

HOLY CONVOICATIONS



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“ADONAI said to Moshe, “Tell the people of Isra’el: ‘The designated times of ADONAI which you are to proclaim as holy convocations are my designated times.” (Leviticus 23:1)

פֶּסַח Pesach - Season of our Deliverance

"In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between sundown and complete darkness, comes Pesach for ADONAI." (Leviticus 23:5)

Shabbat notwithstanding, Pesach is the beginning of the biblical feasts of Leviticus chapter 23. The actual feast known as **Pesach** spans three separate, yet inextricably-linked feasts: **Pesach**, observed on the fourteenth day of the Jewish month of Nisan, **HaMatzah** (Unleavened Bread), observed on the fifteenth day of Nisan, and **Bikkurim** (Firstfruits), observed the day after the Sabbath of HaMatzah.

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Understanding the Passover Season

I want to provide the readers with a concise look at Passover by supplying a direct quote from a book I highly recommend reading called 'The Seven Festivals of the Messiah' by Edward Chumney, available through Treasure House Publishing. One may also read this book online at Chumney's web site at <http://www.hebroots.org>. In Chapter Three, pages 23-25, he provides this vital background look at understanding the overall message of the Pesach and its relevance and fulfillment in Yeshua the Messiah:

G-d declared Passover (Pesach) to be a permanent celebration for all eternity (Exodus [Shemot] 12:2,6,13-14). Historically, Passover (Pesach) celebrates G-d's deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt (Mitzrayim), where they were slaves to the Egyptians (Exodus [Shemot] 2:23-24; 6:5-8; 13:3,14).

The spiritual application that G-d wants us to understand is this: Egypt (Mitzrayim) is a type of the world and the world's system. Its ruler, Pharaoh, was a type of satan (Ha satan). The bondage people are in when they live according to the ways of the world's system is sin (John [Yochanan] 8:34).

Historically, the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage in Egypt (Mitzrayim) by putting the blood of a lamb upon the doorposts of their houses (Exodus [Shemot] 12:2,6,13). Spiritually, this is a picture of the Messiah Yeshua and how those who believe in Him are delivered from the bondages of sin and the rule of satan (Ha satan) in their lives. Yeshua is the Lamb of G-d (John [Yochanan] 1:29). Yeshua is also our Passover (Pesach) (1 Corinthians 5:7). Those who follow Yeshua are the house of G-d (Hebrews 3:6; 1 Peter [Kefa] 2:5). The doorposts are our hearts. It is only through trusting by faith (emunah) in the shed blood of Yeshua (Jesus), our Passover (Pesach), that we are free from the bondage of sin (Galatians 4:3-5,9; 5:1; 2 Peter [Kefa] 2:19). This is because the blood of Yeshua redeems us from sin (Leviticus [Vayikra] 17:11; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Peter [Kefa] 1:18-19; 1 John [Yochanan] 1:7; Revelation 1:5).

During Passover (Pesach), the head of each household was to take a lamb of the first year on the tenth day of the first month known as Nisan and set it aside until the fourteenth day (Exodus [Shemot] 12:3-6). In the evening of the fourteenth day, at exactly 3:00 p.m., the lamb was to be killed (Exodus [Shemot] 12:6). The blood of the lamb was to be sprinkled on the lintel and two side posts of the household door. The lamb was to be roasted with fire, with bitter herbs, and with unleavened bread, and the entire household was to feast upon the body of the lamb (Exodus [Shemot] 12:7-8). The people were instructed by G-d to eat the lamb with haste and to be dressed and ready to leave Egypt (Mitzrayim) at the midnight hour. This would be the fifteenth day of Nisan (Exodus [Shemot] 12:10-11).

At midnight on that fateful evening in Egypt, death passed through the land. Every house that did not have the token of the blood on the doorposts and lintel suffered the judgment of G-d (Exodus [Shemot] 12:12-15). The Hebrew word for Passover is Pesach, which means "to pass or hover over." This word speaks to us about two things. First, it shows the passing over in judgment from death and sin to life in Yeshua. Second, it tells us

about allowing, by faith (emunah), the blood of Yeshua to hover over our lives and give us divine protection from the evil one (Ha satan).¹

Having laid the framework for Passover, I wish now to turn in a different direction for this commentary. Why does Traditional/Rabbinic Judaism so vehemently reject the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ? What about Christianity is so “wrong” to the “Jewish mind?” If the Torah, Writings, and Prophets articulate so foundationally about the Messiah to Come why does the historic Synagogue harbor such a carefully calculated dismissal of what Christians have come to hold so dearly? It is to these questions and their answers that my commentary now turns.

Traditional Judaic Rejection of Yeshua as Messiah

First let us turn to a somewhat specific list of reasons why Traditional Judaism rejects the belief that Yeshua (Jesus) is the promised Messiah of Scripture. This list may prove helpful in addressing Anti-Missionary refutations. The Anti-Missionaries are those who reject, wholesale, the Gospel message and the notion of Jesus as the Christ. In all fairness, and with good intent, Traditional Judaism does NOT reject true belief in God, the One and Only Savior, nor does it reject the Scriptural notion of a personal and coming Messiah. While it is true that Judaism, like any religion, contains within its approaches a wide variety of opinions on some of the key Scriptural topics, spanning the stretch from, say, the Chabad Lubavitchers to the Reconstructionist, Judaism as a whole has historically remained fiercely monotheistic. And rightly so! For as Scripture accurately teaches, “God is One.” No, my list is not aimed at Traditional Judaism’s views in general, only at their rejection of Jesus in particular. Two subsections on ‘Jewish belief based on national revelation’, and ‘Jews and Gentiles’ are included for contextual reasons.

I am in no wise advocating a stereotypical approach to Traditional Judaism. Some Jews reject Jesus; other Jews freely embrace him. And yet others have made the matter personal and hidden so that no one but themselves truly knows their heart’s intentions.

But HaShem knows. And since the lines of demarcation, however, have been drawn it is time that as major religious factions Christianity and Messianism begin to understand why some Traditional views within a major faction such as Judaism are the way they are. To be sure, many Anti-Missionaries have taken an offensive (as opposed to defensive) approach to Christianity and/or Messianic Judaism by offering Traditional Judaism as a well-thought out refutation to the [New Testament] Gospel.

Traditional Judaism has the right to reject or accept the Good News of Yeshua the Messiah. All men have this religious right of free choice. But this feature is what makes the Gospel so wonderful! It is by free choice that we as mankind choose to embrace Yeshua as Messiah! And it is this important choice that opens the invitation to the very presence of HaShem into our lives as personal LORD. To be sure HaShem’s intent is

¹ http://www.hebroots.com/heb_root.html#SevenFestivalsBook

to draw us close to him in genuine, loving fellowship. To this end, he has designed the entire flow of the Torah to lead us to the goal of developing the kind of trusting faithfulness that produces obedience and surrender to his Son, Yeshua HaMashiach! This is what Sha'ul meant when he said in Romans 10:4 that "Christ is the end of the Law." Here, as quoted from the KJV, the word "end" MUST mean "goal" in order for the verse to make any sense! If Christ is the "cessation" to the Law then Christ himself is a liar since he specifically stated in Mattityahu (Matthew) 5:17-20 that he did NOT come to abolish (KJV: "destroy") the Law! A Bible commentary that explains the verses in Romans as "ending the Law" is a commentary that seriously misunderstands the continuity of the Law (Torah) as well as the mission and purposes of the Messiah, and ultimately the eternal Plans of God himself. Once again let me state in no uncertain terms: "The entire flow of the Torah leads us to the goal of developing the kind of trusting faithfulness that produces obedience and surrender to Yeshua."

Here now is a general list and explanation of why Jews don't believe that Jesus is the Messiah. The material contained here in this outline will contradict what I personally believe to be Truth. But for the sake of my argument, for the next section I must speak as a non-Christian, as a non-Messianic Jew. I am only sharing this with you here for reference sake. I do NOT espouse to the arguments here. I am proud to be a Messianic Jewish man, having faith in Messiah as both Son of God and Son of Man.

Why Jews Don't Believe in Jesus

For 2,000 years, Jews have rejected Christianity. Why?

Jews do not accept Jesus as the messiah because:

- 1) Jesus did not fulfill the messianic prophecies.
- 2) Christianity contradicts Jewish theology.
- 3) Jesus did not embody the personal qualifications of the Messiah.
- 4) Biblical verses "referring" to Jesus are mistranslations.
- 5) Jewish belief is based on national revelation.
- 6) Jews and Gentiles
- 7) Bringing the Messiah

It is important to understand why Jews don't believe in Jesus. The purpose is not to disparage other religions, but rather to clarify the Jewish position. The more data that's available, the better-informed choices people can make about their spiritual lives.

1) JESUS DID NOT FULFILL THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

What is the Messiah supposed to accomplish? The Bible says that he will:

A. Build the Third Temple (Ezekiel 37:26-28).

B. Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 43:5-6).

C. Usher in an era of world peace, and end all hatred, oppression, suffering and disease. As it says: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall man learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

D. Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel - uniting the entire human race as one. As it says: "God will be King over all the world -- on that day, God will be One and His Name will be One" (Zechariah 14:9).

The historical fact is that Jesus fulfilled none of these messianic prophecies.

2) CHRISTIANITY CONTRADICTS JEWISH THEOLOGY

A. GOD AS THREE?

The Christian idea of Trinity breaks God into three separate beings: The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19).

Contrast this to the *Shema*, the basis of Jewish belief: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is ONE" (Deut. 6:4). Jews declare the One-ness of God every day, writing it on doorposts (Mezuzah), and binding it to the hand and head (Tefillin). This statement of God's One-ness is the first words a Jewish child is taught to say, and the last words uttered before he dies.

In Jewish law, worship of a three-part god is considered idolatry -- one of the three cardinal sins which a Jew should rather give up his life than transgress. This explains why during the Inquisitions and throughout history, Jews gave up their lives rather than convert.

B. MAN AS GOD?

Christians believe that God came down to earth in human form, as Jesus said: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

Maimonides devotes most of the "Guide for the Perplexed" to the fundamental idea that God is Incorporeal, meaning that He assumes no physical form. God is Eternal, above time. He is Infinite, beyond space. He cannot be born, and cannot die. Saying that God assumes human form makes God small, diminishing both His Unity and His Divinity. As the Torah says: "God is not a mortal" (Numbers 23:19).

Judaism says that the Messiah will be born of human parents, with normal physical attributes just like other people. He will not be a demi-god, and will not possess supernatural qualities. In fact, an individual is alive in every generation with the capacity to step into the role of the Messiah. (see Maimonides - Laws of Kings 11:3)

C. INTERMEDIARY FOR PRAYER?

Basic to Christian belief is the idea that prayer must be directed through an intermediary -- i.e. confessing one's sins to a priest. Jesus himself is an intermediary, as Jesus said: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

In Judaism, prayer is a totally private matter, between each individual and God. As the Bible says: "God is near to all who call unto Him" (Psalms 145:18). Further, the Ten Commandments state: "You shall have no other gods BEFORE ME," meaning that it is forbidden to set up a mediator between God and man. (see Maimonides - Laws of Idolatry ch. 1)

D. INVOLVEMENT IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Christianity often treats the physical world as an evil to be avoided. Mary, the holiest Christian woman is portrayed as a virgin. Priests and nuns are celibate. And monasteries are in remote, secluded locations.

By contrast, Judaism believes that God created the physical world not to frustrate us, but for our pleasure. Jewish spirituality comes through grappling with the mundane world in a way that uplifts and elevates. Sex in the proper context is one of the holiest acts we can perform.

The Talmud says if a person has the opportunity to taste a new fruit and refuses to do so, he will have to account for that in the World-to-Come. Jewish rabbinical schools teach how to live amidst the bustle of commercial activity. Jews don't retreat from life, we elevate it.

3) JESUS DID NOT EMBODY THE PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF MESSIAH

A. MESSIAH AS PROPHET

Jesus was not a prophet. Prophecy can only exist in Israel when the land is inhabited by a majority of world Jewry. During the time of Ezra (circa 300 BCE) the majority of Jews refused to move from Babylon to Israel, thus prophecy ended upon the death of the last prophets -- Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Jesus appeared on the scene approximately 350 years after prophecy had ended.

B. DESCENDENT OF DAVID

The Messiah must be descended on his father's side from King David (see Genesis 49:10 and Isaiah 11:1). According to the Christian claim that Jesus was the product of a virgin birth, he had no father -- and thus could not have possibly fulfilled the messianic requirement of being descended on his father's side from King David!

C. TORAH OBSERVANCE

The Messiah will lead the Jewish people to full Torah observance. The Torah states that all mitzvahs remain binding forever, and anyone coming to change the Torah is immediately identified as a false prophet. (Deut. 13:1-4)

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus contradicts the Torah and states its commandments are no longer applicable. (see John 1:45 and 9:16, Acts 3:22 and 7:37)

4) MISTRANSLATED VERSES "REFERRING" TO JESUS

Biblical verses can only be understood by studying the original Hebrew text -- which reveals many discrepancies in the Christian translation.

A. VIRGIN BIRTH

The Christian idea of a virgin birth is derived from a verse in Isaiah describing an "alma" as giving birth. The word "alma" has always meant a young woman, but Christian theologians came centuries later and translated it as "virgin." This accords Jesus' birth with the first century pagan idea of mortals being impregnated by gods.

B. CRUCIFIXION

The verse in Psalms 22:17 reads: "Like a lion, they are at my hands and feet." The Hebrew word *ki-ari* (like a lion) is grammatically similar to the word "gouged." Thus Christianity reads the verse as a reference to crucifixion: "They pierced my hands and feet."

C. SUFFERING SERVANT

Christians claim that Isaiah 53 refers to Jesus.

In actuality, Isaiah 53 directly follows the theme of chapter 52, describing the exile and redemption of the Jewish people. The prophecies are written in the singular form because the Jews ("Israel") are regarded as one unit. The Torah is filled with examples of the Jewish nation referred to with a singular pronoun.

Ironically, Isaiah's prophecies of persecution refer in part to the 11th century when Jews were tortured and killed by Crusaders who acted in the name of lord Jesus.

From where did these mistranslations stem? St. Gregory, 4th century Bishop of Nanzanzus, wrote: "A little jargon is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend, the more they admire."

5) JEWISH BELIEF IS BASED SOLELY ON NATIONAL REVELATION

Of the 15,000 religions in human history, only Judaism bases its belief on national revelation -- i.e. God speaking to the entire nation. If God is going to start a religion, it makes sense He'll tell everyone, not just one person.

Judaism, unique among all of the world's major religions, does not rely on "claims of miracles" as a basis for establishing a religion. In fact, the Bible says that God sometimes grants the power of "miracles" to charlatans, in order to test Jewish loyalty to the Torah (Deut. 13:4).

Maimonides states (Foundations of Torah, ch. 8):

The Jews did not believe in Moses, our teacher, because of the miracles he performed. Whenever anyone's belief is based on seeing miracles, he has lingering doubts, because it is possible the miracles were performed through magic or sorcery. All of the miracles performed by Moses in the desert were because they were necessary, and not as proof of his prophecy.

"What then was the basis of [Jewish] belief? The Revelation at Mount Sinai, which we saw with our own eyes and heard with our own ears, not dependent on the testimony of others... as it says, 'Face to face, God spoke with you...' The Torah also states: 'God did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us -- who are all here alive today.'" (Deut. 5:3)

Judaism is not miracles. It's the personal eyewitness experience of every man, woman and child.

6) JEWS AND GENTILES

Judaism does not demand that everyone convert to the religion. The Torah of Moses is a truth for all humanity, whether Jewish or not. King Solomon asked God to heed the prayers of non-Jews who come to the Holy Temple (1 Kings 8:41-43). The prophet Isaiah refers to the Temple as a "House for all nations." The Temple service during Sukkot featured 70 bull offerings, corresponding to the 70 nations of the world. (In fact, the Talmud says that if the Romans would have realized how much benefit they were getting from the Temple, they'd never have destroyed it.)

Jews have never actively sought converts to Judaism because the Torah prescribes a righteous path for gentiles to follow, known as the "Seven Laws of Noah." Maimonides explains that any human being who faithfully observes these basic moral laws earns a proper place in heaven.

7) BRINGING THE MESSIAH

Indeed, the world is in desperate need of Messianic redemption. War and pollution threaten our planet; ego and confusion erode family life. To the extent we are aware of the problems of society, is the extent we will long for the redemption. As the Talmud says, one of the first questions a Jew is asked on Judgment Day is: "Did you yearn for the arrival of the Messiah?"

How can we hasten the coming of the Messiah? The best way is to love all humanity generously, to keep the mitzvahs of the Torah (as best we can), and to encourage others to keep them as well.

Despite the gloom, the world does seem headed toward redemption. One apparent sign is that the Jewish people have returned to the Land of Israel and made it bloom once again. Additionally, a major movement is afoot of young Jews returning to Torah tradition.

The Messiah can come at any moment and it all depends on our actions. God is ready when we are. For as King David says: "Redemption will come today -- if you hearken to His voice."

Did Yeshua Have a Passover Meal?

**For more information concerning the timing issues surrounding Pesach see my commentaries on "Bikkurim: Feast of the Firstfruits," as well as "Shavu'ot: The Festival of Weeks," and "Yeshua and Unleavened Bread: An Examination of an Event."*

*2016 Update: For years I asserted that Yeshua most likely died on the very same day as when the lambs were being sacrificed at the Temple, viz, on Nisan the 14th, which I was figuring was a Friday. This put his Seder meal on the prior evening—the sunset of the 13th as it became the 14th, eaten of course without meat from the sacrificial lambs. In this way, technically I had Yeshua keeping his Seder (I assumed it was a Chagigah) on the 14th while being able to die 21 or so hours later on the day part of the 14th as well. However, after careful research, and as an update to my own understanding of the chronology of the week of Passover in which Yeshua was crucified, I have now come to understand that Yeshua was most likely crucified on Nisan the 15th, which as far as I can reckon, would still have been on a Friday as I maintained earlier. This means he ate the Pesach meal with meat from lambs slaughtered the day before his death on Nisan the 14th—a Thursday. Essentially, I now hold to Yeshua being crucified on Chag HaMatzah—the Day of Unleavened Bread. So in conclusion, I still hold to a conjunction-like occurrence of Nisan 14, 15, and 16 all being back to back (i.e., Thursday, Friday, Saturday), with no days skipped in between. The only major changes to my timetable are that I now hold to Yeshua eating his Seder on Thursday the 14th (previously I thought the 14th was a Friday), and being crucified on Friday the 15th (previously I had the Seder and the crucifixion both on Friday, the "Chagigah" Seder being on the evening part of the 14th and his death during the afternoon some 21 or so hours later, viz, the day part of the 14th).

In August of 2001 Wayne Jackson and Christian Courier published an article entitled "*Did Jesus Eat the Passover Supper?*"² In an effort to address an enigmatic, seeming discrepancy of the Synoptic Gospels. With their permission, I have taken liberties with his article by reprinting much of it here for our examination. His thoughts and my thoughts compliment one another, with my conclusions and expansions forming the closing for the article. It is my aim to bring furthering credibility to the Apostolic Scriptures and the stories of Yeshua contained therein.

We know that Yeshua is the Passover lamb, as foreshadowed in the TaNaKH. But did Yeshua "keep" the Passover? How could he have "eaten the Passover meal (i.e. the lamb)" while at the same time "represent the lamb being slain as the sacrifice?" The question often asked that must first be answered is: Did Yeshua and his disciples keep the Passover at the appointed time?

First, it appears clear that Yeshua and his disciples did eat the Passover supper. Two things make this apparent.

² <http://www.christiancourier.com/questions/passoverMealQuestion.htm>

The LORD promised the disciples that he would “keep the Passover” (Mt. 26:18), which is the equivalent of “eat the Passover” (Mk. 14:14). He appointed the place for that event and gave instructions for the preparation (Mk. 14:12ff). The Synoptic texts (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) then harmoniously flow toward the evening of that very day, and depict Yeshua as “eating” with the disciples (Mt. 26:21; Mk. 14:18).

The Torah of Moses is binding for all time, and the LORD was very careful to do all that the law commanded (Mt. 5:17-18; Jn. 8:29). Since the Passover was a part of the law’s requirement, the LORD obviously partook of this feast. The testimony of the Synoptics is clear and decisive that Yeshua and his disciples observed the Passover.

The Problem

While John 18:28 seems to be problematic, there are possible solutions that relieve the narrative of conflict. The passage reads as follows:

“Then they led Yeshua from the house of Caiaphas to the praetorium. It was early. They themselves did not enter the praetorium, so that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover.”

On the surface, this seems to suggest that the Passover had not been celebrated as yet. What shall be said of this confusing situation?

Possible Solutions

Respectable scholars have proposed several solutions to this problem.

First, some have contended that the meal Yeshua ate with the disciples, commonly called the “last supper” was another sort of meal, but not the Passover. Burton Coffman, based upon his view of John 18:28, says there is “no way” this could have been the Passover.³ Unfortunately, this view conflicts with the testimony of Matthew, Mark, and Luke (see above). As one prominent scholar has observed, “hardly a single Bible expositor of note today” agrees with this opinion.⁴

Second, some have argued that Yeshua ate the Passover supper a day earlier than the Jews normally did. Sadler contends, for example, that Christ had the authority to do this because he was “greater than” the Law, the Sabbath, and the Temple.⁵ Moreover, there was TaNaKH (Old Testament) authority for changing the Passover time under appropriate circumstances. The feast could be observed on the 14th day of the *second* month (instead of the first) by those who had been away on a trip, or those who had been ceremonially unclean, at the regular time.⁶ The problem with this view, however, is that it appears to conflict with other explicit New Testament information that indicates

³ Burton Coffman, *Commentary on John* (ACU Press, 1974), p. 425.

⁴ Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Eerdmans, 1951), p. 654.

⁵ M.F. Sadler, *The Gospel of Matthew* (George Bell & Sons, 1908), p. 400.

⁶ Numbers 9:9-12.

the LORD and his disciples ate the Passover on the *first* day of unleavened bread (Mt. 26:17; Mk. 14:12), the normal day for the supper.

Third, it is possible that the Jews at large had eaten the Passover meal already (i.e., on the assigned day), but that these Hebrew leaders (Jn. 18:12), due to their frenzied activity in attempting to deal with Yeshua, had postponed eating the supper. William Hendriksen seems inclined to this view, and he believes that H. Mulder has argued the case in convincing fashion.⁷

Fourth, a few scholars have contended that John's record, versus that of the Synoptics, reflects the use of two slightly different calendars. Leon Morris sees this as the most likely solution to the enigma. He writes:

“The most natural reading of the Synoptics shows the meal there to be the Passover. The most natural reading of John shows Yeshua as crucified at the very time the Passover victims were slain in the temple. While it is undoubtedly possible so to interpret the evidence as to make both tell the same story it seems preferable to see them as following different calendars. According to the calendar Yeshua was following the meal was the Passover. But the temple authorities followed another, according to which the sacrificial victims were slain the next day.”⁸

This theory appears to have few supporters. (Yet see: Harold Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, Zondervan, 1977, pp. 76-90. For a contrary statement, see: Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, Zondervan, 1982, p. 376, and Geldenhuys, pp. 654ff.)

Fifth, the Greek word for Passover is *pascha*. The term is used in three different senses in the Bible. Sometimes the word stands for the Passover sacrifice, the lamb itself (Mk. 14:12; Lk. 22:7; 1 Cor. 5:7). On other occasions *pascha* can denote the meal that was eaten on the 14th of Nisan, the first month of the Hebrew calendar (Mt. 26:18-19; Lk. 22:8, 13; Heb. 11:28).

But it is also the case that the term *pascha* can refer to the entire eight-day period which included the feast of unleavened bread – thus from the 14th of Nisan to the 21st). Note this passage:

“In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten” (Ezek: 45:21; cf. Lk. 22:1, 7; Acts 12:3-4).

F.W. Danker notes: “Popular usage merged the two festivals and treated them as a unity, as they were for all practical purposes.”⁹ It is within this final reference to *pascha* likely including the entire week-long time period, and by a close reading of Deuteronomy 16:1-4, that Tim Hegg carefully adds,

⁷ Hendriksen, *Commentary on John* (Baker, 1953, II), p. 403.

⁸ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Eerdmans, 1971), p. 785.

⁹ F.W. Danker, *Greek-English Lexicon* (University of Chicago, 2000), p. 784.

This may have a direct bearing, therefore, upon the text in John 18:28. For when John reports that the chief priests did not enter the Praetorium because they wanted to remain clean in order to “eat the Passover,” he could be referring to the *sh’lamim* offerings that would have been offered throughout the seven day festival and not just the to the Pesach lamb slaughtered on the 14th of Nisan. For by the words of the Torah itself, the festival *sh’lamim* sacrifices are referred to as “the Passover.”¹⁰

Is Perhaps the Passover in John 18:28 a *Chagigah*?

There were several “feasts” during this period (see 2 Chron. 30:22); the one mentioned in John 18:28 may have been on the day following the main Passover supper. It was called the *Chagigah* (sacrificial meal). Many respectable scholars, e.g., Lenski and Edersheim, defend this view. Edward Robinson has a clear and detailed explanation of this position that is worthy of serious consideration, and, in this writer’s judgment, this argument carries the greatest weight of evidence.¹¹

As mentioned above, some scholars hold that the Passover coincided with the Last Supper and interpret John’s gospel in such a way as to be consistent with this. Such an interpretation makes two claims: The first claim is that the Passover in John 18:28 refers not to the Passover but to the *chagigah* (festival sacrifice), which was eaten joyfully on the afternoon the day after the Passover sacrifice.

I do not believe that John’s Gospel reports a different date for the crucifixion from the Synoptics; rather, the meal of John 13:1 was the *Seder*, and it took place on Thursday night; but “the *Pesach*” [in 18:28] refers to other food eaten during *Pesach*, specifically the *chagigah* (festival sacrifice) which was consumed with great joy and celebration on the afternoon following the *Seder*. This is the *Pesach* meal which the Judeans gathered outside the Pilate’s palace would have been unable to eat had they entered, because their defilement would have lasted till sundown. If “the *Pesach*” meant the Passover lamb, defilement in the morning might not have been a problem, since the *Seder* meal took place after sundown.¹²

More plausibly, “to eat the Passover” in John 18:28 may refer, not to the Passover meal itself, but to the continuing feast, and in particular to the *chagigah*, the feast-offering offered on the morning of the first full paschal day (cf. Num. 28:18-19). This could explain the Jews’ concern: ritual purification could be regained by nightfall, but not by the morning *Chagigah*.¹³

The second claim is that the preparation of the Passover in John 19:14 refers to the preparation day of the first day of unleavened bread in the Passover season (also

¹⁰ Tim Hegg, *The Chronology of the Crucifixion* (www.TorahResource.com, 2009), p. 27.

¹¹ *Harmony of the Gospels* (Religious Tract Society, 1879), pp. 135ff; see also Theodor Zahn, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Klock & Klock, n.d.), pp. 296-98; Geldenhuys, pp. 656ff

¹² David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp. 206-207.

¹³ D. A. Carson, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. F. Gaebelein (Zondervan, 1984, Vol. 8), p. 531.

mentioned in John 19:31), which is of course an annual Sabbath or Holy Day.

This particular Preparation Day was also the first day of *Pesach*.¹⁴

Those who believe that there was no disagreement amongst the Jews over when the Passover should be kept and that the Last Supper coincided with this propose this interpretation of John's gospel (this tends to be those who believe in a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection). In conclusion we must say that we may not be able to determine the precise situation alluded to in John 18:28. Nonetheless, there are sufficient possibilities to establish the fact that no insuperable difficulty exists to challenge our confidence in the sacred text.¹⁵

Passover Bread: Leavened or Unleavened?

Did Yeshua eat bread with leaven? As "ridiculous" a question as this sounds to Jewish ears, it actually shows up in non-Jewish discussions on this topic. Let us see what Strong's concordance has to say about the word "bread" in Mark 14:1:

Mark 14:1

After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

\hn de; to; pavsca kai; ta; a~zuma meta; duvo hJmevraß. kai; ejzhvtoun oij ajrcierei'ß kai; oij grammatei'ß pw'ß aujto;n ejn dovlw/ krathvsanteß ajpokeivnwsin:

Strong's Number: 106

Original Word Word Origin

a[zumoß

From (1) (as a negative particle) and (2219)

Transliterated Word TDNT Entry

Azumos

2:902,302

¹⁴ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 209.

¹⁵ I am indebted to Wayne Jackson and Christian Courier for their invaluable research in the opening part of this article.

Phonetic Spelling

Parts of Speech

ad'-zoo-mos

Adjective

Definition

1. unfermented, free from leaven or yeast
 - a. of the unleavened loaves used in the paschal feast of the Jews
 - b. metaph. free from faults or the "leaven of iniquity"

Now let's examine the "bread" of Mark 14:22:

Mark 14:22

And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

Kai; ejsqiovtwn aujtw'n labw;n a~rton eujloghvsaf e~klasen kai; e~dwken aujtoi'ß kai; ei\pen, Lavbete, tou'tov ejstin to; sw'mav mou.

Strong's Number: 740

Original Word

Word Origin

a[rtoß

From (142)

Transliterated Word

TDNT Entry

Artos

1:477,80

Phonetic Spelling

Parts of Speech

ar'-tos

Noun Masculine

Definition

1. food composed of flour mixed with water and baked

- a. the Israelites made it in the form of an oblong or round cake, as thick as one's thumb, and as large as a plate or platter hence it was not to be cut but broken
- b. loaves were consecrated to the LORD
- c. of the bread used at the love-feasts and at the LORD's Table

2. food of any kind

As we can see the two Greek words for bread are indeed different. It seems as if Yeshua did indeed violate Torah by eating leavened bread with his disciples if we take these verses at face value.

But if we dig deeper we will see the larger picture.

The term "bread," as symbolized by the Greek word in the second passage (artos) is not limited to what we would consider a leavened loaf of baked grains and water. To be sure, the Greek word "artos" is a noun. By contrast, the Greek word "azumos" as found in the Mark 14:1 passage is an adjective!

Bread (a noun in every normal usage of this word) in the Jewish mindset also simply means food. Any kind of food for that matter (as the Strong's note on #2 above shows). The context of how this very same Greek word is used all throughout the book of Acts shows that it cannot be limited to a proverbial loaf of bread as such. Observe:

Ac 2:42

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of **bread**, and in prayers.

Ac 2:46

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking **bread** from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Ac 20:7

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break **bread**, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Ac 20:11

When he therefore was come up again, and had broken **bread**, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

Ac 27:35

And when he had thus spoken, he took **bread**, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

All of these references use the same Greek word as translated in the Mark 14:22 verse. In fact, the idiomatic phrase "break bread" simply means to eat a meal.

Conclusion:

Yeshua may have simply given his disciples some other food to eat besides the matzah (unleavened [adjective] bread) that must have been present during that meal. This other food (referred to as “bread,” but may be any kosher food) most certainly did not contain leaven. How do we know that leaven could not have been present? Instead of accusing the Scriptures of error by looking at it through Gentiles eyes, lets look closer at this through Jewish eyes.

In ancient Isra'el, as during Passover in Isra'el today, when the week of Unleavened Bread is approaching, the Torah expressly commands observant Jews to rid their homes of leavening agent. The Messiah was Jewish, from a Jewish family. The disciples were Jewish. Who in their right Jewish mind would have leavened bread during the week of Unleavened Bread? And if by some crazy chance of foolishness one of those Jewish men did have leavened bread during their Jewish Passover feast, where did they get it? Did they bake it themselves? Did they buy it from some Gentile merchant? Why would a Gentile merchant wish to sell leavening agent to an observant Jewish person during the week of Unleavened Bread? And what foolish Jewish person would be seen buying leaven from a Gentile during that week of Unleavened Bread?

You see, if you work it out logically it just doesn't make any sense at all, especially since the New Testament Scriptures were written about Isra'el, by Israelites, during the time of Isra'el, set in the language of Hebrew and Aramaic, with its central figure being a Jewish man who just happens to be the Messiah of Isra'el.

No, Yeshua could not have risked his authenticity among Jewish people expecting a Torah-observant Messiah by accidentally eating leavened bread at the most important Passover that he would ever celebrate in his 30 years of living as a Jew in 1st century Isra'el.

Various Other Passover Questions, To Include Inquiries About Passover Wine

A long time e-friend of mine has submitted various Passover related questions that I have chosen to use for this final section of my Passover commentary. Perhaps you the reader have had similar questions rolling around your head. I have left the original questions and answers untouched (there are spelling errors and typos). Enjoy this inside peek into the life of my daily routine.

His questions (Q:) appear as regular font, alignment LEFT justified, with my answers (A:) appearing in *alignment CENTER italics* immediately following each question.

Q: Dear Honorable Rabbi [sic]:

I hope I am not bothering you with my questions. I know you are rather busy.

A: *"I am never so busy that I cannot answer e-mails."*

Q: If you may, please consider the following ideas concerning Pesach. Of all the folks I read after, I respect your opinions the most concerning TaNakH observance.

A: *"Thank you for your kind opinion."*

Q: There is a great debate concerning wine vs grape juice going on amongst TaNakH observant Christians. The logic goes like this: since Grape Juice has yeast (leaven) in it, and supposedly wine doesn't (actually, it does--I've done the research) grape juice should not be used for Pesach. This has caused me more questions than answers. Is there any clear SCRIPTURAL commandment?

A: *My thoughts...*

"Firstly, the wine that is served at Passover meals has undergone the strictest of supervision by the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (UOJCA), before they will place a "Kosher for Passover" stamp on it. I can rest assured that according to their consciences and subsequently mine, that it is indeed consumable for Passover purposes. I have no reason to question their stamp of authenticity. If I do, then every other product with the stamp "K," "U," or "P" on it is likewise questionable for Jews worldwide, both Messianic and non."

Q: 1) What (Biblically) is leaven? Some say yeast. Does that include baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), and baking powder (a mix of carbonate, acid and starch)? What did people actually use as leaven in ancient days? How did they cultivate, gather, store it? (Should one remove Alka-Seltzer from one's house during the Feast of Unleavened Bread...)

A: *"The Encyclopedia Judaica explains that biblical yeast was not altogether different than the yeast of today. After all, yeast is a natural product, not something that modern science has created. Yeast consists of any of a group of minute, one-celled ascomycetous fungi, which produce alcoholic fermentation in saccharine fluids. As such, they grow very quickly in a liquid containing sugar. This speaks of HaShem's design not the scientology of synthetics. An informative article on leavening agents can be viewed at this link:*

<http://homecooking.about.com/food/homecooking/library/weekly/aa072197.htm?iam=mt&terms=%2Bleaven> . *In my opinion, one does not need to remove Alka-Seltzer in order to properly fulfill the mitzvah. The passages in question speak to one of the 5 grains that could possibly "leaven" in the presence of water and time: wheat, barley, oats, rye, and spelt."*

Q: 2) Since the commandment concerning leaven (seems to me) focuses exclusively on bread and on (however ancients did this) stockpiles of "leaven" itself, isn't the wine vs

grape juice debate Scripturally meaningless? Isn't applying the commandment to other than stockpiles of leaven and leavened dough (bakery products) applying the commandment where there is no commandment?

A: "Yes, the mitzvah primarily has to do with the baked goods. But the mitzvah does say to remove all leaven from your houses (Ex. 12:19-20). In Deut. 16:3, 4 there are two Hebrew words used to describe "biblical leaven:" chametz חָמֵץ=dough from one of the 5 grains that has been allowed to "ferment" and create yeast, from which bread may be baked, and s'or סֹרֶךְ=the standalone ingredient usually defined as "yeast." I believe that a sincere approach includes removing anything which will defile the conscience, which for biblical purists might only include the "grain" products, but for the ultra sensitive might also include the standalone product we now know as yeast."

Q: 3) Scripture commands (this is ignored by those in the debate) no UNCIRCUMCISED person may partake of the Pesach. This raises a whole slew of other questions.

A: "Yes, it does. Uncircumcised meant (back then) literally and ceremonially. Today, as Christians, this could be applied to the true circumcision that was not made with hands. In essence when churches exclude non-believers from partaking in the LORD's Supper (a type of Seder) they are borrowing theology from your recognized statement (see Ex. 12:43-49). The idea is that anyone who partakes of the Deliverance celebration of HaShem must internalize the truth of what he is indeed doing! To partake lightly is to invite harm and possibly even death (reference the context of 1 Cor. chapter 5, and specifically 11:17-34). However, in defense of allowing non-circumcised males at your Pesach meal, we have the example from the Ex. 12 narrative that a mixed multitude left Egypt with the sons of Ya'akov. It is conceivable that many of the sons of Ya'akov were not physically circumcised during that meal and escape, along with their guests who were also most likely not circumcised."

Q: 4) Since we are COMMANDED (Christians) to keep "the Lord's Supper" (this raises even more questions concerning the "Love Feasts" held apparently on a daily basis which are also referred to as "the Lord's Supper" vs the yearly Pesach), and no uncircumcised person must partake, doesn't this seem to be an injunction (heavily implied, anyway) that all born again believers, (Gentiles, too) are to officially (outwardly) enter into and declare their allegiance with the Commonwealth of Israel? Didn't Shaul eventually circumcise Titus?

A: "Yes, your insights are correct, although it was Timothy who was circumcised by Sha'ul in Acts 16. We (the "Gentile" Church) are fully part of the Commonwealth of Isra'el whether we want to admit it or not, and despite our actions to demonstrate otherwise! We should be teaching physical circumcision! When Messiah returns there will be an ample amount of reeducation on the part of many a believer, both Jewish and non-Jewish."

Q: 5) Didn't Ywhw command the priests NOT to drink alcoholic beverages before entering into Temple Service? Isn't that (in part--also the illegal incense) why Aaron's sons died? Wouldn't that make alcohol for Passover strictly forbidden? And if it is so for the Priests--born again believers ALL being Priests after the order of Melchizedec, what does that imply? It seems Ywhw takes a DIM view of alcohol, considering it a DEFILING agent, if you ask me...

A: *"A specific injunction or prohibition should not be liberally applied to every other situation which bears resemblance to the original one. In other words, if HaShem told the priests not to drink alcohol before entering into Temple Service, does that make it applicable to today's Seder service? I should like to think that this is Scriptural interpolation rather than extrapolation. We don't have license to read into the past, what we know or suppose today (Example: Genesis 18:1-8 *the rabbis try to make a case for Avraham not having served his three guests milk and meat together, by supposing that there was the standard rabbinical waiting period of three hours between the two courses. Of course their speculation is absurd since the Torah makes no mention of any such gap!). The Torah has nothing inherently bad to say about alcohol, only drunkenness. To be sure, every day, while the Tabernacle/Temple stood, Israel was commanded to bring the 'Olah Tamid עֹלָה תָּמִיד the "regular burnt offering (Num. 28:1-8)." In these verses "strong drink" (Heb: nesekh sheykhār נֶסֶךְ שֵׁיכָר = distilled alcohol) is clearly commanded. In verses 16-25 the regulations concerning the Pesach offering are outlined. Clearly the Torah commands the 'Olah Tamid to accompany the Korban Pesach (verse 24). The implication is that alcohol is fine during Pesach. Only beers containing ingredients made from one of the 5 grains are to be excluded. Once again, for today, grace teaches that alcohol be mostly a matter of the individual conscience. Do I drink it? Only on special occasions (such as Passover, Communion, special social gatherings, etc). I do not prefer the taste of malt beverages at all. If my brother sees Ariel with wine in his glass, and this sight causes him to stumble, then I must be careful of the social image that I am sending."*

Q: I can't find it in scripture, but I seem to remember in the OT God commanding ALL the Jews to be priests and to proselytize the ENTIRE world to Judaism--no exceptions.

A: *"That's a new one to me :-)"*

Q: In the days of the Golden Calf, God excluded non-descendants of Aaron, and later non-descendants of Zadak (because they remained faithful to God during rebellions.) I remember somewhere God promising to assign each Gentile who converts to Judaism to one of the twelve tribes.

A: *"In Ezekiel 47, a prophecy goes forth which tells of the future regathering of the entire 12 Tribes. When the chapter begins to draw to a close, it mentions that their allotments (of land) are to be shared with the "strangers who dwell among you." The Hebrew word translated as "stranger" is the same one used in our Exodus passage to describe someone who dwells as a citizen of the Community of Isra'el: "geyr" גֵּר. Conclusion: all who name the name of Yeshua as Messiah are citizens of God's Community of*

believers--his Community called "Isra'el." Anyone of this community who wishes to be cut off or excluded from being called as such, is deceiving himself. We either dwell together as one unified people, or we are left out in the spiritual cold. We cannot have it both ways."

Q: Anyway, I am persuaded all converts are to assimilate into Israel. Shaul says that the blessings OF ABRAHAM--which includes God making a person Jewish, a gift from God, may COME UPON THE GENTILES--Galatians--and that God has made them both--Jew and Gentile--ONE new man, NOT two different types of men, but ONE only: Ephesians, Colossians. Since God never made a Jew into a Gentile; the opposite transformation is our only possibility.

A: "Etymologically, this is very true: Gentiles become "Jews" (in the biblical sense of belonging to the larger group of "Yah-praisers," i.e., "Yah-hodeyah-ites," commonly called "Jews!"). Jews don't become Gentiles, except in the unfortunate case that they lose their cultural, and spiritual inheritance which is associated with Judaism, i.e., they assimilate into Gentile culture and beliefs. When this happens, even HaShem decrees that they are indeed "scattered unto the heathens." But even this doesn't make him into a full Gentile. Being Jewish entails a great responsibility that is intimately tied into witness. This is the plan and purpose of HaShem: witness and revelation. A Jew is supposed to be a "God-revealer." "To whom?," you may ask. To the rest of the world. Christians have this responsibility as well, and in that sense, they are JEWS." Have you read my article on "Who is a Jew?"

Q: The fact that Joel insists Yeshua will command drought upon all Gentiles who refuse to observe at least the Feast of the Tabernacles and the command to send representatives to Jerusalem cinches me that the Law has NOT passed away. I am also persuaded that the Abrahamic covenant is still in effect. Indeed, it is the ONLY covenant in existence AT ALL EVER, bought by the Blood of the Lamb. After all, Abraham's blessing revolved around the promise Yeshua--the Savior--would come (future tense) and make Abraham worthy of all the blessings via His Perfect Sacrifice. Abraham believed on the Cross of Calvary. He was the first "Christian." Didn't Jesus say, "Abraham saw My Day and was glad..."?

A: "In fact to strengthen your argument, when the Torah says that Avraham "saw" Yeshua's day, the Hebrew of the text is actually implying that he saw the "sacrifice being offered on Mount Moriah!" We usually translate the Hebrew phrase "ADONAI yireh" יהוה יִרְאֶה as "God will provide." But a more literal rendering might be "God is seen," or "God has been seen here!" Given our knowledge of the relationship between Mount Moriah and Mount Calvary, the context of Genesis 22:7-18 and coupled with Yeshua's own testimony of John 8:39-59, we can begin to understand just what Avraham saw on the mountain that day!"

Q: Which makes Abraham (a Babylonian; Babylon being a symbol of the World, Satan's culture in general--an Iraqi--from the city of Ur-which exists to this day in Modern Iraq) the first OFFICIALLY recognized Gentile to convert to Judaism, (come out of and leave

the World's Satanic culture and re-adopt God's culture, see Revelations) which (Biblically) seems to be IDENTICAL with Christianity, trusting in the Savior. In the OT they trusted He would come, in the NT we trust He DID (past tense) already come. Judaism and Christianity trust in the same Event, the same Lord, the same Sacrifice to make us partakers of the same Covenant, bought by the same Blood of the same Lamb. They are one and the same. So shouldn't we be coming out and being separate from the same Babylon and pilgrimaging to the same Heavenly City Abraham looked for?

A: "Ameyn! Very nicely stated!"

Q: I am convinced a whole lot of foolish divisiveness in the Body of Christ would end tomorrow if God's Children would see this clearly expressed Biblical truth. I just can't get into my head how folks get TWO religions and TWO peoples out of this...

A: "You and me both, my scholarly friend."

Q: Actually, I am of the opinion that God is Jewish, Adam was a Jew who sold his sonship (like Esau), became a child of the Devil; and all Adam's (Satan's) Children that repent and re-receive Yeshua's gift of re-established sonship with God simply end up back where God had started us from. Remember the prodigal sons? They had ONE father. The wayward's sonship was restored with the SACRIFICE OF THE FATTED CALF. The homeward son was then entreated to enter into the celebration and partake of the calf (Pesach?) also.

A: "Nice drash (homiletic exposition of Scripture) on the history of humankind."

Q: Redemption means to restore, to begin (the right way) a second time. Isn't Yeshua (a Jewish man--Who chose assignment to Juda, no less) "the LAST Adam..."? Babylon (World kingdom) is Satan's culture, and the Levitical Law is God's culture (the culture we lost when Adam rebelled) and AdamFinal (Yeshua) restored us to, officially beginning with Abraham.

Shaul says one is not a true Jew who is one outwardly, but inwardly, via sanctification of the Holy Ghost through Yeshua's Blood.

A: "The literal Greek of this verse in Romans 2:29-29 suggests that a true "Jew" is not one who is [merely] outward, but that a true "Jew" is [also] one who is inward. The use of brackets in this case demonstrate that outward and inward work hand in hand to properly define "who is a Jew." So cases can be made on both sides of the fence, as to Christians being "spiritual Jews," while at the same time "cultural Jews" can actually forfeit their "Jewishness" based on a lack of true inward belief in the quintessential Jew named Yeshua!"

Q: Accepting Jesus Christ is what makes a person Jewish, Christian, a Child of the Living God. (We ain't got two different fathers). This is no way neglects the specific prophecies concerning the flesh (physical descendants) of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

A: "Good observation."

Q: That's my rant for today. PS I read the word "wine" in the Textus Receptus (New Testament) Yeshua drank was "sapa." "Sapa" is non-alcoholic. Do you know if this is true?

A: *Firstly, it must be noted that in every single instance of the word 'wine' in the synoptic gospels, the same Greek word is used:*

(Strong's): 3631 - oy'-nos = a prime (or perhaps of Hebrew origin) [3196]; "wine" (literally or figuratively); wine

Exclusively in the book of Acts (and only once at 2:13), this Greek word is used:

(Strong's): 1098 - glyoo'-kos = akin to [sweet], sweet wine, i.e., (properly) must (fresh, juice), but used of the more saccharine (and therefore highly inebriating) fermented wine; new wine

Romans has one use of 3631 above, at 14:21.

Ephesians has one use of 3631, at 5:18.

1 Timothy has this Greek word at 3:3:

(Strong's): 3943 - par'-oy-nos = from 3844 and 3031; staying near wine, i.e., tipping (a topper); given to wine

1 Timothy has one two uses of 3631 at 3:8, and 5:23.

Titus 1:7 has one use of 3943.

Titus 2:3 has one use of 3631.

1 Peter 4:3 has this cognate of 3631:

(Strong's): 3632 - oy-nof-loog-ee'ah = from 3031 and a form of the base of 5397; an overflow (or surplus) of wine, i.e. drunkenness; excess of wine

All instances of wine in the book of Revelation are 3631.

In connection with 1 Timothy 5:23, water of that period was often impure, a disease-carrier; wine (3631) was less likely to be so. Wine itself was usually served diluted with three to six parts water. Medicinal and ceremonial use of wine has Scriptural support (look up the above references from the above); getting drunk has Scriptural opposition. Normal use of wine at meals has Scriptural support, also use of strong drink for special festivals, and for easing final pain at death or in times of great grief (e.g. Proverbs 31:6,7). Obviously, these general principles would not apply to someone who has a problem with alcohol.

(End of questions and answers)

“Chag Sah-meach Pesach!”

(Happy Festival of Passover!)

For further study, read: Ex. 12:21-51, Num. 28:16-25, Josh. 3:5-7, 5:2-6:1. 6:27; Is. 52:13-53:12; Mt. 26-28; Mk. 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 13-21; 1 Cor. 5:6-8

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