

It is the sacrifice of Adonai's Passover

“²⁵When you come into the land which Adonai will give you as He has promised, you are to keep this ceremony.²⁶ Now when it happens that your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’²⁷ You are to say, ‘It is the sacrifice of Adonai’s Passover, because He passed over the houses of Bnei-Yisrael in Egypt, when He struck down the Egyptians, but spared our households.’” So the people bowed their heads and worshipped... This same night is a night of vigil for Adonai, for all Bnei-Yisrael throughout their generations” (Exodus 12:25-27, 42).

In every generation the obstinacy and willfulness of parents result in a great price paid by their children. America is no exception – millions upon millions of innocent of unborn children pay with their life for our country’s promiscuity. Children’s lives are at risk and our society is responsible (Monday is the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, January 22, 1973). So it was with pharaoh and the people of Egypt at that time – his and their stubbornness had resulted in the death of the firstborn of Egypt. The Lord had said to Moshe: *“²²You are to say to Pharaoh, “This is what Adonai says: ‘Israel is My son, My firstborn.’²³ So I have said to you, Let My son go, that he may serve Me, but you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will slay your son, your firstborn” (Exodus 4:22-23). Our God is just! He warns even Pharaoh (and Egypt) of the impending danger to their children and gives opportunity for repentance. Will our firstborn son be required of us? Pharaoh refused and exactly what God had promised would happen did happen (See Exodus 12:28-36).*

Now delivered from the plague of death by the blood of the Passover lamb, the children of Israel greeted the dawn of their redemption with new trust (faith) born of experience. The night before, they were timid slaves cowering behind locked doors. Now they threw open their doors and windows to the morning sun and rejoiced in their deliverance. Awed by the power of the Almighty that had protected them from the death angel, they were ready to follow Moses, His servant.

That very morning, the Egyptians, fearful of the Lord’s further wrath, begged our people to leave the country immediately. There was no time to prepare food for the journey. They bound up their unleavened dough, still in the kneading bowls, and strapped it to their backs. With this meager supply of food, they set out from Egypt with their wives, their little ones, their aged, their flocks, and all they possessed. They left nothing behind, and their beasts of burden were weighed down with the riches pressed upon them by their frightened Egyptian neighbors.

Four hundred and thirty years earlier, seventy people had come into the land of the pharaohs with Jacob. This day a mighty swarm, the hosts of ADONAI, went out. The Bible records that six hundred thousand men left Egypt. Their mothers, wives, and children surely swelled their numbers to almost two million. This newly formed nation would wander in the desert for forty years. A whole generation would grow old and die before they entered Canaan, the land that flowed with the milk of goats and the honey of figs. But they relied on God's promise that it would come to pass, and they already had His instructions on what to do in the future (See Exodus 12:1-10).

The word “*observed*” or “*keep vigil*” used in Exodus 12:42 (*Hu HaLaila Hazeh L’Adonai Shimurim*) comes from the Hebrew root *shamar*, and it translates as “*keep watch/guard.*” Even as the Lord kept guard over the blood-protected homes of the children of Israel on that first Passover, we, in turn, are to keep guarding the each annual Passover night of remembrance. It is to be a memorial forever. He commanded the annual memorial of the Passover observance so that our Jewish people might reflect regularly upon all He has done on our people’s behalf. In all our comings and goings we are to remember the Lord, we are to rehearse and retell what He has done for us, we are to “*relive*” the events of the great redemption He has done for our forefathers. The Lord also gave specific details of how we are to celebrate the anniversary of our people’s redemption:

1. ⁴⁷ *All the congregation of Israel must keep it (the Passover). (Exodus 12:47)*
2. They must not allow a foreigner to eat the Passover, that is, no one who was uncircumcised or outside the covenant (Exodus 12:43-45).
3. They must eat the Passover in one house, that is, a lamb for a household. The household could be more than one family, as long as they came together under one roof (Exodus 12:46).
4. They must eat the Passover sacrifice in one night, not leaving any for the morning (Ex. 34:25).
5. They must put away all leaven from their houses for seven days (Exodus 13:6-7).
6. They must offer the blood of the sacrifice without leaven (Exodus 34:25).
7. They must not break any bones of the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:46).
8. They must sacrifice the Passover only at the place appointed by God (Deut. 16:5-6).
9. All males must appear before the Lord at Passover time (Ex. 23:17, 34:23)

Only those who are part of the redeemed community could participate in the Passover festival. If Gentile visitors or servants wanted to share in the memorial, they first had to become Jews, that is, undergo circumcision, which would make them part of the covenant. The fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, that in his seed (the *Messiah*) all the nations of the earth would be blessed, means that they who have undergone circumcision of the heart (Jeremiah 31:31-33) are eligible to celebrate the new memorial because they belong to the redeemed community of Messiah. This is why Paul writing to the Ephesians said: ¹² *At that time you were separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.* ¹³ *But now in Messiah Yeshua, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah...* ¹⁹ *So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household" (Ephesians 2:12-13, 19).*

Now there is an even greater redemption to commemorate: forgiveness of sin and new life through *Messiah Yeshua*, God's perfect Lamb. We agree with Scripture that this is a night much to be observed.

What began as a commemoration of the historic deliverance of God's people from Egyptian bondage became a type of the Messianic deliverance of God's people from the bondage of sin and even serves today as a prophetic reassurance of the future fulfillment of the Messianic ingathering of all the nations to celebrate the marriage of the Lamb. {God's Festivals in Scripture and History, Samuele Bacchiocchi pp. 128}

Let us agree with the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 and let us keep the *Passover*: ⁷ *Get rid of the old hametz, so you may be a new batch, just as you are unleavened—for Messiah, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed.* ⁸ *Therefore let us celebrate the feast not with old hametz, the hametz of malice and wickedness, but with unleavened bread—the matzah of sincerity and truth."*