

# The Passover

## *Exodus 12*

### Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, as we study Your Word today, help us remember that it contains the heart of Your message. We are looking into the height and depth and width of Your love for us. Forgive us for taking You and Your love for granted. Our salvation is free, but it is not cheap. You paid an awesome price to make us Your own dear children. Enable us to respond with lives of praise and thanksgiving, and to share the Good News of the Gospel with those around us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Exodus 12:1-20

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, (2) “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. (3) Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. (4) And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. (5) Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, (6) and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

(7) “Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. (8) They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. (9) Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts.

(10) And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.

(11) In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. (12) For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. (13) 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 no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt. (14) “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. (15) Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. (16) On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. (17) And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as a statute forever. (18) In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. (19) For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. (20) You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread.”

1. The Lord gives instruction that the Hebrews are to follow when celebrating the yearly Passover meal. What deliverance did the Passover commemorate? (Ex. 12: 26-27)
2. Israel would develop its own calendar. In the first month of their year Israel was to celebrate the Passover. Why is it appropriate that Israel's year begin with the observance of the Passover?
3. Blood was used to mark the houses where the Israelites dwelt. The Lord would pass over these houses and not strike the firstborn of the families living in them. What do the following passages tell us about the role of blood?

Leviticus 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.

Hebrews 9:22 Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

4. The Lord specified that the lamb to be sacrificed should be without blemish or defect. This stipulation would be repeated in the Book of Leviticus regarding the temple sacrifices. According to the following passages, to what great sacrifice did these Old Testament sacrifices point?

1 Peter 1:18-19 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, (19) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### **Exodus 12:21-30**

(21) Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. (22) Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. (23) For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you. (24) You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever. (25) And when you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. (26) And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' (27) you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped. (28) Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. (29) At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. (30) 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 someone was not dead.

5. The people were told to slaughter lambs. Later the slaughter of animals would become a vital part of Israel's worship. Such sacrifices were never meant to be a mere mechanical ritual. What else must be involved according to the following passages?

Psalms 51:15-17 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. (16) For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. (17) The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Hosea 6:6 For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

6. When the Israelites had received instructions from Moses about observing the Passover, they bowed down and worshiped (Exodus 12:27). How would you define "worship"?

7. After the Israelites had worshiped God, they carried out His commands. How are worship and obedience related (vv. 27-28)?
8. God did not command us to observe Christmas, Lent, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, or other traditional Christian holidays. For what practical reasons do Christians observe these and other holidays? (vv. 26-27 may suggest one such reason.)
9. In your own celebration of Christian holidays, what helps or hinders you from remembering the great deeds of God that stand behind these holidays?

### **Exodus 12:31-42**

(31) Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, “Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as you have said. (32) Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also!” (33) The Egyptians were urgent with the people to send them out of the land in haste. For they said, “We shall all be dead.” (34) So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their cloaks on their shoulders. (35) The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing. (36) And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians. (37) And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. (38) A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very much livestock, both flocks and herds. (39) And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves. (40) The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. (41) At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. (42) It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.

10. The slaying of Egypt's firstborn was a horrible event. In this event, what was God teaching the Hebrews? The Egyptians? What is He teaching us?
11. Think for a moment what it cost God, our Father, and Jesus, His Son, to save us from the wrath we deserve because of our sin. God's amazing, costly love is the “thread” that runs through all of Scripture. How is this great, undeserved love of God expressed in the following verses?

Matthew 27:45-46 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. (46) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Galatians 4:4-5 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Colossians 1:21-22 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, (22) he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

1 John 4:9-10 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. (10) In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

12. How did the Egyptians react to the Lord and His people after the deaths of their firstborn? Check out especially vv. 33, 36, and 38.

## Exodus 12: 43-51

(43) And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, (44) but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. (45) No foreigner or hired worker may eat of it. (46) It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. (47) All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. (48) If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. (49) There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.” (50) All the people of Israel did just as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron. (51) And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

13. What rules regarding the eating of the Passover lamb were given in Exodus 12:46?

14. What details about Jesus’ death are given in Psalm 34:19-20?

Psalms 34:19-20 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. (20) He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.

15. According to the following verses, what is the connection between Jesus and the Passover?

John 19:33-36 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.

(34) But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. (35) He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. (36) For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.”

1 Corinthians 5:7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

16. Shortly before Jesus' death, He gathered His disciples together to commemorate the Passover. At the close of that meal, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. (See Matthew 26:26-28.) What meaning do you think the festival had for those Jewish men, versed in the Old Testament and the history of their people?

17. The elements of the Passover are a sacrificial lamb, gathering for a meal, special food and drink, blood on the door, the angel of death passing over and sparing the people, and release from slavery. How do those features and themes relate to the Lord’s Supper? What similarities do you see? What differences?

*In the Lord’s Supper we gather for a meal to recall the sacrifice Christ, our Passover Lamb, made. Because of Jesus’ blood shed on the cross, we have been rescued from slavery to sin, death, and the power of Satan. We have been spared the agony of eternal death, and given eternity without God, by the sacrifice of Christ, who bore the punishment for our sins. At our celebration, we eat the special food of Christ’s body and drink the special drink of His blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. The Passover and the Lord’s Supper are both celebrations of remembrance where special food and drink help God’s people recall how He saved them. Unlike the Passover, which is celebrated once a year, the Lord’s Supper is usually celebrated every week or two. And there is a difference in the salvation that these celebrations recount: the Passover recalls rescue from physical death and release from physical slavery, while the Lord’s Supper celebrates rescue from spiritual death and release from spiritual slavery. In the Lord’s Supper, we receive the assurance that God has forgiven our sins for Jesus’ sake.*

19. For the Hebrew, the Passover spoke strongly of judgment and salvation. How are those important themes repeated in the Lord’s Supper and in the death and resurrection of Jesus?