

Pentwater Bible Church

Easter Sunday
March 31, 2024



The Resurrection by Rembrandt Cir 1635-39

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

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CHRIST IN THE PASSOVER

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Stained Glass of the Paschal Lamb-Jesus, artist unknown

INTRODUCTION

Abraham, the first Hebrew named in the Bible, received a covenant from the Lord God in approximately 2040 B.C. One of the components of that covenant was that at some time in the future his progeny would be enslaved by another nation.

Genesis 15:13-14

¹³ And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; ¹⁴ And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance (KJV).

Abraham's grandson Jacob, whose name was changed by God to Israel, went from the land of Canaan to live in Egypt due to the famine in Canaan (Genesis 32:28). He and his family totaling seventy souls went to Egypt in approximately 1844 B.C. They would stay in Egypt for four hundred years. By the time God was ready to have them leave and start the journey back to Canaan, they had grown to a population numbering more than two million people (Exodus 12:37; Numbers 1: 46; 26: 51). Moses, their leader, petitioned Pharaoh to let them go and he refused. The Lord God sent ten plagues in succession into Egypt to force Pharaoh to release them. The first nine had no effect upon Pharaoh but the tenth finally caused him to release the Hebrews. They fled the country along with many riches given by the Egyptians to send them off (Exodus 12:35-36). The prophecy that God gave Abraham was

unfolding exactly as it was given. It is the last plague “The Death of the Firstborn” that begins our discussion of the Passover.

THE PASSOVER

Exodus 11:4-7

⁴ And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: ⁵ And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. ⁶ And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. ⁷ But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel (KJV)

God promised Moses that He would not harm any of the Israelites, but in order for them to be protected they had to follow a very specific process during the tenth plague in which all the first-born of animals and people would be put to death. If the Jews followed the Lord’s instruction explicitly, they would be delivered from the death that all the first-born would experience:

Exodus 12:21-28

²¹ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. ²² And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. ²³ For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. ²⁴ And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. ²⁵ And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. ²⁶ And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? ²⁷ That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. ²⁸ And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they (KJV)

The story continues explaining that the Children of Israel were “saved” from the death of the destroyer when he would “pass over” their homes. They were told to “*observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.*” Further they were told “*when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the*

sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

This ritual is rich with meaning for Christians. The Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, is the central figure in this ancient Jewish feast as the Lamb that was slain for the salvation of the world (Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29, 36; I Peter 1:19; Revelation 5:12; 13:8). Christianity is actually a continuation and fulfillment of God's plan for mankind. He elected the Nation Israel to bring forth the Messiah. When Christ appeared and started His ministry the Jewish population flocked to Him. All the early Church believers were Jewish. Most of the Jewish leaders rejected Him not wanting to accept who He is because they feared losing the benefits of the profitable charade that they imposed on the people. They persuaded most of the people not to follow Him claiming their superiority as official leaders of the Jewish community (Acts 4:2). So, for approximately 1992 years since Jesus was here the non-Christian Jews have been trying to follow the Mosaic Law because they did not believe that Jesus is their Messiah. Even though Jesus is clearly the central figure in the Passover, most Jews follow the ritual without ever realizing this. God told them that this was to be a perpetual celebration and that they were to carefully explain to their children.

The Passover became the first of the seven festivals of the nation Israel (see a brief description of the seven festivals and how they relate to Christ at the end of this article). The Passover occurs during the month of Nisan. The 10th day of Nisan is when they single out the lambs and the 14th is the Passover. Their day started at sunset. This festival also begins their religious calendar in the spring.

The Passover is a key event in the history of Israel and becomes an underlying current throughout the entire Old Testament. It is interesting that by tradition, in the biblical orthodox Hebrew culture, almost every major event in Israel's history is regarded as having occurred in Passover or seems to surface at historically significant Passover dates. These include:

- The Covenant with Abraham is regarded as occurring on Passover in Genesis 15.
- Abraham is regarded as having entertained his heavenly guests by the oaks of Mamre on Passover.
- Sodom is regarded as being destroyed following Passover.
- Jericho is regarded to have fallen on Passover.
- The handwriting on the wall in Daniel 5 is regarded to have been on Passover.

The first place in Scripture this event occurs, which is a type of the Passover, is Genesis 3 where Adam and Eve clothe themselves with handmade fig leaves. God then covers them with a coat of skins. This is the first shedding of innocent blood by God as a covering after their sins. The Levitical system can actually be traced to Genesis 3. This gives us more insight into story of Cain and Abel because the sacrifices were instituted in the Garden of Eden and prophetically point to the Redeemer. Abel, by faith, observed the system and presented a blood sacrifice to God. Cain did not observe the system and presented what he wanted to offer, the fruits of his own hands, a non-blood sacrifice in contrast to Abel's offering.

Perhaps the most dramatic prophecy of a type of the Passover was when Abraham was instructed by God to offer up Isaac (Genesis 22). They traveled three days and they went up the hill known as Mount Moriah. When Isaac asks where is the lamb for offering, Abraham says the “*God will provide Himself, a Lamb*” (underlined added). And He did there and 2,000 years later on the wooden cross at Calvary He provided Himself as a sacrifice to redeem us by His blood. Throughout these chapters the word “Lamb” never appears in the plural, it is always singular which makes it very personal. This feast is not a Levitical feast; it is very different than the other feasts. It is much more than that. The High Priest slaughtered the lambs for the rabbinical feasts. In contrast, the lamb for this festival is slaughtered for every household by the head of the household. It is also partaken of and eaten personally by the entire family.

“THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB”

Exodus 12:3-5

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth [day] of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of [their] fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take [it] according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take [it] out from the sheep, or from the goats (underlining added, KJV).

Note the sequence of steps from “*a lamb*” to “*the lamb*” to “*your lamb*”. It is very personal. Each person’s redemption is only achieved by his own belief, not by a minister or priest or family member. It has to be done by each person in relationship with Christ.

Every detail in the Scriptures about The Passover points to Jesus Christ. “*Your lamb shall be without blemish*” (Leviticus 22:18-20; 1 Peter 1:19). Psalm 34:20 “*He keepeth all his bones: Not one of them is broken*” and Exodus 12:46 “*neither shall ye break a bone thereof*” both speak of not breaking a bone of the Passover Lamb. Jesus’ bones were not broken while the other two crucified with Him had their broken to hasten their death as described in John 19:31-37:

³¹ The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. ³² Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. ³⁵ And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. ³⁶ For these things were done, that the

scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. ³⁷ And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced (KJV).

Passover represents the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world for us. We essentially become “covered by the blood” once we accept the Lord into our lives. It is our decision just as it was the ancient Israelite’s decision to mark the doorposts and the lintel with the blood of the lamb. Once we choose this we are “Justified.” God provides several actions, which occur at the moment of belief. We call this being “born again”. It is easy to understand Nicodemus’ inability to comprehend this, since he was not yet born again at the time of his conversation with Jesus in John chapter 3. Here is the sequence of actions that happens to a believer as he is covered by the “blood of the Lamb”, and spiritually born again:

- We are justified, and we make peace with God.
- We receive the peace of God.
- We are sanctified and begin to grow more Christ –like which lasts our whole lives.
- We receive the Holy Spirit as an earnest deposit to be redeemed by God at either the rapture or the moment of our death, whichever happens first.
- We are endowed with Spiritual Gifts.
- We begin to realize our sinful condition.

If the ancient Israelites chose not to accept God’s atonement provision the destroyer would kill them. God did not do the destroying. It is important to note this as He provided the salvation. If we choose not to accept Christ, upon death we go straight to hell which is disconnected from the presence of God. There is no redemption after that for the unbeliever.

Romans 15:4

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope (KJV)

Amos 3:7

Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets (KJV).

Exodus 12:14

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever (KJV).

Note that the Lord instituted this for all times. It was not to end. The Jews still keep the Passover. The Messianic Jews do not slay the Lamb (Jesus) since the Lamb was slain once for all. Most of them still keep the feast and they call it the Haggadah or the Seder.

THE MODERN PASSOVER SEDER (Order of Service)

The Instituted Passover that God ordained as a memorial relationship and a prophetic relationship for His children is the modern Passover is held in homes, and is presided over by the head of the house, the grandfather or father. The ceremony is performed on the 14th and 15th of Nisan, with the 14th being optional and the 15th being mandatory.

The woman of the house also has an important part. The first preparation is a thorough house cleaning by the hostess, and a ceremonial search (the Bedikat Chametz) for leaven by the host. He uses a lighted candle, a wooden spoon, a feather and a napkin. When he finds the last bits of leavened bread, he wraps it in the napkin and says the Kal Hamira - "Now I have rid my house of leaven." The napkin and its crumbs are burned. This service is a type of the Last Supper of Jesus.

The normal dishes are all packed away, and a special set that's used only once a year is brought out. The hostess cooks a festive meal, but doesn't set it on the table until later in the service. The hostess begins the actual Seder by lighting the candles and chanting a blessing. The table is set with several prescribed items, as follows:

1. The Seder Plate, a blue-enamelled brass dish that has six compartments for the following foods:
 - The Zeroah, or shank bone of a lamb (no meat). For the first 1500 years, they actually sacrificed a lamb, and then ate its meat in the Passover meal. But in A.D. 70 when the Roman, Titus, destroyed the Jerusalem Temple proper sacrifices became impossible. Thus, the bone is now placed on the plate as a memorial.
 - The bytzah or haggigah, a hard-boiled egg roasted brown. The egg was not there originally; it is a Babylonian symbol of fertility and may have started during their Babylonian captivity during the 6th century B.C.
 - Three kinds of "bitter herbs" are the chazereth (whole horseradish root), the maror (freshly ground horseradish), and the karpas (lettuce, parsley or celery). The bitter herbs were to remind them of the misery their ancestors suffered.
 - The charoseth, a sweet mixture of chopped apples, nuts, raisins, cinnamon and wine. The charoseth represents the mortar they used in making bricks in Egypt.
2. A bowl of salt water. The salt water is a reminder of the water of the Red Sea and also of their tears.
3. There are also three matzohs (unleavened cracker-like wafers of bread, pierced and striped during baking). These are in a matzo tash, a square white silk bag having three sections.

4. The host has four wine goblets. Sometimes the other celebrants also have four, or sometimes, instead their goblets are refilled several times. The four goblets represent the four verbs in Exodus 6:6-7, "I will bring you out; ... I will deliver you; ... I will redeem you; ... I will take you to be my people."
5. There is also an ornate book, the Haggadah, describing the service and containing the prayers. This was compiled in the 13th century A.D., from much earlier fragments.
6. Each chair has a pillow, and guests recline or sit comfortably (to show that they're not slaves).
7. The host wears a kitel, a long white robe-like outer garment, and symbol of purity. On his head is the miter, a white silk crown-shaped headress. He chants the prayer of sanctification, or Kiddush, "Blessed are thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine."
8. Everyone drinks from the first wine-goblet, the "cup of sanctification. "The hostess brings in a small towel and bowl of water used several times in the service for ceremonial hand washing. (Jesus washed the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper.) The leader passes out bits of karpas to each person. They all chant, "Blessed art thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, who created the fruit of the earth."
9. Everyone dips the karpas into salt water and eats it.
10. Now the leader takes the matzoh tash with its unity (the three matzohs). He removes the middle matzoh, breaks it in half, and hides or buries one half by wrapping it in a white napkin and placing it under a pillow, or under the table. The other half is replaced in the matzoh tash. The buried wafer is called the aphikomen. He doesn't explain why he does this. (There's a great deal of significance in this "burial," and its later "resurrection," especially for Christians. Its meaning can be understood as "that which is coming", for example dessert, yet it can be seen as "He who is coming." According to Jewish tradition, Messiah will come at Passover to bring redemption like the redemption brought through Moses. This is why a place is left at the table for Elijah, the forerunner of Messiah as stated in Malachi 4:5.)

Now it's time for the traditional questions, chanted by the youngest child. Basically, these ask:

1. Why is this night different from all others?
2. Why do we eat matzohs?
3. Why must we have bitter herbs?
4. Why do we dip greens into salt water?
5. Why do we recline on pillows?

The leader then recites the history of the Hebrew nation, from Abraham to Moses. He tells about the slavery in Egypt, and God's deliverance. When he lists the ten plagues, everyone spills a drop of wine into a cup -- one for each plague. When the description is over, they all sing and clap a happy song, praising God. They recite Psalms 113 and 114 (the Hallel). Then they drink from the second wine-goblet (the cup of praise). There's more ceremonial washing and eating matzoh, bitter herbs and sweet charoseth. Now the hostess clears the table of the ceremonial items (but leaves the wine-goblets), and brings out the main dinner. When the meal is finished, the hostess clears the dishes. Now it's time for the search for the aphikomen (the buried half- matzoh). The children, who make it a game, do this. Adults call out clues, "You're getting close," and so on (of course, they all saw the host hide it, so the contest is only ritual). The youngest is usually allowed to find it, and receives a gift. The host breaks off olive-size pieces of matzoh from the aphikomen and distributes them to all. They each eat it, in a reverent manner. Sometimes there is a blessing, "In memory of the Passover sacrifice, eaten after one is sated." (This is the point during the Last Supper at which Jesus broke the bread and passed bits to His disciples; however, Jesus added the significant words given in Luke 22:19, *"This is my body which is given for you."*)

The host now takes the third cup of wine, "the cup of redemption," or "the cup of blessing," and offers the main table grace blessing. (In Jewish tradition, the main blessing comes after the meal.) Then they all drink from the third cup. At the Last Supper, this is the place referred to in Luke 22:20, *"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you'."*

There is a fourth wine-goblet at the table, that hasn't been used until now. This is called "the cup of Elijah." There is also an empty chair, waiting for Elijah to come. This is done because of the promise contained at the end of the Old Testament:

Malachi 4:5-6

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (KJV)

Messianic expectations run very high among the Jewish people and especially at Passover time. The children of the house then make a ritual of going and looking closely at the cup, to see if Elijah has come and sipped some. One of the children goes to the door, opens it, and looks for Elijah. Everyone says, "Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the LORD!"

^[1]_{SEP}The host then leads in the recitation of the second part of the Hallel -- Psalms 115-118, then the Great Hallel, Psalm 136. Everyone drinks from the fourth cup of wine. After one more prayer of blessing (that contains the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem") the Passover celebration is finished.

THE SEVEN FESTIVALS OF ISRAEL

The seven festivals are:

SPRING FESTIVALS

Passover
Unleavened Bread
First Fruits

MID YEAR FESTIVAL

Pentecost

FALL FESTIVALS

Trumpets
Day of Atonement
Tabernacles

Three of the seven feasts of Israel occur in the month of Nisan. The first three deal with Christ's first coming, and Passover became the first of the seven festivals. The feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasts for seven days, starts on the 14th of Nisan, the end of The Passover:

Exodus 12:15

¹⁵ Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel (KJV).

In I Corinthians 5:7-8 leaven is shown to be in Bible typology an example of sin.

The First Fruits represents The Resurrection and it is the day following the Sabbath of the Passover. Jesus died on Passover, Unleavened Bread starts on Saturday and First Fruits (Resurrection) is on the first day of the week or the day after the Sabbath.

The middle one, Pentecost, is fifty (50) days after First Fruits and represents the Church age since the Church was born on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

The three main fall festivals are: Trumpets, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles. They represent Christ's second coming.

Here is a chart connecting the festivals and the events of Christ's death and resurrection:

14 Nisan Friday - Preparation Day		15 Nisan Saturday - 7th day Sabbath		16 Nisan Sunday	
Lord's Passover		1st Day of Festival of Unleavened Bread		The Day of First fruits	
NIGHT	DAY	NIGHT	DAY	NIGHT	DAY
1st day unleavened bread is eaten	Passover Lamb slain in the evening (afternoon)	A <i>High</i> double Sabbath day		The Third Day! (Luke 24:21)	
Lord's Supper Christ arrested in Gethsemane and put on trial	Crucifixion and burial before sundown Women prepare spices.	Rested in the tomb	Rested in the tomb Roman guard set by end of the day	Resurrection before sunrise Tomb discovered to be empty just before sunrise	

NEXT SESSION : MARK CHAPTER 13 THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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