

CHAPTER 5

Yeshua's Last Seder

On the tenth of Abib, five days before the LORD's Passover, Jews took their best year-old lambs into their homes as the Lamb of God entered Jerusalem.

The Homecoming

Jesus customarily entered Jerusalem in the early morning. (Lk. 21:38; Mat 28:1) Crowds ran to see Him going into the city, riding the colt of a donkey as Zechariah prophesied centuries earlier. (Zec. 9:9) They spread palm branches on the road, praising and nearly crowning Him King the day after Shabbat:

¹² The next day, the huge crowd that had come up for the feast heard that *Yeshua* was coming to Jerusalem. ¹³ So they took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting,

“Hoshia-na!

Baruch ha-ba b'shem *ADONA!*

'Blessed is He who comes

in the name of the LORD!' [See Ps. 118:25-26]

The King of Israel!'" (John 12:12-13 TLV)

In Luke's account, on the first day of the week, Jesus entered Jerusalem; it was late when He saw what was happening in the temple area, so He left for Bethany and returned the next day. In the morning, He saw a fruitless fig tree and cursed it; then He entered the temple area and overturned the money changers' tables. At this, the chief priests and the teachers of the law began a plan to kill Him. It was late when they all returned home. The following day, after they challenged His authority, He taught in the temple courts. The widow gave her offering, and He foretold the signs of the end of the age. The Feast was two days away:

¹ Now it was two days before Passover and the Feast of Matzah. The ruling *kohanim* and *Torah* scholars were searching for a way to grab *Yeshua* by stealth and kill Him. ² "But not during the festival," they were saying, "so there won't be a riot among the people." (Mark 14:1-2 TLV)

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It was prohibited in Jewish law to put a man to death on a Sabbath; yet not for law, but for political expediency, they would not kill Him during the festival. Two feasts are in the scriptures: the feast of Passover began Abib 14 with the Seder, a ceremonial meal; it was the first day of unleavened bread; Abib 15 was also a feast, the day they kept as their Sabbath.

From the evening of the tenth when the lamb was taken into their home till the evening of Abib 14 were four full days. The Feast of Matzah was also called Passover (in Ex. 12:1-51) and was seven days long, from Abib 15 to the Sabbath on its last day; so all the Days of Passover were eight, including its Seder; thus, the Feast had three Sabbaths, including the regular weekly one.

On Abib 14 the Seder meal commemorates the night the destroyer passed over each home marked by the blood of a lamb. Yeshua shared the LORD's Passover the night before they crucified Him—the fifth day of their week that year [our Wednesday night]. Thirteen centuries earlier, the Hebrews slew, drained, and roasted the Passover lambs with organs intact the same night as God commanded. On this night, Peter and John slew a lamb to prepare the Seder for Jesus and the disciples in Jerusalem:

22 The Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called Passover, was drawing near. ...

⁷ Then the Day of Unleavened Bread came when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover meal for us, so we can eat it.”

⁹ “Where do you want us to prepare it?” they asked Him.

¹⁰ “Listen,” He said to them, “when you’ve entered the city, a man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him into the house he enters. ¹¹ Tell the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks you, “Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover with My disciples?”’ ¹² Then he will show you a large, furnished room upstairs. Make the preparations there.”

¹³ So they went and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴ When the hour came, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, “I have fervently desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 22:1, 7-16 HCSB)

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The next day's feast was called Passover as well but was the day after the Passover. (Num. 33:3) The multitude left Rameses that day. God continued passing over the Hebrews, but drowned Egypt's army in the sea. The day after the LORD's Passover was the Feast of Matzah; it was held as a weeklong feast, starting and ending on a Sabbath. Yeshua died on its traditional Preparation Day, held the day before the usual Sabbath of the Feast.

¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"
(Luke 22:17-22 ESV)

After supper He took the third cup, that of redemption, and explained it to His disciples. The elements of His Passover had represented His body and blood centuries before Messiah was born, almost two millennia after Melchizedek met Abram with bread and wine. Later, when His disciples took the unleavened bread and wine, they commemorated His death until His return.

That night they crossed the Kidron Valley to a garden where Christ agonized in prayer while the disciples slept. In the dark, Judas Iscariot led a multitude of temple guards, Roman soldiers, and spectators. A mob was in Gethsemane at His arrest, fulfilling the prophecies. (Ps. 2; Zec. 11:13; John 13; Mat. 26; Mk. 14; Lk. 22)

That Preparation Day

After daybreak on Preparation Day for the Feast, the temple guards led Jesus to the high priest where false witnesses spoke against Him. He told them they'd see Him *seated at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven*. (Mat. 26:64) He spoke the truth, but they called Him a blasphemer though He was the very Word of God. (Deut. 18:15-18; Mat. 26:47-67)

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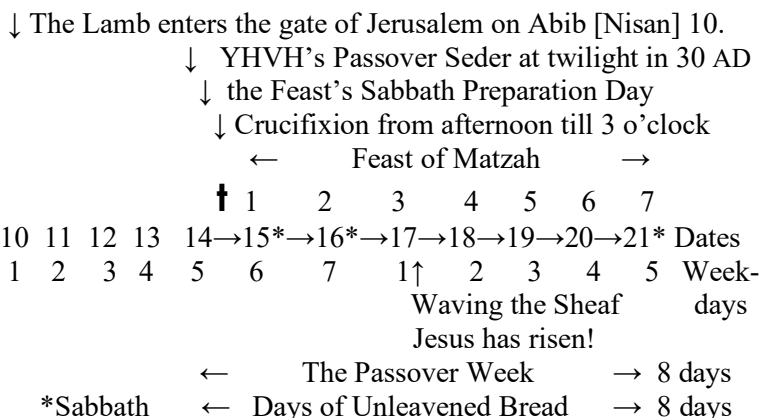
Next they took the Lord to Pilate the governor of Judea who sent Him to Herod the tetrarch. After treating Him harshly, they returned Him to Pilate who yielded to the will of the crowd: *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take council together, against the LORD and against His anointed one, saying, ³Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.* (Ps. 2:2-3)

Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover. (John 18:28 NIV)

At the judgment *bema* [its high platform], Pilate ordered His scourging, and soldiers mercilessly whipped, beat, and mocked Him. At noon Pilate presented Him to the Jews. Under pressure from the priests and the crowd, he sentenced the Savior to death on a cross and washed his guilty hands: *And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!* (Jn. 19:14) [Its feast was called *the Passover* here; *the sixth hour* was noon. Next, we'll see the order of events as they were understood in 30 AD.]

Charting that Passover week sheds the light on its days:

Yeshua's Last Passover Week



The days and dates on the chart correspond to Yeshua's last Passover, not to be confused by other years since its dates fall on

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other weekdays each year. The Hebrew calendar was recently corrected. April 2022 matches the biblical dates in time for its days to be understood. After the crucifixion, two Sabbaths were held back-to-back.

⁴² Now evening had already come. Since it was the Day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected council member who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for *Yeshua's* body.

⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised that He was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him whether *Yeshua* had been dead for long. ⁴⁵ When Pilate learned this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

(Mark 15:42-45 TLV) [In Israel late afternoon is “evening” since it’s near the end of their day.]

Jonah

³⁹ But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

(Matthew 12:39-40 NKJV)

God ordered the days of creation: evening, then morning, but *Yeshua* said He would be in the heart of the earth three days and then three nights [like rolling back time]. As the third night was ending, the tomb was found empty in the middle of Abib 17.

Why did Messiah enter the heart of the earth? He gave His Soul as a burnt offering. (Gen. 22:1-8; cf. Is. 53:10-12) *Yeshua* said His descent would be like Jonah in the belly of the great fish. Its mystery is in the abyss, the bottomless pit.

Jonah may have died in the fish’s belly yet was consciously in hell. David tasted the pangs of hell while still alive, but Jonah in the great fish was the sign of *Yeshua*, the son of David.

Each man described hell as the heart of the earth, condemned without help or comfort. Both were cast into its whelming sea, a prison of hopelessness and condemnation. David cried out, *Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. (Ps. 86:13b); he drew me out of many waters. (Ps. 18:16b; also see Ps. 116, 142.)*

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The issue is whether a man can suffer death while still in the body:

2 Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, ²And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. ³ For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. ⁴ Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. ⁵ The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. ⁶ I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. (Jonah 2:1-6) [YHVH = Yehováh, written as ADONAI, or LORD. Adonai is translated, Lord.]

⁵ "When the waves of death surrounded me,
The floods of ungodliness made me afraid.

⁶ The sorrows of Sheol surrounded me;
The snares of death confronted me.

⁷ In my distress I called upon the LORD,
And cried out to my God;
He heard my voice from His temple,
And my cry *entered* His ears.

(2 Samuel 22:5-7 NKJV; cf. Ps. 18:4-5) – King David

His Soul sank into hell as He faced our judgment day. His people for whom He came shouted, "Crucify Him!" He took the world's sins in His own body, despising the shame; dreading the damnation, and yet entering the abyss. No one but the only Son of God could have died on His cross as our sacrifice who made His own Soul an offering for our guilt. (Ps. 22; Is. 53)

His judgment began at dawn after the night of His arrest on the day He was crucified, just hours after the Seder. How could His Soul descend into the heart of the earth? By the hopeless despondency that overtakes a condemned man. Certain of death without an escape, His sentence was predetermined. Yeshua was alone when He gave up His Soul for the burden of the curse and its penalty. Apart from faith in the Lamb, we pay the cost for our own sinfulness.

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In a garden at night, He'd accepted the commission to drink the cup of death that day. At sunrise, in dread of all that would come upon Him, He felt His descent. They laid His body in a tomb before His quickened Soul entered the waterless pit. On another day, He'd been led into the desert where He was tempted by the devil. Later He urged His followers to pray not to be led into temptation as He had been. Now He was alone again. Only He knew the depth of His grief as He emptied Himself of all but love to take our place in judgment.

His enemies raged against Him; His disciples fled the scene. God judged Him as He would have judged us. Though innocent, He was marked as a sinner. Roman soldiers beat and scourged Him with whips of cords tied with broken pieces of pottery and stones. They mocked Him, pressing a crown of thorns into His scalp; then beat Him until His face and form no longer looked human. They pulled out his beard and forced Him into jeering crowds; stripped Him naked, and nailed His hands and feet to the wood of a cross; then raised it up between heaven and earth.

His Father forsook Him as He would have forsaken us. For Him who received our judgment, it had to be that way. **The first day**, His Soul entered the heart of the earth when the Son of God died as a common man but by no sin of his own. The Passover was slain for the fire when Jesus was in hell the day He preached to its captives, and even there, exalted the Father! (1 Pet 2:18-20)

They crucified Him, but He gave up his mortal spirit, fulfilling the scriptures by giving His life sooner than a crucified man could have died. *For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.* (Ps. 22:16) Had He shrunk from death, his legs would have been broken, but He willingly yielded up the life of His flesh, fulfilling prophecies as our Passover: *He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.* (Ps. 34:20) ... *neither shall ye break a bone thereof.* (from Ex. 12:46) Normally, death on a cross took several days, but God gave His Son the right to lay down His life and to raise it again, so He cried out at His death, not with a whisper, but with a shout! Then he gave up the spirit to God.

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama

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sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:45-46 NKJV; also Ps. 22:1) [3 p.m.]

For His death, the Father removed His Holy Spirit from the perfect man for the sake of every man. As the second Adam, He was left with just the spirit of His body till He released His life to God: *the body without the spirit is dead.* (Jas. 2:26)

And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit my spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last.
(Luke 23:46 NKJV; cf. Ps. 31:5)

If we abide in Him, our soul will not taste death; His Spirit never leaves or forsakes us because the innocent One gave His life as our final Sacrifice. The Spirit led Him into the desert to be tempted after His baptism in the Jordan and led His Soul to hell at His baptism into death. Do not ask, *Who shall descend into the deep?* (Rom. 10:7a) He's already been there. *If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.* (Ps. 139: 8b)

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine long-suffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ... ⁶ For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. (1 Peter 3:18-20; 4:6 NKJV)

When the centurion, who was standing opposite Him, saw the way He breathed His last, he said, "This man really was God's Son!" (Mark 15:39 HCSB)

And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. (Luke 23:48 NKJV)

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (Jas 2:26) The Lord Jesus Christ gave up His body's spirit to God when the guilt of the world fell on Him; *for love is strong as death.* (SS 8:6b)

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Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.
If a man would give for love
All the wealth of his house,
It would be utterly despised. (Song of Songs 8:7 NKJV)

By the power of the Holy Spirit, His Soul revived to preach to the spirits in prison. On the third day, by the same Spirit that led Him into hell, He raised His body to life again, and a train of captives followed Him:

¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from My Father. “
(John 10:17-18 ESV)

Three Days and Three Nights

Joseph, a wealthy Arimathean, and Nicodemus, a respected Pharisee, took His body from the cross and wrapped it in linen with spices, laying it in the rich man's tomb at sunset. (Is. 53:9) As they did this, Jesus' mother and Mary Magdalene watched them at a distance. It was nearly sunset and the sixth day of the week.

His Passover Seder was on the eve of Preparation Day. An unusual double Sabbath began with the feast at twilight on Abib 15; then the weekly Sabbath after the high Sabbath; on the third day, the firstfruit's sheaf would be waved by the priest the day after the weekly Sabbath.

It was against Jewish law to execute a man on a Sabbath or to leave his body on a cross, so they took Him down and buried Him in the tomb near the beginning of the high Sabbath:

Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. (John 19:31 NKJV)

To speed their deaths before the Sabbath, the soldiers broke the legs of thieves on either side of Him. They came to Jesus, but He was dead. From His pierced side, blood and plasma proved His death. A night ago, He'd shared matzah and wine, explaining the prophetic symbols; near evening He fulfilled His own words.

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¹⁰ 'And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.' ...

¹⁴ "For *as for the* life of all flesh, Its blood is *identified* with its life. Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, 'You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.'

(Leviticus 17:10-11, 14 NASB) – the LORD, to Moses

They placed His body in the tomb on the fourteenth of Abib near sunset. The women returned home to mix spices and oils for the body as the Feast of Matzah celebrated their liberty. (Lev 23:6)

⁵⁴ That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. ⁵⁵ And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

(Luke 23:54-56 NKJV) [Its Sabbath was kept on the fifteenth.]

After the weekly Sabbath, sunset began the first day of the week when they bought more spices. The next day was the day of first fruits, beginning the count for the Feast of Harvest or Feast of First fruits, aka Feast of Weeks. (Lev. 23:9-21) The next verse refers to the weekly Sabbath before the day of the sheaf:

16 Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. (Mark 16:1 NKJV)

³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. ⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also as one born out of due time. (Acts 15:3-8 NKJV)

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The way to check the days of Jesus' death and resurrection is by thorough study and revelation of the scriptures: They took Jesus' body down to bury it in the tomb near twilight before the Jews' sixth day when they held the Sabbath of the feast; after the sixth day, the seventh day Sabbath passed; in the middle of the third day of the feast—near dawn on the first day of the week, Christ rose to life and left the tomb to appear to men for the next forty days; then He ascended to the Father in heaven.

We must seek the truth with our whole heart; we can't quit when we're halfway there. And when we do, we return to the roots of the olive tree into which we're grafted as branches. Here we are, in the promised new covenant, unlike the old, although historic Judaism impacts our faith. (Jer. 31:31-40) The Kingdom belongs to the King of the Jews, the Son of God—Yeshua the Messiah—our Lord and Savior too.

If the temple priests had known God's Passover would be fulfilled by the sacrifice of His own Son, they would not have planned His death, but the prophecies were hidden from them who hadn't believed the prophets meant exactly what they said, and the priests who believed He was the One to come kept their faith as a personal secret, fearing its social stigma.

Although His crucifixion was prophesied, its day was not. It came at a time in history when men were thoroughly versed in rabbinical teachings but not in the Scriptures themselves. Its day has been hidden from gentiles for centuries by our dependency on teachers who are misinformed; even so, the Bible's words are being revealed near the peak of the great apostasy. If we make the same errors the Jewish priests made, our understanding of the Scriptures will be distorted, and we will be taken unaware who are not living by the truth of God's Word.

If Only the Truth Were Known

¹³ The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.

¹⁴ "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD—a lasting ordinance. ¹⁵ For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything

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with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat; that is all you may do.

¹⁷ “Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. ¹⁸ In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. ¹⁹ For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And anyone, whether foreigner or native-born, who eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel. ²⁰ Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.”

(Exodus 12:14-20 NIV) [Each evening leads to each new day.]

The Feast of the Passover was a Sabbath; it was *the first day* of unleavened bread, followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread and held until the seventh day, which was the last Sabbath of the Passover. From twilight on the fourteenth until twilight on the twenty-first, seven days, only bread without leaven may be eaten with meals, and all leaven must be removed from their homes.

This changes everything, doesn't it? *From the evening of the fourteenth until the evening of the twenty-first day*, seven days would include the twentieth but not the twenty-first. Indeed, the Hebrews were commanded to leave Egypt after midnight on the fourteenth though it would be many hours to completely depart from Rameses; on the fifteenth, Egyptians were still watching them leave. (Num. 3:33) Even so, *the first day* is the key phrase, making the fourteenth, not the fifteenth, the first of seven days.

Spiritually blinded and confused by the scriptures, the chief priests, scribes, and elders, along with synagogue rulers and their legal experts—Torah scholars, demanded the death of Yeshua by crucifixion on the feast's preeminent day: its Shabbat was on its first day, Abib 14, the LORD's Passover. And that is its mystery.