

ADEVĂRATA SEMNIFICAȚIE A SĂRBĂTORII PAȘTELUI LA POPORUL ALES. LA CE FEL DE „TRECERE” SE REFERĂ TERMENUL „PESACH”?

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Abstract

The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in His Body from among the dead (The Christian Passover) proved to be, in a Messianic view, the fulfillment of a prophetic ritual: the sacrifice of a one year-old male lamb as protection against the effects of the last divine punishment inflicted upon the country that kept the chosen people in a state of bondage (The Mosaic Passover). The name of the Pesach feast originates in nounizing the eponymous verb, which is to be found within three verses of the second Book of the Pentateuch.

In short, this essay aims to help students of the Holy Scriptures rule out the theological thought of any association between the Jewish Pesach (Ex. 12, 1-51) and the miraculous crossing of the chosen people through the Red Sea (Ex. 14, 21-31). The event that led to the sacrifice of the paschal lamb is rooted in the announcement of the death of every firstborn throughout the land of Egypt, the tenth and most grievous plague befallen onto the country's inhabitants due to the adamant refusal of the pharaoh to free Israel from slavery. This dramatic event is to be distinguished temporarily and spatially from another one, namely the destruction by immersion of the Egyptian armed contingents that came to pursue the chosen people towards the Red Sea basin, a denouement that will seal the state of complete self-determination of the Israelites under the direct guidance of Yahweh, through the authority of Moses. In what follows, we are going to argue that between the two moments no less than one week passed, as confirmed by the rabbinical tradition itself.

The very name of Pesah (passing, passover), therefore, recalls the harmless passing of the angel of death by the houses of the Israelites marked with the paschal lamb's blood the night when God ended the lives of all the first-born males who dwelled the vastness of Egypt. We raise awareness of the severe confusion emerging from the assimilation of the name of the most important Jewish celebration before Christ, the Pasāh, with the crossing of the Red Sea as if on dry ground. Likewise, another error regarding the Mosaic Passover would be made if someone referred to the passage of the Israelite people from Egyptian slavery to freedom, instead of using the appropriate term, exodus, that is, the departure of Jacob's line from the land where they had been turned from honoured guests into ordinary slaves.

Keywords: Pesach, Passover, tenth plague, firstborn, paschal lamb