

Tonight: Passover

- Passover in the Hebrew Scriptures (overview)
- Specific examples in the Law / Prophets / Writings
- New Testament: John and 1 Peter / Isaiah 53
- Passover in the Gospels (Recast as the Lord's Supper)
- Contradiction (Synoptic v. John)?
- Passover Fulfilled / New Covenant
- Next Week: 1 Cor. (the Passover Epistle):
 - 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 ,
 - 1 Cor 10:14-22,
 - 1 Cor 11:17-34, esp. 23-26
- and Feast of Unleavened Bread / First Fruits

On Sunday we looked at Exodus 12 – the original Passover event. Today we are going to do more of a survey of the Passover in the remainder of the Scriptures.

Passover in Hebrew Scriptures

- Genesis 22 (Abraham and Isaac / Mount Moriah)
- Exodus 12 (and Exo. 34:25)
- Lev. 23:4-5 (among the Feasts of the Lord)
- Num. 9:1-14 (28:16 , 33:3)
- Deut. 16:1-6 (told to commemorate annually)
- Joshua 5
- 2 Chron. 30 (Hezekiah)
- 2 Kings 23 / 2 Chron. 35 (Josiah)

Celebrated (First Two Instances):

- In Numbers 9, we read that the Passover was celebrated in the Sinai wilderness once – a year after Israel left Egypt. This was the first memorial commemorating the Passover when the Lord passed through the land in judgment.
- In Joshua 5, we read of the Israelites celebrating their Passover on the plains of Jericho as the people came into the land of Israel.

These are two particular spiritual markers for the Israelites.

There are three instances noted in the Writings when Passover is celebrated

King Hezekiah 725 BC (2 Chronicles 30:1 – 31:1)

- Hezekiah's celebration occurs in the context of his purification of the temple after the many years of political and spiritual neglect by his father, King Ahaz.

King Josiah 622 BC (2 Chronicles 35:1 – 19)

- Josiah's celebration is initiated by Josiah's response to the apostasy of his father, King Amon.
- Josiah begins seeking God, purging idolatry from the southern kingdom of Judah, and repairing the temple. In the process, Hilkiah the priest discovers the lost book of the law and with Josiah's encouragement the people keep the Passover in obedience to God's command.

Return of Exiles 515 BC (Ezra 6:19-21)

- Finally, the returning exiles celebrate the Passover after completing the second Temple, some 70 years after the Babylonians destroy it.

Summary

- In the writings, we see the Passover celebrated as a vital indication that the people of God are back on the right track. It is like a married couple returning to the place of their engagement. The children of Israel returned to the Passover celebration to recall the Lord's great love for them.

Psalms

- Psalms 113-118 are Passover Psalms
- In the context of the Psalms, we have good reason to believe that Jesus himself singing Psalms 113-118 just before he walked to Gethsemane and his eventual death on the cross for our sins (Matt. 26:30 – “sung a hymn”).
- Many Psalms, i.e. Psalm 105:24-41; 135:3-6; 136:10-22; reference God’s great acts of deliverance, typified in the Passover / Exodus event.

John

- In John 1:29, John the Baptist refers to Jesus as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” We ought to certainly assume that his original hearers understood this comment in light of the Passover.
- John describes three different Passovers observed by Jesus: the first Passover in 2:13; the second Passover in John 6:4; and the final Passover in John 11:55, 12:1, and 13:1, with additional references in John 18:28 and 19:14.
- Of course, as we are well aware, the Revelation (also penned by John) is full of references to Jesus as the Lamb of God – some 30 references.

1 Peter 1:18-20

¹⁸ 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. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you

Isaiah 53:7

- The predicted role of Jesus as the suffering and sacrificial Lamb of God who will die for sin and rise from the grave has always been at the very heart of who Jesus is and what he came to accomplish.
- Isaiah in his well known gospel account, ch. 53, used the prophetic imagery of the Passover Lamb:

Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he opened not his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he opened not his mouth.

“Passover” In the Gospel Accounts

- In examining the events of the Last Supper, which was a Passover meal, we learn that the Passover celebration is transformed into what is commonly known as the Lord’s Supper or Communion.
- Luke 22 explicitly associates the Last Supper with the Passover meal and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Let’s look now to Luke 22:7-23

The Passover with the Disciples

⁷Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. ⁸So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it." ⁹They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?" ¹⁰He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters ¹¹and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' ¹²And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there." ¹³And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Institution of the Lord's Supper

¹⁴ And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" ²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

Matthew 26:30:

³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

[See also Matthew 26; Mark 14;
John at various points: John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14]

We are going to leave Jesus' celebration of the Passover with his disciples for a few slides to deal with some timelines / alleged contradiction.

Contradiction (Synoptic v. John) ?

- It is necessary to address what some commentators see as a contradiction between the synoptic gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and the gospel account of John.
- As we have already read, it is clear in the synoptic Gospels that the writers are clearly indicating that the meal enjoyed by the disciples with Jesus is the Passover. Nevertheless in John chapter 13, 18, 19 there is the repeated phrase that it was the day of the preparation for the Passover, which on its face would suggest that this is the day before the Passover begins.
- For instance, John 19:13-15, reads,

¹³ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" ¹⁵ They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."

The contradiction regards when Passover was celebrated and when Jesus was crucified. I am pleased to report that the "contradiction" is resolved, though specific days I have not dealt with.

Passover contradiction (con'd)

- The confusion in this regard is due to the fact that the entire eight day festival that is a combination of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are collectively referred to as "Passover". For instance, Luke 22: 1, reads "Now the **Feast** of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover."
- Passover can refer to the meal, the day, the week, the season, or even the sacrifice itself.
- There are also differences between the lunar calendar / solar (Gregorian) calendar.
- Passover can begin on any day of the week. The eight day feast (of unleavened bread) with then have two additional high Sabbaths (in addition to the regular Sabbath).

- More importantly, as to resolving the "contradiction", nowhere in the Scriptures is there reference to "the day of preparation" in relation to the Passover, but rather "the day of preparation" is always in reference to the Sabbath.

- The conclusion then is that the day of preparation referred to in the gospel account of John is the Sabbath that falls on the day after the Passover. Accordingly, all four gospel accounts record Jesus eating the Passover with his disciples.
- We do not have the time to delve into this issue, but I would refer you to D.A. Carson's The Gospel According to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, who thoroughly treats the issue.

Since we have dealt with that controversy, let's now consider the significance of Jesus recasting the Passover meal.

Three Feasts of the Lord: Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits

Passover	Feast of Unleavened Bread						
14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st
Paschal Lamb Slain	1st Day Feast of Unleaven Bread	The Omer (First Fruits)	-	-	-	-	7th Day Feast of Unleaven Bread
Not a sabbath	A sabbath No servile work	Not a sabbath	-	-	-	-	A sabbath No servile work
Unleaven Bread Eaten							
All Leaven Removed From the House							
Crucifixion	In the tomb	Resurrection	-	-	-	-	-
1st Day	2nd Day	3rd Day					

Turn to Leviticus 23:4-11 while we review this particular chart

Every year on the 1st Month according
to God's Calendar (Lev. 23):

14th Day – Passover (Lamb was killed and meal was
taken in the evening)

15th Day – 1st Day of Unleavened Bread – **Special Sabbath**

16th Day – 2nd Day of Unleavened Bread

17th Day – 3rd Day of Unleavened Bread

18th Day – 4th Day of Unleavened Bread

19th Day – 5th Day of Unleavened Bread

20th Day – 6th Day of Unleavened Bread

21st Day – 7th Day of Unleavened Bread – **Special Sabbath**

Consider again verses Luke 17-21:

¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves."¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

Recasting the Passover

- Notice multiple cups, which is consistent with a Passover meal, but now, Jesus is pointing forward to a greater deliverance than the deliverance of Israel from Egypt.
- “This is my body, which is given for **you**” and “This cup that is poured out for **you**”. Jesus takes the bread and the wine and makes the point about a substitutionary sacrifice “**for you**”. Even more, “do this in remembrance of me”.
- While all previous Passover meals remembered the original Passover (event) and deliverance of Israel from Egypt, Jesus now tells the twelve (and by extension, us) that “this is what I will do **for you**”. The bread and the wine now refer to a remembrance of what Jesus has done for us.
- And then notice, “the new covenant in my blood.” We have reference to a new covenant in Christ’s blood. Jesus not only refers to the Exodus, but now completely recasts the meal as a vehicle for describing his coming death as a substitutionary sacrifice.

Mark 14:24

- In Mark 14:24, Jesus speaks of his shed blood given “for many.” Also in Mark 10:45, we read that Jesus will die as a “ransom for many.” This is likely a reference to Isaiah 53:12, where the Servant bears the sin of the “many.”
- Clearly, Jesus is making the point that he is about to die as an offering made on behalf of others – establishing a new covenant, inaugurated with a sacrifice and the shedding of blood as set out in Hebrews 9:15 – 22 (next slide).

Hebrews 9:15 – 22

- ¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶ For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. ¹⁷ For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. ¹⁸ Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, “This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you.” ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. ²² Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**

Fulfillment of the Passover

- And so the Passover that began as Israel's deliverance now fulfils what God always had in mind as the ultimate blessing for the world as set out in Genesis 12 verses 1 to 3.
- A second and even greater Exodus deliverance for all who believe in Jesus (Jew and Gentile; all the families of the earth; all nations).

Let us consider what the Holy Spirit spoke through Jeremiah (31:31-34) in reference to a new covenant:

Jeremiah (31:31-34)

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Conclusion

- Thus, the Last Supper (a Passover meal) becomes a commentary on what God was doing in and through the work of His Son, Jesus.
- The Last Supper is a commentary rooted in the history of Israel presenting Jesus as the Saviour.
- Even more, we now have an encouragement to celebrate the broken body of Jesus and the shed blood of the Christ more than once a year at a Passover meal but as often as we gather together to celebrate the Lord's Supper, thereby preaching the gospel to ourselves by proclaiming the Lord's death until he returns and completes what he started at the meal with his disciples.

Conclusion (con'd)

- Remember how Jesus stated that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.
- To participate in the celebration of the Lord's Supper is to engage in a covenant affirmation.
- Jesus has initiated a new covenant with all of its benefits because he is the Lord of the Passover, the Lamb of God, and the one to whom Passover pointed all along.

Next Week: April 4th

- 1 Corinthians –
the Passover Epistle
- Unleavened Bread
- First Fruits