

September 22, 2021

Josiah's Passover

After entering into a covenant with the people before the Lord, Josiah held a Passover feast according to the law. While it is likely that the devout Jews still held the annual Passover in their homes with their family, due to the spiritual decay of the nation, the feast had not been commemorated on a national scale since the days of Hezekiah. We gain some insight into the spiritual condition of the nation in **verse 3** where Josiah instructs the priests to “Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build.” Apparently, the Ark of the Covenant had been removed from the temple, most likely replaced with some form of idolatry, but it was now time to put it back where it belonged. Reinstating the Passover was not a simple task, there was a lot that had to be done.

First, Josiah prepared the Priests and Levites, **II Chronicles 35:1-6**. In beginning the process of preparing them for the Passover, **verse 2** says he “encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord.” Rather than belittling or berating them for their failure, he encouraged them to resume their duties. When someone is struggling spiritually and perhaps has fallen away from the Lord, do you tear them down for their failure or attempt to build them up and encourage them to start anew? The first step of preparation was to prepare the temple. After years of neglect and abuse, the house of the Lord had to be cleansed and the ark of the covenant restored to its proper place. This was the culmination of the process that began back in **II Chronicles 34:8**. The second step of preparation was to prepare themselves. This involved sanctifying themselves and their brethren and organizing themselves to be ready to stand in their place and do their duty as outlined in the law of Moses. If we are to serve in the house of the Lord, we must also take time to prepare and sanctify ourselves. What does this process of sanctification involve? What are the dangers of not properly preparing ourselves before serving the Lord?

Second, Josiah made provision for the people. In **II Chronicles 35:7-9**, Josiah and the princes provided the lambs and bullocks necessary for the nation to commemorate the Passover. God does not tell us how many lambs were provided, but how many bullocks did Josiah provide? How much cattle and oxen did the princes provided? What was the total number of animals provided for the Passover? These animals were not part of the Passover meal. The Passover sacrifice had to be a lamb without blemish and without spot, **Exodus 12:1-20**. The bullocks, oxen, and cattle were for the sin and burnt offerings that were necessary to cleanse the people in preparation for the Passover and the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread which immediately followed the Passover.

Third, Josiah practiced the Passover according to the law of Moses, **II Chronicles 35:10-18**. Planning and preparation would have been meaningless if the people had not followed through and actually observed the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. Good intentions do not equate with obedience. There must be a doing of that which is required. Are there some spiritual things you intended to do, but perhaps never accomplished? When God speaks to our heart, it is important to act immediately, lest Satan come and undo the work of the Holy Spirit in our heart. In keeping the Passover there are two things worthy of note. First, **verse 15** tells us

the singers were in their place. Music and singing plays an important part in the service of the Lord. Musicians need to be prepared and in their place in order to minister before the people. If you serve in the music ministry of your church, how seriously do you prepare for your ministry? Of course, this principle applies to all ministries. Christians should never approach their ministry for the Lord in a slipshod manner. Second, Josiah's Passover surpassed all other Passovers held by the previous kings of Israel. The magnitude of what Josiah accomplished is emphasized in **verse 19**. Everything recorded from **II Chronicles 34:8** through **II Chronicles 35:19** happened within the space of one year. It's amazing what we can accomplish in a year if we put our hearts and minds to the task. What are your spiritual goals for this year? How is your progress in regards to those goals?