

A LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH

1 Peter 1:18-21

The purpose of the Lord's Supper it is to remind us of the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross 2000 years ago. Listen to what the Apostle Peter wrote:

1 Peter 1:18-19(NIV) 18For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

This text transports us all the way back to the book of Exodus. There we find the wonderful story of how God delivered the Children of Israel from slavery.

Remember the 10 plagues God sent on the Egyptians? The 1) water turned into blood; 2) Frogs; 3) gnats followed by 4) flies covered the land; 5) the livestock started dying;

6) Boils covered the bodies of humans and animals alike; 7) hail destroyed the crops and what the hail didn't get, 8) the plague of locusts did; 9) the ninth plague was darkness that covered the land for three days.

But it was the final plague that broke the camel's back, so to speak. The tenth plague was the death of all first-born who were not protected by the blood on the doorposts and lintels. (Read Exo. 12:1-14)

God said, (Exo 12:5) "The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect." The most perfect lamb was to be sacrificed and its blood sprinkled on the doorposts and lintels of the Israelite's houses. Those inside those homes would be protected.

From this miraculous event God instituted the Passover and Unleavened Bread (v. 14, "...for the generations to come...a lasting ordinance."

Jesus Christ became the perfect sacrificial Lamb for us. When God instituted the Pass-over, He specified to the Israelites that the lamb was to be without blemish—Jesus, sinless, without blemish.

Here are some important lessons for us today:

1. The lamb pointed to Jesus Christ.

The first Passover was just before the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The tenth plague had been announced: the death of all the firstborn in the land of Egypt.

God said that the only protection would be blood from the sacrificial, unblemished lamb placed upon the doorposts and lintels.

Only those who had faith and obeyed God would be protected. This applied to the alien in their midst as well as any Egyptian who also believed.

When the death angel passed over that night, the first born of every household died except for those in the houses where the blood was on the posts and lintels.

Now, obviously, the blood itself had no power to keep the death angel away. But putting it around the doors as God commanded was an act of faith and obedience.

It wasn't their feelings and emotions that protected them. It wasn't their repentance. It wasn't keeping the laws that protected them.

It was their faith that believed and trusted God. Faith led to obedience. They placed the blood on the door posts and lintels because of faith. It was the blood that made their protection possible.

(Exo 12:13) "The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt."

It is easy to see how the blood from this physically flawless lamb points to the shed blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. The blood symbolized the future sacrifice of Christ's by which He conquered death for all who had faith in Him.

John the Baptist called Jesus "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). The perfect, sinless Jesus became the sacrifice on our behalf. As Peter said:

"...It was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed...but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." [Alas and Did My Savior Bleed]

A second important lesson for us is that...

2. God sets the conditions for our salvation.

God told the Israelites the Passover lamb must be without blemish. He would not accept just any animal—it had to be the very best..

He told them to put the animal's blood on the door posts. God would be satisfied only if His terms and conditions were met. It had to be a spotless lamb—no substitutes.

What was true then is just as true today. Anyone who wants a relationship with God must do it in the way He says—not the way we may wish or want or think or feel—but only as God says.

Jesus spells it out very clearly in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

He is very clear—belief must be in Jesus Christ. Peter said in Acts 4:12, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

And the Apostle John in John 1:12, “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--”

Scripture could not be any clearer. If there were any other way, God would not have allowed His Son to die for us. Jesus Christ is the only acceptable sacrifice. God will accept no other. If you want to know God, you must come through Jesus.

You may not completely understand this. Certainly the people of Israel, including Moses, did not understand the full significance of the Passover, but they knew it was part of God's plan.

God required it and they obeyed. Faith always accepts God's provision, no matter how strange it may seem to our human understanding. When you accept Jesus Christ by faith, you accept God's provision for your salvation.

To the world it may seem strange, and the world may have different opinions on how to please God; but the world's way is not God's way.

Finally, it is important to understand that...

3. When we come to the table...

- **We acknowledge Jesus is the only way of salvation.**

Focus on the sinlessness of our Spotless Lamb, Jesus Christ. Even though Jesus was absolutely sinless (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22), He was made to be sin for us (2 Cor. 5:1).

The Apostle Peter wrote in 1 Pet. 2:24 (NIV), "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."

When we partake of the Lord's Supper...

- **We accept God's conditions.**

At the Lord's Supper table we proclaim, not our worthiness—for we know just how unworthy we truly are—but Christ's saving, life giving, and uplifting death.

We proclaim our inability to save ourselves by word, or deeds, or any other thing aside from acceptance of Jesus Christ. He was worthy.

The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remind us again, not of Jesus' life and teachings, but rather of His shed blood and death (1 Cor. 11:26; 15:3; 1 Pet. 2:24).

And...

- **We proclaim that Jesus is the only Savior.**

This Table is set for believers only. Only those who understand the sacrifice of Christ, and have accepted him as their own Savior can really comprehend the meaning of the juice and bread.

The Lord's Supper is meaningless to anyone who has not accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Is there anyone here who wants to do that today?

For if you confess with your mouth Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Rom. 10:9).

He invites you to come to Him just as you are. Give Him your life, give Him your heart.

At the Lord's Supper, we Christians meditate on the Perfect Savior who shed His blood on our behalf.