

THE FOUR CUPS AT PASSOVER

INTRODUCTION

The Last Supper Jesus celebrated with his disciples was not the Passover. The Passover lamb must be sacrificed at twilight on 14 Nissan (Exodus 12:18), the day Christians call Good Friday, which is also the day Jesus died on the Cross. This means Jesus died on the Cross before the Passover could be celebrated by devout Jews which would have included Jesus and his disciples. The celebration of the Passover began in the evening of 15 Nissan, which started after twilight on 14th Nissan. For readers who do not know the Jewish day begins in the evening: 'evening and morning was the first day'.

This means the Last Supper that was shared between Jesus and his disciples was a regular Jewish meal, consisting of bread and wine and a dish the bread was dipped into (John 13:26). The Passover consists of roasted lamb. Clearly the meal Jesus shared with his disciples was a simple pot meal, likely a stew. Special foods, for example bitter herbs, that are tasted in the Passover meal are not mentioned.

There are four cups in the Passover Seder. This paper will uncover the hidden spiritual meanings in the four cups of the Passover. We will go back to the accounts in the New Testament and see which cups of the Passover match to the cups in the last hours of Jesus' life. Even though the Last Supper was not the Passover, the cups in the Passover link to cups mentioned in the gospel account. The four cups of the Passover Seder according to the Haggadah of Raban Gamiel the Younger:¹

1. Cup of Sanctification (*Kiddush*: Thanksgiving to the Lord for 'the fruit of the vine')
2. Cup of Wrath (*Maggid*: After reciting the ten plagues; wine is also sprinkled on the table)
3. Cup of Blessing (*Birkat Hamazon*: After The main meal is consumed; the cup that over-flows)
4. Cup of Praise (*Hillel*: After the reciting of the last Hallel hymns, the end of the Passover)



¹ Haggadah means 'order of service'; Raban means 'chief teacher'; Gamiel was the most ancient most revered raban to have pronounced an opinion on the cups of the Seder. Even so, this Haggadah follows the time of Christ. The Haggadah of the Passover Seder celebrated at the time of Christ can't be verified. The Haggadah of Raban Gamiel could be as old as 70 AD, but not earlier. Raban Gamiel the Younger taught after the Temple was destroyed.

THE SECRET TRUTHS

In some of the last words of the Torah it is written: “*The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and our children forever...*” (Deut. 29:29). Not all truth is plainly written in the Bible. There is much more truth which the LORD possesses. Who does the LORD reveal his secrets to? Daniel spoke to Nebuchadnezzar and said: “*As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that reveals secrets made known to thee what shall come to pass.*” (Daniel 2:29). The LORD reveals secrets to whomever the LORD chooses to reveal secrets, even to pagan kings. Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh. Daniel interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. The revealing of secrets and the interpretation of secrets comes from God. To God be the glory!

We will propose in this paper that *patterns in the Hebrew alphabet reveal secrets concerning the four cups of Passover*. Where did this revelation come from? It came to the author in a dream. Is it from God? Judge for yourself whether or not the message in the Hebrew letters we present to you here matches the deeper meaning of the Passover cups and whether or not the interpretation of Passover cups based on these revelations provides insight into the cups referred to in the accounts of the Last Supper. If all these things bring honor and glory to Jesus and bring into sharper light the teachings of the Scripture, how could they have come to man without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

Many searchers have gone looking for the Holy Grail, the physical chalice that Christ lifted up when he proclaimed ‘*this is the new covenant in my blood*’. We believe such a cup no longer exists and if it did, it would possess no value other than as an historic curiosity. However, the relationships in the Hebrew letters which we will present to you will exist eternally, and the secrets that lie within them will proclaim truth forever and ever.

THE HEBREW LETTERS

Each Hebrew letter is a picture and there is a spiritual meaning of the picture. For example the Hebrew letter Aleph is a picture of a Mighty Ox and has the spiritual meaning ‘Father’ or ‘Sacrifice’.

For readers desiring to learn more about how the meaning of the Hebrew letters we use in this paper is determined, we direct your attention to Page 22 HEBREW of our website. The basis for the spiritual meaning of numbers which we present in this paper is also available on our website.

The teaching presented here is a way of understanding deeper truths of the faith. *If you read these things and feel the awe of the LORD rising up within you, then know that these things come from God not from man*. As Jesus said: “*The Spirit of Truth will guide you into all truth*” (John 16:13).

THE FIRST CUP: SANCTIFICATION

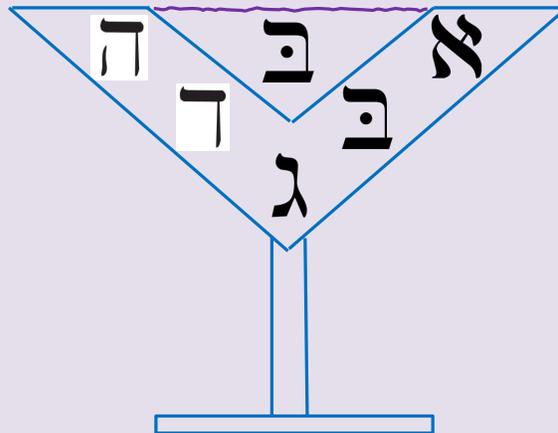
In the Passover Seder, there is the prayer of Kiddush which is spoken before any other part of the Passover begins. The word Hebrew *Kiddush* (qiddūš) means sanctification, from Hebrew qiddēš, to sanctify, derived stem of qādaš, to be holy.

The prayer begins: 'Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine' and continues to honor God with 'a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt'. This much is true to the spirit of observing the Biblical Passover.

In the Jewish Passover Seder the following words are also spoken 'Who chose us from all the nations, and elevated us above all tongues, and sanctified us with His commandments.' Sanctification means cleansing. The commandments of God (Torah) permit one who follows them to avoid sin. Possessing the commandments of God does not cancel the sinful nature nor can possessing the commandments cleanse anyone from past sins. Only the blood of a ritually clean animal sacrifice can cover sins, and only the blood of a perfect sacrifice, the blood of Jesus on the Cross, can remove sins. So this part of the Seder prayer is in error.

We present to you the Cup of Sanctification, composed of the first five Hebrew letters:

[FIGURE 1]



We read the message on the Cup the same way we read Hebrew, from right to left, top to bottom.

The three corners of the Cup tell the story: **Aleph** (Father) **H'eh** (Grace) **Gimel** (Spirit of Truth)

Translation: Father: Grace and Truth.

The content of the Cup is: **Beth** (The Son)

The message in the Hebrew letters on the cup matches what John wrote about Jesus:

“The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of Grace and Truth”. (John 1:14)

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father’s side has made him known.” (John 1:17)

So, then how is this a **Cup of Sanctification**?

When the wine in the **Cup of Sanctification** is *‘poured out’*, signifying the life of the Son being poured out in his death on the Cross, this is what cleanses from sin – the shedding of innocent blood willingly offered to atone for sins of others; a sacrifice acceptable to God.

Where do we see the **Cup of Sanctification** in the Last Supper?

“And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying ‘This is my body given for you: do this in remembrance of me.’

In the same way after the supper he took the cup, saying ‘This is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.’ (Luke 22:20)

Jesus is saying quite plainly that the wine in the cup is a symbol of him and the pouring out of the wine is his suffering of the Cross! His death opens the way for a new covenant between God and man.

We note that this cup that Jesus took was the cup after the supper, which in the Jewish custom is the cup for Grace after meals. This cup is to offer thanks to God for the entire meal. Jesus was thanking God for the salvation of his believers, fully knowing the cost of that salvation would soon fall upon him.

We see a perfect match between the meaning of the Hebrew letters on the Cup of Sanctification [Figure 1] and Jesus’ interpretation of the Cup representing his blood at the Last Supper.

What is the connection to the Passover?

The Passover meal was consumed *after the blood of the lamb was splashed on the doorposts and the lintel*. So, when the Kiddush says ‘Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine’ the spiritual interpretation of that statement is ‘We who enjoy spiritual life through the forgiveness of our sins by the sacrifice of Christ, the lamb of God slain for the sins of the world; we are the fruit on the vine, and we thank you God for our salvation’.

The cup at the end of the Last Supper corresponds to the first cup of the Passover. No one can share in Christ, which is symbolized by eating the Passover lamb, unless the blood of the lamb is already applied to the doorposts of their heart.

Drinking the **Cup of Sanctification** speaks of the internal cleansing of Christ’s blood to the believer.

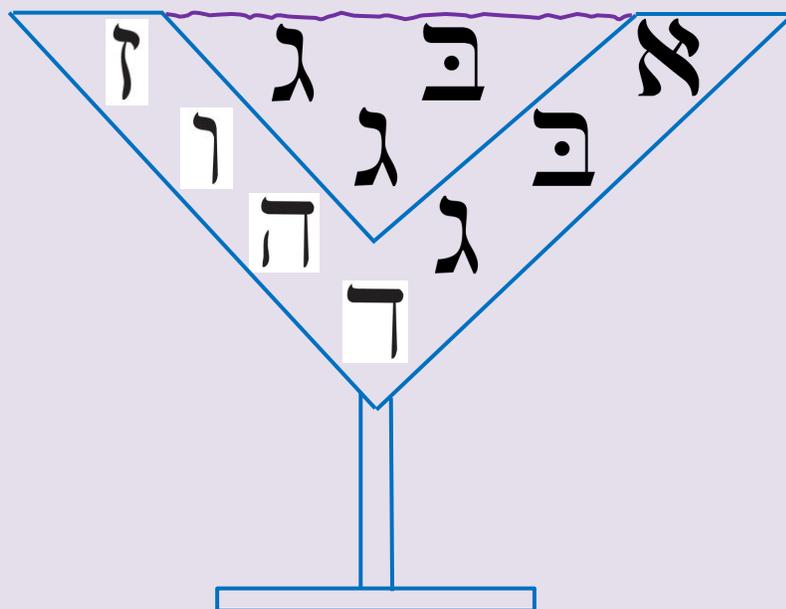
SECOND CUP: THE CUP OF WRATH

Before the second cup is consumed two important rituals are conducted in the Passover Seder. One is the dipping of vegetables into salt water, a symbol so they say of the tears they suffered in Egypt. The other is that the middle matzah (leavened bread) of the stack of three matzah on the table is broken. The larger piece is hidden and the smaller piece is put back in the stack upon the table between the other two matzah. After this is the recounting of the Exodus in a series of questions.

The culmination of the Exodus story is the account of the plagues in Egypt. After each of the ten plagues of Egypt is named, three drops of wine from the **Cup of Wrath** are sprinkled on the table with the fingertip. In total 30 drops of wine.² After this the first two Hallel hymns (Psalm 113 and 114) are sung and the Cup of Wrath is consumed by all participants in the Seder!³

We present to you, the second cup in Hebrew letters, the **Cup of Wrath**:

[FIGURE 2]



The letters on the cup continue in the order of the Hebrew alphabet. The letters in the wine also follow the Hebrew alphabet, each letter in sequence with its predecessor on the right side of the cup.

Continuing in the story of Jesus in his last days on Earth, after the Last Supper it is written:

² The author would note, the spiritual number 30 means 'Blood'. The table is symbolic of the Land of Egypt at this point.

³ The spiritual number 113 means 'The Rapture' and 114 means 'Old Covenant Restored'. After the believers in Jesus go to be with the Lord, the Old Covenant with the Jews is restored on Earth. Soon after is the Great Tribulation, when the Jews together with the whole world will drink from the Cup of God's Wrath! Christians never taste this – Christ drank it for us.

“Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.” (Luke 22:39)

“He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed ‘Father, if you are willing take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done’” (Luke 22:41)

“And being more in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.” (Luke 22:44)

The suffering of Christ began in the Garden of Gethsemane. This is parallel to the vegetable dipped in salt water in the Seder. Peter also wept bitterly when he denied Christ three times.

Pilate examined Jesus at the insistence of the Jewish elders but found no cause for the death penalty.

“Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged and handed him over to be crucified.” (Mark 15:15)

The lashings Jesus received made him so weak that Simon of Cyrene carried the cross following him to Golgotha. We could say this is the point where the body of Jesus was broken, akin to the middle matzah (a type of the second person of the Trinity) being broken in the stack of three matzahs on the Passover Table.

After reflecting on these historical events, we look back at the Cup of Wrath in Figure 2.

We note that there are exactly 10 Hebrew letters, one for each of the 10 plagues in Egypt.

We note there are seven Hebrew letters in the chalice and three Hebrew letters in the wine. The spiritual number 3 means “Truth” or “God” and the spiritual number 7 means “The End”. The Cross was ‘The End of Truth’ in the sense that the crucifixion of Jesus was based on false accusations. The Cross was ‘The End of God’ in the sense that it was the end of the visitation of God, Jesus the second person of the Trinity, on the Earth in his incarnation.

The three corners of the Cup of Wrath in Fig. 2 explain its meaning, reading right to left, top to bottom:

Aleph (Father) **Zayin** (Sword of Justice) **Dalet** (World)

The translation: The Father’s Wrath on the World; Falls Like A Sword!

This is why Jesus was in great anguish and sweating drops of blood. He of all persons understood the severity of the wrath of the Father. Oh the agony of his righteous soul than knew no sin!

There are three Hebrew letters in the wine: **Beth** (Son) **Gimel** (Spirit) **Gimel** (Spirit).

The translation: The Spirit of the Son is Divided: Broken Apart! (linking back to the first cup)

The New Testament explains to us the wrath of God for the sins of the world:

“You are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God’s wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.” (Romans 2:5)

“For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being.” (Romans 2:8)

But Christ took the penalty of the wrath of the Father on behalf of all who believe:

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.” (1 Peter 3:18)

In conclusion, the second cup of the Passover Seder is the cup of the Wrath of God, which points to the Cross of Calvary, when the wrath of the Father for the sin of the world was poured out on Christ.

THE THIRD CUP: THE CUP OF BLESSING

To the Christian, there is no mystery whatsoever what the Cup of Blessing is:

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16)

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, ‘This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.’” (1 Cor. 11:25)

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he comes.” (1 Cor. 11:26)

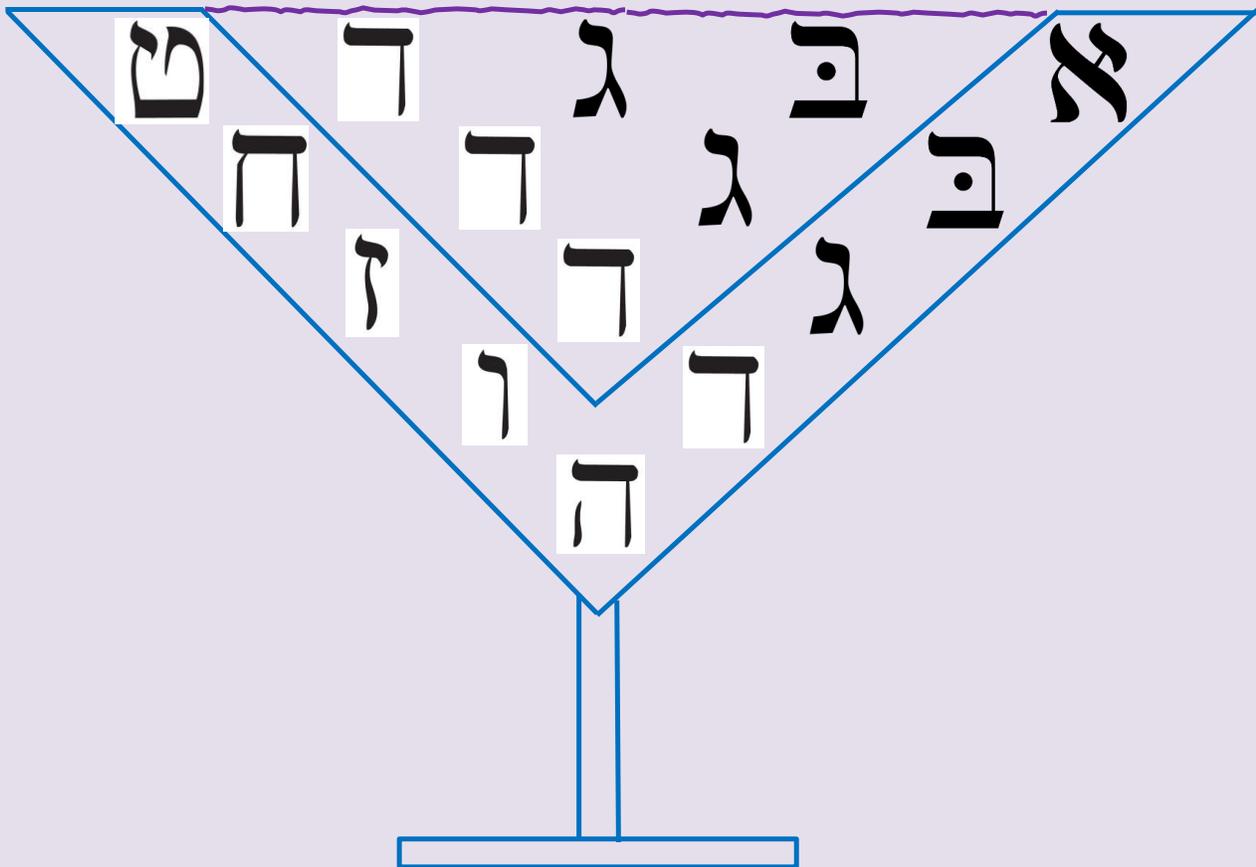
“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” (1 Cor. 11:27)

The **Cup of Blessing** is the communion cup of the Christian believer. The cup which Christians drink when they share in communion looks back at the Cup of Sanctification which the Lord raised at the end of the Last Supper (1 Cor. 11:25) but it also shows the Lord’s death till he comes (1 Cor. 11:26) and therefore looks back at the Cup of Wrath which the Lord drank for us.

Partaking in the communion cup of Christ is a special service within the Church. It is not a time for long speeches from elders or pastors. It is a time for quiet inward reflection. It is a time for meditation upon the person and work of Christ. It is a time for examination of one’s heart for sin. Anyone who shares the cup unworthily, with knowledge of sin in their life, is guilty of the Lord’s death (1 Cor. 11:27)

We present to you, the second cup in Hebrew letters, the **Cup of Blessing**:

[FIGURE 3]



The three corners of the **Cup of Blessing** in Fig. 3 tell the story, reading right to left, top to bottom:

ALEPH (Sacrifice) **TET** (Sober Reflection) **H'EH** (Grace)

Translation: Sober Reflection on the Sacrifice [Christ] reveals Grace [the love of the Father]!

The three corners of the Wine in the Cup add to the message, reading right to left, top to bottom:

BETH (Son) **DALET** (World) **DALET** (World)

Translation: Son of the Father: Divided (from) World or Son of the Father: World Divided

The messages in the wine are deep: first, the Son was divided from the world, in other words he left this place – he died; second, the Son was divided from this world, meaning he was holy and not part of this cursed creation; third, the world was divided because of the Son, meaning all people are now separated into those who believe in Jesus and those who do not. This requires sober reflection!

Is there a connection between the Christian Cup of Blessing and the third cup of the Passover Seder?

The third cup of wine in the Passover Seder is consumed after the main Passover meal. In other words, the appetites of those at the Passover table have been satisfied because they have feasted upon the matzah that was broken and partaken of the lamb that was slain! How much is this like the service of communion in the church, when the virtues of Christ are extolled and remembered and the knowledge of the glory of his sacrifice fills the hearts of believers and satisfies our spiritual appetite for a Savior that is without sin and loves us. *After the ministry of the Spirit to our hearts is completed the Cup of Blessing is shared!*

Now, look at the number of Hebrew letters on the Cup of Blessing.

There are *nine Hebrew letters* on the Cup of Blessing. The spiritual number **9** means 'Truth of God' or 'Judgment' or 'Discernment'. There are *six Hebrew letters* in the Wine in the Cup of Blessing. The number **6** means 'Man'. Thus, the overall message is: *'Man [considers deeply] the Truth of God'*.

But, here is the great insight: there are *fifteen Hebrew letters* in all: **15 = 9 + 6**. The spiritual number **15** means '*Peace*' or '*Covenant*'! This is exactly what the Bible says concerning the Cup of Blessing:

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (1 Cor. 11:25)

This is the message of communion: *man has peace with God's son*: man is now able to sit at same table with God. In the ancient custom, the sharing of a table and a meal together declares peace and unity in spirit. Everyone at the table is one in heart. To share a table, to dip one's bread in the same dish, is a profound act of mutual care, concern, and trust: a statement of an inseparable bond of love. Hence the utter heinous crime of the one who betrayed Jesus: 'Even my close friend whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me' (Psalm 41:9)

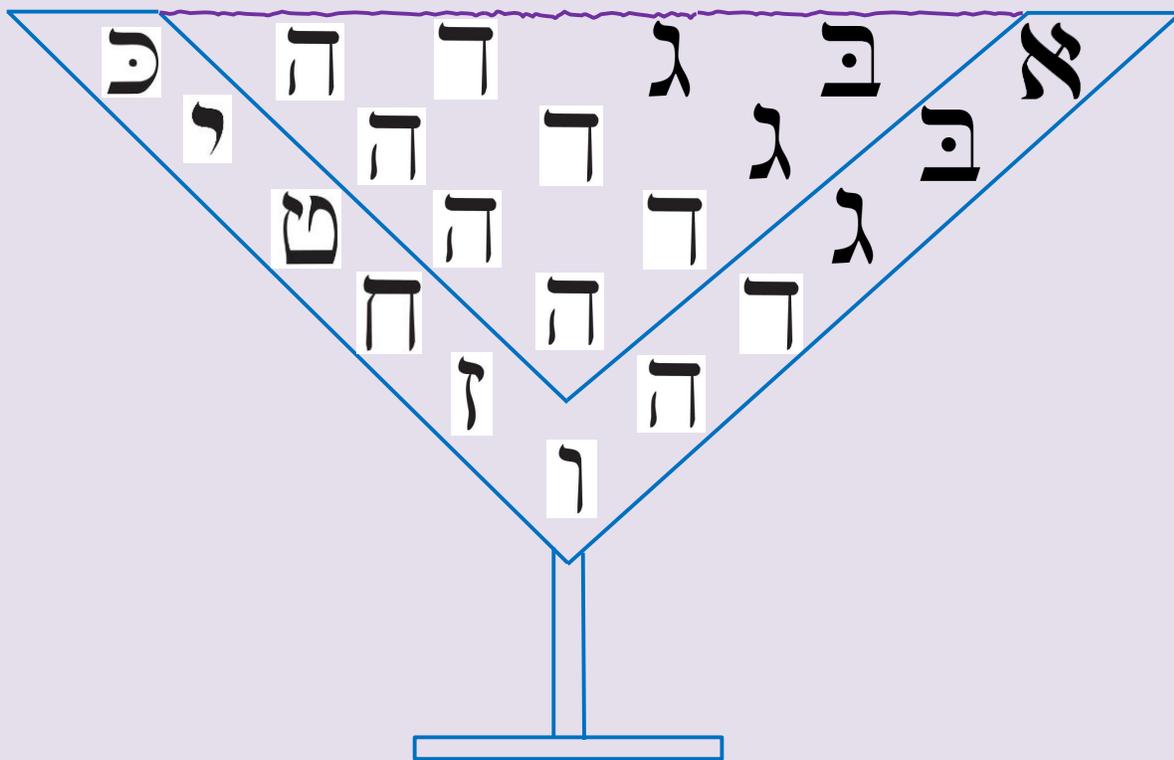
The sacredness of the communion table is brought into sharp focus. To share a table with the holy Son of God comes with it a requirement for the believer to be holy. It is an insult to the holy Son of God to come to the table and sup with him if we are unclean: if there is unconfessed sin in our hearts.

Here comes the healing work of the Holy Spirit. As we sit in sober reflection of the sacrifice of Christ, the Holy Spirit performs the work of the woman of the Hebrew house, searching it out completely that there is no leaven. Surely, if we come to the table of the Lord and our hearts are contaminated with sin, the Holy Spirit will find it. Often it is during the service of communion that the saints deal with sin in their hearts and confess it and repent of it during the meeting. How common it is to see tears in the eyes of believers as the Spirit brings their sin to their remembrance. How sweet it is when the Spirit takes that confessed sin and lays it upon the sacrifice, Christ's death on the Cross. How refreshing it is when the Spirit fills the emptiness that is left with his love and tender mercies towards us.

THE FOURTH CUP: THE CUP OF PRAISE

In the Passover Seder, the **Cup of Praise** is consumed at the very end of the ceremony following right after the singing of the last four Hallel Psalms (115 to 118) plus the Great Hallel (Psalm 136). Just as there are five psalms sung, the theme of Grace (5) is central to the **Cup of Praise**. In another telling picture, the **Cup of Praise** in the Passover Seder is filled to overflowing. The wine from the **Cup of Praise** spreads out over the (whole) table (symbolically speaking). The blood of the Cup of Wrath was sprinkled on the table, which at that point in the service stood for the Land of Egypt. In the **Cup of Praise**, the table again stands for the Land, except in this case the Land is the whole world.

We present to you in Hebrew letters, the **Cup of Praise**:



The message of the **Cup of Praise**, reading the three corners from right to left, top to bottom:

ALEPH (Sacrifice) **KAF** (Preacher) **VAV** (Man)

The translation: The Message of the Sacrifice is Preached to Mankind!

The message of the Wine in the Cup, reading the three corners from right to left, top to bottom:

BETH (Son) **H'EH** (Grace) **H'EH** (Grace)

The translation: The Son (offers you) Grace Upon Grace!

The message which John wrote in the first epistle with which we began this paper is now completed:

The Cup of Sanctification

“The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of Grace and Truth”. (John 1:14)

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but God the only Son, who is at the Father’s side has made him known.” (John 1:17)

The Cup of Praise

“For the fullness of his grace we have received one blessing after another” (John 1:16)

Or, as the last stanza is written in Greek says:

Πας [All] ημεις [We] λαμβανω [Received] και [And] χαρις [Grace] αντι [upon] χαρις [Grace]

“For the fullness of his grace we have received grace upon grace” (John 1:16)

Consider that verse 16 (**Cup of Praise**) in the first chapter of John is sandwiched in the text between verse 14 (**Cup of Sanctification**) and verse 17 (**Cup of Sanctification**). The Spirit is telling us, all three of the cups of God’s goodness to us: **Cup of Praise**, **Cup of Blessing**, and **Cup of Praise**, are **One Cup**, one message and one truth from God. Only the **Cup of Wrath** belongs to the Christ, who drank it for us.

Reflection upon the number of Hebrew letters in the **Cup of Praise** enhances the same story:

In the **Cup of Praise** there are eleven Hebrew letters. The number 11 means ‘Mystery’. The message which the preachers of the good news about Jesus Christ are sharing to the world is a message which was kept secret until the Christ was revealed.

Paul, the premier apostle appointed to carry the gospel to the world (Gentiles), explains:

*“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery [**Cup of Praise**] even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? [**Cup of Blessing**] even so no man knows the things of God, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit of God [**Cup of Sanctification**]; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the*

natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:7-16)

In the Wine of the Cup, there are ten Hebrew letters. The spiritual number **10** means 'Testimony'. Putting together the eleven Hebrew letters in the Cup and the ten Hebrew letters in the Wine in the Cup these convey the meaning:

Testimony (10) of the Mystery (11)!

The **Cup of Praise** is poured to over-flowing. The testimony of the mystery of God in the flesh, of Jesus Christ, over-flows from the cup of the messengers of the gospel until it spreads out to reach even the far corners of the Passover table, which is a symbol of the world.

Christ testified of this to his disciples:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14)

And now look, here we are two thousand years later and there are Christians in every nation on Earth. The prophecy of Jesus has been fulfilled, and yet still he calls his preachers to speak truth and grace to the world to the very end.

Amen. Praise the Name of the Lord!