

“Promises Kept”
November 30, 2025
Exodus 12:1-14, 29-33

I. Introduction

I hope that all of you had a good Thanksgiving and that not too many of you had to make another notch in your belt. Aren't elastic belts nice? If you are like most families, by now the company is all gone (or will be gone soon), the good dishes and silverware are back in storage, and the leftovers have all been put away in the 'fridge and the freezer. After all the planning and eating to your heart's content, Thanksgiving with all the food and trimmings as well as visits with family and friends have come and gone. Now, unlike the many stores who have been prepared for Christmas for months, we need to get ready for Christmas—physically and spiritually.

Decorating the church, decorating our homes isn't just putting out some “Christmas things.” With many of these “things” there are memories. Some are personal, they bring back memories of people and things from the past. Some are spiritual—they remind us of the “reason for the season.” Things like a crèche or a manger, like the one on the table in the front of the sanctuary, remind us of the birth of Jesus in a manger in Bethlehem—just one of many promises that were fulfilled concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. **Micah 5:2** says, “**But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.**”

There are many pictures or promises concerning Jesus Christ in the Old Testament—Aggie and Eric read just one of many passages from Isaiah concerning the promised Messiah. Passover and the elements of the Seder meal were to remind the Jews of their slavery in Egypt and God's deliverance, but Passover and the Passover lamb are also pictures or promises concerning Jesus Christ. In **John 1:29** John the Baptist called Jesus “**the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.**” In **1 Corinthians 5:7** Paul wrote, “**Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**”

In the verses we just read from **Exodus 12**, the people of Israel had been slaves in Egypt for over 400 years. They had been crying to God for rescue. God answered their prayers by raising up Moses to lead them to the Promised Land. But there was one problem; as you well remember, Pharaoh didn't want to let them go. So, using Moses and Aaron as His spokesmen, God sent plagues upon Egypt. The plagues were to punish Egypt and to teach Israel about their God. By the time we get to **Exodus 12**, there have already been 9 plagues: turning water into blood, frogs, gnats, flies, a plague on the livestock, boils, hail & lightning, locusts, and darkness. But, in spite of all these horrific things, Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrews go. It wasn't until the 10th plague—the death of every 1st born male in Egypt—that Pharaoh and the Egyptians were more than ready to let the Israelites leave. **“The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. ‘For otherwise,’ they said, ‘we will all die!’”**

Although they suffered through some of the plagues, the Israelites didn't experience all of them because of God's mercy. But unlike the other plagues, if they or anyone else were to be spared from this 10th and final plague, they had to do something. They needed to kill the Passover lamb and **“then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.”** From that point on, Passover was to be celebrated every year as the people remembered how God had spared or saved their lives. It was at such a Passover meal about 1500 years later that Jesus instituted Communion or the Lord's Table **“on the night He was betrayed”** (**1 Corinthians 11:23**).

This morning, on this 1st Sunday of Advent, let's look at some of the promises concerning Jesus Christ that are seen in Passover and the Passover lamb.

II. Promises Kept Concerning the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, as Seen in the Passover Lamb

A. Without defect One characteristic of the lamb is found in **Exodus 12:5**, **“the animals you choose must be year-old males without defect.”** Moses also wrote that the Israelites were to keep the lamb from the 10th day to the 14th day---5 days during which time they would be able to see if their sacrifice really was **“without defect”** or blemish.

What about Jesus Christ? In 1 Peter 1:18-19, Peter wrote, “For ... you were redeemed ... with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” Peter and the rest of the Apostles had lived with Jesus for 3 years. They had seen Jesus in a variety of situations; both public and private; some threatening and hostile, even life threatening. Through it all, Peter was able to say that Jesus was perfect, i.e., “without blemish or defect.” Jesus was interrogated by the Sanhedrin and then Pilate, but Jesus was found to be blameless through it all. Turn to John 19:1-4. Echoing Peter, John wrote in 1 John 3:5, “But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.” Having been with Jesus 3 years 24/7, in good times and bad, the Apostles were able to say that Jesus was the perfect Lamb of God—a lamb without blemish or defect.

B. Slain between 3 and 6 pm Exodus 12:6 says, “Take care of them, i.e., the Passover lambs, until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.” Over the years, the Sadducees and the Pharisees had fought about what “twilight” meant, but, eventually, the time they settled on was between 3 pm and 6 pm. The 2nd characteristic of the Passover lamb was that it was slain between 3 and 6 pm.

And when did Jesus die on the cross? Turn to Mark 15:33-39. If you have any footnotes in your Bible, you see that the 6th hour is our 12 o’clock or noon and the 9th hour is 3 pm. God’s Passover Lamb—Jesus Christ—died at the appropriate time. Jesus died just after 3 pm.

C. Sacrificed to save others In Exodus 12:13 God promised, “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.” It wasn’t the life of the lamb that saved the people from judgment, it was its death—its blood. This is the 3rd characteristic of the Passover lamb: it was sacrificed to save others.

Just as the lamb had to die to save the Israelites, Jesus came to die to save the world. Turn to Isaiah 53:4-6. In Matthew 20:28 Jesus said, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” 1 Peter 2:24 says, “By his wounds you have been healed.”

1 John 3:16 says, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” Jesus died, was sacrificed, to save others.

D. To be saved, blood had to be applied To save those in a house, Exodus 12:7 says that the blood of the lamb was to be put “on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.” If this wasn’t done, there would be no salvation; death would come to that house. This is the 4th characteristic: to be saved, blood had to be applied.

Similarly, it isn’t enough to admire Jesus’ life and teachings. It isn’t even enough to know that Jesus was sacrificed for the sins of the world. Just as each Israelite household had to apply the blood to the sides and tops of the doorframes, each person must accept Jesus’ sacrifice for himself. Hebrews 9:22 says, “In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Every person must say along with Paul in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Peter proclaimed to the Sanhedrin 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.” John 3:36 says, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.” To be saved from an eternity in hell, Jesus’ blood must be applied to one’s heart.

E. Roasted over fire represents judgment Exodus 12:8 says, “That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire.” Throughout Scripture fire represents judgment—think of Sodom and Gomorrah, think of hell. Roasting the Passover lamb over fire represented the judgment of God.

Prophecy about the coming Messiah, Isaiah 53:5, which we just read, says, “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.” Writing to Christians, Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:24, “He himself, i.e., Jesus Christ, 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.” Jesus was punished or judged guilty for our sins, not for something He had done. Jesus was punished, judged for our sins.

F. No broken bones Writing about the Passover lamb, Exodus 12:46 says, “It must be eaten inside one house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones.” In order that the lamb remain intact or whole, it was roasted not boiled in water or cooked in some other way. This is the 6th characteristic of the Passover lamb: no broken bones.

Turn to John 19:31-37. As Jesus hung on the cross and was judged for our sins, He, like the Passover lamb, had no broken bones.

III. Conclusion

Passover and the Passover lamb are pictures or promises of Jesus Christ—we’ve looked at just 6 of them this morning. The Passover lamb’s death and blood saved the physical bodies of the Israelites. God’s Passover Lamb—Jesus Christ—died to save the spiritual body—the soul—of everyone who believes in Him. Jesus satisfied all the requirements to be the Savior for all mankind. 1 Peter 1:18-19 says, “For 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, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.”

For many of you, what we have talked about today is “old stuff”—you’ve heard all before. But as we come to a close, let me ask you two questions. The first is “*Have you really applied Jesus’ blood to yourself?*” Knowing that Jesus is the Son of God; knowing that Jesus died for sinners; knowing that Jesus rose from the dead are all good things—but Satan and his demons know this, too. James 2:19 says, “You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that-- and shudder.” But they are still on their way to an eternity in hell. As John 3:16, Romans 10:9 and many other verses say, you have to believe that Jesus died for you and for your sins **AND** you have to make Him Lord of your life. He must be number ONE in your life. Have you done that? Is He really number One?

When the blood from the 1st Passover lamb was applied to the side and top of the door frame, everyone could see it. Everyone—believer or not—knew that people who did believe in God and His promises lived in that particular house. There was no denying it—the blood was there to be seen by everyone.

So, the second question is: “*Can others see the difference in you?*” The operative word here is “see”—not “hear.” An old saying goes: “What you do speaks so loud, that I cannot hear what you say.” Are you different or do you blend in with everyone else? Do you laugh at all the same questionable jokes? Do you have the same bad habits as everyone else around you? Is there any difference between what you do and say and what the world does and says? If you say you have applied Jesus’ blood and have made Him Lord of your life, it must be seen not just heard. In [Matthew 7:16](#) Jesus said, “*By their fruits you shall know them.*” James wrote in [James 2:18](#), “*I will show you my faith by what I do.*” [1 Peter 2:12](#) says, “*Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*” How about you, can your faith and the lordship of Jesus Christ be seen in your fruit, in what you do?

This Christmas season, this Advent season, trite as it may sound, remember the reason for the season: Jesus Christ “*being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death-- even death on a cross!*” ([Philippians 2:6-8](#)). Or as [1 Timothy 1:15](#) says, “*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*” Remember the reason for the season, but don’t stop there, as [1 Peter 3:15](#) says, “*But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*”