

## **The Holy Sacrifice Of The Mass Part VII**

### **How Christ Said The First Mass**

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### **The Mass Foretold In The Passover**

### **The History Of The Hebrew Passover**

AT the Last Supper, Christ celebrated the Passover according to the historic Hebrew rite coming down from patriarchal days, Moses and the prophets, and changed it into the Mass. Let us therefore see the history of the Passover.

The word in our translations of the Bible given as pascha, means the Jewish Passover. The word comes from the Hebrew pesach, “to pass over,” because the Lord “passed over” the Israelites’ houses in Egypt signed with the blood of the paschal lambs, when he killed the first-born of every family and animal the night they were delivered from slavery<sup>1</sup> Sts. Augustine and Jerome held it means “to suffer,”<sup>2</sup> and foretold Christ’s Passion.

Our bible says, “It is the victim of the passage of the Lord, when he passed over the houses of the children of Israel.”<sup>3</sup> The Hebrew word means “he leaped over” or “did not tread on.”<sup>4</sup> But it has another meaning: “to spare” or “to show mercy to,” for the Divine Son that night “spared” and “showed mercy” to the Hebrews.<sup>5</sup> The word Passover is given forty-seven times in the Old Testament.<sup>6</sup>

The Passover, still held by the Jews as their greatest religious feast — the anniversary of the delivery of their fathers from Egyptian bondage, falls each year on the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> moon of the lunar month of Ab, or Nisan “sprouting.” The Rabbis call it the Tecupha “Equinox;” the month corresponds to the last of March and the first days of April.<sup>7</sup> It is their Easter, the key of their calendar, and regulates all their movable feasts and fasts, as our Easter, to which it gave rise, governs our feasts, fasts, and movable seasons of the Church year.

## **Biblical Records**

Far beyond history, in prehistoric times, the patriarchs with roasted lamb and bread and wine celebrated the Passover. But the night of the flight from Egypt, when the Hebrews became a nation, God gave more minute details typical of the Redeemer's Passion, the crucifixion and the Mass. The prophets and holy seers of the Old Testament, directed by the Holy Ghost in Shekina form, added to the Passover ceremonial, till at the time of Christ it had become an elaborate and strikingly symbolic rite.

We must keep before our minds, that in Biblical writings, three chief objects were seen at the feast: the first night paschal lamb, the bread, the wine, and at the feast of unleaven bread, which lasted for a week, only the bread and wine. This first feast fell on Thursday the day before the crucifixion, and is forever enshrined in Christian writings under the name of the Last Supper or the Lord's Supper, which he fulfilled and changed into the Mass.<sup>8</sup>

As the Last Supper was that Hebrew Passover with all its elaborate ceremonial, we will first see its history, trace it down the ages.

First the bible gives a full account of the feast,<sup>9</sup> as it was held in Egypt. Then the unleavened bread is mentioned with the consecration of the first-born.<sup>10</sup>

Under the name of feast of unleaven bread, it is united with the two other great feasts of Pentecost and the Sabbath, in which the lamb, in Hebrew taleh, is called "My Sacrifice."<sup>11</sup> The festival is brought into relation with the redemption of the first-born, and the words specifying the Easter lamb<sup>12</sup> are repeated.<sup>13</sup> The same is again given regarding the days of convocation, and laws regarding the offering of the first-fruits, the Bicurim, with the offerings accompanying it when the Hebrews passed into the Promised Land.<sup>14</sup> Again the Shekina "The Divine Presence" repeats the law regarding the Passover at the beginning of the second year after going out of Egypt,<sup>15</sup> and the second Passover, a month later, is ordered for those who could not hold the first. Rules are revealed regarding offerings made on each of the seven days of the festival.<sup>16</sup> The last divinely given direction states the place of sacrifice the Lord will later chose in the "Land of Promise," that is where the ark rested till placed

in the Temple in Jerusalem where the Passover was celebrated in Christ's time.<sup>17</sup> Here more minute details of the festal ceremonial are given.

On the tenth day of the month of Nisan, the Hebrews were to select the lamb, for on this day Christ was condemned to death by the Sandhedrin at Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup> They were told to choose a little ram and keep it till the fourteenth day of the same month, in the evening, for at midnight, following that day, 1300 years later, Christ was arrested. The paschal festival lasted a week, because during Passion week, Christ was sacrificed, lay in the tomb and rose from the dead.<sup>19</sup>

### **Vespers In The Passover**

They sacrificed it in the afternoon, the Hebrew text having "between the two vespers." The "first vespers" among the Jews meant from noon till three, and the "second vespers" from three till night. At three in the afternoon, they were told to sacrifice the lamb, for, ages afterwards, at three o'clock, Jesus Christ, whom the lamb represented, died on the cross.

We find these two vespers mentioned in the Gospel, by the word "evening."<sup>20</sup> According to Hebrew ways of counting days, at sunset the next day began, and not at midnight.<sup>21</sup> This was the law relating to the feasts.<sup>22</sup> "From evening to evening you shall celebrate your sabbaths."

By the sacrifice and blood of the paschal lamb of the patriarchs, the Hebrews were delivered from Egyptian slavery. God himself laid down the ceremony of that sacrifice. The kind of lamb, the time, the place, the rite, the person to kill it, and the persons who could eat it, are all given with minute details.<sup>23</sup>

Three directions God gives regarding the victim. It must be a male, for Christ was of that sex; it must be a year old, to tell that the Lord was sacrificed in the flower of his manhood; it must be without spot, stain, or blemish, to foretell the sinless Christ.<sup>24</sup> During night they fled from Egypt; then they were delivered from Egyptian slavery, to tell how in the last age of the Hebrew nationality in Palestine the Lord was arrested at night to be sacrificed, to deliver the world from demoniac slavery.

## Not An Eclipse

It was spring, the tenth day after the full moon, after the vernal equinox, when the earth is between sun and moon, so all could see, that the darkening of the sun when the Lord was dying was not caused by an eclipse; and the darkness of that Egyptian night when the Hebrews became a nation foretold the darkness at the crucifixion.

Although a lamb was ordered immolated to foretell the sinless Christ, they were allowed to sacrifice a kid as a victim for sin to shadow forth the Lord bearing the sins of the world. He was thus typified by Jacob clothed in kidskin, emblem of sin, when his father blessed him.<sup>25</sup> But the kid must also be a year old and without blemish.<sup>26</sup> The first night of the Passover these animals only could be offered. But the solemnity lasted from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the month of Nisan and sheep and oxen might be eaten the remaining days.<sup>27</sup> Each evening of that week, they held the feast in their houses and synagogues. That was the reason they would not enter Pilate's hall lest they might be defiled, and could not celebrate the remaining days of the Passover. They had all celebrated the ceremony of the paschal lamb the night before, and each night that week they were to offer the victims of peace-offerings, with wine and the unfermented bread. This week was called the feast of unleaven bread.

“Seven days you shall eat unleaven bread... The first day shall be holy and solemn, and the seventh day shall be kept with the like solemnity, you shall do no work in them, except those things that belong to eating.”<sup>28</sup> Thus was the great Easter, a week lasting from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>, kept by the Jews in all their generations, to prophesy our Christian Easter. The first and last days were like our solemn Sundays of Eastertide holiest time of the Church year.<sup>29</sup>

The law was so strict, that the one who would not keep the Passover was to be put to death. “Whosoever shall eat anything leaven from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall perish out of Israel.”<sup>30</sup> “He that eat leaven bread his soul shall perish out of the assembly of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land.”<sup>31</sup> In Christ's day the penalty was excommunication.

Circumcision was a type of baptism. Only the circumcised Hebrew could eat the lamb which pointed to Christ, and only the baptized should receive Communion.<sup>32</sup>

If a Hebrew were unclean, he could not partake of the feast. He went through the ceremony of being cleansed, and on the tenth day of the following month he could eat the lamb, for the Christian in mortal sin must not receive till he has been cleansed from sin by the sacrament of Penance.

### **The Second Passover**

Four places the lamb was sacrificed. The night the Hebrews went out of Egypt, the head of the family slew the lamb at the house, for the Hebrew priesthood had not yet been established, and, as in patriarchal days, the father of the family was then the priest.<sup>33</sup>

They offered the next paschal lamb in the desert of Sinai, the second year after leaving Egypt.<sup>34</sup> Again, they offered it after passing the Jordan at Galgal “the Circuit,” as they lay camped in the deep desert valley, with the tamarisks lining the shores of the historical river where Christ was baptized, to foretell Christians partaking of Communion.

After they conquered Palestine, they were told to sacrifice the lamb only in tabernacle and Temple. “Thou mayest not immolate the phase in any one of thy cities, which the Lord thy God will give thee, but in the place which the Lord thy God (the word translated here as God is the Shekina in the original Hebrew) shall choose that His name may dwell there. Thou shalt immolate the phase in the evening, at the going down of the sun, at which time thou camest out of Egypt.”<sup>35</sup> This command was given because the real Lamb of God, ages later, was to be sacrificed in Jerusalem, where the Temple stood. Till David chose Mount Moriah, in Jerusalem, for the site of the Temple, the tabernacle and ark of the covenant at different epochs rested at Galgal, Silo, Nobe, and Gabaon.

## **The Divine Message**

The night they went out of Egypt, this was the ceremonial: They cut the lamb's throat, caught the blood, "and put it on both the side-posts, and on the upper doorposts of the houses, wherein they shall eat, and they shall eat the flesh that night roasted at the fire, and unleavened bread and wild lettuce. You shall not eat anything thereof raw, nor boiled in water, but only roasted at the fire; you shall eat the head, with the feet, and the entrails thereof. Neither shall there remain anything of it until the morning. If there be anything left you shall burn it with fire, and thus shall you eat it, you shall gird your reins, and you shall have shoes on your feet, holding staves in your hands, and you shall eat it in haste, for it is the Phase, that is the Passover of the Lord. And I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and will kill every first-born, both man and beast. I am the Lord, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment. I am the Lord.

"And the blood shall be unto you for a sign in the houses where you shall be, and I shall see the blood and shall pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you, when I shall strike the land of Egypt. And this day shall be for a memorial to you, and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord in your generations, with an everlasting observance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread,"<sup>36</sup> etc.

When Moses delivered the divine message to the Hebrews, they bowed their heads and worshiped. They followed the instructions, killed, ate the lambs, and sprinkled the blood. At midnight, the hour Christ was arrested centuries later, when he began his Passion to deliver the human race, the first-born of every family, and of every animal in Egypt was killed, as a prophecy of the death of the Virgin's First-born on the cross. This is the reason that Christ is called the "first-born" seven times in the New Testament.

## **The Departure From Egypt**

The general impression is that God sent an angel, called the “angel of death,” to kill, that night. But this is not so. For the text reads: “I am the Lord . . . I shall see the blood, and shall pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, when I shall strike the land of Egypt.”<sup>37</sup>

Jewish writers, as well as these words, show that God himself killed the first-born. And reading carefully their writings, we see that it was the Divine Son who passed through Egypt that night, when He delivered the Hebrews as a prophecy of the time when He, made flesh, by His death, delivered the whole human race from demoniac error, sin, and slavery.

The Hebrews celebrated the feast in Egypt on the fourteenth moon of Abib, or Nisan,<sup>38</sup> and the next day went out of Egypt. Then their slavery ended. “Now the children of Israel departed from Ramesses the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Phase, with a mighty hand, in the sight of all the Egyptians.”<sup>39</sup> Following, then, the history of His forefathers and customs coming down the ages, the Lord and His disciples held the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, and He died on the fifteenth to deliver the human race from the slavery of the devil and of sin represented by the Egyptian bondage.

The Hebrews did not go out the night they held the Passover, for they were told to remain within their houses. “Let none of you go out of the door of this house till morning.”<sup>40</sup> The next day they began the march. All this foretold how, centuries later, Jesus Christ would celebrate the Passover with his disciples; that he would be arrested at night, and the next day, as the first-born, he died to deliver mankind from the bonds of sin, and slavery of the devil.

During the Passover<sup>41</sup> God gave directions they could not carry out that night; they related to future Passovers. They could not keep the next day, the fifteenth, as a feast, for they were then on their journey.<sup>42</sup> They could not offer the “first-fruits” the Omer,<sup>43</sup> for they were then traveling in the desert where nothing grows. They could not immolate the special sacrifices mentioned later,<sup>44</sup> nor sprinkle the blood on the altar in place of the doorposts.<sup>45</sup>

## **The Great And Little Passover**

For these reasons Jewish writers carefully distinguish between the “Egyptian Passover,” held the night of the flight from Egypt, and the “perpetual Passover,” celebrated later in their history. Both clean and unclean celebrated the feast that night, but afterwards God gave them special regulations,<sup>46</sup> and restricted the feast to men alone.<sup>47</sup> Thus it came to pass that Christ with His apostles, no woman being present, held the feast in the Cenacle, and there He ordained only men, and from that came the doctrine that only men are valid subjects for the priesthood. The Psalms forming the Hallel were not sung that night, for only in David’s day were they composed.

Birth and death, origin and end of life, were most unclean to the Jew. The first reminded them of the fall of man, that children are born in original sin; the latter that from the gates of Eden death with his icy hand strikes down every member of our race.<sup>48</sup> During the wilderness wandering, the second year after leaving Egypt some men touched a dead body, became defiled, and could not celebrate the Passover.<sup>49</sup> God told Moses to institute a second Passover on the fourteenth of the following month, giving a like ceremonial as for the first, and these men purified themselves and held the feast. As the first Passover foretold our Easter Communion, so the latter imaged the time to come, when Christians, who, because of sin, cannot make their “Easter duty,” can confess and later receive the “Lamb of God.”

Jewish writers name the first “the greater Passover,” and the latter “the little Passover,” this lasting but a day, the Hallel Psalms being sung while the lamb was being sacrificed, but not during the supper, nor was the leaven searched for.<sup>50</sup>

## **The Passover Under The Judges**

Down the Hebrew history, they followed the law God Himself, laid down. “Thou shalt keep this thing as a law for thee and thy children forever.”<sup>51</sup> “This is the observable night of the Lord when He brought them out of the land of Egypt, this night all the children of Israel must observe in their generations.”<sup>52</sup> In the desert of Sinai, when God commanded them to hold the Easter feast, He said: “Let the children of Israel make the Phase in its due time, the fourteenth

day of this month in the evening, according to all the ceremonies and justifications thereof.”<sup>53</sup> For the third time the Lord repeated the rule relating to breaking a bone of the lamb, or leaving any part till morning, and ends with these words. They shall observe all the ceremonies of the Phase.”<sup>54</sup>

The Hebrews could not again celebrate the feast of the Passover till they camped round Sinai, the second year after leaving Egypt, because they could not be circumcised while on the march. After being circumcised and receiving the Law and the Ten Commandments from the fiery Shekina,<sup>55</sup> the Holy Spirit, covering Mount Sinai, God renewed the command regarding the Passover,<sup>56</sup> to foretell how Christ first preached his Gospel and then was sacrificed. They did not keep the Passover for the next thirty-three years in their march through the Arabian deserts, for the males could not be circumcised during their continual wanderings. But when they crossed the dry Jordan and camped at Galgal within the Promised Land, Josue ordered the rite of circumcision, and then they held the Passover.<sup>57</sup>

Under the Judges they seldom held the Passover, because they were continually at war with surrounding heathens. But when peace came they held the feast with great solemnity each Easter. As the ages passed new rites and ceremonies were added to the Passover, each being a revelation of the sacrifice of Calvary and the Mass. Let us describe the most striking.

### **Great Historical Events**

When the good king Josias brought back the Jews from idolatry, begun under Solomon, he commanded the people saying: “Keep the Phase to the Lord your God, according as it is written in the book of this covenant.”<sup>58</sup>

At a later date, “King Ezechias sent to all Israel and Juda, and he wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasses, that they should come to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem and keep the Phase to the Lord, the God of Israel.”<sup>59</sup> The account says the priests received the blood which was poured out from the hands of the Levites,<sup>60</sup> showing that only priests could sacrifice the lamb in the days of Jewish kings. “And the Phase was immolated, and the priests sprinkled the blood with their hand, and the Levites flayed the holocausts.”<sup>61</sup>

After the Captivity, king Darius of Persia gave orders to search in the library for the holy books, and decreed the renewal of the sacrifices. “And the children of Israel of the Captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.”<sup>62</sup>

Again the Lord renewed the command of the Passover through the prophet Ezechiel, after Herod’s temple was shown him in vision.<sup>63</sup>

Hebrew writings show that during the Passover the chief event of the history of the Israelites happened like the morning light of Christianity rising over the world before the Incarnation of the Sun of justice. At midnight of Passover, Abraham divided his forces, and conquered his enemies;<sup>64</sup> Sodom with all the wicked people were destroyed, while Lot, who, in the city filled with sinners, baked the paschal unleaven cakes, only was saved.<sup>65</sup> To Abraham, during the feast, appeared the Son of God, with an angel each side of him.<sup>66</sup> During Passover, Jacob wrestled with and overcame an angel;<sup>67</sup> Prince Haroseth’s army was destroyed;<sup>68</sup> Bel’s idol was overthrown, and dreams revealed the future to Joseph.

Passover night, proud Belshasser, king of Babylon, celebrated his feast in the great palace on the banks of the Euphrates; within the city’s impregnable walls, praised his idols, mocked the God of Israel, called for the sacred vessels of Solomon’s Temple, and from them drank to the glory of his kingdom and the gods of Babylon.

On the wall of the great banquet hall appeared the hand of light, wrote the sentence of doom on him and on his kingdom, which only Daniel could read to the horrorstricken king, satraps, rulers and concubines, while Cyrus’ armies marched into the doomed city along the dry bed of the river which they had turned out of its course. That Passover night, Babylon was captured, king and nobles slain. Later, Cyrus, seeing his very name foretold by Isaias, sent back the Jews to rebuild the destroyed city and Temple.<sup>69</sup>

At the Passover the lands of Moph and Noph were swept of idolatry, Esther directed the Hebrews to fast and Haman was crucified. All the miracles God performed for the Hebrews took place at the feast to foretell the delivery of mankind by Christ, who was to be crucified the second day of this feast.

## **Easter Offering Foretold**

This was the order of Passover at the time of Christ as laid down in Scripture. The tenth day<sup>70</sup> the lamb was selected, washed, and tied to a stake till the 14th day of the moon,<sup>71</sup> the day they searched the house for leaven.<sup>72</sup> During this their great Holy Week, they were to eat only unleaven bread, foretelling our Easter Week and the reception of the sacraments.<sup>73</sup>

Every male Hebrew, not labouring under a legal impurity, under pain of death was to appear at the national sanctuary, the holy Temple,<sup>74</sup> bringing an offering in proportion to his means, foretelling Easter offerings in our churches. An offering was brought to every feast, but this was the oldest and greatest festival, and numerous costly gifts were brought. Part of these offerings was spent for burnt offerings and the rest for the Chagigah as the Talmud says.<sup>75</sup> Special rules related to the firstborn.<sup>76</sup>

Women went up to Jerusalem with the men,<sup>77</sup> but they did not then eat the Passover with the men,<sup>78</sup> preach or take part as leaders in the synagogue. The feast was held in the evening of the fourteenth of the month to remind them that their fathers in Egypt celebrated it at night.

God commanded them to sacrifice a lamb, because from the days of Abel the patriarchs sacrificed it to foretell “the Lamb of God sacrificed from the foundations of the world.” The lamb was a type and emblem of Him who was to come and bear the sins of mankind, who was “Like a lamb led to the sacrifice.”<sup>79</sup> The sacrifice of the lamb in patriarchal times degenerated into pagan rites when Adam’s religion had become dim, and in Egypt and other places Jupiter was adored under the form of a ram. The beasts first offered to God had become the gods of paganism.

## **Striking Types Of The Saviour**

A striking figure of Christ was that paschal lamb. Its immolation, by which the Hebrews were delivered, foretold the delivery of the whole human race by the sacrifice of Christ. Its blood, sprinkled on the door-posts, pointed to the Lord’s blood sprinkled on the cross by which we are redeemed from sin and hell. The “Angel of death,” God the Son striking the Egyptians, tells of the death of the

soul by sin when not delivered by the Redeemer's blood. The lamb killed in the night typified the Lamb of God arrested at midnight, sacrificed in the darkness of infidelity at the end of the Hebrew nationality, typified by the darkness on Egypt and at the crucifixion.

As the lamb was sacrificed by the whole people, it pointed to that later time when the whole nation cried out: "Crucify Him." "His blood be on us and on our children." The lamb was to be without spot or blemish to shadow forth the sinless Saviour. A kid might be sacrificed at the Passover in place of a lamb, for the goat represented Christ loaded with the world's sins as the scapegoat bore the sins of Israel. Jacob clothed in hairy kid-skins when his father blessed him foretold the Lord carrying our sins. The kid was prepared and roasted the same as the lamb.

The little lamb was to be not more than a year old, to foretell Christ sacrificed in the flower of his manhood, and without blemish, emblem of the sinless Christ. He was separated from the flock on the tenth day of Nisan or Abib, because on this Monday the local Sanhedrin or Law Court of Jerusalem were to condemn the Lord to death, and that evening Christ hid in the Grotto on Olivet. These details we find in Moses' Law. Later the prophets and great Seers of Israel, following the Shekina's directions, added more details to the ceremonial. The leader of the band of Jews select the lamb; the women wash it, as Christ took a bath before the Passover. They sent it with perfume to shadow forth the odour of good works of the Lord's humanity. They tie it to a colored stake, as Christ was fastened to his cross. They called it after its selection the "Lamb of God," the name John the Baptist called the Saviour.<sup>80</sup> They anointed it with oil as the Lord was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Messiah. "The Anointed Jehovah," in Greek: "The Christ." For high priest, king, judge, and ruler of Israel were anointed and hands of ordination imposed on him.<sup>81</sup>

## **Daily Immolation Of The Lamb**

The lamb was the most striking image of Christ among all the various Temple sacrifices. Therefore morning and evening with an elaborate ceremonial like a pontifical High Mass, the high priest presiding, a lamb was sacrificed in the Temple. The daily immolation of the lamb in the Temple and the eating of its flesh, then took the place of what is now the Consecration and Communion during Mass. But the sacrifice of the paschal lamb was a still more strikingly typical of Christ.

The lamb was killed by the priests in the Temple to foretell how the Jewish priesthood would later demand of Pilate the execution of the Saviour. The blood was sprinkled on the great sacrificial altar, as the blood of Christ was sprinkled on his cross. The lamb was skinned as Christ was scourged. Then the dead lamb was brought to the house of the Jewish family.

There they drove a pomegranate stick down through its body, and out into the tendons of its hind feet. They were forbidden to use a metal spit, for the Lord was to be crucified on a wooden cross. They carefully opened out its body, and drove a pomegranate stick through the tendons of its fore-feet, as butchers do to-day. They called this operation "The crucifying of the lamb," to foretell Christ with His hands and feet nailed to the cross. The victim they now named the "Body of the Lamb" to which Christ alluded at the Last Supper when He said "This is my Body." This was the way the lamb was prepared centuries before Christ.

## **The Eucharist Prefigured**

The crucified lamb was then placed in the oven resting on his cross, the flesh not being allowed to touch the oven, to foretell how Christ completely hung from the cross. Thus the lamb was roasted that its body might be penetrated by the fire, as the fire of the Shekina, the Holy Spirit, filled Christ with the love of mankind, moving Him to die for our salvation. When cooked, the lamb was placed on the table, still resting on His cross, and was a striking prophetic portrait of the body of the dead Christ on the cross, His skin all torn off in the flagellation, the yellow serum oozing out and dried, made Him look as though he had been roasted.

The flesh could be eaten only in the house, no part could be carried out,<sup>82</sup> for Communion is received only in the Catholic Church, and not in sects which have not holy orders — an ordained priesthood. Not less than ten, or more than twenty members, formed a “band” to eat the lamb, to image the congregation assembled for the celebration of the Eucharist. The tenth day of Nisan,<sup>83</sup> when the Hebrews celebrated their first Passover, they sacrificed the lamb on the Sabbath to foretell that on Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, the real Lamb of God would be sacrificed in our churches.

The waters of the Nile were turned into blood; in the ceremonial of tabernacle and Temple, the victims’ blood was poured out on the altar; they were forbidden to eat meat with the blood. Even in our days, Jews complain that the ‘kosher’ meat, completely drained of blood, tastes insipid. What did these rites of the Jewish religion mean? They were to bring before their minds the value of human life. They forgot all these that fatal Friday, when the whole nation cried out, “Crucify him!” “His blood be on us and our children!”<sup>84</sup>

The blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled on the door-posts of their houses, as a type, a prophecy, of the blood of Christ sprinkled on his cross. The first-born of the families living in the houses marked with the blood were saved that night. And Moses with the lamb’s blood sprinkled Aaron, his sons, and all the utensils of the tabernacle. “What did you say, Moses? Can the blood of a lamb deliver a man? It is true, he said, not because it is blood, but because it was an example of the Lord’s blood.”<sup>85</sup> Beautifully, in his eloquent words, the Archbishop of Constantinople explains the great mystery of the blood.

### **Symbol Of The Real Presence**

The Hebrews were forbidden to eat any raw part of the Lamb, for the fire of the Holy Ghost completely filled the whole body of Christ. If they broke a bone in the lamb in the preparation they were punished at the time of Christ with thirty-nine stripes on bare back and shoulders. This was to foretell that the soldiers would not break Christ’s limbs when they came to remove the bodies of the crucified that day within the Passover. Only circumcised Hebrews could eat the paschal lamb, as only baptized Christians should receive communion. Only in Jerusalem was the lamb sacrificed, so in the

Church is the Lamb of God sacrificed and eaten. The lamb was eaten with unleaven bread, like the altar breads used to show forth the sinless Christ, on whom was no sin, prefigured by fermenting yeast. It was eaten with wild lettuce dipped in vinegar, to remind us of the bitterness of sin, and with what sorrow for our sins we should approach the table of the Lord.

The whole lamb was eaten, with its head, feet, entrails, etc., to tell us that under the appearance of bread and wine we partake in the whole Christ, receiving both His Divinity and human nature. What remained after the feast must not be taken out of the house, but was to be burned that night,<sup>86</sup> to foretell how the Lord's body was removed that afternoon He died.

The lamb was eaten by the Jews with loins bound up, shoes on their feet, staffs in their hands, clothed as for a journey, for as priests we partake of Communion clothed in vestments on a journey to our home, not in Palestine, like Jews, but in heaven, the Christian's real home.

On the fifteenth, the next day, in the time of Christ, the Hebrews gathered in the Temple to assist in the great celebration, held holy meetings in their synagogues, kept the day like a Sabbath, and did no work except what was required for preparing food.<sup>87</sup> This day and the six following days, two young bullocks, a ram, and seven lambs, a year old, were offered in the Temple.<sup>88</sup> With flour seasoned with oil, they made cakes of unleaven bread, and offered them in the Temple to foretell the Mass. On the sixteenth took place the ceremony of the Omer, a striking figure of Christ's arrest the night He was betrayed.

In the history of Abraham and his "Seed," the "Seed of the woman who was to crush the serpent's head," God bound up in prophetic history the future of the nations. Nature, history, blessings, symbols, ceremonies and graces combine to give a special meaning to the feast. The New Testament is filled with allusions to the going out from Egypt, the feast appearing under the names of pascha, phase, the paschal lamb, the bread and wine, the Last Supper, the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

In countries bordering deserts, like Palestine, they plant crops in the fall and harvest in the spring-time, as God gathered Israel to himself from slavery in the Nile Land, and to foretell when Christ would rescue mankind from

perdition, so Passover fell in the middle of the month Abib, later called Nisan, both words meaning “sprouting,” “green ears.”<sup>89</sup> It was the “beginning of months, the seventh month-the sacred month, reminding us of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit,<sup>90</sup> the seven sacraments. All through the Bible runs the sacred symbol seven, and in sevens the Gospels were written in the original Greek. In the most astonishing way they are interwoven as though the first Evangelist wrote last, and the last first, and altogether run in and out, one with the other under the same divine inspiring Spirit. From the days of the Apostles, the Gospels have proven impervious to attacks of infidels.

From Adam down, in Bible Books the spring feast of Passover was celebrated by the patriarchs with the lamb, the bread and wine. When God established the Hebrew ceremonial, he enlarged the Passover rite into the grand ceremonial of the tabernacle and of Solomon’s Temple.

The stately Liturgy and service of the Temple of Christ’s day were but an extension of the patriarch’s Passover.

To Be Cont’d.

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