

Passover Change

The Children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt and instead of serving HaShem, they were forced to obey Pharaoh. This certainly was not according to the will of G-d and therefore on one particular day, and through one particular element, G-d brought a change not only to the Children of Israel, but one that impacted the entire world. When examining the Biblical account of Passover, one learns that what HaShem brought about provides divine revelation that every human being needs to understand and apply to his or her own life.

The purpose of Israel's existence is to bring G-d's blessings into this world. Due to Israel's sin, selling their brother Joseph into slavery, the entire nation of Israel found themselves also in slavery in Egypt. This meant that what G-d intended to do with the Children of Israel could not come about through natural means. Therefore, G-d acted to bring about a change which would realign not just the Hebrews, but the entire world, in order that G-d's intended purposes could be fulfilled. This change occurred not only on a specific day, but through a specific element. The day was Passover and the element which G-d used was the blood of the Passover sacrifice.

In the Scriptures, Egypt should often be understood symbolically as relating to the world. In other words, the Biblical Passover account reveals a message that has implications far beyond the borders of Egypt, but will impact the entire world. Egypt was the most powerful nation in the world when it held the people of Israel in bondage. Pharaoh was seen as the most powerful leader in the world. An important part of the Passover account was that the G-d of Israel commanded Pharaoh to send forth G-d's people from Egypt so that they could worship / serve G-d. Pharaoh's response was based on two factors. First, he did not know the G-d of Israel and secondly, he did not want to participate in G-d's will. HaShem did indeed bring a change, not only to Pharaoh's thoughts, but also to his behavior. This change did not only relate to the Hebrews, but it is emphasized in the Bible that a **mixed multitude** of people also came out of Egypt with the Children of Israel (See Exodus 12:38). Before speaking about the specific element which G-d used to bring the people out of Egypt, it is important that one understands how the Bible discussed G-d's actions in Egypt. In Exodus 12:12 one reads, "וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים, אֲנִי יְהוָה" *And with all the gods of Egypt, I will make judgments, I am the L-RD.*"

This verse makes it clear that there is a spiritual component in regard to what G-d intends to do to Egypt. It is very significant that the phrase וּבְכָל-אֱלֹהֵי מִצְרַיִם means that HaShem is going to deal with all the gods of Egypt. The last part of the verse is אֶעֱשֶׂה שְׁפָטִים, אֲנִי יְהוָה which informs the reader that G-d will bring judgment upon the false gods of Egypt and reveal to the Egyptians and the world that He is the L-RD. The Hebrew word שְׁפָטִים is in the plural and many of the English translations fail to reflect this. The purpose for plural is to show the reader that the judgment which HaShem will

bring upon Egypt will be abundant, severe and have implications that will go beyond the borders of Egypt.

It certainly was not a coincidence that Yeshua was crucified and died on Passover. All four Gospels state that Yeshua went to the Cross on “**the Preparation Day**” (Matthew 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:42) which is another term for Passover day, i.e., the fourteenth day of the first month. It is theologically correct to understand the crucifixion relates to the judgment of G-d. Yeshua’s death on the Cross represents the full and complete judgment of G-d upon sin. However, it is vital that a person comprehends that it is only when one accepts by faith Yeshua’s Passover sacrifice, then His full payment is applied and the believer will never experience the eternal wrath of G-d. This point is easy to understand when one considers the Passover account in the book of Exodus.

It has already been stated that Israel found herself in bondage to Pharaoh due to Joseph’s brothers selling him into slavery. Even in Jewish literature, they explain that while the Children of Israel were in Egypt 430 years, they descended to such a level that they had absolutely no merit in and of themselves which caused G-d to redeem them; rather, it was solely the outcome of His grace that He redeemed them through the blood of the Passover sacrifice. The Passover offering is connected to redemption and is known in Judaism as the sacrifice which has a redemptive outcome. Because Yeshua was crucified on Passover, His death has a redemptive purpose and the writer of Hebrews informs the reader that the blood of Yeshua purchased eternal redemption for those who receive Him through the Gospel.

οὐδε δι αἵματος τραγῶν καὶ μόσχων διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος εἰσηλθὲν ἐφαπαξ εἰς τὰ ἁγία αἰωνίαν λυτρωσὶν εὐραμένους

“But not by blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered once and for all into the Holy Places, having obtained eternal redemption.” Hebrews 9:12

The writer of Hebrews teaches with this verse some very important truth. First, the blood of the Messiah is far superior to that of the blood of goats and calves. Secondly, whereas Temple sacrifices were repeated, the Passover offering of Yeshua does not need to be done again. The Greek word ἐφαπαξ is highly significant, as it informs the reader that there was a complete sufficiency to Yeshua’s blood and it purchases for every believer eternal redemption. Biblically speaking, redemption brings two significant changes to those who are redeemed. Redemption brings a change of identity and location. For example, marriage is a covenant of redemption. The groom actually redeems his wife, and she receives a new identity as she becomes part of his family and dwells with him. This means that when a person accepts the Gospel, Yeshua’s death and His blood cause this one to become a member of the family of G-d and a citizen of the Kingdom of G-d.

Passover is only one day, and on this day Israel prepared the Passover offering which was actually partaken of on the first day of Unleavened Bread. It is also during the Festival of Unleavened Bread that there is another important commandment to be observed. This relates to the beginning of the Spring harvest. It was a Biblical commandment for the Children of Israel to bring on the first day of the week after the first day of Unleavened Bread the first-fruits of the harvest to the priest. Yeshua's resurrection occurred on the same day as this commandment was observed.

When studying the New Covenant, one learns that Yeshua is not just the Head of the Congregation of the Redeemed (Church), but is specifically called the Firstborn from the dead (See Colossians 1:18). This verse also states that He also has Preeminence in all things. The resurrection of Yeshua brought a powerful change to His disciples. Although they had been told that He had been raised from the dead, they struggled to believe this. In fact, they had locked themselves in a room because of fear (See John 21:19-22). Afterwards, the resurrected Yeshua manifested Himself to His disciples and breathed upon them the Holy Spirit. These two things, believing in the resurrected Yeshua and receiving the Holy Spirit, brought about a most significant change upon the disciples. As in the past, before believing in Yeshua's resurrection, these men were full of fear, but after encountering the resurrected Yeshua and receiving the Holy Spirit, these same men became the very ones who turned the world upside down through preaching our Passover Lamb Who died on Passover, but was raised from the dead victoriously. It is only through faith in Him that one can experience this Passover change and the victory that comes with it.