

Deut. 16:1 ¶ Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

The month Abib is also known as Nisan (occurring in our March/ April) and is significant as the month in which the LORD brought the Hebrew people out of Egypt. It was interesting to note that they went out in the night. The Hebrew for *night* made reference to adversity, and it is an effective picture of the power of Almighty God Who is able to deliver His people from any kind adversity.

The Passover feast was instituted at God's command (see Exodus 12-13) to identify those that were under His protection when the death angel went forth to kill all the firstborn males in the land of Egypt the night that Pharaoh finally decided to let the Hebrews go. This feast was to be reenacted yearly as a reminder of God's great deliverance of His people. (2/10) Passover begins the 7-day "feast of unleavened bread."

Deut. 16:2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.

In Egypt the Passover meal was eaten in individual homes. In the new nation of Israel it was to be celebrated at the place of God's choosing (tabernacle/ temple).

Jerusalem wasn't signified as the city of God's name until the time of David and Solomon. The tabernacle was erected in Shiloh after the land had been subdued.

Josh. 18:1 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there.

And the land was subdued before them.

Previous to that it seems that Joshua was headquartered in Gilgal, but I could find no mention of the tabernacle. Scripture records that it was still at Shiloh during the time of Eli.

1Sam. 1:3 And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, *were* there.

1Sam. 2:22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The ark of the covenant was captured in battle by the Philistines. It eventually ended up in Kirjathjearim until David brought it to Jerusalem. It seems that David built a new tabernacle to house the ark in Jerusalem until the temple was built by Solomon.

1Chr. 15:1 ¶ And *David* made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

2Chr. 1:4 But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to *the place which* David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.

It would seem from God's words to David through the prophet Nathan that God's presence remained with the ark.

1Chr. 17:5 For I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but have gone from tent to tent, and from *one* tabernacle *to another*.

Scripture is clear to record that the presence of the ark often resulted in judgment or blessing.

Josh. 3:14-17 And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea, failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

1Sam. 5:1-3 And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon *was* fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

1Sam. 5:10-11 Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people. So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there.

2Sam. 6:11-12 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obedom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obedom, and all his household. And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obedom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obedom into the city of David with gladness.

At some point the original tabernacle was moved to Gibeon.

2Chr. 1:3 So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness.

Deut. 16:3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, *even* the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth

out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

Deut. 16:4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there *any thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

Unleavened bread was to be eaten during Passover; in fact, it was to be eaten for a total of seven days. This is called the bread of affliction since it had to be made in such haste with no time for leavening. In that regard it came to represent how their affliction in slavery was turned to freedom through powerful deliverance from Almighty God. I have read how Jewish homemakers make a big deal about removing every bit of leaven from the home in preparation for Passover as instructed in Exodus.

Ex. 12:19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses. The people were also instructed not to save any of the leftover meat from the lamb. It was to be roasted and eaten for the evening meal and the remains destroyed by fire.

Ex. 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

Ex. 12:9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

Ex. 12:10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

The typology is easy to see. Leaven always represents sin in the scripture. The Passover points toward Christ, the bread of life and the perfect sacrificial lamb who gives life anew to those who will apply His blood to their hearts. As with the Hebrew children in Israel, it was their choice whether or not to apply the blood to the doorposts of their home as they participated in the Passover meal. So it is today; one can choose whether or not to partake of the bread of life and accept His shed blood as atonement for their sin.

(2/09) As I read through this time, I made the connection as to why the lamb had to be eaten only on the one night. I think it pictures the once for all provision of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God to deliver us from the bondage of sin that would otherwise result in death.

Deut. 16:5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee:

Deut. 16:6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

Deut. 16:7 And thou shalt roast and eat *it* in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.

The Hebrew for *gates* makes reference to a door or the gates of a city. The reference is most probably the city in this section of verses since the instruction is to eat the Passover at the place of God's choosing. The lamb is to be sacrificed as the sun is going down, the time the Hebrews left Egypt. It was evidently meant

to be a celebration that lasted all night since they were instructed to go to their tents the next morning.

Deut. 16:8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work therein.

This verse would seem to be referencing the six days following the Passover meal. On the seventh day there was to be a solemn assembly to worship the Lord and it was to be observed as a Sabbath, a day of rest.

Deut. 16:9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn.

Deut. 16:10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

Deut. 16:11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

In this section of verses Moses begins to give instruction regarding the feast of weeks. The day after Passover is designated as a time to honor God with the firstfruits of the harvest. They were then to count seven weeks from that time and celebrate the feast of weeks, a time of thanksgiving and rejoicing for God's blessings and provision. This was not a time of sacrifice, but a time of freewill offering and thanksgiving. This feast was also significant in that it involved the use of leavened bread as part of the celebration. It was designated as a celebration to be enjoyed by everyone in the nation at that time at the place of God's choosing.

This celebration is more commonly known as Pentecost. It was at this time that the Holy Spirit was poured out in power on the disciples and the church was birthed. In that regard I think it is interesting to note that this was the feast that included the use of leavened bread. Leaven is a consistent type of sin in the scripture. It gives me a picture of God's power and provision to give sinners a reason to celebrate through the gift of His Son, the bread of life, who became our sin so that we may be presented righteous to the Father as part of His family. As I looked for further enlightenment on this scripture, I thought David Guzik made an important observation concerning application to the church—"There needed to be no atoning sacrifice; the price had already been paid by Jesus."

Deut. 16:12 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

Again, Moses reminds them that they were slaves in Egypt. This was in obvious contrast to their current position—free and soon to possess their own country. And this position was a miraculous gift of God. This should be their motivation to "observe and do" according to all God had commanded them. The Hebrew for *observe* states "to hedge about...protect." In other words, through their

obedience they would establish themselves securely within God's protective provision.

Deut. 16:13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

Deut. 16:14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that *are* within thy gates.

Deut. 16:15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

Moses now goes on to give instruction regarding the feast of tabernacles. This feast is to be celebrated for a week after the fall harvest. Again, it was to be a celebration that included everyone in the nation at that time. It, too, was to be celebrated at God's chosen location. Like the feast of weeks, it was also a time focused on celebration of God's blessing in rewarding their labor with abundant harvest.

As I thought about it, this was an ongoing reminder of God's power and authority over His creation. By commanding them to celebrate at these specific times that were directly connected to the harvest, God was essentially forecasting an abundant harvest. Only if they chose to reject God in disobedience would there be reason to doubt the result of the harvest.

I've really been thinking a lot about God's promises a lot lately—especially in the area of prayer. He never changes. He keeps His word. If we but submit to Him as Lord in obedience, we can expect fruit as a result of that prayer. I know that in my head. Why do I have such a hard time applying that truth in my life? Lord, please increase my faith and my desire to honor you with the fruit of my prayer of faith. Teach me to pray with Your heart and with sensitivity to my responsibility before You.

Deut. 16:16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

Deut. 16:17 Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

God's intent for His people was to have all the males in the nation appear before Him as a group in the place of His choosing three times each year—for the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks and the feast of tabernacles. Each of these feasts were designated times of thanksgiving and celebration of God's blessing on the nation. They were times in which men were encouraged to give from their hearts. No one was to come empty handed; everyone was to give in accordance with the abundance with which they had been blessed.

I do not believe God is demeaning the value of women with this instruction. I believe that significance is being given to God's ordained positions of authority.

Men were representative of their families and responsible for setting the example of leadership in obedience and thanksgiving to God. The celebrations were intended to include everyone—man, woman and child—but the man represented the family in situations that did not make the travel of others possible or practical.

Deut. 16:18 ¶ Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

Deut. 16:19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Deut. 16:20 That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Moses now jumps to matters of government. I guess in His mind the instruction to the men of the nation as significant in setting the example of obedience led directly to thoughts of the necessity of establishing leaders among the men. The people were to select honorable men to serve as judges and officers in their respective towns and cities. These men were expected to judge justly without partiality and being careful to avoid bribery.

Deut. 16:21 Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

Deut. 16:22 Neither shalt thou set thee up *any* image; which the LORD thy God hateth.

This instruction is specifically directed to avoid the appearance of idolatry in the worship of YHWH. No altar to God was to be associated with a grove of trees; neither were they to make use of images of any kind.

This instruction reminds me of the words of Paul to the Thessalonians—“Abstain from all appearance of evil.” (1Thess. 5:22)