

The First Passover Supper

Exodus 12.14 – So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

Exodus 12.26-28 – And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'what do you mean by this service?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'

I don't think we could ever understand the amazing anticipation that the people of Israel would have felt when Moses first told them about the Passover Super. For hundreds of years the people had served as slaves in Egypt. Now, 9 miraculous plagues had signaled that God was moving on behalf of His people.

As Moses explained to the nation the timing and the procedures of the first Passover Supper, there would have been an incredible expectancy in their hearts. A great anticipation of things to come.

But their anticipation was not all this feast called for. Their **actions** were supremely important as they prepared for God's greatest plague against Egypt.

Exodus 12.1-2 – Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, 'This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.'

God was signifying that a whole new era was beginning for the people. This removal from the slavery of Egypt was the beginning of a wonderful plan that God had for the nation. It was the beginning of their freedom, their deliverance, their heavenly blessings. This night was to be the beginning of a new era of personal and corporate worship for the Israelites, of guidance **from** and dependence **on** the Lord.. All measurements, all reckonings, all accounts were to begin with this sacrifice, this feast, this supper which the Lord was ordaining for them.

Exodus 12.3-5 – 'Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: on the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.'

With the anticipation of this new beginning came necessary actions. The first was to select a young, male lamb. The selection was to be made personally and purposefully. The selection process was just as important as the eventual sacrifice would be. And so, each family would have a lamb, the one lamb that was fit for them, the one lamb that would save the lives of their firstborn as night fell.

Exodus 12.6-7 - Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two door posts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

God had explained how important the selection of the lamb was, and now, they would wait for 4 days while the lamb dwelt with them in their house. Each morning and evening as they tended to

the lamb, as they examined it, fed it, guarded it, they would grow in their anticipation for that 14th day, when finally the lamb would be slain, the meat prepared and the blood placed on the door frame of the house.

When the 14th day came there could be no hesitation. Each family would simultaneously kill their lamb at dusk and prepare the supper of the passover. This feast would unite all the families of the entire nation in one act of faith and obedience to the Lord.

Exodus 12.8-10 - Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire – its head with its legs and its entrails. You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

The way the lamb was prepared and eaten was just as significant as the way it was chosen, the way it was inspected and the way it was killed. These decisive and methodical actions would universally remind the people that God's plan was unfolding...moment by moment, step by step, towards their deliverance, towards their freedom, towards their salvation.

It would have taken faith to slaughter this young lamb and to destroy what was left after the meal had finished. These Israelites were not prospering in Egypt, they were slaves. What may have seemed wasteful to some was an act of faith that God **would** surely deliver them out of the hands of their oppressors, and then that He would bring them into an abundant life.

Exodus 12.11-13 - And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.

For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike 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. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

This meal was to be eaten in the shadow of God's power, in the expectancy of His work, in the wonder of His strength. Belts and sandals worn for speedy movement at the sound of God's deliverance, staffs in hand because it was no short journey into the land and the life God had prepared for them. Anticipation coupled with action would ensure a meal like they had never had before. This meal was the beginning of new life for the Israelites. It was salvation from the desert of Egypt, freedom from bondage.

Exodus 12.14 - So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

The First Passover Supper was voluntary. There was no real coercion or force applied by God or by Moses. The choices were clear and serious. The method of salvation may have seemed unusual, but it was a simple choice that each family would have to make.

The evening of the passover would have been very strange. For God's people it was to be a time of feasting, a time for families to join together and trust in the Lord. This First Passover Supper was a testimony of God's grace and redemption from the darkness of Egypt. For God's enemies it would be a night of terror, a night of confusion and a night of death.

Exodus 12.26-28 – And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'what do you mean by this service?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'

And the people bowed their heads and worshiped. Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

The First Passover Supper wasn't about death, but about life. It wasn't about fear, but freedom. The First Passover Supper, and the following Passover Suppers were the reminder that God never forgets His people, never leaves them alone, never fails to send a Redeemer, even in the darkest night.