



STEVE MUNSEY



SEVEN BLESSINGS

OF THE PASSOVER

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS PASSOVER?

Where did it come from?

Why is it important to Christians?

More to the point, what does an ancient Hebrew feast called Passover have to do with Christian believers nearly thirty-five hundred years after the feast began?

Here is a brief history, leading to the reason why I feel God told me to write a book with the specific title *Seven Blessings of Passover*:

- The events that led to the Passover were probably the most dramatic in all the Old Testament. The children of Israel were living in slavery in Egypt. Pharaoh was a severe taskmaster, and the Israelites seemed to have no hope of getting out. It was during that time that God spoke to Moses from a burning bush in the desert. Dry and without sap, the bush should have burned up quickly, but that didn't happen. Moses turned to observe this remarkable sight, and out of the bush God spoke to him: And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed (Exodus 3:2).
- God designed seven feasts for the Israelites (Leviticus 23). These feasts were God's own holy days, and there were specific instructions given for their observance. The Hebrew word translated feasts means "appointed times." God Himself orchestrated the sequence and time of each of these feasts.
- Three times a year the Israelites were to appear together before the Lord. The word of God strictly instructed them that they must not appear before Him without an offering.

Deuteronomy 16:16 states, "And they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed" (NKJV).

- The first feast of the Lord is Passover. It is the foundational feast. While the Jewish people have celebrated the Passover annually since the time of Moses, in reality, there was only one Passover. It occurred sometime around 1446 BC in Egypt.¹ It was at that time of the Exodus that a lamb was sacrificed and the blood was applied to each door post and gate. When this was done in faith and obedience to God's command, that home was "passed over," and the life of the firstborn was spared. All succeeding observances over the centuries have been memorials of that one and only first Passover.
- God is a covenant-keeping God. What His mouth speaks, His right arm of power causes to be performed. Thus, the Israelites, as unattractive and undesirable as they may have appeared at that time, were still His people. He saw their plight, He observed their many afflictions, and He decided it was time for them to leave after more than four hundred years in Egypt.
- It would be almost impossible to overstate the exodus from Egypt. Even Hollywood, with all its hype and special effects, did not exaggerate the reality of this miraculous event. God had hardened Pharaoh's heart so he wouldn't let the children of Israel leave his country. Plague after plague came upon the Egyptians without his giving in and letting them go. Finally, Moses announced that the firstborn of each home in Egypt would be taken by the death angel where there was no blood on the doorpost. At this terrible event, Pharaoh decided the children of Israel could leave. All those slaves with their possessions walked past the Pyramids and the Great Sphinx to freedom.
- God established the Passover as a feast to be kept forever: "It is the LORD's Passover... so this day shall be to you a memorial; and

you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance" (Exodus 12:11, 14, NKJV). This feast was established for the Israelites in the time of their flight from Egypt, but it also was consecrated as an appointed holy time each year throughout both the Old and the New Testaments. I will explain more about this in chapter 2.

In AD 325, the Roman emperor Constantine stopped the Passover as a church practice. Since that time, the holy convocations (the feasts) have not been observed by Christians.

Lost through the centuries since AD 325 is the fact that God promised seven major blessings to those who observe His feasts. Specifically, those obedient in the Passover Feast were promised seven blessings—seven specific, supernatural blessings.

However, for nearly seventeen centuries, these powerful truths have been mostly ignored and even rejected by Christians. That must change! The time for change is now. There is too much at stake.

For years God has been stirring me to write this book, to tell people how their lives would change dramatically when they restored the Passover offering. Increasingly, I have been reminded that God sets schedules and time boundaries, especially for His feasts and blessings. He is poised to pour out these blessings upon your life. As you read this book you will learn how to unleash these Passover blessings in your life today.

It is my prayer that God will use the pages of this book to revolutionize your life and will pour out more blessings than you ever dreamed possible. More than anything, I pray that you will understand why God wants you to receive the seven blessings.



PART ONE

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Passover

CHAPTER 1

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The Passover

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WITHOUT BELABORING THE POINT, let me say that the feasts of Israel, beginning with Passover, were built upon the foundation of God's blood covenant with mankind. This goes back to Adam and Eve, who lived in a perfect world, blameless, and without guilt. The first man and woman knew God intimately. They walked with Him and fellowshiped with Him regularly. Then they rebelled through a sin of disobedience. They ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is more than a mere allegory. It is the basis for all that follows for mankind, as presented throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

In the midst of God's judgment for their disobedience, however, came a wonderful promise of redemption through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. God cursed Satan, in the form of a serpent, who had tempted Adam and Eve into disobedience: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

As soon as God gave this first promise of Christ's deliverance, God immediately offered the first blood sacrifice. After they sinned, Adam and Eve ran from God's presence to avoid letting Him see their nakedness. God selected animals—some scholars suggest a lamb—and with the skins from the slain animals, apparently still moist with blood, He covered their sin.

And from that time forward, there were numerous examples

of the blood-red trail of the blood covenant that attempted to cover mankind's disobedience.

Then look at Noah. The first action he took, once the flood waters subsided and his family was able to disembark from the ark, was to offer a blood covenant with the Lord: *"And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar"* (Genesis 8:20).

Abraham, the father of all nations, was chosen by God to enter a covenant that would literally change the course of history. That covenant involved the shedding of blood:

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. (Genesis 17:1-10) Abraham offered his son Isaac as a test of his willingness to obey the God with whom he had entered this covenant. God spared Isaac's life at the last moment by providing a ram as a blood sacrifice:

And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen. (Genesis 22:11-14)

Jacob, Isaac's son and Abraham's grandson, obviously understood the necessity and absolute value of a blood covenant, for we find in Genesis 35:11-12: "And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land."

Not long after God delivered Moses the Ten Commandments, the leader of the children of Israel brought the people together and offered young bulls as a blood sacrifice: "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exodus 24:8).

Many more accounts of the blood covenant are found throughout the Old Testament, but perhaps none more graphically presented than through the feasts of Israel, especially the Passover and what led to God establishing that feast. In these next few pages, I pray God will reveal even more of His wonderful Old Covenant and New Covenant plan to you as we move toward spotlighting the seven blessings of the Passover.

Captivity

The events that led to the Passover were probably the most dramatic in all the Old Testament. The book of Genesis relates how Joseph was sold into slavery, taken to Egypt, endured great hardship, and was eventually given a top position in the nation's government because of God's favor on his life.

Through his influence and administration, Egypt flourished. His family, still in Canaan, heard about abundant grain there and the older brothers—the same ones who had sold him for thirty pieces of silver—came to obtain grain during a seven-year famine that stretched throughout the region. In due time, Joseph revealed that he was their long-lost brother, forgave his siblings, and invited the entire family to live in Egypt.

Years passed. Joseph and his brothers died, and the children of Israel multiplied in the land of Egypt. They held important positions and played an important role in the political, cultural, and economic life of the country. Pharaoh died as well and his predecessor apparently had little sympathy or love for the children of Israel.

It is generally accepted as historical fact that approximately thirty-five hundred years ago, the Hebrews were enslaved by the Egyptians under the rule of the Pharaoh Ramses II. Forgetting what Joseph had done for Egypt, the new pharaoh decided to take action against the growing influence and numbers of the children of Israel. The "foreigners" were brutally forced to build cities, erect monuments, construct roads, work in the quarries, and hew stones or make bricks and tiles. However, according to biblical and historical records, the more the Egyptians oppressed them, the more the children of Israel increased and multiplied.