

Nirtzah ... Conclusion of the Seder ... נִרְצָה

Ended is the Passover *Seder* according to custom, statute, and law.
As we were worthy to celebrate it this year, so may we perform it in future years.

O Pure One in heaven above, restore the congregation of Israel in Your love.
Speedily lead Your redeemed people to Zion in joy.

And many nations will come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of *HaShem*,
to the house of the God of Jacob.
He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths."
For the *Torah* will go forth from Zion,
the word of *HaShem* from Yerushalaiyim. (Micah 4:2)

They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of *HaShem*
as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9)

May Messiah return quickly, and speedily restore all things!

HaShem shall be King over all the earth.
On that day *HaShem* will be One, and his name the only One. (Zech. 14:9)

NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM — לְשָׁנָה הַבָּאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם
L'shanah haba-ah bi Y'rushalaiyim



AN ORTHODOX JEWISH INFORMATIONAL SIDE BAR:

Messianic Redemption

Deep insights from a traditional Jewish source

The theme of messianic redemption resonates throughout the Seder, but is loudest at the very end. The final clarion call of "Next year in Jerusalem," is the final, formal statement we make at the Seder. This is followed by the recitation of songs and poems, the greatest and most inspiring of which is the Song of Songs, which is recited by many at the conclusion of the Seder.

In this beautiful poem of God's love for Israel, the Almighty addresses us as a lover, his beloved (Song of Songs 5:2). My Lover knocks hesitantly yet audibly and hopefully. He is anxiously waiting for us to open the door to Him. His knock indicates that He is ever so near to us. It was heard in

the War of Independence, in which a small group of Jewish fighters won against incredible odds over hordes of Arabs, and again in the Six-Day War, when our holy city of Jerusalem was liberated. But we have not yet opened the door to Him. We are too comfortable in our palatial surroundings. "I have taken off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I soil them?" (v. 4). We are unwilling to give up the luxuries of the *golah* and move to an unknown land. We should not wait too long. "I opened the door to my Lover but He had gone ... I sought Him but could not find Him; I called Him but He did not answer" (v. 6). God will ultimately redeem us, but we can cause the redemption to come sooner. "I the Lord will hasten it [the redemption] in its time" (Isa. 60:22). How, asks the Talmud, can God hasten it if it will come in its time? ... 'If they merit it, I will hasten it; if they do not merit it, it will come in its time' (*Sanhedrin* 98a).

I am reminded of what happened to me on one of my trips to Mea Shearim, in Jerusalem. There I met a very religious and mystical-minded man named Reb Shemuel, the owner of a shop, who abstained from speech as much as he did from food. When I visited him in his store, he gave me an unexpectedly warm greeting and even spoke a few sentences. When I asked him what caused his sudden happiness and unusual loquacity, he turned to me and said, "The *Mashiach*" is in Jerusalem." I smiled, but despite my skepticism, I went to the *kotel* and prayed with special fervor. I listened to the news that night, not expecting but almost hoping to hear a message about the Messiah. The Sabbath came and went. On Sunday, just before departing for New York, I called on Reb Shemuel. "You told me that the Messiah is in Jerusalem," I said. "I waited in vain." Reb Shemuel looked at me very seriously and said, "You are making a great mistake. You think we are waiting for *Mashiach*. No, my good friend. The *Mashiach* is waiting for us."

— 'Messianic Redemption' excerpt from
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**Mashiach* is Hebrew for Messiah

As we read earlier, in a traditional Orthodox Jewish messianic sense, the remaining piece of *matzah* (the *Afikoman*) "will serve as dessert at that great *Seder* when Messiah will have come and the world will no longer know of famine and poverty."

These traditional Jewish stories sound very familiar when compared with the words found in the book of Revelation referring to "the marriage supper of the Lamb," and to the words spoken by Yeshua when He said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open to me, I will come in to him, and eat with him and he with Me." This strongly reinforces the consistent theme that there will be a Messianic Jewish banquet at the end of the age.

Now that we have journeyed together in our celebration of Israel's first *Seder* in Egypt, Messiah's *Seder* in Jerusalem, and our *Seder* in this home, let us walk from this place inspired and encouraged to live *all the days of our lives* worthy of this precious freedom, purchased for us by the blood of the Lamb, and by the mighty outstretched arm (*z'roa*) of God. *Let us conclude with songs of praise (page 24)...*