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**Observance of the Passover***Observance of the Passover by the Jewish People***Past, Present, and Future
By Arlen L. Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

*“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaronin the land of Egypt, saying,*

*This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.*

*Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house…*

*And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

*And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it.*

*And ye shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it…*

*For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite 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.*

*And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt.*

*And this day shall be unto you for a memorial: and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever”* ([Exodus 12:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.1-3&t=NKJV), [6-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.6-8&t=NKJV), [12-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.12-14&t=NKJV)).

God, through Moses, gave Israel instructions at Mt. Sinai for seven festivals ([Leviticus 23:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23.1ff&t=NKJV)). These were given to the nation *following* the giving of the Law and instructions *concerning* the tabernacle and priesthood, *preceding* their journey to Kadesh-Barnea (*cf.* [Exodus 40:34-38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+40.34-38&t=NKJV); [Leviticus 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+1.1&t=NKJV); [Numbers 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+1.1&t=NKJV); [10:11-12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Numbers+10.11-12&t=NKJV)).

These seven festivals were to be observed by the Jewish people year after year throughout their generations. And these festivals were to be observed *after the manner* in which Scripture outlines and deals with them.

**The First Festival, the Passover**

The instructions for the observance of the Passover — the *first* of the seven festivals — is *not* given in Leviticus chapter twenty-three. Rather, it is given at the *time of its institution* in Exodus chapter twelve.

The simple statement in [Leviticus 23:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Leviticus+23.5&t=NKJV), introducing the Passover as the first of the seven festivals, *rests* on the *previous* instructions and *initial* keeping of the Passover, as seen in [Exodus 12:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.1ff&t=NKJV).

The observance of the Passover was to occur on the fourteenth day of what, at that time, became the *first month of the Jewish year*. This was to be “the beginning of months” for the *nation* ([Exodus 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.2&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.14&t=NKJV)).

Thus, the observance of the Passover by the Jewish people throughout *all* their future generations (on the fourteenth day of the first month of *each* year), can only be seen, from a historical standpoint, as a *beginning time* in Jewish life for the coming year — a *new beginning for a new year*.

**The Passover in the Camp of Israel, Past**

At the time that the Passover was instituted, Moses had *returned to* and *been accepted* by the Jewish people. *Nine* different plagues had befallen the kingdom of the Assyrian Pharaoh *ruling* over Egypt.

And the Passover — which had to do with the *death of the firstborn* — was to be the *tenth* and *final* plague befalling those in the land of Egypt.

(The Assyrians had *previously* come down and conquered Egypt [evidently over a century *prior* to this time]. And *they formed the rulers* in Egypt *during* Moses’ day [*cf.* [Exodus 1:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+1.8-9&t=NKJV); [Isaiah 52:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+52.4&t=NKJV)].)

The Passover, having to do with the *death of the firstborn*, was *different* than any of the previous plagues. This plague, *unlike* the *previous* plagues, would *equally* affect not only those in the *kingdom of the Assyrian* but those in the *camp of Israel as well* (*cf.* [Exodus 8:22-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+8.22-23&t=NKJV); [9:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+9.6-7&t=NKJV), [11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+9.11&t=NKJV), [23-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+9.23-26&t=NKJV); [10:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+10.4-6&t=NKJV), [21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+10.21-23&t=NKJV); [11:4-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+11.4-7&t=NKJV); [12:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.12-13&t=NKJV)).

*Every* firstborn throughout the land of Egypt, *both* man and beast, would *die*. There were *no* exceptions.

The firstborn in *every* family in the kingdom of the Assyrian, from the one *seated* on the throne to the *lowest* in the kingdom, would die ([Exodus 11:4-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+11.4-5&t=NKJV)); and, the firstborn in *every* family in the camp of Israel, *without* regard to anything *except* the fact that the person was the firstborn, would die *as well*. Again, there were *no exceptions*.

However, in the *camp of Israel*, God *provided* a means whereby the *firstborn in a family could experience death via a substitute — a vicarious death*. On the *tenth* day of the first month, every family could take a lamb from the flock (a male lamb, in its first year), *pen* the lamb, *check* the lamb for blemishes over several days time, and then *slay* the lamb at a specified time on the *fourteenth* day of the month (the Hebrew text states “between the evenings” as the *time* when the lamb was to be slain, *i.e.* in the *middle* of the afternoon).

The *blood* from the slain lamb was to be caught in a *basin*, *hyssop* was then to be *dipped in the blood*, and the blood was to be *applied to the two side posts and the upper door post of the house in which the firstborn lived*. Then, the *same* lamb which had *been slain* was to be *eaten by those in the household*.

And this *scene was to be repeated* at this time in *house after house after house throughout the camp of Israel*.

The Lord was going to *pass through* the land of Egypt at *midnight* (some nine hours after the lambs had been slain and the blood applied), *executing* His previous decree upon the firstborn. He was going to slay the firstborn in *every* household, again *without regard to any distinction between those in the kingdom of the Assyrian and those in the camp of Israel*.

However, *God had provided a means whereby the firstborn in any Israeli family could experience death via a substitutionary means. The paschal lamb could die in his stead*.

In this respect, *when the Lord passed through the land of Egypt at midnight, He looked for one thing and one thing only. He looked for the blood of a slain lamb, properly applied* ([Exodus 12:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.12-13&t=NKJV), [23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12.23&t=NKJV)).

If He *saw* the blood, He *passed over* that house. Death had *already occurred in that house*; the firstborn had *already died, in a substitute*. The Lord *recognized* this substitutionary death. Thus, *He couldn’t slay the one already reckoned as dead, and He passed over that Israeli home*.

But, if the Lord *did not see* the blood (the instructions concerning death, shed blood, and the proper application of the blood had not been followed), the firstborn in the family was *then slain*. Death had been decreed upon the firstborn in *every* family, and the firstborn in *every* family *had to die*, *whether via a substitute or apart from a substitute*.

**The Passover in the Camp of Israel, Present**

Any attempt by the Jewish people to observe the Passover *during the present time*, according to the instructions which God provided in Exodus chapter twelve, must involve *death*, *shed blood*, the *proper application of that blood*, and the *eating of the Lamb that had been slain*. It must involve a *substitutionary death* for the *firstborn in the family*, *followed* by an *eating of the Lamb*. Anything *short* of this *cannot* be an *observance of the Passover at all*. It can only *be an observance of something else*.

In reality though, since the Paschal Lamb has *already* died and His blood has *already* been shed ([1 Corinthians 5:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+5.7&t=NKJV)), any *true* observance of the Passover *can occur only one way today*, with everything still completely in line with that stated in Exodus chapter twelve. The Passover can only be kept today by *the shed blood being properly applied, followed by the Lamb being eaten*.

In short, *Israel slew* the Paschal Lamb 2,000 years ago, but the *nation has yet to apply the blood and eat the slain Lamb.*

(The paschal lamb was *given* to Israel, and *only* Israel could *slay* this lamb. And since this is true, only Israel *could have slain* the Paschal Lamb 2,000 years ago, the *nation’s Jewish Messiah*, which is clearly attributed to Israel in Scripture [[Acts 2:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.23&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+2.36&t=NKJV); [3:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+3.14-17&t=NKJV); [7:51-52](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+7.51-52&t=NKJV)].

[*E.g.*, during Moses’ day, an Egyptian family *could not* have escaped the death of the firstborn through following the instructions given to Moses in [Exodus 12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Exodus+12&t=NKJV). The paschal lamb *was not given* to the Egyptians. It *was given* to Israel, and Israel *alone could slay this lamb*.

The only possible way in which the firstborn in an Egyptian family could have experienced a *vicarious* death the night of the Passover was for that family to be *inside an Israeli home where God’s instructions had been followed, for* “salvation is of the Jews” ([John 4:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+4.22&t=NKJV))].

The eating of the Lamb is then a *subsequent* matter [*cf.* [John 6:48-58](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+6.48-58&t=NKJV)]. The *Paschal Lamb is the Word manifested in the form of flesh* [[John 1:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.1-2&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.14&t=NKJV)].

And one presently eats the Paschal Lamb *following* the application of the blood through *assimilating the Word in written form*.)

**The Passover in the Camp of Israel, Future**

The institution of the Passover in the land of Egypt in Exodus chapter twelve had to do with the *birth of a nation*. This occurred *following* Moses’ return, *preceding* God removing His people from Egypt, and *preceding* the overthrow of the Assyrian and his armed forces in the Red Sea.

This foreshadows a *future* time when, through Israel’s *observance* of the Passover, there will be a *re-birth of the nation*. In the words of [Isaiah 66:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+66.8&t=NKJV), a nation will be “born at once.” This will occur *following Christ’s return* (as it occurred following Moses’ return), *preceding* God removing the Jewish people from a *worldwide* dispersion (as it occurred *preceding* their being removed from Egypt during Moses’ day); and this will occur *preceding* the overthrow of the kingdom of the Assyrian in that *future* day (as it occurred *preceding* the overthrow of the kingdom of the Assyrian *during* Moses’ day).

(An Assyrian is seen in the *antitype* as well as the *type*. The *future* man of sin, the *Antichrist*, is seen coming out of the *northern* division of Alexander the Great’s kingdom, as it was *divided* among his four generals *following* his death. The northern division was the *old* kingdom of Assyria, and this man is *referred to* as an “Assyrian” numerous places in Scripture [*e.g.*, [Isaiah 14:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+14.25&t=NKJV); [30:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+30.31&t=NKJV); [31:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+31.8&t=NKJV); [Hosea 11:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hosea+11.5&t=NKJV); [Micah 5:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Micah+5.4-6&t=NKJV)].

For additional information on this man, refer to the author’s two pamphlets, “[The Great Image, Great Beasts by Arlen Chitwood, Part 1](http://lampbroadcast.org/plets/ppdf9/DanielsGreatImageGreatBeastsPartI.pdf), [Part 2](http://lampbroadcast.org/plets/ppdf9/DanielsGreatImageGreatBeastsPartII.pdf).”)

*Following* Christ’s return, the Jewish people are going to *look upon* and *receive* the Lamb Whom they *slew* 2,000 years ago. In that day, through *believing*, they will *apply* the blood of the Paschal Lamb which they had *previously* slain. And through *applying* this blood — through *believing* on the Lord Jesus Christ — *those* comprising the nation will *experience* the *death of the firstborn vicariously, via the One Who died in their stead*.

*Then* they will *feast upon the Lamb* by *not only His personal presence* but through an *assimilation of the written Word, which the Jewish people will carry to the nations of the earth* ([Isaiah 53:1ff](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+53.1ff&t=NKJV)).

This is what the *future holds for Israel and the nations during the Messianic Era, though many things must transpire first.*

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See [The Beast — In the Book of Daniel](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-two.php#The%20Beast%20%E2%80%94%20In%20the%20Book%20of%20Daniel) in this site.