

# What Leviticus reveals about the Day of Atonement and Passover

*Parashat Acharei Mot (V'yikra/[Leviticus 16-18](#)) 5782 B"H*

## Atonement.

That's not a word most of us use every day, so if you aren't quite sure of its meaning, let me suggest that breaking it into its three syllables.

At-one-ment.

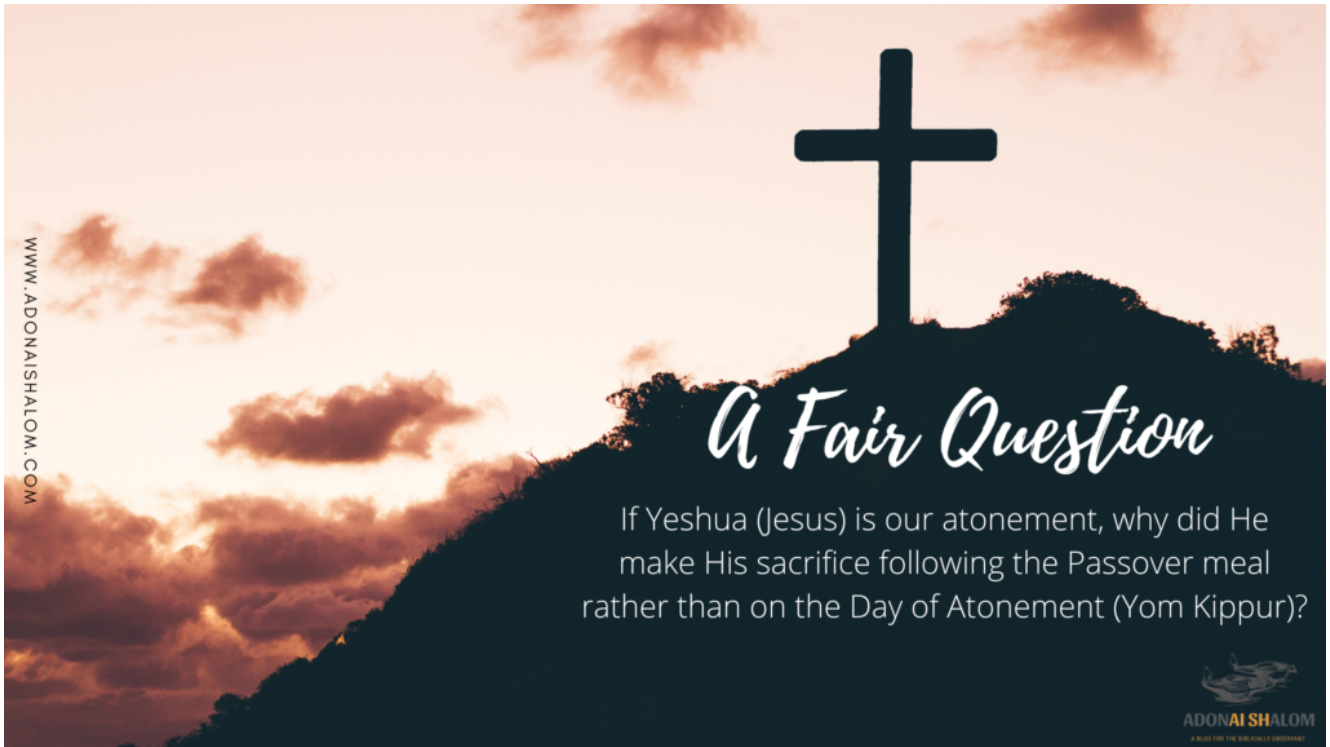
It is a theological term meaning *to be made whole again, reconciled to God.*

God's Son, Yeshua (Jesus), sacrificed His life to make atonement for our sins.

I was asked an interesting question about the atonement recently and it fits perfectly into our study:

**If Yeshua (Jesus) is our atonement, why did He make His sacrifice following the *Passover* meal rather than on the *Day of Atonement* (Yom Kippur)?**

This is a very fair question.



Our reading from [Leviticus 16-18](#) addresses this question since this very week we will celebrate the Passover Feast, yet this passage discusses Yom Kippur.

[Yom Kippur](#) included a necessary **sin offering** and **burnt offering**, sprinkling of blood around the Ark of the Covenant's atonement cover, as well as a ritual involving a literal scapegoat.

When Yeshua (Jesus) was crucified, He who knew no sin became sin for us.

**Yeshua (Jesus) was our sin offering.**

["We have an altar from which those serving in the tabernacle have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals—whose blood is brought into the Holies by the \*kohen gadol\* as an offering for sin—are burned outside the camp. Therefore, to make the people holy through His own blood, Yeshua also suffered outside the gate. So let us go to Him outside the camp, bearing His disgrace." Hebrews 13:10-13](#)

## **Remember [the 5 offerings listed in Leviticus](#) and their purposes?**

The purpose of the sin offering was to cleanse the penitent of their *unintentional* sins. Yeshua (Jesus) knows we will fail. He knows we will sin unintentionally, despite all of our best efforts to please our LORD. The atonement included forgiveness for these mistakes.

## **He was also our burnt offering.**

The burnt offering had an aroma that pleased God. The smoke rose like incense before Him. [“...walk in love, just as Messiah also loved us and gave Himself up for us as an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma.”](#) Ephesians 5:2 (*emphasis added*)

According to [Leviticus 1:3](#), the burnt offering also had to be a male, without blemish.

We see that Yeshua fulfilled the spiritual requirements related to the burnt offering for atonement of sin.

[“You know that you were redeemed from the futile way of life handed down from your ancestors—not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with precious blood like that of a lamb without defect or spot, the blood of Messiah.”](#) 1 Peter 1:18-19 (*emphasis added*)

## **But our Savior didn't stop there.**

He fulfilled the requirements of the Yom Kippur sacrifices, but He actually did more than that.

# He went above-and-beyond.

You see, every year on Yom Kippur (this occurs in the autumn), the High Priest would make atonement on behalf of the people. Israel was symbolically restored as God's people one time every year.

*Can you imagine the burden of sin?*

*How would you feel if your sins could only be forgiven once per year, and the rest of the time you carried that weight on your shoulders?*

*The only perk would be that sin was taken seriously. Great effort was made to avoid sin. Nowadays, many people sin nonchalantly, figuring they are "forgiven" so there is no need to flee sin. This is an error in thought. We should always flee from sin and immorality [\(2 Tim.2:22\)](#).*

Yeshua (Jesus) shed His blood; the perfect atonement sacrifice. And in so doing, **He actually fulfilled the other 3 offerings of Leviticus.**

## **Our Messiah became the meal/grain (matzah) offering**

Remember the meal or grain offering? The type of grain being referred to here is matzah, the same unleavened substance we use every [Passover](#). The meal or matzah offering consisted of **unleavened flour and oil mixed with frankincense and salt. It was placed over fire.**

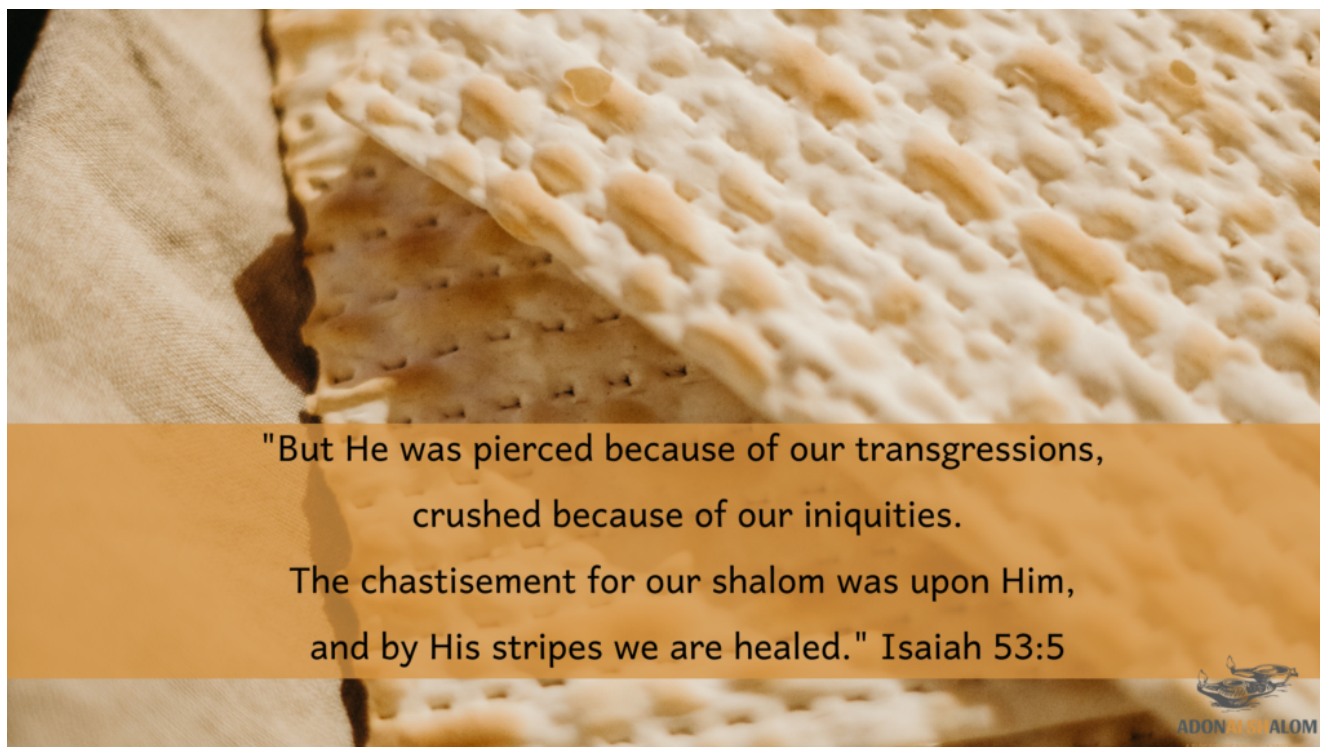
Have you ever studied a piece of matzah?

Notice that it is striped and pierced.

["But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities.](#)



The chastisement for our *shalom* was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5



Yeshua (Jesus) became our meal offering. At his birth, He was given frankincense by the wise men ([Matthew 2:11](#)). Yeshua used matzah at the Passover meal.

"And while they were eating, He took *matzah*; and after He offered the *bracha*, He broke it and gave it to them and said, "Take; this is My body." Mark 14:22

**Our Savior's body was broken for us, just like we break the matzah during the Passover meal.**

**Our Savior was offered up as a fragrant aroma, just as the meal offering was matzah and oil mixed with frankincense.**

Matzah + oil?

The body of Messiah + the anointing, abiding, consoling Presence of the Holy Spirit (Ruach haKodesh).

The atonement was seasoned with salt.

Salt was not only a preservative, it was **used to treat wounds.**

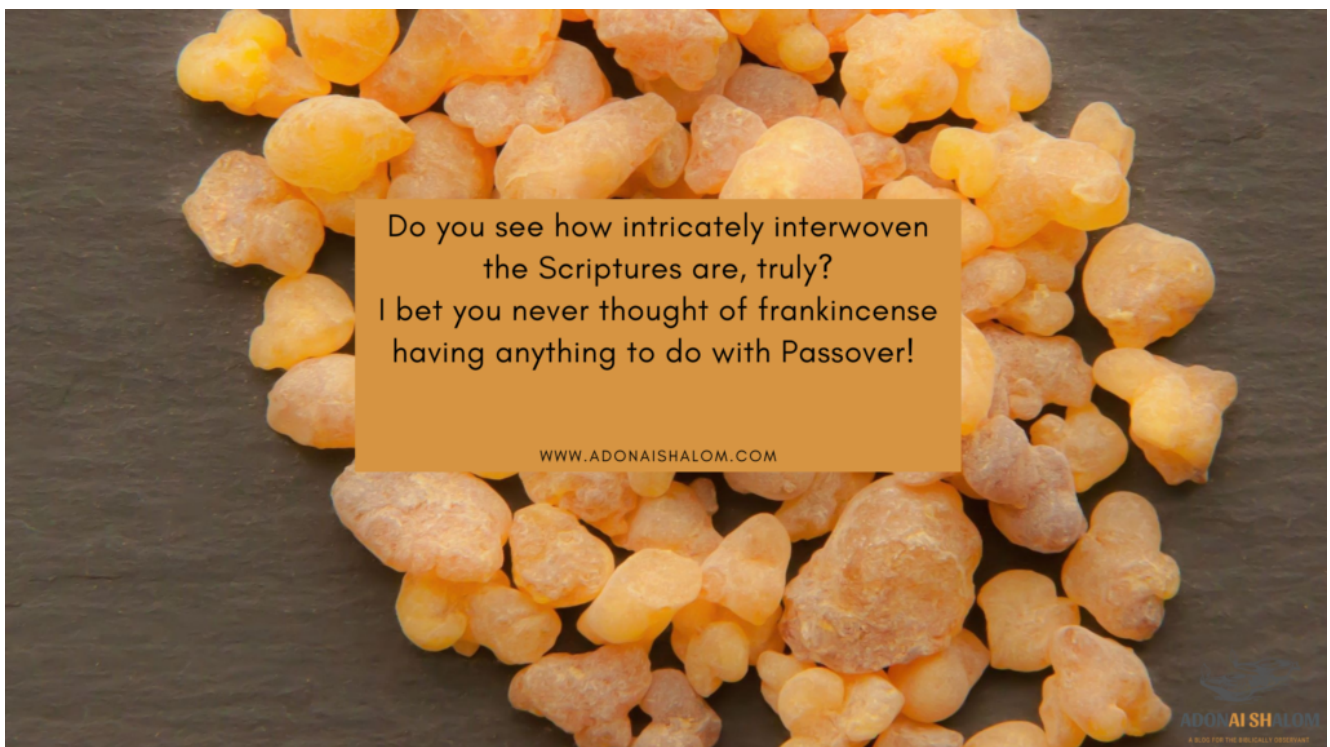
He was wounded for our transgressions, but this holy sacrifice would bring healing to the nations and we would become [the salt of the earth](#) ([Matthew 5:13](#)).

He was raised up by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

## **Do you see all of the connections here?**

Do you see how intricately interwoven the Scriptures are, truly?

**I bet you never thought of frankincense having anything to do with Passover!**



## **Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) also became our guilt offering**

This is the offering that required restitution. We have willingly and disobediently gone against God's Word. Our Redeemer chose to forgive us of our grievous offenses by

making atonement for our sin.

## Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) became our shalom offering

Remember that verse above, [Isaiah 53:5](#)? [The chastisement for our shalom was upon Him.](#)

The chastisement for our peace was upon Him.

We couldn't have peace if it weren't for His sacrifice.

**The common peace offering in Leviticus was a lamb.**

[“...Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29](#)



**So to answer the question: *Why did Messiah die at Passover rather than***

## ***Yom Kippur?***

The LORD has His reasons, but it seems to me that He chose Passover because He did more than what could've ever been done on Yom Kippur.

At Passover, Yeshua (Jesus) truly embodied every aspect of the meal. He symbolically shared His body and His blood with the disciples at the Passover seder meal and then went on to literally give up His body and blood for the sake of lost humanity as He was horrifically nailed to the cross as atonement.

He is our Passover Lamb and He died so we would be able to see how throughout history, He has masterfully planned every detail of our divine rescue.

He came to rescue us from sin and death, and He did it in the most profound way.

Be encouraged today, that our LORD made a way where there seemed to be no way and bridged the chasm so we could be forgiven. He has atoned for our sin!

The atonement that Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) made for us is a **permanent atonement**. Not once a year, not once in a lifetime, it is a permanent, ongoing atonement that ensures we are covered by His blood and presented as cleansed and holy before our Perfect and Holy God.

["Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah! In His great mercy He caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Messiah Yeshua from the dead. An incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance has been reserved in heaven for you.](#)

[By trusting, you are being protected by God's power for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. You rejoice in this greatly, even though now for a little while, if](#)



necessary, you have been distressed by various trials.

These trials are so that the true metal of your faith (far more valuable than gold, which perishes though refined by fire) may come to light in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Messiah Yeshua.

Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. And even though you don't see Him now, you trust Him and are filled with a joy that is glorious beyond words, receiving the outcome of your faith—the salvation of your souls.” 1 Peter 1:3-9

Those of us who have a relationship with our Savior Yeshua ha Mashiach (Jesus Christ) know that He made atonement for our sins. If you do not know this important Truth and do not yet have a relationship with your Creator, please know this: God sent His Son to die in your place, as atonement for you, so that you could be reconciled to God. If you will trust Him today with your eternal future, you can have the confidence and peace of knowing you will live eternally with Him. Subscribe to our monthly newsletter to find out more about our LORD and His ways!

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## **A Simple Passover in light of the Resurrection**

Preparing a simple Passover meal does not have to be complicated. But if you google Passover seder ideas, you may get overwhelmed!

Because Passover is such a central celebration, many wives and mothers love to focus on a beautiful table setting complete with fresh flowers and an exquisite meal.



And there's nothing wrong with that.

I've done my share of elegant Passover meals.

But this year, I'm going simple.



Simple can be better. Have a blessed Passover celebration!

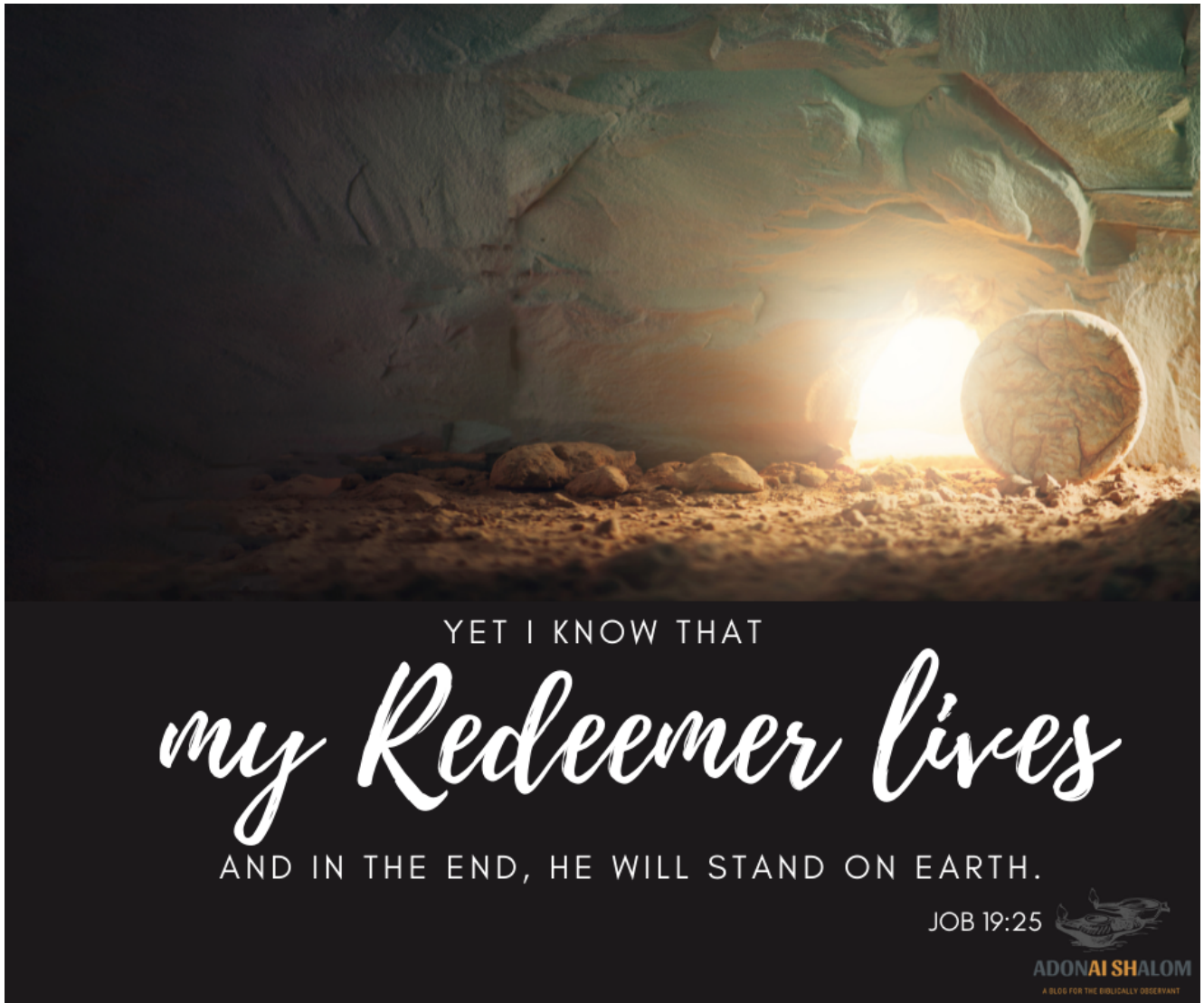
## Post-Resurrection Passover

What does Passover mean for us, now, post-resurrection? Should we still [celebrate the Passover meal](#)?

Of course!

Miraculous things have happened during Passover. Not only does Passover commemorate the Israelites receiving [freedom from Pharaoh](#), the Lamb of God – Messiah Yeshua (Jesus the Christ) was our paschal offering. We have been freed from bondage to sin and death!





“Yet I know that my Redeemer lives and in the end, He will stand on earth.” Job 19:25

Even after the resurrection, Passover remained a central celebration.

In the book of [Acts](#), we see that the believers continued to recognize the various [Biblical feasts](#).

In [Acts 12](#), Peter was captured during Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread, but the LORD sent an angel to break the chains and free him from Herod.

It was yet another sign to the believers that the LORD was with them. They would have clearly understood the connection that Peter was set free during the celebration of their collective freedom.



So yes, we absolutely should have a Passover meal, but Martha, dear, we absolutely don't need to stress out over it.

Now while they were traveling, Yeshua entered a certain village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. She had a sister called Miriam, who was seated at the Master's feet, listening to His teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; so she approached Yeshua and said, "Master, doesn't it concern you that my sister has left me to serve alone? Then tell her to help me!"

But answering her, the Lord said, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and bothered about many things; but only one thing is necessary. For Miriam has chosen the good part, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:38-42

Remember, Messiah Yeshua took our stresses for us.

## Teaching our children

Everyone I know uses a *hagaddah* for Passover. *Hagaddahs* are Passover reading guides. They contain lots of Scripture and explanations of why we celebrate Passover at all. The *hagaddah* can be especially useful for explaining the Messianic fulfillment of Passover to young believers. There's absolutely nothing wrong with it but as the years go along, my little family is getting tired of it. (It is quite lengthy!) Now I know, I know, just because you find something to be (gasp!) a bit redundant or boring doesn't mean it should be abandoned. But, on the other hand, why do something if you aren't finding it to be refreshing to your soul? It is ok to take a break!

We are mandated by God to remind and train our children – to teach the generations of the victory won. So we do not abandon Passover! We will still gather and we will still have a wonderful meal together. But we don't "have to" use a *hagaddah*.

This year, we plan to do a more simplistic explanation and just enjoy our time together as a family. When we hold congregational seders, I believe using a hagaddah is appropriate, and we have done that many times in the past. If we don't use it this year, quite possibly we would next year, but give yourself permission to change it up a bit. We don't want to become "religious" about this. Be led by the Spirit of the LORD – allow Him to help you to teach your children and honor the specialness of the Passover.

[Now when it happens that your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' You are to say, 'It is the sacrifice of ADONAI's Passover, because He passed over the houses of Bnei-Yisrael in Egypt, when He struck down the Egyptians, but spared our households.'" So the people bowed their heads and worshipped. Then Bnei-Yisrael went and did it. They did just as ADONAI had commanded Moses and Aaron." Exodus 12:26-28](#)

The important thing is to ensure that everyone seated at the table understands the purpose and meaning of the seder meal as well as related Scriptures.



Happy Passover!

## Some suggestions for a simple Passover meal

1. Set a simple table setting. Use a table runner or tablecloth that you already have. There's no need to go out and spend extra money (especially with all the inflation right now). Some people like to use a blue runner that reminds of the Red Sea. Be creative! I have an Amazon link below for the table runner I bought this year. *(I'm an Amazon associate and I do get a small commission if you decide to buy something, but it won't cost you extra)*
2. Don't have a seder plate? You honestly don't need one.

Use any large platter, and just put each symbolic item on there. We choose not to use the boiled egg because of its similitude to Easter's fertility symbology. We do have a seder plate which does make it seem special.

3. Make a simple grocery list ahead of time. If you would like to use the traditional seder meal items, you will need a package of matzah (unleavened bread), parsley, apples, horseradish, and a shank bone, if you can find one. There are a million different versions of [charoset](#), but here is [one recipe](#) I'm considering trying this year. Charoset is designed to remind you of the mortar used by the Israelite slaves. Decide what your main dish will be, and get everything a few days before Passover so you don't have to worry about it. I usually find matzah at local grocery stores like Kroger/PickNSave or Publix. If you need it in bulk for a congregation, Amazon sells it that way, too.
4. Plan when and how you will pray and read Scripture. We love to sing many of the traditional songs, like *Dayenu* and *Eliyahu haNavi*. Focus on the continuity of the Gospel, that salvation has come!





"For this is the will of My Father,  
that everyone who sees the Son and trusts in Him  
may have eternal life;  
and I will raise him up on the last day."

John 6:40



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## **Do our Passover observances as followers of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) differ from that of traditional Judaism?**

Some time I will write about the significance of each aspect of the traditional seder meal.

As followers of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ), we are able to understand the seder in a more profound way than a nonbeliever. We can see the parallels between the striped and

punctured matzah and His bruised and broken body. We can observe that the 3 pieces of matzot represent the unity of the Godhead – the Oneness of Elohim. The seder meal consists of 4 cups of wine. Our Savior drank the cup of judgment/deliverance for us – we do not partake of this. He will drink the fourth cup – the cup of praise and ultimate redemption with us, in the Kingdom.

We have a significant difference in terms of the understanding of Yom HaBikkurim, the Day of First Fruits. You see, this refers to the glorious day of the Resurrection!

Unbelievers certainly would not value the significance of Resurrection Day, but we should be testifying to Jewish people who do not yet know their Messiah that He has fulfilled this important feast!

I long to travel to Israel just to see that empty tomb with this sign on the door: “He is not here – for He is Risen!”

You see, I was raised in a pluralistic environment. I was taught the lie that Jesus was no different than Mohammed or Buddha, and I believed it for a long time.

But you see, you can go visit Mohammed’s tomb.

Same with the Buddha.

Their remains are marked at their burial place.

But if we go to visit the tomb of Messiah Jesus. . . there is **no body** there. No remains.

For He is not there! He is Risen! He is Alive!

Our Passover observances are filled with this great joy!

# Yom HaBikkurim

THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION



I've seen some churches hold seder meals that seem kind of solemn. That is totally the wrong way to go about it.

Passover is a true celebration of freedom and salvation!

It should be joyful!

Give joyous witness to the fact that our Savior lives. Just like the early believers went to tell everyone what they had seen and heard, may you be inspired to do the same. Reach out to your friends, family, and neighbors with the Good News of the Resurrection of our LORD!





WITH GREAT POWER THE EMISSARIES WERE GIVING WITNESS TO THE

# *Resurrection*

OF THE LORD YESHUA, AND ABUNDANT FAVOR WAS UPON THEM ALL.

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Acts 4:33, TLV

**How will you be celebrating Passover this year? Leave a comment below, and subscribe to our monthly newsletter! Shalom, and Chag Pesach Sameach (Happy Passover!)**