

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG296 – Passover Is a Choice

I want to talk about Passover. The title I would give to this is *Passover Is a Choice*. Of course, I am going to steer everybody into Exodus the twelfth chapter, and there is so much of this that we can read.

I would have you read the whole chapter as you are getting prepared for the Passover, but I want to start reading at verses 3-4. This was the Lord directing Moses, and He says,

“Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb.’”

This idea really struck me about the fact that Passover is a choice. There are so many facets to Passover, it is such an amazing time, and there are a lot of different ways we could focus our hearts, our prayers, our thoughts about the celebration of Pesach. But what I want to do is to pick just this one concept, that Passover really is a choice. We know that Passover is a time of some of the greatest deliverance, the greatest miracles, the greatest things that we have seen transpire from God. It is where He brought His people out of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness to become a people. When you really get into all the details of Passover, it is almost overwhelming all there is to look at and to think about where Passover is concerned; but it just struck me how simple it really, really is.

I know Passover is a tremendous deliverance, it is a time of God moving; but really, it is a simple choice on our part. I was thinking about the last call that we had, when we were talking about the baptism that we go through, about the resurrection and being resurrected with Christ, and somebody stated, “I realize that it really was my choice to be baptized and lowered into that water. I chose to do that.” And when you think about salvation, it is that simple: We choose to accept Yeshua as our Savior and as our Lord. It is a choice that we make. Again, you could go into all the things that transpire surrounding salvation: What does it mean? What happens, and how does it happen? But really, you can simplify it into the fact that it is a choice; and Passover was that simple of a choice. God was telling Moses to tell the children of Israel to get a lamb, take it into their homes, and on the night they were to prepare it and eat it, to put the blood on the doorposts and on the lintels of the door. But it was their choice to do that or not do that – it was not a law, it was not a requirement.

I know that too often we think about the Law of Moses and we think about the Torah as a law, that this is something we must do. But really it is not, it is a choice that every person makes to do or not to do it. And I thought about this verse 4 also, because it was something that they chose. Each individual chose to do or not to do the blood on the doorposts. At the same time, it was also something they found that they took their family, they did it as a family; and I think this is a part of it. Passover is not something we just choose to do alone, we find those who choose also with a common faith to celebrate this Passover. I know they were taking their own families, or a family next door, but the point was they were finding others of faith to do it with. And I think that this is something that we should focus on, that we are just simply choosing to do the things that the Lord is telling us to do and directing us to do.

In verse 13 He says, "The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt." So again, God was going to strike the whole land of Egypt. He was going to strike every house in Egypt. But if He found one where someone had chosen to put the blood as a sign on the house, He would pass over that. So yes, it was God who had determined what He was going to do in Egypt; but it was a simple choice of each individual and the families that came together to have a different future than the other peoples of Egypt. And I am sure there were some Israelites that may have chosen not to do it; but basically, we see that Passover and the new future that we experience comes as a choice that we are making. It was the same with the idea of the unleavened bread. They were to clean the leaven out of their homes, they were to eat only unleavened bread, and those who chose not to were cut off from the congregation of Israel. You will find that in verse 19. So it was something that was very real in the way that they were celebrating this that was a choice.

Hebrews recognizes it in chapter 11, verse 28. It says, "By faith Moses kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them." It is a matter of our faith. It is a matter that we choose to be under the covering of His blood. So our Passover is an experience of faith. Our deliverance, our release is a simple experience of faith that we choose to participate in.

I want to read also out of Deuteronomy the thirtieth chapter. In verses 19-20, we see Moses speaking to the children of Israel. He says, "I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice...." So again, we see that they were brought out of Egypt by the choice they made. When Moses talked about all that God was speaking to them in the Torah, he said, "Choose." What is it? It is God setting before us life and death, and we can choose what will happen to us in our future. And we see that over and over and over again. We see that really as such a foundation of the children of Israel coming out that Joshua talked about. He said, "Choose for yourself." In Joshua 24:15 he says, "Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

So again, we see this idea. We see it in Elijah when he was dealing with the prophets of Baal and he speaks to Israel and says, "Listen, how long are you going to hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; if Baal is god, follow him. But the people did not answer him a word." (1 Kings 18:21) So we get this idea that so much of what transpired is honestly a simple choice. And as we go into this time, I want us to be choosing and see that we have the power; it is not a light thing, we have the power to choose.

In Second Corinthians 10:4-5 it talks about, "The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ." So when we get into this idea of choice, what we recognize is, what is the choice? the choice is how we choose to think, how we choose to decide in our minds. That was part of the problem with Israel when they got out of Egypt, they did not control their thoughts, they did not control their minds. So they were over here saying, "What is God doing? Did He bring us out to the wilderness because there were not enough graves in Egypt to bury us all, because His intent is to kill us and destroy us?" This thing about the mind and how our mind works and what we go through – when we talk about choice, what

we are really talking about is the fact that we have a choice about the way we think, about what we allow our minds to do. When we read about Passover, when we read about the story of Pesach, in the beginning the elders of Israel cursed Moses because of what was happening when he entered in and talked to Pharaoh. All of a sudden they had to make bricks without straw; things got even more difficult than they had been, and their minds were just going crazy over, "God is going to destroy us because of what He is telling you to tell Pharaoh and what you are doing." And they literally cursed him.

So when you look at it, a lot of what was happening during the Passover process of judgments was the people were having to bring their minds into control to a place where on that Passover night, they chose to put the blood on the doorposts. That was something that they had to wrestle with their thoughts about, and what they were going through. I think this is important for us to realize, and I want us to recognize, because there is a lot of stuff going on right now in the world around us. There are a lot of things we are going through. But I want to just say, you are not your mind. You are not your mind. You control the thoughts that your mind is allowed to think. You choose. See, Passover is a choice, and you choose what thoughts you are allowing your mind to think. Your mind is an instrument of your body, just like your right arm is. You control what your right arm is doing, or your left arm. You control your body to stand up out of a chair and walk. That does not make your body you; you are controlling your body. And we need to come really to grips with this in a greater way.

So when we talk about choice, what we are saying is that we have the ability to choose. And I know this is a battle, like it was saying, but we have the ability to choose what our mind is allowed to think. And we continue to control our own thoughts until our mind comes to the place where it is conformed to our divinely-created eternal being, because that is what we are. Remember that we are divine beings having a human experience. And so, there is nothing about our humanity that we want in charge and controlling how we are living and what we are doing. I do not want my mind on its own choosing whether or not the blood is going on the doorpost of my heart. I want my eternal being created in God and predestined for a purpose to be making that choice for all of me, all of my body. This is something that I really want us to get out of this.

Let me go back to Second Corinthians 10:4-5. "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh," – the battle that we are in is not with our fleshly body, and our mind and our brain are part of our fleshly body – "but divinely powerful." We have weapons that are divinely powerful "for the destruction of fortresses," and "we are destroying speculations." In other words, we do not let our brain speculate about what is happening or what is going on, or what we are going to choose to do. We are not caught up in speculations. When you look at the world around us right now, people are swallowed up in speculations. People's minds are going crazy over things, and they are swallowing lies and believing a lie, and choosing the lie rather than the truth. But "we are destroying speculations and every lofty thing." See, the brain gets into lofty things that are "raised up against the knowledge of God." They were facing the knowledge of God at Passover. God knew what He was going to do to Egypt, and God was giving them that knowledge; therefore they had to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ to put the blood over the doorposts of their homes.

That is where I feel like we are at. We are seeing the world with all of its speculations rising up against the knowledge of God that is available and in the earth today. But we, on the other hand, God's children, are taking every thought captive into the obedience of Christ. That was the choice that they made. There were probably so many reasons they could think of – at the time they were still suffering under the whip of the taskmaster; they had four hundred thirty years of conditioning in their lives of not

seeing God move, of suffering under slavery; all the things that they had gone through. There had to be so many thoughts running through their minds about, "What are we doing?" and, "What is the result of this all going to be?" But they took those thoughts captive by a choice to say, "I choose to do what the knowledge of God is telling me to do, because that is my salvation, that is my deliverance, that is my release." And that is what we should be doing as God's people. We should be absolutely, positively focused on every Word that God has given us. What is He saying He is going to do for Israel? What is He saying is going to be the outcome of what we see transpiring in the Middle East, in the United States, in woke mentality? What do the Scriptures say? That is the knowledge of God. And we should be absolutely setting ourselves with an intensity to take every thought captive in obedience to Christ.

That is what He did. The cross was an act of obedient choice that He made, and we are making the same choice. We are divine beings that were created by God, and we were put into these physical bodies for God's purposes to be fulfilled, for us to learn and become His sons. And so, we should never doubt that. We cannot doubt that. Here is one prayer that we always love to say during our Shabbat celebration. It is Philippians the fourth chapter, starting at verse 8. "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Make our mind think these things. We have a choice, and the choice begins with what I allow my mind to think, and how I allow my mind to think; and whatever is good and whatever is right and whatever is true and whatever is worthy of praise, we should be making our minds dwell on these things until our mind becomes conformed to obedience to Christ.

Verse 9, "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you." I love that part of it, because I tell you, we have had the absolute privilege of sitting under such a pure apostolic word that came through John Stevens. And so, the things that we have learned and received have taught us this principle, that we should see the renewing of our minds, and we should absolutely choose what we are to walk in.

Romans 12:1-2 follows up on this. "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Our mind must be renewed out of what this world has tried to conform it to. It must be renewed to be in absolute flow in obedience with the will of God and what we are created as in divine beings that He is bringing forth. Let me go back to verses 2-3,

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think [see, the issue is the thinking, the issue is what is the mind thinking]; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

These verses are so great, so good. I bless us during this time that we begin to take absolute authority. I think that we are the ones who perform the renewing of our mind. It is not something God does, it is something we do by bringing every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, which is the Word made flesh. It is the Word of God that we bring it into obedience. And so, all of these things will work for us. I bless this. I could go on with it, but I am going to cut myself short because we have to move on with this. I bless this time of Pesach that we as a people begin to give ourselves. He has absolutely brought us into a conformity, and we can do this.

I was looking for one more Scripture. Romans 10, verses 6-10,

But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).” But what does it say? The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

So that is what it is all about. We have this ability to confess. There is nothing that can separate us from God’s love and from His Word. And so, we determine what our heart believes, we determine what words come out of our mouth. It is not something that springs from our mind which is moving on some human level or moved by what it beholds, sees, or hears from a human level.

I bless us with this. Lord, bless this time of Passover. Amen.