

# PASSOVER AND PENTECOST

When we think of the Passover, our minds go to the lamb that was slain in Egypt, whose blood, sprinkled on the doorpost of their house, saved every Hebrew family from the wrath of God against Egypt in the night the death angel passed through the land. When we think of Pentecost, however, our minds go to the 120 disciples of Jesus who were filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. We may be unaware of the fact that between the Passover in Egypt and the day of Pentecost in the book of Acts, there had been almost 1500 Passovers celebrated, every one of them followed by an uneventful day of Pentecost. Why was the day of Pentecost in the book of Acts different from the many hundreds that had come before? Acts 2:1-4. The answer is found in the blood of the Passover lamb.

The blood of the Passover lamb that was offered in Egypt was sufficient to deliver the people from the bondage of Pharaoh in Egypt, but it could not save them from the bondage of sin in their hearts and natures. Fifty days after the Passover, which is the definition of "Pentecost," the children of Israel stood at the foot of Mount Sinai to hear the voice of God when He spoke to them. They had the promise, if they would "obey His voice, and keep His covenant," they would be God's "peculiar treasure," His "kingdom of priests," and His "holy nation" Exodus 19:5-6.

A year before this day, God had spoken to Moses out of a "burning bush," and now He would speak to the children of Israel out of a burning mountain. I believe God's purpose in bringing them to Sinai was to pour His Spirit into them exactly as He did the 120 almost 1500 years later, and they would become His "kingdom of priests," and His "holy nation" Exodus 19:6.

Something went horribly wrong that day at Sinai. The people refused to even listen to God when He spoke. They cried to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" Exodus 20:19. They chose to obey Moses if only God would not speak to them again Deuteronomy 5:27. This choice gave them the Law of Moses, which was imposed upon them as punishment for their refusal to hear God. The apostle Paul confirmed, "the Law ... was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" Galatians 3:19. This was not the will of God for His people, as He said to Moses, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" Deuteronomy 5:29. Less than two months later, Aaron, their

"high priest" under the Law of Moses, fashioned a calf of gold for them to worship, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" Exodus 32:3-6.

Each year, for the next 1500 years, the children of Israel offered another Passover lamb, and 50 days later, there followed another day of Pentecost, both of which were nothing more than a time of memorial of things past. The young King Josiah offered 30,000 lambs and 3,000 bullocks at what was called the greatest Passover feast ever in Jerusalem, but not one drop of that "river of blood" could cleanse the heart of man. The sole reason the children of Israel could never consistently please God is revealed in the words of the apostle Paul; "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" Hebrews 10:4.

Jesus Christ is "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" John 1:29. He is our "Passover Lamb" 1 Corinthians 5:7. His blood is "holy blood," which was shed for our sanctification Hebrews 13:12. The 120 who received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost were those whose hearts had been "purified" Acts 15:8-9 by faith in Jesus Christ and His precious blood. These were the first to become God's "kingdom of priests" and "holy nation" 1 Peter 2:9-10.

*"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."* Hebrews 10:11-12

Consider the futility of being a priest serving under the Law to offer daily sacrifices which "can never take away sin." Jesus Christ offered "one sacrifice for sins forever," because His blood "takes away sin" and "purifies the heart." The problem in the modern church is not in the sacrifice which was offered; it is that the sacrifice is not preached. Consider the futility of preaching, for years, a message that cannot deliver those who believe it. God will never, ever, "pour out of His Spirit" upon a church whose message is "We are all sinners, who sin every day." For these, Christ died in vain. They will be lost, because they have never trusted in Him who "loved us, and gave Himself for us" Galatians 2:20, to "wash us from our sins in His own blood" Revelation 1:5.

Many in the modern church are predicting a great last-day outpouring of the Spirit. It will never come upon those whose hearts have not been "purified" by the washing of the blood of Jesus. God promised the day of Pentecost, but it was 1500 years before He could send the promise upon the people. It was the holy



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blood of the Son of God, offered to make the people pure and holy, which made the difference. As long as we offer philosophy, principles, step plans and countless religious practices that "can never take away sin," there will be no harvest, and no outpouring of the Spirit of God. There is a guarantee of a great Pentecost, however, when we preach the precious and holy blood of Jesus Christ as the only answer for the sin of man. When the true Passover is offered, the true Pentecost follows!

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