

# Jesus

## The Passover Lamb



Many modern Christians have been taught that the Old Testament, and its associated laws, regulations, and holy holidays, bear little to no significance in the walk of a believer of Christ. The following article will use scripture, rather than man-made doctrine, to interpret what the Bible truly has to say about the Festival of Passover and whether or not New Covenant believers should follow the command to observe it annually...

## **What is Passover?**

Passover is a spring festival lasting eight days in total in which God's children abstain from eating any leaven while reflecting on the events that took place between God and the Israelites in Egypt. More specifically, it is a commemoration and remembrance of the freeing of God's children from slavery in Egypt, and how their obedience to Him allowed the redemption from Pharaoh's oppression and safety from "the destroyer." "The destroyer" was actually God exacting justice upon all who did not follow His instructions and have faith in Him. He passed through the land of Egypt at night, taking the life of every household's firstborn son—excluding those who followed His instructions and trusted in Him. Ultimately, this was the final plague that provoked Pharaoh to release the Israelites.

"At midnight, the Lord struck down all the firstborn in Egypt..."

**Exodus 12: 29**

## **What is the True Meaning Behind Passover?**

Passover is all about meditating on and celebrating the redemptive nature of God Almighty. Traditionally, Passover is a remembrance of the miracle that occurred when those who painted lamb's blood on their doorposts were spared and the Destroyer "passed over" their homes. This was followed by a mass exodus of the Hebrew people from bondage in Egypt to find a promised land that was to be theirs forever. It is one major showing of how God is a mighty redeemer and savior to those who faithfully love Him.

Jesus Christ is the greatest example of the redeeming nature of our loving God. He was a man, perfect in all aspects, and free from any sin. He was God on earth, able to give life and freedom from death to all who would come to Him in faith and love. Through His ultimate sacrifice, we are not only spared from death, but we also have the power to now live a life free from sin.

## LEAVEN & SIN

In many ways, Passover is all about freedom from sin. In ancient times, they observed Passover by removing all leaven from their homes and eating nothing containing leaven. In the Bible, leaven is symbolic of sin. In the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, we not only receive atonement for all sin, but we also receive the ability to actively remove sin from our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the process commonly known as “regeneration.”

Paul makes a clear connection between sin, leaven, and Passover in the fifth chapter of his letter to the Corinthians:

“Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Get rid of the old leaven, so that you can be a new batch of dough, because in reality you are unleavened. For our Passover lamb, the Messiah, has been sacrificed. So, let us celebrate the Seder not with leftover leaven, nor with the leaven of wickedness and evil, but with the unleavened bread (matzah) of purity and truth.”

### **1 Corinthians (1 Co) 5:7-8**

As Paul illustrates, New Covenant believers in Jesus Christ should turn the focus of their observance away from removing the leaven from their homes and actively remove the leaven, or sin, from their hearts. The picture portrayed between leaven and sin is by no means the only symbolism of the Passover Festival.

The symbolism between the Passover lamb and Jesus Christ is quite a magical picture when one looks deep enough.

## **Christ in the Passover**

Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month just as a Passover lamb was being selected for each family that followed God's

commands. During this time, Jesus was Himself inspected, questioned, interrogated, and eventually tortured. On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month, it was declared by the Roman authorities that Jesus had “no fault in Him.”

Jesus Christ was recognized and then declared to be the perfect Passover Lamb. Just as the blood of the lamb on the doorposts saved the Israelites, so does the blood of Jesus Christ on our hearts free us and provide redemption from the bondage of sin.

## **JESUS CHRIST: THE PASSOVER LAMB**

- **Passover lamb was to be inspected to ensure it had no defect.**
  - Pharisees questioned Jesus but found no wrong in Him. (John 19:6)
- **Passover lamb was not to have its bones broken.**
  - The two thieves on the crosses had their legs broken but Jesus did not. Instead, He was stabbed with a spear. John 19:36
- **The matzah symbolizes absence of sin with the absence of leaven.**
  - Jesus was as matzah in that He had absolutely no sin in Him. (1 Peter 2:22)
- **The Passover lamb was to be slain and all who smeared blood on the doors, and walked through those doors to enter the home, and ate of the lamb were to be saved.**
  - Jesus’s blood was spilled for us, and when we pass through the “narrow gate” and “knock on His door” and dwell within Him and He in us, we are saved.

## **What God Commands Regarding Passover**

As believers in Christ, we should concern ourselves with what God actually commands of us in His Word. Jesus taught that those who want

a true relationship with God are those who know and follow His commands.

“The way we can be sure **we know Him** is **if we are obeying His commands**. He who says “I know Him”, but isn’t obeying His commands is a liar-the truth is not in him.”

## 1 John 2:3-4

The below verse reveals God’s command concerning Passover:

“This [Passover] will be a day for you to remember and celebrate as a festival to God; from generation to generation, you are to celebrate it by a **perpetual** regulation... Therefore, you are to observe this day from generation to generation by a **perpetual** regulation.”

## Exodus 12: 14, 17

### WORD STUDY

According to the *Strong’s Concordance*, the word “perpetual” or “permanent” originates from the Hebrew word עוֹלָם “*olam*” which translates as everlasting, indefinite, or unending future. Essentially, something commanded as “perpetual” is an eternal command that will never change for all time. This is the word used in original manuscripts to describe the Passover.

“You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time each year.”

## Exodus 13:10

This confuses Christians as there is a widely accepted doctrine which claims that the Torah, and its associated commanded holy days, have been abolished. This is not true and is contradicted by the very words of Jesus Christ Himself:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to **complete**.”

## Matthew 5:17

## WORD STUDY

The word used in the original manuscripts for “complete” is the Greek word “*pleroo*.” This word means to fill something to its full measure. It is very similar to how one may request a gas attendant to fill their tank up to the top. This does not mean to abolish or get rid of their gas tank, rather, to fill it to its fullest operating capacity.

Therefore, according to Jesus, the Torah is not abolished. If the Torah is not abolished, and Passover is found in the Torah as a perpetual festival, we should conclude that the Passover must still be observed today.

[For more information on New Covenant Torah observance, please review the article entitled *Torah or No Torah?*]

## *Is Passover Just for Jews?*

Another common attempt believers take in order to evade observing the Sabbath, Passover, and other high holy callings, is to claim that they are for the Jews and not intended for followers of Jesus. Passover may be a commemoration of an event that happened to the Jewish people; however, scripture reveals that God calls its observance to be held by all those claimed to be His children. In God’s eyes, we are not Jew nor Gentile, but all of us who trust in His son and follow His commands are one in Him – echad.

“It is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile...”

## **Romans 3:22**

Additionally, the calling for Passover is not a Passover to the Jews but a Passover to the Lord our God. It is His holy day for He is the author of all holiness.

“Now you shall eat it in this manner: with 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.**” **Exodus 12:11**

## What Would Jesus Do (WWJD)?

The Bible calls us to not only follow God’s commands, but to walk out our faith in the same way Jesus did.

“Whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way He walked.”

### **1 John 2:6**

There are several examples in the scriptures in which Jesus is observing God’s command to observe His holy days, feasts, and festivals. Jesus was a very Torah observant Jew, which meant He absolutely observed the perpetual command to follow the festival of Passover, each year.

“Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.’” **Luke 22:7-8**

“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.”

### **1 Peter 2:21**

## What Happened to the Biblical Passover?

If there is such compelling, biblical evidence that we should observe Passover, why don’t we?

The very same reason we do not observe Shabbat and other holy days and instead observe the same pagan-rooted holidays the rest of the world celebrates—we have been duped by the devil’s corruption of our practices with man-made doctrine and anti-Semitic agendas. Passover

At the Council of Nicea, in 325, Church authorities agreed to abolish the Divine appointed festival of Passover and replace it with what Constantine called "the more legitimate festival of Easter".

According to Philip Schaff, it was Constantine who invited the Christian bishops to the Council, and paid their expenses both to and from Nicea.<sup>60</sup> Of the estimated eighteen hundred bishops scattered through the empire, only three hundred and eighteen attended the Council. It is said that when the bishops arrived in Nicea, Constantine hosted a great banquet for them in his palace.

Figure 8. Passover was officially abolished at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, recorded in "Faith of the Ages: The Hebraic Roots of the Christian Faith"9)

was abolished for anti-Semitic reasons. It was replaced at the Council of Nicaea with another pagan practice: Easter. This was part of a large effort to de-Judaize the church.

## Is Easter Biblical?

Passover is mentioned in the Bible around 50 times. Easter is mentioned 0 times. Easter was originally a festival in honor of Eostre, the goddess of spring and fertility-her symbol is typically a rabbit or hare in ancient records.

Historically, Easter was celebrated at the vernal equinox in Northern Europe. With the man-made abolishment of Passover, the Church of Rome needed to replace it with some kind of holiday. They were already very familiar with many polytheistic traditions and Easter easily became the new "Christian"



Eostre, the goddess of spring. Ostara (1884) by Johannes Gehrts.



holiday to commemorate the Savior and His resurrection. Any churches who maintained the observance of Passover were labeled as heretics and were heavily persecuted.

## **Conclusion**

Jesus was the sacrificial lamb for all of humanity. All who put their faith in Him and have committed themselves to walk as He did will find favor and liberation in this life and for all of eternity! We as believers can use Passover as a day of remembrance for how we have been redeemed in Jesus.

Each one of us has freedom in Jesus Christ. Paint the blood of Jesus on your hearts by trusting Him, thanking Him, and observing the commands of our Heavenly Father.

For resources on how to observe Passover as a New Covenant believer, leverage the resources below:

- [Biblestudy.org “Guidelines for the Christian Passover](#)
- [Torah Class by Tom Bradford “Believer’s Passover Seder”](#)
- [Hebrew4Christians: Passover – The Festival of Deliverance](#)

## REFERENCES

- Faith of the Ages: The Hebraic Roots of the Christian Faith
- Daniel: Understanding the Dreams and Visions by Charlene R. Fortsch and Erica Dissler
- Messiah in the Feasts of Israel by Sam Nadler
- Seed of Abraham Ministries: Torah Class by Tom Bradford
- The Complete Jewish Study Bible: Illuminating the Jewishness of God’s Word