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The Egyptian Passover

12: 1-28



The rabbis named the first Passover, the Egyptian Passover, and it marked the beginning of the birth of **Isra'el** as a nation. We learn from **Leviticus 23** that **the Passover** would become the first in a cycle of seven feasts. It is mentioned over fifty times in the TaNaKh and thirty-seven times in the B'rit Chadashah. This tells us something about the significance of this festival to the nation of **Isra'el**. In the celebration of **the Egyptian Passover**, rather than focusing on the confrontations of **Moses** with **the king of Egypt**, the story now shifts to **Moses** and the people of **Isra'el**. This passage has two sections. First, **Christ and the Passover (12:1-20)**, and secondly, **He Will See the Blood and Pass Over the Doorway (12:21-28)**.

What the Egyptian Passover Meant to Isra'el: This was destined to be, perhaps, one of the most meaningful nights of **Isra'el's** history. There are several significant things that **the Holy One** wanted to impress upon **the children of Isra'el** from that time to today.

First, **it was a night to remember**. In **Chapter Twelve** there is a decisive turn of events. **Moshe** turned from **his** speeches to **Pharaoh** and, for the first time, began a long message to **the children of Isra'el**. The emphasis is for **the Israelites** to remember what **ADONAI** did on **Pesach**. It is not just the history that **the LORD** wants remembered; it is the spiritual pictures which the history paints that **He** wants us to keep in mind as well.

Second, **mark your calendars**. This was a night when **YHVH** would establish a new system of national dating for **Jews**. **Ha'Shem** was clearly in the process of making this large family, all **the children of Jacob**, into one nation. In doing so, **He** covered every conceivable

detail, including giving the new nation her own calendar. **The LORD** fixed the date for the New Year for **Isra'el** as **the first of Nisan**. This is approximately late March or early April. This calendar has a definite spiritual message (see the commentary on **Leviticus**, **to see link click Dw - God's Appointed Times**). In **Exodus Chapter Twelve**, four dates are given: **Nisan 1, 10, 14** (and by implication also **the fifteenth of Nisan**) and **21**. Lets take a look at these dates and see what we can learn.

The first of Nisan: When **ADONAI** said that **the first of Nisan** was the beginning of months for Messianic Jews and Gentiles, **He** meant it to be more than just ripping off a new page in the calendar. **He** meant it to be a time when **He** would start to do a new work in our lives on the spiritual level. What is the spiritual theme for **Nisan**? Redemption! **Passover** is the first of the appointed times in the new calendar. But we are not only to celebrate the events described here in **Exodus**, we are to celebrate one of the greatest events that we can ever experience, our own personal redemption from sin. Those who know the B'rit Chadashah know how this is accomplished! For us, it is clearly found in **Yeshua** (see **Bw - Christ and the Passover**). The physical **Passover**, then, becomes for us, a picture of the spiritual redemption accomplished by **the One** who is called greater than Moshe, **Yeshua**, our **Passover**.

The tenth of Nisan: Those who lived in the days of the Temple had a better understanding about what a sacrifice meant. They had to set aside **a lamb** and take special care of **it** until it had to be sacrificed on **the fourteenth of Nisan**. It is easy to see how the lamb would have become close and dear to the family, making it harder to kill and eat. For them, it was a real sacrifice to kill **the lamb**. The setting aside of **the Passover Lamb** was to be on **the tenth of Nisan** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ix - The Examination of the Lamb**). It was also on **the tenth of Nisan** that **Yeshua**, our **Passover Lamb**, also entered Yerushalayim (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ It - Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem as the Passover Lamb**).

The fourteenth of Nisan: Early that day **the children of Isra'el** were commanded to remove all **leaven** from **their** homes. The Bible says: **You are to keep [the lamb] until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra'el will slaughter it at twilight (12:6)**, or just before the sunset. During **the Egyptian Passover**, **the lamb** was slain at the entrance to the family home and the blood smeared on the doorpost of the house. But during **Messiah's** lifetime, **the lambs** were slain in the Temple (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ke - Go and Make Preparations for the Passover**). Thus, when the sun

went down on **the fourteenth of Nisan**, a new day began on **the fifteenth of Nisan**.

The fifteenth of Nisan: The Jews reckon time differently than Gentiles. The Jewish day starts at sundown: **So there was evening, and then there was morning . . . (Genesis 1:5)**. Therefore, the **Passover** took place on the start of the day, **after sundown**, on **the fifteenth of Nisan** (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ Kf - I Desire to Eat the Passover With You Before I Suffer](#)).

The twenty-first of Nisan: From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month until the evening of the twenty-first day, you are to eat matzah. Exodus introduces **the feast of Unleavened Bread** (see the commentary on [Leviticus Dz - Hag ha'Matzah](#)) as being celebrated during the same seven days as **the Passover**. Not only were they forbidden to eat any **leaven**, they were forbidden to have **it** their homes. The punishment for anyone who ate **leaven** or failed to clean it from their homes **must be cut off from Isra'el (12:15-20)**, meaning they should be executed!

What the Egyptian Passover meant to Egypt: True to the characteristics of ancient Near Eastern nations, when something bad happened to them, they tended not to keep records of it. This, there is no record found in Egyptian archaeology of the events of **the Exodus**. All the plagues had some connection with **Egyptian gods**. **The ninth plague** (see [Bs - Moses Stretched Out His Hand Toward the Sky and Total Darkness Covered All Egypt for Three Days](#)) was really one of the most important plagues. It attacked Ra, the sun god, as well as **Egypt** as a whole. Thus, by **darkening all of Egypt**, except where **the children of Isra'el lived**, **ADONAI** truly **made a mockery of Egypt**, as **He** said **He** would do **(10:2)**. **The Egyptian Passover** totally dethroned **them** and placed **them** under **judgment**. It is interesting to note that mere wood and stone cannot be judged. It seems that what **YHVH** did was bring about **His judgment** on the demonic forces behind those **gods**.