

Prayer Update From Israel (April 2, 2012)



1. FRIDAY EVENING BEGINS PASSOVER AND THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed, Messiah, 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” (I Corinthians 5:7-8).

Friday at sundown Jews around the world will be gathered round tables in obedience to the command in Exodus 12:14, *“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.”* They will have cleaned leaven from their homes (12:19) and will begin a week of eating only unleavened bread. The word *Pesach* (Passover) comes from verb *lifso'ach* which means “to skip”. Literally, when the scourge went through Egypt, those with blood on their doorposts were ‘skipped’ the judgment which came upon the rest of Egypt. The meal is celebrated at a *seder* table. *Seder* means “order”. In modern Hebrew, *b'seder*—‘o.k.’ is literally, ‘in order’. So the *seder* table is an “ordered” account, both through reading and having a meal, of what God did on that occasion. During the course of the meal, most families are guided by a book called a “Haggadah”. This word actually means “the telling” and is taken from Exodus 13:8, *“And you shall tell your son on that day, saying, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt’”* (Exodus 13:8). Although the book contains remarks by revered rabbis here and there, it is primarily a straightforward account of God’s deliverance of His people Israel from bondage in Egypt, interspersed with wonderful psalms, and other Biblical passages—many of which reference God’s salvation (*Yeshu'ah*) and coming Messiah. At the heart of this “telling” as it has come down to our day is an addition called *Afikomen*. It comes from a Greek word, meaning literally *“that which comes after”* or even *“the one who came”*. At the beginning of the *seder* three pieces of matzo are placed into a three-fold pocket—but the piece going into the middle compartment is first broken. Part of this broken piece of unleavened bread is placed in the middle pocket; the other piece, the *Afikomen*, is hidden. At the end of the

seder children will seek the *Afikomen*...and the one who finds it will be given a redemption-price reward. Then all the participants eat a portion of the *Afikomen* for dessert. Modern-day matzo is unleavened, pierced and striped from the heat in baking. According to the Mishna, the *Afikomen* is a substitute for the “Korban Pesach”—the Passover Sacrifice, which was the last thing eaten at *seders* during the First and Second Temple periods. Yet there is a veil over the hearts of this people, and there is much deep truth in the traditions which they still do not see.

PLEASE PRAY:

*For Light to shine over *seder* tables around the world, to reveal the Truth of the “Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world”—who was bruised and pierced, cut off from mankind and hidden in the earth—the Lamb of God who atones for and takes away the sin of humankind. Who may be found by all who seek, and whose finding brings Life, and Nourishment and Joy!

*For God’s protection over Israel during this holy week when children are out of school and many families are out and about enjoying the holidays.

THIS WEEK’S TORAH PORTION:

From ancient times there has been a weekly portion (Parashah) from the first five books of Moses (The Torah) and an ending (Haftarah) from the Prophets read on the Sabbath in synagogues around the world. This portion is given a Hebrew name drawn from the opening words of the Torah passage. An illustration of this practice appears to have been recorded in Luke 4:16 where Yeshua (Jesus) arrived in the synagogue in Nazareth and was asked to read the portion (Isaiah 61) from the Prophets. We have found that in perusing these weekly readings, not only are we provided opportunity to identify in the context of God’s Word with millions of Jewish people around the world, but very often the Holy Spirit will illumine specific passages pertinent that week in our intercession for the Land and people of Israel. All texts are those of English translations of the Scriptures.

DURING THE WEEK OF PASSOVER, THERE ARE READINGS EACH DAY IN THE SYNAGOGUES. WE HAVE PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING LIST FOR THE USE OF THOSE WHO DURING THE COURSE OF THE WEEK MAY WISH TO READ FROM SOME OR ALL OF THESE PASSAGES.

**Day 1 (Saturday 7 April): Exodus 12:21-51; Numbers 28:16-25
Joshua 3:5-7; 5:2—6:1 6:27**

**Day 2 (Sunday 8 April): Leviticus 22:26—23:44; Numbers 28:16-25
II Kings 23: 1-9; 21-25**

FIRST FRUITS

Sunday—the day after the Passover Sabbath—is the day on which the Ceremony of First Fruits would have been performed (Leviticus 23:9-14). It is also the first day in the “Counting of the Omer” to Shavuot—the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:15).

Day 3 (Monday, 9 April): Exodus 13:1-16; Numbers 28:19-25

Day 4 (Tuesday 10 April): Exodus 22:24—23:19; Numbers 28:19-25

Day 5 (Wednesday, 11 April): Exodus 33:12—34:26; Numbers 28:19-25
Ezekiel 37:1-14

Day 6 (Thursday 12 April): Exodus 9:1-14
Numbers 28:19-25

Day 7 (Friday 13 April): Exodus 13:17—15:26; Numbers 28:19-25
II Samuel 22:1-51

It is customary in many places that the SONG OF SONGS (Song of Solomon) be read during the Passover season, sometimes in the synagogue, sometimes in homes after the Seder meal or preceding the beginning of Shabbat.

PESACH S'ME'AH!!—Joyous Passover Blessings to each of You from



***Martin & Norma
Jerusalem***

[Saturday 14 April, after the close of Passover Week, the regular readings in the cycle through the Torah continue with *Shemini*—“Eighth” (Day): TORAH: Leviticus 9:1—11:47; HAFTARAH: II Samuel 6:1-19.]

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