
Day 25 - January 25

Establishment of a Nation (1525 – 1400 BCE)

Passover and the Exodus

Readings: *Exodus 12:1-13:16*

Reflections:

- This section begins to introduce what the Law will be like. Until this point people just had sacrifice (very little clear direction on it) and circumcision. With the teaching and experience of the Passover, the sense of Law begins to be introduced. You can see the detailed direction and the detailed judgment for failing to follow the direction.
- The symbolism is rich.
 - First we see the reference to the death of a firstborn son. Jesus, as the firstborn son of God died in our place under judgment that we might live.
 - Then we see the death of a sacrificial lamb. Again Jesus is our sacrificial lamb. The blood on the doorposts portrays our lives being marked by his blood and therefore we receive grace, not judgment.
 - The breaking of bread will later be used as a symbol of Jesus' broken body.
 - They took Egypt's silver and gold. This material wealth is now given to God's purposes, this same silver and gold was to be used for the tabernacle. Unfortunately, it was also used for the Golden Calf (another lesson for the future).
 - There is also no yeast in the bread. Jesus will use this same image to describe a teaching or a view of God that lacks faith, yeast being like unbelief and a law based teaching that is based on unbelief. A little bit of yeast works through the whole batch of dough. A little bit of unbelief works through a person's perspective on life and God. This legalistic, faithless view of God is what the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' day taught and so Jesus taught against having this kind of yeast in your life (see Matthew 16).
 - The Sabbath rest is also introduced.

- Circumcision is used to reinforce Israel's uniqueness as an established people again.
- The need for sacrifice is clearly defined. Brace yourself. Here comes the Law!
- One last note. The very last verse suggests that the consecration of the firstborn son and the sacrifice of the firstborn animal were like a sign on the hand or the forehead. There was no physical sign actually on your body, but it was like a sign that would be completely obvious to you and to everyone. It is interesting that in Revelation 13:16 and 14:9 that the sign of the beast is on the hand and the forehead. It is like the enemy wants to mark his people for destruction in the same way God wants to mark his people for salvation. I guess the point of the sign on the hand and forehead is that God's people should have complete confidence in their salvation. It should be obvious to them and to everyone. As Christ-followers we are sealed with a sign, the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30), as people set apart for God.
- We see in this passage that God was practical and wanted to help his people remember. We quickly forget the miracles that God does and so we must journal and capture and remember all of his benefits. It is like a couple going on a date night. Two people who love each other will want to be organized like that to ensure they set aside the time to keep the fires of their love burning strong. When the desire to serve and love is absent, even on just one person's side, the very same thing that is there to help the relationship can turn into something really painful. So the wineskin is good if you have good wine. If the wine you have is ultimately painful, the wineskin or basic rule can just make it all stand out all the more clearly. I am afraid God has experienced that with the human race all too often.
- See Amos 5:21-24 for a good example of following the rules that were there to foster a love relationship with God, but where the people missed his heart altogether and it simply upset God. "I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" God was looking for them to live lives of justice for the poor and needy and yet they simply wanted to go through the motions of worshipping God. All it did was hurt God.