

## “The Blood of the Passover Lamb Protects” – 7/5/2020 – Exodus 12

“**Let my people go!**” That’s what Moses told Pharaoh. Actually, that’s what God told Moses to tell Pharaoh. Israel had been slaves in Egypt for almost 400 years. In answer to Israel’s prayers, God sent Moses with this simple command: “**Let my people go!**” Because Pharaoh wouldn’t listen, God unleashed 10 plagues on Pharaoh and the land of Egypt to convince him that it would be in his best interest to honor this request.

Here’s a little background on today’s Bible Story from Exodus 12. Over 400 years before today’s story, Jacob and his family moved down to Egypt -at the invitation of Pharaoh - because of a famine. Joseph, one of Jacob’s sons, was second in command in Egypt. Over the years, Jacob (whom God renamed Israel) and his family of 75 grew to a nation of over a million people. As the years passed, fewer Egyptians remembered Joseph, and the children of Israel went from honored guests to slaves.

Back to Exodus 12 ... the 10th and final plague, also called the Plague of the Firstborn, is explained by Moses to Pharaoh in this way: **This is what the LORD says: “About midnight I will go throughout Egypt. Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt—worse than there has ever been or ever will be again.”**

Every firstborn son whether Egyptian or Israelite, was going to die - without exception. But now to show that the God of Israel was the true God, he passed along this vital and life-saving information through Moses: **Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood (of the Passover lamb) in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. .... When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that**

**doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.**

As a firstborn son, the destroyer would enter your house, UNLESS you were in a house that had doorposts painted with the blood of the Passover lamb.

As this plague descended on Egypt, every firstborn Egyptian son died, even Pharaoh’s son, because their doorposts had no blood. And, it was during that terrifying night that Pharaoh called Moses and told him: “*Take your people ... and go!*”

God used the Blood of the Passover Lamb to Protect his people! In the OT, the Passover was one of 3 special days God set aside each year as a teaching tool, to help his people “remember” who he was and what he had done for them.

- There was the Passover ... when Israel “remembered” how God used his power and mercy to free their ancestors from slavery when he “passed over” the homes with lambs’ blood on their doorposts.
- There was Pentecost ... 50 days after Passover, when Israel “remembered” that God had given them the land of Canaan to live in, and every crop they harvested was a blessing from God.
- There was Tabernacles ... when Israel lived in tents, or tabernacles for a week, to “remember” the 40 years Israel spent in the wilderness under God’s watchful care.

In our country, we also set aside special days each year, as a teaching tool, to help us and our children “remember” important events.

- There’s Memorial Day ... when we “remember” and honor those who gave their lives for our country.

- There's the Fourth of July ... when we *"remember"* our independence as a nation, and the freedoms we have here. As Christians we're especially thankful for our freedom to worship.
- There's Labor Day ... when we *"remember"* to thank God for the skills and abilities he's given us so that we can work and support those he's entrusted to our care.

Our nation sets aside these days so we *"remember."* Why did God want Israel to *"remember"* the Passover? **And when your children ask you, "What does this ceremony mean to you?" then tell them, "It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians."**

On the Thursday before Jesus died, he gathered to celebrate the Passover with his disciples, just like Jews had been doing since the time of Moses. Their menu was the very same menu God had carefully designed for his people that first Passover. The only difference ... at the first Passover, they needed to eat quickly, have their robes hitched up and ready to travel. Here's the menu:

- Lamb. After killing the lamb, they would still drain the blood, and then roast the whole lamb for the meal. They no longer brushed the blood on doorposts
- Unleavened bread. They were in a hurry to leave Egypt. They didn't have time to wait for their dough to rise. It was simply flour and water, no yeast. That's the bread Jesus passed around.
- Bitter herbs. A sobering reminder of the many, many years of bitter slavery at the hands of the Egyptians. That was in the bowl when Jesus' and Judas' dipped their bread together.
- Wine. The beverage of choice. Milk and water were not easily available. Fermented grapes, not grape juice. That's what was in the cup Jesus passed around.

Moses relayed God's instructions to the people. Following them had an immediate purpose: by obeying it would directly connect them with their Exodus from Egypt. Israel would be protected from the plague of the firstborn in Egypt.

There was also a long-range purpose: by celebrating the Passover each year on the same day, they would not forget how God delivered his people by bringing them out of Egypt. And how through the promised Savior he would deliver them from their slavery of sin.

God told his people: **This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come.** It would be the solemn duty and responsibility of each father to explain the meaning of the Passover to his children.

As wonderful in meaning as the Passover was for OT Israel, it has an even more wonderful meaning for us in NT times. When looking closely at the specific instructions God gave for preparing the Passover meal, there is an obvious and unmistakable connection to our Savior Jesus Christ.

- 1) The Passover lamb was to be a year-old male. John the Baptist called attention to Jesus as: **the Lamb of God.**
- 2) The Passover lamb was to be without defect. Peter wrote: **Christ is a lamb without blemish or defect.**
- 3) The Passover lamb was to be slaughtered as a sacrifice. Paul reminds us: **Christ gave himself up for us as a sacrifice to God.**
- 4) The Passover lamb's blood on doorframes caused God to "pass over" those houses and save those inside from destruction. That points squarely to the central message of the Bible: God sees the blood of his Son, shed on the cross, and "passes over" all who look in faith to his sacrifice for sin. **The precious blood of Christ,** Paul reassures us, saves us from destruction.
- 5) The Passover lamb was to have none of its bones broken. The soldiers didn't break Jesus' bones on the cross like they did the

other two criminals. John writes: **This happened to fulfill Scripture – not one of his bones will be broken.**

God the Father wanted Israel to celebrate the Passover meal as: **a lasting ordinance for generations to come.** God the Son said pretty much the same thing about the Meal he instituted to replace the Passover meal: **Do this in remembrance of me.** That is a Christian parents' solemn duty and responsibility to explain the meaning of the Lord's Supper to their children.

How encouraging to know: The Blood of the Passover Lamb Protects you and me from sin, death and hell!