

The Passover Lamb of God

Exodus 12:1-16 Matt 26:17-20, 26-30 1 Cor. 5:6-8

February 26, 2023

Pastor Dave Bolte



Do you remember the 10 Plagues that God brought on Egypt?

Pharaoh had defied the Lord; he refused to listen to Moses the prophet, and he would not let the Israelites leave Egypt. So God sent the 10 Plagues, meant to show the power and the glory of the One True God, and lead Pharaoh to repentance.

Each of the 10 Plagues corresponded to an Egyptian god or goddess, showing how that Egyptian god or goddess was powerless and unable to help the Egyptians. The 10 Plagues were:

1. Water turned into blood
2. Frogs from the Nile
3. Gnats from the dust
4. Swarms of flies
5. Pestilence on the cattle and livestock
6. Boils and sores on people and animals
7. A Firestorm of hail from the sky
8. An Invasion of locusts
9. Three days of complete darkness

The **tenth plague** was the worst of all: the death of the firstborn sons.

This tenth plague was different though, for with it, God gave the entire world a glimpse of the Messiah, He gave them a foreshadow of the Savior to come.

The tenth plague is the story of the Passover.

God told His people to sacrifice a lamb, and put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of their homes. The Israelites were to eat the lamb with their families, and that night, the Angel of Death would “Passover” their homes and spare their firstborn sons. In this tenth plague, the Israelites were saved; and the Egyptians died. Pharaoh’s own firstborn son died that night; but God accepted the sacrifice of a lamb in the place of the Israelites, and *death passed over them*.

God turned this 10th plague on the Egyptians into a an act of mercy, grace, and salvation for the Israelites --- and taught them about the Messiah to come, the Savior of the world.

*The Passover lamb pointed forward to Jesus,
Who is the "Passover Lamb of God",
Who's blood¹ saves all people from death!*

God provided His Son for you, Who shed His blood shed on the cross, so that death "passes over" you. Through faith, the blood of the Passover Lamb of God is placed over you, and you will not die, but live forever. Through faith in Christ, death "passes over" you! You have been given eternal life! **The Old Testament Passover lamb pointed forward to Jesus, the "Passover Lamb of God", who saves all people from death.** He is the substitute that God accepts in your place; Jesus takes your sins and dies on a cross, for you and in your place!

On Jesus' last night on earth, the night in which He was betrayed, Jesus fulfilled the **Old Testament Passover²**; and He began something new. He gave His People a **new celebration** to remember, a **new meal** to eat in the **New Testament times**: *the Lord's Supper.*

Just as God told His Old Testament people to **eat** the Passover lamb, so too, God now tells His New Testament people to **"take and eat"** and **"take and drink"** of Jesus, our Passover Lamb, in the Lord's Supper. In bread and wine,

¹ The "Blood" of Jesus is a reference to the cross, where His blood was shed for you. The word comes fully loaded with Biblical images, such as the idea of sacrifice, where God accepts a substitutes death for you. The word "blood" brings in the ideas of atonement and propitiation, where Jesus' blood (=death) pays for your sins, satisfies God's Wrath, and creates peace between you and God. It also reminds us of the Biblical image of Passover, which is the theme of this sermon: death passes over you and you will live forever through faith in Christ, the Passover Lamb of God!

² What we know today as Maundy Thursday and Good Friday are one day in the New Testament: Passover. (The Israelites counted days from sunset to sunset, not midnight to midnight like we do). It was the very last Passover celebration, as Jesus fulfills its meaning and purpose. It is part of the "Old" Testament that is set aside now that Christ is here and fulfills it. In its place, and immediately following that last Passover in the Upper Room on Maundy Thursday, Jesus institutes Holy Communion. Holy Communion is the meal of the New Testament era, where the Holy Christian Church eats of Jesus (Body and Blood), the Passover Lamb of God, in bread and wine. In this eating, death "passes over" you as God forgives your sins and gives you eternal life.

we “take and eat” and “take and drink” Christ’s body and blood, our Passover Lamb. In the Lord’s Supper, death “[passes over](#)” you as God forgives your sins and gives you life. Holy Communion is the new “Passover” meal of salvation where Jesus gives of Himself to His People: the Holy Christian Church³.

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “[This is My body](#), which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, “[This is My blood of the New Testament](#); do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

The Sacrament of the Altar is the true [body and blood](#) of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself, for us Christians to eat and to drink. [Luther’s Small Catechism](#)

Just as God told the Israelites to [eat](#) the Passover lamb, so too, God tells us to “[take and eat](#)” and “[take and drink](#)” of Jesus, our Passover Lamb in the Lord’s Supper. Holy Communion is the new “Passover” meal of [salvation](#) where Jesus gives of Himself to His People: the Holy Christian Church.

**Jesus, our Passover Lamb,
is not only [food for salvation](#),
but also our [strength for sanctification](#).**

When Jesus forgives your sins, He also sets you apart to live a holy and godly life. You are sanctified: you are set apart to live a holy and godly life!

Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. [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 5:8

One part of the ancient Passover celebration was that the Israelites were not to eat [yeast](#) for an entire week. [Yeast](#) represented the corruption of sin; all kinds of [malice](#) and [wickedness](#). Refraining from yeast was a way for the Israelites to remember that they were God’s People; and He had saved them and given them new life.

³ Bishop Ignatius of Antioch (AD 108) described the Lord’s Supper as “the medicine of immortality, and the antidote to prevent us from dying; also that which causes us to live forever in Jesus Christ.” This idea come from John 6, where Jesus says for instance, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the Last Day (6:54).” Here Jesus attaches both eternal life and resurrected life as gifts given in Holy Communion. Or as Bishop Ignatius describes it, the “medicine of immortality”!

Just as there was to be no trace of yeast in the Israelite homes; so too there is to be no trace of sin in your life.

This was so important, that if an Israelite did eat something made with yeast during this festival, he was to be “**cut off from the community of Israel**”.

Now that we have **Christ as our Passover Lamb**, we too are God’s People and He has saved us and given us new life. We are to live in sincerity and truth. We are to get rid of the “**yeast**” in our lives --- not *physical yeast* like in bread, but *spiritual “yeast”*: that is, any trace of sin, malice, and wickedness. You are not to let sin have a foothold anywhere in your life! Sin is like **yeast**, it will grow and spread and it will overtake you. And if it overtakes you, you will **cut off from the Kingdom of God**.

† **Be very careful** so that you do not minimize sin in your life

† **Be very careful** so that the world and its evil does not influence your thoughts, attitudes, or actions

Sin is like **yeast**, it will grow and spread and it will overtake you. And if it overtakes you, you will **cut off from the Kingdom of God**.

The only way to remove the “**yeast of sin**” from your life is through **confession and absolution**. Through *confession and absolution*,

- Your turn away from sin; you renounce the disobedience and immorality in your life; and you confess it all to God
- And you hear words of Absolution; you hear an official and powerful proclamation that your sins are forgiven in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Through *confession and absolution*, you are cleansed of sinful yeast as you hear the **powerful words of forgiveness**. You are refocused and recentered on Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes your sins away!

Lent is a time when we remember our sin, repent of it, and turn to Christ for forgiveness. May you do that today, remembering and believing that God has sent His Son Jesus for you, to be your Passover Lamb, Amen.

Lord Jesus, our Passover Lamb,
we thank You for Your death on the cross so
that death “passes over us”.

**We praise You that You have taken the
burden of our sin and guilt off of us and put
it onto Yourself when You died on the cross.**

We pray that You deliver us from evil and
sin, so that it does not grow and spread in
our lives.

Help us to live as Your holy people.

We ask for the Holy Spirit so that we may
glorify You in all that we do.

Amen.

Exodus 12:1-16

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, 2 “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. 3 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. 4 If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. 5 The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. 6 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. 7 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. 8 That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. 9 Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire—with the head, legs and internal organs. 10 Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. 11 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. 12 “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD. 13 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. 14 “This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD—a lasting ordinance. 15 For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. 16 On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat; that is all you may do.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

6 Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? 7 Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 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.

Matthew 26:17-20, 26-30

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?” 18 He replied, “Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, ‘The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.’” 19 So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover. 20 When evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve.

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” 30 When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.