

# What Does the Bible Teach About Jesus and the Passover?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: Mark 12:12-26

- A. What would you eat as your last meal if you knew you were to die tomorrow?
  - 1. In our prison system, a condemned prisoner is usually allowed to choose what they will have for their last meal.
    - a. Gary Gilmore, the first man executed after the death penalty was reinstated in 1977, chose hamburgers, eggs, potatoes, and bourbon.
    - b. Ted Bundy, serial killer executed in Florida in 1989, had a burrito and Mexican rice.
    - c. Timothy McVeigh, executed in 2001 for his part in the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK had two pints of Mint Chocolate Chip ice Cream.
    - d. John Wayne Gacy, serial killer who murdered at least 33 young men, had Kentucky Fried Chicken, fried shrimp, French fries, strawberries, and Diet Coke.
    - e. Walter LaGrand, executed in Arizona in 1999, asked for six fried eggs, 16 strips of bacon, one large serving of hash browns, a pint of pineapple sherbet, a breakfast steak, a cup of ice, 7-Up, Dr. Pepper, Coke, hot sauce, coffee, sugar, and four Roloids.
  - 2. I would have Thanksgiving turkey, bread fresh from the oven, sun-ripened tomatoes from my garden, fresh picked red raspberries, and Bruster's caramel praline ice cream.
- B. The last supper recorded in scripture that Jesus ate was the Passover.
  - 1. For Christians, it may have been the most important meal ever eaten in the history of humankind.
  - 2. The meal Jesus ate on the eve of His death was designed by God to exalt His Son.
  - 3. It is a meal that proclaims the Gospel of the grace of God and the resurrection to a home in heaven.
  - 4. It is a meal that exemplifies new spiritual covenant between God and penitent sinners.
- C. Jesus Christ is our Passover - 1Cor. 5:7-8; 1Peter 1:18-20
  - 1. Preparations for the Passover
  - 2. Problem at the Passover
  - 3. Portrait in the Passover

## I. PREPARATIONS FOR THE PASSOVER

- A. Mark 14:12-16 - The Purpose for the preparations.
  - 1. The Passover was the main feast of the Jewish religious year held on the 14th day of the 1st month of the Jewish calendar - Ex. 12:6
    - a. Roughly corresponds with April in the modern calendar.
  - 2. Also called "The Feast of Unleavened Bread", because no yeast was to be used or kept in the house during the period of the feast.

3. Ex 12:1-11 - Every family in Israel was to take the following steps:
  - a. They were to choose a lamb, which was to be killed on the evening of the Passover - Ex. 12:3-6
  - b. They were to take the blood of the lamb and put some on the door posts of their homes - Ex. 12:7
  - c. They were to roast the lamb over a fire and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread - Ex. 12:8
  - d. They were to eat this meal dressed for a journey, with their shoes on, walking sticks in hand, and to eat it in as though in a hurry - Ex. 12:11

B. The Pattern of the meal.

1. They drank a cup of red wine mixed with water - Luke 22:17
2. There was a ceremonial washing of hands which symbolized the need for spiritual and moral cleansing.
3. They ate bitter herbs which symbolized their bondage in Egypt.
4. They drank a second cup of wine, at which time the head of the house explained the meaning of Passover.
5. They sang the first two Hallel Psalms - Psalms 113-114
6. The lamb was brought to the table, and the head of the household distributed it with the unleavened bread. The unleavened bread symbolized haste. There was no time to allow the dough to rise before the journey would begin.
7. They drank a third cup of wine, and then concluded the meal by singing the rest of the Hallel Psalms - Psalms 115-118
8. Orthodox Jews still observe the Passover the same way it has been observed for thousands of years. Sadly, most have either lost or do not discern its meaning.

C. The Personal nature of the Passover.

1. The feast involved a lamb (Ex. 12:3-8). The family was to choose “a lamb,” afterward called “your lamb,” making the meal personal.
2. They were to select the lamb on the tenth (Ex. 12:3), and were keep the lamb until the fourteenth (Ex. 12:6).
3. An attachment would develop between the family and the lamb. This was intentional; God wanted them to see the high cost of sin, and He wanted them to know that salvation is an intensely personal business.
6. The lamb was to be without blemish (Ex. 12:5), a picture of perfection and purity - 1Peter 2:22; 2Cor. 5:21
7. The lamb was to be slain and its blood applied to the door posts of the house (Ex. 12:7, 22-23). The family was to gather inside the house and eat the meal. When the angel passed through the land to kill the first born, those in homes with blood on the doors would be safe.
  - a. Another parallel to Jesus Christ. The only shelter anyone will have in the Judgment from the wrath of God against sin is the blood of Christ - Rev. 1:5; Rom. 5:9
8. The lamb was to be roasted in fire (Ex. 12:8), a picture of judgment; it reminded Israel that the judgment of God was being poured out on

sinful Egypt, and the only thing that prevented Israel from being judged along with Egypt was the blood of the lamb who had died to save them. The lamb had been judged with fire in their place.

a. Jesus was judged in our place - Gal. 3:13; 1Peter 3:18

9. The lamb had to be eaten (Ex. 12:8). It did no good to simply select a lamb. It did no good to merely kill the lamb. The lamb had to be eaten.

a. Jesus death on the cross is meaningless to us until we believe, obey, and partake of Him - John 6:48-51; Mark 14:22-24

D. Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, sanctifies and purifies us - Heb. 10:10-18

1. His blood saves us from sin, wrath, and death.

2. Heb. 9:22-24; 1John 1:7; Eph. 1:7, 2:13

E. Hymn - Nothing but the Blood of Jesus by Robert Lowrey

V1) What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

V5) Now by this I'll overcome—

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

Now by this I'll reach my home—

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

V2) For my pardon, this I see,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

For my cleansing this my plea,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

V6) Glory! Glory! This I sing—

Nothing but the blood of Jesus,

All my praise for this I bring—

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

V3) Nothing can for sin atone,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

Naught of good that I have done,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain:

Oh! precious is the flow

That makes me white as snow;

No other fount I know,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

V4) This is all my hope and peace,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus;

This is all my righteousness,

Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

## II. PROBLEM AT THE PASSOVER

A. Mark 14:17-21 - Jesus and the apostles arrive to eat the Passover. Between 17 & 18, the events of John 13:3-17 take place. In those verses, Jesus assumes the place of a slave and washes the feet of His disciples. He teaches them a lesson in humility, that is, true leaders serve others.

1. Not just washing their feet, but removing their sandals - Mark 1:7

B. Mark 14:18 - The Announcement about betrayal

C. Mark 14:19 - Their Astonishment - Matt. 26:25

D. Mark 14:20-21 - The Appeal; Jesus used this opportunity to reach Judas one more time.

1. John 13:21-27 - To be handed the "sop" by the host at a meal was the high form of respect and affection.

2. Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper is incorrect. By the first century, Jews had adopted the Greco-Roman manner of feasting,

reclining at the table facing inward leaning against the person behind him. This is how John was able to rest his head on Jesus. That Judas was nearby to receive the sop from Jesus meant that they were reclined near each other. In other words, Judas was as near to Jesus as John.

3. Jesus is not isolating Judas; He gave him every opportunity to repent.
4. Judas turned away and went to complete his plan - John 13:27-30.
5. Why did he choose hell over heaven? Why did he choose to go on in his sins, knowing the consequences of that decision?
6. One will either confess Jesus willingly in life - Phil. 2:10-11
7. Or he will confess Jesus in terror in Judgment, but too late - Rom. 14:11

### III. PORTRAIT IN THE PASSOVER

A. Mark 14:22-26 - Jesus used the Passover to institute a new covenant. The old covenant that had been in force since the Law was given to Moses revolved around keeping rituals and symbolic sacrifices. These rituals and sacrifices looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, Who would be God's perfect sacrifice. The new covenant would look back to the finished work of the Messiah. Instead of keeping religious rituals and performing symbolic sacrifices, we rest by faith on Jesus sacrifice for our sins on the cross, His burial, and resurrection the third day. In this Passover, Jesus teaches the whole world about the new covenant, the Gospel. He taught that salvation does not come through religious rituals and keeping the Old Law; salvation comes by the Gospel of Jesus Christ - Eph. 2:4-7

B. Mark 14:22-24 - The Example

1. The Old Testament prophets used dramatic illustrations to communicate to their audiences.
  - a. Ezekiel shaved off his beard and hair, an outrageous act for a Hebrew man. He took his hair and divided it into three piles. One pile he burned, the second he struck with a sword, and the third he scattered to the wind. This was a picture of the judgment that was to fall on Israel - Ez. 5:1-3
  - b. Jeremiah constructed a yoke and wore it around to illustrate the coming Babylonian captivity - Jer. 27:1-7
  - c. The prophet Abijah tore his clothes into twelve pieces and gave ten to Jeroboam to illustrate the fact that God was about to take them from Israel to form the Northern Kingdom - 1Kings 11:29-33
2. At the Passover Feast, Jesus combined words and symbols to communicate truth. As the meal progressed, the host or head of the family, in this case Jesus explained each part of the feast.
  - a. The bitter herbs reminded them of bondage as slaves in Egypt.
  - b. The wine represented God's fellowship with the believer in the midst of trial.
  - c. Stewed fruits, the color and consistency of clay, reminded them of the bricks they had been forced to make.
  - d. Unleavened bread represented separation from evil and haste.
  - e. The roasted lamb represented purity and redemption.

C. Mark 14:22 - The unleavened bread Exemplifies His body

1. A customary Hebrew statement made when the bread was presented at the table was "Praised be Thou, O Lord, Sovereign of the world, Who causes bread to come forth from the earth."
2. Jesus gave new meaning to the bread by making Himself the bread that God sent from heaven - John 6:33-35; Luke 22:19; 1Cor. 11:23-24
3. Many rejected the symbolism, and they died lost - John 6:66
4. This great truth is what we commemorate every time we partake of the Lord's Supper. It is a truth worth remembering.

D. Mark 14:23-24 - The fruit of the vine Epitomizes His blood.

1. Jewish Passover tradition would say the cup blessing: "May the all-merciful One make us worthy of the days of the Messiah and of the life of the world to come. He brings salvation of His King. He shows covenant faithfulness to His anointed, to David and his seed forever. He makes peace in His heavenly places. May He secure peace for us and for all Israel. And you say, 'Amen!'"
2. Jesus gave new meaning to the cup. It would become the symbol of the new covenant validated by the blood of the sacrifice, His own blood. It is the reminder that He took our place and carried our punishment.
  - a. Isa. 53:4-6, 10; Rom. 4:25, 5:8; 1Cor. 15:3; 2Cor. 5:21; Eph. 5:2
  - b. 1Peter 3:18; Rom. 3:25-26

E. Mark 14:25 - The Expectation

1. That Passover marked the beginning of the testimony of the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and the eventual return of Jesus Christ
2. 1Cor. 11:26; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 19:11-16

F. Mark 14:26 - His Exodus

1. When they finished the meal, Jesus and the apostles sang the final Hallel Psalms and left the upper room. The disciples didn't know what was about to happen. They did not know that before the sun set the next day, Jesus would be arrested, tried, condemned to death, beaten, crucified, and buried. They did not understand the truth that He was headed to His death. They didn't know, but Jesus did. Even though He knew that He was headed for a trap, He went anyway. Even though He knew that Judas would bring soldiers to arrest Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that the people would reject Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that the soldiers would beat Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that He would be nailed to a cross in shame, He went anyway. Even though He knew about the pain He would suffer, He went anyway. He had eaten the last supper, the Passover feast that was planned and anticipated before the world began, and now He must face the substitutionary death that was planned for him.