

THE PASSOVER - THE BASICS

BIBLE STUDY BY JAMIE MCNAB

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Hopefully you are aware that Passover is just 2 weeks away ... Sunday evening April 9. This Tuesday will be the First Day of Nisan.

It is a busy period coming up ... Passover ... The Night To Be Much Remembered ... 2 Feast Days ... 7 Days of Unleavened Bread ... 1 weekly Sabbath (and also Easter falls then).

Traditionally ... we've used the 2 or 3 Sabbaths preceding the Passover to review the key Bible Passages to make sure we are properly prepared as far as we can be (including mentally ... emotionally and spiritually).

We are all very busy people ... with lots of distractions from day to day. It is very easy to let time slip by and ... just turn up for Passover ... ill-prepared to take it properly. We don't want to do that.

In the next 3 Sabbaths ... we'll review the key areas.

Let's start with a Passover warning from the Apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 11:23-30 (NKJV)

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that **the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;**

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "**Take, eat; (a command!) this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.**"

25 In the same manner **He also took the cup after supper**, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 **For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.** (A very sober evening)

27 **Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner** (no one is worthy ... it's talking of eating it in a worthy manner) **will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

28 But **let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.** (Examine/scrutinise ... before taking. Something that we need to do now!)

29 For **he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself**, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 **For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.** (Have died)

The warning to us is ... to take it in a worthy manner. We must never take these things for granted.

Hebrews 2:1-3 (NKJV)

1 **Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.** (that's addressed to you and me. People don't just "leave" God overnight. Normally ... people just drift slowly away ... because we aren't heeding the Word we once heard)

2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3 **how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation,** which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, (to neglect is to make light of

something. We don't give it the attention it needs. Life is just so busy. Like the seeds sown amongst the thorns and thistles).

The Passover is the most important event in our calling. It's the beginning of our salvation. If there was no Passover ... no blood of a perfect Lamb ... you and I would have no forgiveness and no hope of Eternal Life!

Maybe you have kept the Passover 10 ... 20 ... 30 ... or 40 years? Not a problem ... but we must be careful not to become casual ... neglectful ... starting to "drift away"?? Take this seriously.

The Churches of God are often accused of not speaking sufficiently of the Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe a reaction to the over-emphasis by most Protestants to Jesus Christ. We tend to focus on the Father ... exalt Him ... it's His plan!

But of course the Lord Jesus is key ... central to the Father's plan ... so if we tend not to highlight the role of the Lord Jesus Christ as we ought ... the Passover gives us the opportunity to redress the balance. The Passover is totally linked in to Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (NKJV)

6 Your glorying is not good. **Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?**

7 **Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**

8 **Therefore let us keep the feast, (of Unleavened Bread) not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

Let's go back to the beginning ... to the first Passover. One of the values of the Holy Days is to ensure we never go more than a year between reminders of key milestones.

Exodus 11:1-3 (NKJV)

1 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.

2 Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbour and every woman from her neighbour, articles of silver and articles of gold."

3 And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

Exodus 11:4-7 (NKJV)

4 Then Moses said, "Thus says the Lord: '**About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; (the middle of the night)**

5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. (A devastating plague)

6 Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.

7 **But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the Lord does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'** (God would "pass over" ... protection ... salvation)

Exodus 12:1-5(NKJV)

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. (Nisan or Abib)**

3 Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: **"On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.**

4 And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbour 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. *(this is a domestic Passover in people's homes)*

5 **Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.** You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV)

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.** *(at the beginning of the 14th ... at dusk)*
(Rotherham's Emphasised Bible: ... "slay it between the two evenings" :Ben Ha Arbayim ... evening #1 = sunset ... evening #2 = dusk ... between is twilight)

Collins English Dictionary: "Twilight" the soft diffused light occurring when the sun is just below the horizon, especially following sunset".

Exodus 12:7 (NKJV)

7 And they shall **take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts** and on the lintel of the houses *(in their own homes ... the domestic Passover)* **where they eat it.** *(Important: Two clear parts: the Blood of The Lamb. Taking the blood to put on the door ... and then eating the flesh ... the body of the Lamb)*

Exodus 12:8-14 (NKJV)

8 **Then they shall eat the flesh on that night;** *(an important part of the Passover ... there are 2 elements)* 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**, (*daybreak*) 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.** (*Trepidation*) **It is the Lord's Passover.**

12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, (*the 14th*) 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.** (*the blood is important ... painted on the door*)

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.

Exodus 12:21-22 (NKJV)

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

22 And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. **And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.** (*Daybreak ... in Egypt circa 6 am*)

Exodus 12:23-27 (NKJV)

23 For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and **when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.**

24 **And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.**

25 It will come to pass when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

26 And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'

27 that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.' " So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

We can see the same about Jesus' blood.

1 Peter 1:13-21 (NKJV)

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (*Jesus Christ is the Passover Lamb of God ... in reality*)

20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

We are redeemed with the precious ... priceless blood of The Lamb of God. "Redeemed" ... set free ... rescued ... liberated. No longer captive ... under a death-threat. Jesus is "The Lamb of God" ... a title worth dwelling-on?

John 1:29 (NKJV)

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

John 1:30-36 (NKJV)

30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptising with water."

32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptise with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptises with the Holy Spirit.'

34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" *(That's His title!)*

John 1:37-39 (NKJV)

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?"

They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

John Baptist is a witness that Jesus is the Lamb of God. That is one of Jesus' titles identifying Him in His role of Passover Lamb ... one who redeems ... saves.

Jesus is named as "Lamb" over 25 times in the Book of Revelation alone. Let's look at just a couple.

Revelation 5:8-13 (NKJV)

8 Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before **the Lamb**, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

9 And they sang a new song, saying:

"You are worthy to take the scroll,

And to open its seals;

For You were slain,

And have redeemed us to God by Your blood

Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

10 **And have made us kings and priests to our God;**

And we shall reign on the earth."

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

12 saying with a loud voice:

"Worthy is **the Lamb who was slain**

To receive power and riches and wisdom,

And strength and honour and glory and blessing!"

13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

"Blessing and honour and glory and power

Be to Him who sits on the throne,

And to **the Lamb, forever and ever!"**

Revelation 7:9-17 (NKJV)

9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, **standing before the throne and before the Lamb**, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "**Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!**"

11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

12 saying:

"Amen! **Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honour and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.**"

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know."

So he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**"

15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.

16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;

17 for **the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**"

The Passover and the Passover Lamb ... plays a major part in the Gospels.... almost half of the Gospel of John is about The Passover and subsequent resurrection of Jesus. It is key.

Let's look at Jesus' final Passover.

Matthew 26:1-5 (NKJV)

1 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples,

2 **"You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."**

3 Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4 and **plotted to take Jesus by trickery (*stealth*) and kill Him.**

5 But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people."

Matthew 26:17-20 (NKJV)

17 Now on the *first day of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, **"Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" (JESUS IS GOING TO EAT THE PASSOVER)**

18 And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, **'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."** ' "

19 **So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.**

20 Then evening had come, He sat down with the twelve.

*A transition day. It was a custom of the Jews on the 14th: gather/burn leaven ... about 10 am. Don't eat after ... 11 am. Bake unleavened bread for the Feast ... 3 pm.

Matthew 26:26-30 (NKJV)

26 And as they were eating, **Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."**

27 **Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.**

28 **For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

There are two emblems: The Bread and The Wine ... picturing the Body and the Blood.

Mark 14:12-17 (NKJV)

12 **Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, (the transition day) when they killed the Passover lamb, (they were at that very time ... killing their Passover Lamb ... for the domestic Passover kept at the beginning of the 14th)** His disciples said to Him, **"Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"** *(Jesus didn't say, "no not this year!!" He Was going to eat The Passover)*

13 And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him.

14 Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, **"Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"** '

15 Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us."

16 So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and **they prepared the Passover.**

17 **In the evening He came with the twelve.** *(to do what? To eat The Passover)*

They were right then killing the Lamb. There was divisions amongst the Jews ... just like today ... about when you should keep The Passover. Some of them kept it at home ... the domestic Passover.

Many Jews kept the Passover nearly a day later. They waited for the High Priest to kill the first lamb at 3 pm ... then other priests would kill thousands more ... and the people that followed this rule ate a Passover meal after sunset on the 15th of the month .. this was known as "The Temple Passover". This was the wrong day.

Jesus kept The Passover at the correct time ... just after sunset ... on the early part of the 14th. It says so in verse 12.

Mark 14:12 (Young's Literal)

And the first day of the unleavened food, ***when they were killing the passover,*** his disciples say to him, "Where wilt thou, [that,] having gone, we may prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?" *(for their domestic Passover in their homes)*

Mark 14:12 (NASB)

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, ***when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed,*** His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare for You to eat the Passover?" *(The lambs are being sacrificed at this moment)*

Mark 14:22-26 (NKJV)

22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many."

25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus modified the emblems from the physical lamb and herbs to the Bread and Wine.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NKJV)

23 **For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you:** *(Paul received this information from The Lord)* that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, **"Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."** *(It is important to know that the bread is broken for us)*

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, **"This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

26 **For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.** *(A memorial ... of a special event that happens once per year. An ANNUAL EVENT! Not "as often as you want"! The Catholics: every day [communion] ... Seventh Day Adventists: quarterly ... some born-again churches: 1st Sunday of each month)*

1 Corinthians 11:26 (NET)

26 **For every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

It's a memorial. Once a year on the anniversary. Like Thanksgiving ... Remembrance Day ... 4th July (Easter! Xmas!) ... once a year.

1 Corinthians 11:27-30

27 **Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

28 **But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.**

29 **For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.**

30 **For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. (have died)**

1 Corinthians 11:28 (AMPLIFIED)

Let a man [thoroughly] examine himself, and [only when he has done] so should he eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

(The Greek dictionaries say, "scrutinise")

Don't just "turn up" ... we should prepare ... we should ponder ... consider the cost ... to the Father and to Jesus. Are we grateful?

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV)

5 **Examine yourselves** as to whether you are in the faith. **Test yourselves.** Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (AMP)

5 **Examine and test and evaluate your own selves** to see whether you are holding to your faith and showing the proper fruits of it. **Test and prove yourselves** [not Christ].

How have we progressed since Passover last year? Am I doing well ... am I more fruitful ... more grateful? Or ... am I drifting away?

Taking Passover ... taking it meaningfully and seriously ... is brought out in the passage we traditionally read around Passover.

John 6:25-35 (NKJV)

25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

26 Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

27 **Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."**

28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered and said to them, **"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."**

30 Therefore they said to Him, **"What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?"**

31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' "

32 Then Jesus said to them, **"Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.**

33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

35 And **Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**

John 6:41-58 (NKJV)

41 The Jews then complained about Him, because **He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."**

42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.

44 **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

45 It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

46 **Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.**

47 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

48 ***I am the bread of life.***

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 **This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.**

51 ***I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.***

52 The Jews therefore quarrelled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

53 Then Jesus said to them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.**

54 **Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.** (*We do this symbolically at Passover when we take the bread and wine. However, more importantly ... We are to make Jesus part of us. We should be changed by Jesus living in us*)

55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

56 **He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.**

57 **As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.**

58 **This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”**

John 6:60-69 (NKJV)

60 **Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”**

61 **When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you?**

62 **What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?**

63 **It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.**

64 **But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.**

65 **And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”**

66 **From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. (Notice: Jesus didn't run after them. If you walk away from Jesus ... away you walk)**

67 **Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”**

68 **But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.**

69 **Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

To eat is to take into our being ... to digest ... to make it a part of ourselves! Blessed if we eat ... not just look at ... admire ... know about ... take a picture of Jesus over there. Therefore ... understand

“the recipe” ... eat it! Get it inside! Christ in us ... the hope of glory.

Also ... taking part in the Passover ... eating the Bread ... drinking the Wine ... symbols of Jesus' Body and Blood ... is a renewal every year of our everlasting covenant.

A covenant is a formal ... legal ... agreement/contract. God is a Covenant God. “Covenant” is mentioned more than 300 times in the Bible. There were covenants with Noah ... Abraham ... Israel ... David ... and US ... you and me!!

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)

1 “Behold, I send My messenger, *(John Baptist preparing the way for the Lord Jesus)*

And he will prepare the way before Me.

And the Lord, whom you seek,

Will suddenly come to His temple,

Even the Messenger of the covenant

In whom you delight.

Behold, He is coming,”

Says the Lord of hosts.

Jesus was a Messenger. He brought a message about a covenant ... a New Covenant. Another title for Jesus is “Messenger of the Covenant”.

What do we know about this covenant? Are we familiar with it? Its terms and conditions? Its blessings and obligations? Its connection to Passover?

Hebrews 8:6-13 (NKJV)

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as **He is also Mediator** (*go-between ... Agent*) **of a better covenant**, which was established on better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "**Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—**

9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

10 For **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

11 None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

13 **In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.**

Hebrews 10:26-31 (NKJV)

26 **For if we sin willfully** (*this way of life isn't really for me ... turn your back on God!!*) after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,
27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

29 **Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? (Don't treat the Blood of The Covenant lightly)**

30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, **"The Lord will judge His people."**

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The Passover is THE key memorial of the Blood of The Covenant. So ... to ignore the Passover Memorial is to fail to honour Jesus' shed blood and sacrifices ... it would be ... to despise the Blood of The Covenant.

To sip the wine carelessly ... with your mind on other things ... spacing ... would be to despise The Blood of The Covenant.

The link between the Blood of The covenant and Passover is made very clear in our final scripture today.

Matthew 26:26-28 (NKJV)

26 And as they were eating, **Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."**

27 **Then He took the cup, (of wine) and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."**

28 **For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

In the next couple of Sabbaths ... we'll look in more detail at the bread and the wine.

But ... already it is time enough to start reflecting ... to examine ourselves. How are we doing? What does Passover mean to me? Looking forward to renewing our covenant.

The next couple of weeks will fly by! Don't leave it too late!! I suggest we start round about now!