

Yahshua's Last Supper

by Earl Walters February 2007

- Luk 22:14** And when the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve emissaries with Him.
- Luk 22:15** And He said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before My suffering,
- Luk 22:16** for I say to you, I shall certainly not eat of it again until it is filled in the reign of Elohim."
- Luk 22:17** And taking the cup, giving thanks, He said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves,
- Luk 22:18** for I say to you, I shall certainly not drink of the fruit of the vine until the reign of Elohim comes."
- Luk 22:19** And taking bread, giving 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."
- Luk 22:20** Likewise the cup also, **after supper**, saying, "This cup is the renewed covenant in My blood which is shed for you.

For years I have wondered about the fact that Yahshua supposedly had a Passover seder with His Talmidim on Tuesday evening and then was Himself the Pesach Lamb on Wednesday.

The points covered by Roy A. Reinhold in his article "The Last Supper, was it a Passover seder?" are very interesting.

<p><i>Reinhold asks:</i> <i>How important is this issue? I think it's important in understanding the crucifixion week, and because it is the only New Testament ceremony that Yahshua instituted for believers.</i></p>
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Today we will attempt to reach a conclusion on the issue of whether or not the Last Supper was the celebration of a Passover seder meal or a special ceremony we are now commanded to follow.

Messianic Believers have struggled with several explanations for the apparent conflict in what Yahshua did and what the rest of Judah was observing.

One prominently taught belief is that there was a Tz'dukim (Sadducee) method of observing Passover, and a P'rushim (Pharisee) method.

In this belief system, the Sadducees observed the Passover as the 14th of Nisan/Abib was beginning, and the rest of the Jews celebrated it as the 14th was ending as they do to this day.

A variant on this is a teaching that Yahshua and the apostles had a Passover seder meal as observed by Jews outside of Israel, who observed 2 days for Feast days so they didn't miss it.

Both of these widely held teachings on the issue assume that the Last Supper was a Passover Seder meal.

I don't believe the evidence supports the position that the Last Supper was a Passover Seder meal, and you can be the judge on whether the evidence is strong enough to take that position.

Source Materials Used by Reinhold:

Tanakh: He used the Koren Edition Tanakh for Hebrew; and used the Greek Septuagint also to compare words used in key verses in the Torah on the Passover, to compare with those used in the Greek NT manuscript.

Brit Chadasha: He used the Peshitta Aramaic Brit Chadasha with the Hebrew translation; and for Greek he used the Stephens 1551 manuscript, which was the basis for the KJV English Bible. English translations of the Old and New Testament were observed, but just as a reference to see how others translated certain verses. It was more important to use original language manuscripts to get the original intent.

I agree that it is very important to look at the Peshitta Aramaic as an original source document for the Brit Chadasha. Mainly, because Bishop Papias wrote that the book of Matthew was originally written in Hebrew (Palestinian Aramaic) and translated into Greek.

He was an early bishop of the church in Syria. Later, Irenaeus wrote that he had seen and handled the original Hebrew (Palestinian Aramaic) of the book of Matthew.

Clement of Alexandria likewise wrote that he had seen and referenced the original Hebrew of the book of Matthew.

Therefore, we have 3 witnesses to Matthew being originally written in Aramaic (also called Syriac) and translated to Greek by the apostles.

As you know, I believe that other books in the Brit Chadasha were originally in Aramaic, because there is anecdotal evidence for the complete Peshitta Aramaic Bible going back to maybe about 95 AD (it didn't include Revelation).

I think it is prudent to consider the Peshitta Aramaic of the book of Matthew as based upon the original manuscript.

Evidence #1:

It was **after the Last Supper** and Yahshua had just finished washing the feet of the disciples as described in John 13.

Many Messianic Rabbis often teach that the book of John supports the position of the Tz'dukim (Sadducee) celebrating the Passover early as the 14th of Nisan/Abib was beginning.

This Messianic teaching proposes that the Last Supper was a Passover seder meal. However, take a look at the following (NASB).

John 13:26 ...He took it and gave it (the morsel) to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

John 13:27What you do, do quickly.

John 13:28 Now no one of those reclining at table knew for what purpose He said this to him.

(verse 29 is the strong clue)

John 13:29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, **THAT YAHSHUA WAS SAYING TO HIM, "BUY THE THINGS WE HAVE NEED OF FOR THE FEAST"**; or else that he should give something to the poor.

John 13:30 And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.

John 13:29 (KJV) For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Yahshua had said unto him, "Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor."

John 13:29 (Complete Jewish Bible) Some thought that since Y'hudah was in charge of the common purse, Yahshua was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival," or telling him to give something to the poor.

Verse 29 shows us that the apostles **knew** that the meal they had just eaten in the upper room was not the Passover.

If it had been the Passover and they had just finished eating it, why would they even think that Judas was leaving to go and buy the necessary things they needed for the Passover meal?

The Feast mentioned is the Passover Seder meal, which from the text is still future **AFTER** the Last Supper was finished.

Therefore, they all knew that the Passover meal was eaten at twilight as the 14th of Nisan/Abib was ending and the 15th was beginning (after the Passover Lamb had been killed in mid-afternoon on the 14th when Yahshua died on the cross).

That's why they were thinking that Judas was to buy all the stuff for the Passover meal.

Yes, the day or the two days before the Passover are called the Day(s) of Preparation and that's what they were doing.

They were preparing for the Passover, and sharing a community supper meal.

It appears that Yahshua institutionalized a new thing in the bread and wine ceremony to be celebrated annually as the 14th of Nisan/Abib was beginning every year.

There is other evidence that it can also be taken throughout the year.

Evidence #2:

What type of bread was used at the Last Supper ceremony of the bread and wine?

Was it regular bread or unleavened bread?

If unleavened bread was used, then we can possibly assume that maybe it was some type of an early Passover Seder celebration.

If regular bread was used, then there is no possibility of it being a Passover Seder meal.

Applicable Hebrew and Aramaic words:

Hebrew: matzah (singular) and matzot (plural) is used for unleavened bread; and lekhem (singular) and lekhemim (plural) is used for regular bread. halekhem means "the bread" with the definite article "hey" appended.

Hebrew words:

matzah (singular) מצה, matzot (plural) מצות, means unleavened bread.

lekhem (singular) לחם, lekhemim (plural) לחמים, means regular bread.

Aramaic: As used in all applicable verses in the Peshitta Aramaic NT, patireh means unleavened bread, and lakhma means regular bread.

Aramaic words:

patireh פטירה means "unleavened bread", d'patireh דפטירה means "the unleavened bread", which is the equivalent of hamatzah/hamatzot in Hebrew.

lakhma לחמא, means regular bread, and is the equivalent of lekhem in Hebrew.

Greek: azumos (or variants like azumon) are used for unleavened bread; and artos (or or variants like arton) are used for regular bread as can be "psomi (to)" or "epiousios" in more modern Greek. artos is (regular) bread, a loaf or loaves; and "psomi (to)" is modern Greek for bread and epiousios is modern Greek for daily bread.

Greek words:

azumos—azumon—azuma αζυμος—αζυμων—αζυμα, means unleavened bread.

artos—arton αρτος—αρτον, means regular bread.

psomi(to) ψωμι(τό), means regular bread in modern Greek.

epiousios επιουσιος, means daily bread in modern Greek.

With this knowledge, we can go to all the applicable texts in the Bible and see what is used.

In the Torah Scriptures when talking about the Passover I will use (H) for the Hebrew and (GS) for the Greek Septuagint.

In **Exodus 12:18** it refers to eating unleavened bread on the 14th day of the first month at evening, (H) matzot, (GS) azuma.

In **Exodus 23:15** it refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, (H) hamatzot, (GS) azuma.

In **Leviticus 23:6** it refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, (H) hamatzot, (GS) azumon.

In **Leviticus 23:17** it refers to the two loaves of raised bread for Shavuot or Pentecost, (H) lekhem, (GS) artous.

In **Numbers 28:17** it refers to unleavened bread being eaten for 7 days for the feast, (H) matzot, (GS) azuma.

These texts all show a consistent use of words in the Torah, and shows what words were used in each case for unleavened bread or regular bread.

In each case, where unleavened bread is cited, the word in Hebrew is matzot, the plural of matzah.

The same occurs in the Greek Septuagint, where there is consistency in using azuma/azumon for unleavened bread.

A different word is used for regular bread in both the Hebrew Tanakh and Greek Septuagint.

Going on to the Brit Chadasha, the following are all the verses in the Brit Chadasha about the bread and wine ceremony of the Last Supper, where bread is mentioned.

I will use (PA) for Peshitta Aramaic, (H) for Hebrew version of the Aramaic, and (G) for the Greek NT manuscript (Stephens 1551 which was the basis for the KJV).

Matthew 26:17 (NASB) Now on the First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Yahshua, saying, "Where do you want us to prepare for You to eat the

Passover?" (italics are not in the original text and are added by the translators, and thus it may not mean the first day of the Feast, but the first Preparation Day. The translators may have misled you. More on this verse later). (PA) d'patireh, (H) lamatzot, (G) azumon.

All 3 confirm this is unleavened bread used in the verse.

Matthew 26:26 (NASB) And while they were eating, Yahshua took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body". (PA) lakhma, (H) halekhem, (G) artos. All 3 texts state that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

Mark 14:1 (NASB) Now *the feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread* was two days off..... (PA) d'patireh, (H) hamatzot, (G) azuma. All 3 texts agree that it was unleavened bread.

Mark 14:12 (NASB) And on the first *day of the feast of Unleavened Bread*..... (note heavy use of inserted meaning in italics, this may not be the first day of the feast, but the first Day of Preparation). (PA) d'patireh, (H) lamatzot, (G) azumon. All 3 texts agree on unleavened bread.

Mark 14:22 (NASB) And while they were eating, He took *some* bread, and after a blessing He broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, and said, "Take *it*, this is My body". (PA) lakhma, (H) halekhem, (G) arton. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

Luke 22:1 (NASB) Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. (PA) d'patireh, (H) hamatzot, (G) azumon. All 3 texts agree on unleavened bread.

Luke 22:7 (NASB) Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover *lamb* had to be sacrificed. (PA) d'patireh, (H) hamatzot, (G) azumon. All 3 texts agree on unleavened bread.

Luke 22:19 (NASB) And having taken *some* bread, 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." (PA) lakhma, (H) halekhem, (G) arton. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

Regarding the question of whether this was the normal elements of bread and wine we take each Shabbat, I note in Luke 22:20 that He made the declaration at the end of the meal.

I believe that Yahshua would have blessed the bread and wine prior to His meal as was tradition.

I do believe that we should remember Yahshua each time we bless the bread and wine as well as all other events of worship that we engage in each day.

Someone suggested that we have the blessing of the bread and wine each Shabbat as a congregation, I have no problem with that and will prayerfully consider what direction to take in doing so.

However, I am not convinced at this point that what Yahshua established on this special evening of His life is the same as a routine blessing of the bread and wine.

This event was so special that 3 of the Apostles made a point of addressing it and Sha'ul really emphasized it in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

Yochanan -- the bread and wine ceremony is not mentioned in John, but it introduced the foot washing ceremony, and gave a long discourse by Yahshua to the disciples.

Now let's go on to Paul's coverage of the bread and wine ceremony in 1 Corinthians 11.

1 Corinthians 11:23 (NASB) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread;.... (PA) lakhma, (H) lekhem, (G) arton. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

1 Corinthians 11:26 (NASB) For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (PA) lakhma, (H) halekhem, (G) arton. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

1 Corinthians 11:27 (NASB) Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. (PA) lakhma, (H) milekhem, (G) arton. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

1 Corinthians 11:28 (NASB) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. (PA) lakhma, (H) halekhem, (G) artou. All 3 texts agree that the bread was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

Commentary #2:

All applicable verses covering the bread and wine ceremony at the Last Supper, plus other verses to make a strong point that the bread is leavened.

Every one of them states that the bread used in the bread and wine ceremony was regular bread and not unleavened bread; that's 100% in agreement in both the Peshitta Aramaic and Greek manuscripts on all verses.

The bread used for the bread and wine ceremony was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

We have multiple witnesses to this fact, in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, plus the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians.

Matthew, Mark and Luke had used the term for unleavened bread in the same chapter, when referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

So it isn't like the word was unknown.

100% agreement tells me there is a consistent message in the Brit Chadasha, that the bread and wine ceremony and the Last supper were not a Passover Seder meal.

If it had been a Passover Seder meal, then they would have used unleavened bread (which they did not do).

Yes, there are some troubling verses in gospels that muddy the water on the issue.

We will address all of them later.

I wonder if we should be celebrating the bread and wine ceremony annually as the 14th of Nisan/Abib is beginning, and also celebrate Pasach as a separate feast.

There is also the question as to whether we should observe it throughout the year in remembrance of Yahshua (Yahshua) and His sacrifice for us.

Did Yahshua established one ceremony for believers to celebrate annually on a specific day, on the beginning of the 14th of Nisan/Abib in the evening.

He said, "do this in remembrance of Me."

He appears to have instituted the bread and wine ceremony on a specific day for believers, and said, "do this".

That's the bread and wine ceremony on the beginning of the 14th of Nisan/Abib.

There is further evidence that we are allowed to and encouraged to take the bread and wine ceremony (communion) more often than 1 day a year, but that doesn't negate the command for a specific observance on a specific day.

If true this is the only thing He told us as believers to celebrate on an annual basis.

Summary:

Evidence Area #1: From John 13:29, we know that the bread and wine ceremony and supper were already completed; and that when Judas Iscariot left, the disciples speculated that he was going to buy supplies for the upcoming Passover meal.

Evidence Area #2: The Peshitta Aramaic and Greek Brit Chadasha manuscripts are in 100% agreement on every text in the NT covering the bread and wine ceremony; that the bread used in the bread and wine ceremony was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

The facts above appear to strongly support the Last Supper not being a Pesach seder. Was it a common shared meal before the Pesach lamb was killed in the late afternoon on the 14th of Nisan/Abib?

Let's assume that the bread and wine ceremony at the Last Supper was not a Passover Seder.

Secondly, 100% of all applicable verses in both the Greek manuscripts and Peshitta Aramaic manuscript show that the bread used at the Last Supper bread and wine ceremony was regular bread and not unleavened bread.

Regular bread would not be consumed at a Passover Seder, or even at a supposed meatless Essene seder as some have posited.

However, there are some troublesome verses, and we shall attempt to explain them in light of the knowledge that the Last Supper was not a Passover Seder.

Believers all over the world take the bread and wine (communion), and they do it in remembrance of the sacrifice Yahshua made for them.

That is the bread and wine ceremony boiled down to its bare essence of meaning.

Although it can be seen that the church has missed some of the meaning inherent in the bread and wine ceremony, yet churches all over the world at least celebrate it according to the bare essence of meaning.

However, for Messianic Believers there is more to it.

Minimalists might say, "if the minimum weren't good enough, then it wouldn't be the minimum!"

That's true, and is true concerning all the Bible, but believers should have a yearning for the truth.

For those that accept the minimalist approach, you'd better hope that your minimalist effort on reading the Bible little (if at all), attending Assembly infrequently (if at all) and praying only when you need something big (if at all), is good enough.

The whole reason Yahshua came was to establish a relationship between people and Yahweh.

That sort of relationship is not fostered by a minimalist attitude, although you certainly have the free will to do so.

Some people intimate a minimalist attitude of not caring to know Yahweh personally, or not wanting to know the truth.

They have a neo-modernist attitude of getting by with the minimum.

Perhaps that's why Yahshua said concerning the end-times, "when the Son of Man comes, will He find the faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

Think about it.

If the Last Supper was not a Passover Seder, and prophetically shows a future event which will be fully revealed later, we need to come to understand it in depth.

Was the Last Supper a completely new institution given by Yahweh to be rehearsed by Believers for a coming prophetic event, just as the Biblical Feasts were assigned to us to portray certain future events?

Evidence seems to indicate that the Last Supper is a new ceremony for believers to portray annually and has a future prophetic fulfillment

Troublesome verses:

While it would be easy to gloss over troubling verses that seem to indicate the Last Supper was a Passover Seder, it is better to address them.

They can all be covered from the view that Jerusalem became very crowded at the Feasts.

Therefore, visiting groups like Yahshua and the disciples would have to rent a room ahead of time, just as people today make hotel reservations ahead of time to ensure they have a room during a day in which huge crowds are present.

At all the major festivals many people rented out rooms or their houses to supplement their income.

The Passover also required preparation of the room to ensure it was ceremonially clean.

The Passover lamb had to be killed at the Temple.

Nowhere does it say Yahshua and the disciples took a lamb to the Temple to sacrifice it.

That's why many have supposed that this was a meatless Essene seder.

We do not know whether they ate meat or not, but we do know they consumed regular bread and not matzah at the Last Supper.

Matthew 26:17-19 Now on the first *day of the feast* of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Yahshua, saying, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'" And the disciples did as Yahshua had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

This was not the first day of the feast, and the added italics words are misleading.

Two days of preparing for the coming Passover were observed (13th and 14th of Nisan) to prepare everything, in order to eat the Passover.

So it was on the 13th of Nisan, which was the first day of preparation.

The disciples had to obtain and prepare the room for the Passover meal which was eaten at evening of the 14th of Nisan as the 15th was beginning.

Rooms were rented out for Passover observance, and they obtained and prepared the room.

Yahshua' actions were to have a room for a last meal with His disciples and He earnestly desired to eat the Passover meal with them the evening after the Last Supper.

Why else would He have prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, " My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, yet not as I will, but as You will"?

Did Yahshua wish to eat the Passover with the disciples?

Yes, and He prayed for it at Gethsemane.

However, it was the Father's will for Yahshua to be the Passover Lamb itself and not to eat the upcoming Passover Seder on the following evening.

Therefore, the disciples had a place to go to and stay at in the city when all the events happened later and Yahshua was taken away from them (a refuge in the upper room).

The Last Supper was not a Passover Seder because Yahshua was the sacrificial lamb.

It says they prepared the Passover, and some jump on this verse as conclusive that Peter and John prepared a Passover meal.

However, the Passover required that all men take the lamb to the Temple for sacrifice and be present there.

What the scriptures show us is that Yahshua and the rest of the disciples just showed up later in the evening at the upper room.

Don't you think it is significant that Holy Spirit did not inspire the writers of all these books to mention even once that it was a Passover Seder meal?

What about Luke 22:15? And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;...."

Actually, on face value, Luke 22:15 would seem to indicate that they did eat the Passover meal.

However, we need to look at this verse much more closely.

Because of all the previous extremely strong points, it seems that it cannot be true that He ate the Passover.

Yahshua never changed any of the observed Feast days, since He came to fulfill the spring Feasts as prophecy, and He was the Passover lamb, and the actual Passover meal was on the following evening.

Where Luke 22:15 says, "I have earnestly desired" it uses the same root word in two different ways.

This is a figure of speech called an Hebraism, commonly used throughout the Tanakh in Hebrew, and in Aramaic texts.

in the Greek manuscript -- "epithumia epethumhsa"

Other scholars have noted the usage here of a *polyptoton* or figure of speech, where the same root word is used with different inflections or forms.

The word epethumhsa (h is long "a" sound) is in the Greek aorist tense which indicates a one-time action in the past.

It should be rendered, "at one time in the past I strongly desired to eat this (coming) Passover with you before I suffer."

As He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, "...if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me...", He strongly desired to eat the Passover meal with His disciples, but knew that He was the Passover Lamb and would suffer and die before the meal was eaten on the following evening.

The usage of an Hebraism here indicates that either Luke translated from the Peshitta original text, or that the words were spoken in Aramaic/Hebrew (if the Greek is the original text), and Luke rendered the Hebraism in Greek as best as possible.

in the Peshitta Aramaic manuscript -- "rigta ragtani"

Dr. George M. Lamsa in his translation of the Peshitta Aramaic has it as "I have desired with desire". It is past tense and used in the same manner as the Hebrew equivalent below.

in the Hebrew equivalent of the Peshitta -- "niksof niksafthi"

The Hebraism is in the Nifal root stem and is a Nifal infinitive absolute followed by a Nifal 1cs perfect (I) of the root word "kasaf". In Genesis 31:30, a very similar use of this Hebraism is used, "niksof niksafthah" except that the second word is in Nifal 2ms perfect (you). The Genesis 31:30 usage is the interchange between Jacob and Laban near Mount Gilead when Jacob had left Laban with his wives and children (Rachel had stolen her father's idols too). The Hebraism in Genesis 31:30 is "you longed greatly," in intensive past tense. **Expanding the Hebraism in Luke 22:15, it means "I had (in the past) strongly desired, or, I had (in the past) longed greatly"**. Literally, it is "Desire, I had desired".

While Luke 22:15 is the strongest evidence for the pro-Passover seder believers, it can be explained away as a figure of speech with the wrong nuanced translation.

It cannot overturn all the other strong evidence which seems to prove that the Last Supper was not a Passover Seder meal.

If there is one area of Bible translation that is the most difficult, it is definitely figures of speech (and also maybe parables where there are many possible meanings).

Perhaps some will not believe the extremely powerful evidence against the Last Supper being a Passover Seder meal, in order to protect their historical teachings.

Truth doesn't need to bend the knee to erroneous historical traditions.

Just as king Yoshiyahu (Josiah) in his 18th year heard the truth in the Torah and cleaned house throughout Judah where he got rid of mediums, spiritists, priests of Baal, the pagan altars, and the high places Solomon had built, along with the altar, calf idol and asherah at Bethel that Jereboam had built; so we too ought to be able to carefully examine as an Assembly what we do and separate out the erroneous traditions in favor of the truth.

Now we will cover the most important part of this article on the Last Supper bread and wine ceremony.

We'll cover what it is for, how it is to be observed (and how it was observed by the early church before things got changed), and what it portrays prophetically.

This bread and wine ceremony is more important than you might have thought, and is the only new ceremony that Yahshua instituted for believers.

The Messianic Believers keep their covenant before Yahweh by observing the Feasts of Yahweh as a witness to the nations.

What is your responsibility as a Believer in regard to keeping the only ceremony Yahshua instituted?

The Last Supper: What It Means, The Early Church Practices, And The Prophetic Significance

We should all consider now, that the Last Supper was not a Passover Seder.

It was possibly a final meal Yahshua (Yahshua) shared with His disciples; where He instituted a completely new ceremony, and commanded that believers "do this in remembrance of Me."

Why lekhem (regular bread) and not matzah (unleavened bread)?

Why a new ceremony?

Why the bread of prosperity and not the bread of adversity?

Why the bread of the promised land and not the bread of desert wanderings?

It is not enough to only remove false illusions (in disproving a Passover Seder).

Why the true bread of life?

Why regular bread and not unleavened bread?

On the eve of fulfillment of the Passover Seder, why did Yahshua institute a new ceremony with new meanings and actions?

The answer could be that this new ceremony of the bread and wine is the essence of the Brit Chadasha teachings about the Messiah.

Let's look at John 6:26 to 6:63 for the meaning of Yahshua's saying, **"My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven..... I am the living bread of life that came down out of heaven, if anyone eats this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh."**

Yahshua's words were symbolic and not literal when He said, "**He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day.**" (John 6:54)

Just a few verses later (6:63) He said, "**It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words I have spoken to you are Spirit and are life.**"

Through faith in Yahshua' shed blood and sacrifice we have forgiveness of sins and healing, and through His resurrection we have the promise of eternal life.

We are saved by grace through faith and not of works lest any man should boast.

Yahshua is the true bread of eternal life unsullied by the sin nature passed down from Adam.

He came not baptizing in water, but baptizing with the Holy Spirit and Fire.

This true bread from heaven is the entrance to Yahweh our Father and the Ruach of life.

Which is it that gives life?

According to John 6:54 it is eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Yahshua that gives life, and in John 6:63 it is the Ruach HaKodesh that gives life.

The answer is clear that we obtain salvation by grace through faith in Yahshua as the true Messiah; and by that salvation we are blessed with the Ruach HaKodesh who gives us eternal life.

Eating the flesh and drinking the blood is symbolic--we are not cannibalistic.

However, we symbolically remember the sacrifice of Yahshua's flesh and spilled blood by participating in the bread and wine ceremony.

Before I cite a few verses from John 6, let me say that every verse in this chapter in both the Greek manuscripts and in the Peshitta Aramaic uses the words for regular bread and not unleavened bread

In 100% of all these verses, in all manuscripts about Yahshua being the true bread that came down out of heaven, it is regular bread and not unleavened bread.

All the following select verses from John 6:26 to 6:63 are from the NASB.

John 6:27 Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even Yahweh, has set His seal.

He is talking about spiritual food and not literal food that gives life.

John 6:32-33 Yahshua therefore said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven(regular bread), but it is My Father who gives you the bread out of heaven(regular bread). For the bread of Yahweh(regular bread) is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world."

John 6:35 Yahshua said to them, "I am the bread of life(regular bread and not unleavened bread); he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

Yahshua is the true bread (regular bread and not matzah or unleavened bread) sent down from heaven for the salvation of mankind.

Again He is speaking symbolically that those who come to Him will not hunger spiritually and will not thirst spiritually.

Everyone on earth hungers and gets thirsty in their fleshly body, so it ought to be obvious that He is speaking symbolically.

As it is written in **Colossians 1:26-27** "...that is the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but now has been manifested to His saints, to whom Yahweh willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory."

When a person is saved by grace through faith in the Messiah Yahshua, that person becomes born again, their spirit is made new, and Yahweh Himself comes to live in them in their spirit.

When the Bible talks about being "in Messiah Yahshua", it is referring to that changed person who has Yahweh living in their spirit.

We talk about the anointing of the Ruach HaKodesh, but as truly saved people we are in Messiah Yahshua and He is in us in our spirit.

That saving faith is eating the true bread which comes down out of heaven.

This is the true gospel of the kingdom of Yahweh.

John 6:38-40 For I have come down from heaven, , not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.

Yahshua is the true bread of life from heaven, and we behold Him by faith; and as the verse above states, we who believe in Him have eternal life.

Is this eternal life in the spirit or in the fleshly body?

What did Yahshua mean then by "raising up the dead on the last day", if we in our spirit body never die?

When we are saved, we are a new creation in our spirit. However, our soul and our body are not made perfect like our spirit. Salvation here on earth is only a down payment.

After being saved, in our life we go through the life-long process of sanctification to perfect our soul and body (or not, depending on the free will choices we make).

The soul is your mind, will and emotions; and the soul is the energy interface between the spirit and the body of flesh.

Since there are so many people who've been falsely taught that as humans we are a dual-nature being, where the spirit and soul to these people are the same thing, I guess one verse to dispel this false dual-nature teaching is worthwhile.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the Elohim of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Master Yahshua.

We have the down payment of salvation now we will all receive our perfected body and perfected soul brought back to go with their already perfected spirit, and Yahweh will put them back together again, for forever.

Yahweh was talking to the **believers** at Thessalonica when Paul wrote:

1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 For Yahweh has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Master Yahshua, who died for us, that whether we are awake (living) or asleep (dead), we may live together with Him.

Whether our body and is alive or dead/asleep, we as believers have eternal life in our spirit.

The future salvation stated above when speaking to the already saved, was that the full payment comes to all believers at the same time at the judgment.

When Yahweh raises our body from the dust to perfection, fuses back in our soul that was asleep as a new perfected soul in a perfected body, and we in our perfect spirit are fused back in with the perfected body and perfected soul, then we have the full payment.

It takes these perfected believers to the perfect state that Adam and Eve were in before the fall.

2 Corinthians 5:5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is Yahweh, who gave us the Spirit as a pledge (down-payment).

This is the true gospel of the kingdom of Yahweh.

John 6:48-51 I am the bread of life(regular bread and not unleavened bread). Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.

John 6:40 ...every one who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life;....

Is not the above what Yahshua spoke about in the bread and wine ceremony too?

This is my body.....do this in remembrance of Me.

This is my blood.....do this in remembrance of Me.

Why regular bread and not unleavened bread? Why the bread of prosperity and not adversity in the wilderness? Why a new covenant?

John 10:10I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.

3 John 2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

2 Corinthians 3:16-17 But whenever a man turns to Yahweh, the veil is taken away. Now Yahweh is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of Yahweh is, there is liberty.

Yahshua came to be the sacrifice for our salvation, and the salvation benefits start while we are here on the earth.

We have access to speak to Yahweh and know that He hears our prayers.

We can hear His voice (all believers) as the still small voice speaking to us, from the Ruach to our spirit.

We can receive His help and guidance now.

He came that we might have life abundantly.

It is not the bread of adversity (although there are tests and trials), it is the bread of prosperity, the bread of life.

As at the Last Supper, it is symbolically the **consecrated bread that was on the table of showbread in the Tabernacle and Temple**, that **only the priests could eat**.

This showbread was not unleavened bread, but consecrated regular bread.

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for Yahweh's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you were once not a people, but now you are the people of Yahweh; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Yahshua was the true bread from heaven, that is He came from heaven and didn't have the leaven (sin nature) passed down from Adam.

At the Last Supper He was consistent with what He repeated multiple times in John 6, that He was the true **artos/lakhma/lechem** bread (regular bread and not unleavened bread) from heaven.

John 14:6 Yahshua said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

Many people today seek to gain approval from the world by supposing that "all avenues go to Yahweh", but that is not true.

Yes, people can keep the commandments and reap the benefits in this life.

Yahweh is just and is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

He will bless and open doors for the person who may not be saved in Yahshua our Messiah, but who has turned their heart to seek Yahweh.

The point is that the blessings of Yahweh are not given only to the saved ones, however, direct access to Yahweh the Father is reserved for those who are "in Messiah Yahshua."

Why regular bread and not unleavened bread?

The impure leaven in this world is the sin nature passed down from Adam. Yahshua is the second Adam who imparts the pure leaven from heaven in those who are saved.

They become a new creation when saved, which is why we use the term "born again".

When we are saved, our spirit is made new, and we receive the pure leaven in our spirit, even though our body and soul are not yet perfected.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Ruach offered Himself without blemish to Yahweh, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim.

The pure bread from heaven is Yahshua who was without blemish, and the leaven of Yahshua for us is the word of Yahweh and the Ruach HaKodesh in us who are saved.

Because our spirit is made new in Messiah Yahshua, we have unbridled access to the Father.

John 4:23-24 (Yahshua said) "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. Yahweh is a Ruach; and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Salvation in Yahshua our Messiah enables the new birth where we have a perfected spirit.

We have access to the Father in our perfected spirit "to boldly come to the throne of grace to find help in time of need."

This is the spiritual bread that came down out of heaven (regular consecrated bread and not unleavened bread).

The early Believers celebrated the Last Supper annually at the end of the 13th of Nisan and beginning of the 14th of Nisan, as it was instituted by Yahshua Himself.

It is the only new ceremony He instituted. **Why?**

Because it was a renewed covenant with a new Yahweh-ordained ceremonial aspect to it, and as an annual rehearsal or miqra to portray or rehearse an important prophetic event in the future.

Bagatti noted that oftentimes the Believers would celebrate it at a communal meal and have the bread and wine ceremony and foot-washing ceremony at the end of the meal.

In other words, like the Passover seder, Yahshua gave us the broad outline in ways of annually celebrating the Last Supper bread and wine ceremony.

The apostles instituted this annual Last Supper Bread and Wine ceremony in the Assembly, and it was only later when the ravaging wolves in sheep's clothing came in that they changed things.

Scripturally and historically maybe one needs to keep the only ceremony Yahshua instituted for the Assembly.

Paul addressed the elders of Ephesus and said the following:

Acts 20:29-30 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Many of these are called a "Saint" in the Catholic Church, and when you read their actual writings, they were rabid anti-semites who were full of hate toward Jews.

These were the ones educated in Greek philosophy, who using syncretism, melded their pagan philosophies into church practices.

Most of the changes happened in a 50 year period after the apostle John died, when there was no longer a witness to the actual events in Yahshua' ministry.

What the apostle Paul prophesied in Acts 20:29-30 actually came to pass within 100 years.

It is a sad fact of church history.

These changes were possible, because later leaders had no background in the context of Judaism; therefore, they used as their context basis the Greek philosophy in which they had been educated.

The false "dual-nature of man" teaching came from Greek philosophy.

Prophetic Significance of the Last Supper Bread and Wine Ceremony

Just as the Passover was a prophetic rehearsal for the coming of Yahshua nearly 2000 years ago as the Passover Lamb, so there is a specific prophetic significance to believers celebrating the bread and wine ceremony annually on a specific day--the evening just after the 13th of Nisan ended at sundown, which is the evening of the 14th of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar.

The Last Supper and bread and wine ceremony as rehearsed annually on a specific day portrays the future Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

There is a judgment of believers by Yahshua:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Messiah, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

After the judgment by our Messiah, then the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place in heaven.

Revelation 19:6b-9 Hallelujah! For Yahweh our Elohim, the Almighty, reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the linen is the righteous acts of the saints (true believers -- holy ones). And he said to me, "Write, Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of Yahweh."

This marriage supper of the Lamb appears to take place in heaven before Yahshua comes to reign on the earth as shown sequentially in Revelation 19.

First the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6-9), and then heaven opens and Yahshua comes to the earth to conquer and reign.

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

The marriage supper of the Lamb or related things are also mentioned in other places.

1. Parable of the 10 virgins -- Matthew 25:1-13
2. Dinner of wealthy man -- Luke 14:15-24
3. Promise to the apostles -- Luke 22:28-30
4. A king gave a wedding feast for his son -- Matthew 22:2-14
5. Wedding feast -- Luke 12:35-40
6. John the baptizer's witness -- John 3:29
7. Messiah and the Assembly -- Ephesians 5:23, 25, 27, 32
and probably more places.

The bread and wine ceremony portrays salvation here on earth for believers too, and the foot-washing ceremony portrays Yahweh's appointed leaders in the Assembly with having a "one who serves" mentality.

However, these ceremonies ultimately portray the future marriage supper of the Lamb.

Prototype Last Supper Bread and Wine Ceremonial for Annual Observance

The basics of ceremonial observance for the annual celebration of the Last Supper Bread and Wine Ceremony should include the following.

1. Observance of the annual ceremony as Yahshua instituted on the evening of the 14th of Nisan as the 14th is beginning.

2. A communal supper for the Assembly or family. This doesn't have to be an expensive meal and can be a wonderful pot-luck meal.
3. After the meal is finished, the leader blesses the bread and breaks it for the people and passes it out. Regular bread should be used and challah is ideally suited for it.
4. After the bread, the leader blesses the wine and distributes it.
5. A sermon or reading of the scriptures on why we celebrate this event, and what it means for Yahshua to be the true bread from heaven, plus the significance of the wine. This could be broken in 2 parts and the historical events about the Pesach week and their meaning, covered before the bread and wine; and the present and future meanings covered after the bread and wine ceremony.
6. Hymns or songs as appropriate anywhere in the ceremony.

The above is just a bare-bones outline of the annual ceremony.

Sources:

The Last Supper, was it a Passover seder?

by Roy A. Reinhold March 30, 2002