

## Preparation of the Lamb

### Commentary for March 15, 2018 — ... for the Passover Sacrifice

The Jewish festival of Passover 2018 begins the evening of Friday, March 30 and ends at sundown Saturday, March 31. The apostle Paul tells us that Christ was our Passover:

**“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ OUR passover is sacrificed FOR US.”**

• *1 Corinthians 5:7*

For the Gentiles Paul wrote to, as well as for himself (an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin), Jesus Christ fulfilled and was the reality of the symbol of salvation represented by the Passover lamb. The Passover was the figure of His redemptive act. Do we need to keep Passover today? No, it has been fulfilled by **“Christ OUR Passover.”**

When John the Baptist baptized Jesus he proclaimed Him to be **“the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world”** (John 1:29). The next day John again said to two of his disciples, **“Behold the Lamb of God!”** The two leave to follow Jesus (John 1:36–37).<sup>1</sup>

Reread Dr. Martin’s 1979 enlightening article [“The Apostle John, the Lamb, and the Spirit.”](#) The article details how John in his Gospel demonstrates Jesus was the fulfillment of the true Passover. God’s preparation of His Son for His sacrifice to take away **“the sin of the world”** (John 1:29) is compared with the care of the lamb chosen for the Passover sacrifice. The selected Passover lamb was treated like a beloved pet and pampered by the family before it was sacrificed. There was an emotional cost of the sacrifice, just as there was for God the Father (John 3:16–17). First, the lamb was taken into the house to live with the family:

**“... In the tenth day of this month [of Nisan] they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; ... Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ...**

**And you shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.”**

• *Exodus 12:3–6*

Like the Passover lamb, Jesus was prepared by God for His sacrifice. Dr. Martin wrote:

“... During that time they watched that Passover lamb so it would not eat anything except good clean grass. They watched the lamb very carefully because it had to be roasted with the entrails therein. They wanted to make sure ... with its innards and everything else, for

<sup>1</sup> In the Book of Revelation the Lamb is referred to a surprising number of times — Revelation 5:6, 8, 12–13, 6:1, 16, 7:9–10, 14, 17, 12:11, 13:8, 14:1, 4, 10, 15:3, 17:14, 19:7, 9, 21:9, 14, 22–23, 27, 22:1, 3).

a 5 day period that animal was clean in every way.

The Jews purified themselves before they selected the Passover lamb, but on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan they selected that lamb and watched it carefully from then on. They kept it in a pen [in the house] and fed it only the best and cleanest food. They did not want a fly or a gnat or anything else to get in it because it would have made the Passover lamb to be polluted. That was the reason for the 5 days purification period for the lamb.

It is interesting that in John 11:55 before the Passover, people were coming to purify themselves. Look at John 12:1: **'Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany.'** Six days before the Passover was the 9<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, a day before the Passover lamb was to be accepted. Notice verse 12: **'On the next day,'** that was 5 days before Passover, the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the time the Passover lamb was to be selected, when:

**'[They] took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, "Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that comes in the name of the Lord."**

• **John 12:13**

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and acceptance by the people was the very time the Passover lamb was selected. This is what John was pointing out. At the exact time the lamb was selected for the purification of the people, and [later] when they all would sacrifice the lamb as a priesthood nation themselves, [they did so] all together as a community or as a congregation of God."

Dr. Martin explains in his article how John's narrative of Jesus' crucifixion differs from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke (as does John's chronology). John's purpose was to show that Jesus was the Lamb of **"OUR Passover."** The Israelites were forbidden to eat the blood of the Passover lamb (Leviticus chapter 17), because **"the life is in the blood"** (17:11, 14). Yet Jesus instructed His disciples to drink His blood, symbolic of the life in Him:

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal [eonian] life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.**

**He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him. ... so he that eats me, even he shall live by me."**

• **John 6:53–57**

They drank wine, but Christ's blood through His sacrificial act gives us eonian life.

**"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal [eonian] Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**

• **Hebrews 9:14**

Christ's righteousness justifies us before God: **"... Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him"** (Romans 5:8–9).

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