

Feast of the Firstborn

Host: Tonight is an important night, a night in which we prepare our hearts to celebrate a Biblical festival celebrated each year by Yah's people — the Passover.

Hostess: Samaritans and Galileans, including our Messiah Yeshua, traditionally had a special extra feast meal the night before Passover in which they ate the rest of their leavened bread and remembered that it was the firstborn sons whose lives were spared at the first Passover.

Reader 1: In this celebration, the Galileans and Samaritans put an emphasis on the *firstborn* aspect of the Exodus, calling to mind that it was the *firstborn* Israelites who were protected from death and the *firstborn* Egyptians who were killed.

Reader 2: So the Galileans declared that Aviv 14, the day the Passover lamb was to be slain in the afternoon, was to be a day of fasting for firstborn sons of each family in honor of Yah saving their lives.

Reader 3: They began Passover day (Aviv 14) with a ritual meal called *seudah maphseket*. Since the Hebrew day changes at sundown, the first meal of a new day for any Israelite would be their evening meal.

Reader 4: So Galilean and Samaritan families would have a special dinner meal to begin the day of Passover, and then the firstborns would fast for the next 24 hours until the Passover lamb had been slain and it was time for the official Passover meal the next evening.

Reader 5: This added celebratory dinner meal called *seudah maphseket* to start out the day of Passover literally translates to the "last supper" because this was the last supper for a fasting firstborn son until he celebrated the Passover meal along with all of Israel the next evening.

Reader 6: In the year Yeshua died, He partook of a *Seudah Maphseket* with His disciples and then was betrayed and taken to trial that night.

Reader 7: He did not eat for the rest of that day and was killed that afternoon as the Passover lambs were being slaughtered.

Reader 8: We have a detailed account in John chapters 13-17 of Yeshua's conversation with His disciples on this night.

Reader 9: As we will see when we read those chapters together after dinner, Yeshua was very intentional to demonstrate His love for them and to prepare their hearts to understand *Him* as the fulfillment of the Passover when they partook of it the next night and in the coming years without Him.

Reader 10: He earnestly desired to eat of it with them again, but He knew that He would not.

Reader 11: It is important for us to note that it is never implied in Scripture that either Messiah or Paul ever intended for Passover to be replaced with any sort of "Last Supper" ritual.

Last Supper

Reader 12: That's true. This is not a commanded appointed time with Yah. The Last Supper was simply one last chance for Yeshua to prepare his Disciples, which now includes us, for Passover itself. This is all setup for the main event.

Hostess: We do, however, see much value in observing this ancient tradition that our Messiah did as it helps us to prepare our hearts to truly appreciate and understand the depths of meaning in our celebration of Passover tomorrow. We're so glad you've joined us this evening!

Host: Let's pray and then sing the Shema together as we begin!

(Light candles if desired.)

Yah our God, Ruler of the universe, who has chosen us among all peoples and sanctified us with Your love, we praise You! With an everlasting love, You have given us feasts, holidays, and seasons for rejoicing. On this evening before the Feast of Passover, we have gathered to remember our Messiah's final evening before His death, to honor His sacrifice for us, and to prepare our hearts and minds to keep the Feast tomorrow.

All sing: **Shema, Yisrael, Yahweh Eloheinu, Yahweh Echad.
Hear, O Israel, Yahweh our God, Yahweh is One.
And you shall love Yahweh your God
With all your heart, and with all your soul,
And with all your strength.
And these words which I command you today
Shall be in your heart.
Shema, Yisrael, Yahweh Eloheinu, Yahweh Echad.**

(Pick up bread to break and distribute.)

Host: On the night that He was betrayed, Yeshua our Messiah took the bread, and He broke it and He said, "This is my body, broken for you. Take and eat. Do this in remembrance of me."

(Everyone eat of the bread.)

Host: In the same way, at the end of the meal, He took the cup and He said, "This cup is the renewed covenant in my blood for the forgiveness of sins." Paul later added that whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim His death until He comes again. Let us drink.

(Everyone drink.)

Hostess: Let's enjoy our meal together! After the meal, we'll read Yeshua's final conversation with His disciples.

(Enjoy the meal together!)

Feast of the Firstborn

Last Supper

After the meal:

Reader 1: In the book of John, we are told that “before the feast of the Passover, Yeshua, knowing that his time had come that he would depart from this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

Reader 2: He washed their feet and they shared their last supper together, and then He said to them, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.

Reader 3: “If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately.

Reader 4: “Little children, I will be with you a little while longer. You will seek me, and as I said to the [Judeans], ‘Where I am going, you can’t come,’

Reader 5: “So now I tell you, A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another.

Reader 6: By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

(Read John chapters 14-17 together, dividing it among the readers however you like.)

Hostess: Matthew tells us that before leaving from their meal, Yeshua and His disciples sang a hymn together. This was likely from the Psalms of Ascent (120-134) that were sung by travelers coming to Jerusalem for Passover. Let’s close our time together with a few songs and a final blessing.

Songs:

I Lift My Eyes Up (Ps 121) by Brian Doerksen

Jerusalem (Ps 122) by Aaron Shust

Remain in You (John 15) by James Block

To the Only God (Jude 1:24-25) by David Crowder

Aaronic Benediction (Numbers 6:24-26) by Misha Goetz

