

# YOSEPH AND THE FOUR CUPS OF WINE



Sermon Notes 4/16/05

By Rabbi/Brother Moshe Yoseph Koniuchowsky

All Scriptures taken from the Restoration Scriptures True Name Edition Study Bible

**The 4 "I Will" Cups-**In an attempt to reassure and encourage Moshe, YHWH says: 've-hotzeiti' - I will remove you from the burdens of Egypt; 've-hitzalti' - I will save you from their bondage; 've-ga'alti' - I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments; and 've-lakachti' - I will take you to be my people and I will be your YHWH. Thus, the four cups represent these four redemptive, comforting expressions

**The 4 "Bondage" Cups of Yoseph-**The four cups of wine are related to the four times that the word 'cup' is mentioned by Pharaoh's jailed butler as he recounts his dream to Yoseph in the common prison they share. Although it is interesting that the word appears four times, we certainly may wonder what this has to do with the Exodus from Egypt, which we celebrate at the Seder? What relevance do the troubles of Pharaoh's butler have for us, especially on our night of freedom?

Beresheeth 40: 9 And the chief butler told his dream to Yoseph, and said to him, In my dream, see, a vine was before me;  
10 And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot out; and the clusters of it brought out ripe grapes:  
11 And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.  
12 And Yoseph said to him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days:  
13 Within three days shall Pharaoh lift up your head, and restore you to your place: and you shall deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, like in the past when you were his butler. Why do we drink the four cups of wine at the Pesach Seder? The usual explanation focuses on the four expressions of redemption found in YHWH's promise to Moshe after the "cool" treatment he initially receives from both Pharaoh and the Yisraelites.

Yoseph's clarification of the dream also leads to his own release from prison: it is this same butler who recalls the unfortunate 'Hebrew lad' who helped him when later Pharaoh is plagued by his recurring dreams. Yoseph is summoned from prison and soon emerges as second only to Pharaoh himself in the rulership of Egypt. The 4 cups in the garden at Pesach represent Yahshua's position as He is about to be summoned from prison and become second to Abba YHWH because he willingly became the Lamb! Like Yoseph. We have established that these four cups in the butler's dream are related to Yoseph's rise to freedom and power. Still, what do they have to do with Pesach and the Exodus?

We may wonder what Yoseph's personal attitude was towards Egypt. Yoseph lived in the pre-bondage period and rose to be second in command. He rescued the Egyptian economy during seven years of drought, enriched the Crown and fed the populace, winning honor and glory for himself. By all accounts, Yoseph "made it" in Egypt. There was no place higher to go for him except the seat of Pharaoh himself, which was certainly beyond the reach of a foreign "Hebrew lad". How then did Yoseph view Egypt, based on the position of power and leadership he had reached?

A survey of Yoseph's career reveals an interesting trajectory. Initially, he seems totally absorbed in the realm of his responsibility and office. He names his first son Menashe, meaning, "YHWH has made me forget

completely my hardship and my parental home." Gone are the troubles of his youth, the fights with his brothers, the sibling rivalries caused by his dreams of glory. Gone, too, are the dreams of Abraham and the special covenant established by YHWH with the family. Yoseph is an Egyptian, with an Egyptian name, wife and family. He sits among the mighty in one of the mightiest nations of the ancient world, rich and content and yet a stranger to his people. However, the name he chooses for his second son is Ephraim, meaning, "YHWH has made me fertile in the land of my affliction." Why is Egypt the land of his affliction? Has his view of Egypt begun to change? Is Yoseph really a free man or is he beginning to feel some sense of bondage in this foreign land in which his star has risen?

When Jacob dies, Yoseph accompanies the body back to Israel for burial. Pharaoh sends a detachment of royal guards with him. Why: to protect him? Or to ensure Yoseph's return to Egypt? Yoseph like Ephraim today sits like royalty but is still in bondage. The 4 cups remind us that though Yoseph is rich, in reality in the exile he remains a slave, miserable poor, blind and naked! And when Yoseph is on his deathbed, he makes a shocking request of his brothers: when YHWH brings you out of this land, you will carry my bones from here with you. This request was duly fulfilled by Moshe himself as our ancestors departed. Why? What did Yoseph know? All was peaceful and prosperous in Egypt for his family! What did he see differently from his royal perspective? Why would YHWH have to take them out of Egypt, a land in which they were now living in comfort and security?

The answer is clear: Yoseph realized that he too was a slave. Despite the trappings of wealth and power, ultimately this was not his land. The more he rose in prominence, the more pronounced his sense of alienation. The very prominence, position and power made him more of a slave: the "trappings" were actually a "trap." That is Ephraim's position today!

While the rest of the family lived in security and tranquility, Yoseph again had a vision of the future. The Bible does not record the brothers' reaction to his request for transfer of his remains to Israel. They had never really understood his demands and visions. Was this another crazy dream? "Why should we ever want to leave this land that has welcomed us and in which we are prospering?" Or, had they learned by now to respect Yoseph's uncanny insight, causing them to wonder about their prospects for the future? A few sentences later the Bible begins the description of the bondage. Yoseph knew something. He knew he was in exile and needed redemption to return. Same today with Ephraim they drink the 4 cups in confidence that though they may be comfortable in exile the blood of Yahshua was spilled to bring them home to heaven and back to the land of Yisrael in the atid lavoh.

So what is the connection between Yoseph's four cups and the four cups of the Seder? Is not just for the poor and the oppressed; Pesach is for the Josephs of our people too. Today we live in a different sort of land. Biblically we are guests but not citizens (Ephsiyah 2:11). Our citizenship is in heaven and as part of Yisrael on earth.

Shemot 1:8 Now there arose up a new melech over Mitzrayim, who knew not Yoseph. Yoseph secured temporary safety for his family and temporary fame for himself in Egypt. But soon after there arose a new king who not know Yoseph. Soon after that there was nothing for him or his people. Egypt moved on to a new chapter of its own history. Yoseph turned out to be a temporary sideshow not even remembered in Egyptian records.

The 4 cups remind us that we as the 2 houses have a journey from bondage yet to be accomplished. When we drink the four cups of wine, we remember not only the slaves who were freed from their bondage and oppression, but also Yoseph who, in his own way, was also a slave to Pharaoh in Egypt. He too was freed by Moshe when his bones were taken out during the Exodus. He finally was placed to rest in the homeland he knew was the only homeland that the people of Israel ever had or ever will have. LE-SHANA HABA'A BI-YERUSHALAYIM.

The 4 Passover "Thy Will" Cups of Moshiach-Mattiyahu 26:39-44. Yahshua had 4 cups that would not pass, matching the 4 cups of the Exodus and the Peasch Seder! Yahshua dies and bled at Pesach to bring Yoseph's dream to reality! Not the dream of others but His own! To redeem His people for all

eternity. Mattiyahu/Matthew 26:39-44. Yahshua had 4 cups that would not pass, matching the 4 cups of the Exodus and the Pesach Seder!

Close-The 4 Prophetic Cups of Judgment, Escape and Kingdom- When we gather to drink the 4 cups of Pesach, we are foreshadowing YHWH's covenant promise to destroy ALL the false religious systems of the world, all based in Roman popery, as He ends our nation's exile, with a final outpouring of 4 cups of judgment. Gilyahna/Revelation 16:19, 17:4, and the double cup of 18:6 equal 4 cups of redemption from false religion. The drinking of the 4 cups at Pesach remind us that He who will free the exiles of Yoseph, will do so by their release and exodus from the false Bavel religious system, as seen in Gilyahna 18:4. Rome is overthrown and replaced by Yahrushalayim as a reunited and restored nation proclaim LE-SHANA HAZEH-Be-YERUSHALAYIM.....THIS year in Jerusalem!