

April 05, 2019

Warm hellos dear brethren, and spiritual family here on the Gulf Coast, and scattered children of God.

My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

The Most Important Passover

Here we are less than two weeks away from the annual *Passover memorial observance*. What was the most important Passover celebration recorded in the Scriptures? There have been several significant ones in history.

The original Passover celebrated in Egypt was an incredible and profound event. Numbers Chapter 9 then records the Passover celebration one year after the Exodus. The Passover celebrations during the revivals instituted by Kings of Judah, Hezekiah and Josiah, were all wonderful celebrations as well and at least temporary returns to following God's instructions. Luke chapter 2 also records the travel and celebration of "the Feast of the Passover" by Jesus and his parents.

We find the most significant Passover celebration was the final one observed by Jesus with His disciples just prior to his death.

Jesus clearly stated that He was going to observe the Passover with His disciples, which included killing and eating a lamb or kid at the meal. *After* the meal he introduced the symbols of the broken unleavened bread and the wine. We read in Mark's Gospel, "Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?" (Mark 14:12)

The chronology of the events mentioned in this verse can sometimes be perplexing. Here is the explanation: It is obvious that Jesus gave instructions to Peter and John (Compare Luke 22:8) during the daylight portion of Abib 13. The events of that day would include the preparation of the stew of bitter herbs, the procuring unleavened bread for use in the ceremony later that night (the night time portion of the beginning of the 14th) and the procuring of the Passover lamb to be slain at sunset and then roasted and eaten that night of the 14th. It was referred to as the *first day of Unleavened Bread* because unleavened bread was to be used during the Passover that evening. Even though this was not the Holy Day or First Day of Unleavened Bread

(which is the 15th of Abib.) The meal included the roasted lamb. Why else would it be stated "they killed the Passover lamb?"

The gospels indicate that Jesus had made a prior agreement with the owner of the building for use of the upper room where they observed the Passover. The owner brought water and may have acted as a type of caterer. Peter and John had some part in the preparation. The lamb could not be slain until sunset (or at the beginning of) Abib 14. The slaying, dressing and roasting of the lamb (a smaller animal not a full grown adult) could be done in about 3 hours. Jesus had to observe this Passover according to the instructions in the Pentateuch.

Luke chapter 22 then records, "When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him (v.14)." Mark 14:17 says that He and the disciples came "in the evening." Jesus announced to the disciples, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke 22:15)

They may not have actually begun eating the meal until about 9:00-9:30 pm. (Sunset in early April in Jerusalem was about 7:00 pm. That night Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover lamb and bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Jesus of course anticipated his introducing of the foot-washing, and putting profound emphasis on the broken unleavened bread and poured out and distributed wine.

The foot-washing account in John's Gospel is introduced with "And supper being ended" (John 13:2 NKJV based on the Byzantine text) The traditional meal was basically finished, but the food was still on the low table. Following the foot-washing, Jesus indicated to John that it would be Judas Iscariot who would betray Him. Jesus then tells Judas, "What you do, do quickly." (v.27) Then John records, "he [Judas] then went out immediately. And it was night." (v.28) So, Judas was apparently there for the foot-washing, but leaves before the bread and wine were given to the other disciples as symbols of the body and blood of Jesus.

The introduction and explanation of the *bread and wine* is indeed sobering and profound part of this final Passover observance by Jesus as a human being. He knew that He would fulfill the symbolism of the slain Passover animal. He knew that his body would be horribly beaten and He would shed His blood, finally giving His life to pay for the sins of all mankind.

Jesus focused on and placed a positive outcome on what would transpire over the next day or daylight part of Abib 14. "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28)

We are so blessed to be able to enter the new covenant in this age as a forerunner of what Jesus will do with Israel in the future. (Jeremiah 31) For us, He is NOW the Mediator of the better covenant with the better promises of eternal life. (Hebrews 8:6) Let us all examine ourselves, and as we prepare for this upcoming Passover, be thankful for understanding what this Passover Memorial service symbolizes and that we can have our intricate part in it.

May His Peace be with you as we enter into the Sabbath created for mankind. Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily! Please do pray for us as well.

-Scott and Gayle Hoefker (The Living God Ministries Gulf Coast)

The schedule for this week's Sabbath are:

April 5 - Praises Gifts and Prayers to welcome God's Sabbath 7:00 pm (via Telephone with Stephen Glover in Montgomery)

April 6 - Spirit and Truth Worship 10:15 am, with local services held in Spanish Fort. All are welcome and encouraged to connect live via our normal phone conference.

Lunch to follow @ Hoefker's 12:20 pm.

April 6 - Sabbath Fellowship (interactive Bible Study) 4:00 pm from Spanish Fort (connect live all others via telephone conference).

Upcoming dates for LGM Gulf Coast:

Passover-April 18, 7:30 pm Spanish Fort @ Hoefker's, and in Montgomery.

NTBMO – April 19, 7:00 pm @ Hoefker's Home in Spanish Fort.

UB-1 – April 20, 10:15 am Worship Services @ Hoefker's in Spanish Fort, Noon Meal at 12:30 pm, Almond Branch Evangelism (Bible Study) 2:00 pm,(connect from Montgomery), Family style potluck meal @ Hoefker's 5:00 pm.

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