

PASSOVER – THE FEAST OF REDEMPTION

Our Father who art in heaven , we thank you for the great privilege we have been given to come before you in the name of your son, Jesus Christ and in whose name we pray. Hallowed be your name. Thy kingdom come and thy will be done on this earth as it is in heaven. We praise your name for your loving kindness and for your truth. You have magnified your word above all your name. Be merciful unto us according to your word and give us understanding. And with all the understanding, we ask your inspiration and guidance in how to love our neighbor as ourselves. Amen.

This spring holy season is a very wonderful time of beginning the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. We are rejoicing before God and his throne, thankful and grateful to him for bringing us to a new year and the joy of fellowship together in His presence in this season.

Dry Bones usually refers to the vision of the “Valley of Dry Bones” found in the Book of Ezekiel (chapter 36). God announced, through the prophet Ezekiel, that Israel will be restored to her land in blessing under the leadership of “David” (Ezekiel 37:24), clearly a reference to the future under Jesus Christ the Messiah, descendant of David ([Isaiah 7:14](#); [9:6–7](#); [Luke 1:31–33](#)). God transported Ezekiel (in a vision) to a valley full of dry bones and directed him to speak to the bones. Ezekiel was to tell the bones that God would make breath enter the bones and they would come to life, just as in the creation of man when He breathed life into Adam ([Genesis 2:7](#)). Ezekiel obeyed, the bones came together, flesh developed, skin covered the flesh, breath entered the bodies, and they stood up in a vast army. The reviving of the dry bones signified God’s plan for Israel’s future national restoration. Putting “breath” by God’s Spirit into the bones showed that new life depended on God’s power to restore physically but also spiritually which be fulfilled when Christ returns to earth to establish his Millennial Kingdom ([Matthew 24:30-31](#)). The resurrection of the dead is discussed in [1 Corinthians 15:12-54](#).

A friend has been emailing me cartoons called *Dry Bones* which are becoming one of my favorite cartoons. *Dry Bones* is an Israeli political cartoon strip by Yaakov Kirschen published in the English-language newspaper *The Jerusalem Post*. The internationally syndicated editorial comic strip, featuring the affable key character Shuldig, has been ribbing politicians and their constituents for decades, taking a gentle poke at the Jewish world and the human condition for the past 40 years. The cartoon this week is a large close-up of Shuldig holding up a sheet of Matzah in his left hand with a huge bite missing from the corner and captioned: HAPPY PASSOVER! I wish all of you a HAPPY PASSOVER with JOY abundant and running over! We are in the season of our deliverance and salvation.

The Passover of God pictures our redemption plan in a “capsule”—the entire redemptive plan, action and activity of Almighty God—YHVH, our ruler and Creator who has given us the breath of life and called us to himself to be his chosen people. This is a tremendous honor and

opportunity—that we are called and chosen as his *elect*. That God reached down and chose us to serve him is humbling in spirit. For various reasons it is human for all of us to feel small and insignificant at times, yet we are not to compare ourselves to others or as in my case, other ministries. We all have our problems and things to work out, however. Realize that when we are little in our own sight, we are big in God’s sight. The smaller we are in our own sight, the more God can show his power and glory in us.

Corinthians 12:1-10—Paul said, “I might desire to boast but about myself where caught up to heaven and saw visions and heard inexpressible things that no one is permitted to tell (only angels are permitted to know), because it does not help buildup anyone. I will refrain from boasting so that no one will think more of me than is warranted by what I do or say because of these surpassingly great revelations. Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming exalted above measure (conceited), I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” If we acknowledge our weaknesses and cry out to God as the apostle Paul did, the power of Christ will rest upon us.

James 4:6-8—“God gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’ The humble will receive his grace. “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. **Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” We are to get rid of the leaven (sin) in our lives—inspect our lives, our homes, and every aspect of our lives in getting rid of wrong attitudes, and thoughts. **Hebrews 12:6 -10**—“for whom the LORD loves, he chastens; and he scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.” All God’s children have become partakers of the chastening process so we can be humbled and yielded to him and do what is pleasing in his sight.

If we keep his commands and do what is pleasing in his sight, some day we will be given honor and glory. If you are not chastened, then you are not one of God’s children. “Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He **for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness**”—therefore, ultimately of His glory and power. We can become like God in holiness. Once he can trust us, he can give us more of his power for us to use in our life in serving him in this world. **Verse 11**—“Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

Cappy and I had a little test this week. Monday, we drove down to Wenatchee which is about a hundred miles south in order to have our high speed printer serviced. As we approached the

traffic signal to turn, we heard this clunking sound and the motor died at the signal. Cappy was able to restart the motor and keep it running and miraculously we made it very prayerfully to our destination. The technician was able to quickly complete the service on the printer, before the AAA tow truck driver arrived within thirty minutes of our call. He just happened to be driving on a nearby street area, and towed us to the GM dealership service department. The van needed a new motor. This would take some consideration and prayer on our part, so we rented a car and returned to Omak and finished the printing needing to be done. However, the rent-a car back would have to be returned to Wenatchee and it was time to check out possible transportation options in Omak. Since the 1997 van had over 200,000 miles on it and the motor replaced once, it was time to let it go. We were blessed the following day to find a good, gently used '07 Buick with a big trunk that had the basics without needing to relearn how to navigate a car. Notice, this happened right before Passover, but God provided. A lot of things could have happened much differently in this chastening experience, but God intervened for our safety and needs and made all things work out together for good.

God teaches us lessons and we all need to keep our eyes on Christ and God through every test and every situation. God wants us, as his people, to call on him in times of trouble to deliver us and to keep us out of harm's way. Several weeks ago I asked you all to pray for me because of a rapid heart arrhythmia, and you did. Thank you. Happily, it is within normal limits even though my energy is still somewhat limited.

We are to renew our spiritual vitality daily. **Hebrews 12:12-17**—"Therefore, strengthen the hands which hang down (feeble arms), and the feeble (weak) knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather be healed. Pursue peace and holiness—make every effort to live in peace with all people and to be holy: without holiness no one will see God. Looking carefully (see to it) lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any **root of bitterness** (complaint) spring up trouble for you and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright."

God has called us and given us the birthright opportunity to be in his kingdom and to become like him as members of his family—to be his children, sons of God and rulers with Him over the Universe. Paul says in **verse 17**, "For you know that afterward, when he (Esau) wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears." Esau blew it by selling his birthright... On that particular blessing, he couldn't have it back. But he would not repent and became bitter and angry refusing to go God's way becoming a candidate for the lake of fire. A root of bitterness can be likened to a dandelion found growing in your lawn. Once the plant appears and flowers, unless the dandelion is rooted out right away the seed is cast abroad everywhere and your lawn soon becomes full of dandelions and spreads to your neighbors' lawns as well.

We are surrounded by enormous and serious trials in the world today. These are serious times in which we are living. The Middle East is in chaos. A recent Dry Bones cartoon depicts Uncle Sam who has awakened from a nightmare in which he was on a plane being purposely crashed and the pilot was Obama. America is supporting the rebels in Syria under President Assad and they have now been transformed into ISIS an Islamic state. Following the **advance** of the ISIS

into northern Iraq in the summer of 2014, [Iran](#) began to provide military aid to counter the militant advance. Iran launched airstrikes (3/16/15—deployed advanced rockets and missiles to Iraq against ISIS positions and provided combat troops and technical advisers to the Iraqi government, Shia militias, and Iraqi Kurdistan. Now Obama is cozying up with Iran and trying to make friends with President Assad. Nuclear war is on the horizon as Iran and six world powers announced reaching an agreement Thursday on a broad framework over Iran’s nuclear program. Many important discrepancies on key issues emerge in US and Iran interpretations that need to be resolved before the June 30 deadline. The real trouble is that “Uncle Sam” hasn’t woken up yet because of the policies of our government who are anti-God, anti-Christ and anti-Christian.

This is a most serious Passover season. We must look to God for our salvation as Israel looked to God for their freedom from slavery when in Egypt before the Exodus. America needs to repent of her sins before God or she will perish. We need to take advantage of this Passover season and count the Omer daily and draw near to God from PASSOVER to PENTECOST. The Passover refers to the Jewish people and the people of Israel, but it is also lesson for every true Christian. God commands his followers to keep and observe the Passover. The “Christian world” today is observing Easter Sunday which is tomorrow and a pagan custom originating from the worship of the pagan goddess, Semiramus. There is no command in the Bible to keep Easter. **Ezekiel 8:16-18**—in the inner court of the Lord’s house were men with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. The angel said to Ezekiel, “Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.”

In the New Testament, Paul was talking to the Corinthians who were keeping the feast of Unleavened Bread as God commands. **I Corinthians 5:7**—“Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Christ was our lamb, sacrificed for us, therefore, we keep the feast—the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread which are one and the same and it is ordained forever. **Leviticus 23:4, 24**—“these are the feasts of the Lord YHVH holy convocations that you shall proclaim at their appointed times. Whosoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day that soul shall be cut off from Israel.” God says you and your sons are to keep his ordained feasts forever. **Exodus 12:14-17**—“this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.”

This is to teach us and remind us of the process of salvation every year as we repeat the steps from year to year to reinforce this in our minds, our hearts and consciousness—the fact of salvation and how redemption occurs and what it depends on. It depends on the sacrifice of Christ as our Passover lamb and our getting right with God. The lamb symbolizes Christ and killing the lamb symbolizes Christ who was put to death for our sins. The blood of the sacrificed lamb put on the doorposts in Egypt pictures the blood of Christ that covers our sins. When Christ

was killed in 30 A.D. on Abib \ (Nisan) 14, he was killed at the very time that the Passover lambs were being killed at the temple. He is the perfect Passover lamb. As John the Baptist said, “Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” The process of our salvation begins with the lamb, Christ and his sacrifice. He was resurrected three days later and now lives at the right hand of God and his throne, reigning with God the Father in heaven.

The Jews don’t understand that great meaning of the Passover. They have the Old Testament down pat and observe it every year at the right time and the right place, but they do not understand all the New Testament implications and its typology and how it pictures Christ. I have noticed a trend on the Internet this past week, that more and more websites are talking about the Passover and advocating it for Christians, and saying that the Jews and Christians all need to come together and obey God in keeping the holy days beginning with Passover. Christians are being invited to Passover services and the Jews are beginning to have their eyes opened to realize that Christians are not enemies and thousands of Christians are also beginning to keep what they call the Passover even though they may not be going by God’s calendar or necessarily having a traditional Seder meal. Some have what they call Passover or Communion with wine or grape juice and a tiny wafer of unleavened bread – Satan’s counterfeit. The Passover is a festive meal called a Seder which means setting in order. It is a *Passover Hagadah* that tells the story of the plagues upon the Egyptians, the Passover in Egypt and the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of slavery. Matzo, the unleavened bread of slavery, represents the body of Christ that was beaten and broken for us and the wine represents the blood of Christ. We are to remember what Christ went through to deliver us from the bondage of sin and brought mankind true redemption and freedom.

The Jews are beginning to learn and believe upon Jesus Christ as do Christians who look for his second coming. The Jews are also coming to understand that their greatest friends are the Christian evangelicals who love Israel. There are a lot of us. The mainstream Protestant churches are still baptized and buried into Easter which is pagan.

Article—Aish.com “*Jewish Destiny*”—by Rabbi Ben Bleck. “It has been noticed that more Jews observe the Passover Seder than any other Jewish ritual. It is a powerful affirmation of our collective kinship and a historic moment that allowed for the birth of our people back in ancient Egypt with Divine help. It helps us remember that fact every year when we celebrate it.” It is an opportunity to reflect upon what God has done and to think back over the miracles he has performed and to remind us today that our God is a miracle working God and he will deliver us just as he delivered our forefathers when they were slaves in ancient Egypt.

Rabbi Bleck points out that the first Passover Seder took place not after the Exodus, but before it. It was therefore, not a Seder of gratitude to God for what had already happened, but of hope of redemption that was yet to come. It looked toward the future, just as keeping Passover today does reminds us of that redemption 1,500 years before Christ, but it also projects forward to our redemption and the coming of the Messiah to save us from annihilation today. So Passover is a prophecy as well as a history lesson. It is relevant from generation to generation as we retell the story of Passover to our children. The purpose of our Passover is to resonate with us as a harbinger of future hope and deliverance. In every generation people rise up to destroy God’s church and God’s people, the Jews.

The forces of Satan are rising up today around the world—ISIS, the Ayatollahs, the Obama Administration and are afflicting the Jews and the Christians. We are entering a period of persecution unlike this world has ever seen. Twenty-one Coptic Christians were beheaded on the beach in a gruesome display of Islamic violence in the name of Islam, the religion of Satan the devil. There can be no reconciliation between Islam and true Christianity. The world's definition of Christianity is a pagan apostate Christianity. Satan has deceived all the nations of the world. The apostle Paul warns us that there can be no peace between the righteous and the wicked.

Proverbs 29:27—“An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.” Righteousness abominates the deeds of the wicked whether it is idolatry or homosexuality. **Proverbs 25:26 (NIV)** —“Like a muddied spring or a polluted well are the righteous who give way to the wicked.” **2 Corinthians 6:11-18(NKJV)** –“O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections (emotions). Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open. Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial (Satan the devil)? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said, ‘I will live with them and walk among them. I will be their God and they will be my people.’ Therefore, ‘Come out from them and be separate,’ says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. And, I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

Passover is one of those things that sets us apart from the world as God's people. It sets us apart from the Muslims, the Catholics, and the apostates. **Exodus 13:8-10**—we are to tell our children about Passover and say: “ ‘This done, because of what the LORD did for me when I came up from Egypt.’ It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes that the LORD's law may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the Lord has brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.” The Passover and days of Unleavened Bread is still our sign between God and his people. They are along with God's holy Spirit, the mark of God's people.

Ezekiel 9:1-11 is talking about this end-time apostate, idolatrous generation and God's judgment that is coming upon the entire world—Muslims, Christians, and Atheists altogether. “Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, ‘Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand.’ And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who had the writer's inkhorn at his side; and the LORD said to him, ‘Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it.’

“To the others he said in my hearing, ‘Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and

women; but do not come near anyone on who is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary.’ So they began with the elders who were before the temple. Then He said to them, ‘Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!’ And they went out and killed in the city. So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?’ Then He said to me, ‘The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, “The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see!” And as for me also, my eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.’ Just then, the man clothed with linen, who had the inkhorn at his side, reported back and said, ‘I have done as you commanded me.’ ”

Judgment day has begun. ISIS is marching through the Middle East as a plague allowed by the Lord. Iran is marching through the Middle East. Obama’s treaty with Iran is a covenant with death. **Isaiah 28:7-8 (NKJV)** —“ But they also have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink. They are swallowed up by wine. They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filth; No place is clean. Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scornful men, who rule this people who are in Jerusalem: Because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.’ ”

President Obama is making a treaty with Iran who hates America and says death to America. The U.S. has made lies her refuge and under falsehood hidden herself. What kind of refuge is that? Will we be spared nuclear war because we made a treaty with Iran and death? We are the tribes of Ephraim, Joseph and Manasseh and the lost tribes of Israel. **Isaiah 28:16-19**— “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place. Your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol (grave) will not stand. When the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it. As often as it goes out it will take you; For morning by morning it will pass over, and by day and by night; It will be a terror just to understand the report.” “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, **a tried stone(rock)**, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily. Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet.” **1 Corinthians 10:4**—that rock (stone) is Christ.

The hail is that of nuclear missiles. The waters are the floods of the armies of other nations that will over flow the hiding place. The underground cities are not going to work. They are going to be found and routed out. Passover symbolizes our hope to escape these things that are going to come to pass and to stand before the Lord. God is always willing to come to our aid. We can depend upon and trust God. The Seder teaches us year by year to trust our redemption through Christ and his fulfillment as the Messiah. He is going to come quickly. **Malachi 3:1**—“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts.” He will deliver his people.

As our ancestors ate that first Seder meal in Egypt, they were told they were to stand with their loins girded and shoes on their feet and with traveling staff in their hand ready to march out of Egypt. Are you prepared and ready, fully dressed, with your house in order and in readiness to leave and wearing garments of righteousness? Do you have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel and wearing the belt of truth around your waist with your shield of faith in hand and wearing your helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God?

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”