

The Matzah Tash and the Trinity

April is Passover season. Around the world, Jewish people will gather together to commemorate the deliverance that God provided them through the Exodus in c.1440 BC.

However, there is a deeper meaning to the Passover story than most people realize. Passover does tell the story of the Exodus but it also serves as illustration of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Passover also begins to explain one of Scripture's great mysteries – "The Trinity."

In Matthew 26:26, we read where Jesus takes bread, breaks it and declares that it represents His body. Now on the surface, this breaking of bread (or "matzah") might not seem significant until one puts it into the context of the Passover meal.

First, we notice in v. 26 that it was while they were eating that the matzah was broken. This is important because it pinpoints what matzah was being broken – the matzah taken from the middle compartment of the Matzah Tash.

The Matzah Tash is a single unit item with three compartments.* A matzah is placed into each compartment and before the actual meal is eaten, the matzah from the middle (or second) compartment is taken from the Matzah Tash, broken, wrapped in a clean cloth, hidden, and only brought back to the table after the meal is concluded. This matzah is then broken into pieces and eaten by everyone at the Passover table. It is this matzah to which Jesus called "His body."

Therefore, the question which must be asked is, "Why did Jesus select the second matzah to represent Him and what does this prove?" First, Jesus selected this matzah because it emblemizes the death (the breaking), the burial (the hiding), and the resurrection (the return to the table) that Jesus conquered for the sins of the world. Second, the Matzah Tash is an illustration of the Trinity in that it is one self-contained item with three compartments (aspects). Third, Jesus' choice of the second matzah represents his "position" in the Trinity – God the Father, *God the Son*, and God the Holy Spirit.

I recognize that it is impossible to provide an adequate explanation of the uniqueness of the Matzah Tash and its connection to the Trinity in this article. Please examine the issue more thoroughly so that you might be a Berean of the Word (Acts 17:11). But most of all use this short illustration as an evangelistic tool with your Jewish friends and family. Do not let another Passover come and go without talking with them about the Messianic (and Trinitarian) reality of the Matzah Tash.

Amy Downey

*Occasionally (and only rarely) a Matzah Tash is found that is not divided into compartments but even in this instance, three matzahs are placed into the Matzah Tash and the middle matzah is selected.

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Jesus and Jewish College Students

One of the most interesting works on the modern spiritual condition of Jewish young people is *Generation J* by Lisa Schiffman. In this book, the reader journeys with the author as she begins a search for spiritual belonging, even though she is a Jewish woman who struggles with having any religious faith at all. For the writer of *Generation J*, the quest for faith is more important to her than actually finding it.

This author represents a large majority of young American Jewish people, including, and especially, Jewish college students. College is already a time of searching and exploration of important life issues. People begin to discover what they believe on issues, and not simply what they were taught to think by parents, teachers, and religious authorities.

Jewish college students are no different from other students, but in fact represent the typical need to believe in something, even if they do not know where to begin the search. According to one survey (see www.jta.org/page_print_story.asp?intarticleid+16451&intcategoryid=4 for more details), less than 22% of American Jewish college students attend synagogue on a weekly basis. In other words, Jewish college students see themselves as Jewish even if they have no connection to the reality of Judaism as a religious foundation for living.

So what can we, as believers in Jesus, learn from this information? First, we need to realize that Jewish young people are searching for and wanting to believe in something. The synagogue of their youth did not answer life questions and now they are

on a quest for spiritual vitality and reality for their lives. Therefore, what could be more real than to discover that Jesus is the Messiah of all people, especially the Jewish people (Rom. 1:16)?

Second, we who know Jesus as Messiah must present the life and testimony of Jesus as something more than just rules to follow but as a relationship that makes a difference in this life and in the eternal life to come. We need to make Jesus real to college students whose first reaction is to doubt and distrust any concept of absolute truth and reality.

Finally, we need to focus on equipping Christian college students to be so passionate about their relationship with Jesus that Jewish college students are “provoked to jealousy” (Rom. 11:11). It is difficult on today’s politically correct campuses to set up a table on the quad and begin witnessing. However, we can disciple young Christians to be brave and to be a witness of Jesus to their Jewish roommates, friends, and even professors!

There is so much more on this topic which could be written and discussed. What is a possible next step in reaching Jewish college students with the Gospel? If you live in a college town, perhaps you could sponsor a debate (utilizing college students) on the identity of Jesus. If you do not live in a college town, you can still influence Jewish students by teaching your children to be not only strong in their own faith but also to share Jesus with everyone they meet. But most of all, pray for Jewish college students. They are searching for answers and need to know that Jesus answered them all on a cross outside of Jerusalem 2,000 years ago.

Orthodox Jewish Women and the Gospel

In the January issue, we briefly examined the plight of the *Agunah*. An *Agunah* is an Orthodox Jewish woman condemned to live a life of quiet desperation because her husband will not grant her a religious divorce and often takes no responsibility to provide for her or their children

Many Orthodox Jewish marriages, however, are wonderful; but even in those marriages, there still comes a time when the couple cannot be together – the synagogue. A place that one might imagine to be a locale where a Jewish couple could worship together is one place they are divided.

Orthodox men seek to pray as close to the Torah as possible. The closest seats are the most prized, because a man has a sense that the closer he is to the Torah scroll, the closer he is to God. An Orthodox woman is separated from the Torah and God by a curtain or by a balcony which divides men and women in the worship service. An Orthodox synagogue separates women from an intimate and personal relationship with God.

A vivid picture of the pain of this separation from God is found in Chaim Potok's *Davita's Harp*. Davita's longing for God is so real that one aches for her as she attempts to find a way beyond the curtain that divides her from Jehovah. She longs for a relationship with a God that she does not understand but wishes to know better.

Now is the time for believers to share the truth of the Gospel. Jesus wants to have a personal and eternal relationship with all people

Ministry Calendar

April 2, 2006 – “Personal Testimony” and “Jesus in the Passover” – Lakeridge Baptist Church, Lubbock, Texas

April 8, 2006 – “Jesus in the Passover” – Red Springs Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas

April 9, 2006 – “Personal Testimony” (a.m.) – Red Springs Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas

April 9, 2006 – “Jesus in the Passover” (p.m.) – Sand Flat Baptist Church, Grand Saline, Texas

April 11, 2006 – “Mothers of the Messiah” – Harris Co. District WMA, Houston, Texas

April 12, 2006 – “Jesus in the Passover” – Southline Baptist Church, Cleveland, Texas

April 13, 2006 – “Jesus in the Passover” – Needham Road Baptist Church/The Church at 242, Conroe, Texas

April 23, 2006 – “Jesus in the Passover” – Wedgwood Baptist Adult Sunday School Class, Fort Worth, Texas

September 24, 2006 – “Jewish Evangelism Workshop” – Friendship Baptist Church, Torrington, Connecticut

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE ...

- ☆”The Time Is Short, The Time Is Now”
- ☆Holocaust and Theology ... Can the Two Concepts Co-Exist?
- ☆Cultural or Secular Judaism – What Is It and What Does It Mean to the Future of Judaism?