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- (e) It is a strength that *battles* only for the right, for it is received from Him Who is righteous. Its powers can, therefore, only be legitimately used for divine ends and cannot be diverted to other uses.
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SEVEN OLD TESTAMENT FEASTS

A TYPOLOGICAL STUDY OF LEVITICUS 23

By THE EDITOR

IV. The Subject Considered Analytically

The Passover (*Continued*)

(2) THE PASSOVER AS A MEMORIAL FEAST. That this aspect is foreshadowed even at its inauguration seems clear: 'This day shall be unto you for a memorial and ye shall keep the feast to Jehovah; throughout your generations ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.*' It is plain that it was to be kept in perpetuity, as a recurring reminder, for all succeeding generations. It was, for this reason, named by the Jews 'the Perpetual Passover,' in distinction from the 'Egyptian Passover'.

* Ex. 12: 14; 13: 3, 8; Deut. 6: 20-25.

As already stated (see page 24, Jan. issue) the references to it as a memorial are few, but these few are spiritually instructive. Before turning to two or three of these we must first note, because of its primary importance, the more general analogy or illustration it provides in regard to the ordinance of the Church today, the Lord's Supper. It is significant, to begin with, that the Lord Himself should have chosen to institute the Supper on the very night of the Passover in which He suffered. But He was on the point of fulfilling all the typical import of the *First* Passover in laying down His life sacrificially for our redemption. It was the occasion most suitable, therefore, for inaugurating the *New Memorial* of that redemption: for He was making provision for a *New People*, later called 'His Body,' 'The Church'—of which HE is HEAD. So that two significant changes were effected in the old Sabbath and the old Memorial Feast: the one was substituted for the First Day, the Lord's Day; the other for the New Feast, the Lord's Supper. It is important to note a distinction, however, that the new are not a *continuation* of the old; there is no doctrinal or 'functional' inter-relation. Instead, there is rather, a break with the old legal, priestly ceremony and ritual belonging to both Sabbath and Feast; followed by a far more definitely *spiritual* meaning and usage in both.

For one thing, which is of utmost emphasis, in both the new Day and the new Supper, the LORDSHIP of Christ, the Source and Dispenser of all the blessings and privileges they together envisage, is clearly taught. Both are His; both speak of Him; both are for the purpose of making us pause deliberately from the busy, clamant preoccupations of daily life, and turn our whole attention on HIM—in holy worship and grateful adoration. He is (reverently we say) *ours*, every day; He claims us for Himself in some particular sense in the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day.*

In the Lord's Supper we, as individual believers in corporate union, gather to Him, to commune with Him, to give Him our heart's holiest worship, adoration, praise and thanksgiving. For this high exercise of redeemed souls there is the immediate help and grace of the ever-present Holy Spirit. This is entirely true and sufficient *apart* from all forms and fashions of sacerdotalism.

* This does not imply, of course, that the 'Day' is doctrinally or essentially related to the 'Supper', or the 'Supper' to the 'Day'. But it is the usual (and apostolic) custom to partake of the Supper on the First Day.

Any earthly priest or ritual has no place here. 'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us . . . and having a High Priest over the house of God—let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. . . .'* As believer-priests, in possession of the full rights of a heavenly character, of a blessed relation of union in one Body, of a Divine invitation—'*let us draw near*'. The very symbols of the bread and the wine serve to remind us, as they are intended, of HIM who 'was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;' whose blood was poured out to make atonement for our sin. His own gracious appeal to all His saints was, 'Do this in *remembrance of me*;' His apostle's inspired comment is—'for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink the cup *ye proclaim the Lord's death*, till He come.'**

(a) In the chapter we are studying (Levit. 23), it may seem strange why so little is said about the Feast. But full directions had already been given; here it was sufficient to place the Feast in its correct *order*, as in Num. 28:16, with the addition of its *spiritual* relation with the Sabbath (as we have noted). This we believe is the divine purpose; to show the means by which God's rest is to be restored to a sin-stricken creation, beginning with redemption. There is without doubt a further reason, again spiritual: viz., to reveal to the Spirit-taught mind what the death of Christ, *as the antitype* of the Passover, is to *Jehovah*. A quite unique phrase is used in verse 5 to fix attention on this—it is '*Jehovah's Passover*'. We cannot recollect it being so named in any other context, and that it should be named just in this particular context, devoid of *all* the usual attendant features of the Feast, helps to bring into prominent relief the one point—this is *Jehovah's*; here is *the* type (the basis of all other sacrifices, as we have seen), of what the death of Christ is to God, as the foundation upon which all His gracious thoughts concerning a redeemed earth and a new heaven are built. The death of His Son as a sacrifice for Sin meets all His claims, satisfies all His heart—'In HIM I am *well pleased*,' He could say. It sets forth that aspect of Christ's death, which is *Jehovah's alone*, in which none of His people share; just as the wave-sheaf sets forth the aspect of His *resurrection*, which also is His alone. Who could know the value of this death so well as He? Who understood

* Heb. 10: 19-22.

** 1 Cor. 11: 25-26.

what suffering it meant to the Son so well as He? Yet God delighted in it for all it meant to HIM the Father, and for all its unutterable, *glorious results*. So does the believer, in the Lord's Supper, feed upon the worthiness and excellencies of His Lord; but not the least of all his gratitude and worship will be that which is drawn out by the contemplation of what the death, resurrection, and glorious exaltation of the Son is *to God the Father*.

The Gospel of John significantly confirms this reading of our passage. One of the characteristics of the Gospel is the phrase '*the Jews*'; five times in reference to *feasts*, three of them to the Passover as a 'Feast of *the Jews*,' or the 'Passover of *the Jews*.'* By this usage there can be little doubt the apostle was revealing what might not appear to the outward eye: the degeneration which these annual festivals had undergone into mere *national* institutions devoid of all spiritual meaning. This Feast, with the rest, had become 'the Passover of *the Jews*,' and was no longer 'Jehovah's'.

So does the sacred lesson run for us to read and meditate upon. How easily possible it is, as ever, to maintain the *outward* performance of even the Lord's Supper, with never a sensing of its inward meaning. We are still prone to be content with the externals bereft of all spiritual *reality*. May our hearts be sustained in closest touch with the living Lord, from whom alone we derive life and true experience of the spiritual.

(b) Numbers 9:1-14 records the first celebration outside Egypt, in the wilderness of Sinai. The notice is again brief. Verse 3 states that all the rites and ceremonies were observed but no mention is made of the killing of the lamb. The other point mentioned is in verse 11, but that is not to the Principal Passover, but to what

* See John 2: 13; 5: 1; 6: 4; 7: 2; 11: 55. There are well over fifty occurrences of the term '*the Jews*'. 'In most of the passages in which we meet with the "Jews", we must understand the party possessed of the greatest influence in the nation, the representatives of Judaism, *the leaders in opposition to Jesus*. Even where the term is used in a wider sense, it does not simply designate the nation; when employed by the Evangelist himself, it almost always bears with it the impress of one thought—that of general unfaithfulness, of a national depravation which culminated in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus.' 'The Evangelist is writing of that with which he has entirely broken, and is characterizing the ordinary religion of his day as one that consisted in ceremonies and external purifications.'—*Gospel of John*, by Milligan and Moulton.

the Jews called 'the Little Passover'; which we shall consider in a moment. The main emphasis seems, therefore, to rest upon the necessity of keeping *the Feast*, in its *memorial* character. They were not allowed to forget the place it held in the great history of their deliverance from Egypt. The simple lesson is not far to seek, yet is notoriously overlooked by Christians today: if Israel were so carefully instructed in the matter of *keeping* the Feast, there is surely a far greater claim upon the believer, redeemed at such infinitely greater cost by the Son of God Himself, to 'keep the Memory adored!' Is it too much to suggest that our attitude towards the Supper often serves as an index of our spiritual state? It remains true at least that, as pointed out earlier, this would seem to have been the case in the chequered history of the nation subsequently; for every record of revival (except in Judges) was signified by the celebration of the Passover—e.g., under Hezekiah, later under Josiah, and on the Return from Exile.

But the further incident in this passage is also instructive. Verses 6–9 record that certain men were unable to keep the Feast at the proper time in the first month, owing to ceremonial defilement. Jehovah is seen acting in grace, for in spite of all the Law's normal judicial rigidity, they were not shut out completely. After submission to the prescribed ritual of purification they were permitted to celebrate the 'Little Passover', in the *second* month instead of the first. The only detail that is mentioned is the requirement to keep the Feast with 'unleavened bread and bitter herbs'.

Here then we have both contrast and comparison, from which we draw the spiritual lessons of this first (recorded) wilderness Passover: The first, the difference in procedure *before* celebration. In Exodus 12 we see typically the sinner entirely dependent upon the death of the lamb and the shelter of its blood. There is no other means of escaping from judgment; no acts of purification, no ceremonial 'washings' are called for: 'When I see the BLOOD I will pass over you.' But *now*, it is a *redeemed* people that partake. And yet, though in that position legally, there needs to be care, for there is danger of defilement by the way. In case, however, this may happen God graciously provides for 'restoration'. Incidentally, we might mention (for the reader's personal study) the subsequent ordinance of the 'red heifer', which was later brought in for this very contingency—see Numbers 19. (The New

Testament teaching of this ordinance is found in Hebrews 9:12-14). So that there is first the necessity of celebrating the Feast, yet only by those who are ceremonially clean. This is further borne out by a study of all the subsequent historical celebrations. Every recorded Passover was preceded by various ceremonial preparations of purification.*

The lesson for the believer today is evident. True he does not partake of the Lord's Supper on the same basis—it is not in his own worthiness but in the all-prevailing worthiness of the Saviour Christ *alone* which gives him the *right* to partake. Nevertheless, the significance of the type points to the necessity for a right condition of heart and conscience. Hence the apostle, 'let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup'. This calls for self-judgment and a growing appreciation of the meaning of the Supper. This was what was so sadly lacking in the Church at Corinth, for they failed to rightly discern how easily defilement infects other members of the one Body, of which Christ is the Head. We do not now require, by way of contrast with the old type, ceremonial cleansings, but we do need to get into the presence of God for ourselves and ask Him to remove the defilement from heart and conscience. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' Restoration is immediate and complete, thank God. But here the 'unleavened bread and bitter herbs' come in to recall to our memories the path upon which He set our feet in that first day we trusted in His precious blood for forgiveness, when He called us to 'walk in newness of life'. How bitter and humbling the memory of our failures, of having failed *Him*; how sweet the consciousness that we can still walk with Him—to the end of the journey!

(c) Directions for keeping the Feast in the *land of Canaan* are given more prominence in the closing addresses of Moses, Deut. 16:1-8. They are again few, and intermingled with allusions to the related Feast of Unleavened Bread. There are certain re-emphasis and differences. One prominent iteration is the calling to remembrance of their former state in Egypt, and how their deliverance necessitated great haste and the eating of the 'unleavened bread of affliction,' amongst the other details

* See the passages already given.

performed (v. 3). The latter requirement is both positively and negatively re-asserted (vv. 3, 4, 8) three times. Similarly one other feature is again mentioned—that the flesh of the sacrificial lamb be roasted and eaten on the Passover night, and nothing left over till the morning.*

But the conspicuous difference is the manner and place of killing the sacrifice and of the subsequent feasting upon it. Thrice over the phrase 'in the place which Jehovah shall choose to place His name there' (vv. 2, 6, 7) occurs, whilst in verse 5 is the positive prohibition against this being done 'within any of thy gates' (i.e., households—see also v. 7 b). They were to sacrifice and partake in the Divinely chosen gathering point.

The spiritual teaching is twofold, first the *necessity* of sustaining a lively remembrance of 'how great salvation' Christ has effected on our behalf, and how great was our need morally and spiritually when He saved us. The call to 'remember' is a characteristic of the book of Deuteronomy, occurring at least ten or eleven times. The subsequent generations proved by bitterest and tragic experience the disastrous results of forgetfulness.** The same is true today in many thousands of (Christian) lives.

But two things would serve to keep the memory fresh and spiritually vigorous; first, that which is typified by the roasted flesh and the unleavened bread—it is Christ in death and in life that forms the spiritual food required to nourish the redeemed soul, the affections, and the mind of the believer. John records that 'hard saying' of Jesus (ch. 6:53, ff.) 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves.' The Lord explains this as meaning that, exactly as He Himself nourished His soul by daily fellowship with the Father, so we receive and strengthen our spiritual life by 'feeding' by faith on Christ. This phrase refers to our individual and personal experience of the Saviour.

The second thing to note is the *gathering together* of those who own Him as Lord. This is surely the corporate fellowship and communion expressed when His members meet to 'remember Him and proclaim His death'. This aspect has been referred to above; but it bears a further brief note because of its quite special importance today. We get (*i*) the gathering together in common

* Ex. 12: 8-11.

** Ps. 78: 11; Jer. 2: 32; Isa. 17: 10.

assembly worship, as uniquely expressed in the Lord's Supper. In the Supper 'the bread which we break' is 'the communion of *the body* of Christ'—not His personal body, but THE Body of which He is Head. Thus we express our fellowship with other members of the Christian Church. This is a collective thought, and refers only to occasions when we 'come together in the church'.* (ii) The rallying Object (the Person—He is never *the Subject*) Who bears the NAME: speaking of the Nature, Dignity, and Authority of Him Who bears it. (iii) The Divine will expressed in the Divine *choosing* of the 'place', where 'My Name' calls forth adoration and heart exercise, even apart from any human leadership.

Here we get the only effective conditions for powerful witness and fruitful blessing in corporate experience—in so far as we submit to them and do not act in self-will. For 'where two or three are gathered together in My NAME, there am I in the midst'. Hence, 'let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together as the custom of some is; but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see *the Day drawing nigh*'.**

• 1 Cor. 10: 16-17; 11: 18-26.

• • Heb. 10: 24, 25.

MAN AN ENDLESS BEING

By E. H. DREWERY

These are days of 'liberal theology'. Anything is 'liberal' which gives man a larger licence to do as he likes, that tones down the severity of Divinely threatened judgment; that makes sin less sinful and its punishment less dreadful. The plainest statements of Holy Writ are skilfully distorted, wrested from their context and made to bolster up the figments on man's imagination, his conception of what God is and how He should act towards His creatures. So we are presented with a God who is so loving and kind, who will overlook our faults and failures, not expecting too much from His frail, erring children, for is He not the Father of mankind, who will receive us all at last into His heavenly home? We are