

“By Faith the Passover was Kept”
Hebrews 11.28

INTRO:

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

This is how the Writer of Hebrews began our journey through **Hebrews 11**. **Hebrews 11:1** is not just a neat slogan we can burn into a wood plaque and hang on our walls. It is a reality we must live. Can we see how each of the great men and women of faith took the promises still far off as substance and reality in their lives? Do we begin to understand how the things hoped for and the unseen reality were the driving force of their existences? Today we pick up where we left off with Moses.

I. The Provision of The Passover (Exodus 12:1-12)

II. The Purpose of The Passover (Exodus 12:13-20)

I. The Provision of The Passover (Exodus 12:1-12)

A. Hebrews 11:28

“By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest He who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.”

Faith played a part in keeping the Passover. To see the part faith played, we need to go back to **Exodus 12** where the Passover was instituted.

B. Exodus 12:1-7

“Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ‘This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. . . . Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.’”

Passover was not something that Moses dreamed up, rather it was God’s direct and specific command.

1. The tenth and last plague God would bring upon Egypt was coming, but the LORD made a way for Israel to escape the judgment. It required faith in God’s Word if the Israelites were to be spared.
2. The LORD’s instructions were specific. First on the tenth day of the month every man who was the head of a household must take a lamb. Not just any

lamb, but a prime lamb, a male of the first year without blemish. Each is to keep the lamb for four days. Second, on the fourteenth day they are to kill the lamb at twilight. Then they are to take the blood and put it on the two door posts and the lintel of the house where they will eat the lamb. The lamb is to be roasted, not cooked in any other way, and eaten by the family ready for travel (v.11). None of the Lamb is to be left over. All leftovers must be burned on the spot!

C. Why did that take faith? Moses heard from God and they simply had to obey. Most likely, some in Israel thought through all of this analytically and said to themselves, *“What possible connection could there be to putting blood on the door and lintel of my house and my firstborn not dying?”* Everyone had to believe and obey. God doesn’t ask us to understand how something works, He just asks us to obey Him.

II. The Purpose of The Passover (Exodus 12:13-20)

A. God created Passover to serve a larger purpose than to just give a blood marker so the angel of death did not hit the wrong house. **Exodus 12:13** says, ***“Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are.”***

1. The LORD didn’t need the sign, the Jews did. He taught them some important lessons. First, they needed to learn that for God to pass over them in the judgment there must be blood of an innocent sacrifice applied to them. The Lord said in **verse 13**,

“When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”

The writer of Hebrews brings this full circle in **Hebrews 9:22**.

“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.”

The Lord Jesus had to die and shed His blood in order for us to be forgiven.

2. Second, they needed to understand that the issue was not only the physical blood it was the obedience of faith that applied it to them. In the movie *‘The Ten Commandments’* there is a scene where Joshua paints the blood on the house of an Egyptian because his slave is Joshua’s girlfriend. More was required than just painting the blood on the door. If the lamb was not selected on the tenth day and killed on the fourteenth and eaten as prescribed, they would not be delivered. Obedient faith saved them. The blood applied was a symbol of their obedient faith!

B. More than teaching them a lesson in the short term, The LORD had a long term purpose in the Passover. Passover was to be a permanent ordinance they were to repeat yearly forever. In fact, the Jews make a subtle but important distinction between the Passovers. The first Passover is called the Egyptian Passover. It was

done on the last evening that they spent in Egypt. It was not followed by the week long feast of Unleavened Bread. However, every Passover after that one, included this feast! When He instituted the first one, He gave instructions for the celebration of the later Passovers (**Exodus 12:14-20**).

1. Why did God do this? God's purpose was so the Jews every time they took part in the Passover Seder would look back to their initial deliverance from Egypt.

2 Samuel 7:23 *“And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name; and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land; before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods?”*

The LORD did this so Israel would never forget that she was a redeemed nation, and that God delivered her from her slavery to Egypt. A key thought is found in **Exodus 12:25-27**.

“It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’ that you shall say, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’ So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.”

2. This is also vital to us in the New Testament. We also observe a meal which is a permanent part of our worship of the living God. The Bible calls this ordinance the Lord's Table. The Lord's Table was given to us to remind us that we are a redeemed people and that we would look back to the act that redeemed us, the sacrifice of our savior on Golgotha.

3. In a real sense, we carry on the Passover tradition when we celebrate the Lord's Table. Jesus was eating the Passover meal when He instituted the Lord's Table. He, who was the Passover Lamb, was leading in a Passover Seder. Then when it came to the Afikoman He took it and broke it and distributed it to His disciples. We read in **Matthew 26:26**;

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, Take, eat; this is My body.”

This broke with centuries of tradition. They no longer were to be looking back to the shadow, they were now to be remembering the substance.

1 Corinthians 5:7 *“For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”*

Then He took the third cup, the cup of Redemption, and instead of the normal blessing, He did something entirely different.

Matthew 26:27,28 *“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”*

Interestingly, the Passover meal is not yet complete at this point. Yet, it appears after singing the Hallel at this point they left. They did not drink the final cup of Praise because, Jesus said,

Matthew 26:29 *“I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.”*

The final cup we will drink with Him in the Father's Kingdom! At the end of the traditional Seder, the participants say, *“Next year in Jerusalem.”* We can say, *“Next time with Jesus!”*

Hymn #210 *Jesus Paid It All*