

~ A Season for Remembering ~

Recalling the Past

What may be the biggest blessing as well as privilege of being a parent besides providing for our children's daily bread? Is it not sound instructions?

When we recall the guiding words of our parents, we see how their love provided both corrections and encouragements. From our youth, we developed trust in the value of their words as our guide. Our hope for our children is that they remember our advice and instill similar values in the lives of their children.

Consider the words of King Solomon, the wisest man. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:" Prov. 1:7, 8

Reading the Bible is the greatest resource to find sound instructions. There are many faith building examples found in individuals and people. Let's look at two Spring-time events worth consideration.

Passover Remembrance

"And this day [Nisan 14th] shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever." Ex. 12:14

It was 215 years earlier that Jacob and his family were invited to Egypt to avoid the famine. Now a new Egyptian ruler held Jacob's children in bondage to build great cities. Helplessly they cried for deliverance. Their release required the power of Jehovah. And God wanted that generation to remember this par-

ticular day. More so, God's instructions for future generations were "And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses..." (Ex. 12:25-27) The importance of not forgetting the exodus and those faith-building lessons from generation to generation was instilled by the inquiry of a child to his father of the meaning of this memorial.

Has the child's inquiry ceased since the first remembrance of this event over 4957 years ago? The Passover Memorial was kept once during the 40 years in the wilderness and then it was kept in degrees while in the Promised Land. (Num. 9:2, Josh. 5:10, 2 Chron. 35:18, Matt. 26:2) And today the Passover (Seder) is remembered by the Jews around the world and particularly in their Promised Land – Israel.

Yet there are deeper points to remember for both today's children of Jacob as well as the Christian community. For those things which happen to natural Israel should be of great interest to all who call upon the name of Jehovah.

Abrahamic Promise

"By myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the

seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves..." Gen. 22:16-18

Abraham had faith in God's promise, given exactly 430 years to the day before the Exodus. And his family had grown from one son, Isaac, to 600,000 men plus their families. This nation was leaving Egypt to return to the land promised to Abraham. (Ex. 12:37) Additionally, the plagues prior to their release were signs to this new nation of God's power on their behalf. The first three plagues were felt by all in the land. The next six plagues only affected the Egyptians. The purpose was to develop faith in God to protect the Hebrews and develop a trust in Moses.

The tenth plague was the decisive event in bringing about the Hebrews' exodus. God had instructed Moses of the coming death of all the first born of man and animals in Egypt. Furthermore, God provided instructions for the Hebrews to protect their first born from this coming plague. What was that instruction and why was following the instruction so important for all of Jacob's children and particularly for the first born?

The Hebrews were instructed to bring an unblemished young lamb into their home on the tenth of Nisan. On the fourteenth, they were to kill it, place its blood on the door post and lintels of their homes, and roast and eat the lamb along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. And as the night progressed, death came to each house without the blood on the doorways.

What was the power in the blood? Without this blood, Pharaoh and his magicians could not stop the loss of their nation's first born. And if any Hebrew first born stepped out of the house, the

blood would not protect them. The power of the blood was their faith in the shed blood on their behalf. The first born under the blood were passed over. And as the result of the Egyptians' losses, they were willing and ready to send these troublesome Hebrews onward to their journey home.

How interesting that the Promised Land has returned to the children of Abraham and how Israel has become again a blessed nation! This is worthy of remembering.

Christians' Remembrances

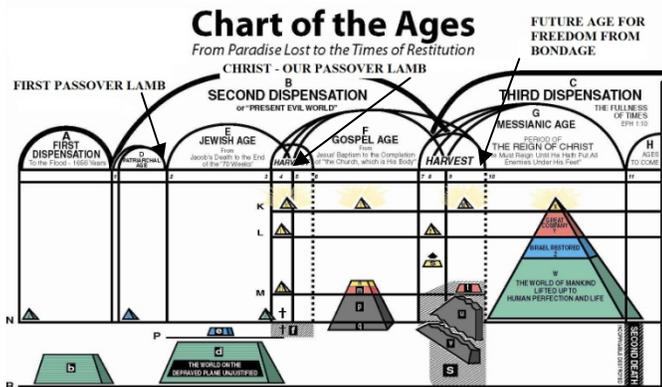
For the Christians, the season near the Passover is also an important time to remember. The man Christ Jesus was nearing his completion of three and half years of consecrated walk in doing his Father's Will.

In fulfilling prophecy, Jesus rode a colt of an ass into Jerusalem on the tenth of Nisan. (Zech. 9:9, John 12:12-15) On the fourteenth of Nisan, Jesus met with his closest disciples to keep the Passover as instructed by the Law. (Mark 14:12-17) And nearing the end of the Passover meal, Jesus said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: ... And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: ... And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in *remembrance of me*. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Luke 22:15-20

Jesus spent himself, giving of his energy (breaking his body) for three and half years in teaching, healing, and suffering persecution. Now his blood (his life) would be shed on behalf of all mankind on the cross. Jesus wanted his dis-

ciples to remember the events of this night as a memorial of his sacrifice, a better sacrifice than the blood of animals for the remission of sins. (Heb. 9:15-28) This was a night to be remembered by all the believers having faith in Jesus' act.

A Tie Between the Two Remembrances



For many of these two religious groups, these events are two different moments in world history and have no relative connection. (See chart above.) However, God revealed to the apostles a tie between the events which happened to Israel – being foreshadows or pictures (types) – and the realities (antitypes) of God's future plans for mankind. Consider the following examples:

1. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are the figures* of the true; but into heaven itself..." (Heb. 9:24) shows how Israel's Tabernacle and its sacrifices were a picture of Jesus offering his sacrifice on God's Mercy Seat.

2. "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices...: Who serve unto the **example** and **shadow** of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle:..." (Heb. 8:3-5) "But Christ **being come** an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more

perfect tabernacle..." (Heb. 9:11) shows how Jesus "a priest for-ever after the order of Melchizedek" offered a perfect atonement sacrifice. Psalms 110:4, Rom. 5:11

3. "For the law having a **shadow** of good things to come, *and not the very image of the things*, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." (Heb 10:1) This shows how God's law given in covenant only to Israel would come to all men by a better mediator (1Tim. 2:5) as expressed in Isaiah 2:3. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Heb. 12:24

The memorial of the Passover was a picture to guide us to the reality presented in the Lord's instituted Memorial. Consider Paul's observation about the Passover. "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." 1 Cor. 5:7-8

In this text, Apostle Paul identifies elements of the Passover and particularly the Passover lamb. On the night which Jesus was betrayed, he and his disciples kept the Passover, the picture. Paul now states that Jesus was the reality of the picture, our Passover lamb, having been sacrificed for Adam and his seed held in bondage. Our lamb was without blemish of wickedness and his bread of life was true manna from heaven.

The Reason for This Season

So, what is the reason for this season to remember? For some, is it simply an exodus and the sparing of the first born? For others, is it simply that the man Christ Jesus died and was raised three days later? However true are these reasons, there is more to the story.

This story begins with God's promises to Abraham spoke of in Genesis 22. Because of Abraham's faith, his children are spoken of as the stars, a heavenly class, and the sand, an earthly class, which would bless all mankind. Yet his great nation found itself in bondage to the Egyptian Pharaoh. This event pictures Adam's seed in bondage to sin and death without a visible hope of release, under control of the prince of this earth, Satan.

Before Joseph's death, he assured his brothers with – "...God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Gen. 50:24) One hundred and forty-four years later, God remembered His First Born people and sent Moses to lead them to the land promised to their forefathers.

God kept His promise to Adam by sending His only begotten son. And it was Simeon, 4124 years later, who gave thanks for remembering the promise to Adam saying, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32)

In Egypt, the first born Hebrews' faith depended on the shed blood of the lamb to be passed over by the death angel. For the first born of Gospel age, their faith in "our Passover lamb" provides a means to the passing over of the Adamic

sentence of death to a newness of life.

Rom. 8:29, Col. 1:18, Rev. 1:5

And the picture of all Jacob's children leaving Egypt and crossing the Red Sea is a beautiful illustration of a future general deliverance of Adam and his children, all who had ever lived, because of trusting in the blood of the lamb of God. Isa. 51:10-12, Hosea 13:14

The final picture is in what Abraham told Isaac while traveling to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, "...My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering..." (Gen 22:8) Abraham (picturing God) offered his son, Isaac (picturing Jesus). For Abraham, God provided a ram in place of Isaac's life. In reality, God offered Jesus as a willing sacrifice. (John 3:16) Jesus as our "Passover Lamb" made the perfect sacrifice once for all. Heb.10:10

The reason for this season is to trust in the Giver of the perfect gift and to have faith in the gift's shed blood.

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