

What's the Message – Lesson 24

Our study today deals with the significance of the Passover.

Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Savior. We pray that the Lord may bless you through this study to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the significance of the ancient Passover event in Egypt, and how it relates to your life today. Amen.

The twelfth chapter of Exodus begins with these words: *“This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.”* Then the Lord instructs Moses on how the people of Israel are to select a lamb, one for each household . . . a lamb or goat without blemish . . . a year-old male . . . and prepare it for it for the evening meal.

Of particular note is this instruction beginning in verse seven: *“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 them . . . In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s Passover.*

For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever . . . And when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall keep

this service. And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' 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 slew the Egyptians but spared our houses.'"

Now Teacher, those are the high points of chapter 12 of Exodus. But this is an ancient story, relating to an ancient people at a particular time in their lives. What does it mean to us today? What is the message we should take from this event and how does it relate to our lives?

First, let us step back a moment and take a look at the big picture. What was God accomplishing with this event, and why was it so important that it should never be forgotten but celebrated throughout all generations? The obvious answer, of course, is that God was freeing them from centuries of slavery and oppression in Egypt and returning them to the land that He had promised Abraham. It was a momentous occasion, for it showed the almighty power of Yahweh and His superiority over all other false gods, and His ability to keep His promises.

Secondly, it was a visible thing, something that everyone could physically see. Like the monuments that we erect to help us remember a major occasion, here was a visual aid, a visible reminder of an act of God's mercy for succeeding generations to visualize.

But for us Christians it is more than simply a reminder. It was a foreshadowing of something even more important to come in the future. Look at verse 22, where we read: *Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood . . .* What do you see happening in those words? Well, just make these movements with your arms with me. Make a vertical motion to paint the blood on the doorposts, then a horizontal motion to paint the lintel.

You have just made the sign of the cross, the cross upon which the most precious Lamb of God would shed His blood to free you from the slavery of sin.

Here we have the greatest event of all time, something to be remembered all our days. And we do so every time we partake of the Lord's Supper. Like the Passover of old, the Lord's Supper is a visual aid for us today to help us remember that God has purchased our freedom from sin through the blood of His Son.

Next time we shall see God's glory as shown through the crossing of the Red Sea.

This series has been developed and written by our director of teacher training, Mr. D. A. Senter, and is copyrighted by Lamb of God Lutheran Church in Flower Mound, Texas. Your narrator is Dale Gaus.

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