

# The Passover

*The Book of Exodus*

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**Bible Text:** Exodus 11-12:1-30

**Preached on:** Sunday, November 13, 2005

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I do invite you this evening to come to the book of Exodus and to the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter. We are going to read a lengthy portion of this Old Testament narrative, chapter 11 and chapter 12, as we look this evening at the Passover as a foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so let us hear together the Word of the Lord as it is found here in the book of Exodus. We will read from the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter and we will read from verse one.

And the LORD said to Moses, "I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."

And the LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again. But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

But the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. 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. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 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. 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. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD'S Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you. So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a

native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ that you shall say, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’" So the people bowed their heads and worshiped. Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.<sup>1</sup>

Amen.

Well, let us come toward God and let us seek his help as we come to this portion of his Word tonight. Let us pray.

*Father, we are thankful tonight that, again, you have afforded to us the joyful privilege of worshipping your great and holy name. And we rejoice that tonight we have access to you, to the shed blood of your Son Jesus Christ. We thank you that he who knew no sin became sin for us, the just for the unjust in order to bring us to glory. And, our Father, we approach you tonight in an attitude of prayer desiring that you would hear us and desiring that you would draw near to us that as we take up your holy Word, oh God, that we might understand its truth and that we might behold from your Word the glory of your beloved Son Jesus Christ. May it be, Father, this place tonight that by the power of your Holy Spirit you would quicken hearts, you would take away the scales from eyes. You would unplug deaf ears, you would cause dead souls to live by faith in Jesus Christ. For we ask these things in his name. Amen.*

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus 11:1—12:30.

If I was to ask you to write down the five most significant events in redemptive history that are recorded in the Old Testament, what would you write down? Perhaps some of you would write down the events of Noah and the ark and the establishing of the covenant with Noah. Perhaps some of you would speak of Abraham and his leaving Ur of the Chaldees to go out and follow the Lord. There is no doubt that most of you would at least write down that the Exodus figures highly in your thoughts. Probably Mount Sinai and the giving of the law of God. Maybe the inhabiting of Canaan would be noted by some of you. The Davidic kingdom, perhaps would be in the minds of some.

But I wonder how many of you in writing down the five most significant events in redemptive history that are recorded in the Old Testament how many of you would actually write down the Passover and the establishing of the Passover at the time of the death of the first born in Egypt?

Whilst the Exodus as a whole, no doubt, is a significant and major event in redemptive history as it is recorded in the Old Testament, I do believe that the instituting of the Passover and the death of the first born in Egypt are significant events within that larger Exodus event in the unfolding plot of God as he progressively reveals his purpose in redemption.

I would go as far as to say what one commentator I read this week said, “The Passover is to the Israelite what Calvary is to the Christian.” It marks the definite accomplishment of redemption and is followed by the application of it by God in the events that followed.

Tonight in our ongoing studies in the book of Exodus we have come to chapters 11 and 12 and we are going to look at what I am calling the Passover, a prefiguring or foreshadowing of Calvary. And by calling the Passover a prefigurement or foreshadowing of Calvary I am basically saying that the institution of the Passover by God gives us light with regards to the event of Calvary and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on behalf of his people at the cross.

It doesn't give us all that there is to know, but it gives us something that there is to know with regards to God's intention in saving sinners from his wrath.

And as we take up this subject tonight I want us, first of all, to consider what I am calling the sober backdrop to the instituting of the Passover. And I believe that this is found essentially in chapter 11 of the book of Exodus where the announcement of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague and the final plague, the final blow or the final sight or wonder, as it were, in this series of signs and wonders is actually given to us.

As we observed last Lord's Day evening God in his sovereign purpose brought down terrible judgments, terrible blows upon Egypt with the intention of doing basically two things. On the one hand the intention of delivering Israel from the bondage of Egypt and bringing them out of the land and bringing them towards the Promised Land that he had promised to Abraham in the Abrahamic covenant, but also revealing himself to Egypt as

the Lord Jehovah who is sovereign over all. And the plagues are the blows that are described by the Lord as signs and wonders as we noted last time increase in their intensity as they unfold the purpose of God, continually showing us this struggle, this spiritual struggle that goes on between pharaoh and Jehovah with regards to the matter of the rescuing of Israel from bondage. Pharaoh continues back and forward to resist God, to harden his heart, to come under the judgment of God. And after nine plagues, nine judgments, nine signs and wonders falling upon him, he still refuses to let Israel go from its bondage.

Consequently we read in Exodus chapter 11 the details of the 10<sup>th</sup> and final and may I say terrible plague, terrible blow that God was going to bring upon Egypt. It would be a plague on the first born of Egypt. It would be one in which the first born of Egypt would die and there would be great suffering amongst the Egyptians.

We read it there at the end of verse 30 in verse 12.

“So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry.”<sup>2</sup>

There was great wailing and mourning in Egypt.

“For there was not a house...”<sup>3</sup>

Now listen to that. “There was not a house where there was not one dead.”<sup>4</sup>

The outcome of this plague would be the deliverance of Israel from the hand of pharaoh. The affliction of God upon the Egyptians would finally accomplish the purpose of God. It is this sobering event, this sobering event of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, the death of the first born that forms backdrop, the context of the instituting of the Passover as it is laid out for us in Exodus chapter 12.

What a fearful and what a terrifying thing God brought upon the Egyptians in order to deliver his people from their enslavement. The Israelites and even Moses would find favor in the eyes of the Egyptians as it is recorded there in Exodus chapter 11, a detail often that we overlook and we don't think about with regards to what God was doing. These Israelites would not only be free from bondage, but they would take a whole pile of stuff with them. Their neighbors would give them things to let them go and Moses would find favor in the eyes of the Egyptians. He was not loved, of course, by pharaoh, but certainly the people, the common people had a regard, had a respect for him. God was at work in Egypt.

And in order to commemorate this great act of redemption—for that is what we are seeing here—God designed a specific ceremony for the Israelite people.

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<sup>2</sup> Exodus 12:30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Now understand at this point in redemptive history Israel is not so much a nation as a family. It is not so much a theocracy yet as it is a group of tribes moving towards the becoming a nation as it would become at Mount Sinai. But here in this particular event God now steps in and gives them a specific religious ceremony as he begins to move them towards Sinai, as he begins to move towards a deeper covenantal relationship with them at Sinai. And here we find that this ceremony is to commemorate this great act of redemption that God was bringing to pass on their behalf, one that even to this very day 2005 is observed by the Jews, the Passover feast. One that would, as we will see a little bit later, ebb and flow through Israel's turbulent history until the Lord himself was celebrated on the night before he was actually put to death. And then, of course, replacing with that which we under the new covenant enjoy, the Lord's Supper.

But suffice to say for us this evening under this first head, I want you to see the sober backdrop to the instituting of the Passover is the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, the plague upon Israel with regards to the death of the firstborn.

But notice, secondly, the detailed instruction for the instituting of the Passover. Now we could spend an awful long time meandering our way through this portion of the Word of God. Indeed, there are many people who love to spend time even setting up the Passover and going through all the ritual and the ceremony of it and all of that. But we want to just simply state that for our purposes tonight to a few things. But notice that the detailed instruction for the instituting of the Passover is given to us here in Exodus chapter 12. And it is impossible to read this portion of the Word of God without seeing that God is meticulous in detail when it comes to matters of religion. God wants us to understand that he is concerned that we get it right, that we do what honors him, that we do what pleases him.

Notice. There are several things for your observation here. The month and the day are specified, verses two and three.

“This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.”<sup>5</sup>

That is the month Abib that they would actually celebrate this. It is actually around about March, April time and it is usually that time of spring.

“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: [now notice] ‘On the tenth day of this month...’<sup>6</sup>

Not just celebrate the Passover in the month whenever you desire it. No, no.

“On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Exodus 12:2.

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 12:3.

Notice that the actual month and the day are specified with regards to God’s celebration or with regard to Israel’s celebration of the Passover specified by God.

Notice verses three through six. The sacrifice is specified. Don’t just sacrifice any old thing that you decide. No, no. You must sacrifice, notice, a lamb.

“A lamb for a household.”<sup>8</sup>

Verse four.

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. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 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.<sup>9</sup>

Even the very moment of killing the lamb is specified by God to the people.

Notice the directive regarding the blood is also specified.

Verse seven.

“And they shall take some of the blood.”<sup>10</sup>

And what shall they do with it?

“They shall... put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.”<sup>11</sup>

Here we have the detailed instruction for the instituting of the Passover. The month and the day is specified. The sacrifice is specified. The directive regarding the blood is specified. The details regarding the eating of the lamb are specified as well, verses eight through 10.

Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Exodus 12:4-6.

<sup>10</sup> Exodus 12:7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.<sup>12</sup>

So the very details regarding the eating of the lamb are specified. Effect, well the Lord is very specific. Yes, and he gets even more specific.

The attire that is to be worn at the Passover is also specified. Notice verse 11.

“And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist.”<sup>13</sup>

Now this is getting ridiculous, isn't it? Why is God so [?] here? Why is God so specific here?

Well, you see, God is holy and God wants us to worship him in the way he commands and he gives us the details for us and he makes it very clear. They are going to have a belt on their waist so if they didn't have one, they would need to get one, because this is the Word of the Lord.

“...your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand.”<sup>14</sup>

Now why was this?

Well, you see, it was really I preparation for leaving, for leaving. They were to eat the passover and they were going to leave. They were heading out into the wilderness towards the Promised Land.

And notice in verse 11 the ownership of the ceremony is specified. It is not your Passover.

“It is the LORD'S passover.”<sup>15</sup>

That is why you will do it my way. That is why you obey me because it is my Passover. It is all about me and what I am doing on your behalf. And here the meaning of the term “Passover” is clearly given to us in what follows, verses 12 through 13.

For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Exodus 12:8-10.

<sup>13</sup> Exodus 12:11.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Exodus 12:12-13.

The blood of the lamb upon the lintel of the door would be that which would signify to God this was a house of an Israelite. Pass on over. Do not kill. Go on to the next house.

And notice the meaning and further observance of this ceremony is specified in verses 14 through 20.

“So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.”<sup>17</sup>

And the details are given. How they received all of these details, the detailed instruction for the instituting of the Passover. What do we find that Moses then does?

Well, in verse 21 we read, “Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.’”<sup>18</sup>

Here Moses has received detail instruction from his God regarding this important ceremony of the Passover, that these people would then celebrate for generations to come, reminding them of the very night that God enacted redemption as he brought down judgment upon Egypt and he changed the whole situation around with regards to pharaoh. He brought about the accomplishment of the redemption of his people and these Israelites, which celebrate this Passover generation after generation remembering this great act of grace, this great act of deliverance by their God, as he brought them from Egypt to the Promised Land.

They would observe it, as we will see, when they came to the land of Canaan. They would observe it in the land of Canaan. But we need to recognize as we understand the Passover that this Passover was a Passover that had detailed instructions from the Lord with regards to its observance.

Now notice then, thirdly, the outworking of the institution of the Passover. We have seen the sober backdrop. The sober backdrop to the instituting of the Passover is the first born plague. We have seen very clearly the detailed instruction of the instituting of the Passover. Then, thirdly, I want us to just open up a little bit the outworking of the institution of the Passover as we see it revealed throughout the rest of the Old Testament in the life of the nation of Israel.

As I have already mentioned, these events are precursors now to God moving Israel forward in terms of its covenant relationship with him. Everything that is happening is based on the Abrahamic covenant. But we are moving towards Sinai and the establishing of the Mosaic covenant which would build upon the Abrahamic covenant which is set in the context of the Noahic covenant and we see, then, the unfolding progressive revelation of God with regards to redemption. And we need to understand that this is the very

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<sup>17</sup> Exodus 12:14.

<sup>18</sup> Exodus 12:21.

framework, the very structure of all of our Bible. This is what we must understand is behind the whole of Scripture. And here this particular ceremony, the Passover marks a watershed, a specific point in redemptive history where God now is actually taking the people up and out towards Sinai to establish a deeper covenantal relationship with them with regards to their identity and with regards to the protection of the seed of Eve as Christ would eventually come through the line of Judah.

And, brothers and sisters, it is important to understand that this Passover would work itself out in the life of the Israelites, would work itself out in the purposes of God until it would come eventually to fulfillment an culmination in the one who is our Passover, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I want to show you that as we work through it. I have put several texts just to quickly move you through them in order to see the outworking of the institution of the Passover.

From this night forward Israel would observe this Passover. It would ebb and flow as a memorial ceremony reminding them of the redemption from Egypt. Its redemptive symbolism and content is surely not difficult to see. It marks this significant time in the history of Israel and the history of redemption.

And notice. In Numbers chapter nine and verse two, first of all, turn there for a moment. Verse one says:

Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: "Let the children of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time. On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it."

So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.<sup>19</sup>

So there it was in Egypt. Here it is in the wilderness of Sinai and it is playing a part in the life of the people as they continue to move toward the Promised Land.

And notice, then, in Deuteronomy 16 and verse one and following. We see again this time on the plains of Moab:

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD

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<sup>19</sup> Numbers 9:1-5.

your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name. You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat...<sup>20</sup>

And so it goes on and it tells us again the things that we have already noted. But, again, we see that the Passover is continuing to being celebrated amongst the Israelite people, amongst God's covenant people.

Do you notice in Joshua five and verse 10 that it is also celebrated in the days of Joshua. Turn there for a moment. Joshua five and verse 10.

“Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho.”<sup>21</sup>

Here is the outworking of the institution of the Passover. God has given his covenant people this memorial ceremony to remind them afresh of his accomplished redemption on their behalf from the land of Egypt, from the bondage of slavery. And we see that it continues to work itself out in their lives, kindling faith, renewing faith, strengthening faith. And we discover that it goes on continually until the divided kingdom. And it would appear that during the divided kingdom there was a loss of faithfulness to God. And we know that very well, don't we? The northern kingdom Israel became an apostate nation. The southern kingdom survived but there were kings that were good and there were kings that were bad. And we know that from the Scriptures that when the kings were evil the people departed from the covenant of faithfulness. When the kings were faithful they tended to be faithful to the covenant. And it is not insignificant then, if you turn to 2 Kings chapter 23 that in the days of Josiah—and Pastor Green was preaching on this not too long ago, although he didn't bring this particular point because his focus was elsewhere. It is interesting to notice in 2 Kings 23 what we have in the days of Josiah.

Verses 21 and 22. Remember that Josiah discovers what? He discovers the Scriptures again. He discovers the law of God again. Well, what would he discover when he discovered the law? He would discover clearly the principles, the regulations for the observance of the Passover. And the facts that would appear that the nation had fallen in regards to its obedience to the law. But here in 2 Kings 23 we read a very interesting thing, verse 21.

Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the LORD your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Deuteronomy 16:1-3.

<sup>21</sup> Numbers 5:10.

<sup>22</sup> 2 Kings 23:21-23.

In this reformation the old paths were rediscovered. God's ways were rediscovered and they were brought back into the centrality of the life of the people of God and the Passover which had been lost in the apostasy of the nation was brought back again to remember what? The redemption of Israel from the land of Egypt by the hand of Jehovah their covenant God.

And it is interesting that we see a similar notice struck also in 2 Chronicles chapter 30 in the days of Hezekiah.

I would love to just take time and just go through all these passages, but we don't have time tonight. But notice very clearly in 2 Chronicles 30 and verse five:

“So they resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that they should come to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem, since they had not done it for a long time in the prescribed manner.”<sup>23</sup>

You see, when people are turning away from God, do you know, one of the first things that goes is true worship, true, pure, God honoring worship. That is what goes first. When that goes, anything goes out. And in the days of the kings we see very clearly Josiah rediscovered the Passover, brought it back. Hezekiah rediscovered the Passover, and he brought it back. And it is very interesting to notice when you go to the book of Ezra that in Ezra chapter six we also read that the exiles rediscover the Passover.

Ezra chapter six and verse 19.

And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were ritually clean. And they slaughtered the Passover lambs for all the descendants of the captivity, for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. Then the children of Israel who had returned from the captivity ate together with all who had separated themselves from the filth of the nations of the land in order to seek the LORD God of Israel.<sup>24</sup>

Now what do we see here, brothers and sisters? We see here walking from Egypt and the night of the instituting of the Passover all the way through the Old Testament we see that the Passover played a central part in the life of the people of Israel when they were spiritually healthy, when they were spiritually walking with God, when their covenant faithfulness was what it ought to be.

And we know, then, that these days of the returned exiles, they set the context for what? For the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. And so when we jump into the New Testament it should not surprise us when we get to Luke's gospel. Turn there for a

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<sup>23</sup> 2 Chronicles 30:5.

<sup>24</sup> Ezra 6:19-21.

moment to Luke chapter two that we read this, verse 41, regarding the parents of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.”<sup>25</sup>

Every year at the feast of Passover they went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover because that was what the Lord commanded of his people. The Lord’s parents were faithful in their observance of the will of God. And into that home was born the one true Passover Lamb.

And how amazing that in Luke 22 the Lord Jesus in celebrating the Passover superseded the Passover with what we celebrate here.

I so much wanted to celebrate the Lord’s Supper [?]. I really doubt, but let’s just do it again. Let’s just celebrate the Lord’s Supper again. I really wanted to do that tonight, but I have to be a man under authority and accept that we are not going to do it tonight, but this is such an appropriate sermon for that. But notice what happens.

Verse seven of Luke 22.

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."<sup>26</sup>

Our Lord himself observed the very things that the Israelites observed the very night that it was instituted by Moses way back in Egypt. But he does much more than that. He gathers up all of that glorious truth and all that it spoke of regarding redemption and he says, “It finds fulfillment in me. And I am superseding the Passover with the Lord’s Supper.”

And so we see in the outworking of the institution of the Passover that comes all the way through the Scriptures right up to the very person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And that brings me to the fourth thing. The prefigurement of Calvary as it is seen, I believe, in the instituting of the Passover.

You see, it is interesting when you go to two texts in the apostles’ writings, how they viewed the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians chapter five and verse seven.

He is looking at it much more clearly stated than this, by the way.

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<sup>25</sup> Luke 2:41.

<sup>26</sup> Luke 22:7-8.

If you don't really think that the Christians in the early Church viewed Christ as the Passover, then you have got a real problem with this text and you have a real problem with the apostle Paul. The controversy is not with me. I am taking up what he is saying.

Verse seven of 1 Corinthians five.

“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”<sup>27</sup>

Paul ties the person and work of Christ, he ties Calvary in to that which is being revealed in Exodus 12 with regards to the Passover. There was no doubt that the Israelites didn't see all of this and understand all of that with their own covenant light. But we do have the full revelation of God and the lights are full on for us. We must see surely in the Passover of Exodus 12 the prefigurement, the foreshadowing of Calvary and of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his sacrifice for sin on the cross.

Notice how Peter, another apostle speaks of him in 1 Peter chapter one and verse 19. And tell me, please, where you think he got this imagery from, where you think he got this idea from as you read his words in 1 Peter chapter one and verse 19.

In verse 17 he says:

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.<sup>28</sup>

Where do you think he got that idea from, that imagery from? The idea of the Passover.

Remember Peter was a Jew. These things, perhaps, were a greater significance in his mind and heart than they do in our Gentile minds and hearts, but the reality is this, that we see the foreshadowing of Calvary and the foreshadowing of Christ in the instituting of the Passover because it speaks of what? It speaks of [?] redemption. It speaks of a more glorious redemption than the Israelites experienced coming out of Egypt.

What does it speak of? It speaks of the redemption from sin. It speaks of the redemption from the bondage of sin, from the captivity of Satan being brought into the kingdom of God.

And, brothers and sisters, it is crucial, then, as we read the Old Testament that we read it recognizing that it is going somewhere, recognizing that it is moving somewhere. It is not just a book of moral stories. It is all about Jesus Christ.

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<sup>27</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:7.

<sup>28</sup> 1 Peter 1:17-19.

Now, it is true that we must be careful not to impose it on the text, but you remember what Spurgeon said. "I would rather see him where he is not, than miss him where he is."

And the reality for us, brothers and sisters is this. As we read through the Exodus with the themes and the ideas of redemption and deliverance and salvation, God is going somewhere with us. It is pointing us forward, pointing us forward to the great redemption of the great salvation of sinners found in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

And here in the Passover, the institution of the Passover we have a prefigurement, a foreshadowing of Christ and his blood being shed on the cross. In what sense? In this sense. That where the blood has been applied judgment will not fall. Where the blood has been trusted in, death will not come. And I say to you tonight we need to understand the significance of these things.

In a day when people are trying to take the Old Testament and make it a book of moral stories, they are trying to make the Bible to say things that it doesn't say, we must recognize very clearly the Old Testament speaks of him. That is what the men on the road to Emmaus discovered when he opened up the Scriptures and he said, "These things, they testify of me."

The Exodus, you know, the Passover in Exodus 12, the blood of the lamb without blemish was shed and applied to the door lintel in order to deliver from judgment and secure redemption. In Christ the blood of the Lamb of God without spot or without blemish is being applied to our hearts by faith, delivers us from judgment and from wrath that is to come. It is a prefigurement. It is a foreshadowing of Calvary and of Christ.

And, brothers and sisters, we must meet that connection or we will forever traverse through an Old Testament and have nothing but a group of moral stories. And that is not what we want. We want Christ our Lord, our Savior.

That brings me to the central challenge of this passage to us this evening. And it is very simple. It is quite straightforward.

The simple and powerful message of the Passover as a prefigurement of Calvary as a foreshadowing of Christ and his redemptive work is this.

Has the blood been applied to your soul? Are you tonight sheltering beneath the blood of Jesus Christ? For if you are not, let me tell you very clearly and very soberly. You are at this moment under the wrath of God. You are open to the wrath of God abiding upon your head. And if you were to die tonight you would be forever in a place where the wailing and the gnashing of teeth is worse, far worse than that which was seen in Israel and Egypt during the death of the firstborn.

[?] see it, you boys and girls, young people, teenagers, those of you who are halting between two opinions, those of you who come here week in and week out and you hear

the Word of God and you are exhorted by your mom and dad and you are called upon and from the pulpit time and time again, you need to recognize very simply tonight if you are not trusting in Jesus Christ and his shed blood at Calvary, you are facing the wrath of God because of your sins. You are facing eternal destruction because of your sins.

That is not a pleasant thing for me to have to say, but needless to say, as a gospel minister, it must be said. And as you walk about on this earth without Jesus Christ and as you go about your business without Jesus Christ you are not in a neutral position. You are in a position of offense. You are in a position of being under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is abiding upon your head like there is a sword ready at one fell swoop to come down and take you into eternity where you will be forever without the Lord and you will be forever condemned.

And I say to you tonight as you think of the sober reality, what happened in Egypt, don't think it won't happen.

God is longsuffering. God is patient. God's purposes are still being worked out. Pharaoh thought it would never happen. Pharaoh resisted the Lord. Eventually the judgment of God fell. And it was sober and it was serious and it was terrifying. And I tell you it all prefigures the judgment there is to come. It all prefigures a far greater wrath that is to fall yet upon this world. That is why I preach the gospel. That is why I plead with you to come to Jesus Christ. That is why I call upon you to avail yourself of the blood of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world that you might not perish, but have everlasting life.

Because the day is coming when the judgment is going to fall. The day is coming when the wrath of God is going to come and flow forth upon the earth. And only those who are sheltering beneath the blood of Jesus Christ. Are going to be saved. Only those who have availed themselves of Jesus Christ and him crucified by faith are going to be saved.

And I say to you tonight: Why would you perish? Why would you halt between opinions? Why would you continue in open rebellion against the Lord? Why would you continue to be defiant to the Lord Jesus Christ when he says to you, "Come to me. I am the Passover Lamb. My blood has been shed that you might live. Believe on me. Turn from your sins. Find peace with God in me and in what I have."

Why would you turn from that? Why would you reject that?

It is time this evening, I think, for some of you to close with Jesus Christ. It is time this evening for some of you at last to put down your defiance, to put down your rebellion and to realize my sense is separating me from God. I am under God's wrath. I am under God's judgment, but I must flee to the blood of Jesus Christ and I must flee to the one who shed his blood and I must seek him for the forgiveness of my sins. But if I should die I will not perish. But I will have everlasting life.

I say it to you tonight. These Old Testament images, how can you not preach the gospel from them? They are full of gospel. They are full of the wonderful message of salvation. The central challenge to you this evening is this. Are you sheltering under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ?

I tell you, the angel of the Lord is coming. He will not be slow. For some of you he may even call tonight.

You know, coming to church this afternoon and there was a car, maybe about 20 feet in front of us and he suddenly just went into a sharp swerve and he went all over the road and ended up off the freeway. It gives you a fright. It makes you realize you do not know what a day will bring forth. He who stiffens his neck, he who hardens his heart shall suddenly be cut off and that without remedy.

Young people, this is not a game. Boys and girls, this is not a game. You need Jesus Christ. You need to avail yourself of his sacrifice at Calvary. You need to be sheltering under his sacrifice for forgiveness of sins and peace with God. He is your only hope. He is the one I offer you tonight. Your sins offend God. You are not neutral. You are an offender. You are condemned right now if you are not a Christian. But you can be saved also right now if you will but turn and believe in the Passover Lamb.

The Israelites as we are going to see in weeks to come, Lord willing, began then their long sojourn to the Promised Land. There is many lessons in it with regards to the nature of the Christian life and with regards to the nature of faith and the struggles of dealing with remaining sin. But all of it ultimately came about because of the accomplishment of redemption that was wrought by God when he came down in judgment upon Egypt with the plague of the first born.

And the Passover spoke to the people of grace, of mercy, of pardon, of Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Let us tonight, as we close this meeting make sure that all of our hope for acceptance with God is rooted and founded in Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let us not trust in ourselves. Let us not trust in our own works. Let us make sure that we are trusting in Jesus Christ and him alone for he is our Passover. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He is the only hope for deliverance from the judgment that is to come. Amen.

Let's pray.

*Father, we thank you for the Old Testament. We thank you for the instruction that it gives us regarding our redemption in Jesus Christ. We thank you that your Son the Lord Jesus indeed is our passover, the Lamb without spot and without blemish who takes away our sins. And we plead with you tonight, Father, for our young people. We plead with you for our children. We plead with you for friends, Lord, who gather with us in this place that you will not allow them to perish, that they might yet in their hearts run to Jesus*

*Christ, that they might believe in your beloved Son and find in him peace with God through faith and repentance.*

*Oh, blessed Father, bless your Word to all our hearts tonight we pray. Thank you for the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin, that delivers us from all iniquities, that rescues us from the wrath that is to come. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen.*