



Passover Shabbat Day 2024

By Moshe Schwab

Today is the Shabbat day during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We have already observed the Passover meal a few days ago. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasts for 7 days and began as we were finishing our Passover meal. So, we are in the 7-day period of this feast. The Bible tells us to observe the Feast of 1st Fruits which is the day following the day of rest of the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. Some think that the day of rest before the Feast of First Fruits is the weekly Shabbat. Most think that the Feast of First Fruits is after the day of rest associated with the rest of the 1st day of Unleavened Bread.

The confusion comes from some who do not understand that feasts also have days of rest, a Shabbat. For our purposes, we contend that in antiquity, they would have observed Passover, rested on the Shabbat of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then gave their barley on the next day for the Feast of First Fruits instead of waiting around for sometimes up to a week to do so. They needed to go home and harvest the rest of their barley!

For the Feast of Firstfruits, we are to tell the story of the believers over the ages and give our first fruits. The believer Abraham came from Syria and his descendants were made slaves in Egypt. Deuteronomy 26:5-6,10 NKJV says, "And you shall answer and say before the LORD your God: 'My father was a Syrian, about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us.' ... "And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O LORD, have given me."

Perhaps, now is the time to remember your story. I think of my humble beginnings in pagan Syria and think about how God has brought me into the family of believers consisting of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Yeshua. Before the writing of the law at Mount Sinai, believers passed on God's commandments verbally. For example, Genesis 26:5 NKJV says, "Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws."

Shaul told the early Gentile believers that they were no longer strangers from the believing community of Israel. Ephesians 2:12-13 NKJV says, "Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." How do you see yourself? Do you see yourself as part of the believing community of Israel going back to Noah?

For the Count of the Omer, simply mark up a standard calendar with the numbers 1 to 49. The 50th day is the day of Shavuot. The days of Omer for this year go from the first day of the Omer at sunset on 4/24/24 to the 49th day (Biblical days begin in the evening. Genesis 1:5 NKJV says, "Evening and the morning were the first day."). The 50th day at sunset begins on 6/12/24 and that is erev Shavuot. Shavuot then lasts until sunset of the following day. Also, remember that we go by the sighting of the first crescent of the moon which is the ancient New Moon. Israel uses a standardized calendar, so they often do not observe the feasts on the right day. They could easily change their system and do it right.

The Omer was part of the system of giving for Israel. Perhaps we put away 1/10th or more of our income when we get paid. The count of the Omer can remind us of our faithfulness to do this. Giving for Israel revolved around a 7-year cycle. The 3rd and 6th years they were to give to the poor, widows, orphans, Levites, and the foreigners which amounts to 1/3rd of our giving. The 7th year the land was to be at rest. They were to bring 1/10th to Jerusalem the other years for the Temple. The counting of the Omer also leads up to the expectation of another feast, Shavuot, also called Pentecost. The law was said to have been given on Shavuot and also the Holy Spirit was given on Shavuot. What will God do on this Shavuot? Perhaps that will usher in a new age someday. Only God knows.

It is important to observe God's feasts no matter what day we observe them. I believe we should try to keep them on the right day. Keeping God's feasts demonstrates that we believe that God is the creator. Genesis 1:14 NKJV says, "Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and **seasons**, and for days and years." **The word translated seasons in verse 14 is the Hebrew word meetings.** The lights in the heavens were given to us so that we would know when to meet with God.

At the end of this teaching, I have included some Passover scriptures for your information. Today I would like to talk about some important issues for believers.

Stay true to your commitment to God.

If you have not committed your life to God, now is the time to do that. Actually, that is a good thing to do regularly. I do that every day in my morning prayers. We need to be committed to keep God's commandments, they give us wisdom and understanding (see Deuteronomy 4:6) and are right and good (see Deuteronomy 6:17-18). God is the creator God who has our best interests at heart. Recognizing the grace that God has given us through His Old Testament commandments is an important understanding for life.

We should understand that God has given mankind grace since the inception of time. God gave grace to Adam and Eve through the promise of a Messiah (see Genesis 3:15). God gave Noah grace. Genesis 6:8 NKJV says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." Noah was a man who did what was right and kept God's commandments. That is what righteousness

means. Isaiah 51:7 NKJV says, "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, you people in whose heart is My law." Be committed to keep God's law. No one who does not act holy will be in the future kingdom of God. Hebrews 12:14 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."

We should also understand that God has given us grace through Messiah Yeshua and the Holy Spirit. This is an important scripture to understand. God gave us His commandments in the Old Testament portion to help us, and also gives believers in the Messiah as another helper, the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-17 NKJV says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth." God's commandments and the Holy Spirit work together to help us live right.

Those who do not keep the 1st helper, God's grace through the Old Testament commandments are grieving the Holy Spirit. Those who willfully live in sin and do not keep the law have rejected God (see Hebrews 10:26-31). Yeshua said He will reject those who do not keep the law. Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV says, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

We need to have endurance and keep God's commandments. God's will is written in the Bible, namely it is what God wants us to do and what He wants for us. It is God's will that we keep His good commandments, and also receive His good Messianic gift of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 10:36 NKJV says, "For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." You will not be in God's future kingdom if you are not committed to keeping God's commandments. Galatians 5:21 NKJV says, "Just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Have order in your life.

It makes sense that we should have an orderly and planned life. Of course, God's commandments should be the basis for our life. They first and foremost should direct how we live. Yeshua said in Matthew 22:37-38 NKJV, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment." How do we love God? Do we just say that we love God or there is a way to do that? The Bible answers that question. Deuteronomy 11:1 NKJV says, "Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge, His statutes, His judgments, and His commandments always." If you want to love God, begin by keeping His commandments.

There is a natural order to life and planning our day and carrying out the necessary things of life is important. When a person does not do these things, the Bible says they do not believe in God the way they are supposed to. 1 Timothy 5:8 NKJV says, "If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an

unbeliever." We are to be a caring and good people who want peace for ourselves and others in life.

Take the drunkard for example. Proverbs 23:30-33 NKJV says, "Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things." Those who overindulge in intoxicating drugs or alcohol are hurting themselves and others. It is wrong. We are not to do things that are detrimental to our bodies because we are created in God's image. Just because something is legal, does not mean it is right to do. Those who are getting stoned on marijuana will not be in God's future kingdom. Sometimes the marijuana is so strong that it is damaging some people for life.

Drunkenness is listed among some of the things that will keep you out of God's wonderful future kingdom. Galatians 5:19-21 NKJV says, "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, **drunkenness**, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Plan out your day, work hard at doing a great job in life, and be an involved, caring, and good person who does what is "right and good," keeping God's commandments. I start my day with prayer, I pray for others, and I try to pray frequently during the day. I commit my day to doing what is "right and good." I am committed to treating everyone with respect and fairly, they are created in God's image. I am committed to being caring and treating my family and friends well and right.

I am committed to doing good work in all that I do. Being created in God's image should convey with that the understanding of what kind of people we should be. Our life should reflect that, and we should also treat others well because they are created in God's image. Genesis 1:26 NKJV says, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." We are not God, but God has given us the ability to be creative, good, caring, kind, and so much more. We should want to use our life for good and not evil and to successfully navigate all that we need to do and what is expected of us.

What does your life look like? What kind of picture do you paint?

Perhaps you could think of your life as a picture that is painted. As we go about life, what do we see and what do others see being painted? Do they see an angry antagonist or a kind and hard-working person who cares about themselves and others? Do they see a rebellious evil person, or do they see a person who is working at doing what is good?

I think most people want to do what is good. Why not show others that you have good biblical values. Psalms 37:3 NKJV says, "Trust in the LORD, and do good." The Bible encourages us to

do what is right and good. Psalms 1:1-2 NKJV says, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night." Trust in God and in His ways.

Since God is an all-knowing and good God, He cares about us and wants what is best for us. Therefore, not doing what God says is to do evil. Do you want others to see you as an evil person? Psalms 34:14 NKJV says, "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

In Isaiah, it talks about the person who does evil.

Isaiah 5:20-24 NKJV says,

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away justice from the righteous man!

Therefore, as the fire devours the stubble, and the flame consumes the chaff, so their root will be as rottenness.

I do not think that people start out thinking they want to be a rotten worthless person, but by not controlling your thoughts, emotions, and actions, you can head in that direction.

God's ways are good. They are right and just. Have you ever been treated unfairly? Is that how you want to treat others? Is that how you want to be treated? So, do what is good. Micah 6:8 NKJV says, "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Are you committed on the inside to think right? Our thoughts will eventually catch up with us. We are not to go after just anything our hearts desire but keep our hearts in the right place. Speak and seek truth and not sinful ways. Decide that you will think about what you are doing and stay away from what is wrong and evil.

Proverbs 4:23-27 NKJV says,

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put perverse lips far from you. Let your eyes look straight ahead, and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or the left; remove your foot from evil.

Perverse means to act in an evil way. Why do you think the proverb tells us that it is important what we think? That is because we will be tempted to act on our thoughts. Keeping your thoughts in the right place will keep you from acting on evil thoughts. Psalms 101:3-4 NKJV says, "I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness." Do not consider doing what is wrong and evil so that you will not do anything wicked.

Decide that you will be strong and follow God. Deuteronomy 31:6 NKJV says, "Be strong and of good courage." Seek God's ways and ask for His help. 1 Chronicles 16:11 NKJV says, "Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore!" The Bible says that God is looking for those who do what is right and good. 2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV says, "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." God knows what you do, and God cares about those who follow Him. Isaiah 41:10 NKJV says, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Stay true to God and be committed to Him. Endure so that you will inherit God's future kingdom. Order your life and successfully navigate all you do in life. What kind of picture does your life paint? Do they see a rebellious person or someone who wants to do what is right and good? Be committed to living how God says to live and think what is right so that you will not do evil and do what is right. God is for you and cares about you, so be strong.

Passover Scriptures

We have already observed the Passover, so I have put these scriptures here for your encouragement and information. If you have not observed Passover yet, you can still do it.

God's feasts are not just Jewish feasts. They are God's feasts; they are biblical feasts! Leviticus 23:2 NKJV says, "The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts."

Passover begins on the 14th of Nisan just before sunset and just before the 15th of Nisan begins (biblical days begin in the evening – Genesis 1:4 NKJV says, "So the evening and the morning were the first day."). We are commanded to keep the Passover with ceremonies; it is a remembrance ritual. Yeshua's remembrance ceremony is also a remembrance ceremony. It is not a communion ceremony. The word communion comes from a pagan practice that was passed down into Christianity. Call it what it is, a remembrance ceremony.

Numbers 9:3 NKJV says,

"On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it."

The Passover meal is to have ritual involving bitter herbs and unleavened bread. The meat is not to be eaten raw or boiled.

Numbers 9:11 NKJV says,

"They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs."

Exodus 12:9 NKJV says,

"Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water."

The Passover feast is a memorial feast and to be kept for eternity.

Exodus 12:14 NKJV says,

"So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance."

The 15th of Nisan and the 21st of Nisan are days of rest. No leavened bread is to be eaten during the 7 days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Leviticus 23:4-8 NKJV says,

"These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the Lord for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it."

Telling the Passover story of Israel and Yeshua our Messiah is our heritage. Israel was delivered from their bondage in Egypt. Yeshua is our Messianic Passover lamb.

Exodus 6:6-8 NKJV says,

"Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord.'"

Yeshua is the Lamb of God who gave Himself for us. Yeshua as God came into the world and provided a sacrifice for our sin. God provided a sacrifice for us through Yeshua just as God provided a sacrifice for Abraham instead of his son Isaac. In the following, Shaul talks as though we are to be keeping Passover. We should be keeping God's feasts.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 NKJV says,

"Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

John 1:29 NKJV says,

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, " Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

Some 600 years before Yeshua came, Isaiah said about the Messiah.

Isaiah 53:5-7 NKJV says,

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the

iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter."

As we can see here in Isaiah, it is about a singular male person dying for our sins.

The Aaronic Blessing.

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name.

The ancient rabbis agree with this pronunciation of God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה). Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ
 יֵשָׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.

Thank you for being with us today.