

# Feast of Passover

## There are 3 pilgrimage feasts in the Old Testament

### Deuteronomy 16:16

Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths.

### Leviticus 23:1-2

<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts.”

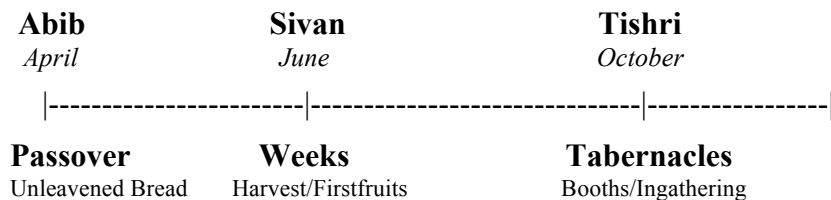
### Exodus 23:14-17

<sup>14</sup> Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. <sup>15</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. <sup>16</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. <sup>17</sup> Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

## Why study Old Testament feasts?

- deeper appreciation of the Old Testament
- backdrop of crucial events in the New Testament
- they are ultimately about the gospel and Jesus

## The Jewish calendar



## What is Passover?

### Exodus 12:1-17

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, <sup>2</sup> “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.

## Passover begins the Jewish calendar

- birth of a nation | Jewish “Independence Day”

<sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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.

## Sacrificial death of the lamb

- why can’t God just forgive?
- necessity of payment

<sup>8</sup> They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. <sup>10</sup> And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. <sup>11</sup> 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.

## A symbolic meal

- unleavened bread – departure in haste
- bitter herbs – bitterness of slavery

“they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service” (Exodus 1:13-14)

<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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.

### **The Tenth Plague: the judgment of God**

- ‘firstborn’ as representative of family
- notice the universal nature of the judgment

<sup>14</sup> 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.

### **Memorial meal: Passover and the future**

- Passover → Lord’s Supper → Wedding Feast of the Lamb

#### **Matthew 26:26-29**

<sup>26</sup> Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” <sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

### **Passover is ultimately about Jesus’ sacrificial death**

#### **John 1:29**

The next day John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

#### **Revelation 5:12**

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

<sup>15</sup> 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.

### **Feast of Unleavened Bread – a time of repentance**

- 7 day feast follows Passover
- symbolism of “leaven” (yeast) as sin
- holiness follows salvation | order is important!
- contra moralism and antinomianism

#### **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

## Passover Notes

### Why study Old Testament feasts?

- seems irrelevant | part of ceremonial laws – aren't they obsolete?

### (1) Help us understand the OT and the life of a devout Jew

- feasts were major events in the life of an Israelite
  - connected to agricultural cycles [beginning of growing season, start of harvest, end of harvest]
- in a world of food scarcity, feasting was only time most Israelites ate meat and wide variety of foods
- feasting provided annual rhythm to life | connected farming to spiritual life
  
- feasting was also only time Israel gathered together collectively as a nation
- pilgrimage feasts – make trek to central location, Jerusalem (Deut. 16:16)
- “holy convocation” – enormous worship service (Lev. 23:2)

#### Deuteronomy 16:16

Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths.

#### Leviticus 23:1-2

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### (2) Not coincidental that major events in NT mapped to OT feast days

- Jerusalem would swell in population many-fold
- charged atmosphere, crackling with energy and tension (during Roman occupation)

### (3) Ultimately, feasts are deeply meaningful to gospel

- NT events are fulfillments of OT feasts
- see beautiful coherence and unity to Scripture

#### Exodus 23:14-17

<sup>14</sup> Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. <sup>15</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. <sup>16</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. <sup>17</sup> Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

#### The Jewish calendar

Abib	Sivan	Tishri
April	June	October
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Passover	Weeks	Tabernacles
Unleavened Bread	Harvest/Firstfruits	Booths/Ingathering

## What is Passover?

### Exodus 12:1-17

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, <sup>2</sup> “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.

### Passover begins the Jewish calendar

- Abib is the first month of the year – starts Spring
- symbolically significant because Passover marks the birth of Israel as a nation
- essentially the Jewish “Independence Day”
  - therefore, when Jews during Roman occupation celebrated Passover, it crackled with tension
  - very significant to understanding NT | and why Romans were sensitive to any hint of rebellion

<sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> 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.

### Sacrificial death of the lamb

- family is spared through death of lamb
- OT sacrifice – animal bears the sin of the people
- v. 5 – “without blemish” – idea of substitution | Lev. 22:20, no defect, injury or blemish

### Modern people hate this idea – why can’t God just forgive?

- sin is destruction | words of forgiveness does not repair the destruction, but someone has to pay
- real forgiveness is absorbing the payment

<sup>8</sup> They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. <sup>10</sup> And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. <sup>11</sup> 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.

### A symbolic meal

- unleavened bread – departure in haste
- first Passover, people ate ready to leave – “belt fastened, sandals on feet, staff in hand”
- this is why lamb is “roasted” | no setup or utensils or water
- haste remind people of God’s miraculous intervention – dramatic nature
  
- bitter herbs – bitterness of slavery
  - “they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service” (Exodus 1:13-14)
- meal is a *dramatic reenactment* of God’s salvation

<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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.

### **The Tenth Plague: the judgment of God**

- the “destroyer” (v. 23) will slay the firstborn of each household
- the death of the firstborn is like the destruction of the entire family
- notice the universal nature of the judgment – every household is under danger
  - if purpose was mere deliverance, then why not just strike Egyptian firstborn sons?
  - this was Judgement Day brought forward – sin and idolatry is being punished (both Egyptian and Israelite)

<sup>14</sup> 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.

### **Memorial meal**

- memorial as remembering the past
- but also, foreshadowing the future

### **Passover was a promise that one day, the real Lamb would come**

#### **Matthew 26:26-29**

<sup>26</sup> Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” <sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

### **Jesus gives the elements of the meal new meaning**

- bread is my body; wine is my blood
- I’m the true Passover lamb; I’m the true substitute for sin

#### **John 1:29**

The next day John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

#### **Revelation 5:12**

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”

### **Extremely significant that Jesus was crucified during Passover**

#### **v. 29 – “I will not drink again until I drink anew with you in my Father’s kingdom”**

- the Lord’s Supper becomes the new “memorial meal” Christians
- but like the Passover, the Lord’s Supper is foreshadowing a future fulfillment

## **Revelation 19 – “wedding supper of the lamb”**

- there’s going to be an incredible celebration – a wedding feast
- God’s people, as bride, will finally unite with her bridegroom – Jesus

### **Isaiah 25:6**

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

<sup>15</sup> 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.

### **Feast of Unleavened Bread follows Passover – 7 day feast**

- symbolism of “leaven” (yeast) as sin

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### **Notice the order: personal holiness follows salvation**

- contra to both moralism and antinomianism