

## **B'nai Chayim/Children of Life Fellowship** Published by Michael Terrett

Last night, we had another amazing Seder and I did not get perfumed until people came in to pick up stuff for the caterers. We enforced a no scent rule for the Seder and those of us who are sensitive had a great time (I am not the only one).

It was a smaller crowd than in previous years, but we had a good time going through the Seder and remembering our double deliverance – from Egypt and from the Egypt of this world. We still had lots of guests for whom it was their first Seder and it gave them a deeper perspective on the meaning of the L-rd's Supper, which was introduced by our Messiah during the Seder Meal (the Last Supper was a Seder Meal).

There is a bit of confusion around the chronology of what the church calls: "Holy Week" and it has more to do with not understanding how the Hebrew calendar works, along with a concerted effort to exalt Sunday as a permanent resurrection day, instead of linking this glorious event to the annual Passover Seder.

According to the oldest church tradition, Holy Wednesday was observed as the day of the crucifixion and the burial of our Messiah. This gave the necessary three days and nights in the tomb, before a resurrection after the Third Day. It just happened to be a Sunday (the first day of the week) and the resurrection scenario from the Bible, exalts the suffering, death, burial and resurrection of the Saviour, without making any weekday more special than any other. The Sabbath is the only special day of the week on the Bible.

In Biblical Judaism, whenever a Holy Day falls during the week (Sunday to Friday), it is called a High Day and is treated as a special Sabbath, so as not to confuse it with the permanent, regular weekly Sabbath.

In the Passover chronology on the Hebrew calendar, the Seder always takes place on the 14th of Nissan, between sunset and full dark and the Festival of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th of Nissan. The Festival of First Fruits begins on the 16th of Nissan and this is when we begin the countdown (the Omer) to Pentecost (Shavuot). This leaves one day between Passover and First Fruits.

It was on this intermediate day when our Messiah was tried, tortured and crucified. When He died, they took His body off the cross and buried it before sunset, which was the beginning of the Festival of First Fruits, and which was considered to be a very special High Day.

In the year when our L-rd died, Passover occurred on a Tuesday evening and His arrest occurred in the night as did His trial. He was crucified on Wednesday, died and was buried. He was in the grave for three days and three nights (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) and He arose sometime after sunset on Saturday (which is the beginning of Sunday on the Hebrew calendar) and in that year, it occurred on the first day of the week.

Passover occurs on the same date on the Hebrew Calendar – the 14th of Nissan, but the date varies on the Gregorian Calendar. Early Christians celebrated the resurrection according to the date of Passover, but sometime around the third century, the date was fixed so that the resurrection was always celebrated on a Sunday and the original biblical chronology was ignored and even modified.

Good Wednesday became Good Friday and Thursday became the permanent date for the Last Supper, but its celebration as a Passover Seder was downplayed and Sunday became exalted and eventually replaced the Sabbath as the Gentile Christian holy day.

This year, the Seder fell on a Monday night. Today is the first day of unleavened bread and tonight marks the beginning of First Fruits – and in the traditional Jewish community, a second Seder is observed to replace commemorating First Fruits.

The days He spent in the tomb as Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and lo and behold, the day after the three days is the Sabbath this year! So in our congregation we are still going to celebrate Shabbat Pesach, but we will also rejoice in the resurrection of our Messiah who rose after the three day period.

There is some discussion as to whether He rose on the third day or after the third day, but this is solved when we understand that saying on the third day means after the three days, which can be seen as you do a close reading of the passages involved.

Come and join us for our celebration of the resurrection this coming Sabbath. If you still want to go and celebrate the resurrection with Gentile believers on Sunday, just remember that rabbits are not kosher! The church has the right celebration, just the wrong date, year by year. You cannot change the Sabbath to make it the first day of the week and resurrection day must always be calculated from the Passover Seder.

May your celebration of Passover Week (the seven days of unleavened bread are often also called this) be sweet and may your celebration of our Messiah's resurrection be blessed and joyful.

Shalom,

Rabbi Mike