



# The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.  
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## Passover: God's Ticket to Freedom!

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The Message of Passover is clear and simple: **Freedom from slavery, freedom from bondage.** In the story of Moses and the first Passover, the freedom gained was a freedom from physical slavery and bondage to Pharaoh in Egypt. God set His people, the children of Israel, free from four hundred years of slavery! But there is another kind of freedom associated with Passover; that is spiritual freedom. Freedom from slavery to sin and bondage not to Pharaoh, but to the devil's power over our lives to cause us to act in ways we know are wrong and to say things we regret saying, yet are unable stop doing. It was no accident that Yeshua/Jesus was crucified on Passover. When His cousin John saw Him coming one day he declared: "**Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**" *John 1:29*. In the Exodus story, God told Moses to take a spotless lamb and roast it whole, taking some of its blood and applying it to the door posts of the Israelites' homes, on the lintel, and the top post, Exodus 12:5-8. When the Lord went through the land of Egypt that night, He passed over the houses of the Israelites that had the lamb's blood on the door posts of their homes, thus sparing the lives of the firstborn in those homes...



### It's All About the Lamb:

The Last Supper was a Passover meal, Luke 22:7-20. The word Passover in Hebrew is "Pesach" and it actually signifies the sacrificed lamb. Passover is the Lamb and the Lamb is Passover. Paul wrote, "**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 Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast...**" *1 Corinthians 5:6-8*.

It was the lamb's blood that signified who would be set free from slavery in Egypt. Likewise, Yeshua/Jesus is the Lamb of God, and it is His blood that sets us free from slavery to the devil and to sin. You see, garlic has no power over evil and shoving a cross in a vampire's face as depicted in the movies will not move the devil out of your house. On the contrary, it's believing that Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection

is our sacrifice. Because of that simple belief, the blood of Yeshua can be applied to our lives for spiritual freedom and gives us access to His power over evil in our lives! All you have to do is believe, Jesus said, "**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent,**" *John 6:29*. By this He was speaking of Himself. "**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life,**" *John 3:16*. Do you want to have eternal life? Do you want to live forever? Then ask Yeshua/Jesus to come into your life. Invite Him in! Welcome Him! And He will come. That is His promise! Moses sacrificed lambs as a picture of the Lamb of God who would one day come and set the prisoners free from sin. Romans 6:23 says, "**For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus/Messiah Yeshua our Lord.**" Even the Tanakh (Old Testament) tells us, "**The soul who sins will die,**" *Ezekiel 18:4*. Why die when you can have eternal life? Why choose death (eternal separation from God) when you can have freedom forever???

Harriet Tubman was a slave who believed in Jesus,

and she had a harsh master. She is said to have prayed for her master that the Lord would give him a kind heart and convert him, but that if he wouldn't stop hardening his heart like Pharaoh, that the Lord would take him. Her master died...

### **Messianic Judaism is about Freedom:**

Passover began with Jews receiving freedom from an earthly Pharaoh. Some fourteen hundred years later, Yeshua/Jesus, THE ETERNAL Passover Lamb was crucified on Passover, to bring Jews and Gentiles spiritual cleansing and freedom from sin and death! Jesus said, ***“Salvation is from the Jews,” John 4:22.*** Passover freedom began with a Jew named Moses and continued with a Jew named Yeshua/Jesus, the King of the Jews!!! If true freedom isn't a Jewish concept, I don't know what is. Yet Jews and Messianic Jews have been given a bad rap. We're often accused of being legalistic and/or Judaizers. We are often accused of being more focused on the Torah/Law, than the freedom afforded to us when we experience the Passover of God's Son. As a Messianic Jewish Rabbi I think we should be recognized more for freedom than for Torah/Law. After all, ***“The Law came through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Yeshua the Messiah/Jesus Christ,” John 1:17.*** What's more important, Moses' Passover or Jesus' Passover? Which do we need more? The Torah of Moses or the Grace and Truth of Yeshua??? I love Torah, the stories of Joseph, Jacob, Abraham, Isaac, Moses and Joshua... They are rich with lessons and instruction about how to live a Holy life. But it is Yeshua who gives us the power of the Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit) to live a sinless life, and to have the free gift of eternal life, Hallelujah!!! ***“The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life,” 2Corinthians 3:6.*** And that is what Messianic Judaism is all about... learning to live in the freedom gained through Yeshua and reaping a spiritual harvest that cannot be attained through the Law itself.





## Passover: Is it Over???

Passover is so much fun! I love to see Christians' eyes light up when they see the origin of their Communion ceremony right in the middle of the Jewish Passover ceremony... It's almost as if Christian tradition was providentially hidden there in the middle of the broken peace of matzo (the Afikomen) that is wrapped up in a white cloth and hidden. That special piece of unleavened bread that we Jews break and distribute after the Passover meal is eaten, is taken along with the Cup of Redemption, or "the cup taken after the meal". Still, after eighteen years of teaching Messiah in the Passover I love to see people's elated expressions when they connect their Christian tradition of the Lord's Supper with the Jewish Passover Meal!

Nevertheless, there are still many who think that Passover is a useless exercise in continuing an obsolete tradition. Speaking of the Passover in Luke 22:15-16, Yeshua/Jesus said, "*I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.*" Jesus said He would not eat the Passover AGAIN UNTIL.. until what? "Until IT(Passover) is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God!". According to what Jesus says in this passage, Passover is not fulfilled until some fixed point in the future, at which time he will have another meal in "the Kingdom of God". The bottom line is that Passover is NOT completely fulfilled. If Passover is **not** fulfilled, shouldn't we celebrate it, knowing the fulfillment is still to come?

I can hear some objections coming in, Whoa.... hold on now, I was told Christ fulfilled the Law and that all that Jewish stuff was done away with? Doesn't the Bible say that Christ is the **end** of the Law???. If so, shouldn't we forget about traditions from the Old Testament, like Passover?" The Apostle Paul wrote, "*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.*" *1 Corinthians 5:6-8*. Paul appears to agree with me, or maybe it's me who agrees with Paul when He said, "*Therefore let us celebrate the feast...*"

What does Paul mean then when he says, "*Christ is the end of the Law?*" *Romans 10:4*. For starters, the word "end" in Greek is "Telos" as in Telescope... And when

you have a telescopic lens set on top of a rifle, the shooter looks through that lens and aims for the "telos" or (the point aimed at, the target, the goal). So "the end of the Law" really means that Jesus is the goal or target of the Law, or the one the Torah/Law is pointing to. This definition directly opposes the other interpretation of this scripture which claims that through Christ, the Law is done away with or finished. In fact, what Paul was trying to explain was that Messiah is what the Torah was aiming at all along. So take Passover for instance. Moses and the sacrificed

lamb's blood was a "telos" pointing to the Messiah Yeshua! So when we bring Yeshua/Jesus into the Passover celebration, we hit the mark or the bull's eye!!! We achieve the goal of the Torah/Law by reaching the mark! "*I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Messiah Yeshua,*" *Philippians 3:14*.



## Who should celebrate it???

So who should celebrate Passover? Numbers 15:14 says, any sojourner (foreigner) who dwells with the children of Israel is eligible to celebrate Torah. In New Covenant application, sojourners are the Messianic Gentiles, or Gentiles who have chosen to co-labor and become like family with Messianic Jews. Also, Churches who love Israel and the Jewish people, and celebrate such things as Shabbat, or Passover out of identification with Jews, are precious to the Lord. It makes my heart sing to see a Church that loves the Jewish people celebrate a Passover and build a relationship with their local Messianic Jewish community. I see strength and unity in those relationships, and find that such connections bring God's will for the end times into greater focus.

## Conclusion:

Yeshua said, "*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven,*" *Matthew 5:17-19*. This verse was written to Jews about keeping the Torah, not for the purpose of salvation, but for a testimony that the Messiah Yeshua is the "telos" or goal of the Torah. Without the Torah, it's like aiming at a target without a scope. The Torah is the rifle scope, the target is Messiah Yeshua. Put the two together and you have Messianic Judaism, and that's why we celebrate the freedom of Passover every year!

In Yeshua's love,  
Rabbi Joe