

Worship 12
Worship In the Family 2
Ex. 12:1-13

Introduction:

1. In this second part of our study regarding worship in the family we will consider the Passover as a family worship event.
2. We will consider family worship during the Mosaic period focusing on Deut. 26 and Deut. 6.
3. Attention will be given to the post Mosaic period with focus on Joshua 7 and Judges 11 as negative family worship events.
4. Finally, brief attention will be given to family worship in the N.T.

Discussion:

- I. Passover as a family worship event (Ex. 12 and 13).
 - A. Ex. 12:1-13 describes the institution of the Passover.
 1. It was done in each household.
 2. It involved the sacrifice of an unblemished lamb, a male, one year old, from the sheep or the goats.
 3. Blood was sprinkled on the doorposts of the house.
 4. It commemorated God's passing over of the first born. The first-born belonged to the Lord, but the lamb was offered in a redemptive way.
 - B. While first done in Egypt it was a perpetual practice remembering God's grace manifest toward them (Ex. 12:17, 33ff).
 - C. It was a teaching opportunity (Ex. 12:26).
 - D. Note that the primary responsibility for keeping the memory alive was on the head of the household, not on the professional priests and prophets, although they played a role. It may be that today the focus is too much on the professionals accompanied by diminished responsibility on the head of the household. But Eph. 6:4 still lays the responsibility heavily on the household leadership. The term translated "fathers" in Eph. 6:4 is "pateres" from a root meaning a nourisher, protector, upholder. Our emphasis today seems to be on providing physical bread, whereas our emphasis needs to be on providing the word of God (cf. Deut. 8:3).
- II. Deut. 26:1-15 describes how the worship associated with the offering of first fruits involved an instructional element.
 - A. It involved an acknowledgement of the Lord's blessing to give them the land flowing with milk and honey. It was an acknowledgement of God's grace.
 - B. It was a household kind of worship (10-11) although it was brought to the priest at the place where the Lord chose to establish His name (Jerusalem) (4, 2).

III. Deut. 6 gives additional insight into the responsibility associated with family worship.

- A. Since it is not in man to direct his own steps (Jer. 10:23) it is the instruction of God that gives life and all good things (6:3, 24; cf. Deut. 8:3).
- B. The teaching is to be first in one's own heart.
- C. Then taught diligently to sons in your house, when walking by the way, when arising and when laying down. They should be taught informally and formally and published in every way. It is for survival, but not only survival but so that God's people, our children and grandchildren, so that our family thrives.
- D. When society is focused on the gods of economic prosperity and greed God's people are taught in their family to fear the Lord and serve Him only.
- E. We are to be reminding our family of what the Lord has done for us (20-23).
- F. Joshua's challenge at the end of his life involved a review of their history and a call to serve the Lord and a commitment that he and his house would serve the Lord (24:1-15). But the book of Judges reveals gross failure by the families of Israel.

IV. Joshua 7:16-26 and Judges 17 reveal negative family worship events.

- A. In Josh. 7:16-26 Achan is called to account for his covetousness. It was in specific violation of their worship of God. All the spoil was under the ban, i.e., it was devoted to God. Achan and family were stoned to death. Evidently, his family was involved.
- B. In Judges 17 Micah stole 1100 pieces of silver from his mother.
 - 1. He returned them to his mother.
 - 2. She dedicated the silver to the construction of a graven image.
 - 3. Micah took them into his house. He made a shrine and an ephod and household idols and consecrated one of his sons as his priest.
 - 4. A young Levite came to the house of Micah. Micah hired him to be his personal priest.
 - 5. Verse 13 indicates that Micah was thinking like idolaters think. He said, "Now I know that the Lord will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as priest."
 - a. He's trying to win the Lord over to being gracious to him.
 - b. He seems to have been materialistically motivated.
 - c. He seems to be negotiating with the Lord to see what he can get.
 - 6. Micah's priest later accepted the invitation to be a tribal priest for the Danites (Judges 18). (He may have been a grandson of Moses. See v. 30 alternate reading.)
- C. It is interesting that in both these negative family events covetousness or greed is involved. Looking back at Deut. 6 this is the very thing that Moses had warned against (see verse 10-15).
- D. There may be many false gods that men serve, but what a warning to us that we cannot serve God and wealth (Matt. 6:19-34)! Do not worry about such things Jesus said. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness."

V. There are few windows into what family worship may have been like in N.T. times.

- A. Mary, Martha and Lazarus were devoted followers and hosted him on occasion (Lk. 10:38-42; Jn. 11).
- B. Most of the information involves casual mention of households.
 - 1. Jn. 4:46-53 speaks of a government official who believed along with his household after his son was healed.
 - 2. Cornelius (Acts 10:2) feared God with his household and responded to Peter's preaching of Christ after assembling his close friends and relatives.
 - 3. The household of Lydia (Acts 16:14-15), the jailor and his household (16:31-34) and the household of Crispus in Corinth (18:8) all come to mind, but nothing is really said about how these families worshiped.
- C. Timothy is mentioned as having been instructed by his mother and grandmother in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14-15; 2 Tim. 1:5). His father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). This probably means that the place of spiritual leadership in this family was not well represented by Timothy's father and maybe not by his grandfathers, thus mother and grandmother took responsibility. Fathers and grandfathers, I would ask you, "Have we abandoned our post? Have we exchanged our role as spiritual leaders for the role of "making a living?" Someone might object, "Someone has to make some money." Yes, but what about seeking first the kingdom?

Conclusion:

- 1. I would like more details about family worship to be revealed.
- 2. I would like more explicit information, a window, that I could look through and see family worship occurring.
- 3. It is clear that heads of families, fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers have a peculiar responsibility.
- 4. It is clear that failure is catastrophic. The Assyrian and Babylonian captivities are testimony to that.
- 5. Failure to worship God in the family, failure to communicate Him and His word to the coming generations is the greatest of all failures.
- 6. We need to renew and invigorate our efforts to make the Lord the number ONE priority in our family!!!