

הבשורה על-פי יוחנן

Gospel of John
from a Jewish Perspective

Paul Cohen

2026

Gospel of John from a Jewish Perspective 1

מִמְרָא (*memra*), the Logos, the Word - John 1:1-18

John 1:1-18

Background

Intro

John is not teaching us Greek philosophy, i.e., logos equals' reason and speech.

1 By reason, Yeshua was the very idea of God.

2 By speech, he was the very expression of God.

A Note on the Targum

Targum (Aramaic: תרגום; plural: *targumim*) means “translation.” This word appears in Ezra 4:7, referring to “the writing of the letter was written in Aramaic and translated.”

The two most significant *Targumim* are

Targum Onkelos on the Torah

Targum Jonathan on the Prophets

Megillah 4:4

“One who reads from the Torah in the synagogue should not read fewer than three verses. And when it is being translated (*Targum*), he should not read to the translator (*meturgeman*) more than one verse at a time, so that the translator will not become confused. And with regard to the Prophets, one may read to the translator three verses at a time.”

Example of Midrashic Targum

Song of Solomon 2:12: “The flowers have appeared in our land; The time of singing has come, And the **voice of the turtledove** is heard in our land.”

Targum Jonathan on Song of Solomon 2:12, the interpretation of “קול התור” (qol ha-tor) is indeed transformed. The word “תור” (tor), which literally means “turtledove,” is reinterpreted to mean “turn,” “period,” or “decree.” In this context, Targum Jonathan understands “קול התור” not as the sound of a bird, but as the **“voice of salvation”** or the “voice of redemption” that announces the end of suffering or the end of the exile and the arrival of the Messiah. It links the imagery of springtime with the spiritual renewal of the messianic era.

Bible Readings in the Synagogues in the First Century

1. Avoid anthropomorphism: e.g., a portrayal of God in a physical, human-like form.
2. Maintain God’s oneness (His unity)

Examples from the Targum

Genesis 19:24 “And Yahweh rained brimstone and fire upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, from Yahweh, out of the heavens.”

Targum “And the Word of the Lord had caused showers of favour to descend upon Sodom and Gomorrah, to the intent that they might work repentance, but they did it not: so that they said, Wickedness is not manifest before the Lord. Behold, then, there are now sent down upon them sulphur and fire from before the Word of the Lord from Heaven.”

Genesis 3:8 “So heard they the voice of Yahweh Elohim [the LORD God].”

Targum “So heard they the voice of Memra,” or “They heard the voice of the Word.”

John’s Logos is the Memra

The personification of the Word in the Bible and Targumim

The Memra as an Active Agent:

Genesis 15:1 “After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision.”

Genesis 20:3 “But God came to Abimelech in a dream”

Targum Onkelos “And the Word from before the Lord came to Abimelech.”

Exodus 25:22 “And I will meet with you there.”

Targum Onkelos “And I will appoint my Word for you there.”

The Word with Personal Attributes:

Psalms 147:15 “He sends forth his command [Memra] to the earth; His Word [Davar] runs very swiftly.”

Isaiah 9:8 “The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it fell on Israel.”

Isaiah 45:23 “By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.’”

The Memra was distinct from God, but the same as God

Exodus 14:31 “And they believed in the Lord.”

Targum “And they believed in the Word of the LORD.”

Deuteronomy 1:32 “You have not believed in the Lord.”

Targum Deuteronomy 1:32 “You have not believed in the Word of the Lord.”

Example Genesis 15:4-7 The Covenant with Abram

The Memra as the agent of Creation

Psalm 33:4-6 “For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. **By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth.**”

Genesis 1:27 “God created man.”

Targum Genesis 1:27 (*Fragmentary Targum*): “The Word of the Lord created man.”

Genesis 1 (General Principle): “And God said, ‘Let there be...’ and there was...”

Hebrews 11:3 “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

The Agent of Salvation

Isaiah 45:17 “Israel will be saved by the Lord.”

Targum Jonathan “Israel will be saved by the Word of the Lord.”

Hosea 1:7 “But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the Lord their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses or horsemen.”

Targum Jonathan “But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Word of Yahweh, their God.”

Targum Jonathan Isaiah 45:17, 25 (combined):

1. “But Israel shall be saved by the Word of Yahweh with an everlasting salvation...”
2. “By the Word of Yahweh shall all the seed of Israel be justified.”

The Visible Manifestation of God’s Presence

John 1:14 “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us ...”

Skeinei - Shekinah, “tabernacled” or “dwelt”

Shekinah (שְׁכִינָה), which derives from the root *shakan* (שָׁכַן), “to dwell.”

Rabbinical Hebrew *Shekinah* glory of God “tabernacled” in the wilderness Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34), now the *Memra* (Word/Logos) “tabernacles” in the person of Yeshua.

[side note: The Departure and Return of the *Shekinah* Ezekiel Chapters 8-11]

The Veil of His Flesh (Hebrews 10:19-20)

The Unveiling

At the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36).

The Agent of Revelation

Exodus 20:1 “God spoke all these words”

Targum Onkelos “the Memra of the Lord spoke all these glorious words, saying...”

Genesis 18:1 “The Lord appeared to him.”

Targum Neofiti and Pseudo-Jonathan on Genesis 18:1 “the Memra of the Lord was revealed to Abraham”

Targum Onkelos on Genesis 20:3 “the Memra of the Lord was revealed to Abimelech in a dream by night.”

Hosea 1:1 “The word of the Lord that came to Hosea”

Targum Jonathan “The word of prophecy from before the Memra of the Lord that came to Hosea.”

Divine Providence and Guidance

Targum Onkelos on Exodus 13:21 “The Memra of the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them”

Note on Hebrews 1:1-3

The Seal of the Covenants

Genesis 9:12 (Noahic Covenant context): “And God said, ‘This sign that I set for the covenant between Me and you.’”

Targum Onkelos “And the Lord said, ‘This is the sign that I set for a covenant between My Word and you.’”

Genesis 15:6 (Abrahamic Covenant context) “And Abraham believed in the Lord.”

Targum Onkelos “And Abraham believed in the Word of the Lord”

Exodus 20:1 “God spoke,”

Targum Onkelos “God spoke all these words” with (*through*) “the Memra of the Lord spoke all these glorious words, saying...”

- The New Covenant was signed and sealed by the ultimate act of God’s Word made flesh (Hebrews 8-10)

The LORD's Memra shall be unto you for a redeeming deity

Leviticus 26:12 “I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.”

Targum Yerushalmi “**My Shekinah** I shall put among you, **My Memra** shall be unto you for a redeeming deity, and you shall be unto My Name a holy people.”

A Closing Note: In Him Was Life and Light (John 1:4)

John 1:4 “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

Psalm 119:105: “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Psalm 119:130: “The unfolding of Your words [Memra] gives light; it [that is the Memra] gives enlightenment to the simple.”

The four key points of John 1:1-18

1. **The Incarnation of the Word** (John 1:1, 3, 14)
2. **The World's Failure to Recognise Him** (John 1:10)
3. **Israel's Tragic Rejection** (John 1:11)
4. **Acceptance of the Son brings Salvation** (John 1:12-13, 16-17)

End Quote:

Risto Santala, a Finnish Christian scholar fluent in Hebrew and Rabbinic sources, summarises the combined evidence from the Targums: “‘The Lord's Memra will be my God’; ‘I will save them through their God, the Lord's Memra’; Abraham was justified through the Memra; the Memra gave Israel the Law; Moses prayed to the Memra; Israel was justified through the Memra's instrumentality and the Memra even created the world.” In fact, according to one Targum (Neofiti), man was created in the image of the Memra of the Lord! Consider also Targum Pseudo-Jonathan the Targum printed in all Rabbinic Bibles (called Mikra'ot Gedolot). Deuteronomy 4:7 in the Hebrew reads, “What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him?” The Targum instead says, “The Memra of Yahweh sits upon His throne high and lifted up and Hears our prayer whenever we pray before him and make our petitions.”

Sources

- McNamara, Martin; Targum and Testament; Aramaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Bible: a light on the New Testament. Shannon, Irish University Press; 1972.
- McNamara, Martin; The New Testament and the Targum to the Pentateuch; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978.
- Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. MBS “John 1: The Logos and the Rabbi” now incorporated in Yeshua vol 2.
- Risto Santala: The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings.

Yeshua, Nicodemus & Born Again (John 3:1-21)

“Yeshua answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘**You must be born again.**’” (John 3:5,7)

Introduction

Not Under the Cloak of Darkness

“Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.” (John 2:23)

Who is Nicodemus in the Bible and Rabbinical and Jewish writings

Rabbinic Tradition: Nakdimon ben Gurion

*Lamentations Rabbati*¹ 1.5 describes the tragic poverty of the Jerusalem rich after the destruction, mentioning “Nakdimon ben Gurion.”

Bavli² Gittin³ 56a, further lists Nakdimon among “three men of great wealth” in Jerusalem at the time of the siege.

Bavli Ta’anit 19b-20a) Nakdimon, during a severe drought, borrowed 12 wells of water from a Gentile authority (Roman), risking 297 kg of silver if the wells weren’t refilled by a specific date.

Bavli Ta’anit 19b-20a concludes: “We have learned in a Baraita⁴: His name was not Nakdimon, but Buni, and he was called Nakdimon because on his account the sun hastened... The rabbis taught: ‘For the sake of each of [*these*] three men alone the sun shone, and they are Moses, Joshua, and Nakdimon ben Gurion.’”

¹ **A midrashic** commentary to the Book of Lamentations. It is one of the oldest works of midrash, or “exposition” of the text.

² **Bavli** refers to the **Babylonian Talmud**, often is abbreviated as “B” followed by the tractate (. The **Jerusalem Talmud (Yerushalmi)**, a.k.a. the *Palestinian Talmud*, is abbreviated “Y”. The Talmud comprises of two parts, **Mishnah** and the **Gemara** which is the main body of the Talmud, consisting of a record of ancient rabbinical debates about the interpretation of the Mishna and constituting the primary source of Jewish religious law.

³ “Gittin” is the plural form of “get,” a Jewish religious document that legally dissolves a Jewish marriage.

⁴ **Baraita** designates a **tradition in the Oral Torah of Rabbinical Judaism** that is not incorporated in the Mishnah. Baraita thus refers to teachings “outside”

Mishnah⁵ *Eruvin* 3(4):17, the Gurion family's estates were located in Ruma, Lower Galilee.

Bavli Gittin 56a

“There were in it three men of great wealth, Nakdimon b. Gorion, Ben Kalba Sabu'a, and Ben Zizith Hakeseth... Nakdimon b. Gorion was so called because the sun continued shining for his sake... One of these [*Nakdimon*] said to the people of Jerusalem, 'I will keep them in wheat and barley.' A second [*Ben Kalba*] said, 'I will keep them in wine, salt, and oil.' The third [*Ben Zizith*] said, 'I will keep them in wood...' These men were in a position to keep the city for twenty-one years. The Biryonim [Zealots] were then in the city... They then rose up and burnt the stores of wheat and barley so that a famine ensued.”

Flavius Josephus⁶, *The Wars of the Jews* 2.20.4 and 4.3.9

Records Nakdimon's son, Gurion ben Nakdimon, negotiated with the Romans. Gurion's son (ben Gurion), Joseph, was also a leader among Jerusalem's defenders.

Bavli Ketubot 66b-67a

“When he went to study in the house of study, people would lay woollen cloaks under his feet, and the poor would come and take them”), paradoxically questions if it was “enough,” never fully explaining the total loss of his wealth beyond the Zealots' destruction of stores.

*Avot of Rabbi Nathan*⁷ (Chapter 17) (The archaic language removed)

Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai was once walking in the market when he noticed a girl picking up barley from under the feet of Arabian cattle. “My daughter, who are you?” he asked her, but she didn't reply. He asked her again, but she remained silent. Finally, she said, “Wait a moment.” She covered herself with her hair, approached him, and said, “Rabbi, I am the daughter of Nakdimon b. Gurion.”

“And what happened to your father's money?” he asked her. She replied, “Rabbi, the proverb from Jerusalem proved true for him: ‘One who wants to keep their wealth should decrease it (by spending on charities), but since my father didn't spend enough on charities, it all disappeared.’”

“And what happened to your father-in-law's wealth?” he questioned her again. She answered, “Rabbi, his wealth was also lost because of my father.”

Then Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai said to his disciples, “Whenever I used to read the passage: ‘If you do not know this, O most beautiful of women! go out and follow the footsteps of the flocks,’ I couldn't understand what punishment was implied. But after what I have seen today, I can confidently say that the punishment means Israel will be dominated by the lowest of the gentile nations; and not only that, but they will also have to lie among the manure of their cattle.”

⁵ Mishnah is the comments by the early rabbis from before Yeshua to about 220CE. The word means to “study by repetition”

⁶ A first-century Jewish historian whose works provide crucial historical accounts of Jewish life and events during the Second Temple period.

⁷ *Avot* (sayings) of **Rabbi Natan**, also known as *Avot de-Rabbi Nathan* is a commentary on an early part of the Mishnah

The same girl then asked him, “Rabbi, do you remember signing my marriage contract?” He replied, “I do,” and turning to his disciples, he continued, “Indeed, I signed the marriage contract of this girl, which was for a million Tyrian dinars. Her father’s family never left their house to enter the Temple until a woollen cloth was laid out for them.”

Summary of Rabbinic Passages on Nakdimon ben Gurion:

The Jewish Encyclopedia

The Jewish Encyclopedia (1906 ed.) “In all probability, he is identical with the Talmudical Nicodemus ben Gorion, a popular saint noted for his miraculous powers; and this would explain also the reference to "heavenly things" in Jesus' arguments with him (John iii. 12).⁸ Nicodemus is in the Talmud called “Buni” and “Nakdimon”⁹.

***The Non-Biblical Gospel of Nicodemus*¹⁰**

The Non-Biblical *Gospel of Nicodemus*:

“When the unjust Jews heard that Joseph [of Arimathea] had begged and buried the body of Jesus, they sought after Nicodemus, and those fifteen men who had testified before the governor, that Jesus was not born through fornication, and other good persons who had shown any good actions towards him” Nicodemus then confronts them, saying, “How can such persons as these enter into the synagogue?” to which they reply, “But how dare you enter the synagogue, you who were an ally of the Messiah? Let your fate be with him in the other world!¹¹” (Gospel of Nicodemus, Part I, Chapter 9).

This exchange indicates his ostracism, complete rejection from the Jewish community, as we will explore this further in John 9.

Connections to the Biblical Nicodemus:

- **Wealthy:** John 19:39-40
- **Pharisee and “Ruler of the Jews”:** John 3:1
- **Nocturnal Visit** John 3:2
- **Engagement with “Heavenly Things”** John 3:12

⁸ <https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11525-nicodemus>

⁹ The name “Buni” (or “Boni,” בני) is generally understood to mean “built” or “my understanding,” derived from the Hebrew root בנה (*banah*), meaning “to build.” However, in the context of Nakdimon ben Gurion, the Talmud (Bavli Ta’anit 20a) explicitly states: “His name was not Nakdimon, but Buni, and he was called Nakdimon because on his account the sun hastened [or ‘broke through’ / ‘pierced through’—related to the root *nakad* or *nakaf*].” So, while his given name was Buni, he earned the popular nickname “Nakdimon” due to the miracle of the sun appearing for his sake.

¹⁰ The Gospel of Nicodemus, also known as the “Acts of Pilate,” is an apocryphal gospel, purportedly written by Nicodemus, that dates to the 4th or 5th century CE.

¹¹ Archaic language removed PC

John 3

Rabbi Nicodemus

Historical setting

Rabbinic Investigations Two Stages

The *Mishnah Sanhedrin* (particularly chapters 4-5 for instance)

1. **Stage One: Observation.**
2. **Stage Two: Interrogation.**

Three Messianic Miracles

1. Messianic Miracle 1: “Healing a Jewish Leper”, Matthew 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45 and Luke 5:12-16.
2. Messianic Miracle 2: “Healing A Man Who Had Been Born Blind”, John 9
3. Messianic Miracle 3: “Casting Out a Dumb Demon”, Matthew 12:22-26

Part One: Possible Discussion between Yeshua and Nicodemus

Many commentators see three connections:

The Law:

Leviticus 14:5-7

2 Kings 5:14

The Prophets:

Ezekiel 36:24-27

The Writings:

Ecclesiastes 11:5

What did Nicodemus believe?

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1: “All Israel has a share in the world to come.”

Midrash, Genesis Rabbah 48:8: “Abraham sits at the gates of Gehenna to save any circumcised from entering.”

Biblical Background

New Testament

1. Being “in Messiah” means being a “New Creation”, the old identity is gone, and a new one emerges (2 Corinthians 5:17). **Change of Identity** from old self to New Creation
2. Believers “have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”. Colossians 3:10. **Change of Identity** from Adam’s fallen image to God’s image
3. Believers have been adopted into God's family, which give us a new identity as a child of God (John 1:12; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26). **Change of Identity** from being alienated from God to being a child of God
4. Believers by the new birth are liberated, no longer “slaves to sin”, (Romans 6:17-18). **Change of Identity** from being slaves to sin, to slaves of righteousness.

In essence, “Born Again” is the change of identity, for the Believers this is a act of God that gives a person a **new identity** in Messiah, forming the foundation for a transformed life.

Older Testament

Exodus chapters 12-14 serve as a collective “new birth” for the entire people of Israel, no longer slaves, but the national son of God.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 contains the promise of a “new heart” and a “new spirit”, resonates directly with the idea of a spiritual renewal, no longer walking contrary to God.

Rabbinic understanding of Born Again

1. Gentile converted to Judaism (Bavli **Yevamot 22a, 62a, and 97a**)
“Shim’on Ben-Lakish said, ‘... a proselyte is like a newborn infant’” (Bavli Yevamot 62a)
Rabbi Yosi the convert resembles that of the “new creation” (Bavli Yevamot 48b).
R. Judah, declared that a convert is “like a babe one day old.” (Bavli Yevamot 48b).
Codified by Maimonides¹² in his **Mishneh Torah, Issurei Biah 14:11**, “When a gentile converts or a servant is freed, he is like a newborn baby”
2. Being crowned king, makes him like a newborn (again), Midrash **Yalkut Shimoni on 1 Samuel 13**
3. When a sinner repents, Bavli **Yoma 86b**: “Great is *teshuvah* (repentance), for it brings healing to the world... the transformative power described here aligns with the idea of a fresh start.

¹² Moses ben Maimon, commonly known as Maimonides and also referred to by the Hebrew acronym Rambam, was a Sephardic rabbi and philosopher who became one of the most prolific and influential Torah scholars of the Middle Ages, 12th Century.

Bavli Rosh Hashanah 17b: speaks of God’s mercy towards those who repent, indicating a complete wiping away of sins, which is the essence of being “born anew” in a spiritual sense. no specific sin is discussed in the dialogue with Yeshua, and Nicodemus appears to be a man of high moral standing and religious observance, it would seem that the concept of “being born again” through repentance for sin did not apply to him in the same way it might to a notorious sinner.

The Rambam, a.k.a. Maimonides’ in Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Teshuvah 2:4, extensively discusses *teshuvah* and its transformative power. He comments on the two passages above and states: “One who repents is like one who was born again.”

Quote by Rabbi J. Simcha Cohen, “Halachic Questions: Born Again Jews,” *The Jewish Press* (October 5, 1990). As found in Arnold Fruchtenbaum’s book *Yeshua* vol 2.
“Any Jew could refrain from transgressing for a number of reasons. A baal teshuva [master of repentance] is different. He simply cannot sin. Sin is alien to his status. When a person can reflect such a strength of character, then he may aptly be designated a complete baal teshuva. He has made the grade. He has demonstrated his transformed status. This is the meaning behind the Rambam’s phraseology – that he refrains from sin “because of teshuva.” . . . In other words, a baal teshuva is really a “born again Jew.””

But there were four other ways to be born again, and Nicodemus qualified for all four.

Though the exact phrase is not used, the concept of being made new is in them.

It is based on **Pirkei Avot 5.21**

“He used to say: At five years of age the study of Scripture; At ten the study of Mishnah; At thirteen subject to the commandments; At fifteen the study of Talmud; At eighteen the bridal canopy; At twenty for pursuit [of livelihood]; At thirty the peak of strength; At forty wisdom; At fifty able to give counsel; At sixty old age; At seventy fullness of years; At eighty the age of “strength”; At ninety a bent body; At one hundred, as good as dead and gone completely out of the world.”

1. Jewish boy becomes **Bar Mitzvah** at the age of thirteen, Talmud (e.g., *Kiddushin 29a*, *Sanhedrin 69a*)
2. **Marriage.** The man becomes a “whole person.” (*Yevamot 63a*, *Sanhedrin 22b*):
“An unmarried man is like a half-person.”
(R. Johanan, a Palestinian Amora of the third century, enumerates Sanhedrin qualifications in *Sanhedrin 19a*, which included “. . . of advanced age; and they must be learned [in Torah] and must understand foreign languages . . .”).
Requirement for members of the Sanhedrin to be married men (*Sanhedrin 17a*)
3. ‘Ordained’ as a rabbi; Nicodemus was addressed as a rabbi (John 3:2)
Mishnah in *Pirkei Avot 5.21* lists stages of life, and “forty wisdom”, a period of significant intellectual maturity and readiness for public leadership. Thus, in his understanding, Nicodemus had experienced a third form of “new birth” through his

ordination. Today you could be 25 and be a rabbi, but traditional, you had to be older.

4. Appointed as head of a rabbinical school.
(Rosh Yeshiva - Head of the Academy, 'Rabban')
Again based on Pirkei Avot 5.21 "At fifty able to give counsel"
In verse 10, Yeshua said to Nicodemus, "Are you **the** teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?".
The point, then, is this: Nicodemus had undergone every process available in

"to be born of water" an expression for **physical birth**.

"one must be born of water **and the Spirit** to enter into the Kingdom of God."

A physical birth *and* a spiritual birth

Two Basic Steps

Scriptural references:

Proverbs 30:4: The Unique Identity of the Son of Man (God's Part)

Title "Son of Man" Daniel 7:13-14

Numbers 21:4-9: The Means of Salvation and Faith (Man's Part)

Conclusion

Sources

- Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G. MBS "John 1: The Logos and the Rabbi" now incorporated in Yeshua vol 2.
- Edersheim Alfred, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, book 3, chapter 6 "The Teacher Come from God and the Teacher from Jerusalem - Jesus and Nicodemus."
- Strack, Hermann L. & Billerbeck, Paul; A commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud & Midrash, Volume 2.

--

The following is a quote from Alfred Edersheim in his book *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Chapter 3.6

“Jesus took him straight to whence alone that ‘Kingdom’ could be seen. ‘Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.’ It has been thought by commentators, that there is here an allusion to a Jewish mode of expression in regard to proselytes, who were viewed as ‘new-born.’ But in that case Nicodemus would have understood it, and answered differently - or, rather, not expressed his utter inability to understand it. It is, indeed, true that a Gentile on becoming a proselyte - though not, as has been suggested, an ordinary penitent - was likened to a child just born. It is also true, that persons in certain circumstances - the bridegroom on his marriage, the Chief of the Academy on his promotion, the king on his enthronement - were likened to those newly born. The expression, therefore, was not only common, but, so to speak, fluid; only, both it and what it implied must be rightly understood. In the first place, it was only a simile, and never meant to convey a real regeneration (*‘as a child’*). So far as proselytes were concerned, it meant that, having entered into a new relation to God, they also entered into new relationship to man, just as if they had at that moment been newly born. All the old relations had ceased - a man’s father, brother, mother, sister were no longer his nearest of kin: he was a new and another man. Then, secondly, it implied a new state, when all a man’s past was past, and his sins forgiven him as belonging to that past. It will now be perceived, how impossible it was for Nicodemus to understand the teaching of Jesus, and yet how all-important to him was that teaching. For, even if he could have imagined that Jesus pointed to repentance, as that which would give him the figurative standing of ‘born from above,’ or even ‘born anew,’ it would not have helped him. For, first, this second birth was only a *simile*. Secondly, according to the Jewish view, this second birth was the *consequence* of having taken upon oneself ‘the Kingdom;’ not, as Jesus put it, the *cause* and condition of it. The proselyte had taken upon himself ‘the Kingdom,’ and therefore he was that he must be born again in order to see the Kingdom of God. Lastly, it was ‘a birth from above’ to which reference was made. Judaism could understand a new relationship towards God and man, and even the forgiveness of sins. But it had no conception of a moral renovation, a spiritual birth, as the initial condition for reformation, far less as that for seeing the Kingdom of God. And it was because it had no idea of such ‘birth from above,’ of its reality or even possibility, that Judaism could not be the Kingdom of God.”

Yeshua at the Feast of Tabernacles: John 7

Introduction

Seven Holy seasons.

Here is a table outlining the prophetic fulfillments of the Seven Holy Seasons, along with relevant scriptures:

Holy Season	Older Testament	Prophetic Fulfillment	New Testament Scripture/Relevance
1. Passover (Pesach)	Leviticus 23:5, Numbers 28:16, Deuteronomy 16:1-8	Messiah our Passover	1 Corinthians 5:7 (“For Messiah, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.”)
2. Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot)	Leviticus 23:6-8, Numbers 28:17-25, Deuteronomy 16:3-8	Messiah, our sinless offering	Hebrews 4:15 (“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathise with our weaknesses, but we have One who has been tempted in every way, just as we are— yet He did not sin.”), 1 Peter 2:22 (“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth.”)
3. First Fruits (Bikkurim)	Leviticus 23:9-14	Messiah is the first fruits of the resurrection	1 Corinthians 15:20, 23 (“But in fact Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep... But each in turn: Messiah, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to Him.”)
4. Feast of Weeks (Shavuot/Pentecost)	Leviticus 23:15-22, Numbers 28:26-31, Deuteronomy 16:9-12; Exodus 20 (Giving of the Law)	Giving of the Law (Exodus 20), creation of the nation of Israel; Giving of the Holy Spirit, creation of the Church	Acts 2 (The day of Pentecost, outpouring of the Holy Spirit and birth of the Church)
5. Day of Blowing (Rosh)	Leviticus 23:23-25,	Israel called back to the Land;	Isaiah 27:13 (“And in that day a great trumpet will sound. Those who were

Holy Season	Older Testament	Prophetic Fulfillment	New Testament Scripture/Relevance
Hashanah/Feast of Trumpets)	Numbers 29:1-6	The believers in Messiah raptured	perishing in Assyria and those who were exiled in Egypt will come and worship the Lord on his holy mountain in Jerusalem.”); 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Messiah will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”)
6. Day of Atonements (Yom Kippur)	Leviticus 23:26-32, Numbers 29:7-11	National repentance of Israel, Second Coming of Messiah	Zechariah 12:10 (“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”); Romans 11:26 (“And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.’”)
7. Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)	Leviticus 23:33-43, Numbers 29:12-38, Deuteronomy 16:13-16	The Messianic Kingdom (Millennial Reign), God dwelling with His people	Zechariah 14:16-19 (“Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.”); Revelation 21:3 (“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and

Holy Season	Older Testament	Prophetic Fulfillment	New Testament Scripture/Relevance
			he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.”); Amos 9:13-15 (Prophecy of restored land and abundance during the Messianic Kingdom)

Intro John 7

John 7 has three-time divisions: before the feast (vv. 1-10), in the midst of the feast (vv. 11-36), and on the last day of the feast (vv. 37-52).

John 7:1 Oppositions by...

Because:

1. Yeshua healing a man on the Sabbath day:
John 5:16
2. Yeshua asserting equality with God:
John 5:17 -18b; John 8:58-59; John 10:30-33

John 7:2-9 The Challenge By Yeshua’s Brothers

The Jewish historian Josephus, “The feast of tabernacles happened to fall at the same time: which was celebrated by the Hebrews as a most holy and most eminent feast.” (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 8.4.1).

Mishnah states, “Whoever has not seen the rejoicing of the water-drawing ceremony has never seen rejoicing in his life.” (*Mishnah Sukkah* 5:1).

The Messianic Fulfillment of Sukkot in Jewish Thought

“Why did Moses command Israel to offer 70 bullocks during the seven days of Sukkot? To atone for the seventy nations of the world.” (**Midrash Rabbah, Numbers 21:2**)

“In that day I will raise up the **kingdom of the house of David** that is fallen,” (**Targum Jonathan on Amos 9:11**)

when discussing the Messiah, alludes to the restoration of the Davidic line, with the *sukkah* (in its broader sense of dwelling or dynasty) representing the enduring nature of the Davidic covenant, (**Bavli Sanhedrin 96b**).

John 7:10 The Journey to Jerusalem

The animosity between Jews and Samaritans

“But when John Hyrcanus came to be high priest, he conquered all the Samaritans, and took the city of Shechem, and *reproduced their temple that was built upon Mount Gerizim*, and this after it had existed two hundred years.” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 13.9.1)

“It happened that as the **Samaritans went up to the feast at Jerusalem**, a Galilean was murdered in the village of Ginae, which lies on the border between Samaria and Galilee, as he was going on the road. When the Galileans heard of this, they were greatly enraged, and were ready to make war upon the Samaritans... This was the beginning of the great troubles among them.” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.6.1-3)

John 7:11-15 The conflict at the Feast of Tabernacles, where Messiah’s authority was questioned

Feast of Tabernacles in the Second Temple Period

Key Ceremonies During the Feast of Tabernacles

The First is the Outpouring of Water (*Nissuch HaMayim* - נִיסוּךְ הַמַּיִם)

For a detailed-outline of the procedure see the last page.

“Whoever has not seen the rejoicing of the Outpouring of the Water has not seen rejoicing in all of his life” (Mishnah *Sukkah* 5:1; cf. Tosefta *Sukkah* 4:2).

“Why is it called ‘Beit HaSho’evah’ (Place of the Drawing *of the waters*)? Because from there they would draw the Holy Spirit, as it says, ‘With joy you shall draw water from the wells of salvation’ (Isaiah 12:3).” (Jerusalem Talmud, *Sukkah* 5:1; see also the Bavli *Sukkah* 55a).

“Just as water goes to the thirsty, so too the Holy Spirit goes to those who long for it.” (Midrash *Rabbah*, *Numbers Rabbah* 14:1)

The second key ceremony: the kindling of the lampstands.

Mishnah *Sukkah* 5:3-4,

3. From the worn trousers of the priests and their belts they would loosen and tear strips to use as wicks, and with them they would light the candelabra. And the light from the candelabra was so bright that there was not a courtyard in Jerusalem that was not illuminated from the light of the Place of the Drawing of the Water.

4. The pious and the men of action would dance before the people who attended the celebration, with flaming torches that they would juggle in their hands, and they would say before them passages of song and praise to God. And the Levites would play on lyres, harps, cymbals, and trumpets, and countless other musical instruments. The musicians would stand on the fifteen stairs that descend from the Israelites’ courtyard to the Women’s Courtyard,

corresponding to the fifteen Songs of the Ascents in Psalms, i.e., chapters 120–134, and upon which the Levites stand with musical instruments and recite their song. And this was the ceremony of the Water Libation: Two priests stood at the Upper Gate that descends from the Israelites' courtyard to the Women's Courtyard, with two trumpets in their hands. When the rooster crowed at dawn, they sounded a *tekia*, and sounded a *terua*, and sounded a *tekia*. When they who would draw the water reached the tenth stair the trumpeters sounded a *tekia*, and sounded a *terua*, and sounded a *tekia*, to indicate that the time to draw water from the Siloam pool had arrived. When they reached the Women's Courtyard with the basins of water in their hands, the trumpeters sounded a *tekia*, and sounded a *terua*, and sounded a *tekia*. When they reached the ground of the Women's Courtyard, the trumpeters sounded a *tekia*, and sounded a *terua*, and sounded a *tekia*. They continued sounding the trumpets until they reached the gate through which one exits to the east, from the Women's Courtyard to the eastern slope of the Temple Mount. When they reached the gate through which one exits to the east, they turned from facing east to facing west, toward the Holy of Holies, and said: Our ancestors who were in this place during the First Temple period who did not conduct themselves appropriately, stood "with their backs toward the Sanctuary of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east" (Ezekiel 8:16), and we, our eyes are to God. Rabbi Yehuda says that they would repeat and say: We are to God, and our eyes are to God.

"For what purpose did Israel need light? Did not the sun shine for them? Rather, it is to teach you that the light of the Menorah came to give light to all who came into the world."
(Midrash Rabbah, Exodus Rabbah 36:2)

Sidenote, "The Jews" in John

1. **All Jews¹ in general**, referring to all descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This usage highlights the broader ethnic and religious group.
2. **Judean Jews²** specifically contrasting them with Galilean Jews or Jews from the Diaspora, often implying a geographical or regional distinction, sometimes with a nuance of opposition from those centred in Jerusalem.
3. **The Jewish leadership³** however, most often in John, the term refers specifically to the Jewish leadership - the Pharisees, Sadducees, or members of the Sanhedrin—who represent institutional opposition to Yeshua.

John 7:11-15 Messiah's Authority Questioned

¹ John 2:6 (water pots for the purification rites "of the Jews"); John 4:9 (Samaritan woman says, "How is it that you, a **Jew**, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?"); John 18:33 (Pilate asks, "Are You the King of the **Jews**?").

² John 1:43 ("And Yeshua was wanting to leave for Galilee, and He found Philip..."); John 4:3 ("He left Judea and went again to Galilee"); John 7:1 ("After these things Yeshua was walking in Galilee; for He was unwilling to walk in **Judea** because the Jews were seeking to kill Him"); John 7:41-42, 52 (arguments about the Messiah's origin, "Does the Messiah come out of Galilee?").

³ John 1:19 ("This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent **priests and Levites from Jerusalem** to ask him, 'Who are you?'); John 5:16 ("For this reason the Jews were persecuting Yeshua, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath."); John 7:13 ("No one, however, was speaking openly about Him for fear of the Jews."); John 9:22 ("For the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him as Messiah, he would be put out of the synagogue."); John 18:31 ("Pilate then said to them, 'Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.' The Jews said to him, 'We are not permitted to put anyone to death.'").

John 7:16-24 Messiah's Explanation

Mishnah, Shabbat 19:1-2, and reinforced in the **Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 132a**, discuss how circumcision—a command given to Abraham (Genesis 17:9-14) and later incorporated into the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 12:3)—overrides the Sabbath restrictions. This is because its timing on the eighth day is a divine ordinance that cannot be postponed.

John 7:25-27 Messiah's Person Questioned

Christian apologist Justin Martyr in *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, “the Messiahship of the Messiah would be unknown, even to Himself, until He was anointed by Elijah”

John 7:28-30 Messiah's Explanation

John 7:31-36 The People's Response

John 7:37-44 Messiah's Invitation

John 7:45-52 The Pharisaic Response

Mishnah, Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers)

“Moses received Torah from Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua, and Joshua to the Elders, and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets transmitted it to the Men of the Great Assembly.” (Pirkei Avot 1:1)

“Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei: From where is it derived that the Holy One, Blessed be He, prays?...As it is stated: “I will bring them to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in the house of My prayer” (**Bavli Berachot 7a**)

“Rabbi Pinchas, Rabbi Levi and Rabbi Yochanan [said] in the name of Rabbi Menachem from Gallia: In the time to come, all sacrifices will be annulled - but the sacrifice of thanksgiving will not be annulled...This accords with what is written [Jeremiah 33:11]: “The voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the groom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who say ‘Give thanks to the LORD of...hosts’ etc.” - this is the prayer of gratitude....”Those who bring [the sacrifice of] thanksgiving to the House of the LORD”: this is the sacrifice of thanksgiving....Thus David said: “I owe You vows and will offer you thanksgivings” [Psalms 56:13] - not “thanksgiving,” but “thanksgivings,” [indicating both] the thanksgiving prayer and the prayer of gratitude.” (Midrash Leviticus: **Vayikra Rabbah 9:7**)

“Mar Zutra bar Tuvia said in the name of Rav, and some quote it thus: Rav Chana bar Bizna said in the name of Rabbi Shimon Chasida, and some quote it thus: Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon...bar Yochai “It is better for a man to throw himself into a fiery furnace, and to not embarrassed their fellow in public.”...What is the source for this? From Tamar, and it says, “When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law.” (**Bava Metzia 59a**)

John 7:53 What about us, what is our response?

Detailed outline of the Outpouring of Water procedure:

The Procedure of the Outpouring of Water (Nissuch HaMayim - ניסוך המים)

The Water Libation ceremony was performed daily during the seven days of Sukkot, accompanying the morning sacrifices. It was a highlight of the festival, known for its extraordinary joy and deep spiritual meaning, symbolizing the future outpouring of God’s Spirit.

1. The Preparation (The Night Before / Dawn):

A golden flask (or pitcher) was prepared. The Mishnah specifies it held **three logim**, a measurement equivalent to approximately **1 litre** (*Mishnah Yoma 3:8; Mishnah Sukkah 4:9*).

At daybreak, a large procession of priests, Levites, and joyous pilgrims would descend from the Temple Mount to the Pool of Siloam (or Shiloach Spring) at the base of the Kidron Valley in Jerusalem. This spring was chosen because its waters were “living waters” (flowing, not stagnant), and it had historical significance (e.g., King Solomon was anointed there).

A priest would fill the golden flask with water from the Pool of Siloam.

2. The Procession to the Temple:

The procession, filled with singing, dancing, and music (harps, lyres, cymbals, trumpets), would return to the Temple Mount. They would enter through a designated “Water Gate” on the southern side of the Temple courtyard (*Mishnah Middot 2:6*).

As the procession arrived at the Water Gate, the shofar (ram’s horn) was sounded with a sequence of blasts (Tekiah-Teruah-Tekiah – a long blast, a staccato note, and another long blast). These blasts would be repeated at various points as they ascended to the altar.

The nights of Sukkot leading up to the morning libations were characterised by the “Simchat Beit HaSho’evah” (“Rejoicing of the House of the Water-Drawing”). This was an all-night celebration in the Court of the Women, featuring immense golden candelabra that illuminated Jerusalem, and pious men (including prominent rabbis) dancing with torches and even performing acrobatic feats. The Mishnah states: “He who has not seen the rejoicing of the water-drawing ceremony has never seen rejoicing in his life” (*Mishnah Sukkah 5:1*).

3. The Libation at the Altar:

The priest carrying the golden flask of water, along with another priest carrying a flask of wine (for the accompanying wine libation), would ascend the great ramp that led up to the top

of the sacrificial altar in the Temple courtyard. At the southwestern corner of the altar, there were two silver bowls (*Mishnah Sukkah 4:9*). One bowl was for the water, and the other for the wine.

The priest would pour the water from the golden flask into the western silver bowl, and simultaneously, the wine would be poured into the eastern bowl.

The people would shout to the priest, “Raise your hand!”, to ensure he visibly poured the water onto the altar. This was a direct response to a historical incident involving a Sadducean high priest who, in an act of defiance, poured the water onto his feet rather than the altar, provoking the people to pelt him with their *etrogim* (*Bavli, Sukkah 48b*).

As the water was poured, the priests and pilgrims would circle the altar, Psalms and prayers, particularly the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) and supplicatory prayers for rain. On the seventh day (Hoshana Rabbah), they would circle the altar seven times.

4. The Significance:

The *Nissuch HaMayim* was not commanded in the written Torah but was considered a *Halacha l’Moshe miSinai* (as if it was a law given to Moses at Sinai), meaning it was part of the Oral Torah (*Bavli, Sukkah 44a*).

Its significance was multi-layered:

Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) marks the beginning of the rainy season in Israel. The water libation was a fervent prayer for abundant rain for the crops of the coming year (*Talmud Bavli, Rosh Hashanah 16a*).

It was an expression of profound joy and gratitude for God’s past provision of water in the wilderness and His ongoing blessing of rain.

The Talmud directly connects the drawing of water from Siloam with “drawing the Holy Spirit”, stating: “Why is it called the House of the Water Drawing? Because from there they would draw the Holy Spirit, as it is written: ‘With joy you will draw water from the springs of salvation’ (Isaiah 12:3)” (*Bavli, Sukkah 55a*). This makes the ceremony a powerful messianic symbol, anticipating the outpouring of God’s Spirit in the eschatological age.

The entire ceremony, with its themes of water, renewal, joy, and the Spirit, deeply reinforced the hope for the coming of the Messiah and the full redemption of Israel.

The Healing of a Man Born Blind - John 9

Introduction

Midrash Tanchuma **Noah 11b**, “in the Messianic era, **all the blind will be made to see**”.

Sanhedrin 97a discusses the signs that will precede the Messiah’s coming

The Physical Healing of a Man Born Blind

Mishnah Sukkah 5:2-3

“*At the close of the first Holyday*”, the priests would descend from the Court of the Israelites (men) to the Court of Women. In the court, four huge candelabra were placed, each “*with four golden bowls at their tops and four ladders to each one.*” Each candelabra was **fifty cubits in height**. Wicks made “*from the worn-out drawers and girdles of the priests*” were placed in each bowl and lit. It is said that “*there was no courtyard in Jerusalem that was not lit up with the light*” which came from these candelabras.



Bavli Sanhedrin 91b, discusses the concept of pre-natal sin, where a child might sin while still in the womb.

Midrash Tanhuma, Parshat Pekudei 3, which speaks of a child sinning in its mother's womb.

More commonly, the idea that a severe birth defect could be a result of a parent's sin, even if the child was innocent, is found in sources like **Sifrei on Deuteronomy 307**.

yetzer hara (evil inclination) - **yetzer hatov** (good inclination)

Midrash Tanhuma, Tazria 5, which states, “From the day a person is born, the evil inclination (*yetzer hara*) enters him”

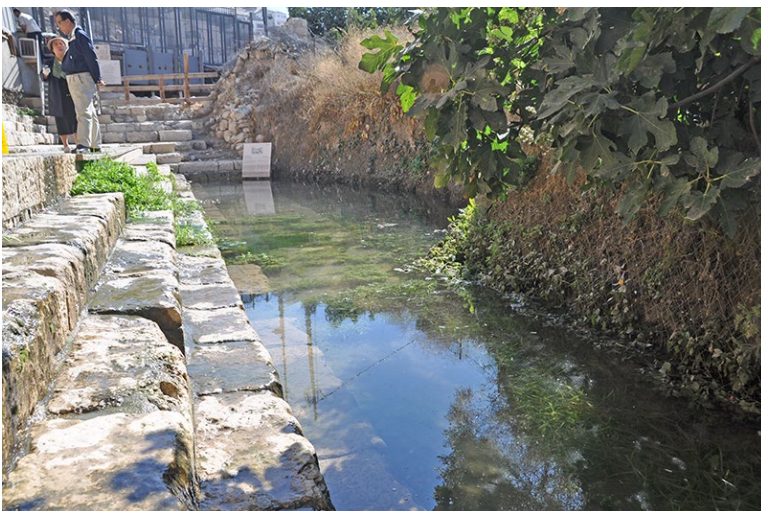
Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 63:6, which depicts the struggle between Jacob and Esau in Rebekah’s womb as an early manifestation of their inclinations.

The disciples, therefore, fell into two fallacies:

Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 55a, which states, “There is no death without sin, and no suffering without iniquity.”

Midrash Rabbah, Leviticus 18:4, discusses how different transgressions lead to different forms of suffering.

Pool of Siloam

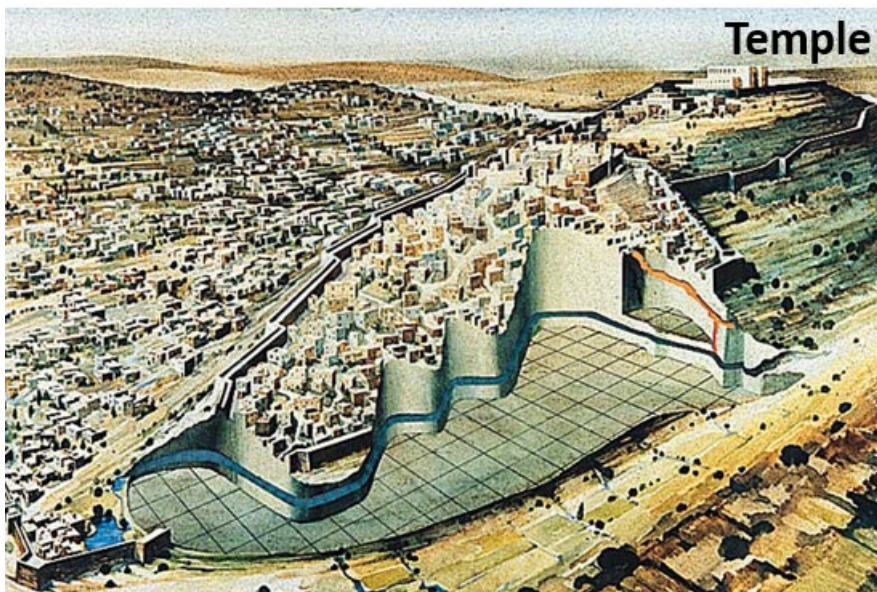
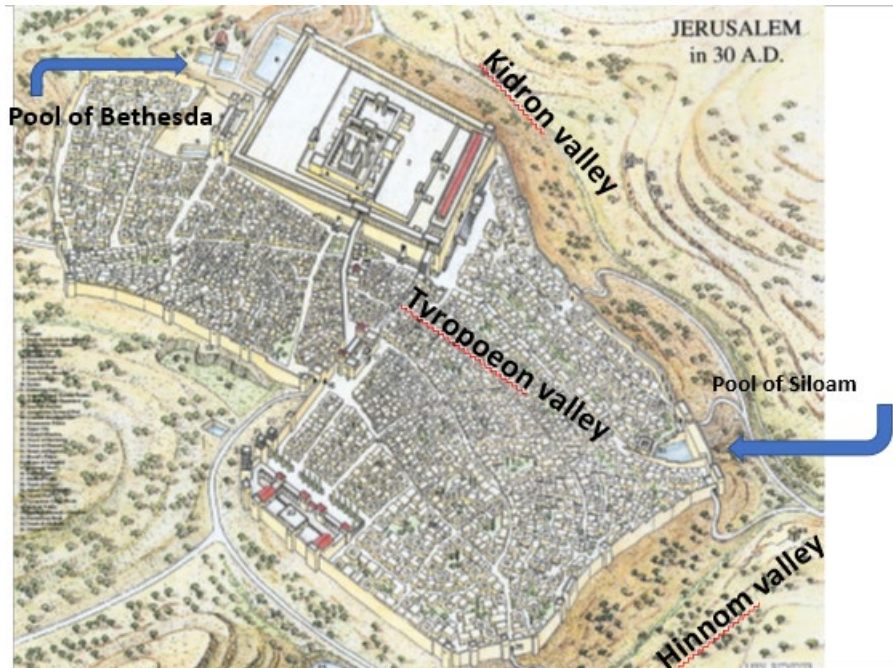


Simchat Bet HaShoeva (The Rejoicing of the House of the Water-Drawing)

Mishnah, Sukkah 4:9-10

9 With regard to the rite of **water libation** performed in the Temple during the Festival, **how** was it performed? **One would fill a golden jug with a capacity of three log** with water **from the Siloam** pool. When those who went to bring the water **reached the Gate of the Water**, so called because the water for the libation was brought through this gate leading to the Temple courtyard, **they sounded a tekia, sounded a terua, and sounded another tekia** as an expression of joy. The priest **ascended the ramp** of the altar **and turned to his left**. **There were two silver basins there** into which he poured the water. **Rabbi Yehuda said: They were limestone basins, but they would blacken due to the wine** and therefore looked like silver. The two basins were **perforated** at the bottom with **two thin** perforated **nose-like** protrusions. **One** of the basins, used for the wine libation, had a perforation that was **broad, and one**, used for the water libation, had a perforation that was **thin, so that** the flow of **both** the water and the wine, which do not have the same viscosity, would **conclude simultaneously**. The basin to the **west of** the altar was **for water**, and the basin to the **east of** the altar was **for wine**. However, if **one poured** the contents of the basin **of water into** the basin **of wine, or** the contents of the basin **of wine into** the basin **of water, he fulfilled** his obligation, as failure to pour the libation from the prescribed location does not disqualify the libation after the fact. **Rabbi Yehuda says:** The basin for the water libation was not that large; rather, **one would pour** the water **with** a vessel that had a capacity of **one log** on **all eight** days of the Festival and not only seven. **And** the appointee **says to the one pouring** the water into the silver basin: **Raise your hand**, so that his actions would be visible, **as one time** a Sadducee priest intentionally **poured** the water **on his feet**, as the Sadducees did not accept the oral tradition requiring water libation, and in their rage **all the people pelted him with their etrogim**.

10 Rabbi Yehuda continues: **As its performance during the week, so is its performance on Shabbat, except** that on Shabbat one would not draw water. Instead, **on Shabbat eve, one would fill a golden barrel that was not consecrated** for exclusive use in the Temple **from the Siloam** pool, **and he would place it in the Temple chamber** and draw water from there on Shabbat. If the water in the barrel **spilled**, or if it **was exposed** overnight, leading to concern that a snake may have deposited poison in the water, **one would fill** the jug with water **from the basin** in the Temple courtyard, **as exposed wine or water is unfit for the altar**. Just as it is prohibited for people to drink them due to the potential danger, so too, they may not be poured on the altar.



Pool of Siloam - Hezekiah's tunnel 533 meters

The First Interrogation of the Man

The strict interpretation of Sabbath laws, (e.g., Mishnah Shabbat 14:3-4)

The 39 Categories of Work:

Mishnah Shabbat 7:2

2 This fundamental Mishnah enumerates those who perform the **primary categories of labor**

prohibited on Shabbat, which number **forty-less-one**. They are grouped in accordance with their function: **One who sows, and one who plows, and one who reaps, and one who gathers** sheaves into a pile, **and one who threshes**, removing the kernel from the husk, **and one who winnows** threshed grain in the wind, and **one who selects** the inedible waste from the edible, and **one who grinds, and one who sifts** the flour in a sieve, **and one who kneads** dough, **and one who bakes.....**

Rabbi Levi ben Gershon (Ralbag), on Deuteronomy 18:15:

“A Prophet from the midst of thee.’ In fact, the Messiah is such a prophet as it is stated in the Midrash of the verse, ‘Behold my Servant shall prosper’ (Isaiah 52:13). Moses, by the miracles which he wrought, brought a single nation to the worship of God, but the Messiah will draw all peoples to the worship of God.”

The Interrogation of the Parents

Yeshua - Yeshu

- **"Yeshua" (ישוע)** is the original Hebrew/Aramaic name of Jesus, meaning “Yahweh saves” or “Yahweh is salvation.”
- **"Yeshu" (ישׁו)**
(Jeconiah, God cursed him and shortened his name to Coniah - Jeremiah 22:24-30).

Bavli Sanhedrin 43a.

This passage discusses the trial and execution of "Yeshu":

"On the **eve of Passover** Yeshu was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he has practised **sorcery** and **enticed Israel to apostasy**. Anyone who can say anything in his favour, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favour, he was hanged on the eve of the Passover!"

"Yeshu," possibly an acronym for the Hebrew curse **"ימח שמו וזכרו"** (Yimakh Shemo U'Zikhro), meaning "May his name and memory be blotted out."

Excommunication or Cherem

Qumran Community Rule (1QS)

Example speaking the Name (Tetragrammaton):

- **1QS 6:27b - 7:2a:** "Anyone who speaks aloud the Most Holy Name of God, [whether in...] or in cursing or as a blurt in time of trial or for any other reason, or while he is reading a book or praying, is to be expelled, never again to return to the society of the Yahad."

Example of lesser offence (1QS 6:24 - 7:25):

- **Speaking against a Priest:** "Whoever has spoken angrily against one of the priests... shall do penance for one year." (1QS 7:3)

In Pharisaic Judaism

- **Nezifah (נזיפה)**¹: A simple “rebuke” lasting 7 to 30 days, merely disciplinary (cf. 1 Timothy 5:1). This was the lowest level. (Mo’ed Katan 16a-17b)
- **Niddui (נידוי)**: To temporarily “cast out,” lasting a minimum of 30 days, also disciplinary (cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).
- **Cherem (חרם)**: A “ban” - an utter separation from the Jewish community (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:1-7; Matthew 18:15-20).
Discussed in the **Babylonian Talmud, Mo’ed Katan 15a-17b**

The Second Interrogation of the Man

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 1:1 it’s very first teaching: "raise up disciples." Pirkei Avot are the traditions or sayings of the elders.

Midrash Tanchuma, Parshat Noah 11, "opening the eyes of the blind" is only done by God (Psalm 146:8), implying that the Messiah is God's anointed agent.

The Spiritual Healing

Shema Yisrael (“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one” - Deuteronomy 6:4)

Maimonides’ Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot Avodah Zarah 2:3, “It is forbidden to serve anything but God... all that is served with the intention of serving the Creator through it is idolatry.”

The Response from the man born blind

¹ The Jewish Encyclopedia entry on "Anathema" also references Mo'ed Katan 16a, 17b for the duration of Nezifah (7 days in Palestine, 1 day in Babylonia) and states that *Nezifah* was "in all probability, introduced only in the second century of the common era as a disciplinary measure against the growing disrespect in the popular attitude toward the rabbis (M. K. [Mo'ed Katan])."

Reponses

Four Key Points	Blind Man	Jewish Leadership
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living Water 2. Lights 3. Singing 4. Rejoicing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Received Holy Spirit 2. Received Messiah 3. Psalm 118:25 was saved 4. Response: Worshipped the Yeshua the Lord 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refused Holy Spirit 2. Refused Messiah's light 3. Refused Salvation 4. Response: Worshipped the Shabbat & Messiahship was denied

Yeshua's Concluding Verdict

John 9:39-41

The Ministry of Jesus and the Spiritual Condition of Israel
The Recurring Theme of Light and Darkness

Conclusion

Sources

- Edersheim, Alfred, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.
- Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G., *Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*
- Lightfoot, John, *Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud & Hebraica*.
- Strack, Hermann L. & Billerbeck, Paul; *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud & Midrash*.

The Feast of Dedication: John 10

Introduction: Chanukah

Chanukah (חנוכה)

Names

Chanukah - חנוכה

Hag Ha-Orim - חג האורים

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12.7.7.

“Now Judas [Maccabee] celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for **eight days**, and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon; but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honoured God, and delighted them by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when, after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, **for eight days**. And from that time to this we **celebrate this festival**, and call it **Lights**. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival.”

Summation of the Story

Summation of the Story

1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees

Talmud, Shabbat 21b

“What is Chanukkah?

For our Rabbis taught: On the 25th of Kislev, the days of Chanukkah are eight. One may not mourn on them nor fast on them. For when the Greeks entered the Sanctuary, they defiled all the oils in it. And when the Hasmonean monarchy prevailed against and defeated them, they searched and found only a single cruse of oil that lay with the seal of the High Priest, undefiled. And there was in it [enough oil] to light for only one day. A miracle occurred and they lit from it for eight days. The following year they appointed these days as a festival with Hallel and thanksgiving.”

The Background: Who are the heroes: The Hasmoneans or the Maccabees?

Hasmonean (חשמונאים) most likely derives from “Chasmon,” an ancestor with that name. This ancestor is believed to be the great-grandfather of Mattathias (Judah Maccabee's father), mentioned in Josephus Antiquities of the Jews 12.6.1, “Asamonaius” (the Hellenised form of Chasmon).

Though it is widely taught that “Judah the *Hammer*” had inscribed on his shield “mem - kaf - beit - yod” (מ-כ-ב-י), forming an acronym of the verse “*Mi Chamocha B'elim Yah*” – “Who is like You among the mighty, O Lord?”
מִי כָמֹכָה בְּאֱלֹהִים יְהוָה (Exodus 15:11).

The Villain: Antiochus IV

Antiochus IV

Prophetically foreseen in Daniel 8:8-14, the little horn.

In the non-biblical apocrypha, 1 Maccabees, mainly chapters 1 and 2 Maccabees Chapters 4 and 6.

Duration of Persecutions by Antiochus IV

Daniel 8:14 “Two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings [literally, ‘evening morning’].

2,300 evenings and mornings is a total of **1,150 days**.

1 Maccabees 1:54, 59

“Now the fifteenth day of the month Kislev, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the **abomination of desolation** upon the altar, and build idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side” ...59 “Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God.”

1 Maccabees 4:52-59

“Now on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month, which is called the month Kislev, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up betimes in the morning, 53 And offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offerings, which they had made. 54 Look, at what time and what day the heathen had profaned it, even in that was it **dedicated** with songs, and citherns, and harps, and cymbals. 55 Then all the people fell upon their faces, worshipping and praising the God of heaven, who had given them good success. 56 And so they kept the **dedication** of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise. ... 59 Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Kislev, with mirth and gladness.”

The **Abomination of Desolation** occurred on the **15th day of Kislev in 167 BCE** (1 Maccabees 1:54, 59). The sanctuary was subsequently cleansed and rededicated by Judah Maccabee on the **25th day of Kislev in 164 BCE** (1 Maccabees 4:52).

Chanukah in the New Covenant

John 10:22-39

Verse 22:

Note “winter”

Verse 23:

Solomon’s Colonnade.

Verse 24:

“Jews” here means the Judean Jewish leadership

Verse 31:

1 Maccabees 4:44-46: “And when they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt offerings, which was profaned; they thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a reproach to them, because the heathen had defiled it; wherefore they pulled it down, and laid the stones in the mountain of the Temple in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet to show what should be done with them.”

Verse 33:

Verse 34:

“Elohim” or “gods” based on Psalm 82:6

The Miracle of the Oil: Historical Perspective

Shabbat 21b.

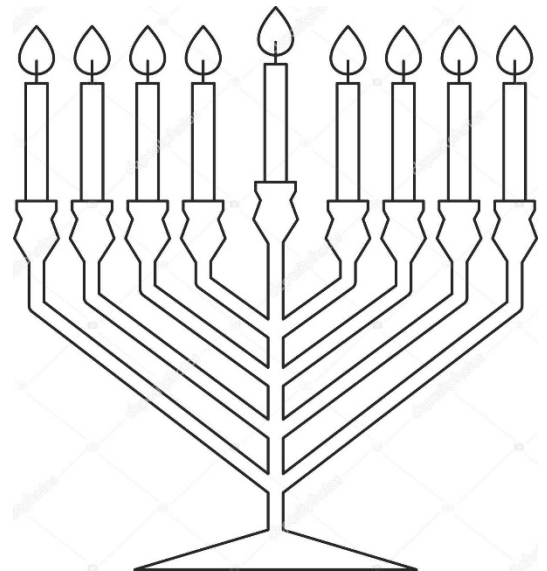
Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles. (2 Maccabees 1:9, 18; 10:6-8).

2 Maccabees 10:6 “And they kept the eight days with gladness, as in the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long afore they had held the feast of the tabernacles, when as they wandered in the mountains and dens like beasts.”

Chanukah Lights:

Chanukiah, the nine-branched candelabrum

Shamash, the “servant light”



The rabbinical discussion regarding the lighting of the Chanukiah

The Core Dispute: Increasing vs. Decreasing Lights

Shabbat 21b

Basic Mitzvah “A Light for a Man and His Household”, though many do one per person.

The fundamental obligation is to light one candle per household each night.

Beit Shammai's Opinion:

They contend that on the first night, **eight lights** should be kindled, and then the number should be **decreased by one each night**, until on the eighth night, only one light is kindled.

Beit Hillel's Opinion:

They contend that on the first night, **one light** should be kindled, and then the number should be **increased by one each night**, until on the eighth night, eight lights are kindled.

Order of Kindling (Right to Left for Placement, Left to Right for Lighting)

While the Gemara primarily focuses on the *number* of lights, later codifiers, particularly the **Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 676:5)**, detail the order of *placing* and *lighting* the candles:

- **Placement:** Each night, a new candle is added to the *left* of the previous night's candles. This means the newest candle is always on the left-most position of the candles already lit. The Chanukiah is typically filled from right to left.
- **Lighting:** When kindling the lights, one always starts with the **newest candle** (the one added for that specific night), which will be the left-most candle for that day's set. Then, one proceeds to light the remaining candles from **left to right**. This ensures that the light being added for the current day's miracle is lit first.

A Messianic Chanukah Blessing

English: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us in Yeshua, and in whose name we kindle the Chanukah lights.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּיֵשׁוּעַ, וּבְשֵׁמוֹ אָנוּ מַדְלִיקִים נְרוֹת חֲנֻכָּה

Transliterated Hebrew: Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'Yeshua, u'vishmo anu madlikim nerot Chanukah¹.

On the first night, we also recite the “Shehecheyanu” blessing:

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for helping us to reach this season.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

Transliterated Hebrew: Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu lazman hazeh.

Biblical Readings in the Synagogue on Chanukah

From the Torah Numbers 7:1–8:4, which details the dedicatory offerings brought by the princes of each tribe for the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

From the Prophets (Nevi'im / Haftarah):

- **On the first Shabbat of Chanukah, Zechariah 2:14–4:7** is read. Which includes the vision of the golden menorah.
- And or **1 Kings 7:40-50**, this passage describes the construction of the Temple vessels by Solomon, including the menorah, further connecting to the theme of the Temple and its furnishings.

¹ Following the Yemenite wording instead of the common Ashkenazi “לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה”, to kindle the light of Chanukah).

From the Writings (Ketuvim):

Psalm 30 (Mizmor Shir Chanukat HaBayit l'David - "A Psalm, a Song of Dedication of the Temple, by David").

Closing Thoughts:

"He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force. He arrogantly entered the sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all its utensils. He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasure that he found." (1 Maccabees 1:20-23)

Maoz Tzur

A popular song, known as "Maoz Tzur," is sung, literally meaning "O Fortress, Rock of my Salvation." This song is traditionally sung every night after the Chanukah candles are lit.

There are six stanzas, and the first stanza is as follows:

"O fortress, rock of my salvation, to praise you is a delight. Restore my house of prayer, and there we will bring a thanksgiving offering. When you will have prepared the slaughter for the blaspheming foe, then shall I complete a song of him, the dedication of the altar."

This stanza is a fervent pleading for the Messianic Age and for the rebuilding of the Temple. The lyrics draw from various scriptural quotations, including Psalm 31:3; Isaiah 56:7; Leviticus 7:11; Isaiah 14:21; 56:10; Psalm 30:1; and 2 Chronicles 7:9.



Event	Day	Scriptures
Triumphal entry into Jerusalem	Sunday Nisan 10	Matthew 21:1-17; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:28-44; John 12:12-19
The cursing of the fig tree	Monday Nisan 11	Matthew 21:18-19; Mark 11:12-14
The cleansing of the Temple		Matthew 21: 12-13; Mark 11: 15-18; Luke 19:45-48
Debates with the religious leaders	Tuesday Nisan 12	Matthew 21:23-23:39; Mark 11:27-12:40; Luke 20:1- 47
The Olivet Discourse		Matthew 24:1-25:46; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-36
Judas betrays the Lord	Tuesday / Wednesday	Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6
Disciples prepare the 'upper room'	Tuesday / Wednesday	Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13
The Last Passover (Exodus 12) this was eaten at night by all Israel	Thursday night Nisan 14	Matthew 26:17-29; Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:7-20
The Upper Room Discourse		John 13:2-18:1
In the Garden of Gethsemane		Matthew 25:30-46; Mark 14:26-42; Luke 22:39-46
Yeshua is betrayed and arrested		Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:2-12
The trials of Yeshua	Thursday night / Friday before sunrise	
- before Annas		John 18:13-24
- before Caiaphas		Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:42
- before the Sanhedrin		Matthew 27:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22: 66-71
- before Pilate		Matthew 27:1, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; Luke 23:1-5; John 18:28-38
[Corban Passover-Festival Sacrifice Only for the priestly family	Friday Morning Nissan 14	John 18:28; Deuteronomy 16:2]
- before Herod		Luke 23:6-12
- before Pilate		Matthew 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:13-25; John 18:28-19:16
The crucifixion of Messiah	Friday Morning	Matthew 27:27-56; Mark 15:16-41; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:17-30
The sayings from the cross		Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26-28; Mark 15:34; John 19:30 "It is finished"; Luke 23:46 (final words)
Yeshua is buried	Friday afternoon	Matthew 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50-54; John 19:31-42
Yeshua is in the grave	Saturday Nissan 15	[1 Peter 3:19]
The visit of the women to the tomb	Saturday night Nissan 16	Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1
Yeshua rose from the dead	Saturday night / before sunrise Sunday morning Nissan 16	Mark 16:1-2 ([<i>as soon as</i>] the Sabbath was past) John 20:1 (while it was dark) Luke 24:1 (early on the first day)



Why study the Passover?

In a **traditional Haggadah**, we find the story:

Once, Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria and Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon reclined [for the seder] in Benei Brak. And they told of the Exodus from Egypt all that night, until their students came in and said, “Teachers –the time for saying the *Shema* of the morning has come.”¹

Messiah’s last supper was a Passover meal, as detailed in:
Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22 and John 13

Eleven traditional steps that are still celebrated that Yeshua also observed during His last Passover

1) Preparation

Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13

“Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So, Yeshua sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.’” (Luke 22:7-8)

Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 6.9.3-4:

“But now, as to the number of people that were then at Jerusalem, it belonged to the priests alone to determine it. For in order to determine this, every tribe brought its sacrifices into the temple; and the priests took an account of them all, and gave their attestations for them; and this was the manner of it: There is a festival among the Jews that is called the Passover, at which they do sacrifice, and it is the custom to slay lambs in great numbers, and they were immolated in the Temple from the ninth hour till the eleventh; but on the day of the feast, from the ninth hour till the eleventh. And when they had killed them, they roasted them with fire, and were to eat them with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And the law requires that no stranger, nor sojourner with them, should be admitted, but only Jews, and those that purify themselves, and that eat in families one upon another; and the law is, that the minimum number for eating the lamb is ten, but that not more than twenty are to eat it. And they say, that on this occasion, when Cestius was procurator, a census was taken, and the number of victims was two hundred and fifty-six thousand, five hundred; which, at the rate of ten to each lamb, makes the number of persons to be two millions, five hundred and fifty-six thousand, five hundred.”

Mishnah Pesachim 1:1: *“On the eve of the fourteenth [of Nisan], one searches for leaven by the light of a candle.”*

Mishnah Pesachim 3:6: *“One may not roast the Passover offering either on a metal spit or on a grate.”*

¹ **Pesach Haggadah**, Magid, Story of the Five Rabbis. Koren Publishers, Jerusalem, 2013

2) Reclining

Matthew 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:14-16

“When evening came, he reclined at the table with the twelve.” (Matthew 26:20)

Mishnah Pesachim 10:1: *“Even the poorest in Israel may not eat until he reclines; and they give him no less than four cups of wine.”*

3) First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification (*Kadesh*)

Luke 22:14-18

“And when the hour came, he reclined at the table, and the apostles with him. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, He said, ‘Take this, and divide it among yourselves.’” (Luke 22:14-17)

Mishnah Pesachim 10:2: *“They poured for him the first cup. Beth Shammai says: He says the blessing over the day, and then the blessing over the wine. Beth Hillel says: He says the blessing over the wine, and then the blessing over the day.”*

Qumran: 1QSa 2:17-22

“And [when] they shall gather for the common [tab]le, to eat and [to drink] new wine, when the common table shall be set for eating and the new wine [poured] for drinking, let no man extend his hand over the firstfruits of bread and wine before the Priest; for [it is he] who shall bless the firstfruits of bread and wine.

Thereafter, the Messiah of Israel shall extend his hand over the bread, [and] all the congregation of the Community [shall utter a] blessing, [each man in the order] of his dignity. It is according to this statute that they shall proceed at every me[al] at which] at least ten men are gathered together.”

(1QSa 2:17-22, Geza Vermes translation)

4) Washing of the Hands

John 13:1-11

Then Yeshua rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”

(John 13:4-5)

Mishnah Pesachim 10:2-3: *two distinct ritual hand washings*

- **Urchatz (אֲרָחָץ - “washing”)** **Mishnah Pesachim 10:2:** *“They brought before him vegetables; he dipped [them in salt water]... after that they brought before him unleavened bread and bitter herbs... they wash [their hands] without a blessing.”*
- **Rachtzah (רְחִיצָה - “washing”):** This washing occurs later, *before eating the matzah.* It is performed with a blessing (the blessing for washing hands before a meal) and is a more formal purification.

Mishnah Berachot 6:5: *“When they eat bread, they say: Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us concerning the washing of hands.”*

5) Dipping of the Parsley

Matthew 26:21-23

“And as they were eating, he said, ‘Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ ... He answered, ‘He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me.’”

Mishnah Pesachim 10:2: *“They brought before him vegetables; he dipped [them in salt water], [and] they gave him unleavened bread and bitter herbs.”*

Also called *Karpas*

6) The Passover Meal

Matthew 26:21-23; Mark 14:18-21; Luke 22:21-23

“And as they were reclining at table **and eating...**” (Mark 14:18)

Yeshua the Passover Lamb Identified

John 1:29, 35, and 36

Exodus 12

Isaiah 53

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

Mishnah Pesachim 10:3-4

“They brought before him unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And he ate the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs. And then they brought before him the Passover offering.” **4** *“They filled **the second cup**. Here the son asks his father... And according to the understanding of the son, his father instructs him. He begins with the disgrace and concludes with the praise; and he explains from ‘A wandering Aramean was my father’ [Deuteronomy 26:5] until he finishes the whole section.”*

7) The Maggid – the Recital

1. The Promise of Home

Maggid: Exodus 6:6-8

John: John 14:1-4

2. The Role of God as the Helper/Advocate

Maggid: Exodus 13:3

John: John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7

3. The vineyard and the Vine

Bible: Psalm 80:8; Isaiah 5:7

John: John 15:1-11

4. The World’s Hatred

Maggid: Exodus 1

John: John 15:18-25; 16:1-4

8) Second Dipping: Dipping into the Sop, Sandwich

John 13:21-30, offering a more public identification.

“After saying these things, Yeshua was troubled in His spirit, and testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ ... so Simon Peter motioned to him (John) to ask Yeshua of whom He was speaking. Yeshua answered, ‘It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.’ So when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.” (John 13:21-26)

The morsel of bread is called *Korech* or Hillel Sandwich:

Mishnah Pesachim 10:3: *“They brought before him unleavened bread and bitter herbs... Rabbi Hillel says: ‘One rolls them together and eats them, as it is written [Exodus 12:8], ‘with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.’”*”

Seudat HaMashiach, the Lord's Supper, Communion.

9) Breaking the Matzah

Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

“And he took bread, and 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.’”
(Luke 22:19)

Unleavened Bread

The three requirements for the bread

1. Unleavened
2. Striped
3. Pierced

Three Matzot and the Matzah Tash

Traditional explanation

- 1) Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- 2) Three divisions in Israel: *Cohanim, Levi'im, Am Yisrael*, Priest, Levites and the Common People of Israel. Messianics see a greater significance.

Afikomen

Mishnah Pesachim 10:4: “*They broke the middle matzah.*”

The Mystery of the Middle Matzah

The Mystery of the Middle Matzah by Michael Moore in the Christian Witness to Israel publication *The Spring Herald* in 2010.

“In 1925, the German scholar Robert Eisler proposed that the afikomen was part of the Passover observed by Jews at the time of Yeshua and that the broken matzah represented the Messiah. Eisler’s thesis was opposed by both Jewish and Christian scholars and was largely forgotten until 1966 when David Daube, a Jewish scholar at Oxford University, revived it and produced further documentation to support Eisler’s theory. Daube argued that the term afikomen was derived from the Greek verb afikomenos, meaning “the Coming One” or “He who has come” and that the “Coming One” was none other than the Messiah.”

10) Third Cup: The Cup of Redemption

Luke 22:20

“And likewise, the cup **after** they had eaten, saying, ‘This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’” (Luke 22:20)

Mishnah Pesachim 10:7: “*They filled for him the third cup. He says a blessing over the meal.*”

Yerushalmi Pesachim 10:1

“Rabbi Yohanan [said] in the name of Rabbi Benaiah, ‘[They] correspond to the four redemptions [or acts of redemption, mentioned in reference to Egypt]: ‘Say, therefore, to the Israelite people: I will take you out [from under the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and through extraordinary chastisements]. And I will take you to be my people,’ etc. (Exodus 6:6-7). [These verses contain the four terms:] ‘I will take out’ - ‘I will deliver’ - ‘I will redeem’ - ‘I will take.’”

‘Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said, “[They] correspond to the four cups of [wine mentioned in reference to] Pharaoh... [referring to Genesis 40:11, the story of Pharaoh’s cupbearer and his dream, which mentions “Pharaoh’s cup” four times as a different, less common, midrashic explanation].’”

The Four Cups recall the Four promises from God in Exodus 6:6-7.

- **“I will take you out”** - The First Cup: Cup of Sanctification
- **“I will deliver you”** - The Second Cup: Cup of Plagues
- **“I will redeem you”** - The Third Cup: Cup of Redemption
- **“I will take you to be my people”** - The Fourth Cup: Cup of Praise - Hallel

What about Exodus 6:8?

A time of singing

Rabbinical obligation of *Birkat HaMazon*, Grace after meals.

Mishnah Berachot 6:8: *“He who eats bread must recite the Grace After Meals.”*

Mishnah Pesachim 10:7: *“They filled for him the third cup. [then] He says a blessing over the meal.”*

11) Singing of the Passover Psalms – The Hallel (Psalms 113-118, and 136)

Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matthew 26:30)

Mishnah Pesachim 10:5-7

- **Psalms 113-114:** Recited *before* the meal, usually after the second cup and the *Maggid* (telling of the story).
- **Psalms 115-118:** Recited *after* the meal, the Grace After Meals, and the third cup. This is the portion that Matthew and Mark likely refer to as the “hymn” sung before they departed.

Mishnah Pesachim 10:7: *“They conclude with Hallel... and they drink the fourth cup.”*

Psalm 136 “The Great Hallel”

Psalms

Psalm 113-118

Psalm 116: The “Cup of Salvation

Psalm 116 “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD,

Psalm 118 is a Messianic Psalm

□

Psalm 136

Ezra 3:11

“And they sang, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, ‘For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.’ And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.”

Conclusion

This is why the apostle Paul commands us

“Let us therefore **celebrate** the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1 Corinthians 5:8)

Traditional final words

“L’shana Haba’ah Bi-Yerushalayim”

“Next Year in Jerusalem”

--

Time Permitting



Outline Psalm 118 supplement

Summary of Psalm 118

Liturgical Structure and Responsive Nature of Psalm 118

This is my understanding of the responsive interplay, as envisioned in a processional liturgy:

1. Psalm 118:1-4: The Summons

The choir director calls upon the entire assembly to begin the praise.

2. Psalm 118:5-14: The Soloist's Lament and Deliverance

A soloist recounts a personal narrative of distress and divine rescue.

3. Psalm 118:15-16: The Choir's Affirmation

The full choir responds with a declaration of joy and victory.

4. Psalm 118:17-19: The Soloist at the Gates

The soloist instructs us to rely on God's promise and that as a nation, we will survive.

5. Psalm 118:20: Priestly/Levitical declaration

The Levites welcome the righteous into the temple.

6. Psalm 118:21: The Soloist's Thanksgiving

The soloist offers a personal prayer of thanksgiving to God.

7. Psalm 118:22-27: The Full Chorus of Acclamation

The entire congregation praises God for the miraculous "stone the builders rejected" and cries "Hosanna", "O LORD do save".

8. Psalm 118:28: The Soloist's Personal Vow

The soloist reaffirms personal devotion and gratitude.

9. Psalm 118:29: The Concluding Doxology

All unite in a final, resounding doxology: "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; His love endures forever."

My interpretation is supported by the alternating use of singular ("I," "me," "my") and plural ("we," "our") pronouns throughout this psalm, as well as the explicit mention of "all," "the house of Israel," "the house of Aaron," and "those who fear the LORD."

Focus on verses 21-24

²¹ I will give thanks *to* you for you have answered me, and you have become my salvation (שְׁיִשׁוּאָה - yeshuah). ²² *The* Stone the builders rejected has become *the* Chief Cornerstone. ²³ This is from the LORD; it is wonderful in our eyes. ²⁴ This *is* the day the LORD has made;

Messianically interpreted in the Targum and Midrash

The Targum paraphrases of verses 21-24

²¹ "I will give thanks in your presence, for you have *received my prayer*, and become for me a redeemer. ²² The child the builders abandoned was among the sons of Jesse, and He was worthy to be appointed king and ruler. ²³ "This has come from the presence of the LORD," said the builders. "it is wonderful before us," said the sons of Jesse. ²⁴ "This day the Lord has made," said the builders; "let us rejoice and be glad in it," said the sons of Jesse."

Midrash Tehillim (Psalm 118:22) also directly links the stone to the Messiah, stating, "The stone which the builders rejected' (Psalm 118:22) refers to King Messiah."

The Messianic Stone in Scripture

Isaiah 28:16

“Therefore, thus says the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believes shall not make haste.”

Targum Jonathan on Isaiah 28:16

“Therefore, thus said the Lord God, Behold, I appoint a king in Zion; a king mighty, powerful, and awesome: I will make him powerful, and I will strengthen Him, said the prophet. And the righteous, who believe these things shall not be moved, when distress shall come.”

The Greek translation, the Septuagint:

“and he that believes on Him shall by no means be ashamed.”

Daniel 2:44-45 “Stone cut out of the mountain without hands.”

1 Peter 2:6 The Messiah is the Foundation Stone.

Luke 6:47-48 The Foundation and the solid Rock

Responses reading verses 25-29

²⁵ Save us, we pray, O Lord! [Hosiah-na – *Hosannah*]...

אָנָּא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא

²⁶ Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the LORD!

בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה



The Rabbinic laws broken during the trials of Yeshua.

The Laws listed below were broken during the trials of Yeshua. These laws come from the Mishnah, particularly from the tractate Sanhedrin, which deals with laws regarding capital offences. Dr. Alfred Edersheim's monumental work, "*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*" (two volumes, 1883), was incredibly thorough and influential. Born into an Orthodox Jewish family and steeped in Jewish tradition, he meticulously laid out the known Jewish legal procedures of the time and detailed how the trials of Yeshua violated many of them. This list was updated by another Messianic Jewish scholar, Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, in his work "*Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*" (four volumes, 2013-17).

Pirke Avot 1:1 "**Moses** received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to **Joshua**, Joshua to the **elders**, [judges] and the elders to the **prophets**, and the prophets to the **Men of the Great Assembly**. They said three things: Be patient in [the administration of] justice, raise many disciples and make a fence round the Torah."

A fence for the Torah refers to the establishment of additional rabbinic ordinances, or "fences," to safeguard the core commandments of the Written Torah. These were the traditions of the elders, and are recorded in the Talmud.

The rabbis claim there are two Torahs

- a. **Written Torah:** This refers to the five books of Moses (the Pentateuch). The original commandments are found here.
- b. **Oral Torah:** This refers to the traditions, interpretations, and legal rulings transmitted orally from Moses and later codified in texts like the Mishnah and Talmud. The "fence" is a part of this Oral Torah. (apocryphal story of Moses in the Rabbi Akiva's study hall, see Menachot 29b)

So based on their writings, these laws that were broken all existed already.

1. **No arrest by the religious authorities that was affected by a bribe.** "And they paid him thirty pieces of silver" (Matthew 26:15)
 - **Biblical Basis:** The Torah explicitly prohibits bribery in legal proceedings.
 - **Exodus 23:8:** "You shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right."
 - **Deuteronomy 16:19:** "You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous."
 - **Rabbinic Source:** The principle of disqualifying judges or witnesses with personal interest or undue influence is fundamental.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 3:5-6:** Discusses disqualifications for judges and witnesses, which would inherently include those influenced by bribes. The integrity of the court system demands unbiased conduct at all stages.

2. **Neither the Judges nor the Sanhedrin members were allowed to participate in the arrest.** “from the chief priests and the elders of the people” (Matthew 26:47)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** This is a principle derived from the role of a judge as an impartial adjudicator. Participating in the arrest implies a prejudgment or active role in prosecution, which disqualifies one as a neutral judge.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 3:4-5:** Lists various reasons for disqualifying judges, including personal interest or prior involvement in the case, which actively participating in an arrest would certainly entail. The judge must be solely concerned with the evidence presented in court.

3. **There were to be no steps made towards criminal proceedings after sunset.** “Some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees went there with **lanterns and torches**” (John 18:3)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** Capital cases, from start to finish, had to be conducted during daylight hours.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “Capital cases are tried during the daytime and concluded during the daytime.”
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 5:5:** “A capital case is to be tried by day and decided by day.”

4. **There were to be no trials before the morning sacrifice.** (In other words, at night.) “Then those who had seized Yeshua led Him to **Caiaphas** the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered.” (Matthew 26:57-59)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** This reinforces the “daytime” rule for trials, specifying the appropriate start time within the day.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “The court sat from the time of the morning sacrifice until the evening sacrifice.” This sets the operational hours of the court within the daytime.

5. **All trials were to be in public.** (There were to be no secret trials.) First to Annas John 18:12-14,19-23 note verse 20 “Yeshua answered him (Annas), “I have spoken **openly** to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together (i.e., in public). I have said nothing in secret.” Three times there is an emphasis to openly, public, not in secret, unlike the start of this trial. After Annas Yeshua is brought to Caiaphas, Luke 22:54 “Then they seized Him and led Him away, bringing Him **into the high priest's house**”
 - **Biblical Basis:** The administration of justice in ancient Israel took place publicly, often “in the gate” of the city.
 - **Deuteronomy 21:19; 22:15; 25:7:** These verses describe legal proceedings occurring at the “gate of the city,” a public forum.
 - **Rabbinic Source:** The very nature and location of the Sanhedrin’s sessions implied public accessibility.

- **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** By stating the court’s sitting hours within the Temple compound, it implies a publicly accessible setting. Secret proceedings would violate the transparency essential for justice.

- 6. **Sanhedrin trials could only be conducted in the Hall of Judgment in the Temple compound.** “Then they seized Him and led Him away, bringing Him into the high priest’s house” (Luke 22:54)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** For capital cases involving the Great Sanhedrin (71 judges), there was a specific designated location.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 11:2:** States that the Great Sanhedrin “sat in the Chamber of Hewn Stone” (לְשֵׁכֶת הַגִּזִּית, *Lishkat Ha-Gazit*), which was located in the Temple compound.
 - **Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 41a:** Clarifies and confirms this location for capital trials.

- 7. **In the trial procedure, the defence was to lead.** (Then would come the accusation.)
 Matthew 26:59 and Mark 14:55 show the accusation comes first. “Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Yeshua to put him to death, but they found none.” (Mark 14:55)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** In capital cases, the presumption of innocence was so strong that arguments favouring acquittal were to be presented first.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5:** “In capital cases they open first with arguments for acquittal; in pecuniary cases, whether for acquittal or for conviction.”

- 8. **All may argue in favour of acquittal, but all may not argue in favour of conviction.**
 “Now the chief priests and **the whole council** were seeking false testimony against Yeshua that they might put him to death” (Matthew 26:59)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** This Mishnaic rule highlights the strong bias towards protecting life in capital cases.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5:** “All may argue in favour of acquittal, but all may not argue in favour of conviction.” This means a judge who initially argued for acquittal could not change their mind to argue for conviction, though a judge arguing for conviction could change to argue for acquittal.

- 9. **There were to be at least two or three witnesses, and their testimony had to agree in every detail.** “For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree” (Mark 14:56)
 - **Biblical Basis:** The Torah requires multiple, consistent witnesses for capital offences.
 - **Deuteronomy 17:6:** “On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.”
 - **Deuteronomy 19:15:** “A single witness shall not suffice to convict a person

of any crime or of any wrong in connection with any offence that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.”

- **Rabbinic Source:** The Mishnah details the rigorous examination of witnesses to ensure their testimony.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 5:2:** Describes the meticulous questioning of witnesses, one by one, and states that “if their words are found to contradict each other, then they are void.”
- 10. **There was to be no allowance for the accused to testify against himself.** “And the high priest stood up and said, “**Have you no answer to make?** What is it that these men testify against you?”⁶³ But Yeshua remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “**I adjure** (*command*) **you** by the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.” (Matthew 26:62-63)
 - **Rabbinic Source:** This is a fundamental principle of Jewish jurisprudence: “A person cannot incriminate himself.” Confession alone was insufficient for conviction in capital cases; external corroborating witnesses were essential.
 - **Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 9b (and elsewhere, e.g., Yevamot 25b, Ketubot 19b):** The maxim “אין אדם משים עצמו רשע” (*ein adam mesim atzmo rasha*), meaning “a person cannot make himself wicked” or “a person cannot incriminate himself,” is a cornerstone principle.
- 11. **The high priest was forbidden to rend his garments.** Matthew and Mark clearly record “Then the high priest tore his robes” (Matthew 26:65; Mark 14:63)
 - **Biblical Basis:** The Torah explicitly prohibits the High Priest from tearing his clothes, as it would defile his sacred office.
 - **Leviticus 10:6:** “You shall not uncover your heads, nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the congregation; but your brothers, the whole house of Israel, may bewail the burning that the Lord has kindled.”
 - **Leviticus 21:10:** “The priest who is chief among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil is poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not let the hair of his head hang loose nor tear his clothes.”
 - **Rabbinic Source:** While witnesses rend garments upon hearing blasphemy, the High Priest is specifically exempt from this general practice due to the biblical prohibition.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 7:5:** Describes the procedure for blasphemy where *witnesses* rend their garments, but the prohibition on the High Priest is a known exception derived directly from the Torah.
- 12. **Charges could not originate with the judge.** (The judges could only investigate charges brought to them.) “Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Yeshua that they might put him to death” (Matthew 26:59)

- **Rabbinic Source:** This principle is inherent in the role of judges as impartial arbiters rather than accusers or prosecutors. The judicial process requires a formal accusation brought by external parties.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5:** The procedure always speaks of witnesses being brought in and warned, implying that the charges are presented *to* the court, not generated *by* it. A judge acting as a prosecutor would violate the fundamental principle of neutrality.

13. **The accusation of blasphemy was only valid if the accused had pronounced The Name of God, in other words, ‘Yahweh’.** In Messianic prophecy, Yeshua is called the “Holy One” (Psalm 16:10); the demons (though they do not make good character witnesses) call Yeshua “the Holy One of God.” (Mark 1:24, Luke 4:34), Simon Peter calls Yeshua the Holy One (John 6:69) there is no text that says Yeshua blasphemed in the Name of the LORD. And in this trial Mark 14:61 “But He remained silent and made no answer. Again, the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?” 62 And Yeshua said, “I am, and you will see the **Son of Man** seated at the right hand of **Power**, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” 63 And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? 64 You have heard his blasphemy.”

- **Biblical Basis:** The capital offence of blasphemy specifically refers to profaning “the Name.”
 - **Leviticus 24:16:** “Whoever blasphemes the Name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.” The emphasis is on the sacred Name (יהוה Yahweh).
- **Rabbinic Source:** The Mishnah provides a very strict and narrow definition for capital blasphemy to prevent misapplication.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 7:5:** “The blasphemer is not liable unless he pronounces the Name [of God].” It specifies the exact context and wording required to make it a capital offence.

14. **A person could not be condemned on the basis of his own words alone.** Since the independent witnesses did not agree, “And the high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” (Matthew 26:62)

- **Biblical Basis:** This reiterates the requirement for external, independent witnesses.
 - **Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15:** (See point 9). A person’s confession, even if true, was not sufficient for a capital conviction under Jewish law; it required corroboration by two or more witnesses.
- **Rabbinic Source:** This is a corollary of the principle that “a man cannot incriminate himself” (see point 10). Confessions were admissible in some civil cases but not for capital punishment.

15. **The verdict could not be announced at night, only in the daytime.** “You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death.” (Mark 14:64)
- **Rabbinic Source:** Consistent with the rule that capital trials must be conducted entirely during the day.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “Capital cases are tried during the daytime and concluded during the daytime.”
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 5:5:** “A capital case is to be tried by day and decided by day.”
16. **In cases of capital punishment, the trial and the verdict of guilty could not occur at the same time, but had to be separated by at least 24 hours.** “You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death.” (Mark 14:64)
- **Rabbinic Source:** This rule allowed for careful reconsideration and potential discovery of new arguments for the defence.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “If they voted for conviction, they defer it to the following day... If they voted for acquittal, they do not defer it, but acquit him immediately.” This implies a minimum of 24 hours between a guilty vote and the final confirmation of the verdict.
17. **Voting for the death penalty had to be done by individuals, beginning with the youngest, so that the younger members would not be influenced by the elders.** Both Matthew 26:65 and Mark 14:63 show it started with the High Priest. “And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need?” indicating the vote started with him.
- **Rabbinic Source:** This specific procedure was designed to ensure independent judgment.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:2:** “How did they vote? The youngest sat at the end of the judges’ row, and the elders after him... they would begin with him who was at the end [the youngest]... lest he [the younger judge] be ashamed [to disagree with an elder].”
18. **A unanimous decision for guilt shows innocence, since it is impossible for all the members present to agree without plotting.** “And they **all** condemned him as deserving death.” (Mark 14:64)
- **Rabbinic Source:** This seemingly counter-intuitive rule reflects an extraordinary bias against capital punishment, assuming that perfect unanimity in a guilty verdict for a capital offence implies a lack of proper deliberation or bias.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “If all [judges] find him liable, they acquit him.”
19. **The verdict of guilty and the sentence could not be pronounced on the same day, but had to be delayed by at least one day.** “And as soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. And they bound Yeshua and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate.” (Mark 15:1)

- As per Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1 (see point 16), a guilty verdict was deferred to the *following day* (at least 24 hours) for reconsideration. The Mishnaic law for deferral of verdict is explicitly 24 hours, to allow for new evidence or arguments for acquittal. The final sentence/execution would typically follow the confirmed verdict.
20. **Judges were to be humane and kind.** “Then they (Sanhedrin members) spit in his face and struck him. And some **slapped** him,” (Matthew 26:67)
- **Biblical Basis:** General principles of justice, mercy, and compassion are foundational in the Torah.
 - **Deuteronomy 16:20:** “Justice, justice you shall pursue.”
 - **Rabbinic Source:** While not a specific written “law,” this is an overarching ethical principle **מִדַּת רַחֲמִים** (*middat rahamim*¹ - attribute (or *measure*) of mercy) embedded in the detailed Mishnaic procedures for capital cases, particularly the emphasis on careful deliberation, the bias towards acquittal, and the repeated admonition to witnesses regarding the gravity of taking a life.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** The extensive admonition given to witnesses before testimony in a capital case (“Perhaps you will say, ‘Why should I be responsible for the blood of this man?’ ...”) demonstrates the court’s profound concern for human life.
21. **A person condemned to death was neither to be scourged nor to be beaten prior to being executed.** Matthew 26:67 “Then they (Sanhedrin members) spat in his face and **struck** him. And some **slapped** him,” Mark 14:65 adds, “And the guards received him with **blows**.” While the flogging is done under Roman supervision, it should have been enough to reverse or stop the trial. John 19:1-2 “Then Pilate took Yeshua and **flogged** Him. 2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe.”
- **Biblical Basis:** Flogging was a distinct punishment with clear limits (Deuteronomy 25:1-3) for offences not warranting death.
 - **Rabbinic Source:** The Mishnah (Sanhedrin chapter 7) details four specific methods of execution (stoning, burning, decapitation, strangulation). None of these methods, in their legally prescribed form, includes preliminary scourging or beating as part of the Jewish judicial process for capital punishment. Scourging was a separate, lesser punishment. The Roman practice of scourging before crucifixion (as seen in Yeshua’s trial) was not a Jewish legal procedure.
22. **No trials are allowed on the evening of either the Sabbath or on a feast day.** John 18:39 “But you have a custom that I should release one man for you **at the Passover**.” This is also acknowledged in the Talmud **Sanhedrin 43a–b**: “...and so they hung Yeshu[a] on the eve of the **Sabbath, and Passover**.”

¹ HaRachamim (the mercies) in Hebrew, certain abstract nouns or qualities, even when grammatically plural, function as a singular concept or an intensified singular. “Rachamim” (mercies/compassions) is one such word. It refers to the *quality* or *concept* of mercy in its fullness.

- **Rabbinic Source:** This law prevents the possibility of a capital verdict and subsequent execution (or final deliberation) from occurring on or immediately preceding a sacred day, which would profane the holy day.
 - **Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1:** “They do not try capital cases... on the eve of a Sabbath or on the eve of a festival.” (Meaning, Friday evening or festival eve, which would extend into the holy day).

Those are the 22 laws which had *previously* been passed by the Sanhedrin, and which would be violated by them in connection with the religious trial of Yeshua. Their main accusation against Yeshua was that He broke the Mishnaic laws, and they were now going to be guilty of the same offence themselves.



Introduction

The Older Testament Exodus 28-29

The Talmudic tradition outlines this lifelong succession to a worthy son (Yoma 72b¹).

Luke 3:2 and Acts 4:6 explicitly refer to “Annas and Caiaphas” as High Priests.

John 18:13-24 shows the true power behind the scenes.

The High Priesthood: A Shift from Spiritual to Political

2 Maccabees 4:23-27

“Three years later, Jason sent Menelaus (brother of the Simon mentioned earlier) to take some money to the king and to get his decision on several important matters. ²⁴ But when he stood before the king, Menelaus impressed him with his show of authority and offered 22,500 pounds of silver more than Jason had offered for his appointment to the office of High Priest. ²⁵ As a result Menelaus returned to Jerusalem with papers from the king, confirming him as High Priest. But he possessed no other qualifications; he had the temper of a cruel tyrant and could be as fierce as a wild animal. ²⁶ So Jason, who had cheated his own brother out of the office of High Priest, was now forced to flee to the land of Ammon. ²⁷ Menelaus continued to be High Priest, but he never paid any of the money he had promised the king.”

Antiquities of the Jews 20.10.2

“Now it came to pass, that the number of the high priests from the days of Herod until the day when Titus took the temple and the City, and burnt them, were in all twenty-eight; the time also that belonged to them was a hundred and seven years.”

Antiquities of the Jews 20.10.5

“Accordingly, Herod (Herod of Chalcis) removed the last high priest, called Cantheras, and bestowed that dignity on his successor, Joseph, the son of Camydus.”

Jewish War 4.3.8 the Zealots appointed Phannias:

“Then did the people cry out and say, that they should not be concerned at all about this matter, for that this was the way of a just election. And when they had gotten this man, who was a clown, and a man not only unskilful, but had never read the laws, and a mere rustic at that, to be high priest, they put upon him the sacerdotal garments; but he, when he was in the midst of the Temple, being clad in the pontifical vestments, and having read the holy scriptures, and taken the oath which the law required, went into the most holy place, and there performed the office of the high priest.”

¹ Where we read a discussion on the selection of a high priest. It states that if a high priest’s son is more worthy in wisdom and piety than other priests, he is to be appointed as the successor. This highlights the ideal of hereditary succession combined with a requirement of personal merit. The passage is not a specific law but reflects the rabbinic ideal that the office should be passed down within the family of the high priest, provided the son is fit for the role. Also in the Tosefta, Sanhedrin 3:2 we read the idea that the Sanhedrin (the rabbinical supreme court) had a role in confirming the appointment, especially to ensure that the candidate was qualified. This demonstrates that while the office was hereditary, it was not an automatic inheritance but required approval based on worthiness.

The House of Annas

1. **Annas** / Ananias [the son of Seth] (6-15 C.E.)
2. **Eleazar** the son of Annas (16-17 C.E.)
3. Joseph **Caiaphas** (18-36 C.E.), son-in-law of Annas.
4. **Jonathan** the son of Annas (36-37 deposed) - (reinstated in 44 C.E.)
5. **Theophilus** the son of Annas (37-41 C.E.)
6. **Matthias** the son of Annas (43 C.E.)
 - Jonathan the son of Annas (44 C.E. re-instated; same person as No.4)
7. **Annas**² the son of Annas / Ananias II (63 C.E.). (*Antiquities of the Jews* 20.10.1).

The Enduring Dynasty of Annas: The Testimony of Josephus

- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.2.2:** Roman procurator Valerius Gratus, who “appointed Ishmael, the son of Fabus, to be high priest. He also deprived him in a little time, and appointed Eleazar, the son of Ananus, who had been high priest before, to be high priest.”
- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.4.3:** the removal of Joseph Caiaphas “And having removed Joseph, who was also called Caiaphas, from the high priesthood, he [Vitellius] appointed Jonathan, the son of Ananus the high priest, to succeed him.”
- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 20.9.1:** “so he [Ananus the Younger] assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, [*who was called Christ*³], whose name was James...”
- **Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 20.10.1:** “And now it was that the high priesthood was very often changed, not by the will of God, but by the covetousness and ambition of the men... [and] they got the high priesthood by money... the high priests were no longer appointed for life, as was formerly the custom.”

A Condemnation from Within

In *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Alfred Edersheim cites the Talmud,

“Josephus describes Annas (or Ananus), the son of the Annas of the New Testament, as ‘a great hoarder up of money,’ very rich, and as despoiling by open violence the common priests of their official revenues. The Talmud also records the curse which a distinguished Rabbi of Jerusalem (Abba Shaul) pronounced upon the High-Priestly families (including that of Annas), who were ‘themselves High-Priests, their sons treasurers (Gizbarin⁴), their sons-in-law assistant-treasurers (Ammarkalin⁵), while their servants beat the people with sticks’ (Pesachim 57a). What a comment this passage offers on the bearing of Jesus, as He made a scourge to drive out the very servants who ‘beat the people with sticks,’ and upset their unholy traffic!”⁶

² Not to be confused with “Ananias the high priest” who is a different individual, Ananias son of Nebedeus (who served from 47-59 C.E.) Ananias the high priest who presided over Paul’s trial before the Sanhedrin in Acts 23:2 and then travelled to Caesarea to press charges before Governor Felix in Acts 24:1.

³ “Who was called the Christ”, is probably an insertion by an early Christian copier.

⁴ Gizbarin (גִּזְבָּרִין) - This word, derived from Persian, refers to the treasurers or chief financial officers of the Temple. The Gizbarin were a board of three men who controlled the main Temple treasury, including all the offerings, tithes, and donations.

⁵ Amarkalin (אֲמָרְקָלִין) - This word, derived from Persian, refers to assistant treasurers or controllers. They served under the Gizbarin and had authority over the Temple’s finances and resources.

⁶ Alfred Edersheim; *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (book 3, chapter 5), page 257, complete and

A Condemnation from the Qumran community

1QpHab: 1st Cave of Qumran *Pesher Habakkuk*⁷

“Interpreted, this concerns the Wicked Priest who was called by the name of truth when he first arose. But when he ruled over Israel, his heart became proud, and he forsook God and betrayed the precepts for the sake of riches. He robbed and amassed the riches of the men of violence who rebelled against God, and he took the wealth of the peoples, heaping sinful iniquity upon himself.”⁸

The Deeper Meaning of the Temple Cleansing and a Call to a Holy Priesthood

The book of Hebrews

A High Priest without Corruption

Hebrews 7:26-27 “For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.”

Hebrews 4:15 “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”

The Melchizedekian Order

Hebrews 5:6 and 6:20 declare: “You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek,” Psalm 110:4

Hebrews 7:1-3 “Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.”

A Better Covenant and a Permanent Priesthood

Hebrews 7:23-24 “The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.”

Hebrews 8:6 “But as it is, Messiah has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.”

Followers of Messiah 1 Peter 2:5

“You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Messiah Yeshua.”

unabridged in one volume, (Hendrickson Publ.) 1993.

⁷ The scroll is identified by its palaeography as “early Herodian,” which points to the period of 30-1 BCE.

⁸ The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English, Geza Vermes, (Penguin Books, Complete Ed). 1998, page 479



The Chronological Puzzle in John 18:28 Distinguishing the Passover Lamb from the Chagigah the Morning Festival Sacrifice

Distinguishing the Passover Lamb from the Chagigah

“Passover”

the Paschal lamb
the Chagigah sacrifice.

- **The Paschal Lamb:** the lamb sacrificed on the 14th of Nisan, Exodus 12.
- **The Chagigah:** a festival sacrifice brought on the 15th of Nisan, Jerusalem Talmud Pesachim 6:1(¶9)
- “One verse (Deuteronomy 16:2) says, *you shall sacrifice a Pesach to the Eternal, your God, small cattle and large cattle*. Another verse (Exodus 12:5) says, *from sheep and goats you shall take*. How is this? Small cattle for *Pesach*, small and large cattle for the festival sacrifice”.
The biblical basis is Deuteronomy 16:2 “You shall sacrifice the Passover unto the LORD your God, of the flock and the herd.”

Resolving the Chronology

Mishnah, Ohalot (Tents) 18:7. “The dwelling places of Gentiles are unclean.¹”

Conclusion

By distinguishing between the Paschal lamb and the Chagigah, the apparent chronological contradiction in John 18:28 is resolved.

Sources:

1. Alfred Edersheim: The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah
2. John Lightfoot: A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica (4 vols.)

¹ The apostle Peter would have been familiar with this, as he states in Acts 10:28, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation.”



The Resurrection of Yeshua

1. Introduction:

a. The Purpose of the Resurrection

b. The Timing of the Resurrection

c. The Sequence of Events

- 1. Friday Afternoon: The Burial** Matthew 27:57-60, just before the Sabbath began at sunset on Friday
- 2. Saturday: The Sabbath**, the tomb was secured. Matthew 27:61-66
- 3. Saturday Evening: The First Day of the Week**, Mark 16:1, after the Sabbath was over.
- 4. After Sunset Saturday and Before Sunrise Sunday Morning**, Matthew 28:2-4, John 20:1 “while it was still dark”.
As the sun was rising (Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1).
- 5. Sunday Morning: Post-Tomb Events**, Luke 24:9-12, John 20:2-10.

d. The Face Cloth and the Empty Tomb

John 20:7 neatly wrapped face cloth (*soudarion*), not a napkin, and the other linen burial strips (*othonia*) that were left behind.

2. Death in the Older Testament:

a. The Hebrew word Sheol in the Bible

Sheol (שְׁאוֹל, she'ol) refers to the “place of the dead”, the afterlife or the unseen world. All people descend into Sheol, Genesis 37:35 and Job 14:13.

b. She'ol in Second Temple and Rabbinical Literature

c. A Conscious Existence:

Jonah prayed from “the belly of Sheol” (Jonah 2:2)

Isaiah 14:9-11 and Ezekiel 32:21 also depict inhabitants of Sheol as having awareness

Sanhedrin 108a:

“Rabbi Menaḥem, son of Rabbi Yosef, says: Even at a time when the Holy One, Blessed be He, restores souls to lifeless corpses, the souls of the generation of the flood will afflict them harshly as if they were in Gehenna, as it is stated: “You shall conceive chaff; you shall bring forth straw; your soul is a fire that shall devour you” (Isaiah 33:11).”

d. Divisions within Sheol (Gehinnom and Gan Eden):**Midrash Tanchuma, Vayikra 8:**

“There are two openings in Gehinnom, one of fire and one of snow.”

The story Yeshua tells of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), “Abraham’s bosom” and the “great chasm”.

Pirkei Avot 5:19

“Judah ben Tema... used to say: the arrogant is headed for Gehinnom and the blushing for the garden of Eden.”

e. God’s Sovereignty Over Sheol:

Psalm 139:8 “If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.”

Sanhedrin 10:1

“All of the Jewish people, even sinners and those who are liable to be executed with a court-imposed death penalty, have a share in the World-to-Come, as it is stated: “And your people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, for My name to be glorified” (Isaiah 60:21). And these are the exceptions, the people who have no share in the World-to-Come, even when they fulfilled many mitzvot: One who says: There is no resurrection of the dead derived from the Torah (*Sadducees*), and one who says: The Torah did not originate from Heaven, and an epikoros (an *epicurean these are the heretic*), who treats Torah scholars and the Torah that they teach with contempt. Rabbi Akiva says: Also included in the exceptions are one who reads external literature (*gnostic text and New Testament*), and one who whispers invocations over a wound and says as an invocation for healing: “Every illness that I placed upon Egypt I will not place upon you, for I am the Lord, your Healer” (Exodus 15:26). By doing so, he shows contempt for the sanctity of the name of God and therefore has no share in the World-to-Come. Abba Shaul says: Also included in the exceptions is one who pronounces the ineffable name of God as it is written, with its letters.”

The Eighteen Benedictions¹, from the Cairo Geniza, non-standard:

“For the apostates (*meshumaddim*) let there be no hope, and uproot the kingdom of arrogance, speedily and in our days. May the Nazarenes; the sectarians (*minim*), perish as in a moment. Let them be blotted out of the book of life, and not be written together with the righteous. Blessed are You, O Lord, who subdues the arrogant.”²

3. Resurrection in Jewish Thought:

a. Resurrection in the Older Testament:

- **Job 19:25–27:** “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God.”
- **Daniel 12:2:** “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”
- **Isaiah 26:19:** “Your dead shall live; their corpses shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!”
- Ezekiel 37: The Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones:

b. Resurrection in Second Temple Literature:

Resurrection in 2 Maccabees 7:7-9

“After the first brother had died in this manner, they brought the second to be made sport of. After tearing off the skin and hair of his head, they asked him, “Will you eat the pork rather than have your body tortured limb by limb?”⁸ Answering in the language of his ancestors, he said, “Never!” So he in turn suffered the same tortures as the first.⁹ With his last breath he said: “You accursed fiend, you are depriving us of this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to live again forever, because we are dying for his laws.”

Resurrection in 2 Baruch [also known as Apocalypse of Baruch] 2 Baruch 50:2-4

“For the earth shall then surely restore the dead, which it now receives, in order to preserve them. It shall make no change in their form, But as it has received, so shall it restore them, And as I delivered them to it, so also shall it raise them.³ For then it will be necessary to show to the living that the dead have come to life again, and that those who had departed have returned again.⁴ And it shall come to pass, when they have each recognized those whom they now know, then judgement shall grow strong, and those things which before were spoken of shall come.”

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birkat_haMinim

² This text of Birkat haMinim from the Cairo Geniza. With the now non-standard use of the Hebrew והנצרים - lit. 'and the Nazarenes', on the second line.

2 Baruch 51:3-5

“Also as for the glory of those who have now been justified in My law, who have had understanding in their life, and who have planted in their heart the root of wisdom, then their splendour shall be glorified in changes, and the form of their face shall be turned into the light of their beauty, that they may be able to acquire and receive the world which does not die, which is then promised to them. ⁴ For over this above all shall those who come then lament, that they rejected My law, and stopped their ears that they might not hear wisdom or receive understanding. ⁵ When therefore they see those, over whom they are now exalted, but who shall then be exalted and glorified more than they, they shall respectively be transformed, the latter into the splendour of angels, and the former shall yet more waste away in wonder at the visions and in the beholding of the forms.”

Resurrection in 4 Ezra 7:28-34 [also known as 2 Esdras]

“My son the Messiah shall appear with his companions and bring four hundred years of happiness to all who survive. ²⁹ At the end of that time, my son the Messiah shall die, and so shall all mankind who draw breath. ³⁰ Then the world shall return to its original silence for seven days as at the beginning of creation, and no one shall be left alive. ³¹ After seven days the age which is not yet awake shall be roused and the age which is flesh shall die. ³² The earth shall give up those who sleep in it, and the dust those who rest there in silence; and the storehouses shall give back the souls entrusted to them. ³³ Then the Most High shall be seen on the judgment-seat, and there shall be an end of all pity and patience. ³⁴ Judgment alone shall remain; truth shall stand firm and faithfulness be strong.”

Resurrection in the Book of Enoch - 1 Enoch 108:11-14

“And now I will summon the spirits of the good who belong to the generation of light, and I will transform those who were born in darkness, who in the flesh were not recompensed with such honour as their faithfulness deserved. ¹² And I will bring forth in shining light those who have loved My holy name, and I will seat each on the throne of his honour. ¹³ And they shall be resplendent for times without number; for righteousness is the judgment of God; for to the faithful He will give faithfulness in the habitation of upright paths. ¹⁴ And they shall see those who were born in darkness led into darkness, while the righteous shall shine brightly.”

c. Summary of Resurrection in Second Temple Literature

d. Resurrection in the Dead Sea Scrolls 4Q521 (or the Messianic Apocalypse).

- 1) [...the hea]vens and the earth will obey His Messiah,
- 2) [the sea and all th[at is in them. He will not turn aside from the commandment of the Holy Ones.
- 3) Take strength in His mighty work, all ye who seek the Lord.
- 4) Will you not find the Lord in this, all ye who wait [for Him] with hope in your hearts?
- 5) Surely the Lord will seek out the pious, and will call the righteous by name.
- 6) His Spirit will hover over the poor; by His might will He restore the faithful.
- 7) He will glorify the pious on the throne of the eternal kingdom.
- 8) He will release the captives, make the blind see, raise up the do[wntrodden.]
- 9) For[ev]er I will cleave [to Him aga]ist the powerful, and [I will trust] in His lovingkindness
- 10) a[nd in His] go[odness forever. His] holy [Messiah] will not be slow [in coming.]
- 11) And as for the wonders that are not the work of the Lord, when he (i.e., the Messiah) [come]s
- 12) then he will heal the sick, resurrect the dead, and to the poor announce glad tidings.
- 13) ... he will lead the [Ho]ly Ones, he will shepherd [th]em. He will do
- 14) ... and all of it...

—Translation by Michael O. Wise; *The Messiah at Qumran* in the Biblical Archaeological Review, Sept/Oct 1992, pages 62.³

e. Resurrection in Rabbinical Literature

Techiyat HaMetim

The resurrection of the dead at the end of days is known as *Techiyat HaMetim* (תְּחִיַּת הַמֵּתִים).

Rambam (Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon-Maimonides)

The last two Principles of Faith are:

12. I believe with complete faith in the coming of Moshiach, and although he may tarry, nevertheless, I wait every day for him to come.
13. I believe with complete faith that there will be resurrection of the dead at the time when it will be the will of the Creator, blessed be His name and exalted be His remembrance forever and ever.

Resurrection in Midrash

Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer, chapter 31, paragraph 10.

“Rabbi Jehudah said: When the blade touched his neck, the soul of Isaac fled and departed, (but) when he heard His voice from between the two Cherubim, saying (to Abraham), “Lay not thine hand upon the lad” (Genesis 22:12), his soul returned to his body, and (Abraham) set him free, and Isaac stood upon his feet. And Isaac knew that in this manner the dead in the future will be quickened. He opened (his mouth), and said: Blessed art thou, O Lord, who quickens the dead.”

³ <https://library.biblicalarchaeology.org/article/the-messiah-at-qumran/>

Pesikta DeRav Kahana God will resurrect the dead based on or because of the merit of Isaac, who was willing to sacrifice himself on the altar, as it is written, “To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To set free those who were doomed to death” (Psalm 102:20)

Resurrection in Siddur

Amidah (the standing prayer), also known as **Shemoneh Esrei** (the Eighteen Benedictions):

The second blessing reads:

“You, O Lord, are mighty forever. You revive the dead, You have the power to save. [From the end of Sukkot until the eve of Passover, insert: You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.] You sustain the living with loving kindness (*chesed*), You revive the dead with great mercy (*rachamim rabim*), You support the falling, heal the sick, set free the bound and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, O doer of mighty acts? Who resembles You, a King who puts to death and restores to life, and causes salvation to flourish? And You are certain to revive the dead. Blessed are You, O Lord, who revives the dead.”

Modeh Ani (מודה אני),

מוֹדֵה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, Modeh ani l'fânechâ,
 מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם, Melech chai v'kayâm,
 שֶׁהֵחֵרְתָּ בִי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחַמְלָה she'heh'chezartâ bi nishmâtî b'chemlâ
 רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ. Rabâ emunâ'techâ.

Yerushalmi Berachot 4:1

“The house of R. Yannai said: One who wakes from sleep must say “Blessed are You, LORD, Who gives life to the dead.”

I gratefully thank You, O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me, with compassion. Abundant is your faithfulness.

4. Resurrections in the New Testament:

- a. The Resurrection: A Pattern of Divine Authority
- b. a. Miracle Resurrections
- c. The Raising of Jairus’ Daughter (Mark 5:21-43, Matthew 9:18-26, Luke 8:40-56)
- d. The Raising of the Widow’s Son in Nain (Luke 7:11-17)
- e. The Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-44)

Shabbat 152a:

“For three days the soul hovers over the body, thinking that it will return. After three days, when it sees the appearance of decay, it departs.”

Midrash Kohelet Rabbah 5:10

“For three days the soul flits about the body of the deceased, hoping to return to it. But once it sees its appearance changing, it departs.”

5. The Sign of Jonah: Yeshua’s Prophetic Sign

- a. The Declaration of the Sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:40)
- b. The Fulfilment in Yeshua’s Resurrection
- c. The Rejection of the Sign of Jonah (John 11:45-54 and Matthew 28:11-15)

- d. The Resurrection of the Two Witnesses

Revelation 11:3-13

- e. The Identity of the Two Witnesses

Jewish Speculation, based on Zechariah 3-4

The two “anointed ones” are Yeshua (Joshua), the High Priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor.

- **Aaron** and **Moses** representing the priestly and the prophetic offices (Shemot Exodus Rabbah 15:3)
- **Aaron** and **David** representing the priestly office and the kingship (Bamidbar Numbers Rabbah 14:13, 18:16)

Christian Speculation

- **Moses** and **Elijah**
- **Enoch** and **Elijah**
- **Israel** and **the Church**
- **The Church (Jew and Gentile)**

- f. My sanctified imagination

6. What did Yeshua do on the Sabbath?

1 Peter 3:18-19 “For Messiah also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God...He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit, in which He also went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison...”

7. The Resurrection of Yeshua:

a. The event and the eyewitnesses. The Empty Tomb.

The testimony of women - Mishnah, Rosh Hashanah 1:8:

“All are qualified to judge, except for women, slaves, and minors.”

b. The Significance of the Gospel Accounts

- John 20:1 Mary Magdalene is mentioned to have been the first to visit the tomb and discover it empty.
- Matthew 28:1 mentions Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary.”
- Mark 16:1 includes Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome.
- Luke 24:10 names Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and “the others with them.”

c. Other Witness accounts

The Third Appearance: To the Two Disciples on the Emmaus Road

- Mark 16:12-13 & Luke 24:13-32

The Fourth Appearance: To Peter

- Luke 24:33-35 & 1 Corinthians 15:5

The Fifth Appearance: To the Ten Disciples

- Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43 & John 20:19-25

The Sixth Appearance: To the Eleven Disciples

- John 20:26-31 & 1 Corinthians 15:5

The Seventh Appearance: To the Seven Disciples

- John 21:1-25

153 large fish

The Eighth Appearance: To the Five Hundred

- Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-18, and 1 Corinthians 15:6

The Ninth Appearance: To James

- 1 Corinthians 15:7

The Tenth Appearance: To the Eleven

- Luke 24:44-49 & Acts 1:3-8

The Eleventh Appearance: To Sha'ul

- Acts 9:3-5; retold in Acts 22:6-10; Acts 26:12-17; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 1 Corinthians 15:8-9

d. The Theological Significance of the Resurrection of Yeshua:

1. The Theological Significance of the Resurrection to Yeshua

Romans 1:4 “who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Messiah Yeshua our Lord”.

2. The Theological Significance of the Resurrection to All Men (believers and unbelievers)

1 Corinthians 15:20-22

Acts 17:30-31

Revelation 20:11-12

3. The Theological Significance of the Resurrection to All Believers.

Romans 4:24-25

Isaiah 53:5-6

Ephesians 1:17-20

2 Corinthians 4:14

Ephesians 1:20-22

Hebrews 2:9-18; 4:14-16

8. Counter-arguments & Apologetics

Recommended: Lee Strobel, *The Case for Christ*

a. The Swoon Theory (or Apparent Death Theory)

This theory posits that Yeshua did not actually die on the cross but merely lost consciousness. He then revived in the coolness of the tomb, escaped, and later appeared to his disciples, who mistakenly believed he had been resurrected.

b. The Hallucination Theory

This theory suggests that the disciples did not see a physically resurrected Yeshua but rather experienced collective hallucinations or visions of him.

c. The Stolen Body Theory

This is one of the earliest and most direct counter-arguments, which your outline already touches on. It claims that the disciples or others stole Yeshua's body to fake a resurrection.

9. The First and Second Resurrection:

Time permitting

10. The Ascension of Yeshua

Not in John, time permitting

The Ascension Account (Acts 1:9-11)

“... this same Yeshua, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.”

The Son of Man Prophecy (Daniel 7:13)

11. Conclusion: The Eternal State

Revelation 20:14

The Eternal State is a future without

New Heavens and the New Earth are without:

1. Satan (Revelation 20:10)
2. Death, and Hades (Revelation 20:14).
3. Seas (Revelation 21:1)
4. Mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore (Revelation 21:4)
5. Sun (Revelation 22:5)
6. Moon (Revelation 21:23)
7. Temple (Revelation 21:21)
8. Night (Revelation 21:25)
9. Evil (Revelation 21:27)
10. Curse (Revelation 22:3)

12. Summary of the hope the resurrection

1. Our Justification is Proven:
2. We Have Power for Service:
3. Our Own Resurrection is Guaranteed:
4. We Have a Sympathetic High Priest:
5. Death Is a Defeated Enemy:
6. Our Eternal Home is the New Earth:

Recommended reading:

Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim

Yeshua: The Life of Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective, Arnold Fruchtenbaum

The Death and Burial of Yeshua - John 19:31-42

The Death and Burial of Yeshua

The Breaking of the Bones of the Robbers and the Piercing of Yeshua

Matthew 27:57-60, Mark 15:42-46, Luke 23:50-54, and John 19:31-42

Josephus, The Jewish War 5.11.1:

“The soldiers, out of rage and hatred, amused themselves by nailing their prisoners in different postures; and so great was their number, that room could not be found for the crosses, and crosses were wanting for the bodies.”

Side note: Morning and Evening Sacrifices

The Morning sacrifice in Yerushalmi (Jerusalem Talmud) Berachot 4:1 (¶1):

“MISHNAH: Morning prayers are until noon; Rabbi Yehudah says, until four hours.

The evening sacrifice Mishnah Pesachim 5:1:

“The daily afternoon offering is slaughtered at eight and a half hours of the day, which is two and a half hours after midday, and is sacrificed, i.e., its offering on the altar is completed, at nine and a half hours of the day.”

Blood and Water.

The Red Heifer sacrifice (Numbers 19) to achieve ritual purity:

- Sprinkled blood
- Ashes of the sacrifice
- Living water becomes the “water of purification.”

John 19:31

1. “The day of preparation”
2. “high day”

Request for the Body

Joseph of Arimathea

All four Gospel accounts reveal key details:

1. His Financial Status and Generosity
 - He was a wealthy man (Matthew 27:57).
 - He was a generous man, giving up his tomb for Yeshua (Matthew 27:60).
2. His Status as a Member of the Sanhedrin
 - He was a respected member of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:43).
 - He had not taken part in the vote to condemn Yeshua to death (Luke 23:51).
3. His Spiritual Character
 - He was a good and righteous man (Luke 23:50).
 - He was looking for the Kingdom of God (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51).

4. His Discipleship

- He was a disciple of Yeshua (Matthew 27:57).
- Until this point, a ‘secret’ disciple (John 19:38).

“looking for the Kingdom of God” *Malchut Shamayim* (מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם) “Kingdom of Heaven.”
Berachot 2:2

“accepting upon oneself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven”

Joseph receives help from Nicodemus (John 19:39)

When did Yeshua die

Sanhedrin 43a–b: “...and so they hung Yeshu(a) on the eve of the Sabbath, and Passover.”

The Removal of the Body from the Cross John 19:40

Nicodemus’ Burial Preparation for Yeshua John 19:39-40

This aromatic spice, אַהֲלוֹת (*ahalot*):

- Proverbs 7:17 states, “I have sprinkled my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.”
- Psalm 45:8 says, “All Your garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia...”
- Song of Songs 4:13-15, list myrrh and aloes are listed among other choice spices in a garden.

John 19:41 “In the garden was a new tomb.”

1. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre
2. The Garden Tomb

Yeshua is Buried Luke 23:53-4

Theological Implications of the burial of Yeshua

1. The End of His Humiliation
2. The Beginning of His Exaltation
3. Change of Ministry

The Sealing of the Tomb

Matthew 27:61-66, Mark 15:47-16:1, and Luke 23:55-56

The Gospels identify these women:

1. Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and Salome (Mark 15:47).
2. Luke's account simply says, "the women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid" (Luke 23:55).

The Women observe and prepare anointed oil for the body of Yeshua

Luke 23:55-56

The Sealing of the Tomb

Matthew 27:62-66

The phrase "Three Days and Three Nights"

The phrase "three days and three nights" was a common idiom that simply meant "for a period spanning three days," not a literal 72-hour period.

- Day 1: Friday (the time between the burial and sundown)
- Day 2: Saturday (a full day)
- Day 3: Sunday (the time from sundown on Saturday until the resurrection)

For example:

- 1 Samuel 30:12-13, an abandoned servant had not had food or water for "three days and three nights," yet he was left behind "three days ago."
- Esther calls for a three-day fast of "night or day" (Esther 4:16), but then presents herself to the king "on the third day" (Esther 5:1).

Three days and three nights in the New Testament

Only once, spoken by Yeshua Himself.

- Matthew 12:40

"On the third day"

- Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19
- Luke 9:22; 18:33, 24:7, 24:21
- John 2:19-21 - in three days
- Acts 10:40
- 1 Corinthians 15:4

“After three days”

- Matthew 27:63
- Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34

Other relevant passages

- Genesis 42:17-18
- 2 Chronicles 10:5, Compare to 2 Chronicles 10:12

Yeshua in Sheol

Apostle Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Yeshua Messiah, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

(Apostles' Creed and Athanasian Creed).

Did Yeshua descend to Hell?? What Is Sheol?

The righteous descended to Sheol (Jacob, Genesis 37:35, Samuel, 1 Samuel 28:13-14)

The wicked descended to Sheol (Psalm 31:17).

Sheol was traditionally understood to have two compartments: one for the righteous, known as Abraham's Bosom, and another for the unrighteous. The account in Luke 16 should be seen as a historical event rather than a parable because Yeshua does not call it a parable, and He uses the personal name, Lazarus; personal names are not typically found in parables.

The destination for the righteous changed after Yeshua's death and resurrection. Following His ascension, Yeshua brought the ransomed dead with Him to heaven. This is why paradise is no longer located near the place of torment in Sheol, but is now in the third heaven, where God dwells (2 Corinthians 12:2-4). The righteous are no longer in a waiting place; they are in the presence of God. (2 Corinthians 5:8... “absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.”)

When Yeshua said to the thief on the cross in Luke 23:43, “Today you will be with me in paradise,” He was indicating that they would go to the compartment of the righteous in Sheol. After Yeshua's resurrection and ascension, Yeshua brought the righteous dead with Him to the highest heaven (Ephesians 4:8: “When He ascended on high, He led a host of captives...”). The promise to the thief was fulfilled when he went with Yeshua to the new, heavenly paradise.

1 Peter 3

1. The death of Yeshua forms the basis for the judgment of Satan

The death of Yeshua forms the basis for God's judgment of Satan and his demonic hosts. Rabbinic tradition, as shown in the Talmud, recognised the concept of Sarei Ha-Umot (שְׂרֵי הָאֻמוֹת), or “Princes of the Nations.” These were believed to be spiritual rulers over the Gentile world. In Sanhedrin 94a, the prince of Assyria is depicted as being cast down by God, symbolising the nation’s defeat. This idea of spiritual princes governing nations is also seen in the Biblical accounts.

In John 12:31, Yeshua declares, “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,” asserting that Satan’s reign was universal and that His victory over him is imminent. Yeshua overthrew Satan’s dominion through the cross, as Colossians 2:15 states, “He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.” This divine victory, culminating in the Resurrection and Ascension, is a witness that Yeshua is the Son of God and will ultimately return to establish His kingdom (Psalm 2).

2. The death of Yeshua was needed for the purification of Heavenly Things

The death of Yeshua is also the basis for the purification of things in heaven. This is a central theme in the book of Hebrews, where the author portrays Yeshua as the ultimate High Priest. Hebrews 9:11-12 explains that through His own blood, the Messiah entered “once for all into the holy places, having obtained eternal redemption.” Later, in Hebrews 9:21-24, the author makes a profound theological statement: it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things (the earthly tabernacle and its vessels) to be purified with the blood of animal sacrifices, “but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.”

This purification extends beyond the heavenly realm to all of creation. As Romans 8:21-23 explains, all of creation “groans and travails in pain together,” waiting to be “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.” This includes not only the earth but also the “whole celestial sphere.” The death of the Messiah, therefore, initiates a process of comprehensive purification that impacts both heaven and earth.

Why Did Yeshua Wait Three Days to Rise from the Dead?

Yeshua waited three days to rise from the dead for several significant reasons. The first is to definitively prove his death. According to Jewish theological tradition, it was believed that a person’s spirit lingered near their body for up to three days after death, hoping to re-enter it. After the third day, the spirit would depart permanently for Sheol, the afterlife. This belief is noted in rabbinic sources, such as Genesis Rabbah 100:7, which states that the soul returns to the body for three days after death. “Bar Kappara taught: The most intense time of mourning is only on the third day. For three days, the soul is hovering over its grave, believing that it will return [to the body]. When it sees that the radiance of the face has changed, it goes and leaves it.”

By rising on the third day, Yeshua’s resurrection occurred at the precise moment when no one could claim he was merely in a coma or that his spirit had not truly departed.

This timing also fulfilled a key prophecy while avoiding physical decay. Psalm 16:10, quoted by Peter in Acts 2:27, foretold that God “will not let your Holy One see decay.” The three-day period ensured that Yeshua’s body remained incorruptible. Most importantly, the resurrection after three days was a fulfilment of the sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:39-40), where Yeshua prophesied that he would be in the “heart of the earth” for three days and three nights, just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish. This prophetic act demonstrated his authority as the Messiah and served as a powerful sign to a sceptical generation.

Wrath

The final hours of Yeshua on the cross are often misunderstood. The first three hours were a time of intense physical and emotional suffering at the hands of men. However, the last three hours were a period of divine wrath. During this time, the Father poured out His righteous judgment upon the Son for the sins of humanity. It’s a common but false doctrine to claim that Yeshua endured the wrath of Satan or his demons. The concept of Yeshua being “born again in hell” or paying a ransom to Satan is a heretical view that contradicts Scripture.

This false view, known as the **Ransom Theory** and famously reflected in stories like the *Narnia Chronicles*, incorrectly posits that humanity was “sold” to Satan at the Fall. It suggests that God had to pay Satan a ransom, which was the Messiah’s death, to free us. This theory wrongly implies that God bartered with the devil and tricked him, which undermines the sovereignty and character of God. The reality is that God did not bargain with Satan, nor did He owe Satan anything.

Instead, the core of the Gospel is that the Messiah paid the penalty of sin and disobedience that humanity owed to God. He took upon Himself the punishment that a holy God demands because of His righteousness and our unrighteousness. He did not pay a ransom to Satan; He satisfied the righteous demands of God the Father on our behalf. As Galatians 2:16 states, “We know that a person is justified not by the works of the law, but through the faith of Yeshua the Messiah.”

This justification is a profound gift. It is not our own faith that saves us, but the perfect faith of Yeshua, which He demonstrated on the cross. As Galatians 2:20 declares, “I have been crucified with Messiah; and it is no longer I that live, but it is Messiah who lives in me. And the life I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.” This means we are justified by His faith, and we are called to live by that same faith, trusting completely in His finished work on our behalf.