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פסח

Pesach

How to Keep a Scriptural Passover Today

1st Corinthians 5:7b-8a

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

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 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 Diaspora (Dispersion).

Please understand, what will be outlined in this study is going to challenge what you have been taught in the church. Let us choose not to condemn one another if we do not agree, but agree to walk in shalom with one another and continue to strive to obey His Voice to the best of our knowledge and ability. As we do this together, He will continue to refine us and reveal to us those things that are not pleasing in His sight! What is recorded below is a brief record of where I am personally in my own understanding and the reasoning of how I got to this place.

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 promised to give you eternal life if you obey Him and endure to the end. Most likely 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 promised to give 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.

However, of course, we do believe Him, and we know that He keeps His word; and when He says our life will be eternal because we have trusted in His Son and obey Him, then, we will, in fact, have eternal life, as long as we continue to trust in and obey His Son Yeshua.

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? Can you see the quandary one puts himself in if he states that these particular set of commandments are not eternal as YHWH has said that they are?

Let us examine the Scripture.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:14

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. His people have not been doing this! We have claimed to be His people, but those who have been a part of Christianity and have come out of that background, have traditionally not kept Pesach anywhere near how YHWH commands and how it is recorded in Scripture.

The verse immediately preceding this verse (verse 13), describes how one is 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 in more detail later in this study.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:17

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) is making an attempt to keep Pesach with its “seder” service, those who are descendants of the northern House of Israel have traditionally rejected this command as unnecessary.

We have allowed teachers of unrighteousness to steal away our inheritance from us! If we truly desire to get our inheritance back, then it would follow that one should begin once again to keep His eternal commandments! And if one does not keep His eternal commandments, what right do we really have to expect YHWH to give him a righteous inheritance? Why would one expect our Heavenly Father to reward bad behavior? If one wants and expects eternal life, does it not follow that he should keep YHWH’s eternal commandments? To be sure!

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

Now we are not suggesting that one earns his salvation. For, we know that this is not possible. What we are saying is that if one is truly saved, then such a person will have a strong desire to keep and obey His commandments. Can one not rightly see that if one does not keep His commandments, then perhaps such a person is not really in covenant with YHWH at all?

Shemot [Exodus] 12:24

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. Please note that in the previous two passages YHWH tells us to do this throughout our generations. However, in this passage He tells us for us as well as our “sons” to keep and observe these eternal ordinances, just in case the stubborn, stiff-necked characteristics of being a descendant of Avraham, Yitzchaq and Ya’aqov kick in and hinder one from seeing the truth of what YHWH is commanding.

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 Israel’s males to gather. While we are not in the land it is not possible for most of us to gather in Jerusalem. The best that many can do now is to gather together in localized groups near where they live. This is much like what Israel did in Egypt.

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.

Therefore, 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?

Shabbat

Shemot [Exodus] 12:16

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 for the first and last Days of Unleavened Bread. Cooking cannot be done on the other annual Shabbatot, except for Shavuot.

Please notice the words “set-apart gathering” in the above passage. This phrase is translated from the Hebrew words מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ (miqra qodesh – more on this below). 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 for those same seven days (more on this shortly).

Vayyiqra [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 describe briefly 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 that YHWH our Creator has made with His people, in order to meet with them. Mo'edim 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. The day of Pesach is actually a day of preparation wherein we kill and prepare the Pesach lamb for the meal on the first evening of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

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). Basically, this is the time in which YHWH has commanded His people 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 holy convocation 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.

Therefore, 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 tells us that we may cook whatever is necessary for us to eat on these two particular 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.

So what is a “holy convocation”? What does it mean to “do no servile work”? We see these phrases used in Vayiqra 23:7 above. These are important questions that we need to answer so that our celebrations will be pleasing in His sight.

The first question deals with a “miqra qodesh” - מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ. “Miqra” means a “sacred assembly” and “qodesh” means to be “set-apart.” So a “miqra qodesh” means “a very set-apart sacred assembly.” So what all is classified as a miqra qodesh?

In Vayyiqra 23:3, we are told that the weekly Shabbat is a miqra qodesh, a time for a set-apart sacred assembly, or gathering together. Then in Vayyiqra 23:6-7, we are told that the first day and the seventh day of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread, is also each a miqra qodesh. In Vayyiqra 23:21, we learn that Shavuot (Pentecost) is also a miqra qodesh. In Vayyiqra 23:24, we learn that Yom Teruah, the Day of Sounding or the Feast of Trumpets, is also a miqra qodesh. In Vayyiqra 23:27, we see that Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a miqra qodesh. And finally, we see in Vayyiqra 23:35, 36, that the first day and the eighth day of Sukkot are each a miqra qodesh.

What this means for us, is that whenever there is a miqra qodesh, we are commanded to gather together with other believers if possible and celebrate and worship YHWH our Elohim. We are to do this on a weekly basis on the Shabbat. We are also commanded to do this seven other times throughout the year.

So what does it mean to do no servile work? The Hebrew here is מְלֶאכֶת עֲבֹדָה – “m’le’ket ‘avodah.” The root word for מְלֶאכֶת is מְלָאךְ – “mal’ak” which means “a messenger” or “one sent to do a task.” The form of the word here means “work or occupation.” This word is also in the construct form, meaning that it modifies the following word. The root word for עֲבֹדָה is עָבַד – “avad” which means “to work or to serve.” The form of the word here in this passage means “labor or service.” Thus, these two words together mean the work that one does as his normal occupation is not to be done during a miqra qodesh. Quite literally it would be understood as the “work of labor.”

What do you do on most days of the week? It is whatever you do for pay: your job; or, for a mother, it is doing laundry, cooking, and all the other things that she does to take care of her family. To do no servile work means, that for that day, we put all those things aside and focus upon YHWH. We get all the preparations done ahead of time so that this is possible.

Finally, in understanding exactly what kind of Shabbat the first and last days of Unleavened Bread are, we need to discuss what a Shabbat Shabbaton is.

A Solemn Rest

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:39

“Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land, you shall keep the feast of YHWH seven days; on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest.”

YHWH tells us that on the first day and on the eighth day of Sukkot is to be a “solemn rest.” But just exactly what is a “solemn rest”? The Hebrew word here in both cases is שַׁבָּתוֹן – “Shabbaton.” This word is found thirteen times in eleven verses in the Torah Moshe; three of

those in the book of Shemot (Exodus) and the rest of them in the book of Vayyiqra (Leviticus). The verse above is one of the two verses in which this word occurs twice.

Several times this word is immediately preceded by the word שַׁבַּת – “Shabbat.” So the question before us is this: what is a “Shabbat Shabbaton”; and how do we properly understand the word “Shabbaton”?

As we can easily see, the word “Shabbaton” comes from the word “Shabbat.” The word שַׁבַּת – “Shabbat” means “to stop work; curtail activity before completion.” שַׁבְּתוֹן – “Shabbaton” seems to be the compounding of שַׁבַּת and אוֹן. Often when making compound words in Hebrew, letters are dropped; in this case the aleph is dropped adding the וֹן – “on”, which is pronounced with a long o sound as in the English word “own.” This word, אוֹן means “to acquire.” So what we have with the word שַׁבְּתוֹן would mean “to acquire a cessation of work or an acquired cessation of work.” With the coupling of these two words together we would have an emphatic command not to work.

The word שַׁבְּתוֹן occurs with some of the mo’edim, but not all of them. It is important for us to examine these days that are Shabbaton, and those that are not, and the reason why those days that are not Shabbaton are not listed as such.

There are only four of the seven yearly high days that are spoken of in the Torah as being Shabbaton, days of complete rest. The other three days that are not Shabbaton, are not Shabbaton for very specific reasons, as we are about to discuss. Let us put these days before us in the form of a list for easy reference.

Days listed as Shabbaton

1. The weekly Shabbat – the seventh day of the week
2. Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month
3. Yom Teruah – the Day of Sounding, the first day of the seventh month
4. The first day of Sukkot – the fifteenth day of the seventh month
5. The eighth day of Sukkot – the twenty-second day of the seventh month
6. The Shemitah – the year of land rest

First, let us examine the weekly Shabbat as a Shabbaton to see what this means so that we can apply this same standard set in the Torah to the other days.

Shemot [Exodus] 16:23

And he said to them, “This is that which YHWH has spoken, ‘Tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy Shabbat to YHWH; bake that which you will bake, and boil that which you will boil; and all that remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.’”

This passage is speaking of the weekly Shabbat on the seventh day. Notice that there is to be no cooking on this day. All the cooking is to be done before that day begins. This is a very

important aspect of what makes a Shabbaton. We will come back to this again, so keep this in the forefront of your memory.

Shemot [Exodus] 31:15

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Shabbat of solemn rest, holy to YHWH; whosoever does any work on the Shabbat day, he shall surely be put to death.

Working on the Shabbat carries the death penalty! There are no exceptions. Please brethren, do not try to reason this away with something like: you are under grace and YHWH knows your heart and He will understand. Stop! This is extremely serious. Your eternal life and well-being hangs in the balance here. Is this something that you really want to gamble with, particularly considering that YHWH has already told us that working on the Shabbat carries the death penalty? What part of that don't you understand? So, are you going to obey His commandments or not?

Such is a Shabbaton. When YHWH declares a day to be a Shabbaton, we are not to cook on this day, nor are we to work on this day!

Shemot [Exodus] 35:2

Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Shabbat of solemn rest to YHWH; whosoever does any work therein shall be put to death.

Here is a second witness that working on the weekly Shabbat carries the death penalty.

Next, we see that Yom Teruah, also known as the Day of Trumpets is a Shabbaton as well.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:24

“Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest to you, a memorial of sounding, a holy convocation.’”

Then we see from two separate passages that Yom haKippurim or the Day of Atonements is a Shabbaton as well.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:31

“It is a Shabbat of solemn rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; it is a statute forever.”

And again;

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:30-32

30 “And whatsoever soul it be that does any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people.

31 You shall do no manner of work; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

32 It shall be to you a Shabbat of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; in the ninth day of the month at even, from even to even, shall you keep your Shabbat.”

Then we come to Sukkot, in which we find that both the seventh day and the eighth day are Shabbaton.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:39

“Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land, you shall keep the feast of YHWH seven days; on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest.”

Then just as a side note which we will need to deal with later in a separate study, the Shemitah year, or the year of the land Shabbat, is a Shabbaton as well.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 25:3-5

3 “Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in the fruits thereof;

4 but in the seventh year shall be a Shabbat of solemn rest for the land, a Shabbat to YHWH; you shall neither sow your field, nor prune your vineyard.

5 That which grows of itself of your harvest you shall not reap, and the grapes of your undressed vine you shall not gather; it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land.”

This is a brief examination of each of the ten verses where the word “Shabbaton” is found in the Torah, or for that matter, all of the Tanak.

The first and seventh days of Unleavened Bread are not listed as Shabbaton, and neither is Shavuot; but there are very good reasons why these three days are not listed as Shabbaton. Let us examine those reasons now.

Please note what the following passage teaches us.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:16

“And in the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.”

YHWH gives us a very specific exemption for the first and last days of Unleavened Bread. That exemption is that food that we cook on those days, to be eaten on those days, may be cooked. It is for this reason, that these days are not called Shabbaton. It is for this very reason that Shavuot is also not a Shabbaton.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:17

“You shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenth parts of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, for first-fruits to YHWH.”

YHWH also commands us to bake two loaves of bread to be done on the day of Shavuot. Therefore, once again we see why YHWH does not call Shavuot a Shabbaton.

Therefore, we see that there are some very specific exclusions that YHWH gives to us concerning what days are Shabbaton. The days that YHWH calls Shabbaton, are days in which no work and no cooking are to be done. These days include the first and eighth days of Sukkot. However, the first and last days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread are not Shabbaton and we may cook on those two days.

Our family has only been keeping a proper Pesach now for about 10 years. We do not know if YHWH would ever have the 14 or 15 of Aviv ever fall on the weekly Shabbat. If it did then there would naturally arise the question of killing and cooking on the weekly Shabbat. Let us prayerfully consider this next passage.

Matithyah (Matthew) 12:5

“Or have you not read in the Torah, that on the Shabbat day the priests in the temple profane the Shabbat, and are guiltless?”

We are commanded to keep the weekly Shabbat. We are also commanded to keep Pesach. If YHWH in His great wisdom sees fit to have these two days fall on top of one another, then it is up to us through the guidance of His Spirit to be able to discern how to do this.

One thing that seems abundantly clear is that the Pesach lamb is commanded to be killed at a particular time on a particular day. Whatever day of the week this falls on, then we should keep this commandment, even if it is upon the weekly Shabbat. This of course includes the cooking of that lamb. However, there are some aspects of the keeping of Pesach that one could prepare in advance of the weekly Shabbat, like the building of the pyres, in order to honor the seventh day Shabbat as much as possible.

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 Israel and be grafted in, then part of that process includes all males being circumcised. If a person is going to eat the Pesach meal, Scripture says that he must be circumcised.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:48

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. Furthermore, Yeshua taught us that He did not come to do away with the Torah commandments, but rather he came to verify them (see Matthew 5:17ff).

For further details on circumcision please see these two studies, [Circumcision of the Heart](#), and [Circumcision of the Heart – part 2](#).

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

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 14:1

For YHWH will have compassion on Ya'aqov, and will yet choose Israel, 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 (גֵר) is representative of those of the House of Israel who have gone into the Diaspora, and have lost their identity as descendants of the House of Israel. They, therefore, have become known as *gerim*.

Therefore, what we should glean from the passage in Shemot 12:48, is that part of the returning process of the lost tribes of Israel 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 as one places his trust in the Master Yeshua, having confessed his sins and turned away from his sin. Then, by walking in obedience to Him and His commandments, one does those things that are pleasing to Him.

That obedience to Him 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 Israel 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. However, 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

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 that 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 this wrong 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 (never 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 happens according to His sovereign will.

Deuteronomy 16:1

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, not by calculation.

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 doing (in this case observation) as opposed to a culture of calculation, which we find in the Western world.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:18

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 beginning of the fifteenth of Aviv, 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 in which it will bring glory and honor to Him.

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

Shemot [Exodus] 12:3

“You speak to all the congregation of Israel, 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 separated 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.

Another aspect of separating the lamb for four days is found in the following passage.

Shemot [Exodus] 23:19 (see also Shemot 34:26; Devarim 14:21)

“The first of the first-fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of YHWH your Elohim. You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.”

The phrase “a kid in its mother’s milk,” may very well be an idiom which means a young animal which is not weaned. Therefore, when we separate the lamb for Pesach we are taking it out of its mother’s milk. Four days gives us sufficient time in which any milk which it may have nursed from its mother is completely processed and passed through the lamb or kid.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:5

“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 perhaps rather, non-obedient believers). The goats He sends away into damnation, but to the sheep He gives eternal life. The lamb being in the first year of its life seems to be significant of the lamb being sexually pure. This also is a foreshadowing of Mashiach being sexually pure.

In addition, 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 on a deeper level the great 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. As we approached the tenth of Aviv, I realized that this lamb was unacceptable to YHWH. Therefore, I selected another one from the flock, one which was not lame, but was without defect. It also may be wise, if it is possible for one to do this, to set apart more than one lamb so that if something happens to the selected lamb then a backup lamb is readily available and has already been separated for the four days.

We work at having lambs so that they will be about three to four months old when Pesach comes. However, 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

“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. In considering this commandment let us prayerfully consider the following passage.

Tehillim [Psalm] 22:14

***I am poured out like water,
And all my bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It is melted within me.***

This particular Psalm is clearly a Messianic Psalm. In it we find that all of His bones are out of joint. Considering this, would it actually be possible for us to separate the joints of the lamb in order to put it into a roasting pan for cooking, as long as one does not break any of the bones of the lamb? It would seem so. However, if one feels convicted that the skeletal structure of the lamb must remain all together as it is being cooked, then he should follow this without condemnation upon his brother who understands the commandment not to break any of the lamb’s bones in a more literal way rather than including the separation of the bones.

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 Israel, 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 Israel, 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 as there was enough meat for all present without having a lot of it left over.

One aspect of Pesach that we should address here is concerning those who are vegetarians. My wife used to have severe allergies to all red meat. When the time for Pesach came, we did a lot of praying; but even though she was very allergic, she still ate some of the lamb in obedience to this command. Now, she no longer has those allergies as YHWH honored her obedience and healed her of this allergy. All praise to His great and glorious name!

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: 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! Above all, hear and obey His Voice in this as well as all matters!

Kosher Kill

I grew up in the country and lived on a farm. I have been involved in doing butchering all my life. However, 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

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

And again:

Leviticus 23:5

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 born several years after Yeshua died), 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 2:30 P.M., and offered about 3:30 (pp. 174, updated edition, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*).”

Unlike Western culture, which depends upon calculating the calendar, 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 begins when the sun is halfway between its zenith and the horizon or at the 45 degree position in the sky. Therefore, between the evenings is quite literally when the sun is at the 45 degree position. This is when the Pesach is to be slain.

The first thing to be done 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.

In addition, 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

“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.*

Many people, when they kill a clean animal, just simply cut its throat and let it bleed to death. However, is this really sufficient in doing a kosher kill since just cutting the throat, which includes the windpipe, allows for its blood to be sucked into its lungs? This seriously interferes with its breathing while it is bleeding out, which causes the bleeding process to be greatly foreshortened. Because the blood effectively seems to strangle the animal, it would then be inedible according to the passage in Acts 15:20.

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. Taking this care provides for an effective humane kill as well as making sure that the animal is not suffocated upon its own blood.

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).

Shemot (Exodus) 27:3

And you shall make its pots to take away its ashes, and its shovels, and its basins, and its flesh-hooks, and its firepans; all the vessels thereof you shall make of copper.

One of the amazing things that we have discovered, that YHWH has known all along, is that using a copper pot and a copper utensil to catch and stir the blood actually helps to keep the blood from coagulating.

The reason that the blood cannot be put upon the doorposts and the lintel immediately is because once that is done, we are required by His commandments 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 that 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. It does not matter whether we place the blood on the two doorposts first, or on the lintel first, 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.

These passages would seem to indicate that it is important to place the blood on both doorposts together. Why would this be important?

Please consider that the two doorposts may represent the two houses of Israel, 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

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 the plagues of Egypt upon them or their households. Yet, by not keeping this eternal Torah commandment, isn't that what one is choosing? It would certainly see so!

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 all of His eternal commands including keeping Pesach according to the way that YHWH has commanded us to keep it. Rather than keeping it according to the traditions of man (rabbis), 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 the Destroyer forth (in any country), 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

“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

“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.

Please understand that one does not obey these commandments in an effort to replace the Blood of Mashiach in any way. Obeying these commandments are not done for salvation. These commandments are obeyed because of one's love for YHWH and a desire to keep and observe all of His commandments.

Stay Inside Until Morning

Shemot [Exodus] 12:22

“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 not to 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

“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.

Now we are not suggesting in any way that the Blood of Mashiach is not sufficient to save and protect us. What we are saying is that according to the written word of YHWH, His people are to obey each and every commandment to the best of their ability. It is this obedience which pleases our heavenly Father and allows for Him to bless us and not curse us!

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

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 of our house 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.

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.***

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

Where His Name Dwells

We need to pause here and discuss the place where YHWH chooses to have His name dwell.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 16:16

“Three times in a year shall all your males appear before YHWH your Elohim in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before YHWH empty.”

There are to be three times in a year that we are to gather together to meet YHWH and to be with His people. One of those times is the feast of Unleavened Bread; or, sometimes referred to as Pesach or Passover. It states in the above verse that we are to gather in the place that He will choose to place His name. Historically, in the past that place was Jerusalem. However, today most of us cannot go to Jerusalem to celebrate one feast a year, let alone three feasts a year.

However, there is also another thing to prayerfully consider. Does His name dwell there now? Let us consider this from a Scriptural point of view. First, we must answer the question of what does it mean for His name to dwell there?

Yehoshua [Joshua] 18:1

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there; and the land was subdued before them.

When YHWH first brought Israel into the land under the leadership of Yehoshua son of Nun (pronounced noon), He had them set up the tent of meeting at Shiloh. He caused His name to dwell there. It is important for us to understand that when YHWH speaks of His name dwelling in a place, He is speaking of the mishkan, or the temple, being there. One or the other has to be present and being used for His name to dwell somewhere on earth.

This is what YHWH clearly states in this next passage.

Yirmeyah [Jeremiah] 7:12-14

12 "But you go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I caused My name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.

13 And now, because you have done all these works," says YHWH, "and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you heard not; and I called you, but you answered not;

14 therefore will I do to the house which is called by My name, wherein you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh."

Not only did YHWH cause His name to stop dwelling in Shiloh by removing the mishkan, but He also laid it in ruins. He states that He will do likewise to Jerusalem. Did He not do this in 70 A.D.?

Yirmeyah [Jeremiah] 26:6

"then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth."

While Jerusalem has been rebuilt, neither the mishkan nor the temple has been set up again. Does His name dwell there as before? No. Will it dwell there again one day in the future? Yes, to be sure, it will. But that day is not yet.

So, while a person could certainly go up to Jerusalem and gather together with others to celebrate His feasts, and it would not be wrong to do this, His name does not now dwell there as He made it to dwell there in the past. Today, for us in the Diaspora, we need to gather together so that He can be in our midst as a people. When we do this in His great name, then He will come and meet with us.

Yechezqel (Ezekiel) 11:16

"Therefore say, 'Thus says Adonai YHWH: "Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations, and whereas I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they are come."'"

YHWH even tells us that when He scatters us among the nations that He personally will be a sanctuary where we dwell. This way, when we begin to return to Him, we can begin keeping the festivals and other commandments just like He has commanded us to keep them.

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 speaking these words about His being the One killing all the firstborn of Egypt.

Please note the following fulfillment of Pesach at the end of the Millennium.

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 or foreshadowing of what is portrayed in the passage above. What is portrayed in the above passage is the fulfillment of the type and foreshadowing found in the first Pesach.

Shemot [Exodus] 12:23

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 from these passages His name to be Yeshua or YHWH Tzava'ot.

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 would have cooked 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 that person who did not obey the command to stay in the house!

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

Therefore, 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, but rather an enclosed fire inside of the oven. In this way both commandments are being kept.

Whereas, if we were to cook the lamb on an open fire outside, we would not be keeping the command not to 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

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 flesh 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, according to this commandment. It cannot be cooked in one house and then separated and eaten in two houses. It must be eaten in the house that it is cooked in according to this commandment.

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

“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.

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

This is particularly true when we eat the Pesach meal in trepidation and haste, much like 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 be a part of our everyday living, there is often an outward sign that 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 in which it is a sign of something that YHWH has already done for us spiritually. Just exactly what could that signify?

There seems 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 Israel to be a shepherd to the nations.

Shemot [Exodus] 19:6

“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, Israel has not really fulfilled this commandment from YHWH.

The eating of the lamb in haste and with trepidation and with our shoes on and our staff at hand also signifies a coming future event. Please note this next passage.

Matithyah (Matthew) 24:15-18

***15 “When therefore you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand),
16 then let them that are in Judaea flee to the mountains;
17 let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out things that are in his house;
18 and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak.”***

Please note that the flight out of Egypt took place at Pesach. It seems prophetically significant and likely that this flight will also be at that same time of year. Therefore, the commandment to eat the lamb in haste and trepidation and with our shoes on our feet and our staff at hand is a command to be packed and ready to go at a moment's notice.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 16:3

“You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shall you eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for you came forth out of the land of Egypt in haste; that you may remember the day when you came forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life.”

It is important to note that we are commanded in particular to remember that we came forth out of the land of Egypt in haste. Then, given what Yeshua taught us that a future flight would be done in haste as well, this seems to tie these two events together in a prophetic manner that we would do well to take careful note of in our preparations and keeping of Pesach from year to year (more on this below).

Shemot [Exodus] 12:8

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 and our bread which did not have time to rise. We will see more on the week of Unleavened Bread below.

Burn Leftovers in the Morning

Shemot [Exodus] 12:10

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 in our home, is rise up very early in the morning (at the first light) and go out and burn that which is left. However, 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 and before we strike the doorposts and lintel with the blood of 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.

Now in order to build these two pyres of wood, it is best for the wood to be dry. Therefore, some thought may need to be given a couple of weeks in advance so that one does not end up with wet wood due to rain. Then when the pyres are actually put together it may be necessary to cover the second one in order to keep it dry so that it will be easily lit in the morning.

The way that Israel 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 Israel is in the Temple courtyard, and that we are all to stay in the Temple courtyard all night. In the morning, we are all to return to our tents for the rest of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread.

Also, please note the difference between the Pesach sacrifice, which is only supposed to be done in the mishkan or temple in the land, and the Pesach lamb which is commanded to be done by the individual in the Diaspora. As we have seen in Shemot 12, each family is supposed to take a lamb or kid from the flock. However, as we see in the following passage the sacrifice for Pesach done in the mishkan or temple is considerably different.

B'midbar [Numbers] 28:16-22

16 And in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, is YHWH's Pesach.

17 And on the fifteenth day of this month shall be a feast; seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

18 In the first day shall be a holy convocation (miqra qodesh); you shall do no servile work;

19 but you shall offer an offering made by fire, a burnt-offering to YHWH; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven he-lambs a year old; they shall be to you without blemish;

20 and their meal-offering, fine flour mingled with oil; three tenth parts shall you offer for a bullock, and two tenth parts for the ram;

21 a tenth part shall you offer for every lamb of the seven lambs;

22 and one he-goat for a sin-offering, to make atonement for you.

Notice that this Pesach sacrifice includes two young bulls, which the Pesach done in the home does not include. This shows to us the difference between what is done in the home and what is done in the mishkan or temple. It seems rather plain that the following passage is discussing the sacrifice done in the mishkan or temple and not the one done in the home as the one done in the home is commanded to be done throughout our generations forever.

There is one other passage to consider in this matter of whether or not it is commanded to kill a Pesach lamb or not, now in our day.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:21

"If the place which YHWH your Elohim shall choose, to put His name there, be too far from you, then you shall kill of your herd and of your flock, which YHWH has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates, after all the desire of your soul."

YHWH clearly states that if it is too far to go to the place where His name dwells, then we may kill and eat where we live. Furthermore, we are to do this in the same manner as He has commanded us. He has commanded us to kill the Pesach. He name does not presently dwell on earth, therefore, it is commanded to kill and eat the Pesach in our homes where we live.

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 Israel.

Seven Days of Unleavened Bread

Shemot [Exodus] 12:15

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 Israel.

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 be 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 that we are not to have any leaven in any of our borders at all. Therefore, in the Land of Israel, 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 that 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. Once again, this shows us that there is a difference in how we are commanded to keep Pesach in the land from being outside the land living in the Diaspora.

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 Israel, 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, 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. The main thing is to shema His Voice in this matter. Each person needs to hear and obey YHWH.

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. It is a good tradition that does help us to keep the command to remove the chametz (leaven).

As long as we remove all leaven (products that we use for leavening, including baking soda, baking powder and yeast) and food products made with leaven in them from our homes, we are keeping the commandment and fulfilling the requirement not to have any leaven in our homes. It would seem important that each person in the household do something to help remove the leaven from the home.

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 Israel out of the land of Egypt;

15 but, as YHWH lives, that brought up the children of Israel 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 people 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!

Amein and Amein!

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

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