

The Passover and Christ

S.R. Acts 12:1 – 4

3 – 17 – 2024

Introduction:

- A. Every year in the spring, there are many religious and non-religious traditions which are connected with the holiday called Easter.
- B. My concern is that people do not realize that the Easter holiday with its traditions was not instituted by Christ. (Although the word "Easter" is found in the KJV translation, this is misleading due to today's religious traditions of men.)

I. THE GREEK WORD, TRANSLATED AS "EASTER," IS ACTUALLY THE WORD "*PASSOVER*." (Acts 12:1 – 4)

- A. The Greek word *pascha*, which came from the Hebrew word *Pacach* or *pecach*, literally means "to pass over, or to spare." (Luke 22:1,7-8)
- B. The Passover was a Jewish feast according to the law of Moses.
 1. The traditions of Easter developed over the centuries after the completion of the New Testament.
 2. Today in the minds of most religious people, the word "Easter" refers to something different than the Jewish feast of Passover.
 3. Jesus kept the Passover with His apostles.
 4. Easter was not instituted by the Lord, nor observed by the apostles and early Christians.

II. WHAT WAS THE PASSOVER?

- A. God instituted the Passover for the Israelites. He instructed them to observe this feast in preparation for the last plague against Egypt (Exodus 12:1-14). What do we learn from this passage?
 1. First, God set up the Jewish calendar.
 2. The meal consisted of roasted lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs (8-9). They were to eat in a hurry with a belt on their waist, sandals on their feet and their staff in hand (11).
 3. This was called the Lord's Passover because when God brought death upon the firstborn of both man and beast in Egypt He passed over the houses of the Israelites, sparing them from death (12-13).
 4. The 14th day was to be a memorial, and the people were to keep it as a feast (14). Therefore, God commanded them to teach their children what the Passover meant (Exodus 12:26-27).
- B. The Passover was eaten in the evening on the 14th day. This preceded the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which began on the 15th day of the month of Abib [Nisan] (Exodus 12,15-20).
- C. In Israel's history we read about the people keeping this Passover. (2 Kings 23; Ezra 6)

III. JESUS KEPT THIS PASSOVER ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF MOSES.

- A. Luke records the story when Jesus was 12 years old and traveled to Jerusalem with Joseph and Mary.
 - 1. Without telling Joseph and Mary, Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, asking questions in the temple from the teachers.
 - 2. The reason the family went to Jerusalem was to keep the Passover, which they did every year (Luke 2:41-42).
- B. Therefore, that evening when Jesus met with His apostles in the upper room, they ate together the Passover supper (Matthew 26:17-20).

IV. AS THEY WERE EATING THE PASSOVER SUPPER, JESUS INITIATED HIS OWN MEMORIAL CALLED THE LORD'S SUPPER (Matthew 26:26-29).

- A. The Passover was a memorial for Jews to remember how God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage. (Deut. 16)
- B. Jesus instituted a different memorial for Christians to remember how God delivers us from the bondage of our sins. Jesus is our Passover lamb, whose blood takes away our sins (1 Corinthians 5:7).
 - 1. The blood of lambs once saved Israel from death. Jesus was crucified during that Feast of Unleavened Bread. His blood now saves us because He was the perfect sacrifice.
 - 2. The Lord commanded His disciples to partake of His supper to remember His body and His blood. We must never forget that Christ's sacrifice reconciles us unto God. Therefore, we must proclaim His death until He returns (1 Cor. 11:23-26).
 - 3. New Testament Christians continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42). They met on the first day of the week to break bread together (20,7). Therefore, we should follow that same pattern revealed in the Lord's word.

Conclusion:

- A. The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, are central themes of the gospel of Christ.
- B. We must keep the traditions which the Lord established for Christians, not those that men teach. Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection must be kept near to our hearts throughout the whole year.
- C. Christ, our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7).
 - a. Let us approach the Lord's Supper with the unleavened bread of "sincerity and truth."
 - b. Christ, our Passover shed his blood that we may receive the forgiveness of our sins through His blood (Matthew 26:28)
- D. (1 Peter 2:24) Have you availed yourself of the blood of the lamb by the washing of water with the word?