

CHAPTER 2

THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER

The first Passover was observed by the children of Israel in the land of Egypt, on the eve of their departure out of the house of bondage into the wilderness. It was the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month. God had raised up a deliverer for the people in the person of the man Moses, and had equipped him with such power and authority in the Spirit that he was to Pharaoh even "as God." Many and dreadful and great were the signs and wonders which were wrought by his hand, so that Egypt became utterly wasted at the hands of a God of judgment. One by one the plagues fell upon the land; and time and again Pharaoh promised to let the people go, only to harden his heart when the plague was lifted. Finally God declared His judgment upon the firstborn of all the land of Egypt - and then Egypt was literally "glad" to see the people depart, so dreadful and far-reaching was the destruction of the Almighty.

A NEW BEGINNING

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying. This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you" (Ex. 12:1,2). As from this date Israel was to have a new calendar. It was to be the first month instead of the second, because God was going to deliver them from Egyptian bondage, and bring them into a new experience and into a new land. Israel's old associations were to be gone forever. No longer would they serve the Egyptian taskmaster under hard bondage, but they were to serve the LORD their God. No longer were they to eat the leeks and onions and garlic of Egypt, but they would feast upon manna from heaven, and drink water out of the flinty rock. No longer would they abide in the houses of their little world in Egypt, but they would henceforth follow the cloud of glory from one place to another, from one experience to another, even from "glory to glory." Had not the Lord plainly declared, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." (Ex. 3:7,8). And so, to deliver Israel from the judgment of the firstborn, and to prepare them for a new life as a separated and holy nation, God instituted the Passover. And this event would mean the preservation of Israel in the hour of God's judgments upon the land of Egypt, and the beginning of a new era for the people of God.

So it is that the Cross of Christ becomes the beginning of a new era for the children of God. Old things begin to pass away, and all things begin to become new. The bondage of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, gives way to a liberty in the Spirit, and a life of servitude to the God of our salvation. "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:18). From the time we receive Christ as our personal Saviour, and really partake of the benefits of Calvary's Cross -from that very hour we begin a new life in God. And whereas, we once served the enemy of our souls under cruel bondage, now we have become the voluntary bond-slaves of Christ. And after all, the only liberty man will ever

find in this world is the liberty which he derives in becoming the "slave" of the Lord Jesus. Paul delighted in calling himself a "doulos," a "bondslave" of Christ. Man is only free when he is bound to Christ with a chain of love and friendship which neither the cares of life nor the attacks of Satan can sever.

A LAMB FOR AN HOUSE

Our Passover Lamb is sufficient for all our needs. And though men have appropriated His grace and blessing from the foundation of the world even until now - still there remaineth grace sufficient for any sinner who comes to Christ. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; the ye, always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8).

THE LAMB TO BE WITHOUT BLEMISH

This was necessary because it typified the true "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (Jn. 1:29). "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (I Pet. 1:18,19).

THE LAMB MUST BE KILLED

Modernism will accept the Lamb of God as He teaches in the temple, lives a life of righteousness and purity, and expounds His parables. But they will have nothing to do with the Lamb who was crucified for their sins. And therefore the door of salvation is closed to them. For there is positively no acceptance for any man before God except by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ. It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul, and "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22).

THE BLOOD MUST BE APPLIED

It is not even sufficient that the lamb should be slain; the blood of the slain lamb must be applied to the door-posts of the house. In other words, there must be an individual and personal appropriation, by faith, of the work of the Cross. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (Mercy Seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Rom. 3:25,26).

THE FLESH MUST BE EATEN

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." (Jn. 6:53-55). It was a hard saying then, and it is a hard saying today. How can we eat the flesh of Christ? So reasons the natural man. But we can do so by the Spirit, through faith. We may eat His flesh in daily meditation and appropriation of the Word. We may eat His flesh in prayer and communion by the

Spirit. And we may eat his flesh as we discern the Lord's Body in the Communion. Jesus said, and incidentally it was on the occasion of the last Passover, "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me." (Lk. 22:19). For He was the fulfillment of every Passover Lamb which was ever offered in Jewish ceremony; and the Substance having been revealed, the type has passed away.

THE PEOPLE MUST DEPART

The children of Israel were to eat the Passover lamb with their loins girded and with their shoes on their feet... ready to depart from Egypt. The moment a man receives Christ as his Passover Lamb, he must there and then be prepared to depart from the world and all of its allurements. He is not saved by works, and it is entirely unscriptural to teach holiness as the means of salvation. For it is not within the power of any man in Adam's fallen race to present himself acceptably before God. There is none righteous, no not so much as one; and by the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. (See Rom. 3:9-31). He receives the efficacy of the blood, and eats of the Passover Lamb by faith - and that constitutes his salvation. But when one identifies himself with Christ he must depart from the world and its corrupting influences, and be prepared to follow his Lord in the pathway of separation and consecration. Then only, by the works of grace produced in the heart, do we behold the scriptural signs and evidences of the salvation of Christ.

THE BLOOD IS THE SIGN

"When I see the blood I will pass over you." (Ex. 12:13). For our part we must apply the blood by faith to our hearts. Our feet must be shod, and we must be ready to leave the old ways behind. We must participate in Christ, and give evidence of the fact that we are true disciples. But so far as God is concerned He beholds this one token: "When I see the blood I will pass over you." God is eternally satisfied with the work of Calvary's Cross, and we as God's children are "accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:6). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21).

'Five bleeding wounds He bears,

Received on Calvary,

They pour effectual prayers,

They strongly plead for me;

Forgive him, O forgive, they cry,

Nor let that ransomed sinner die.'

O, there are so many, many things that we have left unsaid

concerning the Passover Lamb. He is the theme of the whole Bible. All spiritual blessings stem from Calvary, and all power and glory and majesty pertaineth to the Lamb that was slain, and He is therefore "Worthy ... to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5:12).