

Deuteronomy 16:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

Analysis

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. The Passover memorial commanded perpetual remembrance of exodus deliverance. Israel must continually recall God's redemptive act that constituted them as His covenant people.

The month of Abib (later called Nisan) occurred in spring, timing the festival to commemorate actual historical deliverance. The specificity grounds Passover in real history, not mythical sacred time. God acts in actual space and time to redeem His people.

The phrase brought thee forth...by night recalls the dramatic midnight exodus when death passed over Israelite homes marked with lamb's blood while striking Egyptian firstborn. This foundational deliverance established Israel's identity as redeemed people.

Reformed theology sees Passover as supreme Old Testament type of Christ's atoning sacrifice. As the Passover lamb's blood protected from death, Christ's blood delivers from divine judgment. Paul declares, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Historical Context

Passover became central to Jewish religious identity, observed annually from the exodus through the present day. Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples at the Last Supper, transforming it into the Lord's Supper which Christians observe as memorial of His sacrifice.

The connection between Passover and Christ's crucifixion is chronologically precise - Jesus died during Passover week as the ultimate Passover Lamb.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. Why does God command perpetual memorial of the exodus deliverance?
2. How does Passover's historical specificity differ from pagan mythical celebrations?
3. In what ways does the Passover lamb prefigure Christ's atoning sacrifice?
4. What does transformation of Passover into the Lord's Supper teach about Old and New Covenant relationship?
5. How should regular memorial of redemption shape Christian identity and worship?

Interlinear Text

שְׁמוֹר	אֶת	בַּח־דָּשׁ	הָאֶבִּיב	וְעָשׂוּ יָתִיד	פֶּסַח	יְהוָה
Observe	H853	for in the month	of Abib	and keep	the passover	the LORD
H8104		H2320	H24	H6213	H6453	H3068
יְיָ	כִּי	בַח־דָּשׁ	הָאֶבִּיב	הוֹצֵא יָאֵךְ		יְהוָה
thy God	H3588	for in the month	of Abib	brought thee forth		the LORD
H430		H2320	H24	H3318		H3068
יְיָ	מִמִּצְרַיִם	לַיְלָה:				
thy God	out of Egypt	by night				
H430	H4714	H3915				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 34:18 (References Egypt): The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.

Exodus 13:4 (Parallel theme): This day came ye out in the month Abib.

Numbers 28:16 (References Lord): And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.

Leviticus 23:5 (References Lord): In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover.