



... a lamb for a house ...

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 This 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. (Ex 12:1-12)

It is a great spiritual challenge to write of the First Passover owing to its importance and prophetic promise of the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are far too many allusions to the Cross of Christ to enumerate in this devotion. Jesus was the Lamb of God (without spot or blemish) that was sacrificed from before the foundation of the world. He was crucified, according to the most exhausting calculations, on the 14th of Nisan (and certainly on the day of the Passover Sacrifice in the Temple at Jerusalem). Jesus died precisely at the hour of the Passover sacrifice – the 9th hour (3 PM in our calculations).

The date is important for the first month of spring in the Hebrew calendar is Nisan (or more recently, Abib). It was the time of the New Creation upon which Noah looked out from the Ark and beheld the dry ground of the New Creation. According to ancient Hebrew writings, *The sages teach us that "with Nisan was the month that God created this world."* As it says in the beginning of the second account of Creation (which

corresponds to the Jewish calendar, beginning from Nisan): "When they were created" (בְּאֶרְבֵּבָה) and this word is written in a manner that it means "they were created." Thus, the month of Nisan signifies the annual renewal of the creation of this world. And In Nisan our forefathers were redeemed from Egypt and in Nisan we will be redeemed (Rosh Hashanah 11a). It amazes me the Jews do not recognize the stark and profound truths highlighted in the Passover of the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps their unbelief is truly a fatal flaw of their own rebellion against God's Word. The New Spiritual Creation we enjoy in Christ was thus made on the same month (Nisan) when we were redeemed from our sin and bondage just as was Israel from Egypt – the land of sin and bondage symbolically.

All mankind, being descended from Adam, are under the curse of sin. All are born as walking dead – that is, with the sentence of death hanging over their countenances. (Eph 2). It is true that all in the land of Egypt of the first born were under that sentence of death on the Passover Night. There was one exception only – those whose doorposts and lintels were covered with the blood of the lamb - these were spared. The same is true today. Only those who are under the blood of Christ shall be "passed over" by the second death. *But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you;* (1 Peter 1:19-20), as also we read in this text from Exodus today: *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.* (Exodus 12:5)

The Passover has eternal implications. It was the beginning of the called out nation of Israel, or the Old Testament Church, and was an enlargement upon, and a contingent of, the call of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Passover, by no means, has been done away. We enjoy the Passover with each partaking of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We enjoy the spiritual Presence of Christ, in stark form, especially during the holy reception of the elements of Bread and Wine of the Lord's Supper. Christ is the full realization and fulfillment of the Passover, and He has become 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: 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) Leaven represents sin, and that is the reason that we use unleavened bread in the Communion Service. The Bread represents the sinless Body of Christ, and the Wine, His Blood. So, the symbol must bear the nature of that which is symbolized. Some moderns carelessly use table bread and water. This may be more convenient, but worship is not a fast-foods practice. Care and reverence is essential.

The Passover occurred in old Egypt as the tenth plague that the Lord sent against that land to force Pharaoh to free the people of God. The Passover distinguishes a great gulf between the people of God and those of the world. All of the world shall die in trespasses and sin; but those people of God (who are not accounted as part of the world) shall be passed over by the Angel of Death if they have secured their hearts under the Blood of the *Lamb without blemish slain before the foundation of the world.* " *And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.* (Ex 11:5-7)

The Passover is more than a memorial and takes on the sacramental nature of baptism. Baptism is the sign by which we are sealed when we are received by faith into the Church of the Living God – it is the first of the two Sacraments of the Church that relates to standing in Christ. Holy Communion (Passover of old) is the Bread of Heaven

(Word) we consume daily for our spiritual sustenance. The Cup represents the shed blood of Christ as well as the cross that every Christian must bear in following Christ in His life, death, and resurrection. Of course, following Christ in His death means that the Christian does not truly die, but lives on in the resurrected Christ!

The Holy Communion (as Passover observance)

1. [SACRAMENT] A Sacrament, as long as you continue in obedience to God and do not observe it unworthily. See Lev. 23:2.
2. [to be observed for ever] Hebrew: `owlam (H5769), "time out of mind; without end." It means time without defined limits and corresponds to the Greek: aionios (G166), translated "everlasting" and "eternal" in connection with the existence of God, heaven, hell, life, the kingdom, and other things that are clearly eternal. The passover and certain other memorials are eternal and will be observed in the eternal reign of Christ (Ezek. 45:17; 46:14). See `Owlam-- Everlasting. The term in both the Old Testament Hebrew and the New Testament Greek mean the same – EVERLASTING. In the Reformation Church of England, Holy Communion was observed less frequently than the Roman Catholic Church who has made an idol of the Communion Service. The old Passover was observed once per year, and it is certainly fitting to observe the Lord's Supper as often as once per month – though no limitation to its frequent observance is stated in Scripture. But to observe the Holy Communion daily, or even weekly, tends to make the observance too common and less meaningful than a less frequent observance. The joyful nature of Christ as our Eternal Passover whereby we need not fear the "shadow of death," means that, like the Sabbath, the Christian can take comfort in a continual Passover and a continual Sabbath in Christ (it is He who works IN us and not we, ourselves). If it is Christ who works in and through us, our own labors and works must take Sabbath (REST). *Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* (Col 1:29) *Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.* (Heb 4:1-6)

Are you resting in the winds of God, or still rowing upstream in your canoe of wood and straw?