

Message #20

Exodus 12:21-28

The procedure had been carefully spelled out and now it was time for the people to respond. When the truth has been communicated it is time to respond. There does come a point when it is time to personally respond to the sacrifice.

As verse 21 says, Moses called for the Elders of Israel. **It is clearly the responsibility of leadership to see to it that the congregation is carefully instructed concerning the shed blood of the Passover Lamb. This is the one thing that could deliver from the death penalty.**

It seems to me many churches and denominations have completely lost sight of this responsibility. One person told me they were in a church that taught water baptism was the most important thing. Another person told me that they were in a church that taught infant baptism was the most important thing. There is a denomination that will tell you the most important thing is the Virgin Mary.

But it is clear that **the most important thing is to be covered by the shed blood of the Passover Lamb because that is the only thing that can save someone from the death penalty.**

MOSES COMMUNICATED TO THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL THE NECESSITY OF THE PASSOVER LAMB AND SACRIFICE IN ORDER TO BE SAVED FROM DEATH AND THOSE ELDERS AND THE PEOPLE NEEDED TO OBEY.

It would be well for us to remember that some of these leaders had questioned the credibility of Moses. The foremen of the sons of Israel had actually spoken out against Moses because the Pharaoh had increased their work load (Ex. 5:19-21). In fact, when Moses spoke to Israel they didn't listen to him (Ex. 6:9, 12). Now Moses was going to the Elders and they better believe this message because if they didn't they would die. God was not playing games here. This was serious business.

This is so significant that Moses takes the time to carefully communicate nine specific messages to these Elders:

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #1 – Go get the Passover Lamb and slay it. 12:21

Every Israelite and family needed to come under the security of the sacrificed Lamb. This was the only means of escaping death. In order for us to be saved, a Lamb must die. The blood of the Lamb must be shed. This shows all of us that none of our works can save us or take care of our sin problem.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #2 – Take a hyssop branch and dip it in the blood. **12:22a**

Now the thing that is added here that was not previously revealed is that the blood of the Lamb was to be collected in a container, “a basin” and then a hyssop branch was to be used to dip in the blood and applied to the door.

Hyssop grew commonly on rocks and walls in the Near East and Egypt. It was a plant that grew about a foot and a half high. It had bushy stalks and at the end of those stalks were flowers and leaves that gave a nice aromatic smell.

If it is the same plant we know today, it is a plant of small white flowers that has a fragrant aroma. By dipping the hyssop into the blood, it would give the blood a sweet fragrance. This clearly suggests that this blood is a sweet fragrance to God. The reason why this is a sweet fragrance to God is because this blood is the blood that can save sinners.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #3 – Apply the blood to the two doorposts and lintel. **12:22b**

There was to be an adequate application of this blood to the side and top of the door. This is the only way to stop the destroyer from bringing the death penalty. That blood of the Lamb needed to be applied to the doorposts of the house.

It obviously was critical that the people believe this. It was critical that the people realize that if we are not covered with the blood of the Lamb, we will die.

In fact, this is a key part of faith. In Hebrews 11:28 we read, “By faith he (Moses) kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood so that he who destroyed the firstborn might not touch them.”

So this is a critical part of faith. People need to believe that the only way to escape the death penalty is to be covered by that blood. The Israelite needed to believe that if God saw that blood on the doorposts, He would not destroy the people, but would spare them and save them. We need to believe the same thing.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #4 – No one is to go outside the door until morning. **12:22c**

The old Bible scholar of the 1800’s whose name was George Bush, said, “those who expect God’s salvation must abide by the terms which he has declared...” (*Exodus*, p. 144). His term was you do not go out until morning.

Now of course one question we would ask is why is morning so significant to this Lamb sacrifice? The reason is because this all points to Jesus Christ and it is the morning of the resurrection that secures salvation and justification.

Lots of people die, but only One arose. This resurrection morning is critical because it proves that His is the only blood that God will view as salvific.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #5 – The Lord will pass through the land to smite Egyptians. **12:23a**

Now lets be very clear on this point—God is not some love God who will just love everyone into His heaven and into His eternity. **If God does not see the blood of His Lamb applied to a person, that person will be destroyed.** It is that clear. Either that sacrificial blood keeps you from God’s wrath or God’s wrath is on you.

God was not going through the land of the Egyptians to reward them or honor them or invite them to be right with Him; He was going through the land to smite them.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #6 – When the Lord sees the blood, He will Passover the house. **12:23b**

Let us be very clear on this point; if God does not see the blood, the destroyer will destroy everyone indiscriminately. It would not matter how nice a person was, how religious a person was, how giving a person was, how generous a person was, how kind a person was. It would not matter how much they tried to obey God or keep any religious laws. **If God did not see that blood, the person was doomed. However, if God did see it, He would Passover the destructive judgment.**

This specifically means that He will not allow the people in the house to receive the death penalty and He will not allow the destroyer to come into the house to ever smite His people. As we said, it is not only that when God saw that blood He would just jump over that house and move on to the next house. When He saw the blood, He realized that the people had placed their faith in Him and His sacrifice and not only were they spared the death penalty, He continually protected them from the destroyer.

The blood God saw made the people secure. If God sees the blood calculated to you, you are forever secure. The Apostle Paul is very clear to connect this to the shed blood of Jesus Christ which secures us when we believe on Him.

In Romans 3:24-25 Paul writes: “being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption that is in **Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.** This was to demonstrate His righteousness because in the forbearance of God, He passed over the sins previously committed.”

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #7 – This event is to be an ordinance that is celebrated forever. **12:24**

Now why is it that this ordinance should be celebrated forever? The answer is because this ordinance has eternal ramifications.

This business about the shed blood of a sacrificial lamb being the only means of escaping the death sentence has eternity in view. This is the way it works with Israel and this is the way it works with us. This lamb sacrifice points to the Lamb of God sacrifice.

The problem for Israel is that she missed the eternal significance. When Jesus Christ came to Israel nearly 2000 years ago, had she accepted Him, she would have been in her land with all the blessings of God. But she rejected Him. In fact, one of the reasons why she has rejected Him from being her Messiah is that He suffered and died on the cross. Had she remembered the significance of the Passover Lamb, she would have realized that is what our Messiah must do. He must shed His blood to secure for us all of the blessings of God. But as John said, "He came unto His own and His own did not receive Him."

But there is no doubt that all through eternity we will all recognize the value of the sacrificial Lamb. This ordinance will be celebrated forever and one day it will be fully understood by all.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #8 – This Passover ordinance is to be celebrated even when God gives Israel the Promised Land . **12:25**

This is the thing that Israel has overlooked. When Jesus Christ came the first time, had they remembered the significance of this, they would have realized that their Messiah had to be sacrificed as the Lamb of God and shed His blood in order to purify the sinful nation before she could inherit the land.

It is clear from this verse that God has a plan for Israel that includes land; specific land. It is said in this verse that God will give Israel land He has promised her. The dimensions of that land are first spelled out in Genesis 15:18-21.

It is quite obvious from checking history books that Israel has never had the totality of that land to this very day. Yet here in **Exodus 12:25** it is specifically restated that God will, in fact, give her that land. When He does, this Passover rite is to be observed. Why?

Because this Passover points to the fact that only Jesus Christ and His shed blood could forgive the sin of Israel and give her that land.

SPECIFIC MESSAGE #9 – This Passover was to be carefully explained to the children when they ask the meaning. **12:26-27**

Verse 26 is important because it indicates that children will ask questions about God and things connected to God and when those questions are asked, God expects parents and leaders to be able to give answers. In other words, we need to be able to defend truth and answer questions.

Now the assumption here is that the children are not just going through ritualistic religious motions of "dead worship." They have minds that want to know things and they want answers. They want explanations and leaders ought to be able to answer the questions of the children.

Moses gives the precise explanation God wanted the children to know:

Explanation #1 - This is the Passover sacrificed to the LORD . **12:27a**

To be right with God, it must be on His terms, not our terms.

Explanation #2 - The LORD passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt. **12:27b**

The reason He passed over is that they were covered by the blood.

Explanation #3 - The LORD smote the Egyptians, but He spared the Israelite homes.
12:27c

It comes down to this point—either the blood of the sacrifice takes the death penalty away from you or that death penalty is on you.

We may notice from **verse 27** that the people “bowed low and worshipped” and then **verse 28** says they did just as the Lord commanded.

I love what one commentator observed about **verse 28**, this is one of the rare moments in Israel’s history when she obeyed and did exactly what God wanted her to do. This was one time when you did not want to miss precision. That blood needed to be on that home and she did it.