

# Passover

## Exodus 12:1-28

In the last plague the Lord comes to every household in Egypt but He passes over those marked with the blood of a lamb. Passover is a foundational event for Israel, a deliverance to be remembered and celebrated forever.

### **A New Calendar**

Yahweh tells Moses this will be the beginning of months, a new calendar for Israel (v1). God is the author of new life, and He renews His entire people who had been slaves in a never-resting, 24/7 economy. The plagues began when Pharaoh would not let the Lord's people go worship Him for a few days in the wilderness (5:3). Yahweh escalates the conflict because He is Lord. For centuries Christians worshiped before or after work on Sunday until the gospel shaped our calendar to make Sunday, the Lord's Day, a day of worship and rest. Just recently all kinds of things are routinely scheduled on Sunday morning, ignoring Jesus' resurrection on the first day and His claim that "from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD" (Is. 66:23). We give away what our fathers fought for. The Lord's Day is not kept not by refraining or getting the government involved, but by gathering, worshiping, and resting. Passover began and shaped the entire year. We have Christmas, Epiphany, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost.

### **Shed Blood**

Every man is required take a perfect lamb for his household, kill it on the fourteenth day, and put its blood on the doorposts and lintel of the house wherein they would eat it (vv3-7). The first few plagues happen throughout Egypt, but the fourth through ninth fall only on the Egyptians and not in the land of Goshen where the Jews live. In the tenth plague the Lord comes to claim the life of every firstborn in every household including Israel. Everyone has a God: "[A]gainst all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am Yahweh" (v12). He would see the blood on their houses and pass over. Israel is not less deserving of death for their sins than Egypt because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). God is redeeming them from slavery but also demonstrating their deeper need for redemption from sin. How can Yahweh, who will "by no means clear the guilty" (Ex. 34:7), spare them? Only through the blood of a spotless, representative substitute. It's not that Egyptians must die but not Israelites. There has to be shed blood on the door, and no one goes outside until morning (vv22). This is because without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22), and so by faith Israel trusts Yahweh's mercy that atonement will ultimately come—and it will not be through a young domesticated animal. Jesus is your covenant representative so that when He died, you died: "if one died for all, then all died" (2 Cor. 5:14). He became your sin on the cross, suffering and dying for it, and when He rose, so did you (2 Cor. 5:21, 15).

**NOTES:**

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### **Shown Blood**

The blood of lamb must not only be shed, but also shown on the doorposts and lintel of the house (v7). The blood is a sign to Israel and to Yahweh (v13). God's people trust Him and receive His grace by faith alone to be saved, but He uses physical means as vehicles and expressions of grace and faith. If He doesn't see blood, the firstborn dies. When He sees the blood of the substitute, He passes over. This is why the blood of Jesus was shed on the cross. God saw the blood, and when you confess your sins "in Jesus' name", He sees you in Jesus, forgiven and cleansed by that blood. God is gracious and merciful, but His mercy has to be given to particular households, and it is given in a very visible and public way. Peter says, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38-39). We come through the door of Christ to the Father by baptism, and this baptism is into His death (Rom. 6:3). Blood had to be shed, and blood had to be seen. It was seen on the cross, shed once and for all. Now the Father sees His children marked by their baptism, dead to sin and alive in Christ.

### **An Everlasting Ordinance**

Thirteen times the word "eat" is mentioned in this passage. These instructions are given to the "all the congregation of Israel" (v3). They are to eat unleavened bread, and bread was also part of the fellowship and thanksgiving offering (Lev. 7:12-13). None of the sacrifice would remain until morning because they were to be ready with belt and sandals on and staff in hand, eating quickly and ready to leave, not waiting on any leaven (vv10-11). This feast would continue to teach the following generations (vv26-27). For us, it has been fulfilled and transformed by Christ: "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8). We are called to be alert and quickly repent of our sins, and to commune with God and His people.