

## Good Friday:

Lord Jesus,

You are nailed to your cross, but your body lives in the miracle of the church.

You are silenced by the crucifixion, but your voice still speaks to each of us across the centuries. Your hands are fastened to hard wood, but your works of love and compassion continue to touch the lives of countless persons. Your feet are nailed to the cross, but your message keeps calling us to action even yet today. And in this moment of sadness and sorrow, in this time of remembrance, we look forward to the future with hope. Amen.

I spoke yesterday about the Messianic Jewish Community. I again want to share a meditation from them today.

### Time of Slaughter

A short time later, Yeshua is hung on the cross. It is the third hour, 9:00 AM by our reckoning when he is crucified (Mark 15:25). On that day the Temple was crowded with pilgrims bringing up their lambs for the Passover slaughter. All the priesthood of Israel was also at the Temple for this festival. Because of the great number of lambs to be slaughtered, the afternoon continual offering was performed early.

### The Death of the Lamb

When the 9th hour arrived, a long blast of the shofar signaled the Levites began their chanting of the Hallel (Psalms 113-118). The gates to the inner court were opened, and the first crowd of Israelites with their lambs ready rushed in. Within minutes, the clean and spotless courtyard around the altar was stained red with blood. Gutters flowed with red. The base of the altar seemed to bleed, even gush forth as basin after basin of blood was splashed against it in quick succession. The dead lambs were hung on hooks, forearms spread in a crucifixion pose as they were skinned and prepared for roasting.

The Levites continued chanting the Hallel, which Jesus and the disciples would have also chanted the night before. The sound of their voices, joined by the voices of the thousands of Pilgrims who had gathered at the Temple, filled the entire city of Jerusalem. Indeed, they were heard outside the walls, a short distance away, where Yeshua had then been hanging on the cross for six hours. As they chanted, "The cords of death entangled me . . . precious in the Sight of the LORD is the Death for his Righteous Ones . . . Open for me the Gates of Righteousness . . . The stone the builder's rejected has become the capstone," Yeshua died. It was the 9th hour, the very hour at which the Passover lambs were being slain in the temple. Yeshua, the lamb, died.

This is the story of the Exodus and the Passover lamb of Egypt. Paul tells us that Messiah our Pesach has been sacrificed. It is by his blood, applied to the doorposts of our lives that we are spared the fate of the Egyptian firstborn. By his blood, applied to our lives, the last judgment passes over us". ( Work Cited: Macoby, Hyam. 1988. Early Rabbinic Writings. Cambridge University Press, Great Britain)

There is so much to be said in silence, meditation, thanksgiving, and praise, about the immense love that Jesus showed to us this day. It is beyond our comprehension no matter how often we hear this story. Not only did someone give his life for each of us, this was God our creator. God loved us so much, that he sent us his son to teach us, to walk with us, to share our humanity and to die for us. With deep reverence, we continue on this journey with Jesus even as he suffers and dies. We lie in state with him through tonight and tomorrow. Then on Easter Sunday morning, to approach the tomb is great sorrow. It is only then that we discover the rest of the story.