

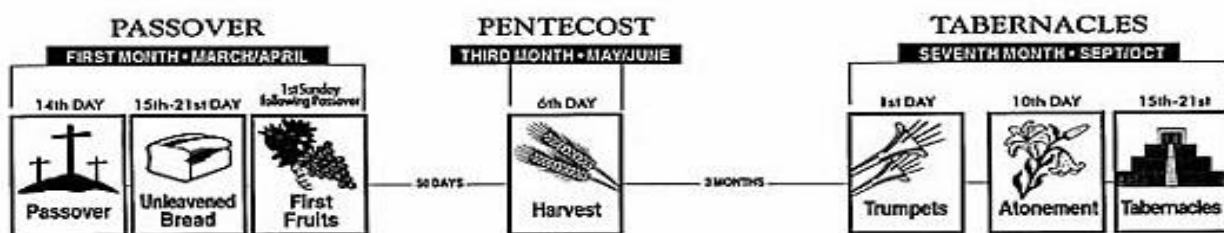
Series – God gives us Reasons to Celebrate

Celebration of His Plan Of Redemption *Festival of Passover*

Exodus 12:1-13,

Life was over – but it began anew. The most noted apologist of our day died this week. His story is the story of the Passover in our age. He was born on March 26, 1946, in India. His family went to church and observed Christian rituals, but he said he never heard the gospel. "I attended more Hindu festivals and celebrations than I did Christian ones," As a young man, Zacharias attended a Youth for Christ rally, where he responded to the invitation with what he later termed "a kind of half-hearted commitment." At the age of seventeen, in response to poor academic performance that he felt brought shame on his family, he took poison to kill himself. He was rushed to the hospital, where a representative of Youth for Christ left him a Bible opened to John 14 and Jesus' statement, "Because I live, you also will live." "Jesus," he prayed, "if you are the One who gives life as it is meant to be, I want it. Please get me out of this hospital bed well, and I promise I will leave no stone unturned in my pursuit of truth." God answered his prayer, and Ravi Zacharias kept his promise.

Biblical Review – 7 Feasts combined into 3 great parties in Jerusalem each year



Passover had three parts and Christ fulfilled all three.

1) **Passover (Leviticus 23:5)** – Pointed to the Messiah as our Passover lamb (**1 Corinthians 5:7**) whose blood would be shed for our sins. Jesus was crucified during the time that the Passover was observed (**Mark 14:12**). Christ is a "lamb without blemish or defect" (**1 Peter 1:19**) because His life was completely free from sin (**Hebrews 4:15**). As the first Passover marked the Hebrews' release from Egyptian slavery, so the death of Christ marks our release from the slavery of sin (**Romans 8:2**).

2) **Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6)** – Pointed to the Messiah's sinless life (as leaven is a picture of sin in the Bible), making Him the perfect sacrifice for our sins. Jesus' body was in the grave during the first days of this feast, like a kernel of wheat planted and waiting to burst forth as the bread of life.

3) **First Fruits (Leviticus 23:10)** – Pointed to the Messiah's resurrection as the first fruits of the righteous. Jesus was resurrected on this very day, which is one of the reasons that Paul refers to him in **1 Corinthians 15:20** as the "first fruits from the dead."

I. The Event that was Celebrated

Exodus 12:1-13

A. God provided for Israel to become a nation

1. Jacob's family was moved to Egypt to isolate and protect – 70 in all – a Family
2. Joseph made the way for them to thrive and multiply – 600,000 left – A Nation
3. A new Pharaoh forgot Joseph and feared the nation – turn them into slaves

B. God provided a leader to lead them to freedom

1. Moses miraculously preserved and trained
2. Moses fled, waited, and then was called of God
3. Moses demanded freedom, and God demonstrated His power -10 plagues

C. God provided a plan for their deliverance

1. The final plague -death of the first-born son
2. The lamb was to be slain and the blood applied
3. The angel of death would look on the blood and spare the family

II. The Observance of the Celebration

A. In Egypt to be spared

1. Lamb to be chosen - 1-year-old male, without blemish,
2. Lamb to be slain – no bones to be broken - Blood applied to top and sides of doorframes
3. Lamb to be roasted and eaten – no leftovers - Done by families or shared with another family

4. To be eaten with their coats and walking shoes on – ready to go -they stayed indoors till dawn
5. They were sent out by Pharaoh

B. Every year after – Passover became the first month – a new beginning

Lamb and special meal prepared to remind them

Bitter herbs to remind them of the pain of slavery

4 ritual cups of wine celebrating God's deliverance

No yeast (typical of sin) in their bread

Exclusive for those who were part of the covenant relationship with God

Instructions for Passover also appear in Numbers 9, Deuteronomy 16, In pre-exilic times, the festival is observed in by Joshua in Joshua 5, by Josiah in 2 Kings 23 and 2 Chronicles 35, and by Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 30. Ezra 6 also records a post-exilic celebration of Passover by the returnees from exile.

III. The Fulfillment of the Celebration in Christ

A. Condition of those without Christ

Slaves to sin - *Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. Romans 6:16*

Without Hope - *In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. Ephesians 2:12*

B. Christ is the Lamb of God

Identified by John the Baptist - *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29*

Chosen and inspected – triumphant entry and questioning by priests – found innocent
Pilate turned to the leading priests and to the crowd and said, "I find nothing wrong with this man!" I have examined him thoroughly on this point in your presence and find him innocent. Luke 23:4, 14b

This High Priest of ours (Jesus) understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. Hebrews 4:15

Blood shed for sins of others

For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. ¹⁹ It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. 1 Peter 1:18-19

He will stand for us in Heaven

Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders...⁹ And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. Revelation 5:6a, 9

What does this mean for me? The Blood of Christ

I have gained the unmerited favor of God, His Grace, and am forgiven!

He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. (Ephesians 1:7)

I am justified and am spared from the wrath of God

And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. (Romans 5:9)

I am cleansed

But if we are living in the light, God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

I have the power to overcome the enemy

And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die. (Revelation 12:11)

How Shall we Celebrate – clues from the children of Israel

With anticipation – **expecting the Lord to come at any time**

Clothed and ready to go – **clothed with Christ and ready to follow in obedience**

Leaving sin behind – **no sin can go with us into heaven therefore confess and repent**

Trusting God to spare them by His grace – **judgment is inevitable, but grace is available**

God wants you to be free from the poison of sin and to celebrate is wonderful plan of Redemption