

## **Jesus in Exodus**

### **The Passover**

The word that is translated Passover is *pasach*. In Isaiah 31:5 the word is used in reference to a bird. "He will pass over and preserve it." The word for bird is in the feminine. The picture of the Hebrew word for Passover is like a bird fluttering over her brood to protect them. Jehovah stood guard over the doors with the blood of the Lamb as the angel of death passed by.

### **The Passover Lamb**

Exodus 12:5-7,46 The Passover lamb had to be killed for its blood to be affective in keeping them from death. It was the blood of the Savior who died for us that keeps us from death. It was to be an unblemished lamb, so the people watched it for four days to be sure it was perfect. Only a perfect one could make atonement. In the same way, Jesus' public ministry presented a man whose judge, Pilate, said, "I find no fault in Him." Hebrews 4:15 says he passed all the tests man faces without sin. 1Peter 1:18,19 No bones of the lamb were to be broken. John 19:36 Jesus was pierced instead of having His legs broken as was customary to hasten death of the crucified. Exodus 12:3 There are more than thirty New Testament references to Jesus as the Lamb of God.

### **Bitter Herbs**

Exodus 12:8 Bitterness reminded them of the bitter hardships of slavery in Egypt, but it also looked forward to an even more bitter time to come. Zechariah 12:10 When Israel has the veil lifted and understands they rejected and killed their Messiah, they will grieve bitterly. Zechariah 13:9 Then they will call on His name and say, "The Lord is our God".

### **Unleavened Bread**

The lack of leaven symbolized their haste in departure, not having time to allow the bread to rise, but there is a deeper meaning. Leaven in Scripture almost always refers to sin. For the next week, they were not to eat bread that had yeast. When we come to Christ as our Redeemer, we are to put sin out of our lives. The old nature must die with Jesus on the Cross. We are to be sanctified and no longer walk according to our sinful desires. Leaven in Hebrew means 'bitter' or 'sour'. Sin has that same affect in our lives. When we allow it to continue, it makes us bitter or sour. It also puffs up making bigger but not changing the weight. The parallel is thinking more of ourselves than we ought.

The ancient Hebrews used the same method that we use today to make sourdough bread. Once the yeast had worked through the dough, a piece was set aside for the next batch. Batch after batch each new generation of yeast in the bread had descended from the original yeast spores. Sin has leavened the human race. It has been passed down from Adam to us. 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

The word for 'unleavened' is *matzo* which means 'sweet, without sourness'. It pictures the sinless life of our Savior who fulfilled all righteousness. His sweet life was an example for us of walking in the Spirit. When the Temple was destroyed, the rabbis declared the *matzo* to be a memorial of the Passover Lamb. "Do this in remembrance of me." We take the bread of communion to remember the bodily sacrifice of our Lord.

### **The Blood on the Door**

Exodus 12:22 The basin mentioned here is not like we would think of the word today. It is the Egyptian word *sap*. It was a ditch in front of the door threshold to keep rainwater out of the house. A container was placed in it to prevent seepage. The Passover Lamb was slain there in front of the door. Hyssop was placed in this 'basin' at the base of the door and then the header was marked and then each side of the door. The sign of the cross was made in doing so. The crown of thorns drew blood from Jesus' head that also sweat drops of blood. The nails pierced the hands and feet. "I am the door, whoever enters in through me will be saved." And so, centuries before Christ, people entered by the blood stained door as death passed them by. In the morning they stepped out into a new life on their way to a new place, delivered.

### **Passover Conditions**

All the congregation of Israel must eat the Passover. Exodus 12:47 No one who was a stranger, uncircumcised, or outside the covenant could participate. Verses 43-45 (Communion is only open to those who have entered into the new covenant Jeremiah 31:31-33) A lamb for each household. It could be the extended family as long as they are living under one roof. Verse 46 (We see family conversions in the book of Acts – also consider Rahab) They must eat the Passover entirely. Nothing could be left by morning. Exodus 34:25 (There is no partial salvation, no 'kind of' believing) They had to put away leaven from their tables and houses for seven days. Exodus 13:6,7 (We have discussed the picture of sanctification. All the first-born who had been redeemed by the blood of the lamb were sanctified to the Lord. 1Corinthians 6:19,20)

The calendar of the Jews began with the first Passover. So it is with us. Our life begins when we come under Christ. We are a new creation from the time the blood is put on the doorpost of our hearts. Exodus 13:2

### **Seder Traditions**

The rabbis regarded the words of the ancient sages almost as highly as the Torah. These oral traditions were compiled in a book in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD called the Mishnah. One of the things it covered was the order of the celebration of Passover. Seder means order of service. One of the additions to the Biblical Passover was four cups of wine. Heated water was added to it. What a picture of the blood that was shed for us. It was also a symbol of joy.

It was believed that just as God delivered them from Egypt at Passover, and the Law given in the same season, so the Messiah would come at Passover. We see almost all of the elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Seder at the Last Supper. It is interesting to note that Judas left before eating the Paschal lamb. The tradition of the time was to eat nothing after the lamb, but only to drink the last two cups of wine. Jesus however added a shocking new element when after the supper he took the bread and broke it and said, "This is my body, which is broken for you." After the temple was destroyed, the Jews would add this tradition, but Jesus was the first to use what became known as the *aphikomen* or after-dish. Then he took the cup. This was the third of the four cups of wine. Only the first and the third are mentioned in the gospels. The third was the most significant according to the Mishnah. It symbolized the blood of the Lamb and was called the Cup of Redemption. It was of this cup that Jesus said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you." Luke 22:20

In the contemporary Seder there are even more pictures as God is still trying to reveal his Son to the Children of Israel. The unleavened bread or matzo is put in a special bag with three compartments for three pieces. If a family does not own one of these bags, they may be placed one on the other on a tray. They symbolize unity, but various reasons are given as to what unity. There is a small cup that will be filled four times with sweet wine. Early rabbis say this represents the four verbs in Exodus 6:6,7. There is a shank bone of a lamb to remind them of the Passover Lamb. Two larger silver goblets are placed at the table. One is for the host and the other at an empty chair. The chair is for Elijah, who will announce the coming of the Messiah. Malachi 4:5 The host dons a white cotton or silk robe that is reminiscent of the priestly garment, but also of the robe of righteousness that is ours through our Passover Lamb. The host serves the bitter herbs, to be dipped in salt water reminding us of tears. Then he takes the middle matzo out and breaks it in half. He replaces half, and while the children cover their eyes, he wraps the other half in a napkin and hides (or buries) it. This hidden half of the middle wafer is the *aphikomen*.

There are some Psalms recited and the ritual continues and then dinner is served. After the feast it is time to hunt for the *aphikomen*. The adults give hints as the children hunt. Once it is found it is given to the host and the Seder continues. It is broken into olive size portions and is the last thing eaten. The third and fourth cup of wine follow along with Psalm 126. There are prayers for the return of Elijah and even a peek out the door to see if those prayers are answered that night. When the door is opened everyone recites, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord".

I have left out many of the details, some of which refer to the coming Messiah. But tonight we are looking for the shadows and types. Do the children ask why there are three wafers? Does anyone guess as to why the second one is broken?

And why is it hidden only to be brought back at the end of the feast? We know. Someday they will know too. The three are the Trinity who are three in one. Jesus is the Lamb of God who was broken for our redemption. He was buried, hidden from our sight, but was discovered alive after three days. He ascended into heaven, hidden from our view. John the Baptist came in spirit of Elijah to announce the first coming of the Lord. Will that same spirit return in one of the sackcloth prophets to announce the Second Coming in power and glory?