

QUESTION #55

What significance should the Passover observance have for the believer in Jesus today?

One key element in the plan of God is reconciliation of us to God.

“And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18).

This ultimate reconciliation with God is caused by the death of his Son.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” (Romans 5:10).

The one thing that sets Jesus apart from all other good men is: He was raised from the dead, never to die again, and he has the ability to raise us up into bodies that do not die (1 Corinthians 15:52-54, John 6:40).

“No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:44).

There is a requirement we must meet in order to have a good resurrection.

“Whoso eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6:54). This is accomplished by taking the wine and the unleavened bread once a year as a commitment to the person whose death allows us divine reconciliation.

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19-20).

We are to take the wine and the unleavened bread in remembrance of Christ.

Just as the Children of Israel ate a lamb that was symbolic of the body of Christ, Christians eat unleavened bread, which is symbolic of the body of Christ.

“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).

Leaven is symbolic of sin during Passover time. Leaven is also a sign of puffiness, symbolic of human pride. To truly forgive all who have harmed us we must set aside pride. Jesus showed us an excellent way to start the time for the consumption of Passover. He washed his disciples' feet (John 13:4-5).

The foot washing is to be continued.

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet” (John 13:14).

One of the lessons of the foot washing is: The servant is not greater than his Lord (John 13:16). Whoever would be a chief must be the servant of all (Mark 10:44).

We need to examine ourselves before we participate in taking the bread and the wine (1 Corinthians 11:27-30).

Christ pointed out that the earnest and sincere prayer of a sinner repenting is the formula for justification (Luke 18:10-14). Christ mentioned this because the religious leaders of the day looked down their noses at people of other faiths (Luke 18:9). Repentance is a divine priority. We must repent of all sins, but especially of being unforgiving of others. We cannot be forgiven if we do not forgive (Matthew 6:14-15).

“...Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7).

The Old Testament Passover lambs were a symbol of the coming Messiah. This is the reason they were killed each year in the Spring, the same season in which Christ would be crucified.

After the death of Christ there is no need to sacrifice a lamb. Christ is the fulfillment of that symbol.

Christ was cut off in the midst of his week. He died on Wednesday the 14th of the Hebrew month Nisan. He died on the stake at 3 PM (the ninth hour) (Mark 15:34-37). This was the same time the Passover lambs were being slaughtered. That night most of the Jews would eat the Passover lambs, woefully unaware that the symbols of Passover had changed.

In the Old Testament, eating the lamb was symbolic of eating the future Messiah. However, in the New Testament, eating the unleavened bread is symbolic of eating our Messiah and Savior Jesus Christ (Matthew 26:26-28).

Just as people who go to a party together should be friends, so also the people who gather themselves to the Passover should be friends and disciples of Christ.

Disciples of Christ are those who are willing to be taught by him. A disciple is a learner. What is the mark of a disciple? It is the attribute of love for others (John 13:35). This is in opposition to the spirit of competition, greed, lust, and hostility.

You are a friend to Christ if you do what he commands (John 15:14).

If you are a disciple and friend to Christ, then and only then, should you participate in the Passover (foot washing, taking the wine, taking the unleavened bread).

Acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ is reconciliation with God, allowing us to be saved by his life (Romans 5:10). Christ was raised from the dead. He is the living Messiah. He is not just a good teacher, a good leader, or a prophet. He is the first begotten from the dead who washed us from our sins in his own blood (Revelation 1:5).

“I am he that lives, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen...” (Revelation 1:18).

Answer by: Wily Elder (Florida)