

**Deliverance Demands a Sacrifice**

Scripture: Genesis 22:13; Exodus 12:3–13

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From the moment sin entered the world through the fall of Adam and Eve, death followed. While they themselves would eventually die as a result of their rebellion, their sin also resulted in immediate physical death—that of an animal, as noted Genesis 3:21 when the Lord made clothes for them.

That simple act of God's kind provision foreshadowed the substitute He would eventually send to redeem sinners. And the foreshadowing didn't end there—substitutionary atonement is woven throughout Jewish history and culture in the Old Testament.

In Genesis 22:13, the Lord provided the ram for Abraham to sacrifice in Isaac's place. God similarly provided a substitute—the spotless Passover lamb—to spare Israel's firstborn from the last of His plagues against Egypt (Exodus 12:3-13). Substitutionary death was essentially the heart of the sacrificial system the Lord instituted under the Mosaic covenant. The message to God's people was clear: death always follows sin, and atonement for sin was not available without a sacrifice.

However, it was not the sacrifice of an animal *itself* that brought pleasure to the Lord or actually atoned for sin (Psalm 51:16). Those sacrifices were divinely designed as acts of obedience in faith—each of them foreshadowing the final Lamb God would ultimately provide in Jesus Christ.

And while Israel missed the significance of God's foreshadowing—they expected the Messiah to come as a lion, not a lamb—the Passover celebration remained a highlight of the Jewish calendar. And several centuries after the Lord first delivered the Israelites from Egypt, Christ, as the fulfillment of everything Passover pointed toward, transformed the Passover meal into a new celebration of His sacrificial death on our behalf.

As we prepare to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection this week, we're going to visit the Upper Room, examine the link between Passover and the Lord's Table, and consider the substitutionary atonement for sin available only through Jesus.

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