

Sermon Outline

“AND THE LORD GAVE THEM REST”: A CHRISTIAN READING OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

REMEMBERING THE LORD’S PASSOVER (JOSHUA 5:10-12)

I. No Shame in Christ

II. Israel Observes the First Passover (Joshua 5:10)

- A. After circumcision had been given, Israel observes yet another important ceremony as a part of their relationship with God—Passover.
- B. To understand what the Passover meant to Israel, we would have to go back to Exodus 12.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What does Israel do after the circumcision? (2) Where do we go to find the origins of the Passover?

III. The Very First Passover (Exodus 12:1-32)

- A. In Exodus, Israel is still being used as slave labor in Egypt.
- B. When we come to Exodus 12, the Lord had already sent nine plagues on Egypt.
- C. After the ninth plague, the Lord announces a tenth plague—He will kill every firstborn in the land of Egypt (Ex 11:5).
- D. Why is the Lord choosing this course of action? Here are two reasons.
 - 1. The tenth plague distinguishes between Egypt and Israel (Ex 11:7).
 - 2. The tenth plague is payback for Egypt’s killing of Israelite children (Ex 1:22).
- E. In Exodus 12, the Lord begins preparing Israel for the arrival of his tenth judgment.
- F. Israel’s preparation involves a special meal called the Passover.
- G. The Lord announces that the month of the Passover will be “the beginning of months.”
 - 1. Israel had been observing time according to the Egyptian calendar.
 - 2. Just before the tenth plague, God tells Israel that this month is the start of a new year.—Israel’s deliverance will be a new beginning for Israel.
 - 3. By pronouncing this month the start of a new year, God is...
 - a. redefining time for his people
 - b. breaking the mindset of shame that had been ingrained into his people.
- H. What does the Lord want Israel to do on this first month of their new year?
 - 1. On the tenth day of the month, each house must take a lamb for itself (Ex 12:3).
 - 2. Each family shall keep its lamb until the fourteenth day (Ex 12:6).
 - 3. On the fourteenth day, each family is to kill its lamb in the evening.
 - 4. Following that, each family is to smear the blood of its lamb on their doorframes (12:7).

5. Once this is done, each family will eat the slain lamb along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (12:8).
6. Why unleavened bread and bitter herbs?
 - a. The bitter herbs are clearly a reminder of the bitterness of slavery.
 - b. The unleavened bread was most likely a symbol of holiness.
 - c. The lamb was an atoning sacrifice to absorb the coming judgment on the family's behalf.
- I. Why is the feast called the Passover?

—“And when I see the blood, *I will pass over you...*” (Ex 12:11)
- J. There are a few points in Exodus 12:12-13 that deserve our further attention.
 1. The Lord says that he himself will pass through the land of Egypt.
 2. When God sees a house that is marked by the lamb's blood, he will spare it.
 3. The tenth plague is also judgment on the gods of Egypt
 - a. The Lord judged Re, sun god and father of the Pharaoh.
 - b. The Lord judged Isis, protector of children.
 - c. The Lord judged Osiris, god of the dead.
 - d. The Lord judged Horus, patron of the Egyptian kings.
- K. The Passover was both a work of salvation and an act of judgment.

—Through judgment, God delivers his people from slavery.
- L. God wants Israel to observe the Passover throughout time and teach its meaning to future generations (Ex 12:26-27).

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What is the nature of the tenth plague? (2) Why is God pursuing this course of action? (3) When is the Passover feast celebrated? What is the significance of God's revising the Israelite calendar? (4) Why is the Passover called such? (5) How is the tenth plague a judgment on the gods of Egypt? (6) What is the Passover meal meant to teach the Israelite children?

IV. The Start of a New Day in the New Land (Joshua 5:11-12)

- A. In Joshua 5:11-12, we see what happens on the day after the Passover.
- B. The day after the Passover, Israel observes the Feast of Unleavened Bread (cf. Ex 12:15-20).
- C. God discontinues the manna, and Israel begins eating the produce of the land.
 1. Now that Israel is out of the wilderness, Israel doesn't need manna anymore.
 2. God wants to bring Israel to a place where they will finally enjoy what the land has to offer.
- D. In verse 12, God is opening the windows of time and space, allowing us to get a taste of the restored universe.
 1. In the new creation, God will hold a feast for all his people (Isa 25:6)
 2. The feasting in Joshua 5 is a foretaste of things to come.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) What does Israel do after the day of Passover? (2) Of what is Joshua 5:11-12 a foretaste?

V. Remembering the Lord's Passover Today

God calls his new Israel to continue observing the Passover today. But instead of sacrificing a lamb afresh, we observe the Passover by continuing to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to absorb God's judgment for our sins and to free us to serve God (1 Cor 5:7). We observe the Passover also by celebrating the Lord's Table, which is the Passover feast in a new form.

By celebrating the Passover in a Canaanite world, we remember that our Lord Jesus has suffered our punishment, enable us to be spared the wrath of God, and judged the gods of the world. Because of this, we can have confidence that God is with us and live as God's faithful people in a difficult world.

- A. 1 Corinthians 5:7: "Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. *For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.*"
- B. The death of Christ has accomplished similar things as what we saw in Exodus 12:11-13.
 - 1. At his death, Christ the Lamb absorbed the punishments of God for his people (Rom 8:3).
 - 2. Since Christ died for his people, God will spare those who have been "marked" by the blood of Christ through faith (Rom 8:1).
—"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ" (Rom 8:1)
 - 3. Just as the first Passover was a judgment on the gods of Egypt, the death of Christ is also judgment on the gods of the world, especially Satan himself
—"Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out" (Jn 12:31; see also 2 Cor 4:4; Col 2:15).
- C. By resting on Christ, all these benefits come to us:
 - 1. God passes over us in mercy.
 - 2. God causes us to share in the triumph over Satan.
 - 3. God frees us for his eternal service.
- D. Trusting in Christ takes tangible form at the Lord's Table.
 - 1. The feast of the Lord's Table is the direct descendant of the Passover (Mt 26:17, 19, 26-28).
 - 2. When we eat of the Lord's Table with faith in Christ, we share in the death of Christ and all its benefits—mercy from God, triumph over Satan, freedom unto holy service.
- E. Having received the Passover death of Christ, we are strengthened to face the challenges of a fallen world.
 - 1. We deal with the gods of this world from a position of victory in Christ.
 - 2. We are free to live for God—and God alone.

***Questions for reflection:** (1) How are the benefits of Christ's death similar to the benefits of the original Passover? (2) What is the direct descendant of the Passover meal today? (3) What benefits does the Lord's Table give us when we partake with faith in Christ? (4) What does receiving Christ enable us to do?