

THE PASSOVER



AND



THE LORD'S SUPPER

"Christ our Passover
is sacrificed for us!"
I Corinthians 5:7

The Passover is a memorial that had its origin on the night of the fourteenth day of the first month about midnight, in the land of Egypt.

"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. 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. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. 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. 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. 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." Exodus 12:6-11.

"And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the cap-

tive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and 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. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up and get you forth from among my people...And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof." Verses 28-31, 43.

These Scriptures are stated here to familiarize you with the Words of the Lord concerning the keeping of the Lord's Passover. The observance of this ceremony is different from the feasts of Israel. This day was observed each year as they came out of Egypt to commemorate their release from bondage. The feasts of Israel were not kept until they were back in their homeland, but each year during the forty years of travel in the wilderness they kept the 14th day of the first month.

The other feast days that were given to Israel later, called the Laws of Moses, were to be kept after they arrived in their own land. "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." See Exodus 12:25, 13:11-12; Leviticus 23:10.

"Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year." Exodus 13:10. "In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover." Leviticus 23:5. "And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel." Numbers 9:1-5.

"Observe the month Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the Lord

shall choose to place his name there. But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt." Deut. 16:1,2,6.

Notice in the Scripture passages, you have just read, you will find the statement, "appointed time" or "appointed season". That phrase means the time to keep the Lord's Passover. Look at Psalm 81:3: "*Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day.*" The phrase "time appointed," means full moon. We start counting the fourteen days from the beginning of Abib, the first month. The fourteenth day at even is the beginning of the Lord's Supper.

THE PASSOVER NOT ON THE FIFTEENTH

Some want to deny all the foregoing texts of Scripture and try to prove by some Jewish rabbi that the Passover was always observed on the fifteenth of the first month, without a single verse of Scripture for proof. All we need to refute the above claim is two passages of scripture.

We are aware of the fact that the

people of Israel were all in their homes when they ate the Passover, and when the angel of death passed over at midnight, they were instructed not to go out of their houses until the morning. Until morning, or the light part of the fourteenth day of the first month, the Israelites were in their homes in the land of Goshen. Rameses is a city in the south part of the land of Goshen. "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children." Exodus 12:37.

It is a settled fact that the people of Israel had to leave their homes and gather together to Rameses before they could take their journey from Rameses.

The Children of Israel had been slaves for about three hundred years. During that time they lost all of their possessions. The Lord instructs Israel to spoil the Egyptians and take what is coming to them. As soon then as the 14th day became light they went to Rameses, the treasure city of Egypt (Exodus 1:11; 12:35, 36) where they could get the jewels of silver and gold, and spoil the Egyptians.

"These are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their

armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out. And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians." Numbers 33:1-3.

Here we are told that "they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day, on the morrow after the passover." This proves that they gathered to Rameses on the light part of the fourteenth day of the first month, and departed on the fifteenth, which shows that the Passover would have been on the dark part of the fourteenth day.

PASSOVER IN THE GOSPEL AGE

The Passover is a type of Jesus Christ, "The Lamb of God." (John 1:29; I Corinthians 5:6-7; I Peter 1:18-19). The lamb must be without blemish. To test this the lamb was kept up for four days. (Exodus 12:5-6). So was our Lord's public life, under hostile scrutiny. It was a testing which proved His holiness. (Luke

11:53-54). The Lamb of God was slain on the exact day as the Passover Lamb of the Old Testament. We are to remember the "Night in which Jesus was betrayed."

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." I Corinthians 5:7-8.

We are given to understand that Christ is our Passover, and we are to eat of His body and drink His blood.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood,

dwelleth in me, and I in him." John 6:51-56.

Christ is our Passover and has given us His body and blood to eat, and drink, but not in a literal sense. Christ being our Passover and we being commanded to keep the Feast, to us the bread and fruit of the vine becomes the body and blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Matthew 26:26-29. "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he give it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in

the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." Mark 14:22-26.

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves." Luke 22:7-8, 14-17.

This testimony from Matthew, Mark and Luke shows plainly that Jesus ate the old Passover with his disciples at the proper time. On the same NIGHT they received it from the Lord, he was betrayed into the hands of sinful men.

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth about the Lord's Passover just as he had received it of the Lord, and commanded it to be kept as stated. *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:*

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." I Corinthians 11:23-24.

God has made it essential that we eat the Passover, and also that we be worthy. *"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."* John 6:53-56.

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." I Corinthians 11:27-28.

Here are the passages in Scripture written about the Lord's Supper. Three times in the synoptic gospels and then by Paul in I Corinthians 11:23-24. This last passage was actually written first before the gospels were. It was given to Paul by direct revelation of Jesus Christ. It is not a Sacrament, it is not a sacrifice, it is called simply, "Lord's Supper." It is

in remembrance of the death of Jesus and a proclamation in the most literal interpretation of the bread and the fruit of the vine symbolizing the Body and blood of the Jesus Christ. In this observance, memory and hope mingle in a common glory. Memory is of the Lord's life freely given for us. Hope is for us to believe in the return of the Lord and His final reign.

Paul warns against eating and drinking the emblems of the Lord unworthily. None really is worthy of what Jesus, the Lamb, has done. But through the love of Christ, and his atonement, we can be worthy of taking them. If we partake the Lord's Supper in a manner that is degrading, or when we are thoughtless with our thoughts and attitudes which we know are not Christ-like, we should get rid of them. If we continue to harbor pride, selfishness, scorn for others, a loveless heart, all are sin and must be gotten rid of. This is the leaven that we must put away. There can be no leavening on the Lord's table. An individualistic attitude violates the essential principle of the Supper, namely, that it is something to be shared. First, we humble ourselves with our brethren and then we refresh ourselves together with the body and blood of the Lord. Taking the emblems is not a matter between

Jesus and you, it is between Children of God and other Children of God. If you try to partake of Jesus without looking at your brother, you're eating and drinking damnation to yourself, not discerning the Lord's Body."

The idea of the Lamb of God is one of the great lessons of the Book of Revelation. In this book Jesus Christ is called the Lamb no fewer than twenty nine times. There is a point to all this. The Apostle John is trying to show us how important our Saviour is and how important the Lord's Supper is because of the Lamb of God. He is trying to point out to every believer the necessity to apply the blood of the Lamb to your life. The word he uses for "Lamb" is not used anywhere else except in Jeremiah 11:19 where we read, "I was like a Lamb...that is brought to the slaughter." The other places in Scripture that use the word "Lamb" are found in John 1:29-30, where we read that Jesus is called the Lamb of God by John the Baptist. Peter speaks of the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (I Peter 1:19). In Isaiah 53:7, in the chapter so dear to our Lord Jesus and to the early church, we read of the Lamb brought to the slaughter. In all these cases the lamb is called "Amnos." In the Book of Rev-

elation and Jeremiah the word "Lamb" is called "Arnion." This is used by John so often that we have a new conception of Jesus, Who gives His Body and His Blood for the salvation of man. The man who partakes of the emblems of the Lamb will have eternal life in him.

That is why the Lamb will continually bear the marks of the crucifixion. The picture of the sacrifice of Christ must never be forgotten or obliterated. Even in heaven they are visible everywhere. Here is the picture of pain and torment, the shame and the humiliation, the death and the Cross, wherein the Lamb was God's perfect sacrifice for the sin of man.

Remember to meet with this wonderful Lamb of God in the night that He was betrayed. It is a night to be remembered! Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you can be a new lump. Come and Dine, the Master calleth.

We must follow the example that Jesus set for us. When we gather together on the fourteenth day of the first month, we first come to wash one another's feet (the act of humility) as Jesus did. We then break and partake of the unleavened bread, which represents his body. After this we divide and drink the cup of grape juice, which represents His blood.

The fourteenth day of the first month is determined by the moon and the Vernal eniquinox. The new moon nearest the Vernal Equinox is the beginning of the first month. Fourteen days are then counted, and the Lord's Supper is then taken in the evening, the beginning of the fourteenth day.

Jesus showed us by example how to keep this important event once a year. We MUST partake of the Lord's Supper properly, but we MUST do it worthily, so we can have life in us.

