

# PASSOVER – Let's Keep it in a Worthy Manner

## Discerning the Body; Sins of Ignorance vs. Intentional Sins

[www.LightontheRock.com](http://www.LightontheRock.com)

TITLE: Passover – Worthy Manner

by Philip Shields March 2009

.....

Summary: We examine keeping Passover “in a worthy manner”. We must face and overcome sin. We look at “sins of ignorance” versus intentional or defiant sins. Scripture has strong warnings especially about sin *not* done in ignorance. Recognizing the Body, lest we take Passover unworthily and bring condemnation on ourselves. Take the Passover after careful examination, fully prepared and in a worthy manner.

.....

Greetings, children of the Highest, my brothers and sisters in the Messiah . This is Philip Shields. Soon we'll be breaking unleavened bread and sharing, as one body, in the Bread from heaven and partaking of symbolic blood of the Lamb in the New Covenant, as we drink some red wine at Passover.

***Are you ready to keep the Passover symbols in a worthy manner?*** Have you recognized and considered the Body properly? Have you deleavened your spiritual house, as well as your physical house? Are you carefully thinking about this very important service, which we'll be observing sooner than you might think!?

I hope today you will hear whatever Yahweh has to say to you, personally, as we study His word and delve into this topic. Have you heard my recent 3 part series on “Hearing God's Voice”? I hope so. How are you doing with it? I find it very exciting as we get better dialed in and hear His voice more and more clearly, more and more often. I certainly have been personally convicted by God's words to me even as I prepared this message.

I've been recently reminded as well, that it's also so vital that as we learn to hear Yahweh's voice we also *get really, really good at tuning out, turning off, and not listening to the Adversary's voice*. Oh yes, Satan is constantly broadcasting to us his foul moods, his sinful thoughts, his confidence-destroying depression, his unity destroying thoughts of hate and disrespect for the body members of God's temple – and you'll see this especially as we get closer to Passover. Human nature is automatically tuned in to his wave length. Let's watch him especially if he attacks our marriage and family. You've been warned. And I've had to fight him in these areas myself recently.

As we prepare for Passover, the Accuser of the Brethren has gone to his strongest broadcasts, doing his best to ruin Passover for you. Mark my word. Be on guard even as we thankfully celebrate and praise our Savior for the Passover. Remember, I think the night we often call “the Night to be Much Observed” is actually more correctly translated “The Night to be very Observant” – on your guard, expecting the unexpected, ready, alert, even as Yahweh literally has our back. He did, remember, with the cloud that came in behind them as a wall between them and the Egyptians. But my point:

be aware Satan is going to do his best to destroy your Passover, to make you feel unworthy of taking it, to make you not go, to make you get into a fight with the ones you love most – real close to the Passover. You've been warned. Turn him off, tune him out – and get closer than ever to Yahweh in the next few weeks as you prepare for Passover.

I also hope you'll review some of the messages I've given in the past, on the website, during months of March-April going all the way back to 2004. And God willing, I will try to have at least one more sermon before I leave for Israel.

Before we start today's message, I had to comment: I hope you're watching what's going on in the world news. I will cover prophecy and world news and how the big pieces are coming together to make the end –time 666 system very possible. Remember my sermon recently where I talked about "Expect the unexpected" and to watch everything, everyone – and most of all, yourself and your relationship with Yahweh. Be sure you are in Christ and be sure your lamp is full of oil – the biggest thing of all. If our lamps (lives) are full of the oil of God's Holy Spirit, we will be fine. That's where you should focus right now: being right with Yahweh. Repent and overcome sins that have dogged us forever.

Now is the time to prepare properly for Passover and have the right mindset. In fact, we can raise our eyes to heaven and rejoice – for our Redemption is nigh. We do not need to despair. We know we are just in the beginning of the "beginning of sorrows". It's going to get much, much worse for true believers. But bring it on – for we know the world must go through these things before our Redeemer will come. I pray Yahweh will see us worthy of His protection and divine providence in the coming tough times. "We ain't seen nothin' yet" brethren, so put your seatbelts on and be ready for the ride of your life.

***So why did I just mention the news? I'm making a point: though a ton of stuff is coming at us, we note it – and then get back to the main work at hand: being prepared properly for Passover. We must NOT get distracted right now.*** We have the important task of being ready for the Passover with proper spiritual preparation and spiritual house cleaning.

[I remind people that I often refer to Jesus by His Hebrew correct name of Yahshua. I refer to God by His name of Yahweh, the "I AM".]

[I review the fact we are to examine ourselves – and then take the Passover.]

**1 Corinthians 11:27-30**

**27** Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. **28** But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. **29** For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's\* body. **30** For this reason many *are* weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

None of us, except the Christ is worthy (Rev 5:12) – unless the Holy Son of God makes us worthy. John the Baptizer said he was not even worthy to carry Yahshua's sandals (Matt 3:11). The centurion told our Savior he, the centurion, was not worthy to have Jesus enter his home (Matt 8:8).

So we become worthy to the degree we are in Christ and He is living in us. Taking the Passover in a worthy way has more to do with the *humble attitude* in which we take Passover; it's not really a matter of being worthy or qualified to drink it or not. We are to examine ourselves, then "so let him eat ...and drink...". It doesn't say to examine yourself, feel terrible as a result, and then decide *not* to take the Passover. Please note that distinction.

Also note we are to examine *ourselves* – not everyone else or anyone else.

After proper examination, we should know we need Passover bread and wine more than ever before! And we take it with careful consideration of what we're doing. It's not just a ritual, like many would "take communion" as a ritual. It should not be that way among us. And neither is Passover the eucharist or "communion" in the Catholic or Protestant sense. But with proper consideration, we would come to the Passover service joyfully, yes, but also with profound gratitude and holy awe.

You should note, lest I forget, that in the original Greek, verse 29 says "not discerning the body" – the word "Lord's" is not in the original text. We will discuss it with both meanings – with the words "Lord's body" and without the word "Lord" as I think both are meaningful. But the original Greek simply says "not discerning the body".

So today I'm going to focus primarily on what it means to take the Passover in a worthy manner, fully discerning and appreciating the sacrifice and the body of Christ.

It certainly doesn't mean that if we have recently sinned that we can't take the Passover. In fact, if anything, when we examine ourselves we realize more than ever how much we truly need the Passover and all it means. In self-examination, let's also be reviewing God's commitments to us and our commitments to Yahweh. I hope in a coming sermon to cover "Yahweh – the Covenant Making Living God".

### **(Track 2) WHY DO WE NEED PASSOVER?**

Passover is the first feast in the feasts of the Eternal. Jews consider it their most important feast. Many Christians do not keep Passover because they feel all the feasts have been fulfilled already in the Messiah. But if that were so, then why does Paul give clear Passover instructions in 1 Cor 5 and 11 – where basically a predominantly Gentile church in Greece was keeping Passover and were unleavened?

Without keeping the feasts, we wouldn't understand Yahweh's plan for saving mankind – each one, as 1 Cor. 15 says—in his/her time and in his/her order. There is a time and place for people to be called. The world has depicted God and Satan in a titanic struggle to see who will win. By that scenario, Satan is apparently winning hands down, when you count the very few true believers compared to world population.

But that's not the case. This is Satan's world – not the Living God's world. Satan is the god of this world, for now (2 Cor.4:4; Rev. 12:9), but the time is coming when King Yahshua, Jesus the Christ, will topple him and replace his evil empire with one ruled by righteousness. And at that time He sets His hand to save the world. I've given many messages about that period in sermons around Sept-Oct each year.

But in the meantime, Yahweh has called and chosen a few “first fruits” right now to be the beginning of his kingdom. That’s all pictured by Passover, and how one goes from guilt to justification, from the death penalty to the gift of eternal life. The Passover, Days of unleavened Bread and Pentecost explain all that. And don’t forget the first little Feast of First fruit – picturing the risen Messiah accepted on behalf of the rest of the harvest.

Sin – breaking God’s holy law – incurs the penalty of eternal death (**Rom. 6:33**). Eternal death is not the way many Christians describe it: endless eternal life being tortured in a Dante-designed hell fire. Death is death, not life in a bad place, not life away from God, not life with no future. Death is the absence of life. Scripture describes the “second death”, and there has to be a resurrection, a 2<sup>nd</sup> life, for there to be a second death. And that death is death for real, not eternal life spent being tortured by One who claims to be all-loving, all merciful and gracious.

The wages of sin is death – for real, for forever. You do end up in the lake of fire and suffer everlasting punishment, not everlasting punishing (**Matthew 25:46**). Their shame is everlasting (**Dan 12:2**), but they die, and quit living. It is not my purpose in this sermon to prove or disprove traditional explanations of hell fire – but just to say, yes, the penalty of sin is to die forever, not to live forever being tortured by a supposedly loving and merciful Creator.

Our Creator is merciful – but He is also a just and fair Creator, who demands justice be paid. So He offered a way: He would offer His own Son to take our sins upon Himself and die for us, the righteous for the ungodly.

**Romans 5:6,8** says Christ died for us, the ungodly, in our stead, so we wouldn’t have to die.

**Isaiah 53:6** – you can go back after this sermon and print the transcripts and review all these scriptures much more thoroughly and slowly. I recommend it. Isaiah 53:6b says “The **Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.**” So it’s very clear, He took our sins upon Himself, and bore the penalty for us, paid in full.

1 Pet. 3:18 says it was the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God. 1 John 4:10 says Yahweh first loved us and gave His only Son to be the propitiation – or atoning sacrifice – for us.

Some important things to consider here and remember as we come to Passover: The holy Creator is *for* us. We sinned and earned the eternal death penalty by our sins, but He is making a way out to *pass over* our previous sins (Romans 3:25), and the penalty they incur.

The Eternal God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten son for us, that whosoever would just believe in Him would be saved, and not perish, but have everlasting life (**John 3:16**). He didn’t send His Son just to point His finger accusatively at us, but to make the way possible to make all things right with Him again – through belief in His Son (**John 3:17**). So the Lamb of Yahweh – Jesus the Christ, Yahshua the Messiah – was offered by the Father for us, that we could be made right again and have access to eternal life.

So the Lamb of God had to be God Himself so that His one life given for us was worth more than all of ours put together and could pay the price of sin. While Jesus was on the earth, He was God as well as man. I believe that, as I’ve said many times before, because the Son of God allowed Himself to be worshipped even before his resurrection – without sinning – and only God can be worshipped

without it being a sin. (*If you need proof of Yahshua being worshipped as a human, read Matthew 2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; Mark 5:6-8; John 9:38*).

Many scriptures call Yahshua, or Jesus – “GOD”. Thomas after the resurrection said to Him, “My Lord and my GOD!” (John 20:28). Hebrews 1:8 says “*to the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O GOD, is forever and ever’*”. In Titus 2:13 Paul refers to Him as “our great God and Savior Jesus Christ”. Of course John 1:1-3, well known passage, calls Him “the Word and the Word was God”.

So the Son of God also became the Son of Man, and became flesh. I’m spending some time on this because there are false preachers out there giving various explanations why Yahshua wasn’t God. Yahshua on earth was also fully man while retaining the fact He was also God. God in the flesh, God incarnate.

As God in the flesh, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and had God’s nature from birth. As the Son of Man, I believe he also had human nature to fight, which He did perfectly and without sin. In all points He was “made like His brethren” -- Heb 2:14-18, please be turning there. He was tested and tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. But the Holy Spirit was so strong in Him that He was never “enmity against God” or ever hated God and His law, as someone full of the carnal mind is like (Romans 8:5-9, especially verse 7). Those of the carnal mind (called “in the flesh”) cannot please God, but God said several times that He was well pleased with the Messiah, His son. So obviously Messiah was living in the Spirit and submitted fully to His father’s will, a perfect example for us.

By the way, none of us were previously God. None of us were conceived of the Holy Spirit and had the fullness of God’s spirit from birth. None of us can say from birth in us “dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (**Col 2:9**) – so don’t think you or I can ever on our own, be perfect and sinless merely by imitating Christ. If we could, we would have something to boast about and would not have needed a Savior. There will never ever again be a sinless human from birth. Never. Please hear my series on the Righteousness of God, 3 parts, and also the 3 part series on Gal. 2:20 – Crucified with Him.

### **Hebrews 2:14-18**

**14** Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. **16** For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. **17** Therefore, in all things ***He had to be made like His brethren***, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

So when water and blood came out His side on the tree He was nailed to, that was proof He was a man. He loved being called “*the Son of Man*”. That designation was understood actually as a Messianic title, especially as used by the prophet Daniel. Note that at least two prophets were called a “son of man” – like Ezekiel and Daniel (Ezek 2:1; 3:1; Daniel 8:17). But only the Messiah would be “*the Son of Man* (Daniel 7:13), coming in the clouds of heaven. This is why, when Jesus said to the Sanhedrin at his unjust trial, “You shall see the son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven...”

(Matt. 26:64), they called it blasphemy. They knew He was quoting Dan. 7:13 and ascribing that to Himself.

The blood of the Lamb cleansed us from all sin and removed the penalty. The life of the Lamb living anew in us, by His Spirit – gives us life eternal also. We're forgiven by His death, and saved by the fact He was resurrected and lives again!

**Romans 5:10** “For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”.

Eternal life is defined as being much more than just living forever – but John 17:3 says eternal life is knowing God the Father and Yahshua the Son of the Living God.

In the same way as the Son of God died for us, *in Exodus 12, innocent lambs* were killed and died for the household they represented, so that when the Death Angel came around, he saw the blood of the lamb and passed over that house. The houses that did not have the blood of the lamb on the doorposts had all their first born men, boys and animals all die (Exodus 12:21-30).

Turn now to John 1 please so you can read scripture in your own Bibles.

*The Son of God does not take the blame for our sin, but does take the penalty for our sin for us, voluntarily.* Just as if I were assessed a \$300 traffic ticket, and someone else pays the bill for me – that makes me justified again with the judge, but neither does that impute any blame on to the Christ. He takes our sin, but not our blame. Be turning with me please to

The law came through Moses, but grace and truth through Jesus Christ. That's a direct quote from John 1:17. In John 1:29, 35-36, John the Baptizer saw Yahshua and said, “Behold the Lamb of God, *who takes away the sin of the world*”. Very clear. He repeats that in verse 36. Though Yahshua's sacrifice fulfilled all the various old testament sacrifices, when He is called “*the Lamb of God*”, that is referring to the Passover Lamb. 1 Cor. 5:7 says “...Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.” That's referring to the Passover Lamb, not just any and every other animal.

Yahweh is not content to just erase the sin without the penalty being paid. That would not be just. Justice requires the penalty be paid. One life could only pay for one other life, so the one paying the bill, has to have a life worth all of our lives put together: that's God Himself. Yes, Yahshua was the Word, and the Word of God was with God from the beginning and was God (John 1:1-3). Then John 1:14 says “the Word became flesh”. The Word – who was God – became flesh, became a man.

As we come to Passover, we need to be reminding ourselves of the enormous cost that was paid so that we could be made right, justified, with God. When you and I are tempted to sin – just ask yourself: is this worth the pain and suffering and death my Savior went through? He won't take our lighthearted attitude towards sin lightly, not at all.

He did so voluntarily and says so – John 10:17-18 – that He lays His life down voluntarily of Himself. No one made Him do it. In the same way, Isaac, at age 33 according to some traditions, voluntarily gave himself to his aging father Abraham, whom he could have easily overpowered. Isaac pictured the Messiah, and Abraham pictured Yahweh our dear Abba.

The blood of animals could temporarily pay the price – but Heb 10:4 says they could not take away the sin. The blood of God alone, as a man, could do that.

Jesus' sacrifice – pictured by the broken bread and the wine -- allows us to be healed by His stripes (Isaiah 53:5) as to be forgiven by His spilled blood. His suffering was to suffer in our stead when we're ill, in pain, or sick – and his spilled blood was to pay for our sins. Christ's sacrifice includes suffering for us, as well as dying for us. Physical healing as well as being made whole spiritually.

**(Track 3) SINS OF IGNORANCE vs. premeditated or presumptuous sins, or sins of defiance; appreciating Christ's Sacrifice**

1 Cor 11 says we should not take the Passover in an unworthy manner. So as we evaluate and prepare for Passover, we ask ourselves if our actions indicate we deeply, deeply appreciate what Yahweh has done for each of us. I've had some major repenting to do, as I've found myself callously giving in too easily of late, to some sins. I've confessed it now to you – and to Abba, and to my Savior. After we have accepted Yahshua indeed as our master and Savior, we need to take sin – and living a righteous life in Christ, letting Him live in me – much, much more seriously than we often have, or often do.

He suffered horribly for my healing and literally died for my sins. I wonder how seriously we would take sinning, if before giving in to a temptation, we could have a video flash in front of each of us, showing in graphic detail the sights and sounds of our elder brother Yahshua being nailed to the stake or tree, hammer blow by hammer blow, just so each of us could be forgiven... I wonder if we would really want to give in to sin as easily or casually as we sometimes have.

But God is not mocked. Christ died once, for all, for sin. Sins of ignorance are one thing, but if you do a study on sin of knowledge – when one knows he/she is sinning or about to sin, or plans the sin – God takes those sins much, much more seriously than sins of ignorance.

*Just as in matters of crime, unplanned crimes are not treated as severely as premeditated crimes. The true God also sees premeditated sins as bordering on defiance – and there are stern warnings about that. That is also why David's sin of passion of adultery with Bathsheba was not considered nearly as bad as his sin of premeditating the murder of her husband Uriah.*

I fully understand that God is a loving, gracious Father who will forgive us, but it might be good to just read a few verses again. I don't think I, or any other preachers I've heard recently, warn brethren enough about unintentional vs. intentional sin. I think we are afraid to put fear into people, or are afraid we may not say it right. I'm going to ask you to read Leviticus 4 and Leviticus 5 some time.

Heb 9:7 talks about sins committed in ignorance being forgiven. **Acts 17:30** – God overlooked sins, or looks much more lightly on sins, committed in real ignorance. Even those sins have to be confessed and repented of, but God sees them in much different light than sins done with full understanding of committing the sin. I speak to myself here too. This concept frankly horrifies me, because I'm fully aware that all of us, many times, do things we know better than to do. They are not sins of ignorance.

*Part of preparing for Passover is to decide to stop this cavalier attitude toward sin that too many of us still have, if we're honest with ourselves. We must start to take sin much more seriously, thus recognizing the excruciating sacrifice that was spent for you and me – and start letting the risen Messiah live HIS perfect life in us again. You know where the word “excruciating” comes from? It comes from the word meaning “pain like someone being crucified would be experiencing”. We must overcome sin by allowing the risen Christ to rule in our lives. We must let His mind be in us so we are not like a carnal man who still enjoys sin.*

Paul said in Romans 7 that he still sins. But how did he describe those sins: here, are you ready? “That which I *hate* I still find myself doing”.

But when I'm really honest with myself and Yahweh – and I'm baring my soul to you right now – I have to admit that too many sins are still alluring to me or are attractive to me. I still sometimes don't quite hate them enough; I may even still want to do them *when I'm not close to Yahweh*.

OK, maybe I've just horrified some of you. But wouldn't you say the same thing if you were honest? The sins that you still have not overcome are probably there because you still enjoy them too much.

Are all your sins really a matter of slipping up, all the time, and only doing the things you hate – or don't you have to admit that you still somewhat enjoy *some* of the sins you get into? Be honest.

Especially sins of the flesh – sins of lust, sexual sins, sins of passion – whether literally done or only in the mind, sins of greed, coveting, and sins of not resisting the excessive pulls of food, drink and money. Sometimes we enjoy gossiping about the body of Christ. We're giving in much, much too easily to these things – and it's high time someone says publicly that this is very, very serious to Yahweh. We haven't even mentioned pride and other sins yet.

***When we sin those types of sin, we know what we're doing is wrong even as we do them. Admit it. Those are not sins of ignorance. They may be sins of weakness, of temptation, but they're not sins of ignorance.*** Hopefully neither do they quite reach the level of sins of defiance or being impetuous – but it could be getting too close to that description.

Hand in hand with this topic will be one I'll give when I come back from Israel – and it will be about having total, absolute, unconditional surrender to our King of kings. If you think what I've just said is sobering, you “ain't heard nothin' yet” by comparison.

So willful, intentional sin, or sin done with full understanding that you are about to sin – is not to be taken lightly. Worst of all, are sins of defiance against God and His spirit -- and impetuous sins.

Here are more scriptures about the fact that most of our sins going forward should truly only be sins done in ignorance. And we should be fighting sin, drawing near to God, filling our minds with His mind:

**Acts 3:17** – “...I know *you did it in ignorance, as did your rulers*”. Peter goes on to say in v. 19 to repent and be converted! Time now to actually, truly change, be different than what we used to be.

I know I personally feel so bad when I recognize, as I still do, that sometimes I seem to take 3-4 steps forward and then slip back 6-7 steps, and still find myself doing the things I'm supposed to be



hating. It's a good sign when you no longer enjoy doing some of the sins you loved doing. I'm getting there too, but now we must recognize where we still sin too easily. We must fight a tougher fight.

**Acts 17:30** – “Truly these *times of ignorance* God overlooked, but now commands men everywhere to repent,” – and it goes on to say in v 31 because the day is coming we will be judged in righteousness by the One who died for each of us.

I've already mentioned Heb 9:7 how the priest offered sacrifices for himself and for the people's sins done in ignorance. Some time read slowly all of Leviticus chapters 4 and 5 to get the full meaning of all this.

**1 Pet 1:14-15** – “as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to your *former* lusts, *as in your ignorance*, but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all conduct.”

**1 Timothy 1:13** – Paul says “although I was a former blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man, I obtained mercy *because I did it ignorantly* in unbelief.”

Are we getting the picture? Keep in mind that I know our father is a very, very merciful God. David surely understood what he was doing when he numbered Israel, and when he murdered innocent and loyal Uriah – and look how severely God dealt with him both of those times. We're still talking about it 3,000+ years after the fact. And yet God forgave even those sins – but at a very heavy hand and a heavy price, because it was treacherous and David surely knew what he was doing was wrong.

So remember that too, when we read the next two or three passages, but I do want us to take the sacrifice paid for us very seriously. I preach to myself. I have to stop sinning too. I have to overcome completely too. Some things are not being repeated in my life, but – like you too – too many things are still being allowed without an aggressive fight against them.

***This has everything to do with appreciating and discerning the body of Christ.*** I know, by giving the scriptures that follow, some will give me grief and flak, accusing me of minimizing the grace of God. On the other hand, I will just read the scriptures, without comment beyond what I've already said, and you be the judge of what Scripture actually says. Brethren, we've got to discern the body of Christ and take sin much, much more seriously.

What did Yahshua say to the Pharisees?

**John 9:41**

***“...if you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say ‘we see’, therefore your sin remains”.***

Ouch! But again, of course – that's what Yahshua said on the cross: “Father forgive them, *for they know not what they do*” (Luke 23:34). Even there, our Savior speaks of sins of ignorance, and forgiving them, even though people around Him certainly were not repenting yet.

As you hear these verses, ask yourself what sins we're too cavalier with – and decide this year you're realizing time is short, we've got to live the new life, we've got to live a way that is evident of being in Him. So evaluate sins you aren't even fighting anymore in your marriage relationship –

giving of yourself to your wife as Christ did to the church, or submitting to your husband as you would if that were Christ himself. I know – but that's what scripture says. How about sins in our minds – sinful daydreams or thoughts we tolerate; how about sins with the internet, sins with money, sins with using Yahweh's name lightly and in vain, sins of anger, sins of lack of forgiveness, sins of refusing to accept a repentant brother in Christ who needs your acceptance, sins of gluttony... you get the point.

### **Numbers 15:27-31**

**28** So the priest shall make atonement for *the person who sins unintentionally*, when he sins unintentionally before Yahweh, to make atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. **29** You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally, *for* him who is native-born among the children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among them.

**30** *'But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on Yahweh,* and he shall be cut off from among his people.

**31** Because he has despised the word of Yahweh, and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt *shall be* upon him."

The word "presumptuously" carries the meaning of one being defiant against God and His law; knowing what he is doing is wrong, but not caring what Yahweh thinks – and so he/she goes ahead with this sin, with the full knowledge what he or she is about to do is dead wrong. *Most translations translate this verse "defiantly" or "intentionally".*

If your conscience is still smiting you, if you hate yourself as you sin, if you stop part way through the sin – all these are signs there's still hope! These would indicate you haven't reached yet the threshold of being defiant. But neither should we flirt with the edge of the cliff.

I think scripture gives more leeway for sin done out of weakness vs. sin done with a cavalier "I can always repent later" attitude. That borders on being presumptuous sin, and very sinful, very evil in God's eyes. Beware, brethren. I hope this is what it takes to hear a minister of God say it like it is, all the while remembering I very much am preaching at myself as well. I'm feeling the heat too, knowing how many times I just didn't fight sin enough.

### **Hebrews 6:4-6**

**4** For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, **5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6** if they fall away,\* to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame."

**Hebrews 10:26-29** is similarly tough, where it says beware lest we trample "the Son of God underfoot, counting the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace."

### **Psalms 19:12-13**

"Who can understand *his* errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.

**13** *Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression."*

Having said all that, God was so merciful even to evil king Ahab when he had even the slightest humility and remorse. Ditto for King Manasseh. Do you remember the tenderness God showed to evil Cain, as He tried to get Cain to see where his actions were leading?

We do have a merciful God, and I am not preaching that we have no forgiveness if we sin with knowledge – but scripture is clear that we better understand this is not taken lightly. Peter was still forgiven when he denied the Christ 3x. Did he know what he was doing? How could he not have known? But he was forgiven, but he also was dealt with fairly harshly, publicly, in front of the others, and 2,000 years later, we're still reading about it.

*So don't think you can't be forgiven, but do realize sins we know are sins as we do them, or are premeditated sins, or sins carefully plotted out and thought through – these are going to be treated much more severely than sins where you truly were caught off guard and in genuine weakness of the flesh, you cave in.*

Nonetheless, once we've been enlightened, we will be held to a much, much higher standard than those who have not been called yet, not been enlightened yet, and who not have the Holy Spirit yet.

**Zechariah 12:10-11**

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

As we come to Passover, let's do look on Him whom we all have pierced, because of our sins – and this year, let's take the Passover with deep appreciation, humility and gratitude, and praise Yahweh for His grace and for His love, and His patience with us.

Brethren, Abba gave up His eternal companion and only Son – that we could be forgiven and receive HIS righteousness by faith.

You know what? I'd take a bullet for my only son. And I understand the grief of losing a son – as indeed we lost our first son as a baby. But still, I cannot comprehend the depth of love it would take, to offer up my son with full knowledge of the violence he would suffer in order that others may be spared. That's what dear, dear Abba did for you and me.

So with that in mind, let's start taking the sin in our lives much, much more seriously and determine to fight it ferociously, showing how much we appreciate the pain, the life, the sacrifice that went into being able to be forgiven.

I assure you, I've prepared this section with many tears of repentance as I see myself so deeply of being so guilty of this very matter Yahweh has shown me that I must face, and must speak of, to all who will listen. Time is short. Let's fight sin as never before. Let's quit giving in to it so easily, and let's be filling up our lamps with oil, living by God's Spirit, for time is shorter now than ever before.

**(Track 4) WE'RE TO BE COMMITTED NOW TO BE A SLAVE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

Once we have been buried in baptism after confessing our belief in the risen Christ, and have come to a deep sorrowful repentance proven by a new life of change of direction – we should be stricken with a tender conscience when we fail our Master, when we break Yahweh's perfect law, when we break our baptism vows of loyalty, faithfulness and obedience.

Our lives today should be living testimonies of a new creation in Messiah. And so we hurt inside, we feel so bad inside, when we let the Adversary have genuine ammo to use against you and me, the people of God. We hurt when we aren't living lives of holiness, as He is holy. We know we stumble, we know we – like Paul in Romans 7 – still sometimes do the things we don't want to do or the things we hate. But brethren, let's be sure we at least do hate the sins when we do them – and not find ourselves having to admit that we still in fact enjoy certain sins. God help us, if that's the case.

The test is what we're doing and thinking and saying when we think we are alone, when we think no one around knows us. We've all been there. I've been there too. But if we're in Christ, and if God abides in us since we are the body temple of the Spirit, we are in fact, never alone. What are we making the Christ see, through our eyes? Where are we taking our dear Almighty Abba, the great Yahweh – with our feet? What do we make our future Husband, the Groom – hear from our mouths, when we think no church people are around?

Sure, no one's around – except the Father, except our Master, except the 24 living elders surrounding God's throne, except the seraphim and cherubim, and except the millions of holy angels. No ones' around? We need to be cognizant that we are surrounded by clouds of witnesses all the time.

As you delevan your home of physically leavened bread, don't get so busy with the physical that you forget to delevan the spiritual house. Our lives should be God's House of Prayer. Does our temple of the Spirit need to be cleansed of spiritual leaven like Jesus cleansed the temple before the Passover?

One more thing: remember that the priests in the Old Covenant had to go through purification rites before they were qualified to be involved in the Passover functions. See Ezra 6:20 for example. There were several times the priests and brethren were not prepared, they had not sanctified themselves before taking the Passover (2 Chron 30:17; 29:34).

Next, let's just let the word of God speak to us. I'm going to slowly read Romans 6, the entire chapter now – with everything we've just been studying as the back drop.

**ROMANS 6**

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body

of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died has been freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, <sup>9</sup> knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. <sup>10</sup> For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. <sup>11</sup> Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God

<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

<sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. <sup>18</sup> And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup> I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading* to *more* lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves of righteousness for holiness.

<sup>20</sup> For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death. <sup>22</sup> But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **(Track 5) OTHER WAYS WE CAN DISCERN THE BODY**

Before taking Passover, we are to examine ourselves and be sure we recognize and discern the Body. I noted in the beginning of the sermon that in the original Greek, 1 Cor. 11:29 just simply says if we eat or drink, we will be guilty of the body. It does not say, in the Greek, “of the body of Christ”. I think those extra words, added in the English translations, can make sense – but I also think Paul is being inspired to say that we need to be cognizant of how we are thinking and treating other members of the body of Christ – the brethren!

In just a very few verses later, in Chapter 12, his whole topic is how we are each a member of the body – some are hands and feet and so on. Some are the disgusting, embarrassing parts like armpits and backsides – but still very necessary. Just as you wouldn't cut off your butt, or your armpit – we should not neglect, reject, or cut out people we think are not worthy of our company.

How are we dealing with people you know were disfellowshipped, especially if for political reasons and not genuine spiritual reasons? Have you forgiven everyone of the hurts they've caused you? Remember that our Lord teaches that if we don't forgive everyone, from the heart, neither will we be forgiven. He said to forgive as He forgave, to love as He loves. How is that? While we were still sinners, He said “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do”.

*On this section I appeal to you to listen to my recent sermon “Least of these my Brethren”. I deeply think that Paul is not just saying that our Passover preparation is just thinking about the literal crucified body of the Christ – but as I’ve been pointing out so much lately, the body of Christ is you, it is I. The body of Messiah – of the Christ – includes everyone and anyone in whom dwells God’s spirit.*

All through the book of Corinthians, Paul is warning them about the miserable way they are conducting themselves against one another, basically a body that is hurting itself. In taking a brother to court, they might as well be taking their Messiah to court. In condemning one another, they were condemning their Master. In getting drunk at the Passover and not providing for everyone there – they were showing contempt for their Savior. In not feeding the hungry brethren when they could, they were not giving the Messiah food when HE was hungry (remember Matthew 25).

I thank those of you have helped with our Kenyan and Ugandan brethren. They are poor and in the midst of a famine. Thank you for helping us make sure they at least have something to eat for the Night to be Observed.

And please be sure you have forgiven and washed everyone from your heart before coming to wash your brother’s or sister’s feet at the Passover.

I recommend that when you come to Passover this year, think as you wash your brother’s or sister’s feet: “I love you. Whatever way you have picked up some spiritual dirt in the past year, I agree with our Master, and as I wash your feet, I hold you in loving respect and honor, as a vessel of God’s Spirit. I see you as forgiven, I see you as spiritually washed, and I accept you as part of the Body of Christ. And now I hope and pray you will accept me too, wash the dirt off my feet too – and see me as someone forgiven, washed, clean, new and holy too.”

Yes, the footwashing symbolizes humility and service too. Absolutely. But for now I’m focusing on how it pictures being accepting of one another, and washing one another. Really, Yahshua is the one who washed us – we’re just agreeing with Him as we wash feet. We’re washing whom He has already washed. We’re accepting whom HE has already accepted.

As we do all this – we’re accepting, recognizing, and honoring the Body – the members of the church, parts of the body of Christ – and we’re honoring our Lord and Savior at the same time.

But as I wrap up, I want to say again – take sin very, very seriously. Let’s fight sin as never before by feeding the righteous spirit in us and starving the carnal spirit. Let’s overcome by being one with the One who completely defeated sin. Let’s not give in to sins of presumption or sins we know are sins as we do them. And please, never ever sin defiantly against our Maker! That’s so serious to Almighty. I preach to myself too.

***Ultimately only the Lamb is the one worthy.*** “Worthy is the Lamb” Rev 5:12 says. We are worthy to take Passover only to the extent we have come to accept His worthiness, His light, His righteousness, His holiness, His acceptance of the brethren and of one another -- and His purity.

We can become perfect – but only “in Him” as I’ve spoken about so often the past couple years. Paul said “That I may present every man perfect *in Christ*” (Col. 1:28). Paul also said he didn’t want his

own righteousness from the law, but the righteousness of God himself, through faith in Christ (**Phil. 3:9-10**). The whole goal is to show we are truly a part of His holy body, and so we come together, each part fulfilling its God-given role and gift, til we reach the unity of the stature of the measure of the Christ. So we're growing in Him, *'Until Christ is formed in you'* – Gal. 4:19. As that happens, our lives are hidden in Christ, in God the Father (Colossians 3:3) as I point out in the series on what it means to be "in Him".

Passover starts the process of forgiveness and being able to continue all the way into the very Holy of Holies presence before our Maker, in Christ, the perfect High Priest. Through His torn body, symbolizing the torn veil of the temple hiding the empty holy of holies in Jesus' day. (Many believe there actually was no ark in Herod's temple). But in any case, today we can come to the true holy of holies, to the very Mercy Seat of God the Father in the heavenlies, through the Passover body of Jesus the Christ – or as I prefer, Yahshua the Messiah.

Brethren, I'm going to end it there for now – and hopefully I'll be able to have one or two more done this week. However, I'm getting ready for a trip to Israel soon and won't have much time... but watch the website. I want to go into the cups of wine at Passover, drinking the cup, the Jewish weddings and how Passover shows a huge similarity to the steps in Yahshua marrying His people, and on and on. But let's leave it there for today's message anyhow.

Have a wonderful Passover in April this year as you love and accept the brethren.

Til next time, your brother in our Master – Philip Shields.