

LORD'S PASSOVER! Part 2

Scripture: Ex. 12:2-10

Introduction: I just started the Passover topic last week. I started reading Jewish evolving belief over this important passage. You will see a drastic difference between the ancient ritual vs the present Jewish practice. Let us look at this Passover passage closely again.

Exodus 11:4-8

*4*Moses said, "Thus says the LORD, 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt,
*5*and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well.
6'Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been before and such as shall never be again.
7'But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.'
8"All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

Thus says the Lord! There is a clear message from the Lord, and it is the sentence of judgement upon Egyptians. I do not like to call this Passover as a plague. I like to call it a severe pronouncement of judgement for Egypt from the Lord Himself! This was an act of horror and it was to happen about midnight when everyone is in deep sleep. All of the Egyptian first born were to be slaughtered. Not only the human beings, but the first born of the cattle also. Even the slaves of Egyptians who are not of Israelites were to lose their first born too!

Why the first born? What is the significance of the first born? The first born is the point person who is supposed to take over the role of the head of the family when that person passes away. There will be total confusion in the family, and other siblings will fight for power!

This was to be a gripping moment for Egyptians. There was going to be a great lamentation in almost all the houses of Egyptians. Even when we read the following words, it brings terror within us: "there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again." The Egyptians were given a 12 hour warning, and they were warned clearly, your first born shall die surely. Pharaoh could have taken this threat seriously, he could have repented, and let the people of Israelites go. After seeing 9 plagues, he should have learned his lesson. But he thought Moses was bluffing! The servants must have been very frightened, but still they could not go against the Pharaoh's will.

But there was to be a separation between the Israelites and the Egyptians. The Lord would protect them and Pass over, if they heeded to His commandment! Jesus is giving us the same warning even today. If we trust in the Lord, and be washed in His blood, we shall be saved. Otherwise, we will perish! Moses told Pharaoh that his servants will bow before him, and plead for Israelites' departure!

Exodus 11:9, 10

9Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt." 10Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

But the Lord warned Moses clearly. The Pharaoh will not listen to the word of the Lord. Now his heart was hardened. He had gone through so many plagues, but none of them was real life threatening! Now the Lord was going to get the attention of the Pharaoh through death! That is the only language everyone understands! It was not the Lord who hardened the heart (as we saw in my last sermon) but Pharaoh himself hardened his heart. The Lord is omnipotent, and He could have awakened his spirit and made him see the truth, but God chose not to! In that aspect, we can say, God hardened his heart. It is not a good thing to say about our Merciful, loving God. It demeans the character, and holiness of our God. In my humble opinion, it was a poor choice of word on the part of the writer. Please read my previous sermon, Lord's Passover, part 1 for more thorough explanation. I do not want to keep repeating these controversies. Let us move onto Exodus chapter 12:1, 2

Exodus 12:1, 2

1Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2"This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.

Month of Abib or Nissan? Or Tishri? By the way, Nissan and Abib means the same first month, but Tishri is the seventh month. Why do the Jews celebrate New Year in the seventh month? Ex. 12:2,

Exodus 34:22

22"You shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, that is, the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year.

Jewish scholars cling to this phrase turn of the year, and opt for Tishri as New Year.

Ezekiel.40:1

1In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was taken, on that same day the hand of the LORD was upon me and He brought me there.

This is their conclusion!

- The spiritual year, or sacred year starts with Nisan to calculate months.
- The civil year or "civil calendar" is determined from Tishri.

Months are counted based upon Nissan but years are counted based upon Tishri!

Now let me complicate this Jewish calendar even further! **Jewish** people follow the lunar calendar. That means they will lose approx. 10 days a year. So every third year, they insert one extra month to adjust the calendar. So when you see your favorite TV preachers bring the calendar to prove the point concerning the end time theology, please flip your channel. It is not easy to calculate Jewish calendar. There are too many variables involved. No one will know the time of Jesus' second coming! Just be ready, as Israelites were in this passage.

Exodus 12:3-5

3“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ household, a lamb for each household.

4‘Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb.

5‘Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

The lamb here can be a goat also, but they have to be male and one year old. They have to choose their lamb on the tenth day. God had prepared His own Son Jesus Christ also. After the resurrection of Lazarus, He was being prepared for the sacrifice of our sins! Five days before, He entered Jerusalem as the hope of Messiah, and Jerusalem was electrified. But the religious leaders did not believe in Him, and they marked Him for sure for slaughter four days before Passover, the tenth day of Passover!

Nowadays, no Jewish person sets apart any lamb on 10th day of Nissan! As a matter of fact, they don't even eat lamb during Passover. Why? Because they refuse to sacrifice anymore. They insist on sacrificing only in Jerusalem temple! This belief is based upon Deut. 16:5, 6.

Deuteronomy 16:5, 6

5“You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which the LORD your God is giving you;

6but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt.

Even when Jews won 1969 war, they were not able to sacrifice. One rabbi was keen on sacrificing Passover lamb, but he could not for various other technical difficulties! One reason is that you do not know the exact location of **the Holy of Holies**. Approximate site is there, but we cannot be sure if that is the exact place. Also there is no bonafide priestly generation there to perform the ritual.

This lamb was kept for 4 days to make sure that there was no blemish with the lamb. It has to be completely unblemished. Our Lord Jesus also preserved Himself as an unblemished sinless lamb! He who knew no sin became our sin offering!

Exodus 12:6, 7

6‘You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

7‘Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

It was to be killed at the twilight. This can be a debatable topic. The Muslims consider evening when the sun goes down. But the Jews have two different evenings. One is when the sun descending down around 2:30 or 3 pm and then the sunset happens. The second kind of evening is the time between actual sunset, and it becomes night. The twilight time is defined by a Rabbi as the time when we can barely see the color of the thread of the cloth that can be distinguished at that light! But once we cannot see the color of the thread, it shall be called night, and a new day is born for the Jews.

But in Jesus' time, the evening began when the sun started descending down. As per this interpretation Jesus was killed in the evening just like the Passover lamb. Common sense suggests that the skinning and

preparing the slaughtered lamb may require two or two and a half hours, and no one would like to do that in the night time. Also the lamb was slaughtered in the temple between 2 and 3pm which coincides with our Lord's death. Since the lambs were slaughtered only in the temple, and their sacrifice was usually at 3pm, that tradition may have been continued.

But the first Passover lamb in Egypt was killed when the sun went down and it was ready to get dark and it happened in everyone's house. In other words, there was no temple, no priest, every household leader acted as a priest and slaughtered the lamb. This passage can be quoted to defend priesthood for all believer.

But once the temple came into existence, Deuteronomy 16.5,6 was strictly followed. The lamb was killed only in the temple.

Deuteronomy 16; 5, 6

You shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt. (NIV says "evening when the sun goes down!")

Exodus 12:8-10

8'they shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

9'do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails.

10'and you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire.

They were roasted with fire, without broken bones, not boiled, I don't come across even salting, leave alone your spice mix! Nothing was left over. If anything was left over until morning, they were burned with fire.

Exodus 12:11-13

11'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD'S Passover.

12'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the LORD.

13'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

There was a hastiness. They had to eat in a hurry. They were to be ready, dressed up, their shoes worn, and their staff in their hand. In other words, they should be ready to get out of town in minutes. That means their bags must be packed too! Slaves do not have much time to wander around. When they are freed, they must run out as fast as they could, like a bird that releases itself out of net and flies away.

The Lord's Passover. Pesach in Hebrew. It was the time of Lord's Passover. If He did not Passover any House, there would be death. The first born in that house would be killed as well as the first born of the beast. There could be two death in the same house, if the father was the first born, and his own first born son. How would the wife feel, if she lost both of them at the same time.

The only thing that would save the first born is the blood on the door post. The Lord will Passover those houses that have the blood of the lamb on their door posts!

The Lord has promised that there is going to be a day of judgement, and He will return one day to judge us. The only people who could be saved are the ones who are the ones who have the blood of the lamb in the door posts of their hearts.

Remember, this Passover story is nothing but a shadow of things to come! The same thing is going to happen all over again on that day of the Lord, when Jesus returns!

Conclusion:

Are you ready?

Do you trust God's Word, and follow the instruction.

Are you indeed washed by the blood of the lamb, and by the Holy Spirit by faith?

Nothing can save us other than the blood of Christ! Receive Him by faith today.