

Christ Our Passover: From the Type in Egypt to the Fulfillment in the Body of Christ

Introduction

Brethren, the Passover is not merely an ancient ceremony preserved in the history of physical Israel. It is one of the clearest patterns in Scripture by which God revealed beforehand the redemptive work that would later be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The lamb slain in Egypt, the blood placed upon the houses, the deliverance of the firstborn, and the departure of Israel from bondage all pointed beyond themselves to a greater Lamb, a greater blood, a greater deliverance, and a greater calling. The Old Testament Passover was a type; Christ Himself is the fulfillment. As the Apostle Paul declares, "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Therefore, this matter must be approached with reverence by the body of Christ, the true Church of God. The Passover teaches not only what God has done, but also who may partake, how they must partake, and what spiritual condition must exist in those who come to the bread and the cup. The Passover is for those who are being brought into covenant with God through Christ, those who examine themselves to see whether they are in the faith, and those who understand that only the body of Christ may partake of the symbols of His body and His blood in a worthy manner.

The Old Testament Passover: The Type and Shadow

The Passover began in Egypt, where the children of Israel were in bondage. God commanded Moses and Aaron concerning the first month and the fourteenth day, and He appointed a lamb without blemish to be taken, slain, and eaten. Exodus 12:11-13 records the meaning of that night: "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

The blood of that lamb did not save Egypt. It marked the houses of Israel. It preserved the lives of the firstborn of physical Israel, and by that deliverance God opened the way for all Israel to come out of Egypt. The firstborn were spared from death, and the nation was

brought out from the house of bondage. Moses later reminded Israel of this truth in Exodus 13:3: "Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten."

God fixed the timing of this memorial. Leviticus 23:5 states, "In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover." Numbers 9:2-3 adds, "Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it." Numbers 28:16 confirms, "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD." Deuteronomy 16:1 again connects the observance to deliverance: "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night."

The Passover was therefore a memorial of redemption, but it was also a prophecy in action. Israel's yearly observance kept before them the truth that deliverance required a lamb, blood, obedience, and separation from Egypt. Joshua 5:10-11 records, "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day." Later restorations under Hezekiah, Josiah, and the returning exiles show that when Israel turned back toward God, the Passover returned to prominence. 2 Chronicles 30:1 says, "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel." 2 Chronicles 35:1 states, "Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month." Ezra 6:19-22 records the returning captives' observance: "And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat, And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel." Ezekiel 45:21 also points forward, saying, "In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten."

Christ the Fulfillment of the Passover Lamb

When Christ came, He did not come disconnected from the Passover. His life and ministry repeatedly intersected with it. Luke 2:41-43 says, “Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.” John 2:13-23 records, “And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple... But he spake of the temple of his body.” John 6:4 states, “And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.” These references show that the Passover formed the background of His life among Israel, but the final Passover before His death revealed its true meaning.

Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, and Luke 22:7-20 show Christ keeping the Passover with His disciples and giving the New Testament meaning of the bread and wine. Matthew 26:17 says, “Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?” Mark 14:12 says, “And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?” Luke 22:15 records Christ's desire: “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.” Then He took bread and wine and identified them with Himself. This was not an ordinary meal. The lamb in Egypt had been the type; He was the reality. The blood on the doorposts had been the shadow; His blood would establish the New Testament.

John 13:1 says, “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” John 19:14 places His condemnation in the setting of Passover preparation: “And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!” Thus Christ, the true King and the true Lamb, was offered at the very season that had always pointed to Him.

John also records the Passover setting surrounding Christ's trial. John 18:28 says, “Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.” John 18:39 adds, “But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” These details

show that while the leaders were concerned with the outward Passover observance, the true Passover Lamb stood before them.

The apostolic interpretation is unmistakable. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” The Old Testament Passover lamb saved the firstborn of physical Israel from death. Christ, the ultimate Passover Lamb, saves the firstborn of spiritual Israel. Through Him, God is preparing a people who are coming out of spiritual Egypt—the ways, sins, bondage, and corrupt systems of this present world. As Hebrews 11:28 says of Moses, “Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.” So also the Church must understand that deliverance still comes through faith, blood, obedience, and separation.

The Firstborn of Physical Israel and the Firstborn of Spiritual Israel

In Egypt, the blood protected the firstborn. Yet the deliverance did not end with the firstborn alone. Because the firstborn were spared and God judged Egypt, the entire nation of Israel was freed from bondage and began its journey out of Egypt. That historical deliverance becomes a type of the greater deliverance God is working through Christ. Christ’s blood saves those whom Scripture identifies spiritually as belonging to Him, those who are called into the body of Christ and seek to become part of the firstborn of spiritual Israel. Through that work, God makes a way for all eventually to come out of this world’s ways, just as physical Israel came out of Egypt.

Egypt represents bondage, oppression, false worship, and the world’s system under judgment. Coming out of Egypt therefore pictures more than a change of geography; it pictures a change of allegiance. The Church must not merely admire the Passover story as history. The Church must see itself called out from the spirit of this world, called to be unleavened, called to purge out sin, and called to live in the reality of the Lamb whose blood redeems.

The Bread, the Wine, and the Body of Christ

Paul gives the sacred instruction concerning the symbols Christ gave to His disciples. In 1 Corinthians 11:23-34 he writes in full: “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do

ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.”

The bread is a type of His body. The wine is a type of His blood. These symbols are not common things to be taken casually or by those who remain outside the covenant reality they represent. They belong to Christ and are given to His body. To eat the bread is to acknowledge participation in His body. To drink the cup is to acknowledge the New Testament in His blood. Therefore, only those who are a part of the body of Christ, walking in faith, repentance, and covenant commitment, may partake in a worthy manner.

Self-Examination Before the Passover

This passage shows both the manner and the prerequisite of partaking. The bread and cup are not ordinary food and drink; they proclaim the Lord's death. Therefore, Paul says plainly, “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” The command is not merely to eat, but first to examine. The warning is equally plain: “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” The body of Christ must therefore discern the Lord's body, judge itself, and come in humility so that it does not come together unto condemnation.

This examination is not a light self-review. It is a solemn proving of whether one is truly in the faith and whether Christ is truly in the person. 2 Corinthians 13:5 states in full: “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” The requirement is clear: one must examine himself before partaking. The issue is not merely whether a person understands the ceremony, but whether the person is joined to Christ, discerning His body, and seeking to live as part of spiritual Israel.

To be worthy does not mean to be sinless by one's own strength; it means to come rightly, humbly, repentantly, and faithfully, discerning what the symbols mean. The Church must understand that the Passover is for those who are in covenant relationship with God

through Christ. Just as the Old Testament Passover had restrictions and belonged to those identified with Israel, the New Testament Passover belongs to those identified with Christ's body. They must continue in the growth, development and the commitment they made at baptism so they remain in the covenant relationship with Christ. His body eats the bread; His body drinks the cup; His body remembers His death until He comes.

Conclusion

The Passover in Egypt was a divinely appointed type. The lamb, the blood, the spared firstborn, and the exodus from Egypt all pointed forward to Jesus Christ, the true Passover Lamb. The blood of the lamb saved the firstborn of physical Israel and opened the way for physical Israel to leave Egypt. The blood of Christ saves the firstborn of spiritual Israel and opens the way for mankind to come out of the bondage and ways of this world.

For this reason, the body of Christ must approach the Passover with holy seriousness. Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. The bread represents His body, and the wine represents His blood. Those who partake must examine themselves, prove whether they are in the faith, that is discerning that they are the Lord's body, and come as those being truly joined to Him. This is not merely a memorial of ancient Israel; it is the living proclamation of the death of Christ, the redemption of spiritual Israel, and the calling of the true Church of God to come out of spiritual Egypt and walk in the way of the Lamb until He comes.