in the true holiest place in heaven at any time.

At this time you should all drink a small amount of wine.

After the wine we close the evening with the following readings.

Joh 13:18 "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen, but that the Scripture might be filled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' 19 "Now I say to you, before it takes place, that when it does take place, you shall believe that I am. 20 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send, receives Me. And he who receives Me, receives Him who sent Me." 21 When Yeshua had said this He was troubled in spirit, and witnessed and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you shall deliver Me up." 22 The taught ones looked at one another, doubting of whom He spoke. 23 And one of His taught ones, whom Yeshua loved, was reclining on the bosom of Yeshua. 24 Shimon Kepha then motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. 25 And leaning back on the breast of Yeshua he said to Him, "Master, who is it?" 26 Yeshua answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Yehuah from Qerioth, son of Shimon. 27 And after the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Yeshua, therefore, said to him, "What you do, do quickly." 28 But no one at the table knew why He said this to him, 29 for some were supposing, because Yehuah had the bag, that Yeshua was saying to him, "Buy what we need for the festival," or that he should give somewhat to the poor. 30 So, having received the piece of bread, he then went out straightaway, and it was night.

To help show that this was not the Passover meal I have said in the past that the bread Yeshua was leavened and not Matzos because Matzos does not soak up sauce. Others will argue this point differently so I bring it to your attention. Notice also they thought Judas went to buy things for festival. He could not do this if it was Passover.

We continue to read in John;

Joh 13:31 When, therefore, he went out, Yeshua said, "Now the Son of Adam has been esteemed, and Elohim has been esteemed in Him. 32 "If Elohim has been esteemed in Him, Elohim shall also esteem Him in Himself, and straightaway esteem Him. 33 "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You shall seek Me, and as I said to the Yehudim, 'Where I am going, you are unable to come,' I now also say to you. 34 "A renewed command I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this shall all know that you are My taught ones, if you have love for one another." 36 Shimon Kepha said to Him, "Master, where are You going?" Yeshua answered him, "Where I am going

you are unable to follow Me now, but afterwards you shall follow Me.” 37 Kepha said to Him, “Master, why am I unable to follow You now? I shall lay down my life for You.” 38 Yeshua answered him, “Shall you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the cock shall not crow at all until you have denied Me three times.

Joh 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, so that where I am, you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know. 5 Thomas said to Him, Lord, we do not know where You go, and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus said to him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me. 7 If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from now on you know Him and have seen Him. 8 Philip said to Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. 9 Jesus said to him, Have I been with you such a long time and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father. And how do you say, Show us the Father? 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The Words that I speak to you I do not speak of Myself, but the Father who dwells in Me, He does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the very works themselves. 12 Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes on Me, the works that I do he shall do also, and greater works than these he shall do, because I go to My Father. 13 And whatever you may ask in My name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. 15 If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, so that He may be with you forever, 17 the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive because it does not see Him nor know Him. But you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while and the world does not see Me anymore. But you see Me. Because I live, you shall live also. 20 At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him. 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, Lord, how is it that You will reveal Yourself to us and not to the world? 23 Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My Word. And My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My Words, and the Word which you hear is not Mine, but the Fathers who sent Me. 25 I have spoken these things to you, being present with you. 26 But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. 28 You have heard how I said to you, I go away and I am coming to you again. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens you might believe. 30 I shall no longer speak many things with you, for the ruler of this world

comes, and he has nothing in Me. 31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has given Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go away from here.

Joh 15:1 I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away. And every one that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. And they gather and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done to you. 8 In this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you shall be My disciples. 9 As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you; continue in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 I have spoken these things to you so that My joy might remain in you and your joy might be full. 12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another. 18 If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept My saying, they will also keep yours. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works which no other did, they would not have had sin. But now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father. 25 But that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, "They hated Me without a cause." 26 And when the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me. 27 And you also shall bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Joh 16:1 "These words I have spoken to you, so that you do not stumble. 2 "They shall put you out of the congregations, but an hour is coming when everyone who kills you shall think he is rendering service to Elohim. 3 "And this they shall do to you because they did not know the Father, nor Me. 4 "But I have said these words to you, so that when the hour comes you remember that I told them to you. And these words I did not say to you at the beginning, for I was with you. 5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and not one of you asks Me, 'Where

are You going?' 6 "But because I have said these words to you, grief has filled your heart. 7 "But I say the truth to you. It is better for you that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you at all, but if I go, I shall send Him to you. 8 "And having come, He shall reprove¹ the world concerning sin,² and concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment – Footnotes: 1Or confute or prove wrong. 22 Chr. 24:20, Neh. 9:30, Ezek. 36:27, Mic. 3:8, Acts 28:25-27. 9 concerning sin because they do not believe in Me, 10 concerning righteousness because I go to My Father and you see Me no more, 11 concerning judgment because the ruler of this world¹ is judged. Footnote: 1See Lk. 4:6. 12 "I still have many words to say to you, but you are not able to bear them now. 13 "But when He comes, the Spirit of the Truth, He shall guide you into all the truth. For He shall not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears He shall speak, and He shall announce to you what is to come. 14 "He shall esteem Me, for He shall take of what is Mine and announce it to you. 15 "All that the Father has is Mine. That is why I said that He takes from what is Mine and announces it to you. 16 "A little while, and you do not see Me, and again a little while, and you shall see Me."17 Therefore some of His taught ones said to one another, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you do not see Me, and again a little while, and you shall see Me,' and, 'because I am going to the Father'?" 18 So they said, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying." 19 Yeshua, therefore, knew that they were wishing to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you asking one another about what I said, 'A little while, and you do not see Me, and again a little while, and you shall see Me'?" 20 "Truly, truly, I say to you that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice. And you shall be grieved, but your grief shall become joy. 21 "The woman has grief when she is in labor, because her hour has come, but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the affliction, for joy that a man was born into the world. 22 "And you, therefore, have grief now, but I shall see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you. 23 "And in that day you shall ask Me none at all. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My Name He shall give you. 24 "Until now you have asked naught in My Name. Ask, and you shall receive, in order that your joy might be complete. 25 "These words I have spoken to you in figures of speech, but an hour is coming when I shall no longer speak to you in figures of speech, but I shall declare the Father plainly to you. 26 "In that day you shall ask in My Name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father on your behalf, 27 for the Father Himself does love you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from Elohim. 28 "I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father." 29 His taught ones said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and not using figure of speech! 30 "Now we know that You know all, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from Elohim." 31 Yeshua answered them, "Do you now believe? 32 "See, an hour is coming, and has now come, that you are scattered, each to his own, and leave Me alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.33 "These words I have spoken to you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you have pressure, but take courage, I have overcome the world.

Joh 17:1 Yeshua said these words, and lifted up His eyes to the heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come. Esteem Your Son, so that Your Son also might esteem You, 2 as You have

given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give everlasting life to all whom You have given Him.

3 “And this is everlasting life, that they should know You, the only true Elohim, and Yeshua Messiah whom You have sent. 4 “I have esteemed You on the earth, having accomplished the work You have given Me that I should do. 5 “And now, esteem Me with Yourself, Father, with the esteem which I had with You before the world was.6 “I have revealed Your Name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have guarded Your Word.1 Footnote: 1See Ps. 138:2. 7 “Now they have come to know that all You gave to Me, is from You. 8 “Because the Words which You gave to Me, I have given to them. And they have received them, and have truly known that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me. 9 “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10 “And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I have been esteemed in them. 11 “And I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Set-apart Father, guard them in Your Name which You have given Me, so that they might be one,1 as We are. Footnote: 1See 10:30. 12 “When I was with them in the world, I was guarding them in Your Name which You have given Me, and I watched over them, and not one of them perished except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be filled. 13 “And now I come to You. And I speak these words in the world, so that they have My joy completed in them. 14 “I have given them Your Word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world. 15 “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the wicked one. 16 “They are not of the world, as I am not of the world.

17 “Set them apart in Your truth – Your Word is truth.1 Footnote: 1See Ps. 119:142, 151. 18 “As You sent Me into the world, I also sent them into the world. 19 “And for them I set Myself apart, so that they too might be set apart in truth. 20 “And I do not pray for these alone, but also for those believing in Me through their word, 21 so that they all might be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, so that they too might be one in Us, so that the world might believe that You have sent Me. 22 “And the esteem which You gave Me I have given them, so that they might be one as We are one, 23 “I in them, and You in Me, so that they might be perfected into one, so that the world knows that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. 24 “Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me, might be with Me where I am, so that they see My esteem which You have given Me, because You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 “O righteous Father, indeed the world did not know You, but I knew You, and these knew that You sent Me.26 “And I have made Your Name known to them, and shall make it known,1 so that the love with which You loved Me might be in them, and I in them.” Footnote: 1See v. 6, Ps. 22:22, Heb. 2:12.

Joh 18:1 Having said these words, Yeshua went out with His taught ones beyond the Qidron torrent, where there was a garden, into which He and His taught ones entered. 2 And Yehuah, who delivered Him up, also knew the place, because Yeshua often met there with His taught ones. 3 Yehudah, then, having received the company of soldiers, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, and torches, and weapons. 4 Yeshua, then, knowing all that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom do you seek?” 5 They answered Him, “Yeshua of Natsareth.” Yeshua said to them, “I am.” And Yehudah, who

delivered Him up, was also standing with them. 6 When, therefore, He said to them, "I am," they drew back and fell to the ground. 7 Once more He asked them, "Whom do you seek?" And they said, "Yeshua of Natsareth." 8 Yeshua answered, "I said to you that I am. If, then, you seek Me, allow these to go," 9 in order that the word might be filled which He spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me, I have lost none." 10 Then Shimon Kepha, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. And the servant's name was Melek. 11 Then Yeshua said to Kepha, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" 12 Then the company of soldiers and the commander and the officers of the Yehudim seized Yeshua and bound Him, 13 and they led Him away to Aanan first, for he was the father-in-law of Qayapha who was high priest that year. All that we have just read was the night before Yehshua was arrested. Pray after this evening and think about what you have just experienced and then what Yehshua was going through this whole night. We will be praying this in the very same garden Yehshua did on the Mount of Olives.

For the Passover at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th after the sun has set and first Holy Day has started.

Exo 12:5 'Let the lamb be a perfect one, a year-old male. Take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then all the assembly of the congregation of Yisra'el shall kill it between the evenings. 7 '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.

We are to put the blood on the door post. Note what you are told in Joh 10:7 Yeshua therefore said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

Also note that the name Silwan which is the name of the town on the Mount of Offence means 'Post' in Arabic. It was at the top of this town where Yehshua was killed.

Exo 12:12 'And I shall pass through the land of Mitsrayim on that night, and shall smite all the first-born in the land of Mitsrayim, both man and beast. And on all the mighty ones of Mitsrayim I shall execute judgment. I am Yehovah. 13 'And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I shall pass over you, and let the plague not come on you to destroy you when I smite the land of Mitsrayim. 14 'And this day shall become to you a remembrance. And you shall observe it as a festival to Yehovah throughout your generations – observe it as a festival, an everlasting law.

We are to remember forever this night when Israel left Egypt and how it came about and we are also to remember all the symbols which point us to Yehshua.

1Co 5:7 Therefore cleanse out the old leaven, so that you are a new lump, as you are unleavened. For also Messiah our Passover was offered for us.

Joh 1:29 On the next day Yohanan saw Yeshua coming toward him, and said, "See, the Lamb of Elohim who takes away the sin of the world!"¹ Footnote: 1Mt. 1:21, Titus 2:14, 1 John 3:5 & 8.

1Pe 1:18 knowing that you were redeemed from your futile way of life inherited from your fathers, not with what is corruptible, silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless,

Yehshua fulfilled the symbolism of the Passover lamb. Indeed, all the sacrificial sin offerings represented and were fulfilled by Yehshua (Heb 9:11 But Messiah, having become a High Priest of the coming good matters, through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, 12 entered into the Most Set-apart Place once for all, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, having obtained everlasting redemption.).

Having now shared with you what I do on the Night of the foot washing before Passover I have just heard a teaching about the Door Threshold by Rico Cortes which all of you need to hear. It is extremely profound. YOU can listen to it on www.truth2U.org at

<http://www.truth2u.org/2011/04/rico-cortes-passover-the-threshold.html>

For the week leading up to Passover I have removed all bread products and yeast and baking soda from my house. I vacuumed the upstairs and down stairs and check the freezer and between the cushions of the couch and in the duct vents and I did the windows at the same time. I also clean the inside of my truck and the backhoe I work in. I also do my lunch pail and then take all of these crumbs out to the garbage so they are not on my property when Passover comes.

I have now shared with you the night of the foot washing.

On Passover last year with Nehemiah we read each of the chapters of Exodus and divided it up and let people make short comments on each chapter. We let the children read too so that all at this special night are involved.

You could do this and or watch the ten Commandments. Passover is one of the most important holidays, and the Seder is the meal that kicks off the entire celebration. This is a meal that is eaten in haste with your shoes on and staff in your hand ready to flee.

It is a rehearsal of a future flight we will have to keep. After the meal many people stay up all night singing and talking about the Exodus. Some of us are not up to that but it is up to you to make this your Feast by the way your family keeps it.

Some have asked who can come. I say anyone who is a believer and or those who are learning and not argumentative. I will defend this position by the follow two links?

<http://www.gentiles-and-circumcision.info/exodus-12-48-passover-gentiles-circumcised.html>?

<http://www.gentiles-and-circumcision.info/acts-10-cornelius-gentiles-baptised-withoutcircumcision.html>

It is not just for those who are circumcised.

I also believe you are to eat unleavened bread for all seven days so have a box of matzos handy and do attempt to eat some each day. It will remind you of what the Israelites were doing this week. And yes you should think about this as if you were with them fleeing pharaoh and then on the last day of unleavened bread they crossed the red sea.

For those of you who are knew do the best you can with what you understand. Get together with others of like mind and share this Holy Day season with them. May Yehovah bless your understanding and knowledge as you grow closer to Him this week pregnant in meaning and rich in teaching lessons.

We continue this weekend with our regular Triennial Torah reading which can be found at?

https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf

“Beware That You Do Not Forget the Lord Your God” (Deuteronomy 8)

Moses reminds Israel of God’s mighty power with which He kept them alive in the wilderness for 40 years, and He warns them not to forget God when they enter the Promised Land and become prosperous, seeming to have everything they need. It is easier to remember God when we see we are in desperate need for His help than when we think we can make it on our own. In a materialistic society, when many have money in the bank and food in their refrigerators and cupboards, they can easily neglect to sincerely pray “give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). God allowed Israel to hunger in the wilderness to test them and to find out what was in their heart (Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 16). He gave them manna to teach them that man does not live by bread alone. Rather, man lives by carefully observing God’s Word (verse 3). As long as we seek first the Kingdom of God and God’s righteousness, all our physical needs will be provided for (Matthew 6:33). When tempted by the devil, who told Him to make bread out of stone to satisfy His hunger, Jesus Christ quoted this very passage of Deuteronomy 8:3, showing that He understood the importance of truly living by God’s Word at all times (Matthew 4:2-4). After the devil ceased from tempting Him until another opportune time (see Luke 4:13), God’s angels ministered to the hungry Jesus by bringing Him the physical things He had need of (Matthew 4:11).

Continuing on, Moses impresses on the new generation of Israelites how vital it is that they remember their total dependence on God. Moses knows human nature. When people are full with blessings and no longer conscious of need, they are susceptible to concluding not only that they can get along without a Provider, but that they themselves had somehow gained their abundance through their own power and strength (Deuteronomy 8:11-17). So Moses admonishes the people, “You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth” (verse 18). Tragically, the ancient Israelites would forget God—and so will their descendants, the nations of the modern-day Israelites.

In the midst of the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation remarking that this very thing had happened among the American people. He eloquently stated: “We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of [God’s] redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness” (April 30, 1863, Proclamation for a National Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer). If only today’s national leaders would see it the same way.

1 Chronicles 3

The Line of David (1 Chronicles 3)

We earlier read the listings of David's wives and children at the beginning of chapter 3 in conjunction with the events of his life (see the earlier Bible Reading Program comments on 1 Chronicles 3:1-5 with 2 Samuel 3:2-31 as well as the comments on 1 Chronicles 3:5-9 with 1 Chronicles 14 and 2 Samuel 5:11-25). And we followed the lineage of the Davidic kings through the history of Judah.

The lineage here is shown progressing from Jeconiah or Jehoiachin, the Jewish king taken into Babylonian exile, to Zerubbabel, the governor of the first return, to his son Hananiah (verse 19) and then Hananiah's sons Pelatiah and Jeshaiiah (verse 21). Also mentioned in this context are the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, and the sons of Shechaniah— followed by descendants of Shechaniah. The Nelson Study Bible notes on verses 21-24: "These names were detached from the Zerubbabel genealogy and may be other Davidic families.... Four generations of Shechaniah, ending in Anani, are listed. Hence the genealogy of vv. 17-24 presupposes about seven generations. Since Jeconiah reigned around 598 B.C. (v. 17), a date of approximately 425 B.C. for Anani is reasonable. Anani is the latest generation recorded in Chronicles, and any dating of the book should take this into account."

1 Chronicles 4

The Prayer of Jabez (1 Chronicles 4)

Chapter 4 gives more details about the family of Judah. "Sons" in verse 1 refers to descendants, for of those listed here only Perez was Judah's actual son (2:3-4). The outline of the genealogies of Judah is as follows: Shelah, son of Judah (2:3; 4:21-23); Perez, son of Judah (2:4-8; 4:1-20); and Hezron, son of Perez and ancestor of David (2:9-3:24).

But there is more in 1 Chronicles 4 than just genealogy. In the midst of the nine-chapter-long list of names, a very short but remarkable story appears out of the blue about a man named Jabez (verses 9-10). It's as if a camera were scanning a crowd of faces and all of a sudden stopped and focused on a single individual.

We know almost nothing about Jabez, but you may well have heard of a popular book about his prayer published in 2000 by author Bruce Wilkinson titled *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*. A number of other books and articles on the subject have followed so that the prayer has become a phenomenon among a number of people—with some unfortunately treating it as some sort of magic formula to get blessings from God. Some of late are focusing on this passage more than any other part of the Bible, and some perhaps almost to the exclusion of the rest of the Bible! That is of course not at all what God wants. For one thing, Christians are to approach God through the name of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we know from Christ's teachings on prayer that God doesn't want or hear rote prayers (Matthew 6:7), but rather He wants believers to talk to Him in prayer the way a son or daughter would talk to a father. So merely memorizing and reciting the prayer of Jabez is not a key to divine blessing. That being said, despite the wrong approach some have taken we can in any event draw some valuable and helpful lessons from this brief but fascinating story.

The name Jabez means “pain” or “sorrow”—his mother having named him this because she bore him “in pain,” that is, “in Jabez.” What would have motivated a mother to give her newborn child such a name? It must have been something more than the common physical pain of childbirth. More likely, her life must have been such that she perceived the addition of this child would bring great hardship or difficulty. Perhaps she was in financial straits. As the account says that Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, it may be that she already had sons who had caused problems and feared Jabez would do the same.

Whatever the case, Jabez probably did not have an easy life. Can you imagine growing up with a name like Pain or Sorrow? The teasing from peers would have been relentless. Worse, in Middle Eastern society of that day a name was thought to be a meaningful determiner of destiny. His life was “marked out,” so to speak, by his name. He would have been expected to be a perpetual source of pain. And this is not to mention the difficult family situation of growing up with a mother who would give such a name to her child and the dreary circumstances that would have provoked it.

All that being said, Jabez responded to his situation with more honor than the rest of his family. There is only one way out of a nowhere life—and Jabez realized it. So what did he do? Let’s notice the prayer of Jabez.

1. He called on the God of Israel. Before we can even begin to deal with whatever difficult situation we find ourselves in, it is vital that we recognize that there is only One who can ultimately help us—the God of Israel. Jabez was part of the covenant nation of Israel and called on the nation’s God—the only true God. Perhaps he knew the story of Jacob wrestling with God, not letting go until God blessed him and thereby receiving the name Israel, “Prevailer With God.” We should recognize that Jabez probably did not just call on God on one afternoon. His prayer was likely a regular one to God—pleading with Him to deliver him from his life’s circumstances. And it was probably uttered in various sincere ways, not recited as some kind of mantra.

2. He prayed earnestly for God to truly bless him. He said, “Oh, that You would...,” expressing a great desire. And he did not just ask to be blessed, but to be blessed indeed—that is, really and truly blessed. While this might have included physical substance, this is not stated. It probably included spiritual wellbeing. Most likely, he was asking God to bless Him in every way possible, trusting that God would do it. Some would perceive this as selfish, but we shouldn’t jump to that conclusion. As God says that Jabez was honorable it is likely that he was a service-oriented person, seeking the means and opportunity to better serve God and others. Moreover, God says we are to pray to Him for those things we need and desire. The point is that, in praying to Him, we recognize God as the One who is able to fill our wants and needs—and we trust Him to do so.

3. He prayed for God to increase his boundaries. His plea to God to “enlarge my territory” makes it look like Jabez’s desire was for land and wealth. But the word can be translated territory, boundary, border or coast. It was more likely a request for God to increase the boundaries of his life—to extend his limits beyond those in which he had been confined. Of

course, it may have concerned his physical means. Perhaps it involved the recovery of a squandered family inheritance. We can all ask God to increase our affluence, grow our business or extend our influence—if our goal is to serve Him and others. We should all want to be more and do more for God and to have the physical means to do more for others. Only He can give us the means to accomplish this.

4. He prayed for God’s help and direction. In asking for God’s hand to be with him, Jabez recognized that he could not go it alone. He had asked for great blessings and an extension of boundaries. Humanly, he would not even be able to handle this. That’s why he needed God’s guidance and power to enable him to meet the demands of the blessings and boundaries for which he was asking. He realized his total dependence on God.

5. He prayed to be kept from evil. The Hebrew word translated “evil” has a broader meaning than malicious acts we commit or that are committed against us. A more appropriate translation in this context would be “afflictions” or “adversities”—any bad circumstances in life that adversely affect us and our loved ones. We should always be mindful of the need for God’s protection and not take it for granted. This is quite like Jesus’ instruction that we pray, “Deliver us from evil.” We are asking God to protect us from those evil forces and circumstances that would harm us—especially the evil one, Satan the devil, this society over which he reigns, and our own corrupt natures which he has influenced.

6. He prayed to not be a source of harm to others. This man who had grown up with a reputation for having caused pain to his mother and a name from her seemingly destining him to be a source of pain wanted no more of it. He wanted to escape. More importantly, he simply did not want to hurt others. This was an attitude of loving one’s neighbor. As Romans 13:10 says, “Love does no harm to a neighbor...” Indeed, the verse goes on to say that fulfilling God’s law is love—as His law forbids harming others. We see here that Jabez had an attitude of living by God’s law and covenant. It was this more than His nationality that gave him the right to call on the covenant God of his nation.

So we see it isn’t a matter of saying certain words in prayer, but rather of having the right heart or character. When we seek the right heart, living the way we understand God wants us to live, the “right” words will come when we talk with Him in prayer. God blesses the person with the right heart, not the one who utters a “magic prayer.”

Jabez prayed his heartfelt, desperate prayer for great blessing and a changed, hope-filled life...and something remarkable happened: “So God granted him what he requested” (1 Chronicles 4:10). This should fill us all with hope and faith. As the late U.S. President Ronald Reagan once stated, “There is nothing impossible for man, if he will only join himself in prayer to God!”

Interestingly, the name Jabez appears in only one other place in Scripture—two chapters earlier in 2:55 as the name of a place where the scribes dwelt. It could be that the Jabez of chapter 4 acquired this land as part of the answer to his prayer and then used it in God’s service.

Verse 11 of chapter 4 recommences with the genealogies so matter-of-factly that many do not even notice the remarkable two verses prior.

As for the end of chapter 4 concerning the family of Simeon, we earlier read these verses (24-43) in conjunction with King Hezekiah's preparation to rebel against Assyrian rule (see Bible Reading Program comments on 2 Kings 18:7-8; 1 Chronicles 4:24-43 and 2 Kings 20:20). The Simeonites who dwelt in the south of Judah were able and likely encouraged at this time to expel neighboring peoples and take over their land. Note that they pursued the perennial enemy of Israel, the Edomite Amalekites, into Mount Seir—that is, the land of Edom in what is today southern Jordan.

Galatians 5 (<http://jesusisajew.org/Short/GAL5V1-4.php>)

To our modern ears, unfamiliar with the religious culture of Sha'ul's time, this can sound like a warning against all Torah observance, and circumcision in particular. If we become circumcised, we will suddenly take on a debt that cannot be paid off. If anyone actually wants to do anything the Torah says, it is a sure sign they have come under bondage, fallen from grace, and become a stranger to the One who loves us.

But once we know that the Perushim (Pharisees) used circumcision as the final act when converting a Gentile to their form of Judaism, and that it was a public commitment to keep the whole Torah, things begin to get clearer. And when we understand that what the Perushim meant by "Torah" included not only the books of Moses, but also what Yeshua (Jesus) called "the tradition of men" (what later became the Talmud), things become clearer still. Sha'ul wasn't warning against the Biblical instruction of circumcision, or anything else written through Moses. Rather, he was saying don't exchange the gift of a saving, life-changing, relationship with Messiah for our "works of Law": mere rule-keeping (especially rule-keeping by compulsion — our own or others').

Look at the word "again" in verse 1. The Galatians were primarily non-Jews. They didn't observe Torah before being given faith in Yeshua. So the Torah couldn't be the yoke of bondage they were again being entangled in (and similarly, the "days and months and seasons and years" disparaged in Gal. 4:9-10 are not the Biblical festivals, either). So what was that bondage? Perhaps they were again giving away responsibility for their own spirituality. Perhaps they were in danger of exchanging the Traditions of the Pagans for the Traditions of the Perushim. Or of trading one worship-by-appeasement for another, rather than finding rest in YHWH's love.

Lastly, verse 4 doesn't say that wanting to do what is written in the Bible is the problem, but seeking to be justified by doing those things. As they are written on our hearts, we do the things instructed in Torah, not in order to be saved, but because we delight in them.

In Galatians 5:18 Paul (Saul, Sha'ul) wrote,

"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

Does that mean if I am led by the Holy Spirit, I won't keep the Law?

No, in fact it means the exact opposite. The Torah (Law, instruction) is a gift from God. It describes how to be a blessing to God and to one another. Take an example from our modern system: If I am allowing myself to be led by the Holy Spirit, I won't drive recklessly and as a result I won't be subject to the penalty of the traffic law.

It's the same with the Torah Law. If I'm not breaking the Law, I'm not under threat of the penalty of the Law.

The Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) will never lead me to break Torah. Verses 22-23 list the character traits and actions that are the Fruit of the Spirit. Verse 23 says, "Against such there is no Law." So by definition, if I'm being led by the Spirit, I am not breaking the Torah.

Galatians 5:18 can best be understood as saying, But if you are being led by the Spirit, you are not under the penalty of the Law.

?How can you be led by the Ruach Hakodesh? First ask to be given faith in Messiah Yeshua. When you have received that, ask for the Holy Spirit. Then you will begin to learn and to listen.

Galatians 6

Paul uses chapter 6 to continue to teach and uplift with instruction.

Set one another straight in meekness, looking at ourselves first.

Bear on another's burdens. No one is better than the other.

Share teaching with one another.

Reminder that we shall sow what we reap and be careful not to stray from the path of Elohim.

Sow in the flesh... reap corruption in the flesh (eternal concepts here)

Sow to the Spirit and reap everlasting life.

Do good to one another, especially those in the house of belief and stay firm in this goodness.

The men of formal Judaism desire more and more and more people become circumcised so that they can boast to one another concerning members, converts, and rule. This is sowing to the flesh.