

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Night of Solemn Observance Service

Optional Prelude:

Shared Dinner with Roast Lamb, Bitter Herbs and Unleavened Bread

Songs of Praise

Opening Prayer

Tonight we will continue on from the events we looked at last night related to the Last Supper and the night following it. But first we will review Jeshua's institution of Bread and Wine, and then take it as a commemoration of what Jeshua has done for us.

Introduction for taking the Bread and the Wine: (1 Corinthians 11:23-34)

For I received from our Lord that which I also handed down to you: that our Lord Jeshua on the night in which He was betrayed, He took bread; and He blessed and He broke it and He said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for yourselves; you will do this for my memorial."

Likewise, after they had eaten, He also gave them the cup, and He said, "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood. Every time that you drink this cup, you will do it for my memorial." For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, it is our Lord's death you commemorate, until His coming.

Therefore whoever eats this bread of Lord Jah and drinks from His cup and is unworthy of it will be guilty of the blood of Lord Jah, and of His body. Because of this, let a person search their soul, and then let them eat

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of this bread and drink of this cup. For whoever eats and drinks while unworthy eats and drinks condemnation to his soul for not discerning the body of Lord Jah. Because of this many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged to be chastened by our Lord, we are chastened lest we will be condemned with the world. 1 Corinthians 11:23-32

Let us meditate upon these things and our readiness for taking the Bread and the Wine.

[Quiet time for personal reflection and prayer.]

Now we will take the Bread and then the Wine according to Luke 22:19 and 20 [-using unleavened bread and red wine or red grape juice.]

And He took bread, and He gave thanks and He broke it and He gave it to them. And He said “This is My body which will be given for your sakes; you will do this for My memorial.” Luke 22:19

[Rise up and offer the unleavened bread to Jehovah and give thanks for it, using Jeshua’s words above. Then break the unleavened bread into pieces and pass them around. Wait for everyone to receive their bread and eat it.]

Then He also took the cup after they had dined. He said “This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which will be shed for your sakes. Luke 22:20

[Rise up and offer the wine to Jehovah and give thanks for it, using Jeshua’s words above. Then pour the wine into glasses and pass them around. Wait for everyone to receive their wine and drink

it. Then thank Jeshua for offering us His body and blood for our healing, our salvation and our life, both for now and for everlasting life.]

Now we will review the Rest of the Passover Day—the day Jeshua was impaled and killed—beginning at first light: (John 18:28 to 19:42

Then they brought Jeshua from the presence of Caiapha to the Praetorium, and it was dawn. But they did not go into the Praetorium, so they would not be defiled until they had eaten the Passover.¹

Then Pilate went outside into their presence and said to them, “What is your accusation against this man?”

They answered and said to him, “If he were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered him to you.”

Pilate said to them, “You take him and judge him according to your Instructions.” The Judeans said to him, “It is not lawful for us to kill anyone.”, that the saying of Jeshua might be fulfilled when He revealed by which death He would die.

But Pilate entered the Praetorium and he called for Jeshua, and said to Him, “Are you their Judean King?”

Jeshua said to him, “Are you asking about this for yourself, or have others spoken to you about Me?”

Pilate said to Him, “Am I a Judean? The children of your own nation and the chief priests themselves have delivered you to me. What have you done?”

Jeshua said to him, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would

¹ That is, they would be defiled for the entire day, until after dusk that evening, when it was time to eat the Passover. They would therefore be unable to participate in other religious activities, including preparing their Passover Lamb, until then.

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have fought, so that I would not have been delivered to the Judeans; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

Pilate said to Him, “Therefore you are a king.”

Jeshua answered to him, “You say that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world: that I should testify concerning the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth hears My voice.”

Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Judeans, and said to them, “I do not find even one fault against him. But you have a custom that I should release one person to you at Passover. Therefore, do you want me to release to you this King of the Judeans?”

And all of them cried out and said, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” Now this Barabbas was a robber.

Then Pilate scourged Jeshua, and the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put purple garments on Him. Then they said, “Peace to you, King of the Judeans!” And they struck Him on his cheeks.

Pilate went outside again, and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing him outside to you, that you may know that I find not even one fault against him.” Then Jeshua went outside, while wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garments. And Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!”

And when the chief priests and guards saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Impale him!² Impale him!” Pilate said to them, “You take and impale him, for I am not able to find a fault in him.”

² Impaling Jeshua means to nail Him to a post which is then fastened upright, where He is left to die. It was the Roman government’s most horrific way to kill someone. The lack of a capital H in him is to emphasize their disrespect of Jeshua.

The Judeans said to him, “We have our Instructions, and according to our Instructions he deserves death, because he made himself the Son of God.”

And when Pilate heard this word, he was all the more afraid, and he went into the Praetorium again and said to Jeshua, “Where are You from?” But Jeshua did not give him a reply. Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak with me? Do you realise that I have authority to release You, and authority to impale You?”

Jeshua said to him, “You would have no authority over Me whatsoever if it had not been given to you from above. Because of this, the sin of the one who delivered Me to you is greater than yours.”

From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Judeans cried out, saying, “If you let this man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”

Therefore when Pilate heard that saying, he brought Jeshua out and sat down in the judgement seat in a place that is called The Pavement of Stones, but in Hebrew, Gpitha.

But the evening of the Passover had turned, and it was about the sixth hour.³ And he said to the Judeans, “Behold your King!”

But they cried out, “Take him away! Take him away! Impale him! Impale him!”

Pilate said to them, “Should I impale your King?”

The chief priests said to him, “We have no king but Caesar!”

³ Two notes here: First, John is saying that the night portion of the Passover, which is the preparation day leading into the Feast of Unleavened Bread, had finished. It was now dawn of the preparation day and the Passover Lambs would be sacrificed before the day ended. Secondly, the sixth hour clearly refers to the Roman timekeeping system being used by Pilate, which had two twelve hour cycles beginning at midnight and noon. The Hebrew system began at dusk and dawn.

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So he delivered Him to them so they could impale Him. So they took Jeshua and led Him away. And He, carrying His stake, went out to a place called The Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Gogoltha, where they impaled Him,⁴ and two others with Him, one on one side and one on the other side, and Jeshua in between.

Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on His stake. And the writing was: This is Jeshua of Nazareth, The King of the Judeans. Then many of the Judeans read this title, for the place where Jeshua was impaled was near the city; and it was written in Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.

Then the chief priests said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘He is the King of the Judeans,’ instead, ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Judeans.’”

Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

Then the soldiers, when they had impaled Jeshua, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. Therefore they said one to another, “Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it, to find whose it will be,” that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: “They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.”⁵ So the soldiers did these things.

And there near the stake of Jeshua stood His mother, and His mother’s sister, and Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. Jeshua and the disciple whom He loved saw His mother standing there. He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” And He said to that disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her with him.

⁴ Num 21:7-9

⁵ Psa 22:18

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After this, Jeshua, knowing that all things were now completed, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” Now a vessel full of vinegar was placed there; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on hyssop, and brought it to His mouth.⁶ So when Jeshua had taken the vinegar, He said, “Behold! It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

And the Judeans, because it was late afternoon, said, “These bodies should not remain on the stakes because the Sabbath will soon begin.”⁷ For that Sabbath would be a Great Day,⁸ so they asked Pilate that the legs of those who were impaled might be broken, and that they might take them down. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and those of the other who were impaled with Him. But when they came to Jeshua they saw that He was already dead and they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers stabbed His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

And the one who saw it has testified, and his witness is true; and he knows that he spoke the truth, that you may believe. For these things happened so the Scripture would be fulfilled which said, “Not one of His bones will be broken.”⁹ And again another Scripture says, “They will look at Him whom they pierced.”¹⁰

After this, Joseph from Arimathea, because he was a disciple of Jeshua, but secretly, for fear of the Judeans, begged Pilate that he might take the body of Jeshua; and Pilate gave permission. So he came and took Jeshua’s body. And Nicodemus, who had previously come to

⁶ Psa 69:21

⁷ Literally “the Sabbath was dawning” in the Greek.

⁸ The coming Great Day was the First Day of Unleavened Bread, one of the Annual Sabbaths (Holy Days) as confirmed in Lev 23:5-7 and verse 18:28 above. It can occur on different days of the week from year to year.

⁹ Exo 12:43-46, Psa 34:20

¹⁰ Zec 12:10

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Jeshua by night, also came, and he brought with him spices, myrrh and aloes, about one hundred pounds.¹¹ Then they took Jeshua's body and the spices and bound them with linen, as is the custom of the Judeans when they bury.

Now there was a garden in the place where Jeshua was impaled, and in the garden was a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So they laid Jeshua there, because the Sabbath was approaching and because the tomb was nearby.¹² John 18:28 to 19:42

Now our debts are paid, and our sins have died with our Messiah.

Dusk today marked the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the first day of this Feast is an Annual Sabbath. This Great Sabbath evening is called The Night of Solemn Observance.

First, let us listen as Paul explains what Jeshua's death means for us: (Romans 5:8 to 10 and Romans 6:3 to 23)

But here God demonstrates His own sure love for us, that while we were sinning, the Anointed died in our place. Therefore, how much more, having now been even more justified by His blood, we will be saved from wrath by Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God in the death of His Son, therefore, how much more, through His reconciliation, we will live by His life. Romans 5:8 to 10

Or do you not know that all of us who were immersed into the Anointed Jeshua were immersed into His death? We were buried with Him through immersion into death,

¹¹ This is Roman pounds, which converts to 75 Imperial pounds or 34 kilograms.

¹² Isa 53:3-9

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that as Jeshua our Messiah rose from the dead through the glory of His Father, so we also will walk in new life. For if we have been planted with Him in the likeness of His death, in this way we will also be in His resurrection, for we know that our old person was impaled with Him, that the body of sin will be destroyed, so we will not serve sin again. For the one who has died has been freed from sin.

But if we died with the Anointed, we believe that we will also live with the Anointed, knowing that the Anointed, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death has no further dominion over Him. For when He died, He died to sin once for all; but now that He lives, He lives to God. So you also, count yourselves as dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in our Lord and Messiah, Jeshua. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, to obey it in its lusts. Nor yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin will not have dominion over you, for you are not under the Instruction but under grace.

What? Will we then sin because we are not under the Instruction but under grace? It cannot be so! Do you not know that to whoever you present yourselves to obey, you are bonded as slaves to him who you obey, if your ear listens to sin or if to righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that form of teaching to which you were delivered. And having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

I say, as to the children of the house, because of the weakness of your flesh, that as you presented your members to serve defilement and evil, now also in this way present your members to serve righteousness and

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holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and in the end, everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is everlasting life in the Anointed Jeshua, our Lord.
Romans 6:3 to 23

The Feast of Unleavened Bread speaks of our new freedom from being slaves of sin. Leaven can be a symbol of sin and hypocrisy: (Luke 12:1 to 3)

And when a multitude of people had gathered together, so many that they began to trample one another, Jeshua said to His disciples, "First of all, beware of allowing the leaven of the Pharisees into yourselves, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. Therefore everything you say in the darkness will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the roofs.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread talks of removing the leaven of sin and malice within us so we can become like Christ: (1 Corinthians 5:6 to 8)

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge the old leaven out of you, that you may be a new lump, since you are unleavened. For the Messiah is our Passover, who was sacrificed for our sake. Therefore let us keep the feast not with old leaven, nor with the leaven

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of bitterness or wickedness, but with the leaven of purity and holiness.

We are now to become spiritual: (1 Corinthians 15:45 to 49)

And so it is written, “The first man Adam was a living soul.” And the last Adam is the life-giving Spirit. But the spiritual was not first, but the animal, and then the spiritual.

The first man was from the dust of the earth; the second Man is Lord Jah from heaven. So just as he was a being from dust, so also are those of dust; and just as He is a being from heaven, so also are the heavenly.

And as we have borne the image of him from the dust, we will also bear the image of Him from heaven.

Our new walk requires growth and commitment: (Romans 8:12 to 16)

Therefore, my brethren, we are not debtors to the flesh, that we should walk according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you are living. For those who are led by the Spirit of God, these are the children of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as children, by whom we cry out, “Aba, our Father.” And that Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are children of God.

Even the Apostle Paul had to keep growing and persevering: (Philippians 3:8 to 4:9)

I also consider all these things a loss because of the majesty of the knowledge of Messiah Jeshua, my Lord,

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for whose sake I have lost everything, and consider them as a dung heap, that I may gain the Messiah, and I may be found in Him, while not having my own righteousness which is from the Instructions, but that which is from the faith of the Anointed, which is the righteousness that is from God; that through it I may know Jeshua and the power of His resurrection, and I may share in His sufferings, and I may be conformed with His death, that perhaps I may be in the resurrection from the place of the dead.

Not that I have already received it, or that I am already perfect; but I run on, that perhaps I may obtain that which Messiah Jeshua has obtained for me. My brethren, I do not think to myself that I have obtained it; but one thing I know; I have forgotten those things which are behind me and I reach out before me, and I run toward the goal to take the victory of the high calling of God in the Anointed Jeshua.

Therefore let those who are perfected be governed by these things, and if you are governed by anything else, God will also reveal this to you. However, so we may arrive at this one path, let us follow and be in one accord.

My brethren, imitate me, and you should observe those who walk in this way, according to the pattern you have seen in us. For there are many who are walking differently, and there are many times I have said to you about them, and now I weep as I say that these are enemies of the stake of the Anointed. For their end is destruction, those whose god is their belly, and their glory is in their shame; these whose minds are on earthly things.

For our enterprise is in heaven, and it is from there that we look for the Saviour, our Anointed Lord Jeshua,

for He will transform our humiliating body,¹³ to become the image of His glorious body, according to His great power by which He is able to subdue everything to Himself.

Therefore, my beloved and dear brethren, my joy and my crown, stand like this in our Lord, my beloved.

I request from Euodia and from Syntyche that they be of one mind in our Lord. Also I request of you, true son of my yoke, that you will help these who labour with me in the Good News, with Clement and my other helpers, those whose names are written in the Book of Life.

Rejoice in our Lord always. And again I say, rejoice! Let your humility be known to everyone. Our Lord is near. Do not be concerned, but always¹⁴ be in prayer and in supplication, and let your requests be made known to God with thanksgiving; and God, who is greater than all minds, will guard your hearts and your minds with His peace through the Anointed Jeshua.

Therefore, my brethren, those things that are true, those things that are pious, those things that are righteous, those things that are pure, those things that are loved, those things that are praiseworthy and those that are works of glory or of praise; meditate on these things. These things which you learned and received and heard and saw from me, these do, and the God of Peace will be with you. Philippians 3:8 to 4:9

And so we see what Jehovah God and His Firstborn Son Jeshua have done for us. Through the death of Jeshua's body and the spilling of His blood, we have been set free from the domination of sin over us, and now we are to walk, even run, in righteousness, obeying God's Holy Spirit that now lives within us.

¹³ In the sense of being weak, feeble and physical compared to our promised new body.

¹⁴ Literally 'at every time'.

In the Old Covenant, this night also talks of the eating the body of the Passover Lamb, the saving power of its blood and the death of the firstborn: (Exodus 12:3 to 30)

“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth day of this new moon every man will take for himself an animal of the flock, according to the house of his father, a flock animal for a household. And if the household is too small for the flock animal, let him and his neighbour next to his house take it according to the number of the souls; according to the mouths he must feed count the flock animals. ‘Your flock animal will be a perfect male yearling. You may take it from the lambs or from the kids.

‘Now you will keep it until the fourteenth day of this new moon. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel will kill it between the evenings. And they will take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

‘Then they will eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and bitterness they will eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor cooked by boiling with water, but roasted in fire; its head with its legs and its entrails. You will let none of it remain until morning, and what is left of it until morning you will burn with fire.

‘And this is the way you will eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you will eat it in trepidation. It is Jehovah’s Passover. ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man and beast; and I will execute judgement on all the gods of Egypt: I am Jehovah. Now the blood will be for a sign for you on the houses which

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you are in. And I will see the blood and I will pass over¹⁵ you; and the plague will not be on you to destroy you when I strike in the land of Egypt. So this day will be a memorial for you; and you will celebrate it as a feast to Jehovah throughout your generations. You will celebrate it as an everlasting statute.

‘Seven days you will eat unleavened bread. Indeed, on the first day you will remove leaven from your houses. For anyone who eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that soul will be cut off from Israel. On the first day there will be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there will be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work will be done on them; but that which every soul must eat; that only may be prepared by you.

‘So you will observe Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you will observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting statute. In the first new moon, on the fourteenth day of the new moon at evening, you will eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the new moon at evening. For seven days no leaven will be found in your houses, for anyone who eats anything leavened, that soul will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. You will not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you will eat unleavened bread.’”

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and slaughter the Passover.

¹⁵ This is the “pass over” from which the “Passover” acquires its name. As this happens during the “Night of Solemn Observance” on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, this is also why the First Day is also often called the Passover, as well as the preceding Preparation Day on which the Passover Lamb was sacrificed.

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And you will take a bunch of hyssop, immerse it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you will go out of the door of his house until morning. For Jehovah will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, Jehovah will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

And you will observe this thing as a statute for you and your sons forever. It will come to pass when you come to the land which Jehovah will give you, just as He promised, that you will keep this service. And it will be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ that you will say, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice of Jehovah, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’” So the people bowed their heads and worshipped.

Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

And it came to pass at midnight that Jehovah struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. Exodus 12:3 to 30

And so we see that the blood and the flesh of the Passover Lamb and the death of the firstborn were all required for them to be set free. All of this was symbolic of what the Firstborn Son of God would one day do for not just physical freedom for one nation, but for freedom from death for everyone on earth.

As this Night moves on, we see the beginning of Israel's release from slavery: (Exodus 12:31 to 42)

Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise and go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve Jehovah as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also." And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We will all be dead."

So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. And Jehovah had given the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds; a great deal of livestock.

And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not linger, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

Now the dwelling of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt and in the land of Canaan was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years; on that very same day; it came to pass that all the host of Jehovah went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night of solemn observance to Jehovah

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for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of Jehovah, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations. Exodus 12:31 to 42

Tonight is truly a night of solemn observance, as it commemorates not just the freeing of the Israelites from slavery through the death of all the Egyptian first-born, but even more the freeing of all people from their death sentence through the sacrifice of Jehovah God's First-born and only true Son, Jeshua the Anointed. There was a heavy price to be paid for their and for our liberation.

This seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread talks to us of our ongoing journey of turning away from sin and learning to obey and walk with our Father, Jehovah God and with His Anointed Son, our Lord Jeshua, assisted by God's Holy Spirit dwelling within us. We will learn more about this tomorrow, in the day portion of this Great Sabbath. And on the Wave Sheaf Offering, we will relive the joy of Jeshua's resurrection.

Closing Prayer

Prepared by the Central Highlands Congregation of God

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