

Abounding Grace Christian Church

Seeing Christ in the Old Testament: A Study of the Types of Christ – Part 6

I. Seeing Christ in the Book of Exodus (continued).

A. The Passover Lamb.

1. **Backstory** - God had sent nine plagues upon Egypt attempting to get Pharaoh to let His people go. Instead of conceding, Pharaoh continued to harden his heart and refused to do what God commanded. As a result, God sent one final plague which would affect Pharaoh personally. This plague resulted in the death of all the firstborn of Egypt (**Exodus 11**). Note **verse 10** states; **“So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the LORD hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.”** It’s important to note that God didn’t directly harden the heart of Pharaoh. Many times, prior to this, Scripture states that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (**cf. Exodus 7:14; Exodus 7:22; Exodus 8:15; Exodus 8:19; Exodus 8:32; Exodus 9:7**). We should not think that God persuaded an unwilling, kind-hearted Pharaoh to be hard towards God and His people. In hardening the heart of Pharaoh, God simply allowed his heart to pursue its natural inclination. There is a saying that says, **“The same sun that melts wax hardens clay.”**

2. God institutes the Passover as His means of setting apart the firstborn of the Israelites for Salvation - **Exodus 12:1-14, 21-28**. The word **“Passover”** has several possibilities regarding its meaning. Many scholars think it means simply that God will literally **“pass over”** the Israelites when He sees the blood on the door posts and lintel. Victor Hamilton states;

“The interpretation of others suggests that *pāsaḥ*... means not ‘to pass over’ per se but rather ‘to defend, protect.’ The Lord will protectively cover the houses of the Israelites and will not suffer the destroyer to enter (Ex 12:23b, and cf. I Cor 10:10; Heb 11:28). It is the destroyer who seeks to enter the houses and the Lord rebuffs him, standing guard by the houses of his people. The blood is a sign to the Lord. ‘When I see the blood... I will ‘protect’ you’ (not the negative idea, ‘I will pass over/omit you’”¹

Messianic Jews, Ceil and Moishe Rosen seem to agree when they write;

“The verb ‘pass over’ has a deeper meaning here than the idea of stepping or leaping over something to avoid contact. It is not the common Hebrew verb, *a-bhar*, or *gabhar*, which is frequently used in that sense. The word used here is *pasah*, from which comes the noun *pesah*, which is translated Passover. These words have no connection with any other Hebrew word, but they do resemble the Egyptian word *pesh*, which means ‘to spread wings over’ in order to protect.”²

3. The Passover Lamb as a Type of Christ.

a. The lamb was to be without blemish (**verse 5**). Jesus, **“The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”** (**John 1:29**) was examined and found to be without sin (without blemish). (**Matthew 27:1-2, 11-14, 17-26; John 11:49-53**). The Apostle Peter wrote:

“[K]nowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” – I Peter 1:18-19.

b. The lamb was to be a male of the first year (**verse 5**). The **“first year”** indicates the **“firstborn.”** This is in contrast to the first born of Egypt who would be killed by the plague. The firstborn lamb would be substitute for the firstborn of Israel. Jesus is said to be the **“firstborn among many brethren”** (**Romans 8:29**) and the **“firstborn from the dead”** (**Colossians 1:18**).

c. The lamb’s blood was to be put on the two doorposts and the lintel of the house where the lamb would be eaten (**verse 7**). Many suggest that this was symbolic of the cross with the horizontal lintel above the vertical doorposts.

¹ Victor P. Hamilton, “1786 נִסָּךְ,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 729.

² Ceil and Moishe Rosen, *Christ in the Passover*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1978), 22.

Kevin J. Conner writes;

“The blood must be shed. This was evidence of death. The blood must be sprinkled. This was the evidence of application....The blood was to be the token on the door of every house in order for deliverance to be effective. The absence of blood brought judgment by the death angel....The blood must be applied in faith and obedience to the Word of the Lord through the Gospel given to Moses....In fulfillment, we see that when Jesus died on the Cross, He was both the Lamb and the blood-sprinkled door. In His death He is the Lamb, but in His resurrection He is the door – the only entrance to the Household of God, the Household of faith (John 10:9)”³

d. The body of the lamb was to be roasted and eaten (**verses 8-10**). In regard to the body being roasted, Ceil and Moishe Rosen write:

“Fire in Scripture speaks of God’s judgment. Isaiah the prophet foretold that the Messiah would bear the sins of many, be wounded for sins not His own, be stricken with God’s judgment, and be numbered with transgressors. As Jesus the Messiah suffered the fire of God’s wrath and judgment, He cried out from the cross: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ (Matthew 27:46). Second Corinthians 5:21 says: ‘He [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us...that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.’”⁴

- 1) The lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread. **“Unleavened bread”** refers to; **“bread made without yeast; bread quickly made, without waiting for the dough to rise”⁵** In Scripture, leaven is often a symbol of sin. Our Passover Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, was sinless in every way. We, as believers are to partake of our Lamb and, in doing so, turn from sin. The message of the Gospel is **“repent and believe” (Mark 1:15; Acts 3:19)**. Again, the Rosen’s write;

“Thus, for the Hebrews, the putting away of all leaven symbolized breaking the old cycle of sin and starting out afresh from Egypt to walk as a new nation before the Lord. They did not put away leaven in order to be redeemed. Rather, they put away leaven *because* they were redeemed. This same principle applies to the redeemed of the Lord of all ages. Salvation is of grace ‘not by works, so that no one can boast’ (see Ephesians 2:8–9).”⁶ (See I Corinthians 5:1-8).

- 2) The lamb was to be eaten with bitter herbs. Possibly representing the bitterness of their enslavement in Egypt or the bitterness of death.
- 3) The lamb’s bones were not to be broken – **Exodus 12:46**. This was not understood until the death of Jesus Christ. The Roman soldiers would typically break the legs of the one crucified in order to hasten their death. But when they were about to break Jesus’ legs they found He was already dead (**John 19:32-33**). This fulfilled the foreshadowing of the Passover lamb and the prophetic word of **Psalms 34:20**.

e. The Beginning of Months – **Exodus 12:2**. In establishing the initial Passover, God changed the calendar for Israel. This feast was going to be the foundation of their experience with God. It’s considered a foundational feast and all the six feasts that eventually followed were built on it.⁷ Kevin Conner writes;

“So for the believer in Christ, receiving Christ as the Lamb of God is but the beginning of one’s experience in God. It is the first, the foundation experience. There is more to follow. New birth is the beginning of New Covenant relationship (John 3:5; II Corinthians 5:17).”⁸

³ Kevin J. Conner, *The Feasts of Israel*, (Portland, OR: Bible Temple Publishing, 1980), 18-19.

⁴ Ceil and Moishe Rosen, *Christ in the Passover*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1978), 26-27.

⁵ William D. Mounce, *Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 981.

⁶ Rosen, 30.

⁷ Kevin Howard and Marin Rosenthal, *The Feasts of the Lord*, (Orlando, FL: Zion’s Hope, Inc, 1997), 16.

⁸ Kevin J. Conner, *The Feasts of Israel*, (Portland, OR: Bible Temple Publishing, 1980), 17.