

Safety under the blood of the Lamb

God was about to judge the entire land of Egypt, including Goshen where the people of Israel were living. Every individual was under judgement but the firstborn would represent the entire family. Yet in the midst of the judgement there was a way of salvation. God provided a lamb as a substitute. For some, the lamb would die instead of them. For those firstborn members of the family who sheltered under the blood of the passover lamb, there would be safety.

• *The lamb dies instead of the people*

The lamb dies instead of the people. It is not that God forgets their sins. There is a judgement in Goshen. God does not ignore His people's sins; He judges them in a substitute. God provided Jesus, His lamb. Jesus was punished for sin instead of the human race.

• *The story emphasises the blood*

The story emphasises the blood. After the lamb had been killed in each family they had to take the blood and put it on the doorposts and the top of the door so that blood was painted all around the doorway¹. The blood had to be produced explicitly. There were other ways to kill an animal (strangling, for example), but the blood had to be produced to prove the animal had died in bloody sacrifice.

1 12:7

• *The blood would be painted around the doorway*

The people were to gather on the fourteenth day. The lamb would be killed. The blood would be painted around the doorway, and then the lamb would be eaten. Each family or group of small families would eat 'the lamb'. It was spoken of as if it were just one lamb.

• *The lamb roasted and eaten*

The lamb had to be roasted¹. At the same time as the eating of the animal, some other foods were to be eaten as well. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs were taken with the meat of the lamb². The entire animal had to be roasted whole³. They were not allowed to leave aside the head or the thighs of the animal. Not a bone was to be broken⁴.

1 12:8

2 12:8

3 12:9

4 John 19:36

• *Leaven represented impurity*

Leaven represented impurity. It is 'leaven' or 'yeast' which makes the dough ferment. It was used sometimes as a picture of impurity or corruption. Bitter herbs represented the sufferings and bitter life the Hebrews had endured¹. They were being redeemed from the bitter experience of bondage.

1 1:14

• *Bitter herbs represented suffering*

• *Nothing to remain*

As the Israelites ate the lamb they were not to leave anything of the lamb remaining. Anything that was not edible or was left uneaten had to be consumed with fire¹.

1 12:10

• *Dressed ready for an abrupt and sudden journey*

As they ate the roast lamb on that first passover night they were to be dressed ready for an abrupt and sudden journey. They had a belt around their waist so that they could walk rapidly without their flapping robes making them walk slower. They had their sandals on their feet. They were to have a staff in their hand. And they were to eat rapidly, not leisurely.

Every aspect of this event spoke of God's way of salvation

Every aspect of this event spoke of God's way of salvation. Jesus was a sacrifice for our sins on the cross. Jesus did not die of illness or of old-age. He died under the judgement of God. It was a terrible death. It was violent and ugly. He was abandoned by people and abandoned by God. There is a lot of emphasis in the Bible on blood. Our salvation takes

• *The blood of Christ*

place by the blood- sacrifice of Jesus. This is why the New Testament often speaks of the blood of Christ (Matthew 26:28; Luke 22:20; John 6:53– 56; 19:34; Acts 20:28; Romans 3:25; 5:9; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25, 27; Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Colossians 1:14, 20; Hebrews 9:14; 10:19, 29; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2, 19; 1 John 1:7; 5:6, 8; Revelation 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11; 17:6). 'Blood' means death as a sacrifice for sins.

• *Sheltering under the blood of Jesus – God's wrath averted*

If the Israelites' firstborn children would shelter under the blood, all would be well for them. They would be kept safe. If we shelter under the blood of Jesus Christ the judgement of God will pass by us without destroying us. It happens now. At this very moment the wrath of God is averted for all who trust Jesus and we are taken as God's children. It will happen also at the final judgement day. When the unsaved are experiencing the anger of God the saved will find that the wrath of God will pass them by again. They will be safe because of the blood of the lamb.

• *The story emphasises the speed at which their salvation takes place*

The story emphasises the speed at which their salvation takes place. They had wanted to escape Egypt for many years but had not been able to find deliverance. They had prayed to go, but nothing brought them release. Even the previous nine miraculous judgements had not led to Pharaoh's letting the people go. But the blood can do what nothing else could do. Once the lamb has died and the people have fed on it they are free! Before they could not get out of Egypt. Now they cannot stay in! Immediately they are pilgrims travelling to a new land. Instantly they are freed. The unleavened bread was easily and speedily cooked. It meant they could leave swiftly, urgently.

• *The unleavened bread spoke of urgency in leaving behind the old wicked, sinful, painful life*

The unleavened bread spoke of urgency in leaving behind the old wicked, sinful, painful life. In 1 Corinthians 5:7 Paul said 'Clean out the old leaven ... Christ our passover is sacrificed'. The passover lamb pictures Jesus. The leaven is a picture of the old life from which Jesus delivers us.

• *Never to forget*

They were never to forget this day. The bitter herbs would be a reminder of the painful days that had experienced before. The Christian remembers the days when he was without Jesus. He looks back on them with horror. 'Never again will I go back to that!' he says to himself.

• *This is the way to live*

The Israelites were to make a meal of the lamb. The lamb which had died for them became afterwards the source of their strength, their energy, their life. This is the way to forgiveness. We shelter beneath the blood of the lamb. This is the way to live. We get strength from the Lamb.



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