



The Good News

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The Passover

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Most of us are familiar with the Last Supper at which Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper and which Judas left to betray Jesus. The Last Supper was, in fact, the eating of the Passover feast by Jesus and His apostles which was commanded of the Jews way back in Exodus. For hundreds of years this feast had been observed, yet what was the source of this memorial? Certainly it was a command, but the command was given for a reason: to help the Israelites and their children never forget what the Lord did in Egypt. What did the Lord do that was so important to remember? Why was it called the "Passover"? Let's consider these questions as we turn back time, and the pages of our Bibles, to the events recorded in Exodus 12...

The Nine Plagues – We find leading up to Exodus 12 that nine different, and increasingly devastating, plagues had been unleashed upon Egypt by God due to Pharaoh's hard heart in not letting His people go. In Exodus 11 we learn that what God is planning to do next will be the worst of them all, and will inspire Pharaoh, and the rest of the Egyptians, to beg the Israelites to leave Egypt.

The Plague of Death – In Exodus 12 we find that God has decided to unleash a terrible plague upon the people of Egypt: He will kill the firstborn of every person and every animal, from the house of Pharaoh to the poor fellow in the dungeon. Everyone will feel and know the power of God. However, the Israelites were to be saved from this terrible plague and God issues commands that would ensure the Israelites would not be harmed as He went through Egypt killing the firstborn of all.

The Passover – We read that the commands for the Israelites to follow were very specific: on a certain day of the month they were to kill a certain kind of lamb, they were to do certain things with its blood,

they were to cook the lamb a certain way, and they were to do certain things with the leftovers. Of particular note here is that the Israelites were to paint some of the blood on the doorposts and "lintel" (the top part of the door frame) so that God would know to "pass over" that house. These things were done by all the Israelites and, when the Lord passed through Egypt, He passed over all the houses of the Israelites.

What's really behind the Passover? – God says that the blood was to be painted on the doorposts and lintel so that He would see the blood and pass over the house. Yet, surely God would know which homes belonged to His people and which belonged to the Egyptians. In fact, we learned earlier in Exodus that the people of Israel lived in a place called Goshen, somewhat separated from the Egyptians by region. Why did God require the painting of the blood around the doors of each home? There wasn't anything particularly special about the blood itself, but rather that the Israelites obeyed the commands of God in faith. It was their obedience that led to their being "passed over", not some magical blood of an animal. It was important that the Israelites never forgot what God did in passing-over them because it showed the power of God, and what can be accomplished if they obey His commands.

In I Cor. 5:7 Paul says that "...indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us." As we remember the sacrifice of our Lord on this Lord's Day, and every Lord's Day, let us remember that the application of His blood through the Spirit will be the only way we can be passed over on the Judgment Day.