

## **Jesus and the Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:1-14)**

Hello, my name is Stephen Sizer. Please open your Bible and turn with me to Exodus 12. God's people were slaves in Egypt. How would God rescue them? God reveals a plan that will cause Pharaoh to beg the Jews to leave his land. God sends a series of terrible judgments (called Plagues) on Egypt. Although the first nine inflicted great suffering on the people, Pharaoh hardened his heart against God. The tenth plague would get his attention. At midnight on a certain night, the Lord would go through the land of Egypt and every firstborn son would die immediately. But God would spare his people - if they followed His instructions. When blood of a lamb was sprinkled on the doorpost of each home, God would see the blood and would "pass over" that house. But if God didn't see the blood, he would take the life of the firstborn in judgment. It was the blood of the lamb that saved the people of God that night. Every year since then, for 3500 years, the Jews have observed a Passover celebration as a solemn reminder of God's amazing deliverance in Egypt. Here are seven instructions God gave his people.

Notice how in each detail there is a wonderful insight into the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross.

### **1. A lamb must be chosen**

“Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.” (Exodus 12:3)

It couldn't be a bull or a dove, which were sometimes used in other Old Testament sacrifices. God was very particular--it was to be a lamb and only a lamb. Nothing else would do. When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him, he cried out, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). The Apostle Paul refers to Christ as our "Passover Lamb, who has been sacrificed." (1 Corinthians 5:7). A lamb must be chosen.

### **2. The lamb must be a male**

Verse 5 states that "the animals you choose must be year-old males." (Exodus 12:5). Jesus fulfilled this in that he was the son born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:31-32). A lamb must be chosen. The lamb must be a male.

### **3. The lamb must be unblemished**

Verse 5 adds, “The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect.” (Exodus 12:5). This means that

family would have to inspect their lamb to make sure there were no open sores, no infections, no diseases, no blemishes, no sickness of any kind.

The Apostle Peter refers to Jesus as being "a lamb without blemish or defect." (1 Peter 1:19) Hebrews 4:14-16 emphasizes that though Christ was tempted in every way that we are, He was without sin. When Pontius Pilate finished examining Jesus, he declared "I find no fault in him." (John 19:6). The lamb to be chosen must be a male and unblemished.

#### **4. The lamb must be slaughtered at twilight**

"Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight." (Exodus 12:6)

The words literally mean "between the evenings," which in Jewish thought meant between 3-5 p.m. The New Testament tells us that Jesus was nailed to the Cross at the "third hour," meaning 9:00 a.m. as the day began at sunrise around 6:00am. Matthew 27:45 tells us that there was darkness from the sixth hour until the ninth hour, or from 12 noon to 3:00 p.m. Shortly after, Jesus uttered his final words and died. His body was then taken down from the cross before sundown.

Thus, Jesus died "between the evenings" (3-5 p.m.) at the exact hour the Passover lambs were being sacrificed throughout Israel. The timing was perfect. The lamb chosen must be a male, unblemished and slaughtered at twilight.

### **5. The bones of the lamb must not be broken**

God gives an additional instruction "Do not break any of the bones." (Exodus 12:46). It was the custom of the Romans to break the legs of those being crucified in order to hasten their death. John 19:32-36 tells us that the Roman soldiers did not break Jesus' legs because he had already died. The Apostle John points out that this happened to fulfil the Scripture, "Not one of his bones will be broken." (John 19:36). The sacrificial lamb chosen must be a male, unblemished, slaughtered at twilight, but its bones must not be broken.

### **6. The blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the doorposts**

"Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs." (Exodus 12:7)

After the lamb had been slaughtered and the blood drained, the father was to take some of the blood and sprinkle it on top and the sides of the doorframe.

The blood would be the sign to the Lord that the family had sacrificed a lamb as he had commanded.

“The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.”  
(Exodus 12:13)

The lamb alone could not save God’s people. Only the blood sprinkled on the doorpost could spare the people from the terrible judgment of God that struck down the first born of every Egyptian family. Jesus Christ is our only hope of salvation. His blood was poured out for us (Matthew 26:28). He is God’s Lamb offered for the sins of the world. However, Jesus’ blood saves only when it is applied. For those who reject the blood, even the Lamb of God cannot save them. If you want to experience freedom from bondage and avoid the sure judgment of God, the Lamb’s blood must be applied to the door of your heart. The sacrificial lamb chosen must be a male, unblemished, slaughtered at twilight, its bones must not be broken and its blood must be sprinkled on the doorposts.

## **7. The lamb sacrificed must be eaten**

“That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast... This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your

belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover." (Exodus 12:8-11)

In John 6, Jesus made one of his most provocative statements.

"Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them." (John 6:53-56)

The imagery is further developed in Jesus teaching at the Last Supper, the Passover meal he shared with the disciples on the night he was betrayed.

"And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:19-20)

The Passover, when God literally passed over the homes of God's people because of the blood sprinkled, was a foreshadowing of the Last Supper. And the Communion or Lord's Supper, we celebrate has its roots in the Passover. Seven instructions God gave his people – and in each and every detail a wonderful parallel with all that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished for us on the cross.

A lamb must be chosen	Exodus 12:3	John 1:29
The lamb must be male	Exodus 12:5	Luke 1:30-32)
The lamb must be unblemished	Exodus 12:5	1 Peter 1:19
The lamb must be slaughtered	Exodus 12:6	Matthew 27:45
The bones must not be broken	Exodus 12:46	John 19:36
The blood must be sprinkled	Exodus 12:7,13	Matthew 26:28
The meat must be eaten	Exodus 12:8-11	Luke 22:19-20

Recognising then from Exodus that Jesus is indeed our Passover lamb. How then should we live? The Apostle Paul writes,

“For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

With sincerity and truth. How do you respond to these truths? Christ is indeed in all the Scriptures. The question is, does he also dwell in you too? He is not just a lamb, but the lamb. The question is, is he your lamb? May you have confidence that he is indeed today. May God bless you.