

Weekly Devotional by Pastor Ken Nabi
March 29, 2010

Seeing Easter Clearly

"For Christ, our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed." 1 Corinthians 5:7

It has been said that the New Testament reveals what the Old Testament conceals. For generation after generation, the Israelites remembered Passover as the miraculous and climactic deliverance provided by Yahweh God when he sent an angel of death into Egypt to render judgment on Pharaoh and his hard heartedness. The whole story is described in Exodus 12 with God giving very specific instruction about the removal of yeast from the home and the slaughter of a lamb for the family and how it was to be eaten. The blood of the lamb was to be smeared over the door posts of the home and it was to be done at twilight. Generation after generation of Hebrew people would recall this amazing provision of God and remember his love and that one day he would send his messiah.

The picture in Exodus is so pregnant with meaning that when Jesus came on the scene in the New Testament, all of the symbolism burst forth pouring out insights that had never been had before. Remember that Holy week is about Jesus and His disciples coming into town to celebrate Passover. Jesus and His disciples are in the upper room (Mark 14:12-24) eating the Passover meal when he institutes the Lord's Supper revealing the meaning of what Jews had been doing for hundreds of years.

The unleavened bread was his body—because there was no sin in his being. The wine was his blood. And, if you connect the dots, he was about to be the Passover Lamb offered up to God the Father. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 5, the Apostle Paul makes clear all of this symbolism that was contained in the OT but revealed in the life of Jesus. Paul says that Jesus was the Passover Lamb sacrificed for us. The blood of Jesus is to be applied to the door posts of our heart so that the judgment of God passes over our lives in mercy and grace.

What a picture! I suspect that the Jewish people of that day had these "aha" moments when they could see what God had been doing for generations of remembrance. Jesus was the messiah. He was the lamb of God. His death was foretold by their tradition of getting rid of the yeast, and slaughtering a Passover lamb.

Jews today still remember the Passover meal. In fact, in the church calendar, today—March 29th 2010 is Passover. Jews call the Passover meal the "Seder" meal. Seder means "order" and they follow a very specific routine both revealed in Exodus 12 as well as the traditions that have been cultivated for thousands of years. We Christians know that Jesus is the lamb killed to provide our covering. The key is the blood of the lamb on the door posts of the heart. In fact, in Revelation 3:20, we see the Passover meal metaphor. "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."

Easter only makes any personal sense if you understand the Passover Lamb was crucified for your sins. Today, before this day is over, pause and read Exodus 12:1-14 and 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. Ask God to reveal your sin that needs to be removed and ask Him to pour out His mercy and forgiveness in your life.

Prepare your hearts for Easter—the resurrection of Jesus—by cleansing your heart through submission to the messiah. He loves you and has made a way for you to be in true relationship with Him. He is the God who not only delivered Israel from oppression, but also people from bondage to sin. He is our Passover Lamb.

Prayer: Lord, cleanse my heart of sin by forgiving me. Show me the things in my heart which are keeping me from your best and give me the power to be clean. Help me this week in anticipation of Easter to grow in expectation of hope that your deliverance is more beautiful than the ugliness of my sin.

Your Partner in the Gospel – *Ken Nabi*