

Numbers 9:

Reading #274

### The other passover

Now came the time to remember the anniversary of their departure from Egypt, and the goodness of the LORD in His care for them that night. Because the might of Egypt had been broken there was no necessity to keep it exactly as they had done then, fully clothed for travel and with their shoes on. Exodus 12:11. On this occasion there would be opportunity for reflection and praise to the Son of God for His mercy.

In the New Testament it is written: “Purge out therefore [your move] the old leaven [of selfishness], that you may be a new lump [freshly baked], as you are [now] unleavened [enlightened]. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven [of ignorance], neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness [sinful actions]; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth [the Christian way].” 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. So here we are commanded to keep this feast in the right way, for it has great meaning.

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Numbers 9:

<sup>1</sup> And the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season. <sup>3</sup> In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, you shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall you keep it.”

<sup>4</sup> And Moses spoke to the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. <sup>5</sup> And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

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This was the first Passover to be held since their escape from Egypt, and was also to be the last in the wilderness wanderings, but they did not know that. So, on the tenth day of the month they chose their lambs, set them aside until the morning of the thirteenth, and then killed them in the afternoon ready for the meals that night after sunset, which was the beginning of the fourteenth day of the month. (There would have been thousands of them required to feed

that multitude. However, because the lambs represented the Son of God in His death at Calvary, and also His death for each one of us when we choose to become Christians, the Passover Lamb is always referred to in the singular.)

That day also, they sprinkled the blood of the Lamb upon "the two side posts and on the upper door post" of the entrances to their tents, the firstborn of each family explaining to their children as they did so the wonderful story of their deliverance while sheltering behind that form of the cross. This is a symbol of the work to be done in every family today. Parents should gather their children into the home at least once every year and present Christ before them as their Passover. The father is to dedicate every inmate of his home to God and to do a work that is represented by the feast of the Passover. It is perilous to leave this solemn duty in the hands of others.

It was not enough that the passover lamb was slain and eaten; its blood must be sprinkled upon the doorposts. So it is not enough that we should know about the death of Jesus at Calvary; the merits of Christ's sacrifice must be applied to our lives. We must believe, not only that He died for the world, but that He died for us individually, and know that it has happened. 1 John 3:14. It is not enough even that we believe on Christ for the forgiveness of sin; we must by faith be constantly receiving spiritual strength and nourishment from Him through His word to grow in grace. We must appropriate to ourselves the virtue of the atoning sacrifice by "eating" His flesh and "drinking" His blood. John 6:53-56. And to explain His meaning He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Verse 63.

The hyssop (the words of the Bible) used in sprinkling the blood was the means of purification, being employed in the cleansing of the leper and of those defiled by contact with the dead. In the psalmist's prayer also its significance is seen: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51:7.

Understanding the spiritual significance of the passover ritual made some men in Moses' time very concerned when they could not attend it because they were ceremonially "unclean."

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Numbers 9:

6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the [burying of the] dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: 7 and those men said to him, "We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore [why] are we kept

back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?”

<sup>8</sup> And Moses said to them, “Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.”

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>10</sup> “Speak to the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off [the ritual had to be held in a certain place], yet he shall keep the passover to the LORD. <sup>11</sup> The fourteenth day of the SECOND month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. <sup>12</sup> They shall leave none of it to the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

<sup>13</sup> “But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbears [doesn’t bother] to keep the [first month] passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin [and its consequences].”

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A wise God made provision for such emergencies by organising another Passover to be held on the fourteenth day of the second month. All was to be held and done exactly as at the first for this was a further opportunity for experiencing release, but only for those who COULD NOT through no fault of their own attend the first passover. However, this second ritual has a meaning which is not immediately apparent.

What does this mean SPIRITUALLY?

Here is the record of the Passover LAMB at Calvary.

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John 19:

<sup>31</sup> The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation [day], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day [being both a ceremonial and a seventh-day Sabbath],) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

<sup>32</sup> Then came the soldiers, and broke the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they broke not His legs: <sup>34</sup> but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

<sup>35</sup> And he that saw it [John] bare record, and his record is true: and he knows that he says true, that you might believe. <sup>36</sup> For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, “A bone of Him shall not be broken.” [Exodus 12:46] <sup>37</sup> And again another scripture says, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” [Zechariah 12:10.]

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But in the reality He was slain from the foundation of the world, so the real pass over was available from that time! Revelation 13:8.

Lateral thought:

The first time salvation was offered to sinners was when the Son of God pleaded with Lucifer and his followers to give up their rebellion and come back into the fold. How do I know this happened? Because He is the LORD who changes not! Malachi 3:6. Just as He was compelled by love to offer Adam and Eve a way out (and all of us since then) so He tried with the rebels in heaven. However, they were “clean”, uncontaminated by death, and “not in a journey” when they refused to accept His gift so they cannot participate in the second pass over. Adam and Eve, on the other hand, who were contaminated by death once they chose to sin, did accept His offer and ever since then we, his descendants, have all been called to the second Passover.

As a sinner, Adam was in a different position from that of Satan. Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God's glory. To him as to no other created being had been given a revelation of God's love, for he was a covering cherub. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him or his followers, no more He could offer. But humanity was deceived; their minds darkened by Satan's misleading tales. The height and depth of the love of God they did not know. Therefore for us there is hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character we might be drawn back to Him.

That's why the fallen angels cannot be saved, and why there is no further salvation for humanity once the day of opportunity passes. “Take heed, brothers [and sisters], lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today;” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end; while it is said, “Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.” Hebrews 3:12-15. That's why we are told to, “keep the feast” today.

I repeat, the pass over experience as a part of the everlasting gospel has been in existence from the foundation of the world when the LAMB of God was slain. Revelation 13:8. But that day of opportunity will not always be available! And you may die soon so don't waste the chance.

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Numbers 9:

<sup>14</sup> “And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover to the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: you shall have one ordinance [rule], both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.”

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Here we see that, contrary to many opinions, salvation was not restricted to the Jews in the Old Testament times, but was freely available to anyone who chose to accept the terms of the offer. The offer still exists – that is, you must choose the LAMB from among all the other “saviours” clamouring for attention (1 Corinthians 8:6) – then consider your choice over a period of time to be certain of it (Luke 9:62) – then you may kill it and cook it ready for the evening meal of the day (1 Corinthians 15:3) – not forgetting to sprinkle its blood on the entrance to your home (Romans 10:9) – and partake of it roasted with bitter herbs. This latter point has at least two meanings – the persecutions referred to in 2 Timothy 3:12, and the contrition of heart we should feel because of our sins as we “feed” upon Christ (Psalm 34:18).

Then you may enjoy our week of Unleavened Bread. Isn't it great for us that those men asked that question because they wanted to participate in the ritual?

Now the Spirit appears to change the subject by discussing how the people of the exodus were led each day. In actual fact, He is describing the Christian experience AFTER the pass over when we have become the temple of the LORD.

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Numbers 9:

<sup>15</sup> And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. <sup>16</sup> So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. 18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents. 19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.

21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even to the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed. 22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed. 23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

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When it was for the good of the people and for the glory of God that they should pitch their tents in a certain place, the Son of God signified His will to them by causing the pillar of cloud to rest directly over the tabernacle, where it remained until He would have them journey again. We may have the same guidance if we wish. Jesus said, "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear [from Me], that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you." John 16:12-14.

If we do not know the will of God concerning ourselves, it is our own fault. We all have the same opportunities to obtain the knowledge offered (we can all see the cloud), therefore our sin of not knowing, not understanding, is as great in the sight of God as if we have heard and then transgressed.

Ron

P.S.

The travels of the children of Israel are faithfully described; the deliverance which the LORD wrought for them, their perfect organisation and special order, their sin in murmuring against Moses and thus against God, their transgressions, their rebellions, their punishments, their carcasses strewn in the wilderness because of their unwillingness to submit to God's wise arrangements - this faithful picture is hung up before us as a warning lest we follow their example of disobedience and fall like them.

“But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play [in false religious rituals].’

“Neither let us commit [religious] fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day twenty-three thousand. Neither let us tempt [ignore] Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

“Now all these things happened to them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” 1 Corinthians 10:5-12.

Has God changed from a God of order? No; He is the same in the present dispensation as in the former. Paul says: “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.” 1 Corinthians 14:33. He is as particular now as then. And He desires that we should learn lessons of order and organisation from the perfect order instituted in the days of Moses for the benefit of the children of Israel. Not the same kind of organisation, for that has passed, but one based on the principles of His kingdom.

Bye for now,  
Ron

Some of the comments in these readings are adapted from books in my library. No recognition is given because they are not intended as authorities, but are used because they express my understanding clearly. All the ideas expressed in these readings, right or wrong, are my own.

Jesus said, “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears My voice.” John 18:37. Christ affirmed that His word was in itself a key which would unlock the mystery to those who were prepared to receive it. It has a self-commending power, and this is the secret of the spread of His kingdom of truth.