

# Passover and the Lord's Supper

The purest type of the Lord's Supper is, of course, the Passover. Christ is, indeed, our Passover (**1 Cor. 5:7**). Let's consider the fitness of different ones to partake of the Passover, and then see if there are New Testament scriptures that show how they apply to the Lord's Supper.

- The Passover was for the children of Israel
  - **Exodus 12:24** - And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.
- The Lord's Supper is only for believers.
  - **1 Corinthians 11:23** - For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you (*Corinthian believers*), That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
- No stranger was to partake. This could include a Gentile, a Gentile proselyte, or even a Jew that was not known to the company.
  - **Exodus 12:43** - And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof:
- No stranger should partake in the Lord's Supper. He is unknown, so his life, his beliefs, his associations are unknown. Are the standards for the Lord's Supper lower than the standards for the Passover so that we invite strangers to partake?
  - **1 Timothy 5:22** - Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.
- A purchased servant, who was circumcised, could partake. Of course, the only way to know if this was a purchased servant or a hired servant was to ask.
  - **Exodus 12:44** - But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.
- One who is known to be 'purchased' and has put off the flesh should partake of the Lord's Supper.
  - **Acts 20:28** - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
  - **Philippians 3:3** - For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.
- A foreigner (outsider) and a hired servant could not partake. Not being bought, the hired servant would not be compelled to honor the words of the Lord, so he would be one not circumcised. It would speak of one who is dependent on his own works, rather than the grace of God. This would be in contrast to a purchased servant.
  - **Exodus 12:45** - A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.
- The unsaved have no license to partake of the Lord's Supper, neither those who are 'workers' (attempting to be justified through their own works)
  - **John 9:31** - Now we know that God heareth not sinners...
  - **Galatians 5:4** - Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
- A stranger who eventually attaches himself to the Jewish company would be allowed to partake, after all his servants were circumcised

- **Exodus 12:48** - And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.
- One who has made himself to be known as free from doctrinal or moral sin, and no longer a stranger, should partake of the Lord's Supper.
  - **2 Timothy 2:22** – ... follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.
- One who had come into contact with a dead body was considered defiled by association and could not partake of the Passover.
  - **Numbers 9:6** - And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:
- The association of an otherwise Godly believer with those who dishonor the Lord by doctrine or lifestyle, can cause him to be considered unclean. Are we to be so careless as to allow this 'leaven' to enter into our assemblies by carelessly allowing someone to partake of the Lord's Supper when his associations cause him to be defiled...thus bringing this defilement into the assembly?
  - **1 Corinthians 5:6** - Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?
  - **Galatians 5:9** - A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.
  - **1 Corinthians 15:33** - Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals. (ASV)

These Scriptures make it so clear that reception to the Lord's Supper is a serious matter and should not be taken lightly. The Lord gives the assembly the responsibility to make sure those who are breaking bread with us are known to be living in purity before the Lord.

It is heartbreaking that we cannot remember the Lord with everyone that calls upon the name of the Lord. However, the church is in a state of division, ungodliness, and ruin. Scripture calls for separation from those things that dishonor the Lord, and care in receiving those who desire to walk with us.

There are two things which must never be lost sight of in connection with the question of reception at the Lord's table, and these are, first, the grace which will not allow of the exclusion of any who ought to be admitted; secondly, the holiness which cannot allow the admission of any who ought to be excluded.

-CHM-