

Scripture Lesson Text

EXOD. 12:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.

3 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:

4 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.

5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats:

6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and

unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

11 And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it *is* the LORD's passover.

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite 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.

13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt.

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.

NOTES

Obedient to Remember

Lesson Text: Exodus 12:1-14

Related Scriptures: *Joshua 5:8-12; II Kings 23:1-3, 21-23; Ezra 6:19-22; Luke 22:7-16*

TIME: 1445 B.C.

PLACE: Egypt

GOLDEN TEXT—"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" (Exodus 12:14).

Lesson Exposition

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LAMB— Exod. 12:1-7

Beginning the new year (Exod. 12:1-2). God had sent Aaron out into the wilderness to meet his brother Moses so that they could work as a team in approaching Pharaoh and the children of Israel (4:27-29). They had informed the people about what God intended to do, and they had gone together to request of Pharaoh the privilege of going into the wilderness to worship God (5:1). Because of Pharaoh's refusal and subsequent increases in labor, the children of Israel became very unhappy with Moses and Aaron (vss. 20-21).

The month mentioned in Exodus 12:2 is Abib (13:4; 23:15), which was the seventh month of the civil year for Israel but was now to become the first month of their religious calendar. After the Babylonian Captivity, the name was changed to Nisan (Neh. 2:1; Esther 3:7). It corresponds to our modern-day months of March/April.

Moses had just warned Pharaoh of the coming Passover, when all of the firstborn of Egypt would die (Exod. 11:4-8). This final warning went un-

heeded. This was setting everything up for such a monumental incident that it would change Israel's entire future, and it needed to be remembered forever.

This is what was behind the change of Israel's religious calendar. Abib was about to contain the incident Moses had warned Pharaoh about, followed by the great Exodus of Israel.

Choosing a Passover lamb (Exod. 12:3-5). The Lord told Moses and Aaron to speak to the entire congregation, but verses 21-28 make it clear that they did this through the elders.

The first part of the instruction was that each family head was to choose and set aside a lamb on the tenth day of the month. This was the Passover lamb, the most important object that would be used in the approaching Passover.

Since the lambs were going to be eaten on one particular night, and there would be no opportunity for leftovers, there was a problem with families too small to consume a lamb by themselves in the allotted amount of time. In those cases, men were to combine their families with other families and share lambs.

It was possible, therefore, that more

than two families could share lambs and eat together. If there was only a husband and wife and small children, for example, they could combine with other families.

Applying the blood of the Passover lamb (Exod. 12:6-7). The Hebrew word translated “lamb” allows for either a sheep or a goat; the root idea is an animal sent out to graze. The age, however, was set. The animal had to be a male yearling, and it had to be without blemish. This meant it had to be a perfect specimen, without physical flaws of any kind and certainly not diseased. These requirements would be repeated to the Israelites later when instruction was given about the sacrifices they were to bring to God.

The emphasis on a perfect lamb looked ahead to the Lamb of God, Jesus, who died for us and who was and is perfect in every way. Hebrews 7:26-27 says of Jesus, “For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”

This was pictured in the slaying of the Passover lamb and in the application of the blood to the doorposts and lintels of the homes. Everywhere a lamb was being eaten, this blood was to have been applied. The blood would be the means of salvation from the coming of God later that night. Jesus’ blood is the only means of our eternal salvation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BLOOD—Exod. 12:8-14

Eating the Passover meal (Exod. 12:8-9). The children of Israel were to eat the lamb on the same night on which it was killed, and there were

specific instructions accompanying this event. Everything revolved around completing this meal quickly because of what else was going to occur that night. They were told specifically that the lamb was to be roasted. This was so important that it was repeated with added details. They were not to eat it raw or boil it in water; it was to be roasted in fire in its entirety.

Along with the lamb they were to eat unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The unleavened bread was necessary because they were going to have to leave Egypt before the normal leavening process could finish. Eating unleavened bread would always be a reminder of this deliverance. Although it is not explained in the text, the bitter herbs might have been to remind the people of the bitterness of their oppression while in bondage.

Being ready to leave (Exod. 12:10-11). If they could not eat the entire lamb, they were supposed to burn in the fire what was left over. The Exodus was going to happen quickly, and there was to be nothing left behind of these Passover lambs. The assurance of their quick departure was portrayed in the fact that they were to be dressed and ready for rapid movement. They were to have their loins girded, with flowing robes pulled up under belts at their waist. They were to eat with sandals on their feet, ready to leave.

They were to also have their staffs in their hands so that they could simply rise and depart without having to locate them. They were to eat quickly. This was the time prior to the killing of all the firstborn in the land, both people and animals. When that happened at midnight, Moses and Aaron were going to be called upon by Pharaoh to get out of Egypt as quickly as possible (Exod. 12:31-34). There would be no time then for finishing a meal! They would be expected to gather with everyone else

and begin their journey immediately. A monumental event was going to occur that very night!

Observing the blood (Exod. 12:12-13). Verse 11 concludes by saying, "It is the Lord's passover." Verse 12 explains that God was going to move through the land of Egypt that night and slay every firstborn of both man and beast. The redeeming factor for the Israelites would be the blood they had splashed on their doorposts and lintels. God said this blood would be a "token" for them, meaning a signal or sign of evidence that they were to be spared from the destruction. When God saw the blood, He would "pass over" those homes.

It is clear that the lambs and their being put to death were types of Jesus Christ. When John announced the presence of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, he was referring to the fulfillment (the antitype) of the Old Testament Passover lambs. Paul told the Corinthian believers that "even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7).

Peter amplified this by writing, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18-19). All those Old Testament killings were fulfilled when Jesus died on the cross, shedding His blood for us.

God also executed judgment on all of Egypt's gods that night. The Egyptians served a multitude of gods, many of which were shown to be inept by the plagues. The Lord said He was going to execute judgment upon them, stating, "I am the Lord" (Exod. 12:12), implying that He was the only God and that all the gods of Egypt were nothing and completely powerless in His presence.

Establishing a memorial (Exod. 12:14). This initial Passover Feast was to become an annual feast observed by the children of Israel from then on. It was to be a memorial, that is, an annual reminder of their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. In the history of Israel, the Exodus still stands as one of the greatest events ever. It has been estimated that as many as 2.5 million people were involved in that deliverance.

It is no wonder that God established the Passover as an annual reminder. It is also a reminder to us that God promised Israel a land forever. What we are witnessing in Israel today is significant.

—Keith E. Eggert.

QUESTIONS

1. Which month was to be the first of Israel's religious calendar?
2. What act was to take place first in preparation for Israel's deliverance?
3. What were the requirements for the chosen Passover lambs?
4. What was to be done with some of the blood of the Passover lambs?
5. What instructions were given for the meal the people were to eat on the night they killed the lambs?
6. How were the Israelites to be prepared for leaving quickly?
7. What event was going to occur in Egypt that would cause the need for quick response?
8. What was the reason for the placing of blood on the homes?
9. How did all this preparation for departure foreshadow Jesus?
10. How was Israel supposed to remember this event from then on?

—Keith E. Eggert.

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. Redemption by God always signals a new beginning (Exod. 12:1-2; II Cor. 5:17).
2. The way of redemption needs to be proclaimed to all men (Exod. 12:3-4; Matt. 28:18-20).
3. Purity of motive and action displays true faith and obedience (Exod. 12:5-6; Isa. 29:13).
4. Clear directions from God warrant full obedience to God (Exod. 12:7-10; cf. Josh. 1:8).
5. God is gracious to redeem, but He will judge those who are His enemies (Exod. 12:11-13).
6. Wise is the person who regularly remembers his redemption by the Lord (vs. 14).

—Don Kakavecos.

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think God changed the Israelite calendar to have Passover at the beginning of their religious year?
2. Since in the New Testament Christ is said to be our Passover Lamb, what similarities and differences do you note between the Old Testament Passover lamb and Christ (Exod. 12:3-13; Matt. 3:17; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 1:18-20)?
3. What similarities and differences do you observe between the Lord's Supper and the Jewish Passover Feast?
4. Will the Passover be practiced by redeemed Jews even in heaven (Exod. 12:14; cf. vs. 17, 24)?

—Don Kakavecos.

Golden Text Illuminated

“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” (Exodus 12:14).

On the eve of this last of the ten plagues, the Lord instituted a commemorative feast that was to be celebrated by God's people in perpetuity. His people would eat the Passover in remembrance of their great deliverance from slavery in Egypt. They would remember how the Lord Himself had visited death upon every family in Egypt, from Pharaoh's firstborn to the firstborn of the lowliest prisoner in the lowest dungeon (cf. Ex. 12:29-30).

They would also remember how the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites, who had obediently painted the blood of the slaughtered Passover lamb on their doorposts. Because He spared all the firstborn of Israel on that first Passover, every firstborn of Israel from that day forward, both man and beast, would be set apart to the Lord.

All this foreshadowed the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Firstborn of God the Father and the firstborn son of Mary. As such, Jesus was doubly set apart and dedicated to God. It was at that last Passover before His death that Jesus transformed the Passover celebration into what we now know as the Lord's Supper.

In Christ, the Passover of the old covenant has truly become the eternal ordinance it was always intended to be. The Lamb who was slain has become the Lamb enthroned forever at the right hand of God.

—John Lody.