

פסח (Pesach)

How to Keep a Scriptural Passover Today

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1st Corinthians 5:7b-8a

For Mashiach our Pesach also has been sacrificed. Let us therefore celebrate the feast.

Pesach

There are many today who are interested in, and returning to, the Hebrew roots of their faith; that is, the original faith of the apostles in the first century. As more and more people are coming back to the original faith of the first century, many of them have questions concerning what is the proper way to keep Pesach (Passover) according to Scripture.

The purpose of this study, is to give the reader the tools needed to keep a Scriptural Passover in the Dispersion.

Eternal Ordinance

There are three passages in Shemot (Exodus) 12, in which YHWH tells us that Pesach (Passover) is to be practiced forever, throughout our generations. When we begin to understand the significance of this, then we can begin to keep His appointed times properly.

Please consider the following concept.

If you are reading this, then the chances are, that at some time in your life, you have come to believe upon Yeshua as Mashiach and have accepted Him as your Savior. When you did this, He gave you eternal life. You would understand that to mean life everlasting, or a high quality of life that will never cease to be.

You would take strong exception with anyone who would suggest that YHWH could, or would, change His mind at some time in the future, and take back the eternal life that He has given to you, because He just “changed His mind.”

If we cannot believe that He actually means eternal when He says eternal, then we basically cannot believe Him on anything.

But, of course, we do believe, and we know that He keeps His word; and when He says our life is eternal because we have believed on His Son (and obey Him), then we will, in fact, have eternal life.

So, if He says our life is eternal, why would the keeping of Pesach according to His instructions be any less eternal when He states that it is eternal?

Let us examine the Scripture.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:14

14 And this day shall be to you for a memorial, and you shall keep it a feast to YHWH; throughout your generations you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

YHWH states very plainly that Pesach (Passover) is to be kept by His people forever, in all of our generations.

This brings us immediately to a difficult problem. We have not been doing this! We have claimed to be His people, but those of us who have been a part of Christianity and have come out of that background, have traditionally not kept Pesach anywhere near the way in which YHWH commands (and how it is recorded in Scripture).

The verse immediately preceding this verse (verse 13), describes how we are to strike, or put, the blood on the doorposts and the lintel of our homes. This can easily be seen as part of the eternal commandment. We will examine the putting of the blood upon the lintel and the doorposts later in this study.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:17

17 And you shall observe the (feast of) unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall you observe this day throughout your generations by an ordinance forever.

Once again, YHWH commands that we are to keep Pesach and the seven days of Unleavened Bread, as an eternal ordinance throughout our generations. And once again, while the southern House of Yehudah (Judah) has done this fairly well (in that at least they are making an attempt to keep Pesach with their “seder” service), those of us who are descendants of the northern House of Israel, have traditionally rejected this command as unnecessary.

We have allowed unrighteous teachers to steal away our inheritance from us! If we truly desire to get our inheritance back, then it would follow that we should begin once again to keep His eternal commandments! And if we do not keep His eternal commandments, what right do we really have to expect YHWH to give us a righteous inheritance? Why would we expect our Heavenly Father to reward bad behavior?

We certainly do not do that as fleshly parents! We should not expect our Heavenly Father to reward bad (Torah breaking) behavior! However, YHWH does reward Torah obedience from us.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:24

24 And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever.

This is the third passage in which YHWH tells us that Pesach is an eternal ordinance, making it the third witness. Scripture teaches us that everything is to be confirmed by two or three witnesses. YHWH has certainly done that in establishing that He has always intended that we keep Pesach as an eternal ordinance in all of our generations.

Shemot [Exodus] 23:14-15

14 “Three times you shall keep a feast to me in the year.

15 The feast of unleavened bread shall you keep; seven days thou shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month Aviv (for in it you came out from Egypt); and no one shall appear before me empty handed.”

Pesach is one of the commanded pilgrimage Feasts, in which YHWH commands all of Yisrael’s males to gather before Him. While we are not in the land it is not possible for most of us to gather in Jerusalem. However, there are feast sites here in North America for His people to gather at during these commanded feasts. While this is not the perfect solution, it is better than not gathering at all.

Also, the purpose of the second tithe, is to provide the means to go to these pilgrimage Feasts. That is, we are to put aside the second tithe, and use that for travel expenses, food, and lodging, or whatever is necessary for us to go to the commanded pilgrimage Feasts.

So the question that we should each ask ourselves is this, “Who are we going to believe -- some man teaching us that we no longer have to do this? Or, are we going to believe YHWH, who has commanded us to do this forever?”

Which one is safer to believe?

In the Land

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16:2

“And you shall sacrifice the Passover to YHWH your Elohim, of the flock and the herd, in the place which YHWH shall choose, to cause His name to dwell there.”

This one passage causes more people not to keep Passover according to Scripture than any other passage. But let us carefully, prayerfully, and fearfully, examine this passage to see what it is actually saying.

First, I do not think that there would be very much disagreement that Jerusalem is the place where YHWH has chosen to cause His name to dwell. However, with that said and understood, we should then ask ourselves, “In what way will He cause His name to dwell there? Is it not by His presence? And is not His presence with the Ark of the Covenant in the Mishkan?” The answer is “yes” to each one of those questions. So,

where is the Mishkan today? Where is His visible presence today? Is it in Jerusalem? It does not seem that it is.

While there was a period of Israeli history in which YHWH dwelt in Jerusalem, it has not been so for a very long time. Please note this following passage.

Sh'muel Aleph [1st Samuel] 4:21-22

21 And she named the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory is departed from Israel; because the ark of Elohim was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband."

22 And she said, "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of Elohim is taken."

What is happening in this passage, is that Phinehas's wife gives birth to a son right after the Philistines capture the Ark of the Covenant. The son was named Ichabod, because when the Ark was taken, YHWH's glory also departed.

We also find this same concept in a vision of Yechezkel.

Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 10:18

And the glory of YHWH departed from the threshold of the temple, and stood over the cherubim.

YHWH's glory then departed with the leaving of the cherubim. As one reads this entire chapter, one finds that the glory of YHWH departed because of the very gross sin of both Israel and Judah.

Now please note this passage.

Matithyah [Matthew] 23:37-39

37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that kills the prophets, and stones them that are sent to her! How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not!

38 Behold, your house is left to you desolate.

39 For I say to you, You shall not see Me again, until you shall say, 'Blessed is He that comes in the name of YHWH.'"

While YHWH had caused His Name to dwell in Jerusalem at one time, because of sin on the part of the leaders and people of Israel and Judah, YHWH left. Furthermore, it seems that from the time of Mashiach until He returns, His name will not dwell in Jerusalem.

Therefore, it seems that Devarim chapter 16, is actually a prophetic utterance in future tense, to us today. Because it is clear from the text of Devarim 16 that these things are to take place while we are dwelling securely in the land, and since we are not dwelling

securely in the land at this time, it does not seem wise to apply these verses to us today.

Furthermore, we need to remember that when YHWH instituted the Passover, the nation was in the land of Egypt. They also kept the Passover outside the land for the first forty years.

Therefore, since we are not in the land, and since we are, in fact, living in Egypt, it seems incumbent upon us today to keep the Passover according to the way in which YHWH commanded us to keep it while we were in Egypt.

Shabbat

Shemot [Exodus] 12:16

16 And in the first day there shall be to you a set-apart gathering, and in the seventh day a set-apart gathering; no manner of work shall be done in them, except that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.

YHWH has placed in the Scriptural calendar, seven yearly Shabbatot (Sabbaths). Unlike the weekly Shabbat, which always falls on the seventh day, one of these yearly Shabbatot can fall on any day of the week, including the seventh day. Whatever day YHWH causes these yearly Shabbatot to fall on, they are to be treated as, and made into, a Shabbat in which no work can be done. This is, of course, with the exception of cooking as stated above.

Please notice the words “set-apart gathering” in the above passage. This phrase is translated from the Hebrew words מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ (miqra qodesh). This phrase means a set-apart gathering or “holy assembly.” Please note that YHWH has commanded us to gather together to have a feast, and to worship Him on the first day and the last of these seven days. Moreover, we are commanded to eat unleavened bread (more on this shortly).

Vayiqra [Leviticus] 23:4-5

4 These are the set feasts of YHWH, even set-apart gatherings, which you shall proclaim in their appointed season.

5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, is YHWH's Pesach (Passover).

We need to briefly describe the difference between Pesach and the week of Unleavened Bread. YHWH does not command Pesach to be a miqra qodesh (set-apart gathering); i.e, it is not a Shabbat. However, it is a commanded mo'ed (מוֹעֵד) literally, “appointed time”).

Basically, Pesach being an appointed time (mo'ed), means that this is a special appointment which YHWH our Creator has made with His people, in order to meet with them. Mo'e'dim are eternal appointments made by YHWH. These appointed times cannot be changed or altered by man. (However, Pesach is not a Shabbat of rest, since He commands us to do some work for Him on that day.)

We need to do what is necessary to rearrange our schedules so that we can keep these appointments with Him!

This particular appointment, Pesach, is to happen on the fourteenth day of the first month, the month of Aviv (which we will briefly discuss shortly). But basically, this is the time in which YHWH has commanded us to kill the Pesach lamb. When YHWH tells us that the 14th day of Aviv is a mo'ed, He is essentially telling us that He will be with us when we kill the lamb for Pesach.

YHWH even specifies the time of day that this appointment is to happen by using the words "at even." We will also discuss the significance of this shortly.

Remembering that in Hebrew thought, the day begins and ends at sunset, we are to kill the Pesach lamb in the mid-afternoon of the fourteenth of Aviv; and then at sunset, the miqra qodesh (of the First Day of Unleavened Bread) begins. This is when we are to eat of the Pesach lamb – the Passover meal as commanded in Scripture.

Vayiqra [Leviticus] 23:6-8

6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast (mo'ed) of unleavened bread to YHWH; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.

7 In the first day you shall have a set-apart gathering; you shall do no servile work.

8 But you shall offer an offering made by fire to YHWH seven days; in the seventh day is a set-apart gathering; you shall do no servile work.

So what we see, is that on the fourteenth day of Aviv in the mid-afternoon, is when we are commanded to kill the Pesach lamb. Then at sunset on the fifteenth day of Aviv, the first miqra qodesh (set-apart gathering) of the seven days of Unleavened Bread begins. This is a "yearly" or "high" Shabbat. It is on this very first evening that we are commanded to eat of the Pesach. Then, on the seventh day of the seven days of Unleavened Bread, there is to be another miqra qodesh.

This seventh day is also a high Shabbat as well, which means that we are to do no work on this day. That is, we are to do no work except for cooking. YHWH commands us that we may cook whatever is necessary for us to eat on these high days or High Shabbatot. However, since they are Shabbatot (rest days), in general there is to be no paid work, and no usual work.

Circumcision

Shemot [Exodus] 12:43-44

43 And YHWH said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover; there shall no foreigner eat thereof;

44 but every man's servant that is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof."

When it comes to this subject, there is a lot of emotional baggage that comes along with it. Because the church has wrongly taught for centuries that the need for circumcision has been done away with, many people have difficulties and struggles in coming to a proper Scriptural understanding of this very important topic.

This passage is very clear: unless a person is circumcised, he cannot eat of the Pesach. If a person desires to become a part of Yisrael (be grafted in), then part of that process includes the need for all males to be circumcised.

Basically, if a person is going to eat the Pesach meal, Scripture says that he must be circumcised.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:48

48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with you, and will keep the Passover to YHWH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

It is important for us to come to this understanding. If we violate this command, we are disobeying YHWH! These are His commands, and no human has the right or the authority to do away with (or change) any of His commandments.

We need to examine the word גֵּר (ger) which is translated as *stranger* in the above passage. This is an important word, and even a prophecy concerning us as part of Ephrayim today.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 14:1

For YHWH will have compassion on Ya'aqov, and will yet choose Yisrael, and set them in their own land: and the stranger shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Ya'aqov.

It seems probable, that the prophetic stranger (גֵּר) is representative of those of the House of Yisrael that have gone into the Diaspora, and have lost their identity as descendants of the House of Yisrael. They, therefore, have become known as *gerim*.

So, what we should glean from the passage in Shemot 12:48, is that part of the returning process of the lost tribes of Yisrael is to be circumcised in order to partake of the Pesach. This is one of the signs that we actually belong to YHWH.

Please understand that one does not get circumcised to get saved. Circumcision and salvation are two different issues. Salvation comes to us as we believe upon the Master Yeshua, having confessed our sins and turned away from our sin. Then, by walking in obedience to Him and His commandments, we do those things that are pleasing to Him. This includes circumcision.

Children

Shemot [Exodus] 12:26-27

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say to you, "What do you mean by this service?"

27 that you shall say, "It is the sacrifice of YHWH's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Yisrael in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, but delivered our houses." And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

There are literally thousands of books written, about why so many Christians' children lose their faith, and how to keep them in the faith of Christianity. But here in these verses, YHWH basically tells us how to pass our faith on to the next generation.

It is through being obedient to His Torah (i.e., His Voice) that He will then have the opportunity to prompt the next generation to ask questions; thereby, presenting an opportunity not only to explain what we are doing (obeying His commands), but also to begin the process of training the next generation to hear and obey His Voice.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:24

24 And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever.

When we obey this eternal ordinance in the way by which He has commanded us to obey it, then we pass on to our children the mindset of obeying His eternal ordinances (rather than doing whatever is right in our own eyes). Is this not one of the most valuable things that we could possibly give to our children?

Children are a very important aspect of keeping and obeying His Torah commands. This seems particularly true of Pesach. We should be especially mindful of the importance of children in keeping Pesach. More than at any other appointed time (mo'ed), Pesach seems to be focused upon our children. Let us not miss this, thus missing a very important opportunity that YHWH has placed in our hands.

Aviv

Shemot [Exodus] 12:1-2

1 And YHWH spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 “This month shall be to you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.”

According to YHWH, the first month of the year begins when the first Rosh Chodesh (New Moon) is sighted in the Land of Israel, after the aviv barley has been sighted.

There are those who have erroneously attempted to tie this event to the equinox, stating that if we do not do this, then the month of Aviv will eventually end up in winter. This is an attempt to scare people into their way of thinking. If one just thinks about this for a moment then he will see how ludicrous this suggestion is, as the barley always ripens in spring (not in winter).

The temperature of the ground has to be at a certain level, and sustained for a period of time before the barley begins to grow. Once this process begins in the spring, it is only a matter of time, depending on temperature and moisture available, as to how quickly this comes to pass. Basically, this is according to His sovereignty.

Deuteronomy 16:1

1 Observe the month of Aviv, and keep the Passover to YHWH your Elohim; for in the month of Aviv YHWH your Elohim brought you forth out of Egypt by night.

Please note, that in the above passage YHWH commands us to *observe* the month of Aviv. Basically, this means that we are to see the beginning of this month with our eyes. It is by observation that we begin this month.

It is very much like Rosh Chodesh (New Moon), or a Scriptural new day (sunset), or many other things in Hebrew culture. It is a culture of observation (as opposed to a culture of calculation as in the western world).

Shemot [Exodus] 12:18

18 In the first (month), on the fourteenth day of the month at even, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

We are commanded to start the month of Aviv by observation. Then, we are to set a lamb apart on the tenth of the month. Then, on the fourteenth day of the month of Aviv, we are to kill the lamb in the evening (literally, “between the evenings”; more on this below), and then prepare and cook it, so that we can eat our evening meal on the fifteenth, which is the beginning of the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

This is the month of Aviv, in which we are to observe (obey) and keep all these things in obedience to His Torah.

The Lamb

The central aspect of Pesach is the lamb. YHWH gives us several commands that are very important for us to understand and to obey, in order for us to keep Pesach in the way by which it will bring glory and honor to Him.

One such commandment concerns *when* to select a lamb.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:3

3 “You speak to all the congregation of Yisrael, saying, ‘In the tenth of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household,’”

On the tenth day of the month of Aviv, every man is commanded to select a lamb from his flock and set it aside. They are then to keep this lamb for four days. Basically, they are to make it their pet. They are to grow to love this lamb, and it is to become a part of their family. This is done in this fashion, so that the stark reality of the price that Yeshua paid comes home to us.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:5

5 “Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep, or from the goats;”

The Pesach animal can either be of the sheep or the goats. Because of the wording, it seems that YHWH actually prefers for us to use a lamb rather than a kid. This may be because Yeshua likens us to sheep (believers); He then contrasts that to goats (unbelievers, or rather, non-obedient believers). The goats He sends away into damnation; but to the sheep He gives eternal life.

Also, the lamb cannot have any blemishes. Basically, this means it is without visible defect. One year, in praying about which lamb to choose, I had a lamb that was of “show quality.” This lamb would grow up to be a wonderful herd ram. The more he grew, the better he looked. And the closer it came to Pesach, the more I knew what it meant for this little guy.

YHWH was talking to me the whole time I was observing this lamb; that he was indeed a *perfect* lamb and that it was the one I needed to use for Pesach. Of course, that is the one that I used, but I was sad and began to understand the cost involved in YHWH sending us His Son, The Perfect Lamb!

Another year, I had selected the very best one again; but just a couple of weeks before Pesach, something happened to this lamb and he began to limp. So as we approached

the tenth of Aviv, I realized that this lamb was unacceptable to YHWH. So I selected another one from the flock, one which was not lame, but was without defect.

We work at having lambs so that they will be about three to four months old when Pesach comes. But a lamb can be anywhere in the first year of its life, just as long as it has not reached its first birthday yet.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:46

46 "In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth any of the flesh out of the house; neither shall you break a bone thereof."

Another commandment of YHWH to which we need to pay particular attention, is that none of the lamb's bones can be broken.

When we kill the lamb (which we will deal with in more detail below), not breaking its bones is important, especially while skinning the animal. When the skin is removed, care must be taken not to break any of the bones.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:3-4

3 "Speak you to all the congregation of Yisrael, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household;

4 and if the household be too little for a lamb, then shall he and his neighbor next to his house take one according to the number of the souls; according to every man's eating you shall make your count for the lamb.'"

Shemot [Exodus] 12:21

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Yisrael, and said to them, "Draw out, and take you lambs according to your families, and kill the Passover."

This is one of the more difficult aspects of selecting the lamb. Basically, YHWH does not want us to have a lot of meat left over and thereby waste it. Likewise, we also need to make sure that each person has enough to satisfy the commandment.

When YHWH showed me this commandment, I had the choice of the lamb narrowed down to two very differently-sized lambs. I would look at and observe these lambs, and pray and seek Him in this matter. One was about one month older than the other lamb. One month in age can mean a lot of pounds at that age (about 3-4 months old). I actually thought that the larger one would be the right choice, but ended up selecting the smaller one; and as it turned out, it was the right choice.

One aspect of Pesach that we should address here is concerning those who are vegetarians. My wife has severe allergies to all red meat. So, when the time for

Pesach comes, we do a lot of praying; but even though she is very allergic, she still eats some of the lamb in obedience to this command.

I know that there are many people out there who are vegetarian by choice. Please know and understand, that YHWH does not have an exception clause for you, so that you do not have to eat lamb. If you have a severe allergy, then whether you eat or don't eat is between you, the doctor, and YHWH. I cannot make that choice for you. I just know this: that YHWH has commanded all those who are a part of His family (Israel) to eat of the Pesach.

Please do what is necessary to fulfill this commandment!

Kosher Kill

I grew up in the country and lived on a farm. I have been involved in doing butchering all my life. But it was not until I began obeying Torah, and seeking to kill clean animals according to Scripture in order to be pleasing to YHWH, that I truly came to understand what it meant to do a kosher kill.

First, let us look at when this is to be done for Pesach, and then some details on actually how to do it.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:6

6 “and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Yisrael shall kill it between the evenings.”

And again:

Leviticus 23:5

5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month between the evenings, is YHWH's Passover.

Please note the phrase “between the evenings” in both passages. What does this mean?

According to Josephus (who was a contemporary of Yeshua), the Passover lambs were sacrificed from about 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Josephus, *Wars*, IV, 9, 3). According to Jewish historian Alfred Edersheim, “Ordinarily it [meaning the evening sacrifice] was slain about 2:30p.m.and offered about 3:30” (pp. 174, updated edition, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*).

Unlike Western culture, which depends upon calculation, Hebrew culture depends upon observation. In Hebrew thought there are two evenings. The first evening starts when the sun is at its zenith (highest point in the sky) and then begins descending (leading to

evening). The second evening ends when the sun meets the horizon. Half-way in between this time was the time “between the evenings,” and this is when the Pesach is to be slain.

The first thing to do is to bind the animal, much like Avraham bound Yitzchak when he was about to offer him up as a burnt offering, and just as Yeshua was bound on His cross (or stake). The purpose of this, is actually to help keep the animal calm by reducing the animal’s struggle. This also helps to reduce the possibility of injury to either the animal, or to the person doing the killing.

Also, by helping to keep the animal calm and not overly exerting itself, it is not pumping a lot of adrenalin into its bloodstream, thereby causing the meat to be tough, rather than tender. In doing a kosher kill as commanded, let us consider the following passage.

Acts 15:20

20 “but that we write to them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood.”

In the above passage we are interested in the phrase and from what is strangled. This phrase plays a very important part in the commandment in being able to do a kosher kill. The definition of “strangle” according to Webster is *to obstruct seriously or fatally the normal breathing*.

Most people, when they kill a clean animal, just simply cut its throat and let it bleed to death. But some feel that this is really not sufficient in doing a kosher kill. When a slaughtering takes place in this fashion, thereby cutting the windpipe along with the arteries in the throat area, then blood is sucked into the lungs of the animal; thereby seriously interfering with its breathing while it is bleeding out, which causes the bleeding process to be greatly foreshortened. Many feel that this effectively makes the meat inedible, according to Scripture.

In order to be safe, care must be taken to cut only the carotid artery, and not the windpipe of the lamb. This allows the lamb to be able to breathe without interference and blood cannot get into the lungs.

One thing that is very important is to have available several very sharp knives. Because we are under a time crunch, we will not have time to stop and sharpen the knives. When one gets dull we just need to be able to put it aside and pick up another one that is sharp. It is very important to have several knives that are very, very sharp.

The Blood

When the lamb is slain, the blood must be caught in a bowl, basin, pail, or some other kind of container. A person must be assigned to stir the blood to keep it *living* until such

time as the blood can be put upon the doorposts and the lintel, or else it will coagulate (clot).

The reason that the blood cannot be put upon the doorposts and the lintel immediately, is because once that is done, we are required to stay inside until morning (more on that shortly). As there are several things that must be done before the blood can be placed or struck upon the lintel and the doorposts, a person must be assigned to stir the blood.

As one studies and learns all that is required to do to keep a Scriptural Pesach, one thing that begins to emerge quite clearly, is the need for community. It is a big task to keep Pesach. It has been a wonderful blessing to have as many children as we do, for they have always been an integral part of keeping Pesach.

Please note the following two passages of Scripture.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:7

7 And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, upon the houses wherein they shall eat it.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:22-23

22 And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

23 For YHWH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel, and on the two doorposts, YHWH will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you.

What we should notice here in these two passages, is that we are to place the blood of the lamb upon the two doorposts and upon the lintels of all the outside doors. Please note in verse seven above, that the order in which the blood is placed, is first upon the two doorposts and then upon the lintel.

However, in verses 22 and 23, the blood is placed upon the lintel first, and then the two doorposts. According to these passages, it does not matter whether we place the blood on the two doorposts first, or on the lintel first. However, it should be pointed out, that one thing we do not find in Scripture is placing the blood on one doorpost and then the lintel, followed by placing the blood on the second doorpost.

If read in this way, this passage would seem to indicate that it is important to place the blood on both doorposts together. Whether we do this last or first, as long as we place the blood on both doorposts together, we are staying within the commandment of Torah. Why would this be important?

Please consider, that the two doorposts may represent the two houses of Yisrael: Yehudah and Ephrayim. One would not want to be guilty of splitting or separating brothers (the two houses), would he? No, of course not!

In this next passage, we see the reason why it is important to have the blood upon the doorposts and upon the lintel of our homes.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:13

13 And the blood shall be to you for a sign upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

Please allow me to say a couple of things here for each person to ponder and to pray about. First, I am certain that of all those reading this study, no one would willfully choose to have YHWH place these plagues upon them or their households. Yet, by not keeping this eternal Torah commandment, isn't that what we choose?

Also, please consider that those of us in the USA are living in spiritual Babylon (Egypt). There is coming a time when YHWH will destroy this country because of its rampant wickedness. We do not know when He will choose to do this. The best protection from the Destroyer that we can have, is to obey these eternal commands and keep Pesach according to the way in which YHWH has commanded us to keep it. Rather than keeping it according to the traditions of man, we need to keep it according to Torah! Basically, we need to choose whether we are going to obey YHWH or man.

Then, when He sends forth the Destroyer, He will watch over those who have shown themselves to be His people. Now why wouldn't each and every one of us want to do that?

Shemot [Exodus] 12:7

7 "And they shall take of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, upon the houses wherein they shall eat it."

The blood of the lamb is to be placed upon both doorposts and upon the lintel of the house in which the lamb is to be eaten.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:22

22 "And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning."

The blood is to be placed, put, or struck upon, the two doorposts and the lintel by using hyssop. The man of the house is to take this plant and dip it into the blood, and then either strike it against the doorposts and lintel, or brush it on as one would paint with a

brush. The wording of Scripture seems to allow for either method. Just do as the Ruach would lead and it will be right.

Stay Inside Until Morning

Shemot [Exodus] 12:22

22 “And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.”

One of the commands that YHWH has given to us concerning the keeping of Pesach, is to not go outside after the blood has been put upon the doorposts and the lintel. This seems to be one of the preeminent commands of Pesach.

Please note the next verse following Shemot 12:22.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:23

23 “For YHWH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel, and on the two doorposts, YHWH will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you.”

Please note, that in order to be afforded the safety of the blood on the lintel and two doorposts, one must be inside the house. We surely want to keep Pesach in such a way as to keep the Destroyer from coming into our homes, do we not?

The only sure way to do that, is to keep the commandments of YHWH in a way that is pleasing to Him, regardless of what man says.

Please note also, that when we read and study Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16, we see that the way YHWH commands us to keep and observe Pesach in the Land, is not the same as how He commands us to keep Pesach outside the Land.

However, there is one similarity that we need to point out here in this study.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16:7

7 And you shall roast and eat it in the place which YHWH your Elohim shall choose; and you shall return to your tents in the morning.

Please note, that whether we are in the Land or we are outside the Land, YHWH commands us to stay in the house where we eat the Pesach. In the Land, we will be in the House of YHWH (probably in the courtyard), and outside the Land,, we are in our

own houses (or in the house of a neighbor). Either way, He expects us to stay inside until morning.

Once we return to the Land, after the first night is over, we are commanded to return to our tents for the remainder of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

So, what is this supposed to teach us, this not going out until morning?

It is interesting to note the following:

- The messengers took Lot out of Sodom in the morning
- Avraham rose early in the morning to go and sacrifice Yitzchak
- Avraham's servant rose in the morning to return to Avraham with Rivkah
- Ya'aqov rose in the morning and set the stone up as a pillar (Ya'aqov's ladder)
- There are many more too numerous to mention in this short study

Now please consider this passage.

Tehilim [Psalms] 30:5

For his anger is but for a moment; His favor is for a life-time; weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning.

Basically, when we eat the Pesach, we are to do so with great haste and trepidation. But with the coming of the morning, the Destroyer has passed and we are safe in His care – joy comes in the morning!

Malak of Death

There are three passages in Shemot that speak of the Malak of Death passing over and killing the firstborn of Egypt, both man and beast. It is important to note the identity of this Malak.

Shemot [Exodus] 11:4-5

4 And Moses said, "Thus says YHWH, 'About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

5 and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sits upon his throne, even to the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill; and all the first-born of cattle.'"

Verse four above records the words of YHWH, in which He states that He is the One who will pass over the land of Egypt, and He will strike all of the firstborn of Egypt, both of mankind and of beast.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:12-13

12 "For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the elohim of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am YHWH.

13 And the blood shall be to you for a sign upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

In verses twelve and thirteen, again YHWH states that it is He who will go through the land of Egypt and kill all of the firstborn of Egypt. In fact, YHWH states this no less than six times in these two verses. Please remember that it is YHWH Himself, who is speaking these words about His being the One killing all the firstborn of Egypt.

Please note the following fulfillment of Pesach at some time in the future.

Gilyana [Revelation] 14:14-19

14 And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud one sitting like a Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another messenger came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to Him that sat on the cloud, "Send forth Your sickle, and reap; for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

16 And He that sat on the cloud put in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 Another messenger came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another messenger came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, "Send forth Your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the Messenger put His sickle to the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great wrath of Elohim.

In the passage above, we see the ultimate fulfillment of the Malak of Death passing over the earth and reaping the whole earth. The first Pesach (Passover) was a type of this fulfillment portrayed in the passage above.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:23

23 For YHWH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel, and on the two doorposts, YHWH will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you.

Once again, in this passage we see that it is YHWH, who is the One who passes over and kills the firstborn in all the homes that are not marked with the sign of the blood on their doorposts and lintels.

It is also important to note, that the identity of the Malak of Death is the same in both passages. We understand His name to be Yeshua (or YHWH Katan).

Cooking the Lamb

Shemot [Exodus] 12:8-9

8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roasted with fire, and unleavened bread; with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

9 Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted with fire; its head with its legs and with the middle parts.

YHWH commands us to roast the lamb with fire. He specifically commands us that we are not to boil it in water. In that time and culture, they would all have had a cooking pit in their homes in which they could cook the lamb over an open fire. We do not have this type of set-up in our homes today. A hundred years ago – yes - but not today. We do have ovens that use fire to cook, but that is the closest that we can come.

We could cook it outside. However, we must ask ourselves this question: Which is the higher command, or the more important command to keep; roasting with an open fire, or not going outside after we have put the blood on the doorposts and lintel?

We have looked at this verse above, but please consider this verse again:

Shemot [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 pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you."

Going outside after the doorposts had been struck with blood, was flirting with death, and possibly opening the door for the Destroyer to destroy the person who did not obey the command to stay in the house!

No such warning is associated with the command to cook with fire.

So, it seems to us, that the more important command, is to strike the doorposts and the lintel with blood, and then stay in the house. The lamb is still being cooked with fire; albeit, not over an open fire.

Whereas, if we were to cook the lamb on an open fire outside, we would not be keeping the command to not go outside after the doorposts and lintel were struck. This cannot

be good. It would be much safer spiritually, to stay in the house after we place the blood upon the doorposts and upon the lintel.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:46

46 In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth any of the flesh out of the house; neither shall you break a bone thereof.

In cooking the lamb, it is important that one is careful not to break any of its bones to get it to fit into a roasting pan or pot. This may take some preplanning to be able to have a pan or pot large enough to accommodate the whole lamb.

In general, when looking for a pan or a pot of this size, look for one that is as large as possible.

Please note, that YHWH commands us that none of the meat of the lamb is to be taken out of the house in which it is to be eaten. If more than one family is sharing in the eating of a lamb, then it must be done in one house only.

Eating the Lamb

Not only does YHWH command us to prepare and cook the lamb in a particular way, but He also commands us to eat the lamb according to certain standards.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:11

11 “And you shall eat it with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste; it is YHWH's Passover.”

YHWH commands us to eat the roasted lamb with our loins girded, our shoes on our feet, and our staff close at hand. Why are we to eat it in this fashion?

We examined one reason above, when we discussed the importance of children in keeping Pesach. Children are just naturally curious, and when the child's parent does something that he does not understand, then the child typically asks questions. This is particularly true when it comes to obeying the commands of Pesach. YHWH designed the commands of Pesach to cause our children to ask us questions about what we are doing.

Also, by eating it in this fashion we are bringing to mind all the wonders, signs, and miracles that YHWH did in bringing us out of the bondage of Egypt.

This is particularly true when we eat the Pesach meal in trepidation and haste, much as our fathers did on this night so very long ago.

Of course, this is also a commandment from YHWH, so we should obey it on that basis alone. However, it is also good and beneficial for us to understand what is behind the commandment.

When dealing with many spiritual characteristics that YHWH desires for us to have in us and to be a part of our everyday living, there is often an outward sign which is a sign of the inward work YHWH has already done in us. One of the clearest examples of this is when we are immersed into Yeshua and are adopted into the family of Elohim.

Immersion in water does not save us. However, the immersion in water is a sign of something that YHWH has already done in our lives. When we are immersed in water, this signifies an already existing spiritual reality of what YHWH has done for us in giving us spiritual life. Many often refer to this as an outward sign of an inward work (or some similar wording to that).

Likewise, to eat the Pesach in haste, with our shoes and coats on, with our staff at hand, seems to fit that same pattern, of which this is a sign of something which YHWH has already done for us spiritually. But just exactly what could that signify?

There seem to be at least two things that are significant in this commandment. The first would be that this is the way a servant would eat his meals. He would be ready and listening for his master's command, so that if his master called to him, he could rush to him to serve him. It seems to be a sign of a servant's heart.

The second aspect seems to be that of a shepherd. A shepherd would always be dressed, staff close at hand and ready to protect the sheep with his life if necessary.

When YHWH called us to be a kingdom of priests and a set-apart nation, He was basically calling Yisrael to be a shepherd to the nations.

Shemot [Exodus] 19:6

6 "and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests, and a set-apart nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

So far, Yisrael has not really fulfilled this commandment from YHWH.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:8

8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

YHWH also commands us to eat the lamb with bitter herbs. This is usually done with horseradish and parsley. Some even include oregano in their preparations of the lamb.

The main thing, is that we eat something that is going to remind us of the bitterness of our bondage in Egypt.

Then, we are also to eat the lamb with bread that has no leaven in it. This is to remind us of the haste in which we left Egypt so that our bread did not have time to rise. We will see more about this on the discussion of the week of Unleavened Bread below.

Burn Leftovers in the Morning

Shemot [Exodus] 12:10

10 And you shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; but that which remains of it until the morning you shall burn with fire.

In this command there seems to be two parts. The first half of the verse: “you shall not leave any of it over until morning,” seems to be saying that we are to eat all of the lamb before morning comes. The second half of the verse: “but whatever is left of it [lamb] until morning, you shall burn with fire,” seems to be saying that if you are not able to eat all of the lamb, then the leftovers, along with those parts that are not edible, like the bones, you are to burn with fire in the morning.

What we do, is to rise up very early in the morning (at the first light) and go out and burn that which is left. But here is the thing that we have to keep in mind: this is a High Shabbat. That means no work shall be done on this day.

On the day before (the day of preparation), the fourteenth of Aviv, before we actually get to the killing of the lamb, we prepare two pyres of wood. We use the first pyre of wood to burn the skin and the entrails as soon as we have removed them from the lamb.

The second pyre of wood is used first thing in the morning on Aviv 15 to burn the leftovers. We do this very early in the morning just as it is getting light. By building the pyre the day before (which is not a Shabbat), we are able to be fully prepared to obey all the commands of Pesach in a way that is pleasing to YHWH.

The way that Yisrael is supposed to keep Pesach in the Dispersion is different than in the Land. We are not sure about all the details of keeping Pesach in the Land, but it seems it will not be exactly according to Shemot 12. Rather, what Deuteronomy 16 seems to indicate, is that all of Yisrael is in the Temple courtyard, and that we are all to stay in the Temple courtyard all night long. In the morning, we are all to return to our tents for the rest of the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16:5-7

5 You may not sacrifice the Pesach within any of your gates, which YHWH your Elohim gives you;

6 but at the place which YHWH your Elohim shall choose, to cause His name to dwell in, there you shall sacrifice the Pesach at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that you came forth out of Egypt.

7 And you shall roast and eat it in the place which YHWH your Elohim shall choose: and you shall return in the morning, and go to your tents.

This passage also seems to show the importance of not going outside before morning. In the one case, it is not going outside our homes before morning; and in the other, it is not going outside the Temple courtyard until morning.

This seems to be one of the preeminent commands of Pesach.

Now consider this passage.

Tehillim [Psalms] 30:5

***For His anger is but for a moment; His favor is for a life-time:
Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes in the morning.***

There have been many times when I have been sad or troubled throughout the night, but when morning comes, it all looks brighter.

Pesach should be especially so, because it was on this night that YHWH passed over Egypt and killed all the firstborn of Egypt and spared all the firstborn of Yisrael.

Seven Days of Unleavened Bread

Shemot [Exodus] 12:15

15 Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread; even the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Yisrael.

This is a very serious command. YHWH tells us straight out: if you disobey this commandment, you cannot be a part of His people. It would seem to me that wisdom would tell us that we should take YHWH at His word here!

For seven days, from Aviv 15 through Aviv 21, there should be no leaven found in our homes.

Again, there seems to be a difference in the way that YHWH commands us to obey these seven days of Unleavened Bread outside the Land, as opposed to obeying the seven days of Unleavened Bread inside the Land. Please consider the following passage.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16:4

4 And there shall be no leaven seen with you in all your borders seven days; neither shall any of the flesh, which you sacrificed the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

In the verse above (Devarim 16:4), YHWH commands us not to have any leaven in any of our borders at all. So, in the Land of Yisrael, to properly keep and observe and obey this command, all leaven in the Land must be removed for seven days.

However, in Shemot 12:5 above, we see that we are only commanded to remove the leaven from our own homes. Why the difference?

Outside the Land, we are to be in subjection to the governments which YHWH has placed over us. We do not have any control over the land we live in. Therefore, it would not be possible for us to keep this commandment. Therefore, YHWH only commands us to remove the leaven from our own homes, that which we do control.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:17-20

17 And you shall observe unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore shall you observe this day throughout your generations by an ordinance forever.

18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at even.

19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eats that which is leavened, that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Yisrael, whether he be a sojourner, or one that is born in the land.

20 You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall you eat unleavened bread.

In these four verses, YHWH commands us not to eat anything leavened, but only unleavened bread, five times. Does He have our attention now?

It may be that your situation will not allow you to kill a lamb and put the blood upon the doorposts and lintel. If not, then you should go somewhere that will allow this, if at all possible. However, without exception, everyone can remove the leaven from their homes, and eat only unleavened bread for these seven days.

There are some who will do a thorough spring cleaning in the two weeks' time from Aviv 1 to Aviv 14. This is a good and healthy practice. Many orthodox Jewish families practice this. However, as this is not found in Shemot 12, we cannot really say that this is a command.

As long as we remove all leaven (products that we use for leavening, including baking soda, baking powder and yeast) and products made with leaven in them from our homes, we are keeping the commandment and fulfilling the requirement to not have any leaven in our homes.

The Second Exodus

Yirmeyahu [Jeremiah] 16:14-15

14 Therefore, behold, the days come, says YHWH, that it shall no more be said, As YHWH lives, that brought up the children of Yisrael out of the land of Egypt;

15 but, as YHWH lives, that brought up the children of Yisrael from the land of the north, and from all the countries where He had driven them. And I will bring them again into their land that I gave to their fathers.

Some believe that Pesach is all about remembering the First Exodus, and nothing else. However, is it perhaps possible that YHWH also desires in the keeping, observing, and obeying of the commands concerning Pesach, that we prepare for the Second Exodus?

Perhaps, part of eating with our shoes on our feet and our loins girded and our staffs in our hands, is to remind us that one day, YHWH will remove us from these graves that we live in (in the Dispersion) and take us back to His Land.

We should be ready to go!

CHECKLIST

- Observe the Aviv & Rosh Chodesh
- All males to be circumcised before Aviv 14
- Select an unblemished lamb (or kid) on Aviv 10
- Select according to size of household
- Aviv 14, day of preparation for Shabbat on Aviv 15
- Build two pyres of wood
- Remove all leaven from home by sunset on Aviv 14
- Bind the lamb
- Have several sharp knives at hand
- Kill the lamb kosher, between the evenings
- Catch the blood in a basin
- Have a person stir the blood until all outside tasks are done
- Skin, remove entrails, and clean lamb
- Do not break any bones or separate any joints
- Take lamb into house for cooking
- Burn skin and entrails on first pyre
- Make sure all outside chores and duties are done
- Put blood on doorposts and lintel with hyssop
- Go into the house and stay there until morning
- Roast lamb with fire (cook in oven without water)
- Eat lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread
- Eat the Pesach in haste & trepidation
- Eat Pesach with shoes on, coat on, & staff in hand
- In the morning, burn leftover lamb
- Remember, Aviv 15 is a Shabbat
- Eat unleavened bread for seven days