

Pesach, The Last Supper, and Matzah

Part 3

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Food, Blood, Mouths, and Lips

Nothing is more important to sustaining life than breathing. Genesis 2:7, “And YHWH formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Breathing was a gift from YHWH--or perhaps our breath is better understood as on loan. The breath of YHWH is what defines human life. As living beings, whether we believe in our Creator or not, we have no real choice but to breathe. Even if we hold our breath, we can't override our created nature and choose to stop.

Eating is another story. Eating too is fundamental to life, but over this activity we have a choice.

The most common Hebrew word for both “eat” and for “food” is *akal* אכל (Strong's 398). The root of *akal* is the very common two letter word *kol* (Strong's 3605) which implies a full vessel. Other *kol* rooted words are *kallah* (Strong's 3617) implying “to complete” and *kaleel* (Strong's 3632) implying “whole” and “perfect”. *Akal* (eat /food), is the “primary thing that makes us whole”. Food doesn't just satisfy us-- based on the deeper understanding of *akal*, food *completes* us. This idea of being made whole is illustrated in another word that shares the same root, *kallah* (Strong's 3618)—the word for “Bride”--The one that is needed to complete a man. The two become one flesh---and so it is with our food.

Because of this, YHWH gave humanity guidelines as to how to preserve the lives He gave them. We won't dive deep into the details of Adam and Eve's sin, but I will point out that *akal* is used exactly 14 times (7 x 2) before we were kicked out the garden. Eating is first introduced in Genesis 2:16-17, “YHWH commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely ; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” Part of the consequences of our disobedience is tied to eating, Genesis 3:19, “By the sweat of your face you will eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken...” The final time out of the 14 is in Genesis 3:22, “Then YHWH said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever.” From YHWH's perspective the worse-case-scenario is a “fallen” mankind, having within them both good and evil, eating from the Tree of Life. This would perpetuate our imperfect nature eternally. This is the reason YHWH removed us from Paradise.

Spoiler alert: Revelation 2:7, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.” Revelation 22:12-16, “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the Tree of Life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. I, Yeshua, have sent my angel to testify to you these things for the churches.”

The goal of the life of a Hebrew is to make it (through overcoming) back to the Tree of Life--to eat from the very tree that was forbidden to Adam and Eve in the beginning. Every time we eat—eat anything, we are supposed to be reminded of this fact--that our undisciplined mouths got us kicked out of the garden, and therefore through our mouths we will be restored to eternal life. In the garden we were instructed to only eat plants, and in our eternally restored state, we'll be back to that ideal. Although there are certainly health

benefits to eating biblically, the road-map of all food-related commandments and themes ultimately lead us back to the Tree of Life.

We are told in Genesis 1:29, “Then God said, ‘behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed ; it shall be food [*akal*] for you;”. As far as food goes, collective humanity has dominion over the plant realm. We have power over it. When we eat plants, we are at the same time declaring our dominance over them. Plants do not eat people, people eat plants. This being said, how sadly common that many of us allow plants to creep in and steal our role in this relationship. We allow tobacco, alcohol, coffee, or any number of “controlled” plant-based substances to not just “complete us”, but to control us. Fasting, of any sort, is designed to remind us that we have dominion over creation, not just plants, but especially over our own cravings. Messiah fasted for 40 days to prove that he was worthy and undefeatable in regards to temptations and cravings.

After the flood, over 1000 years since Creation, mankind gets further eating instructions. Genesis 9:3-6, "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. Only you shall not eat flesh with its **life, that is, its blood**. Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.” YHWH had just caused the death of all but eight human beings on earth. He wants us to know that human blood is precious and that his actions were about preserving a pure bloodline [one not defiled by Nephillim] for the sake of moving humanity toward eventual restoration. At the same time we are given the freedom to eat animal flesh, we are also given the first set of commandments regarding the handling of blood. Animal flesh is OK to eat, but it’s blood is not. With the blood drained from the animal, it is now simply meat—a suitable protein source.

As we’ve discussed, from the perspective of Scripture, what we eat (*akal*) completes us, makes us whole, becomes part of us. When we eat the blood [the life] of animals, we are allowing the life of something we are supposed to have dominion over to complete us and make us whole. This is contrary to the order created in the garden, and is forbidden. In the process of a Levitical sacrifice, when an Israelite placed his hand on the head of an animal, he was in a way identifying with it, and then personally taking its life. YHWH was teaching us, through this object lesson, the principle of putting our “animal nature” to death—reminding us of our place in His Creation, and our obligation to behave as Humans—not animals. Animals behave purely on instinct and emotion. Humans, when behaving in YHWH’s image, have dominion over our instincts and our emotions. It’s easy to make a salad, but it should never be a common and thoughtless practice to shed blood.

Of course, most of us eat with our mouths, which is the Hebrew word *Peh* פֶּה (Strongs 6310). The first letter is the פ (an image of lips, and the letter also known as *peh*), which is also the first letter (and the first syllable) of Pesach. The second letter is *hey*, implying “behold”. So *Peh* implies “lips! Behold”, which is often translated as “mouth” or concepts related to the mouth.

In the story of Cain and Abel, Genesis 4:11, is the first use of *peh*. “Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.” Wow. The Hebrew word for blood (*dam*) the word for mankind (*adam*) and the word for the ground from whence they came (*adamah*) are intimately related in the language as well. In that verse, the *adamah* (ground), opened it’s *peh* (mouth), to receive the *dam* (blood). Humans are not to eat blood, but the ground is. Deut 12:15-16, "However, you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your gates, whatever you desire, according to the blessing of YHWH your God which He has given you; the unclean [people] and the clean [people] may eat of it, as of the gazelle and the deer. "Only you shall not eat the blood; you are to pour it out on the ground like water.” We don’t eat blood, we give it back to the ground—it’s source, which makes the ground complete.

The other word relevant to eating is *sepah* שֵׁפָה (Strong's 8193), often translated as "lips". The image in the ancient Hebrew is *shin* שׁ, which can mean imply "to divide". *Shin* is the picture of teeth, which divide into bite sized pieces. In *sepah*, the letter *shin* is added to *peh* (mouth) and you get "lips" (which are divided by our mouths). After the flood, during the building of the Tower of Babel, we learn that mankind's lips are still problematic to YHWH's image. Genesis 11:6, "And YHWH said, 'behold, the people are one [*echad*], and they have all one language [*sepah*]; and this they begin to do : and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.'" Throughout the entire story of Babel, in fact, the word translated as "language" is consistently *sepah*. From YHWH's perspective, he saw humanity as one giant pair of powerfully dangerous and unrestrained lips.

Prior to the first Pesach, these "mouth" and "lip" terms come at us fast and furious, if we are paying attention to the language. Exodus Chapter 4:10-, "Moses said to YHWH, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent , neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant ; for I am slow of speech [*peh*] and slow of tongue." YHWH said to him, "Who has made man's mouth [*peh*]? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, YHWH? "Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth [*peh*], and teach you what you are to say." But he said, "Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will." Then the anger of YHWH burned against Moses, and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he *speaks fluently*. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. You are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth [*peh*]; and I, even I, will be with your mouth [*peh*] and his mouth [*peh*], and I will teach you what you are to do. Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as Elohim to him.""

That's 7 times *peh* is used. Whatever YHWH is about to do with Moses and Aaron, it's centered around "the mouth". The answer is revealed (in the Hebrew) the very next time *peh* is used is hidden in the English in Exodus 12:4, "And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according [*peh*] to his eating [*akal*] shall make your count for the lamb." The word strangely translated as 'according' is actually *peh*. The mouth, apparently defective somehow in Moses, is the determining factor for how many folks are allowed per house on the night of Pesach. Since a one year old lamb would be roughly the same size for each meal, invite over as many "mouths" as it takes to finish the lamb. Just as YHWH saw mankind at Babel as one big dangerous pair of lips, He sees Israel at Pesach as a unified and obedient mouth.

But wait...Moses isn't done trying to convince YHWH that he isn't up to the job. Exodus 6:10-13, "So YHWH said to Moses, "Go in, tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the people of Israel go out of his land." But Moses said to YHWH, "Behold, the people of Israel have not listened to me. How then shall Pharaoh listen to me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?" But YHWH spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them a charge about the people of Israel and about Pharaoh king of Egypt: to bring the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt." His first excuse, as we learned, was connected to his mouth (*peh*). This next excuse is connected to his lips (*sepah*). This time, it's a call back to the lack of circumcision of Moses' son that almost disqualified Moses from this responsibility in the first place. Moses is subtly reminding YHWH about his past failures, but YHWH isn't listening. Scripture then inserts a long genealogy and officially puts Moses in charge of all of Israel. Moses nevertheless ends this chapter with the same exact doubting statement. "YHWH spoke unto Moses, saying, "I am YHWH: speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee." And Moses said before YHWH, "behold, I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?""

Moses' fears about his *sepah* are overcome in the next chapter with a strange use of the term *sepah*: Exodus 7:15, "Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water. Stand on the bank [*sepah*] of the Nile to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that turned into a serpent." "The bank" of the Nile is the word *sepah* ("lips" as in the 2 edges of the Nile) and YHWH is about to show Moses that his own *sepah* are indeed

circumcised (authorized), while showing Pharaoh that his *seph* are also fully under YHWH's control. Remember that this is the river where the Hebrew male newborns were drowned in mass. Moses' uncircumcised lips paralleled with the lips of the bloody river recall the tiny bits of blood that would have been shed during the 8th day circumcision of a Hebrew baby—had Pharaoh not drowned them in the river.

We can see how the language of scripture is painting a picture using consistent themes: mouths, lips, and blood show up again and again in important and surprising places. Food plays a prominent part in several foundational Biblical events. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob for a pot of beans, and yet Isaac prefers Esau to Jacob because of the taste of Esau's venison. Food is what lured Israel into Egypt in the first place. Melchizedek uses bread and wine during a ceremony with Abraham—a ceremony that to this day is the “type” for a traditional Shabbat service. It's not until Exodus 12, however, that a “ritual meal” becomes instituted by YHWH as a eternal annual remembrance. Pesach combines every one of these themes and brings them to their fullest meaning. As we discussed in Part 1 of this study, Messiah is our *Ketonet Pas*. When we are redeemed, we “put on” Messiah. That covers us on the outside, like the blood on the doorpost is on the outside of the house. The *akal* (eating) of the *Pesach*, occurs inside the house. The act of sanctification begins is when Messiah, The *Pesach* the Lamb of YHWH, is “in us” thus *Pesach* covers our entire spiritual condition, inside and out. This same act of sanctification continues through the Word [*debar*] of Elohim, and the indwelling of the *Ruach*, both too *inside* the house.

The Ordinance of Pesach

Please take a second, get out and open your Bible and read through Exodus Chapter 12.

Each and every verse in Exodus Chapter 12 could be endlessly expounded upon. Here are some Hebrew diamonds hidden in the English rough—some more obvious than others. The point here of course not to exhaust the deeper meanings of each verse, but to spur conversation and help each other see Pesach outside of each of our existing paradigms. During the Pesach meal, while we are eating in haste, we traditionally read through Exodus 12. He who has ears to hear may listen with fresh understanding after taking the time to review it more slowly verse by verse. We'll go over the concept of Matzah separately afterward, but here are the highlights of the evening of Pesach.

Exodus 12: 1-2, “Now YHWH said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.” First, the word for “month” [*chodesh*] here is traditionally related to the moon, but the deeper meaning is simply “renew”. The “month” that Pesach falls within each year is focused on “renewal”. The Pesach meal, in fact, falling on the evening of the 14th and morning of the 15th, falls in the exact *center* of this Month of Renewal, and occurs when the full moon is rising WHILE the sun is setting. Jewish tradition and other historical sources tell us that prior to this Exodus 12:1 command, the year began in Autumn—because Creation began in Autumn. You could say that “the fall of man” also happened in “the Fall.” Starting here, the first Pesach, Hebrews have a new calendar. Our lives are no longer ruled by a fiscal calendar, a school calendar, or any secular calendar. The calendar that begins with the month that contains Pesach now sets the tone and timing for our lives.

Exodus 12:3, “Speak to all the congregation of Israel” The underlined word above translated as “congregation” is the Hebrew word *edah* (Strong's 5712). The root *ed*, is usually translated as “witness” as in “Do not bear false witness”. Here in Exodus 12:3 is the first time it is used in all of Scripture as “congregation”. In fact, this is the first congregation in the whole Bible!

Exodus 12:3, “...saying, on the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household.” Dealing with our “animal nature” is part of Pesach.

This one-year-old male lamb is otherwise known as a “ram”. This is a 100-pound beast with horns. It eats continuously, defecates everywhere, is noisy, tries to escape, and breaks things. This ram is taken into the house for the days preceding Pesach. When the time came for the slaughter, it was likely a relief that this lamb was going to die. Killing the beast reminds us of our order in Creation.

Exodus 12:4, “Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb.” Notice how this first congregation is defined—it’s based on households, not individuals, and it’s based on proximity—not personality. If your family can’t finish a single year old lamb, get your literal next-door-neighbor to join you. Pesach is a corporate event, and it’s important that Pesach unites Israel and that no Israelite is left uninvited.

Exodus 12:5-6 “Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.” The word “assembly” here was translated into the Septuagint (Greek language scriptures) as “Ecclesia”. If our English translations from the Greek consistently used the same terms in both the New and Old Testaments, this verse would say, “the whole Church Congregation of Israel...”. Pesach, scripturally speaking, is the “Birthday of the ‘Church’.” The word for “kill” [*shachat*] here is also crucial. The English word for “kill” is used quite a bit in various translations, but *shachat* was used prior to this twice: when Abraham was about to *shachat* the bound Isaac, and when Joseph’s brothers *shachat* the goat that shed blood in his place. “Killing” the Pesach is tied to both Abraham and Joseph as we discussed at length in the Part 1 of this Study.

Exodus 12:7, “Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.” This is the first instance of the word “Mezuzah” in scripture, meaning “doorpost”. Later in Deuteronomy, we learn we are to “write the commandments on the doorposts”. This recalls the first act of obedience that is the very center of the rite of a Hebrew.

Exodus 12:8-9, “They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails.” The potential *shachat* [sacrifice] of Isaac was to be a burnt offering. Pesach follows that pattern.

Exodus 12:10, “And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire.” From the perspective of YHWH there are two ways to make something vanish completely—eat it or burn it. What we put into our bodies goes into the “Temple of the Holy Spirit”, and what goes into the fire goes directly to YHWH. Either way, the Pesach is to be fully consumed. There were to be no doggie bags, and there are no leg bones (broken or otherwise) to use as a future souvenir.

Exodus 12:11, “Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste -it is YHWH’s Pesach.” Observing Pesach is not about resting and celebrating a finished work, it’s meant to be a reminder that we are on a journey, and we should be in a hurry to get there. We need to be dressed, prepared, and expecting YHWH to move...and he expects us to follow.

Exodus 12:12, “For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments -I am YHWH” Some translations infer that there is an ANGEL of DEATH that does the “striking down”, but this is no proxy...YHWH personally is exacting justice on Egypt—payback for the deaths of the males drowned in the

river by the Egyptian people. This is also YHWH proving dominance over the false gods of Egypt as a testimony to the entire world, as well as a reminder to His own people.

Exodus 12:13, “The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will Pesach [elect, protect, and separate] you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.” The word “see” is Ra-ah. During the near sacrifice of Issac, Abraham names that mount “YHWH Y’Ra-ah” – Often mistranslated as “YHWH will provide”, the literal meaning is “YHWH sees”.

Exodus 12:14-20 focuses on the commands surrounding Matzah--discussed at length in a separate section later in this document.

Exodus 21-22, “Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Pesach lamb. You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.” The safety was found *inside* the house. Remember that a house isn’t just a building. We are Israel, and Israel dwells within The Father’s House. We often see two houses of Israel, but once we all partake of the Pesach, we are really only one House. Passing over the threshold in the morning begins our new life with “us in Messiah and Messiah in us.”

Exodus 12:23, "For YHWH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts YHWH will protect the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your house to smite you." The word for “destroyer” [*chachlat*] is sparingly used. The world is *chachlat* [destroyed] in the flood. The next time it’s used, Sodom and Gomorrah are *chachlat* [destroyed]. The next and final time it’s used before the night of Pesach is describing the sin of Onan in Genesis 38:9. Onan “*chachlat* his seed upon the ground...” When Onan failed to impregnate his brother’s widow as commanded, his disobedience and selfishness destroyed an entire family line of unconceived human beings. Each time this word is used, death comes to entire families, and few if any escape.

Exodus 12:24-25, “And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. When you enter the land which YHWH will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite.” Forever is a mighty strong word. If YHWH never changes, and forever means forever, shouldn’t we still kill a lamb on Pesach? Here’s the catch, in Deut 16:5-6, "You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which YHWH your God is giving you; but at the place where YHWH your God chooses to establish His name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt.” Once the Journey to the promised land was complete, especially once YHWH had a physical House of His own, His house was where the Pesach was to be slain, not our own. The word we read as “temple” is *heyca* הַיְצֵאל. Notice the kol כּוֹל (the word for complete, and the root of *akal* (eat)) at the end of *heyca*. It’s preceded by the two main letters in the name of YHWH יהוה. A traditional Jewish Seder would not serve lamb, but would have a lamb bone on the table as a remembrance. They believe that until there is a Temple again, they can’t eat the Pesach. That seems like a fair position to a degree. The other extreme is to actually kill a lamb on Pesach, at your house, on your property, and eat it. Those folks would argue that they are NOT *shachat(ing) The Pesach*, they are simply killing a lamb—on the day ordained, to eat on Pesach. During our upcoming meal, we are very deliberately NOT taking a lamb into our house on the 10th, NOT examining it for blemishes, NOT killing it on the 14th, and NOT putting its blood on the doorposts. The lamb we will eat is NOT The Pesach! However, we ARE eating Lamb, in remembrance and in honor of both the animals historically slain, but the actual Lamb of YHWH, Yeshua the Messiah. Despite that our lamb isn’t “THE” Pesach, we will make sure nothing remains when the sun rises—not even a token lamb bone. We have to recognize that in every aspect of the way we observe the various rituals of each feast, we are in physical exile, and the fullness of His promises to Israel

have not yet been realized. What we do have is better than an unblemished animal. We have the True Pesach, The Lamb of God—*shachat* before the foundation of the world. It is His sacrifice, His blood, and His flesh we remember, through the ritual instituted in Exodus 12, which He established forever.

Exodus 12:26, “And when your children say to you, 'What does this rite mean to you?' you shall say, 'It is YHWH's Pesach sacrifice, who Protected the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.' And the people bowed low and worshiped.” The Pesach remembrance is designed to reinforce our faith, while at the same time teaching our children about the core attributes of YHWH. Worshipping YHWH is specifically mentioned as part of the ordinance of Pesach.

We're skipping comments on Exodus 12:27-41.

Exodus 12:42, “It is a night-watch for YHWH, for having brought them out from the land of Egypt this night is for YHWH, and to be watched by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations.” The idea of “observing” Pesach is different than “watching” the night of Pesach. We are to do both. We take part in the ritual meal, and embrace the understanding of all it entails. Then we stand watch until the morning, alert, worshipping, self-examining, ready to begin renewed lives with the rising of the sun and with our exiting the house.

Exodus 12:43, “YHWH said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of Pesach: no foreigner is to eat of it; but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Pesach to YHWH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.” The themes of Pesach appear universal. Freedom, liberation, new beginnings, etc...can be embraced by every culture and way of life. There are Passover Haggadahs (the book that guides you through a Seder) for every secular niche you can imagine—However, the true Pesach is about the freedom provided by YHWH, being liberated and redeemed from the worlds systems and starting anew in His Kingdom. These benefits belong solely to Israel, and they are meant to be attractive. His light is supposed to shine in us so brightly that the nations should be begging to take part in the True Pesach—not a secular counterfeit.

Exodus 12:49, “The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.” Even under the original Pesach, it could be said, “there is now no Jew or Gentile, Slave or Free Man, Man nor Woman.” How much more so with the death of Messiah?

Exodus 12:50, “Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as YHWH had commanded Moses and Aaron. And on that same day YHWH brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.” If you love me you will keep my commandments.

The Last Supper

Before we tackle the depth of Matzah, we have to cover the delicate subject of “The Last Supper”. At the risk of taking a giant detour, it must be noted that there was a tradition specifically in the region of Galilee—not in Judah--to have a special meal the night *before* Pesach, the evening of the 13th of Aviv. The meal would remember the souls whose lives were at risk, both of Israelites and of the nations when the either the death or protection of the firstborn would occur the next evening. This meal was known as ***seudah maphsheket*** roughly translated as “Last Supper”. This end of this meal would begin a 24 hour fast, *specifically for firstborn sons*, ending with the Pesach meal at the end of the 14th. Today, Judaism still honors a ***seudah maphsheket***,

they just do it on the evening before Yom HaKippurim (the Day of Atonement). Christianity, following its typical pattern, has created “communion” from this supper, disconnecting it almost completely from the themes and events of *seudah maphsehket*. Of course, the Messianic community is left in between—some forcing The Last Supper INTO a Jewish Passover Seder, ignoring all the evidence that this meal occurred precisely 24 hours earlier.

When Yeshua, says “I long to eat this Passover with you,” he is referring to the meal the next night that he will MISS, and in fact says “I will not eat this Passover until I enter into The Kingdom”. Some Greek manuscripts insert ‘again’ into that verse, implying that this was the Passover meal, but many others do not. Yeshua is the Lamb of God, and was being led to the slaughter all night and day of the 14th. He was finally killed at twilight, at the Torah prescribed time.

Pesach is about the protection of Israel, YHWH’s first born son. The Last Supper was a night of preparing the hearts of the Firstborn through prayer and fasting. The lives of every Hebrew were NOT in danger in Exodus 12, it was only the lives of the first born males. Who more deserving of YHWH’s protection on Pesach than Yeshua—The firstborn of Mary—YHWH’s only begotten Son—a King of Judah, through the Blood-line of David—the promised Messiah! Yet, when the night of Pesach came—He was the only one NOT protected from *Shachat* (being slain).

In 1 Corinthians, Paul does not refer to The Lord’s Supper as “the Passover” he instead calls it “the night Yeshua was betrayed”. The Last Supper that occurred the night of the 13th was the start of a day of betrayal. This was the meal where Satan entered in to Judas. This was the meal where the Disciples argued about who would be the greatest, yet was the same night his Disciples fell asleep while Messiah sweated blood. This was the night he was arrested by his Jewish brothers. This was the night the secular government of the world, beat Him, mocked Him, and sentenced Him to death. This is the night his most enthusiastic disciple denied Him three times.

That night, the night before Pesach (John 13:1) is about “preparing the Pesach”. It’s about avoiding the spirits of betrayal, double-mindedness, pride, envy, and deceit. This night is to ensure that we are not simply going through the motions of our traditions on Pesach, but are truly setting the day apart to begin the year as renewed creations. To find the “upper room” the disciples followed a man carrying a pitcher of water. That night Messiah demonstrated the heart of preparing for Pesach by bowing down and washing their feet. In John 13:13-17 He said, “You call me Master and Lord, and you are correct, I am. If I, your Master, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do to each other as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his master, neither He that is sent greater than He who sent Him. If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.” Just as he had taught throughout his ministry, “love your enemies”, Messiah even washed the feet of Judas that night, even after Satan had already entered him!

The only Gospel that *doesn’t* mention the bread and the wine that Messiah shared during The Last Supper is the Gospel of John. Perplexingly, however, this is the gospel where the concept is thoroughly explained. John 6:53-65, “So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever. These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult

statement; who can listen to it?" But Yeshua, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, "Does this cause you to stumble? What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. But there are some of you who do not believe. For Yeshua knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him."

Anyone who even casually reads through the Torah knows that animal blood, and certainly human blood, is forbidden to drink. We covered the idea of eating earlier in this study, and learned that what we eat "completes" us. We don't want to consume anything, such as the life contained in the blood of a mere animal, that would result in a downgrade to our humanity, or that would enhance our "animal nature" that we are attempting to harness on our spiritual journey. The challenging statement that Messiah was making was that HIS blood and flesh are not a downgrade. Having his life (his blood) in us is the highest and most powerful form of life.

The bread He is using for this object lesson is Manna...not Matzah. He is referring to Himself as an upgrade to the already miraculous pure bread from Heaven...not the specifically to the unleavened bread of Pesach. There isn't much evidence in Scripture that Messiah ate unleavened bread during the The Last Supper. The bread they ate that night is referred to in greek as *artos*—typically translated as "a loaf". I've never heard of a loaf of matza, but the word *artos* is sort of vaguely used throughout Scripture—it's even the word used for the Showbread in the tabernacle—never specifically required to be unleavened. Of course Messiah was born in Bethlehem (beit lechem—the house of leavened bread). Until the night of the 14th there would have been nothing sinful or odd to have leavened bread Messiah's last meal with his Disciples.

In traditional Christianity, much is made of Messiah's words during this meal. Mark 14:22, "While they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body." And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." To most Christians, these statements are making a break from the "old covenants" and instituting something new—but notice how in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew Yeshua doesn't say this is a "new" covenant—just that the wine represents the blood of THE covenant he will soon shed for many on Pesach. The covenant with Noah is spelled out clearly. The Abrahamic Covenant is reiterated 3 separate times (at least) in Genesis. The Mosaic Covenant is detailed over the course of 4 separate books of the Torah. Luke is the only gospel that uses the phrase "new covenant", and the greek word used for "new", *Kainos* (Strong's 2537), can also be understood as "fresh", "renewed", or even "upgraded". For those who turn the "bread and the wine" into a "sacrament", it's interesting to point out that John spends 4 entire chapters on The Last Supper, and makes no mention at all of the bread or the wine, nor does he even mention covenants at all! He does however, use the same word, *Kainos*, in this way: John 13:34, "A new [kainos] commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another." This commandment to "love" occurs 22 separate times in Deuteronomy, so the "newness" here is similar to the "new" covenant. He is expounding upon, fulfilling, and teaching us more Holy way to live, without throwing out a single bit of any previous Covenant. Read John 14-17 to hear the Father's heart for us during this time of Preparation for Pesach!

Marar and Matza

Back to Exodus! Exodus 12:8, “They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread [matzah] and bitter herb [marar].” The bitter herb command is very subtle and overlooked. *Maror* means “bitterness” or “stagnation.” The word *marar* מרמר has the picture of water, and the pictures of two heads. Combined, this paints the picture of the head of a river—where it’s still kind of swampy and wet, but has the potential to turn into a rushing river. The word *marar* is used one other time in Exodus, referring to the bitter labor done by the Hebrew brick-makers while still in slavery. We eat the bitter herb to remind us of where we came from and at the same time the potential of where we are still heading. Where we used to be was stinky and going nowhere, but once we embraced Messiah and experienced His Pesach, our lives began to flow and we experienced the beauty, purity, and joy of His Living Water.

We’ve been obviously putting off the study of Matzah and leavening as they are both more related to “What happens next”. By the time the New Testament was written, the feasts of Pesach and Matza had become so intertwined that terms became synonymous. According to the original commands given to Moses, these are two separate but obviously related events. I think it’s best to look at them separately to compare and contrast the themes. Pesach refers to the day of the 14th, but more importantly to the Sacrifice itself. Pesach is brief moment in time: an animal slain, blood on the door, and the meat being eaten in haste. When morning comes, however, the real journey begins. We leave the door behind, at least until next Pesach, and we begin on “The Way”.

Matza does not make its first appearance in Exodus, but in Genesis 19:3. Lot prepares Matzah for the visiting angels who arrive to rescue him and his family. The premises are identical. Destruction is about to befall an entire community, and the righteous (not based on their own righteousness—but on Abraham’s) are miraculously rescued. The very night before the pending destruction, Lot makes Matzah and it is eaten as part of a Feast. Shortly afterward, they leave the city in haste. Haste, again, is an important element to our rescue from destruction, and a repeated element related to Matzah.

In the physical straight-forward understanding of leaven and bread, a family would simply let their fresh dough sit out in the open air. Tiny bits of bacteria (naturally occurring leaven) in the environment enter into the bread and the bread begins to ferment. This fermenting dough is known as “the starter”. Fresh dough would have a piece of starter added to it, which then causes the bread to rise, while at the same time effecting it’s taste—making it more sour as time goes by. This is a very healthy process of bread-making--there is nothing intrinsically sinful about bread--leavened or otherwise. Today, most people just tear open a packet of yeast and dump it into the dough—it sure is faster, but the object lesson YHWH intends may not be fully understood.

During this Feast, the kitchen science understood by everyone 5000 years ago is turned into an important object lesson. On the 14th day, prior to the Pesach meal, the sourdough starter and any bread already made with leaven is to be destroyed. Then for an entire week, no leaven or leavened bread is to enter your house or your mouth. After the Feast, the process of creating a “starter” begins again.

Exodus 12:14, “Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to YHWH; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. 'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. 'On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day ; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. 'You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first

day of the month at evening. Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is an alien or a native of the land.”

If Pesach is mostly about redemption, the first Sabbath of unleavened bread is about sanctification. We are to go through our houses, searching for “leaven” and “leavened bread”—a thorough spring cleaning. If that is where the object lesson ended, I supposed we could be considered obedient to the letter of the law. The more important task though is the search of our hearts and minds. During the preparation of Pesach, go through your video library and the books on your bookshelf after you go through the pantry. Go through your hard-drive when you are done with the refrigerator. Re-examine your relationship to your spouse and your family, your finances, and all of your life’s priorities. Pray to YHWH and ask Him to show you where to start. Purge. Detox. Prune.

Matthew 16:6, “And Yeshua said to them, “Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”” 16:12, “Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Empty yourself of what you think you know about Scripture, and re-learn to take every thought captive and compare it to the Word of God. Seeing the world through the paradigm of correct theology is liberating and powerful, but misunderstandings about YHWH and His character can be dangerous and debilitating.

Luke 12:1, “He began saying to His disciples first of all, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” We often limit the definition of hypocrisy when referring to ourselves. It isn’t just saying one thing and doing another. If you are keeping Shabbat, but your mind is still full of worry and fear...that is hypocrisy. If you avoid pork and shellfish, but don’t think twice about or other known poisons, that could be considered hypocrisy. If your investments are tied up into companies that profit from evil and sinful activities, that may be considered hypocrisy. If you are claiming to be “set apart”, and yet still follow and are affected by pop-culture, daily news, and politics, that may be considered hypocrisy. If you are easily offended, haven’t forgiven yourself for mistakes in your past, or forgiven others for their wrongs against you...you can’t really claim to be following Messiah without risking some serious hypocrisy. Sure, we can pray about and course-correct any time of year, but the Feast of Matzah is designed for this type of reflection. If we truly believe that we can “do all things through Messiah”, this would be the season to put that faith into action, and “pluck out that eye” that may be causing us to sin.

Paul even calls other human beings “leaven”. In the Corinthian assembly there was a brother who had been committing serious sins proudly and in plain sight. Paul writes in 1 Cor 5:5-14, “I have decided to deliver such a one [this immoral brother] to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Messiah Yeshua. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the Feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler - not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church?” Disassociating ourselves with poisonous people can be one of the hardest pieces of leaven to burn.

The final Sabbath of Unleavened Bread is about the process of regeneration. As we reintroduce leaven back into our homes and diets, we remember this parable: Matthew 13:33, “He spoke another parable to them,

"The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened." This is a very important parable. Leaven, throughout this entire week, does not necessarily represent sin. Leaven (in Hebrew *seor*) is simply a *transformative* agent. It takes plain dough and over time spreads and transforms everything it touches. This spiritual process works with both correct and incorrect thoughts and ideas. Again, this season is about starting from scratch, about becoming the starter dough for one week per year, so that we are moving forward with correct attitudes, beliefs, and motives. Each year we allow YHWH to refine and redefine us more and more into His image.

In the past 3 studies, we've covered Redemption, Sanctification, and the very beginnings of Regeneration. As the events of Exodus 12, the focus of most of this study, conclude, the Hebrew people have been spared death on Pesach night. They have taken their Matzah, and were set free by Pharaoh—and even left with loot. However, they are still in Egypt! They still have a final test to pass, the Red Sea lies straight in their path, and Pharaoh hasn't given up yet. In our remembrance of Messiah, He has had His Last Supper, He has become our Pesach, and He has been laid in the tomb. His Disciples are heart-broken and discouraged. Messiah is dead. In the final upcoming study, we will explore the next Feast tied to Pesach and Matzah, The Day of First Fruits (*Ha Yom Bikkurim*). As we will learn in the final study, First Fruits resolves both of these cliff-hangers, and expounds upon the theme of Salvation!