

Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah

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BIG SANDY, Texas—On April 9, 2017, many people will be commemorating the suffering and death of our Lord and Savior on a date representing the night that He was betrayed.

Last week, I began a three-part series to briefly discuss the following histories.

- Last week—Exodus Passover
- This week—Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah
- Next week—Christ Instituted New Symbols

Domestic Passover first

When Bible students look back at the various history lessons surrounding the Old Testament Passover, they realize that the Exodus Passover was a different event from the Passovers that soon followed.

One way to describe the difference is that the Exodus 12 Passover was a domestic event, and that later Passovers were sanctuary events.

Why do we call the Passover of Exodus 12 a domestic event? It occurred in the homes of the people. The Passover of Exodus 12 occurred before the instructions about the tabernacle (Exodus 25-27) and about the priesthood (Exodus 28-30) were given.

Why do we call the later Passover occurrences a sanctuary event?

They occurred after the instructions about the tabernacle (Exodus 25-27) and about the priesthood (Exodus 28-30) were given.

Became a sanctuary Passover

Once the tabernacle and priesthood were established, the Passover became a sanctuary event.

Notice some phrases that revealed the pivot of thought toward a sanctuary event.

Exodus 12:48—If a stranger wanted to keep the Passover, he had to be circumcised, and then “let him come near and keep it.” This was sanctuary language—projecting to the upcoming change.

Numbers 9:6—When a person was considered “defiled,” this was associated with the sanctuary. A defiled person was prevented from presenting the offering at its appointed time (verses 7 and 13).

Deuteronomy 16:2—The Passover sacrifice was to be presented in the place where God placed His name (His sanctuary).

Deuteronomy 16:5—The Passover sacrifice was not to be within their gates.

Deuteronomy 16:6—The Passover sacrifice was at twilight—at the time they came out of Egypt.

Time of Hezekiah

History shows that there was a time of revival for the people of Judah during the reign of Hezekiah. Notice a few highlights.

2 Chronicles 29:2—Hezekiah did that which was right in the sight of God.

2 Chronicles 29:3—Hezekiah repaired the temple.

2 Chronicles 29:4-11—Hezekiah instructed the priests and the Levites to sanctify themselves and to sanctify the house of God.

2 Chronicles 29:20-36—Hezekiah encouraged the offering of solemn sacrifices.

2 Chronicles 30:1—Hezekiah made an invitation for people to keep the Passover.

2 Chronicles 30:2-4—The people agreed to keep the Passover in the second month, because they were not prepared.

2 Chronicles 30:5—The people decided to keep the Passover in the prescribed manner, which they had not done for a long time.

Instead of paraphrasing the next few verses, let’s quote them.

2 Chronicles 30:17-20—“For there were many in the assembly who had not sanctified themselves; therefore the Levites had charge of the slaughter of the Passover lambs for everyone who was not clean, to sanctify them to the LORD. For a multitude of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, ‘May the good LORD provide atonement for everyone who prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he is not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.’ And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.”

■ To all the people who argue about people being worthy to partake of the Passover—did you notice that Hezekiah prayed for them, knowing they weren’t worthy enough?

2 Chronicles 30:23—"Then the whole assembly agreed to keep the feast another seven days, and they kept it another seven days with gladness."

2 Chronicles 30:24—"For Hezekiah king of Judah gave to the congregation a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep, and the leaders gave to the congregation a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep; and a great number of priests sanctified themselves."

2 Chronicles 30:26—"So there was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem."

Time of Josiah

History shows that there was a time of revival for the people of Judah during the reign of Josiah. Notice a few highlights.

2 Chronicles 34:2—Josiah did that which was right in the sight of God.

2 Chronicles 34:3-7—Josiah began to purge Judah of idolatry.

2 Chronicles 34:8-13—Josiah repaired the temple.

2 Chronicles 34:29-32—Josiah renewed the covenant.

2 Chronicles 35:1—Josiah kept a Passover.

2 Chronicles 35:2-6—Josiah encouraged the priests in the service of the house of God—including the killing of the Passover offering.

2 Chronicles 35:6—The Passover offerings were done according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

2 Chronicles 35:7—Josiah and other men gave animals for the Passover offering.

2 Chronicles 35:10—The priests stood in their places.

2 Chronicles 35:11—The priests and Levites were involved in the Passover offerings.

2 Chronicles 35:12—The offering was done as it was written in the Book of Moses (indicating a sanctuary Passover back then).

2 Chronicles 35:14—The priests served until night.

Instead of paraphrasing the next verse, let's quote it.

2 Chronicles 35:18—"There had been no Passover kept in Israel like that since the days of Samuel the prophet; and none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem."