

Be SURE you're ready for Passover



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www.LightontheRock.org

Hello everyone. Are you ready – or getting ready -- for Passover? Or will you be caught off guard? Passover may come up sooner than you think. Is the universe's most momentous event and greatest triumph and life restoring salvational event – about to just casually pass you by this year?

Welcome everyone to Light on the Rock. I'm Philip Shields with the good news of God's love for all mankind evidenced by the Passover – as our Father is making moves to remove the god of this world – Satan – and send Yeshua the Messiah, Jesus the Christ – instead to RULE the world.

As I record this, the big news in **March 2020** is this nationwide and worldwide ANGST, anxiety, over the **pandemic Covid-19 Corona virus**. Even if you feel *you're* not worried about it, you've no doubt spent a lot of time shopping to stock up while also listening to a lot of news updates. This has used up precious time.

Passover this year 2020 is on April 8. Have you been thinking about it and getting ready for it?

By the time we come to Passover, we're supposed to have EXAMINED OURSELVES, searched out the remaining spiritual LEAVEN and sins in our lives, even as we are PURGING our lives of evils that still lurk inside us. I'll be talking about that. But SATAN can be taking our FOCUS away from God and his love.

A huge distraction and angst may have also happened to the great prophet Isaiah. Overall righteous King Uzziah had died. What would happen next? What kind of king over Judah would his young son be? Many Jews of that time no doubt were filled with angst and concern.

But first let's see what happened to Uzziah, whose name means "Strength of YHVH".

2 Chronicles 26:16-18 P

But when he [Uzziah] was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against YHVH his God by entering the temple of YHVH to burn incense on the altar of incense. 17 So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of YHVH — valiant men. **18** And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to YHVH, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You shall have no honor from YHVH God."

So this righteous king got careless and presumptuous. This is why Passover preparation is so VITAL for us: *it makes us re-evaluate where we are with God and have to humbly realize we still fall way short of being in his image (what God is LIKE)*. This can help us from having our own heart "lifted up" to our destruction. Let's continue with Uzziah:

2 Chronicles 26:19-21 P

“Then Uzziah became furious; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense. And while he was angry with the priests, LEPROSY broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the House of YHVH, beside the incense altar. 20 And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he was leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also hurried to get out, because YHVH had struck him.

21 King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of YHVH. Then Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.”

So what's the lesson of Uzziah's death for us today as we go through a stressful time leading up to Passover? Isaiah didn't have to worry. In Isaiah 6, YHVH shows Isaiah that He was fully aware of everything going on. How?

Isaiah 6:1-5 P

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord (Adonai) sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

What's the lesson? God shows Isaiah some of his glory and that He was still sitting on his throne. That hadn't changed. In spite of Corona Covid-19 pandemic, God is still on his throne and he doesn't want us distracted from getting ready for Passover.

Let's continue, Isaiah 6:3-5 now. **P**

3 And one [seraph, a 6-winged super angel] cried to another and said:
"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD (YHVH) of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!"

4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 So I said:

"Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD (Yehovah) of hosts."

So this is someone called "Yehovah of HOSTS" – who by the way, the apostle John under inspiration clearly tells us in John 12:37-41 was none other than the Word of God who was also God (John 1:1-3) who came as Yeshua the Messiah (John 1:14)!

In John 12, the apostle recounts how in spite of numerous signs the public did not believe in Christ, and then in vs. 39-40, he quotes from the book of Isaiah... Let's pick it up:

John 12:37 P

"But although He [Yeshua] had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him,"

John 12:40-41 P

"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
Lest they should see with their eyes,

Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them."

41 These things Isaiah said when he saw HIS glory and spoke of HIM".

The time Isaiah saw YHVH's glory was Isaiah 6, and John says Isaiah was talking about Yeshua! Indeed, as I've pointed out numerous times, the name "YHVH" can refer to either the Supreme Being God Most High (the Father) or to the Word of God who came as Yeshua the Messiah, depending on context. I have 3 sermons specifically proving this.

But why do I bring this up? IT WAS TO REMIND Isaiah and to remind US, that in unsettling times of angst and uncertainty – whether because of the death of a godly king or the presence of a pandemic -- **GOD IS STILL ON HIS THRONE and knows what's going on. YHVH has everything under HIS control, whether we see it that way or not.**

BACK TO PASSOVER

So back to Passover. Passover represents the biggest and most pivotal victorious battle God had over Satan. It was pictured partially by God's victory over Pharaoh in the 10th plague forcing him to release all the Israelite slaves after Egypt was utterly destroyed. But all that pointed to the PASSOVER battle and victory of Christ over Satan at Calvary.

Satan no doubt fought Yeshua hard all his human life. All Satan needed was for Christ to sin ONE TIME, just one time, and he could not have been our Savior. Yeshua totally demolished the Adversary. WE are the beneficiaries of that great victory.

SO are you READY to have a SOLEMN REJOICING of our Friend and Brother Yeshua's total VICTORY OVER SIN, DEATH, AND OVER SATAN – opening the door for you and me to have a place at the table of our Lord, and in the Household of God himself – AND TO BE PART OF HIS ROYAL KINGDOM?

Out of the 7.8 BILLION on earth, A PRECIOUS FEW will be keeping Passover in honor of the Son of God and of God himself and HIS love and promises.

OR, have you been so blindsided by all the hype over Coronavirus and other distractions that you're not giving Passover much thought?

That's what we're talking about today: DON'T BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD for this Passover! BE ready! Be sure you're going to take it in a WORTHY manner and have examined yourself.

SPRING HOLYDAY DATES IN 2020

(Notes: Passover dates on our Roman calendars will change from year to year. This is about 2020.)

*Do you realize Passover is just DAYS away? ****

Passover DAY in 2020 is April 8, Wednesday. For many of the Church of God brethren, they'll be observing the foot washing and the bread and wine ceremony the eve before – evening of April 7, Tuesday evening after sundown.

- Then for them, **the Night to be Much Observed** will be the following evening, at the end of Passover day, on April 8 after sundown, starting the first day of Unleavened Bread, a “high day” holy day. Remember God’s days begin and end at sundown.
- ‘The days of Unleavened Bread are Thursday April 9, 2020 starting the evening before, through Wednesday April 16, ending at sundown. April 16 is also a holy day, an annual sabbath, and we do not go to work but worship on that day.

But Jews and those who strictly follow the rabbinic calendar, they will be keeping the Seder/Passover on evening of April 8, Wednesday evening, 2020. And this will also start the Days of Unleavened Bread, when we all eat Matzah for 7 days. Jews often add an extra day on their holy days to “be sure” they are on the right day. They do not do this on the fasting day of Atonement, however.

I do not get into the calendar arguments about who is right, as there are various options out there. My point is not the calendar, but are you ready for the SEASON of Passover and everything for which it stands? Are you pondering how profound the Passover is – and how profound is the blood of Yeshua covering and cleansing us? You’ll read more about that today.

WHAT TO DO TO PREPARE FOR PASSOVER

In the Old Covenant, the Israelites had to pick out a lamb on the 10th day of the first Hebrew month of Abib/Nisan. So they had to be aware of the Passover before they killed the lamb on the 14th. And certainly be aware that GOD HIMSELF offered his Lamb – his SON, Yeshua – to be killed at 3 pm on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Abib.

SO the ancient Israelites were prepared. Certainly for that first Passover, Israel remembered they were slaves. God had said all the firstborn of man and beast were going to die, except any who were in a house covered by the blood of the lamb splashed on the lintel and door posts of the house. Elohim said, “when I go through Egypt, when I SEE THE BLOOD” covering any home, I will spare the first born in that household. Let’s read it:

Exodus 12:12-13 P

‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night and **will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt** I will execute judgment: I am YHVH.

13 Now the BLOOD shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. **And when I see the BLOOD, I will PASS OVER you;** and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.”

Even in the New Covenant, what those perfect lambs POINTED TO was GOD the SON, Yeshua – who was GOD, who was the executive creator who made everything we see and don’t see, under the overall direction of the One I know as God Supreme, God The Father (**Ephesians 3:9** is clear that “GOD CREATED all things THROUGH Jesus Christ...”)

As we come to Passover, we need to remember who this Yeshua WAS and IS. John the Baptist called him “the Lamb of GOD who takes away the sin of the world” (**John 1:29**).

John 1:29 P

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**"

So just as the Israelites had to offer up a lamb, all that pointed to God the Father offering up HIS LAMB, HIS OWN eternal companion who came as Yeshua (John 1:1-3, 14). And it's only if we COME UNDER HIS BLOOD spilled for you and me – that will be able to have confidence that God will PASS OVER our sins too.

Just as innocent lambs had to die in ancient Israel, so the first-born Israelites didn't have to die – in the same way WE need to be prayerfully pondering the deep significance of all this before Passover – and not casually accepting this. Someone DIED for you, someone was painfully executed for me – so that you and I didn't have to die for eternity!

It would be a good idea to VOICE OUT – now, before Passover – that you absolutely want to renew your appreciation and knowledge of the POWER in the shed blood of Yeshua! And that you want our Father to see you as “under the blood” and that he SEES you covered by the Blood of the mighty Son of God. You have splashed that blood – so to speak – over your life and you vocally acknowledge it. And you want HIS life to be YOUR life now.

Romans 10:9-11 P

“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

The Apostle Paul warns us in 1 Corinthians 11 that if we don't properly take time consider that GOD himself, as Son of God, died for you so you wouldn't have to die eternally, that we could be guilty of the very blood and death of our Lord. I'll read that in a minute. But first, let's see what Paul says:

“IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”

Just as I've mentioned what ancient Israel did – that's fine. But note that I also made a point to say all those innocent lambs pointed to Yeshua. ** TOO often there's a lot of time talking about Exodus 12 and not enough time talking about to WHOM, ABOUT whom, they all pointed – Yeshua.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 P

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; **do this in remembrance of Me.**"

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood.** This do, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of Me.**"

Paul says that Yeshua told him more than once – “Folks! This is into about little lambs or kids of goats. This is about to whom they pointed! This is about ME! And I want you to be very conscious of that.”

Let’s be VERY CONSCIOUS that **PASSOVER IS NOT JUST A CEREMONY** that we take part in every year. It’s not just a ceremony. **And preparing for it is not just the few minutes of quiet before the service when everyone reads their Bibles for a while about the Passover.**

It’s a conscious remembering and reciting and absorbing that GOD the SON gave up his life for his brothers and sisters, for all the children of God – for any and all who would accept him as their savior.

I do have a full and thorough sermon on this topic of “Do this in Remembrance of Me” that you may wish to go back and hear. Click on this link:

<http://www.lightontherock.org/message/do-this-in-remembrance-of-me?highlight=WyJkbyIsIidkbyIsInRoaXMiLCIndGhpcyIsImluIiwjJ2luIiwicmVtZW1icmFuY2UiL CkbyB0aGlzIiwjZG8gdGhpcyBpbiIsInRoaXMgaW4iLCJ0aGlzIGluIHJlbWVtYnJhbmNliiwiaW4gcmVtZW1icmFuY2UiXQ==>

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Even to the ancient Israelites, God told them to recall the Passover deliverance in very PERSONAL terms.

Exodus 13:7-8 P

Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.

And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what YHVH did for ME when I came up from Egypt.'

Can you hear and feel the pathos and impact when you say “for ME, when I came up...” instead of “for Israel” or “for us”? Apostle Paul put it in very personal terms. He says he has been crucified WITH Christ – I have a whole sermon on that too. Just type into the Search bar - “Crucified with Christ”.

Galatians 2:20-21 P

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, **who loved ME and gave Himself for ME.**

21 I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

So part of the pre-Passover thinking, praying, meditating is about how PERSONAL this Passover should be for you and for me.

EXAMINE YOURSELF BEFORE PASSOVER

Paul goes on in 1 Cor. 11 with something we MUST do every year. We’ll read the whole passage first and then come back to analyze it more.

Brandie: POST ALL THE INSET SCRIPTURES GOING FORWARD. If the scripture is short, please post it more in the middle of the scroll page, not just at the top. Be sure all scripture chapter-verse is underlined. Use the same lay-out as I have laid them out, rather than ever in one big block jumble of words. Like the one below, where I have a return-line on some of the verses to help it be more readable.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32 P

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in **an unworthy manner** will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 **But let a man examine himself**, and so **LET HIM eat** of the bread and drink of the cup.

29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.”

This takes TIME. You should be sure to be doing this NOW. We're warned that if we rush into this without proper preparation, we're taking the Passover in an unworthy manner and certain judgments will come upon us!

UNWORTHY MANNER (or “unworthily” as KJV)

Frankly, the only one truly worthy is the Son of God Himself. He wants us to VALUE and appreciate what He's done. We can't be practicing ongoing sin.

EXAMINE HIMSELF

Right now, prior to Passover, we should be taking stock of where we are with our God, his laws, how much we love him, how much we thank and appreciate him and more.

- David asked GOD to examine him and try him.

Psalms 26:2 P

“Examine me, O Lord, and prove me;
Try my mind and my heart.”

I repeat what David said, but I add, “but please, O loving Father, examine me in your kindness and mercy and grace, as I will surely be found wanting.”

And over and over, we're told the examination is to be on ourselves, not someone else.

2 Corinthians 13:5 P

“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. **Test yourselves**. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? — unless indeed you are disqualified”.

Galatians 6:3-4 P

“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

But let each **one examine his OWN work**, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

1 John 3:20-22 P

“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

Beloved, **if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence** toward God.

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”

You know how just prior to Passover we put out the physical leaven. WHY? Again, to focus on what it spiritually points to: purging our LIVES – not just our houses – of what leaven points to – SIN! Just as we are sometimes surprised at the leaven we sometimes MISS, same thing spiritually.

- **Secret, private sins you hold on to?** Not faithful with taxes or tithes? Occasional “light porn” you peak at? You use the F word and other profanities with non-believing friends?
- **Properly keeping the sabbath HOLY. Do you guard the sabbath to keep the profane out of this holy time?** Are you READY for the sabbath before the sun sets end of 6th day, Friday? Or are you lukewarm about it and careless with holy time?
- **Does your marriage reflect the joyful union of Christ and his Bride, the church?** Husbands, are you loving, serving, giving yourself to your wife as Christ would? Wives, are you working with your husband respectfully and submissively as you would to Christ himself? Total fidelity. Repenting of any flirting, lusting, anything off base.
- Living common-law or in sin with someone? Occasional fornication – or adultery?
- **A BIG, BIG ONE for so many: not having totally forgiven and RECONCILED with someone.** That could be your own wife or husband! Or your literal father or mother. Or a brother/sister in Christ who attends somewhere else. Whose feet would you prefer not to have to wash? ***Christ DID. SO WOE to you who won’t forgive or reconcile with a brother/sister. This topic is worthy of a whole sermon and I will try to give one on not just FORGIVING, but RECONCILING with those you forgive.

Matthew 5:23-24 P

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, **leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.**”

- **Our BODIES – true TEMPLES of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling Presence of God and Yeshua?** Yeshua said his father and he would gladly come LIVE IN US (John 14:23). Paul says we are the dwelling place, the temple, of God’s spirit. I’ve had to face up to this and realize my health, my weight, etc. is not COMPATIBLE

with being the TEMPLE of God's holy presence. Now we exercise more, get more sleep, eat better, losing a bit of weight...

- **Just a “little sin”** you're allowing in your life? Son of God had to die for your LITTLE sins too! The constant little sin will be like a constant drip that will wear away stone! We JUSTIFY the little sins of our lives and call them by dainty names. A bald-faced lie is “just a little white lie”, or adultery is called an affair, a drunk admits to “having a sip”.... Don't lie to yourself. Use this time to evaluate what has to change in your life. EXAMINE yourself.
- **SECTARIAN DIVISIONS** between sabbath keeping believers. Come together! Your leader is not the human leader but is Yeshua. Your human leader didn't die for you. He didn't shed his blood to cover you. You weren't baptized in his name! Paul says all of this when correcting the Corinthians' divisions into following groups of men!

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 P

“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.** 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are **contentions among you.** 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.” **13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

SO LET HIM EAT/DRINK

What happens after an honest self-examination? Frankly, I hope we can see areas we ARE working on and overcoming and growing in. But we can also realize if we're humble and honest – that we're not a pure image of Yeshua yet, get discouraged and decide to stay home. WRONG! WHAT did Paul say?

1 Corinthians 11:28 P

“**But let a man examine himself,** and **so LET HIM eat** of the bread and drink of the cup.”

When you properly examine yourself, your conclusion is – “WOW, do I EVER need a Savior and Redeemer.” We pray for help to be stronger and do better – and COVER yourself with the bread and wine, picturing the same thing that the splashing of the lamb's blood over the lintel showed. Otherwise you're outside of the covered home, covered by the splashed blood!

If You don't take the Passover, then you're taking the sacrifice up yourself, instead of accepting Christ's.

Numbers 9:13 P

“But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, **because he did not bring the offering of the Lord at its appointed time;** that man shall bear his sin.”

BECAUSE we're not reconciling, because we're not unifying as the Body of Christ, because we're not discerning the Lord's body, we're SEEING LESS HEALINGS. Paul goes on in 1 Cor. 11 to say this.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30 P

"For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep".

So BE READY for Passover. Be prepared for assaults from Satan too. They seem to come rapidly this time of year. Don't give in to discouragement or feeling God has abandoned you. Passover is a time of TRUST, TRUST, TRUST – no matter what.

Read my MARCH BLOG on this topic too, as it covers other points too.

One thing to remember: when we are risen after baptism into the Body of Christ (Romans 6:3-6), we are literally a part of HIM now. **His blood – like YOUR blood – is constantly looking for cuts, infections, intrusions into the body** and our blood sends out white blood cells to STOP the intrusion, cut, infection. It's CONSTANTLY doing that. When 1 John 1:7 says "the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin" – that's not in the past tense. It's an ongoing tense.

1 John 1:7,9 P

"**But if we walk in the light** as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from ALL sin.**
9 If **we confess our sins**, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from **ALL unrighteousness.**"

We have to be striving to walk in the light, to have fellowship with the body parts of God's church, **and to confess our sins**. If we do, the cleansing is ongoing. Yeshua cannot tolerate or allow disease, infection, wounds to linger in his Body. So he's constantly cleansing his body.

Christ is determined, as Eph 5 says, to present his bride to himself as a lovely bride, without spot or wrinkle or any defect. His blood is continually cleansing us. You who are into Do-It-Yourself (DIY) salvation might have a hard time absorbing the depth of **what 1 John 1:7** really tells us. It's an ongoing action – Yeshua continues to clean us up and keep his body uninfected, unwounded.

True, if WE refuse to cooperate with that cleansing, if we won't self-examine, if we won't confess sins, if we won't give up our secret pet sins, just like in any body, at some point sometimes a part of the body has to be amputated; taken off; removed. But that's a drastic step. It WILL happen, if we don't properly take stock and examine ourselves and then EAT and DRINK of HIM, our Master and our Lord.

So PASSOVER IS CRITICAL. It's the FIRST STEP in the plan of Salvation. It's not the ONLY step. There are holydays that come up after Passover that explain there's more to God's plan.

Have a productive Pre-Passover.

- DON'T allow any distraction. Not corona virus, not anything.
- Yeshua and God our Father are STILL on their throne and watching over you.
- Do take the time to be **self-examining and confessing to**, and giving up, and handing over to God all spiritual leaven still in our lives.
- Then COME to Passover for a SOLEMNLY JOYFUL celebration of our Lord and Savior and our Father who so loved everyone that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)
- Come and wash one another's feet, accepting that Yeshua has already washed his feet and this year you are acknowledging that. Then break bread with us as we partake of his one body, and as we drink of HIS cup and all that means.

Have a most meaningful Passover yet.

Closing prayer