

IMMERSE: BEGINNINGS

Week 4 – EXODUS – The Significance of Passover

July 4, 2021

The Hebrew title for Exodus is, “AND (or NOW) these are the names.” The opening, “And,” or “Now,” tells us that Exodus is a continuation from the account in Genesis.

Scripture dates the arrival of Jacob and his extended family into Egypt (70 in all [Gen. 46:27]) as being 430 years before the Exodus (Ex. 12:40). God had told them they would be afflicted in a strange land for 400 years (Gen. 15:13) but would spend a total of 430 years in that land (Ex. 12:40:41). Note: for further dating information concerning the Exodus from Egypt, check out I Kings 6:1.

As God had promised...the Exodus, the departure from Egypt, marked the end of the 400 years of affliction God decreed for Israel (Gen. 15:13). The nation of Egypt whom the children of Israel had served while in bondage was judged, as God had promised (Gen. 15:14). While in Egypt, the descendants of Abraham multiplied greatly, as God had promised. And, the departure from Egypt set them on their journey to the land of promise that God had promised...making of them a great nation as God had promised (Gen. 12:1-3). On Mt. Sinai God gave the children of Israel the law to teach them how they should live as a nation under God!

WHY are we going to discuss Passover? Why have I presented Passover Seders at SBC and at other churches? Should believers in Jesus celebrate Passover?

I read an article recently, “The story of Exodus begins with Moses.” Do you agree? If so, why? If you don’t agree, why not? Consider what our focus has been thus far....

- The Bible is one story/one narrative.
- Genesis flows into Exodus which flows into Leviticus which flows into Numbers which flows into Deuteronomy which flows into the rest of the Bible!
- God promised that He would use the nation of Israel as an instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18):
 - God used Jewish Joseph to bless the Gentile Potiphar in Egypt (Gen. 39:5).
 - God used Jewish Joseph to bless the world in the midst of famine (Gen. 41:56-57; Gen. 50:20).
- Genesis 22 - GOD told Abraham to take his only son whom he loved to the region of Mt. Moriah and offer him, Isaac, as a sacrifice – a burnt offering – to the LORD!!! In traveling up to the site of sacrifice with his father, Isaac realized that they weren’t bringing an animal to sacrifice. Isaac asked “... where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”

Gen. 22:8 - ...*God will provide HIMSELF the lamb for a burnt offering* – in the Hebrew. There’s no “for” in that sentence in the Hebrew. AND, there’s no lamb provided at this time. What does Abraham offer as a sacrifice? A ram!

Where do we next read a FOCUS on the lamb/lambs? In EXODUS 12!

Does the story of Moses begin in Exodus????? NO!!! (Actually, Rev. 13:8 teaches us that Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!)

2

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PASSOVER

Here's the punch line at the outset re: the significance of Passover: We are here today – at Scottsdale Bible – worshipping the Lord – because of Passover!

Are you aware that when we as believers in Jesus gather in church to worship, when we assemble at Bible studies, when we spend time with God during our “quiet times,” when we share Jesus with those who don't yet know Him, we are doing so because of Passover? The body of Christ is in existence today because of Passover. Paul wrote, . . . the Anointed One – the Messiah - *Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us* (I Cor. 5:7). Passover, the first feast that God gave to the children of Israel, focuses on redemption through the shed blood of the Passover Lamb. As Jesus' followers how are we to understand Passover? Passover is the foundation of our faith – the death of Jesus and His resurrection. Jesus died on the day of Passover!

While in bondage in Egypt, God's initial instructions to Moses regarding the Passover in Exodus 12:2-5a conveyed a new calendar which speaks to a new life, a new beginning. This month – Nisan – became the first month of the religious calendar. And Passover focused on deliverance through the blood of the Passover lamb!

Ex. 12:2-5 - This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father; a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.

Many lambs participated in that first Passover. BUT GOD initially spoke of “a” lamb; He then qualified the lamb as “the” lamb followed by “your” lamb - a personal lamb for each man's NEED!

The Passover was to be a corporate celebration. Moses was told to speak to the entire congregation of Israel. BUT, every man was to *take for himself a lamb. . . a lamb for a household.* AND, we read that “the” lamb was to be counted according to each man's need. “YOUR” lamb was to be scrutinized to determine if it was “without blemish.” This spotless lamb was a personal provision from God. When was this to occur in the first month? On the tenth of the month.

God was specific regarding the timing of the relationship between the people and their lambs. *Ex. 12:6-7 - Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.*

The lamb entered the lives of the family members and was kept under scrutiny from the tenth of the month until the fourteenth. Wouldn't there be an attachment between the people and the lambs? God intended for the lambs to be CHERISHED and then MOURNED.

Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, God told the children of Israel to remember what He had done on their behalf AT PASSOVER. In looking back, God instructed them to look forward. They were to look for the Lamb who would come as the ultimate sacrifice! Passover is pivotal in God's plan of redemption.

3

Pesach is the Hebrew word for Passover. Pesach means "to pass over." The root meaning of "pesach" is to spread the wings over; it means to protect. God's Passover means such sheltering and protection as is found only under the outstretched wings/arms of the Almighty. Jesus spoke to the children of Israel before His crucifixion, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. . . How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. . . .* (Matt. 23:37-39). It was not merely that the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites. He stood on guard, protecting each blood sprinkled door!

The root word for feasts is *ya-ad* - to be set, to meet by appointment. What a beautiful picture of God's heart! God is a personal God Whose desire is to meet with man for relationship, for communion, for fellowship.

Ezekiel 45:21 speaks of our celebrating Passover in the Millennial Kingdom. *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.* Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus will celebrate Passover in the Millennial Kingdom because it is the groundwork, the basis of our salvation.

God commanded the children of Israel to observe Passover as an everlasting memorial (Ex. 12:14, 17, 24). The Hebrew word for "observe" is *shamar*; the meaning of which is to keep, to guard, to protect. God protected the homes at the first Passover with the blood on the doorposts and lintel. The Jewish people were to keep watch each year and remember the Passover. Passover is God's object lesson which speaks to redemption. It needed to be indelibly stamped on the minds and hearts of future generations. People can best remember through an annual re-enactment, through a ceremony that would touch and appeal to the senses of each participant.

Each Seder plate displays the Passover elements: parsley, bitter herbs; charoseth; shankbone of a lamb, a roasted egg. Each speaks to the life of our Messiah Jesus.

Parsley: hyssop – which was used to apply the blood of the Passover lambs to the lintel and doorpost of each home – wherein God's instructions were obeyed. ALSO – green of the parsley – NEW LIFE!

Bitter herbs: Jesus' suffering

Shankbone of the lamb: Jesus' sacrifice

Roasted egg: His sacrifice which leads to NEW LIFE. Roasted egg – speaks of having been roasted in fire. Fire in Scripture most often speaks to judgment. Jesus took upon Himself our judgment. He died our death. He paid the penalty for our sin. His death led to NEW LIFE!

Charoseth: sweetness of our freedom in the Messiah

Matzah - Unleavened bread. Leaven symbolizes sin in the Scriptures (leaven – yeast – expands and influences.)

4

Leaven – means bitter/sour. It is the nature of sin to make us bitter/sour. Leaven causes dough to become puffed up. The sin of pride causes people to become puffed up. Matzah means “without sourness” and speaks of our sinless Messiah.

Jesus is the fulfillment of Passover!

Jesus went up to Jerusalem for Passover at the culmination of His first coming. . . to die on the day of Passover. Jesus celebrated Passover and He died on Passover.

Jesus is our Passover (I Cor. 5:7). He is the Passover Lamb who came unto His own. Jesus entered Jerusalem, the “house” of His people at His triumphal entry on the 10th day of Nisan which the Jewish people observed as Lamb Selection Day. Jesus rode into Jerusalem along with all the animal Passover lambs.

The Jewish Historian Josephus has recorded that up to 256,500 lambs were slain at any given Passover in Jesus' day. The 256,500 lambs slain were deemed spotless. Jesus rode into Jerusalem that day as the Lamb of God.

Jesus lived among His people from the tenth of Nisan until the fourteenth of the same month. He was scrutinized and declared blameless by the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:60), by Pilate (Matt. 27:24), by Herod (Luke 23:15), by the thief on the cross (Luke 23:41), and by Judas who cried, *I have sinned by betraying innocent blood* (Matt. 27:4). And, because Jesus was found spotless, without blemish, on the fourteenth day of Nisan, on the day of Passover, He was crucified, shedding His blood for both Jew and Gentile. The Jewish feast of Passover points in neon to salvation in Jesus, our perfect Passover Lamb.

The first Passover in Egypt foreshadowed Jesus as the Lamb of God for the world in a way you might not have realized.

At the first Passover in Egypt, bondage was immediately transformed into liberty. New life began for not only the children of Israel but also for Gentiles! As the children of Israel were led out of Egypt, strangers accompanied them. A *mixed multitude*, an interwoven numerous company, left Egypt with the Jewish people (Ex. 12:38). *Mixed* depicts “not Jewish”! Egypt was a conquering country. Egypt conquered other lands and took captives as slaves. This mixed multitude was most likely comprised of Gentiles captured from many nations. God chose the children of Israel to bless the world (Gen. 18:18). God's plan is salvation for all the families of the earth through the Jewish

Messiah, Jesus (Gen. 12:3). What a graphic picture is revealed to us in Exodus 12 of deliverance for both Jew and Gentile through the blood of the Passover lamb!

God's heart for the world is revealed in Passover. His directive to the Jewish people to keep Passover as a memorial forever demonstrates the ongoing telling of His story of redemption. God is currently using the Church comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus, "one new man" (Eph. 2:15), to tell the story. The Church is God's redemptive tool in this age. We are to proclaim salvation to the world. The message of salvation through the blood of the Passover Lamb is broadcast throughout Scripture.

Let's rejoice with each other *that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, ⁹ and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy* (Rom. 15:8-9).