Beginning of Passover
Exodus 12:1-14
SS Lesson for 11/10/2013

Devotional Scripture: 1 Cor 5:6-8

OUTLINE

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson teaches about the Beginning of Passover. The study's aim is to understand that God did this in a unique manner for both Israel's and our instruction. The study's application is to live daily under the sovereignty of a loving, miracle-working God.

Key Verse: Exodus 12:14

14 “This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance.

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

In these verses instructions are given on how to observe the Passover. Though the feast was observed in each Israelite home, their united and simultaneous worship would help weld them together as a single community (cf. v. 3). The blood of the animals was to be placed on the doorframes of the houses, the animal meat roasted, and the people were to eat it with bitter herbs and bread... without yeast. The slaying of the animals (instead of the Israelites’ firstborn sons, v. 13) and the sprinkling of blood prefigured the substitutionary death of Christ. He is “our Passover Lamb” (1 Cor. 5:7), “a Lamb without blemish or defect” (1 Peter 1:19; cf. John 1:29). His own sacrifice is the means whereby individual believers escape the horrors of spiritual death. Bitter herbs (probably endive, chicory, dandelions) symbolized sorrow or grief (cf. Lam. 3:15) for past sin, or the Israelites’ bitter experience of oppression in Egypt. The bread without yeast symbolized their leaving in haste (Ex. 12:11, 39; Deut. 16:3). The meat was to be roasted, not eaten raw as some pagans did. The people were to eat the entire meal quickly while dressed ready for travel (on the cloak tucked into the belt). Thus under the protection of shed blood, the congregation was to be reminded of cleansing from sin (cf. Heb. 9:22) and that they were sojourners in a strange land. It is the Lord’s Passover means the Passover lamb was for the Lord (cf. “a festival to the Lord,” Ex. 12:14). God said that on the very night (at midnight, 11:4; 12:29), after the Israelites had eaten the Passover lambs with herbs and bread, He would kill the firstborn son and animal in every Egyptian family (cf. 11:5; 12:29-30). The purpose of this final plague was like the others: to bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt (cf. Num. 33:4), thus showing that God is the Lord. Pharaoh’s eldest son and successor supposedly had divine properties. Min, the Egyptian god of reproduction, and Isis, the goddess of love who attended women at childbirth, were judged as impotent by this climactic plague and catastrophe. The sprinkled blood on the Israelites’ houses provided protection from death when God destroyed the Egyptian firstborn. From the verb, pass over (pāšāh) comes the noun that designates the feast, the Passover (pesāh). As the blood of an animal was the means of deliverance and of escaping death, so Christ’s blood is the means of redemption for believers (Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7). The Passover was to be observed annually (for the generations to come) as a lasting ordinance (cf. Ex. 12:17, 24; 13:10). Other annual events and feasts and Levitical regulations were also called “lasting ordinances” (e.g., 27:21; 28:43; 29:9; 30:21; Lev. 16:29, 31, 34; 23:14, 21, 41). The Passover was a festival to the Lord (cf. Ex. 5:1; 10:9).

Commentary from Bible Expositor and Illuminator

This key verse text is a charge from God to His people regarding the celebration of Passover. In the midst of the destruction and devastation of the plagues that ravaged the Egyptians, God's people were called to perform a certain set of tasks that involved killing a sheep and painting doorposts with its blood. It seems it would be an easy thing to remember forever, given the emotional turmoil that was raging in the hearts of the Hebrew people. But God knew their forgetfulness; He called upon them to remember the events of the day in which He passed over the Israelites but killed the firstborn son of every Egyptian. Life is a bit different for believers today. Unlike the people of Israel, we are not likely to see a constant stream of miracles surrounding us, the possibility of slavery threaten us, or plagues devastate entire civilizations around us. However, we still share in the human experience—enduring pain, fearing death, and
struggling to obey our God. God called the Israelites to preserve the memory of Passover through a festival. He did this not just because it represented a momentous occasion but because He knew it would provide a channel for life change as well. As the Israelites celebrated Passover in days to come, their hearts would once again be comforted by the mighty, protective hand of God. This would cause them to take a close look at their lives and examine whether they were living lives that exhibited gratefulness and humility. Memorials are important to the Christian life even today. While God does not call us to set up stones or construct monuments as He did the Israelites, He does command us to remember His blessings. In the Old Testament, Psalm 103 shouts the anthem: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” (vs. 2). Psalm 136 describes some amazing feats that God accomplished among the people of Israel, repeating the refrain "For his mercy endureth for ever.” The New Testament calls believers to remember God's blessings as well. Notice II Corinthians 2:14: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.” We have so much for which to be thankful. We have a Saviour who loves us without end, a promised home in heaven, and the power to resist sin and obey God—something we could never have hoped to possess before we were born again. Let us take time and effort to remember God's many blessings. It is interesting to note that God has established memorials for His people today. For example, baptism is a visible representation of a believer's dying to sin and living for God. Communion is a reminder of Christ's death and our need to live lives that honor Him. Indeed, the Bible says that communion should be a time in which we examine ourselves (I Cor. 11:28). So, the next time you witness a baptism or take part in communion, take advantage of the opportunity to praise God for your blessings. Also, use it as a time of reflection, and consider how you should respond in light of all that God has done.

Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson

The outline of the lesson was adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary and from the points revealed by the study of the Scriptural text.

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Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

People like to remember how things began. Nations celebrate their origins with holidays, solemn ceremonies, and raucous parades. Families celebrate marriages and the anniversaries that follow with parties, gifts, and cakes. Organizations celebrate their founding with employee picnics, commemorative products, and contests. We need to celebrate important events because it is all too easy to forget what has brought us to the point where we are now. "The daily grind" may consume our time and energy to the point that unless we plan to slow down and contemplate what is important, we will not say the “deeper” things that need to be said, think what needs to be thought, and do what needs to be done. Important people and historic moments will fade from memory as we forget what made them special. Forgetfulness can lead to disaster as mistakes are repeated and purposes (reasons for being) are lost. The meaning of life can get swallowed up by life's demands; the
direction God has given world history can be replaced with a pointless, repetitive cycle. God knows the importance of remembering beginnings. He gave the ancient Israelites three practices by which to remember their founding event, the exodus from Egypt: (1) the rite of the firstborn son, (2) the meal of unleavened bread, and (3) the celebration of the Passover feast. Today's lesson focuses on the third of these.

The Passover feast, like other commemorations, must be considered within the historical context in which it occurred. Further, we must look not just to the immediate context, but also to the larger context of history for fullest comprehension. For Passover, that context goes all the way back to Genesis 1. In the first 11 chapters of Genesis, we see God's good creation collapsing under the weight of human sinfulness. Not even the catastrophic event of the great flood could cure what ailed the world. Rather than forsake humanity, however, God formed a people through whom he would bless all nations. They would be his vehicle for ushering in the Messiah to reconcile a wounded world to him. This people began with Abraham and Sarah. Generations later, the growing nation of their descendants found itself enslaved within the confines of Egyptian civilization. Pharaoh, feeling threatened by their growth, suppressed them with harsh toil and deadly population control. After centuries of progressively worse treatment, the cries of the Hebrews moved God to action. He raised up a figure who would lead the Israelites out of Egypt as God willed to develop them as a light to the nations.

Moses was that leader. Through Moses, God unleashed a barrage of plagues against the Egyptians. These plagues eventually broke Pharaoh's stubborn will, but he has not yet conceded defeat as today's text begins. In anticipation of the tenth and final plague, God established the Passover instructions as specified in today's text. By these, generations of Israelites were to remember their exemption from the associated catastrophe (Exodus 12:24-27).

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

When of the Passover (Exodus 12:1-3)

1 Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,
2 "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.
3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

First month of the Hebrew Year (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

ABIB - the first month of the Hebrew calendar (corresponding to our March-April). On the 15th of this month, the people of Israel left Egypt. Abib was made the first month of the year in commemoration of the Exodus (Ex 23:15; Deut 16:1). The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were celebrated during the month of Abib.

On the tenth day (3)

The tenth day no Israelites was to celebrate empty-handed (Ex 23:15)

15 "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt. "No one is to appear before me empty-handed.

The tenth day represents when the Israelites came out of Egypt (Deut 16:1)

16 Observe the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover of the Lord your God, because in the month of Abib he brought you out of Egypt by night.
On the tenth day Joshua and his people memorialized crossed the Jordan (Josh 4:15-24)
15 Then the Lord said to Joshua, 16 "Command the priests carrying the ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan." 17 So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." 18 And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before. 19 On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. 20 And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan. 21 He said to the Israelites, "In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?' 22 tell them, 'Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.' 23 For the Lord your God dried up the Jordan before you until you had crossed over. The Lord your God did to the Jordan just what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over. 24 He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the Lord is powerful and so that you might always fear the Lord your God."

On the tenth day Josiah celebrated the Passover after years of not doing so (2 Kings 23:20-23)
20 Josiah slaughtered all the priests of those high places on the altars and burned human bones on them. Then he went back to Jerusalem. 21 The king gave this order to all the people: "Celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant." 22 Not since the days of the judges who led Israel, nor throughout the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah, had any such Passover been observed.
23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, this Passover was celebrated to the Lord in Jerusalem.

By the household (3)

By the household as a sin offering (Lev 16:6)

6 "Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household.

By the household to make atonement (Lev 16:17)

17 There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel.

By the household for purification (Job 1:5)

5 When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular custom.

By the household even for priest (Heb 5:1-3)

1 Every high priest is selected from among men and is appointed to represent them in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness. 3 This is why he has to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as well as for the sins of the people.

How of the Passover (Exodus 12:4-11)

4 And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.
5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.
6 Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.
7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.
8 Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.
9 Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails.
10 You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.
11 And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.

Use a lamb without blemish (4-5)

_A lamb without blemish is the penalty for sin (Lev 5:6-7)_

6 and, as a penalty for the sin he has committed, he must bring to the Lord a female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin. 7 "If he cannot afford a lamb, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the Lord as a penalty for his sin—one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.

_The ultimate Lamb without blemish takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29)_

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

_The ultimate Lamb without blemish blood purchased men for God (Rev 5:6-9)_

6 Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7 He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. 8 And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

On fourteenth day slaughter the lamb (6)

_On fourteenth day the Passover begins (Lev 23:5)_

5 The Lord's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.

_On fourteenth day because it was the commandment (Num 9:3)_

3 Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations."

_One must be consecrated to offer the lamb on fourteenth day (2 Chron 30:17)_

17 Since many in the crowd had not consecrated themselves, the Levites had to kill the Passover lambs for all those who were not ceremonially clean and could not consecrate [their lambs] to the Lord.

Blood on the doorpost (7)

_Blood on the doorpost as a sign (Ex 12:22-23)_

22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning. 23 When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the
doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

_Blood on the doorpost because of faith (Heb 11:28)_

28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

_It is through Jesus' blood that we have redemption (Eph 1:7)_

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

_It is through Jesus' blood that we are cleansed (Heb 9:14)_

14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

_It is through Jesus' blood that we can have access to God (Heb 10:19)_

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,

**Eating of the meat of the lamb (8-11)**

_The meat must not be offered with anything containing yeast (Ex 23:18)_

18 "Do not offer the blood of a sacrifice to me along with anything containing yeast. "The fat of my festival offerings must not be kept until morning.

_The meat must be eaten the same day (Lev 22:29-30)_

29 "When you sacrifice a thank offering to the Lord, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted on your behalf. 30 It must be eaten that same day; leave none of it till morning. I am the Lord.

_The meat must be offered in a place God directs (Deut 16:4-6)_

4 Let no yeast be found in your possession in all your land for seven days. Do not let any of the meat you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain until morning. 5 You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the Lord your God gives you except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt.

_The meat must not be eaten by a foreigner (Ex 12:43)_

And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.

**Why of the Passover (Exodus 12:12-14)**

12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord.
13 Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.
14 So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.
Judgment against the gods of Egypt (12)

Judgment because God gives judgment among the gods (Ps 82:1)
82 God presides in the great assembly; he gives judgment among the "gods":

Judgment because God strikes down other gods (Num 33:3-5)
3 The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, 4 who were burying all their firstborn, whom the Lord had struck down among them; for the Lord had brought judgment on their gods.

Judgment because other gods tremble and melt before God (Isa 19:1)
19 An oracle concerning Egypt: See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt within them.

Judgment because God destroys other gods (Zeph 2:11)
11 The Lord will be awesome to them when he destroys all the gods of the land. The nations on every shore will worship him, every one in its own land.

To pass over of the plague (13)

Pass over by the destroyer (Ex 12:23)
23 When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

Pass over the firstborn of Israel (Heb 11:28)
28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

Pass over only those who are in the house (Ex 12:22)
22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning.

For a memorial (14)

A memorial as a lasting ordinance (Ex 12:17)
17 "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.

A memorial to celebrate the Passover (Num 9:1-3)
The Lord spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. He said, 2 "Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. 3 Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations."

A memorial that included the setting apart all the firstborn of Israel (Ex 13:12-13)
12 that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord’s. 13 But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb; and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.
Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thought From Bob Deffinbaugh

From the series: Exodus: The Birth of the Nation

The meaning of the Passover for Christians

The New Testament teaches a number of practical applications of the Passover for contemporary Christians. Let me outline some of them briefly.

(1) Because Christ is our Passover Lamb, we are God’s possession. The firstborn of Israel had to be redeemed because God had spared them, and thus they belonged to Him. While only some of those Israelites who were in Egypt were firstborn, and thus in need of being redeemed, all of us who have trusted in Christ belong to Him. Every child of God belongs to God, and must live in the light of belonging to Him. “You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). “You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men” (1 Cor. 7:23). Since the firstborn of the Israelites belonged to God, they had to sacrifice them (in the case of an animal, except for the donkey, 13:13), or (in the case of a son) to offer a sacrifice to redeem them. Because God has spared us from His wrath by His mercy, we are to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—which is your spiritual worship” (Rom. 12:1). Because Christians have been redeemed by the Lamb of God, they do not belong to themselves, and they must therefore live out their lives as a living sacrifice to God. I fear that all too many presentations of the gospel do not inform people that when they come to faith in Christ, they cease to own themselves, and that they become Christ’s possession. In fact, all men belong to God by virtue of creation, and all Christians belong (doubly) to God by virtue of redemption. We cannot live our lives independently, autonomously, as Christians, but we must live them out as those who have been bought with a price and as those who belong to God. Just as God’s claims on the Israelites were spelled out in the Law, given a little later on in Israel’s history, so God’s claims on our lives as believers are given to us in the Scriptures. Let us heed His commandments well, for we belong to Him.

(2) Because Christ is our Passover lamb, we must live our lives in purity, in holy living. In the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, we read, “Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:6-8). In the context of this chapter in First Corinthians, Paul has been speaking of a Christian who was living with the wife of his father (5:1). The Corinthians had not done anything to remedy the situation, and even seemed to be proud of their liberality in this matter (5:2). Paul told them he had already acted (5:3-4), and that they should do likewise, by putting this man out of the assembly. The principle on which Paul based his instruction was that of the relationship between the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The sacrifice of the Passover lamb set in motion the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Since Christ is our Passover lamb, and He has already been sacrificed, the Corinthians should begin the Feast of Unleavened Bread, looking for any sign of leaven (a symbol of sin) and putting it far away from them (5:7-8). Thus the fact that Christ is our Passover lamb necessitates maintaining purity in our lives, and in the church as well.

(3) The Passover teaches us the important role played by religious ceremony (liturgy, if you prefer) in the Christian’s experience. By the annual observance of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, God not only reminded His people of His mighty deeds in the past, but also taught them concerning the future. The institution of the Lord’s Table (“communion”) serves the same purposes. The observance of the Lord’s Table reminds the Christian of the salvation which our Lord accomplished by His death, burial, and resurrection (cf. Lu. 22:14-22; 1 Cor. 11:17-34). Unfortunately, Christians have come to take the remembrance of our Lord
lightly, and do it infrequently, often as a kind of footnote to some other service. Let us learn to value and to practice those times of remembrance and anticipation which God has established and commanded us to do. Just as the Passover celebrations (including the redemption of the firstborn and the Feast of Unleavened Bread) provided an opportunity to instruct the children concerning God’s work in the past and its bearing on the present, so the Lord’s table and baptism provide us with teaching opportunities which we dare not neglect.

(4) The Passover (Passion) of our Lord is a pattern for Christians regarding suffering. While it is true that the Egyptians suffered for their sins in the plague of the firstborn (and the other plagues too), we ought not overlook the suffering of the Israelites during the 400 years of oppression, and even during the days which immediately preceded the exodus. Some Christians believe that suffering is not to be a part of the experience of one who trusts in the Lord and is obedient to Him. This is entirely untrue. Ultimately, it was not those many Passover lambs which spared the Israelite firstborn from death, it was the suffering and death of the Lamb of God, who died for all who would believe. The Passover necessitated the suffering of the Son of God. The degree to which He suffered can only be estimated in the light of the holiness of God and the dread which our Lord experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane when He anticipated the cross. In the first epistle of Peter, the apostle informs Christians who are suffering that the passion, the suffering of the Lord Jesus, the Passover lamb, was a pattern for the suffering of all the saints (cf. 1 Pet. 2:16-24). The Lord Jesus, as the Passover lamb, is the pattern for Christian suffering, and the way it should be dealt with. Paul also speaks of our suffering in “Passover” terms. In the 8th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, Paul writes of the victory which the Christian can have in suffering (8:31-35). He then quotes this passage from Psalm 44 to show that we, like Christ, are called to suffer as “sheep”: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered” (Rom. 8:36). In the context of Psalm 44, from which this citation was taken, we learn that those saints who suffered as described above were those who were faithful to God, not those who were disobedient. The Passover lamb is therefore a pattern for the saints, showing us that innocent suffering is often a part of God’s will for the righteous, and that through the suffering of the saints, God’s purposes may be accomplished. Let no one seek to suffer in this way, but let no one dare to suggest that suffering in the life of the saint is inappropriate, the result of either sin or unbelief. The suffering of the Passover lamb is the pattern for the saints to follow when they suffer.

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Conclusion from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

People may try to avoid remembering how certain things come to an end (jobs, marriages, the lives of loved ones, etc.). Endings tend to be sad because we do not like to let go. We do not like the instability that the end of something familiar brings. An ending of something often signals entrance into the unknown as comfortable routines must be abandoned and new ones developed. Yet endings sometimes are gateways to new beginnings that far outshine the past. The Passover was just such a gateway. In this vein, Christ has given us the Lord’s Supper for us to remember the end of Jesus’ earthly life that leads to resurrection life in him. The facts surrounding the ending of Jesus’ earthly ministry belong in our memory because they are the foundation of our new life in him. It is thus fitting that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper in the context of the Passover meal. Remembering what Jesus has done is a vital foundation to being able to “make disciples of all nations” as Jesus would have us do (Matthew 28:19).

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. Redemption by God always signals a new beginning (Exod. 12:1-2; II Cor. 5:17)
2. The way of redemption needs to be proclaimed to all men (Exod. 12:3-4; Matt. 28:18-20)
3. Purity of motive and action displays true faith and obedience (Exod. 12:5-6; Isa. 29:13)
4. Clear directions from God warrant full obedience to God (Exod. 12:7-10; cf. Josh. 1:8)
5. God is gracious to redeem, but He will judge those who are His enemies (Exod. 12:11-13)
6. Wise is the man who regularly remembers his redemption by the Lord (vs. 14)