



AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ²This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: ⁴ And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: ⁶ And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. ⁷ And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. ⁸ And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. ¹³ And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. (Ex 12:1-14)

There are many today who do not wish to honor the Lord through the order and liturgies which He has laid down in His Word. They prefer to launch out into the deep without compass or chart, and worship the Lord in their own way (as did Cain) and disregard the old paths in which their fathers in Christ walked. The old hymns are cast aside along with the Psalter and order of worship institutionalized by the early Church

fathers who remembered the Lord. Instead, inordinately loud and worldly music is adopted for worship, entertainment replaces reverence, and the Word of the Lord is seldom preached expositionally and with power. Many have completely torn the Old Testament out of their Bibles and believe they can rely alone on the New Testament for understanding. It is impossible to understand the New Testament without the foundation for it laid in the Old.

If I ask you, "Where do we have the Lord's Supper reflected in the Old Testament," many would answer that it was of an entirely new concept presented in the New. What of that first Passover in Egypt? It was an exact type and shadow of that which was to come and be fully realized in Christ. He it was that is the 'Lamb without blemish.' The Lord's Supper for the Church is simply the Passover fulfilled in Christ. In fact, like the Sabbath Rest, the Lord is also our Passover! *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **CHRIST OUR PASSOVER** is sacrificed for us: s Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* (1 Cor 5:7-8) In the Anglican tradition, which I believe comports well with the Word of God, we partake of wine to represent the Blood of Christ and His spiritual Presence, and unleavened Bread to represent His Body broken for us. The symbol must conformed to the character of that which it symbolizes.

If we did not know of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only son, how would we understand that no man's sacrifice could suffice for our Redemption save the innocent Blood of the only Begotten Son of God? Had it not been for the totally innocent animal of the Garden at Eden who had to die (the first death on earth) to cover the nakedness (sin) of Adam, how would Abel have known to bring a proper sacrifice, for without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins.

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. 16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, 20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. 21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. (Heb 9:15-22)

Now, you may be wondering about the title of this Devotion – Nisan 17. Nisan 17 has a particular meaning to Christians of advanced knowledge and understanding. Nisan is the first month of the year in the Hebrew calendar. It very easily relates to Spring when all things are made new (March & April). The ancient Hebrew New Year began on the seventh month (*Tishrei*), but God changed the observance of the beginning of the year to Nisan. The Jews still observe the New Year on the 1st of *Tishrei* (this past September 9) and businesses follow the Jewish pattern of beginning the fiscal year near that date. But God has named Nisan to be the beginning of months for His people, and so do we in recognizing that last Passover of Easter and the New Creation in Christ. Nisan is important to understand, but a certain day of Nisan is even more important to know – the 17th! Why? Of what significance in Nisan 17? Below are some important events that occurred on Nisan 17:

1. Noah's Ark came to rest on top of Mt. Ararat (Gen 8:4) Note that the seventh month was later designated as the first month at the time of the Exodus (Exo 12:2). (NEW BEGINNING!)
2. Jacob and his remaining eleven sons entered Egypt (Exo 12:40-41) 430 years before deliverance. (SAVED FROM FAMINE)
3. The children of Israel led by Moses through the Parting of the Red Sea (Exo 3:18, 5:3) (SAVED FROM PHAROAH)
4. Israel crossed Jordan Waters and partook of the first fruit of the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12) (BEGAN LIFE ANEW IN THE PROMISED LAND)
5. Hezekiah cleansed the Temple (eight hundred years after entering the promised land. (2 Chronicles 29:1-28) (RENEWAL OF VOWS TO GOD)
6. Queen Esther convinced King Ahaseurus to save the Jews from Destruction (Esther 3:12, 5:1) (SALVATION FROM WORLDLY OPPRESSOR)

With God, nothing happens by accident but in total conformity to His Sovereign Will. So, there is another very important event that occurred on Nisan 17th – in fact the most important event in time and eternity! The Lord Jesus Christ arose from the tomb on Nisan 17!

Our Lord was crucified on Nisan 14, and He gave up the Ghost at exactly three PM. It was the exact time that the Passover Lamb was sacrificed in the Temple. Passover began exactly at 6 PM that same day; however, in the Hebrew calendar, a new day begins at sundown – so 6 PM marked the beginning of 15th Nisan. You may wonder why the Hebrews begin each day at sundown? It is because God began each day of Creation at sundown. He began Creation of the world in total darkness, and finished his work in brilliant daylight. *1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the EVENING and the MORNING were the FIRST DAY.* (Gen 1:1-5)

Jesus lay in the tomb at the end of the 14th of Nisan. He was there during Passover on the 15th, and rose at the end of the 16th (Sabbath) 'as it began to dawn on the first day of the week (17th Nisan). *“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE HEART OF THE EARTH”* Matt 12:39-40 (KJV) If there ever was a wicked and adulterous generation, I believe it is the one we see today. Men and women traverse field and dale, state and nation, seeking after signs and wonders from crudely dressed so-called ministers of God; but these are the same hypocrites which the Lord pointed out among the Scribes, Pharisees, and Jewish rulers. We need only one sign, and that sign is the Lord crucified, buried, and risen from the grave!

Perhaps you do not believe we need the Old Testament still. If so, I am sorry for you for you will never come to a full understanding of the majestic salvation made available to you in Christ Jesus!