

FOR ALL OF MANKIND

At sunset, shortly after dark, on March 31st is the Lord's Passover. Why is it called that?

The word Passover got its name from Exodus 12:13.

13 The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

The Passover commemorates the day when the Eternal passed over the Israelites and spared them from the final plague that led to their deliverance from slavery in Egypt.

When you mention the word "Passover," the typical reaction is it's some Jewish custom going back a long, long time ago.

It's a Jewish ritual that traces its roots to the Jewish people's escape from slavery in a land called Egypt.

It's some kind of tradition religiously observed by bearded rabbis together with the faithful of Judaism.

But the Passover, the first of God's commanded annual festivals, is the beginning, the very first step, in God's grand master plan of salvation for ALL of mankind.

Not just the Jews.

Today, many have been misled into believing that the Passover is not important. That it's no longer needed.

It's merely some Old Testament ritual for the Jews. Not for the New Testament Christian. They don't need it at all.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Jesus Christ was the Word, the Spirit Being Who was with God from eternity. He was the Spokesman, Who made ALL things.

Including the entire human race (John 1:1-3). And He divested Himself of His power, majesty and glory, to become flesh to suffer and die an agonizing death to pay the penalty for OUR sins (Philippians 2:5-8).

He is our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7) in whom we have redemption (Colossians 1:13-14).

REDEMPTION, not salvation, through Christ's blood, which paid the penalty of OUR sins and reconciled us to God the Father. But we shall be saved by His life, His resurrection (Romans 5:10).

Since Christ did the creating (Psalm 33:9), He is our Maker (Ephesians 3:9). And only His sacrifice — not the blood of bulls and goats — could pay the full penalty of the sins of all human beings (Hebrews 10:4).

We've been released from death row! Not to continue in our former lives of sin but to a new life in the faith and firmly anchored in the truth of God. The truth of the Bible (John 17:17).

The Passover is an annual reminder — a memorial — of Christ's sacrifice which God commands that we keep FOREVER (Exodus 12:24). And forever means forever.

There are those who believe that Jesus Christ did away with the Passover observance. Did He abolish the Passover?

Jesus did not abolish the Passover. At His final Passover on earth, He changed the symbols used and instituted the New Testament Passover (Luke 22:19-20).

Instead of shedding the blood of the lamb and eating its roasted body, we are now to use wine and unleavened bread.

The wine symbolizes Christ's shed blood for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:28). The broken bread symbolizing His broken body.

Christ was so brutally and savagely beaten, His face was barely recognizable. Pilate had Him scourged, lacerating His back and literally ripping open His body. He allowed this to happen for the forgiveness of our physical sins. The healing of our bodies, when we are sick (Isaiah 53:5, 1 Peter 2:24, Psalm 103:2-3, James 5:14-15). And so the bread is a reminder to us that it is by "His stripes we are healed."

Sentenced to death by crucifixion — the most horrible, agonizing form of death reserved only for the vilest criminals — Christ was stripped of His clothing and laid down upon the stake.

His arms were stretched above His head; and, at the center of His open palms, iron spikes were hammered through the hands and feet into the wood.

He hung there in excruciating pain for 3 hours until a Roman soldier stabbed His side with a spear. Christ cried out with an agonized scream, and He died.

Christ suffered so we might have our guilty past blotted out, and the slate wiped clean (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Now we are at peace with God. Now we're no longer cut off from God because of our sins. Now God promises to hear us when we cry out to Him in heartfelt prayer and supplication. Now we are on the path to eternal life.

All this was made possible only because Jesus Christ the Word was willing to die for us, suffering a brutal beating and the miserable death of crucifixion.

However, to the typical professing Christian, the Passover has little if any relevance to his life. It doesn't concern him and it holds very little if any significance to him at all.

For the vast majority in the world today, the full significance of the feast of the Passover escapes understanding.

It is virtually meaningless.

They think they know what it is, but in fact, they don't understand it at all!

Because the Passover is not merely a Jewish observance.

It points to Jesus Christ, the true Passover Lamb, Whose sacrifice alone removes the sins of all mankind.