A Day to Remember

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The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2 This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. 3 Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. 4 If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. 7 They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8 They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 9 Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. 10 You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11 This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the LORD. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD.13 The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance (Exodus 12:1-14).

1. The Most Important Day

When are the most important days of the year? When I was growing up in Korea, the anniversaries of my grandparents passing were some of the most important days of the year. This is because Korean people often take the day to remember the sacrificial love of these loved ones. In the US, birthdays are often the days we celebrate the most. But how many of us remember what the Lord had done for bringing us into the world on our birthdays?

2. Passover

Exodus chapter 12 tells us about Passover. Passover is the day that the Jews remember what God had done for their ancestors. The Pharaoh of Egypt refused the demands of Moses and Aaron and would not let the people go. Because of Pharaoh's refusal, the Egyptians suffered nine plagues. The tenth

and climactic plague was about to happen, which is the slaughter of the firstborn child.

God said to Moses and Aaron that on the 10th day of the month, each Israelite family would select a lamb or goat that was one year old and without blemish. On the 14th day, the animal was to be killed at twilight. The blood of the animals was to be placed on the doorframes of the houses.

The Israelites were to eat the animal with bitter herbs and bread without yeast. The people were to eat the entire meal quickly then get ready to travel. After the Israelites ate the Passover lambs, God would kill the firstborn and animal in every Egyptian family. When God would see the blood on the doors of the Israelite homes, God would pass over their homes. In verse 14, God says to Moses and Aaron, "***This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance."*** God wanted the Israelites to set aside this day as a perpetual ordinance for Israel. This annual observance reminds the people of Israel of God's salvation.

3. Passover and Jesus

What does Passover mean to us? According to the Gospel of Mark 14:12, Jesus has the last supper with the disciples at a Passover celebration. After the slaughter of the Passover lamb, the disciples asked Jesus where he would like to eat the Passover meal with the disciples.

Matthew 26:26-28 tells us what happened when they had a Passover meal. "***While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."*** 27 ***Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you;*** 28 ***for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."***

While the disciples were eating the Passover meal, Jesus took the unleavened bread and wine and gave a new symbolic significance to them. Jesus identified the bread with his body and the wine with his blood. Paul says in I Corinthians 5:7, "***Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed."*** Paul says that Christ is our Paschal lamb; the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Just like the Passover meal, the Lord's supper is our way to remember our freedom from sin through Jesus.

4. Passover Throughout History

Passover would become the most significant holiday for the Jews. Until May 1948, Jews were scattered across the world. In 1948, the Jewish dream of a state of Israel came to reality. Throughout that time, the Jewish people have celebrated Passover every year with the Seder meal on the first night of

Passover. When the families get together for this meal, the children ask the question, “why is this night different from all others?” The parents explain why.

The Jewish people throughout history suffered a lot for many different reasons. We remember that the Jews were the largest groups targeted during the Holocaust. During all this time, the Jews continued to remember the Passover. When they observed Passover, the Jewish people were reminded of all that God did for them in Egypt and what God would do for them in their times of trouble. The Passover was a reminder for the Jewish people to hope and believe in many miracles that God has shown to them.

5. Conclusion

Passover is not only the celebration of Israel’s freedom from Egypt but also the anniversary of Israel’s birth as a nation and the people of God. Passover is a reminder for the Jews of their special relationship with the Lord and the fulfillment of the covenant made to Abraham; “***your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions***” (Genesis 15:13-14). Passover revealed God’s faithfulness to his promise to Abraham.

The Holy Communion is not only the sign of the forgiveness of our sin through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, but also the sign of the New Covenant. Jeremiah 31:34 says, “***this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people***.” God’s new covenant includes all of us as God’s people.

6. Application

It can be easy these days to feel anxious, sad, lonely or overwhelmed. These feelings have been common among people around the world in response to the pandemic. This morning, I’d like for us to ask a question. How are we dealing with the pandemic? The Passover is a reminder of the many struggles and of God’s faithfulness for the Jewish people. As we go through our own difficult time, can we say to ourselves like the Bible verses remind us, “***Be still and know that God is our Lord***.” “***He is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble***”? Passover and Holy Communion remind us that we are in covenantal relationship with God as God’s people and no one can break the relationship. We pray that the pandemic would pass soon. However, even before the pandemic is over, we can have peace as long as we remember God’s faithfulness throughout history. If we trust in the Lord, we can stand quietly before the Lord as we experience God’s continued care every day of our lives. Amen.