

## *It Is the Lord's Passover*

The Passover was so important that God set the annual calendar by it (Ex 12:2). A perfect lamb was to be taken, slain, eaten and its blood applied to the door posts and lintels of the Israelites' dwellings.

Recently, an orthodox Jewish man contacted Helen Shapiro with some questions about references to Isaiah 53 and the Messiah in the Day of Atonement prayer book. These were easily answered but Helen's closing remarks to his initial enquiry encouraged him to search the Scriptures to see that Moses wrote about Jesus. This man had never heard that before! He has asked to know more as he's only ever heard Messianic arguments from the prophets.

As we approach Passover again this year, we can look into 'Moses' and examine some lesser-discussed details of the ordinance and consider their meaning, type and fulfilment in Jesus. Indeed, He fulfilled all of the Feasts of the Lord, but His atoning death took place at Passover - not on the Day of Atonement.

We read, 'and they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and

that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire'(Ex. 12:8,9).

The Lord instructed Moses and Aaron to 'speak...unto all the congregation of Israel' (v.3) and that the whole assembly of Israel were to participate (v.6). In a previous issue of BESORAH, I explained that the Passover sacrifice was a national peace offering – both the original event and the subsequent annual memorials (see Spring 2022), hence the command to address the entire people of Israel. But a peace offering was never sacrificed in a vacuum. It could only be offered when sin had been fully dealt with. So, the entire nation had to be right with God and right with each other, resulting in the public, collective testimony of the fellowship meal. The communal eating of the peace offering was evidence of complete restoration – *not* a means to it! It is a collective proclamation (Hebrew: Hagaddah) of 'what the Lord did for me...'.

Throughout the Scriptures, there are only a few recorded instances of the Passover commemoration being kept by Israel. They kept it in the wilderness of Sinai, the second year after they came out of Egypt (Num, 9). They also observed it in Joshua's day, after they crossed the Jordan (Josh 5). Though these were memorials of the original event, the very essence of Passover still required that the nation be right with God before



performing it (this was also echoed in the symbolism of cleaning out of the leaven, etc.). One can't just 'go through the motions' or celebrate a sort of 'National History Week' as one might celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in the USA. No, it had to be observed as though it happened to each successive generation and had to reflect a present spiritual reality. But after the occurrence in Joshua 5, scripture records that proper, full observances and celebrations of the Passover were intermittent, only at times of national restoration and only then when the nation was truly repentant of idolatry and backsliding. This deserves consideration, in view of what I've just written. These events, as responses to national spiritual revival, took place in the days of Hezekiah (2 Chron 30: 1-18), Josiah (2 Chron 35:1-19) and Ezra (Ezr 6:20). Such restoration is far-reaching in its implications, both for Israel and, of course, spiritually for the Church!

The sacrificial lamb was not to be eaten raw or boiled, but 'roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof' (Ex 12:9). If we believe that the Passover is fulfilled in Jesus, how is He typified in *these* particulars?

This word here for 'raw' (רָאָה) implies a harshness that hinders or discourages (רָאָה). This 'hindrance' is used in the Law regarding the forbidding (hindering) of a vow or of making it of none effect (Num 30). It's also used of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh's potential discouragement of the rest of the tribes and, in so doing, hindering them from entering the Land (Num 32). Flesh that has only had enough heat to warm the exterior is uncooked and therefore too tough to eat, whereas fully-cooked, roasted meat is tender. (Incidentally, the expression used for 'raw' found in I Sam 2:15 is different. This passage tells us of the worthless sons of Eli demanding

'raw' meat from those who came to sacrifice. The phrase here is (כִּי אֶחָד) 'with the life'. In other words, it's either still living or at least still has the blood in it!) While the Passover meal was to be eaten in haste, it was not to be prepared in such a hurry that the lamb wasn't cooked.

How was Yeshua 'roasted'? Today, the term is a euphemism for 'taking the micky' out of someone or poking fun at them, which seems pretty mild. However, its fuller meaning is that of ruthless ridicule, trash talk and mockery. James tells us that 'the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell'. (James 3:6). As Jesus was being crucified, unbelievers 'that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, 'Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross'. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, 'He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Messiah, the King of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe'. And they that were crucified with him reviled him' (Mark 15:29-32). Jesus' response to this 'roasting' was 'softness' and compassion, even while suffering the abuse and mockery: 'Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke 23:34), and, 'Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise' (Luke 23:43).

What can we see, then, in 'his **head** with his **legs**, and with the **purtenance** thereof'? The Hebrew word for 'legs' is כָּרַע. It means 'to bend or bow'. It is used to describe a posture of worship, either of God (2 Chron 7:3) or of Baal (I Kings 19:18).

The word 'purtenance' is an old word for entrails, or as we used to say, innards. In the Hebrew, it is קרב. It is the very inward part; the seat of life! When Elijah called upon the Lord to revive the child, he literally prayed, 'LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul *return into his inward-parts* again' (1 Kings 17:22, emph. Mine).

The lamb was not to be 'boiled or sodden with water'. It's essence was not to be diluted or its properties leached out into a broth that could be spilled out or drunk in place of the meat. It was to be offered whole and eaten that night only.

Surely the ordinance of the Passover lamb, roasted with its legs and internal organs, finds its fulfilment in John 19:30b, which reads, 'He said, It is finished: and He **bowed** His **head**, and gave up the **ghost**' (emph. mine).

To repeat, while Jesus fulfilled all of the Feasts of the Lord, He died at Passover - an event with global implications, not just national ones for Israel. There were Egyptians who came to believe in the God of Israel (Ex. 9:20 and 11:3) and we read that a 'mixed multitude' went up also with Israel (Ex 12:38), which Stephen refers to as 'the church in the wilderness' (Acts 7: 38).

Regarding Jesus' last words, I find an interesting meditation in two standard Hebrew translations of the New Testament that I regularly compare: one by Prof. Delitzsch and one by Zalkinson/Ginsburg. Delitzsch translates 'it is finished' into Hebrew using the word כלה. This word is used throughout the Old Testament to mean 'the conclusion'. Zalkinson/Ginsburg, however, use the word נשלם. This comes from the word Shalom (שלום) and comes from a different concept: that of restoring wholeness. In view of the fact that the Passover is a collective peace (שלום) offering, I find this choice compelling.

Whichever word Jesus actually spoke when He yielded up His spirit, His death was certainly the fulfilment of the Law and full payment for sin. We pray for this orthodox Jewish man, that his eyes will be opened to see the Lamb that God provided for Himself (Gen. 22) and he would *believe* Moses; for once he does, he will come to saving faith in Yeshua (John 5:46)!

May we all receive a deeper revelation of Yeshua, our Passover, and His finished work at this season. Shalom, Chrissy Rodgers