

# The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

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~ All articles are written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

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## Fellowship in Passover

Number 9:1-14

### I. Introduction

A. This is the last chapter that takes place entirely at Sinai.

1. **Chapter 10** records one final preparation before they depart.
2. This is followed by their departure from Sinai.
3. It also records a conversation between Moses and his brother-in-law.
4. But what we have here in **Chapter 9** occurs at Mt. Sinai.

B. This first part of this chapter happens before the census was taken.

1. It occurred in the first month of the year, 9:1.
2. The census was commanded in the second month of the year, 1:1.
3. So, this is a flashback of sorts.
4. However, the order of presentation is intentional.

C. Overview of **Chapters 1-8**.

1. **Chapters 1-4** are all about ordering the camp.
  - a. The warriors are numbered.
  - b. The worshippers are numbered – Priests.
  - c. The workers are numbered – Levites.
2. **Chapter 5** is about purity in the camp.

- a. Corporate purity.
- b. Personal purity.
- c. Marital purity.

3. **Chapter 6** is about personal separation to the Lord – Nazarite Vow.

4. **Chapter 7** is about the special gifts for the tabernacle.

5. **Chapter 8** is about the consecration of the Levites.

D. Now they are just about ready to begin their journey to the Promised Land.

1. The camp is organized for war, worship, and work.
2. They have been instructed in purity.
3. They have been directed in personal separation.
4. They have offered gifts for worship.
5. They have consecrated the workers who aided in worship.
6. They are almost ready to start moving towards their goal.

E. First, they must have fellowship with God and accept His guidance.

1. Fellowship in the Passover feast.
2. Guidance in the cloud.

F. That is what **Chapter 9** is all about.

### II. The Passover is really about several things.

A. Fellowship with the Lord.

B. Memorial of their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, **Exo. 13:16**.

C. It was a recognition of judgment on the wicked, **Exo. 12:12**.

D. It reminded them of God's mercy on those under the blood, **Exo. 12:13**.

E. A reminder that they belonged to the Lord, **Exo. 13:2, 12, 15**.

F. An opportunity to teach their children of God's power, **Exo. 13:8-9, 14-15**.

G. A reminder that God keeps His promises, **Exo. 12:40-42, Gen. 15:13-16**.

H. At this time, it was a look forward to a future blessing, **Gen. 15:13-16**.

I. It was a way to keep God's law in their mouths, **Exo. 13:9**.

J. It reminded them that all their blessings came from the blood of the lamb.

K. It looked back to an accomplished redemption and looked forward to the completion of a promise.

### III. Christ is our Passover, I Cor. 5:7.

A. The Lord's Supper is a fellowship, communion, or sharing in His blood and body, **I Cor. 10:16**.

B. It is a memorial of our deliverance from the bondage of sin.

- C. It is a recognition of the Lord's judgment on the wicked, **I Cor. 11:29-30**.
- D. It is a memorial of the Lord's mercy on those under the blood, **I Cor. 11:31**.
- E. It is a reminder that we belong to the Lord, **I Cor. 6:19-20**.
- F. It is an opportunity to teach our children of God's power to save, **I Cor. 11:26**.
- G. It is a reminder that God keeps His promises, **I Cor. 11:25**.
- H. It looks forward to a future blessing, **I Cor. 11:26**.
- I. It is a way to keep God's law in our mouths, **I Cor. 11:27-32**.
- J. It reminds us that all our blessings come from the blood of the Lamb, **Eph. 1:3-7**.
- K. It looks back to an accomplished redemption and looks forward to the completion of the promise.

#### IV. The feast was to be kept consistently.

- A. God had already instructed that it was to be done every year, **Exo. 12:2, 14-20**.
- B. Being in the wilderness did not exempt them from observing it.
- C. Being away from their homes did not negate it.
- D. Not having realized the promise was not an excuse.
- E. Even being engaged in carrying out God's commands was not an exemption.
- F. Following God daily did not negate the need for special observances.
- G. They were not free to decide how often to partake.
- H. God told them what day of the year, so it was a yearly event.
- I. Today, He has told us what day of the week to have the Lord's Supper, so it is a weekly event.
- J. We are not free to decide how often to partake.

- K. "As often as you do it" says nothing about frequency, it is about how to do it, when you do.

#### V. Provision is made for all of Israel to partake.

- A. Some had been defiled by a corpse and could not participate, **Lev. 7:20-21, Num. 19:11-13**.
  1. The fact that these men still wanted to participate is to their credit.
  2. However, they seem to be suggesting that they not follow God's restriction.
  3. Moses does not answer without seeking God's direction.
  4. God had not revealed anything about this yet, and Moses would not speak where God had not given revelation.
- B. God makes provision for those who are defiled to participate the following month.
- C. He also includes those on a far journey in this.
- D. God intends for all who have been redeemed to participate in the celebration of that redemption.
- E. When they did partake, they had to follow all the other regulations.
- F. There is wonderful precedent in this for us today.
  1. The Passover was meant to be a corporate event, national in fact.
    - a. Those who were unable to participate could do so later.
    - b. When they did it later, only **they** did it, not everybody.
  2. This makes wonderful application to the idea of Sunday evening communion.
    - a. It is meant to be a corporate event, the whole Church, **I Cor. 10:17, 11:20**.
    - b. For those who cannot partake in the

first (or morning) service, they may partake later at the evening service.

#### VI. Punishment is pronounced on those who fail to partake.

- A. There are some wrong conclusions some could draw, if not for **verse 13**.
  1. It is not important to observe it at all.
  2. Any reason for not partaking will do.
  3. You can do it the following month just because you want to, or it is more convenient, etc.
- B. Here God makes it clear that none of these ideas are correct.
  1. Participation in the feast was required for all in Israel.
  2. Not participating when you were clean and not on a journey, was sin.
  3. Not only that, but it was also punishable in the most serious way.
- C. They would no longer be part of Israel – excommunicated.
- D. This was not something to be taken lightly.
- E. I believe we face a similar fate if we forsake the Lord's Supper, **John 6:53-56, Heb. 10:24-31**.
- F. Likely the Jewish Christians were forsaking the assembly because they were observing Jewish practices instead.

#### VII. The stranger had to follow the same ordinance as the native Israelite.

- A. This could only mean proselytes who had been circumcised, **Exo. 12:48-49**.
- B. It cannot refer to someone traveling in Israel who is not circumcised.
- C. God consistently makes the same rules for both the stranger and the native Israelite, **Num. 15:26, 29-30, Exo. 12:19, 49**.

- D. Nobody gets to make their own rules about how to worship the Lord.
  - E. This is comforting for the stranger.
  - F. They are part of the nation, family.
  - G. This also makes the native Israelite respect them as part of the Covenant.
  - H. It also has a practical value as the same rule applies to everyone.
  - I. Law and order will always break down when there is not consistency.
  - J. That is one of the big problems in our present age of narcissism.
  - K. People actually expect society to change their very language to suit them.
  - L. We are obsessed with "selfies".
  - M. We have to post our lives on FaceBook because it is obvious that the world needs to know and wants to know every detail of our lives.
  - N. While we are each important to God, none of us gets special rules 'just for us'.
- H. But we must keep the fellowship with the Lord along the way.

#### VIII. Conclusion

- A. The Passover lamb could not have any of its bones broken.
- B. Jesus did not have any of His bones broken, **John 19:32-36**.
- C. The Passover feast had to be kept without leaven, **Exo. 12:15, 19**.
- D. When we keep the feast of our Passover Lamb, we need to do it with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, **I Cor. 5:7-8**.
- E. Before we can truly journey with God, we need to fellowship with Him.
- F. We need to be reminded of our past redemption and look to the completion of His promise.
- G. We are headed to the true Promised Land.