

**The Faith of God**  
**Passover**  
**3/8/15**

Today I want to continue the thought of what The Apostle Paul called "The Faith of God." Last week we talked about how we the Christian church made the transfer from the Seventh Day Sabbath to Sunday or the 'Lords Day.' Most Christians around the world celebrate Sunday as the Christian Sabbath.

Many of us would make the argument, "Does it really matter? Look at all that God has done for the Christian Church through-out the centuries even though they were not strictly adhering to the standards that were set by Jesus and the early Apostles." In fact I, myself, grew up in a home where Sunday was sacred and we were not allowed to play strenuous games as children on Sunday.

If Christianity is just another great religion along with other religions of the world such as Islam, Hinduism or any number of faiths, than it doesn't matter!

But if the Church is to fulfill its role as the pillar and ground of the truth, than it does matter! We are warned about the consequences of abandoning truth for fables in the Apostle Paul's statement in 2Ti 4:3-4 where we read, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, because they have itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Also that powerful warning from Paul in 2Th 2:10-11, Satan, who comes as a deceiver to all those, "that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, ... And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:"

Also we have the promise of Jesus' return upon the restoration of all things. We read in Act 3:19-21, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

One of the goals of The Church of God is to make every effort to restore the truths and doctrines that have been lost or changed through the ages. A major part of that effort is to re-establish our roots in a New Testament form of Judaism.

Today I want to address the story of the biblical Passover. The Christian community as a whole has set it aside and has recognized Easter in its place. Passover is a pivotal part of the Christian faith because it tells the story of Jesus death since it was on the exact day of the Passover when Jesus was crucified. Jesus is our perfect, unspotted, Passover Lamb, whose blood covers us as did the blood of the first Passover lamb cover the door posts of the children of Israel the night before they walked out of Egypt. In 1Co 5:7 we read, "... For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:"

The Feast of Passover and unleavened bread was there to teach the next generation of the powerful way in which God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. It is a powerful type of the deliverance we have from our Egypt of sin. In Exo 13:9-10 we read, "...for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shall therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year."

At the last Passover that Jesus celebrated with his disciples, He instituted a New Testament Passover that was to remember Jesus' sacrifice. In Luke 22:19-20 we read, "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Now they were no longer just to remember the deliverance from Egypt, but also our deliverance from the slavery to sin.

Very early in Christian history the western (Roman) Christians began to abandon Passover for the Easter celebration. Perhaps we should take a look at where Easter came from. Did it come from Jewish (biblical) heritage, or did it come from pagan origins? The Roman (Gentile) Christians had a practice of incorporating pagan festivals—of pasting “Christian” names over them and calling them “Christian.” This was done to make “Christianity” more palatable and familiar to heathen worshippers, whom the Church was

trying to attract. How did such a state of affairs develop?

Easter has its origins very early in human history and can be traced all the way back to the Tower of Babel. It was called by many names such as Astarte, Ashtaroth, Beltis and other names but they all have reference to the goddess of fertility. Hence the practice of the colored Easter eggs and the Easter Rabbit.

Quoting from the book, *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, "Astarte (Easter)-worship was always associated with the worship of Baal or Sun worship. Astarte was Baal's wife." Notice that another name for Astarte was Ashtaroth. "What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. *Easter* is nothing else than *Astarte*, one of the titles of Beltis, the *queen of heaven*..."

Certainly we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus! Without it we have no hope! It is the great promise that as He arose from the dead, being the first fruit of the resurrection, we too will one day arise from the dead, or be changed in the rapture! And live forever with Him in Glory! But should we as Christians let ourselves take part in something that is obviously of Pagan origins. Something that has been hated by God through the ages, the worship of the Sun god Baal and the goddess of fertility, (Ashtaroth.)

Once again, it was the anti-Semitism of the period that forced the early Christians to abandon Passover for Easter. Quoting from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, we have the story of how Easter slowly came to replace the Passover by A.D. 325 within visible, organized "Christianity": "Although the observance of Easter was at a very early period in the practice of the Christian Church, a serious difference as to the day for its observance soon arose between the Christians of Jewish and those of Gentile descent, which led to a long and bitter controversy...The Jewish Christians...(observed) the 14th day of the moon at evening...without regard to the day of the week. The Gentile Christians ...identified the first day of the week with the resurrection, and kept the preceding Friday as the commemoration of the crucifixion, irrespective of the day of the month."

Now read this quote from the same source, concluding the matter of how the Council of Nicea “decided,” for all, the matter of Easter versus Passover: “As for Easter, the Fathers decreed, 1. that Jewish customs should not be followed, and (2) that the practice of the West, of Egypt, and of other Churches should remain in force, namely, of celebrating Easter on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox”

Let us now consider God’s own words in **Deuteronomy 12:28-32** (NKJ): “Observe and obey all these words which I command you...When...you...dwell in their land, take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them...and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, ‘How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.’ *You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way*; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods...*Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.*”

So let us celebrate Passover and rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord and look forward the our own everlasting life with Christ.

Listen again next week.

This we do know, The Bible is God’s Word, God’s word is true, Jesus Christ is God’s son, Jesus died to save us from our sin, Without Jesus we are eternally lost. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we might be saved. Atheism is a temporary condition for every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus stands ready to save you now, Will you call on Him today?

Until next week, God bless.