

# The Third Cup of Redemption

**Matthew 26:27-29; Mark 14:23-25; Luke 22:20;**

**First Corinthians 11:25-26**

**About 9:00 pm on Friday evening the fifteenth of Nisan**

**DIG:** What clues were given to the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection in Exodus? What did Rabbi Sha'ul add? How many cups of wine were/are consumed during the Seder meal? What are their names? What does each cup represent? What does the cup of Elijah have to do with the four verbs from the four cups? What do the four cups describe for believers today?

**REFLECT:** When will Yeshua drink the fourth cup of praise again? How can you drink it with Him? What does it mean to you that you are redeemed? How often do you think of the cost of your redemption? Do you take it for granted? Did you ever? Do you ever thank Messiah for His sacrifice and the spilling of His blood for your sins? Why not?

In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the third cup of redemption, and when He had given thanks He offered it to them saying: **Drink from it, all of you. This cup is the New Covenant** (see my commentary on **Jeremiah Eo - The Days are Coming, declares the LORD, When I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el**) **in My blood, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me** (Matthew 26:27-28; Mark 14:23-24 Luke 22:20; First Corinthians 11:25). This becomes not just merely a physical redemption from the land of Egypt (see my commentary on **Exodus Bz - Redemption**), but a spiritual redemption that will come by the shedding of His blood. A clue from Exodus points to the fact that the blood of Christ would have something to do with the Passover (see my commentary on **Exodus Bx - He Will See the Blood and Pass Over that Doorway**). Rabbi Sha'ul added: **For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes** (First Corinthians 11:26). During the course of the Pesach meal, participants drink **four cups of kosher Passover wine, the fruit of the vine:**

**The first is the cup of sanctification.** It is based on the promise from ADONAI that I will bring you out (*hotzeyti*) from the yoke of the Egyptians (Exodus 6:6a). In the *haggadah*, this cup is called *Kadesh*, or the Cup of Sanctification. The Hebrew word implies *separation* or *being set apart*, and an appropriate word for the first step of redemption from Egypt. At the beginning of every Seder, the *b'rakhah* is chanted, "Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe who creates the fruit of the vine." Celebrants drink the first cup to thank God for bringing the children of Jacob out of Egypt.

**The second is the cup of plagues**, but it is not mentioned by any of the four Gospel accounts. It is based on the promise from Ha'Shem that **I will deliver you (*hitzalti*) from being slaves to them (Exodus 6:6b)**. This goes beyond celebrating the deliverance from a life of slavery. It is called **the cup of plagues**, a reminder of the ten plagues upon **Egypt** (see my commentary on **Exodus Bj - The Ten Plagues of Egypt**). Although this **cup** represents the freedom of the Jewish people, **the rabbis teach that they are not to rejoice in the misfortunes of evil** (in this case, **the Egyptians**). As a result, this **cup of wine** is not tasted and enjoyed, but emptied by spilling out ten drops, one at a time, for each plague.

**The third is the cup of redemption**. It is based **God's** promise that **I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment (Exodus 6:6c)**. This has always been **the cup** taken right after the main meal, immediately after the *afikoman* search (see **Kj - Breaking the Middle Matzah**). The Hebrew term *gaalti* implies buying back something that belonged to someone else. It's the same verb used in the redemption of a slave at **the Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:47-55)**. Each year when Jews celebrate the Seder, they are to remember that **ADONAI** paid an unbelievable price for the redemption of **His** people. Before **Christ**, this was clearly understood to be the death of **the Pesach** lamb and the blood applied to the doorframe of the house (see my commentary on **Exodus By - The Tenth Plague of Death**). They were slaves, now they are free. The Cup of Redemption is a wonderful reminder of **God's** love for us. We were slaves to sin, now we are set free.

**The fourth is the cup of praise (also called the cup of acceptance)**. It is based on **the LORD's** promise that **I will take you as My own people (*lakakhti*), and I will be your God. Then you will know that I Am the LORD who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians (Exodus 6:7)**. At the very end of the Seder, the fourth and final **cup** is taken when the second part of Hallel (**Psalms 115-118**) is recited. This is the climax of the previous three **cups**. After the blessing is chanted again, **the cup** is shared, followed by songs of praise in celebration of our full redemption.

The famous messianic Jew Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889) observed that, "**the Lord** ended each phase of **His** ministry with a feeding. **He** ended **His** Galilean ministry with the feeding of the five thousand. **He** ended **His** Gentile ministry with the feeding of the four thousand. And **He** ended the Judean ministry before **His** death on the cross with the feeding of **His** own **talmidim** in the upper room."<sup>1404</sup>

There are many wonderful symbols that are part of the Seder service and **the Passover** holiday. One of the most important symbols is in many ways, one of the most misunderstood symbols. It is called **the cup of Elijah**. In many ways this **cup** represents the messianic vision of the Jewish people.

At the Passover meal, the question is raised, "Why do we drink four cups of wine?" And the truth is that the **four cups** of wine represent the **four verbs** that are in Exodus 6:6-7, which describe the way ADONAI brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. These **four Passover verbs** are bring out, save, redeem and take out.

In fact, some rabbis argue that there should be a fifth cup of wine because there is a fifth verb, bring, in verse 8 of Exodus 6, which refers to the way God would bring the Israelites into the Land. Some rabbis felt that this was a separate process. It wasn't part of the redemption of the children of Israel; it was part of their future. So there was a division among the rabbis as to how many verbs applied to the redemption of the Israelites. Therefore, there was a difference of opinion as to how many cups of wine you should drink at the Seder.

And so the rabbis came up with a compromise. They said, we will drink **four cups of wine** at the Seder, but we will pour a fifth cup. Even though it sits in the middle of the table - no one touches it. In the messianic future, when the Messiah comes, He will answer all of our questions. The most important questions, like how do we have peace in this troubled world? And the rabbis say that when the footsteps of the Messiah arrive, some of the other questions of life will be resolved. One of those resolved questions would be, do we drink **four cups of wine** or **five cups of wine**? Do we drink the fifth cup of wine at the Seder table?

This is **the cup of Elijah** and serves as a reminder that he will come before that great and dreadful Day of the LORD (see my commentary on Revelation Bw - **See, I Will Send You the Prophet Elijah Before the LORD Comes**). The hope is that Elijah will appear at our Seder and announce the arrival of King Messiah. So as long as this cup sits on a Seder table, untouched, it means that we still live in a world that needs to be redeemed. It reminds us that our work, our ministry is not completed.

While all the cups picture wonderful historical lessons, **the four cups** of the Seder also reveal critical spiritual lessons for us today. For both Jewish and Gentile believers **the cups** describe our spiritual journey. Like **the cup of sanctification**, we were set apart for a purpose; like **the cup of plagues**, we were delivered from the foolishness of our old life; like **the cup of redemption**, we were bought back by a faithful redeeming kinsman (Ruth 3:9 CJB); and like **the fourth cup**, we praise God for our **acceptance** as His child (see Bw - **What God Does For Us at the Moment of Faith**). Messiah was about to fulfill the ancient promises illustrated by symbols of the Seder!

Most certainly **Jesus** celebrated the first three **cups** at the last Seder, but then **He** said something surprising at the end of the evening. Normally **the talmidin** would have expected to celebrate the end of the Seder with the drinking **the last cup**. That was what **they** had done **their** entire lives. At that point, however, **Christ** said: **I tell you the truth, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink new wine with you in My Father's Kingdom (Mattityahu 26:29; Mark 14:25)**. He was referring to **the final fourth cup of praise**, which **He** clearly did not drink. How inexplicable, yet, at the same time, how profound!<sup>1405</sup>

The next time **Jesus** will drink **the fourth cup of acceptance** will be at the wedding feast of the Lamb on the earth to start the messianic **Kingdom** (see my commentary on **Revelation Fg - The Wedding Feast of the Lamb**). That is a Seder you won't want to miss. If you believe that **Yeshua is the Son of God: For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (First Corinthians 15:3-4)**. Then you will experience that Seder with **Him!**

Yerushalayim was quiet. The City of David seemed to be deserted. The streets were clear of people and animals with only the roofs and alabaster pinnacles catching the glow of the moon. On the wall of **Pilate's** headquarters a Roman guard folded his arms against the chill of an east wind and watched his off-duty comrades roll dice on the flagstones below. He laughed at the soldiers' arguments after each roll when his attention was diverted by the sentry at the twin gates, who stepped into the roadway and drew his sword.

He watched as the sentry, who spoke sharply to someone in the moonlight. In a moment the sentry was waving someone inside the praetorium, but whoever it was would come no further than under the twin gates. Through the courtyard torchlights the soldier above could see that it was **the high priest** and beside **him** the burly **chief of the Temple guard**.

They argued. The sentry thought, "They wouldn't be here unless they wanted something from **Pilate**." Always, it seemed to him, they wanted something done or they wanted something stopped. He watched and saw the soldier below sheathe his sword, cup his hands, and roar across the courtyard that **Caiaphas, the high priest**, desired immediate audience with **Pontius Pilate**, governor of Judea and Samaria, at the pleasure of Tiberius Caesar.

The sentry saw **the high priest** standing at the twin gates. Such superstitious people! He wouldn't come in to a Gentile's residence for fear of being defiled. What a fool. He was glad **Pilate** kept **him** waiting. The guards along the walls of Jerusalem called out the second watch of the night. In thousands of homes, the Seder was nearing an end.<sup>1406</sup>