TITLE: Easter is relevant any time of the year!

TEXT: Ex. 12:14-23; 1st Co. 5:6-8; James 2:10;

Heb. 10:1-4, 11-18

INTRODUCTION: I remember doing a sermon one time that was titled; Christmas in July, so I thought, why not do Easter in October because Easter is worth celebrating anytime of the year...

 I love the parallels between Old and New Testament...

 For most major events that we find in the New Testament, there is a type or foreshadowing of it in the Old Testament.

 The Easter advent, which deals with the death burial and resurrection of Jesus, is the most significant part of the New Testament.

 Did you know that there is an Old Testament type or foreshadow of Easter?

 Sure you do! In the book of Exodus we find the Passover, the Feast of unleavened bread.

**Exod 12:14 (NIV) "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD--a lasting ordinance.**

**15 For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel.**

**16 On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat--that is all you may do.**

**17 "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.**

**18 In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day.**

**19 For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born.**

**20 Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live,**

**you must eat unleavened bread."**

**21 Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb.**

**22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning.**

**23 When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.**

What this is is an Old Testament type or foreshadowing of what Jesus did on the cross.

 Let’s look at it for a moment.

 We are at a time in Hebrew history when the nation has been enslaved in the hard bondage's of slavery to the cruel taskmaster of the Egyptians for over 300 years, and God is about to deliver them from their oppression with a mighty deliverance.

 Moses has by this time gone before Pharaoh 9 times to try to get Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go.

 Nine times God has displayed His might and power before Egypt with miraculous works of His power---Nine times the heart of Pharaoh has been hardened and he refuses to yield to God...

 Now comes the tenth and final plague...The death angel is about to come upon the land of Egypt.

 Every house that isn't covered by the blood of the Passover lamb will be touched by the ultimate plague, the ultimate judgment of God-death....

 God instructs His people what to do to avoid this ultimate judgment of God upon the land.....

 They were to apply the blood of the lamb to their houses. And in preparation for this "sacrificing on the Lamb" there was something just as important that they were to do...

**Exod 12:18 In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day.**

**19 For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born.**

**20 Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread."**

What started the Feast of unleavened bread, the Passover, where the blood was to be applied to their homes to protect them from the destroyer, was for 7 days they were to not only not eat bread with yeast in it, but they were to literally remove all the yeast from their homes.

 We find something very important here...

1. What is it that yeast represents? In the New Testament yeast represents sin!

**1Cor 5:6 (NIV) Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?**

**7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast--as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**

**8 Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.**

Yeast is symbolic for sin. Both do the same thing.

 If you are making bread and you put in just a little yeast, what happens? It works through the entire batch of dough. You put just a little yeast in a bottle of grape juice and it will ferment the whole bottle.

You put a little sin in these containers (our bodies) and it will eventually work through the entire container.

**Jame 2:10 (NIV) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.**

If there is sin in here, in our heart, than we are a sinner.

God’s people were to remove all yeast from their homes and they were to do it for 7 days.

 Seven is a very interesting number in Scripture.

 Symbolically, it represents the completeness of God.

7 days of creation. 7 weeks of Daniel's prophecy relating to the fulfillment of all things.

 When asked how many times we are to forgive our brother Jesus responds 70 X 7 times to illustrate total and complete forgiveness.

 In the Book of revelation we find 7 Church'sand7 candlesticks representing the complete Church, 7 angels, 7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls representing the complete judgment of God.

 7 is symbolic with completeness---The removal of yeast for 7 days is symbolic of the complete removal of sin.

 What is this all a picture of?

Our salvation experience! What Jesus did on the cross! The Easter advent!

 Jesus, the Lamb of God, a lamb without spot or wrinkle, becoming the atoning sacrifice for your and my sin.

 But before that happens we must do what?

 Partake of the lamb! Apply His blood to our life!

 Once we partake of Jesus by asking Him to come into our heart and become the Lord and Savior of our life, as we apply His shed blood to our life, it marks us for protection so that the destroyer will not be allowed in.

 We are passed over---That which passes over us is the judgment of God.

 When we stand before the judgment of God, sinners that have been covered by the blood of Jesus, God's judgment, the judgment of eternal death and eternal separation from Him, will pass over us. God will pass over our sin because He can’t see it through the blood. The Blood has washed it away.

 When we partake of our Passover lamb, when we partake of Jesus, when we apply His shed blood to our lives, when we allow Him to change us from the inside out, we are removing the yeast, the leaven of sin, from our life.

 The Israelites were commanded to remove all yeast from their homes for seven days. I believe that was symbolic for the complete removal of sin.

 It was to point them to the real thing that was yet to come. It was to point them to Jesus!

 The Passover was to be remembered and repeated annually....To keep Gods people ever Mindful of the mighty deliverance of their God. For them to remember how God, with mighty displays of His awesome power delivered them from their bondage and slavery in Egypt.

 But it was also symbolic of something greater that was yet to come --- The real deliverance from the bondage and slavery of sin and death that would be revealed in Jesus, the Lamb of God that would take away the sin of the whole world.

 It is to this audience that Paul is speaking in the book of Hebrews when he says this:

**Hebr 10:1 (NIV) The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming--not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.**

**2 If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.**

**3 But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins,**

**4 because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**

 The Passover would fall into this same category of sacrifices and offerings that are but an annual reminder of sins. It says that it is impossible for the blood of goats and bulls to take away sin.

They were never intended to. They were just to be a reminder of sin, of man’s sinful condition and that the penalty for sin is death.

**11 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.**

**12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.**

**13 Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,**

**14 because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.**

**15 The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says:**

**16 "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord.**

**I will put my laws in their hearts,**

**and I will write them on their minds."**

**17 Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."**

**18 And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.**

The Passover and the entirety of the animal sacrificial system was just to keep man mindful that he is a sinner in need of a savior!

 It was all done just so that man would recognize and be receptive to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who would not just come to remind mankind of their sinful condition, but could actually remove us from it.

 Because by one sacrifice He can make perfect forever those who draw near to Him.

 Our perfection in Christ is not just in that we can be forgiven of past sin.

 Our perfection in Christ is that we are given the ability to do that which we couldn't do before and that is to go and sin no more!

 Because when we ask Christ into our hearts and then give Him Lordship of our life, then the reality of the cross becomes a truth to us. Then we can claim the promises of Scripture ---**Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world!**

 We can gain victory over sin because the same one who conquered sin now resides within us.

 We no longer have to be annually reminded of sin! We no longer have to make endless sacrifices to try to please God because by one sacrifice, the sacrifice of Himself, Jesus has made perfect forever those who are being made holy through faith and belief in Him! Those who have applied His blood to their lives!

EXAMPLE: Picture the Passover---Over the last few weeks they had seen the awesome power of God displayed time after time.... God has sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh 9 times and 9 times Pharaoh has not yielded. His heart has remained hardened toward God... With each visit God has demonstrated His power and each time the plagues have gotten progressively more severe....

God sends Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh one last time---the result is the same---a hardened, unrepentant heart.

 Moses and Aaron go back to the people to tell them how they must prepare for what God is about to do in the land of Egypt....

 Picture yourself sitting there in your house after you have done all that was required of you to do...

 Waiting for the judgment Hand of God to pass over.

 You hear the wailing and weeping coming from all the households of Egypt as Gods judgment passes through the land....

 Knowing that the only reason that you are spared is because of the blood of the Passover Lamb that you have applied to the door frames of your house.

 How foolish it would have been to know what was coming and not have applied the blood.

 Scripture is crystal clear that there is a coming day when the judgment hand of God will pass over all mankind....

 He has told us that it is coming and He has told us what we need to do in order to escape that Day of Judgment.

He has told us that we need to apply the blood to our lives---The blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the whole world.

 But in order for the blood to work it has to be applied to our life. Applied by embracing Jesus as our Lord.

Are you thankful for the blood of THEE Passover Lamb, are you thankful for Jesus?

 Have you applied His blood to your life?

 Have you come to Jesus for the forgiveness of your sin and made Him the Lord and then the Savior of your life?

 Have you been marked for redemption on that day when Gods hand of judgment will fall upon all those who have hardened their hearts against Him?

 Do you see the Blood of Christ for the precious thing that it is?

I want to close in prayer this morning and then we will partake of communion this morning...

PRAYER—INVITATION—COMMUNION

 Jim-Randy

**23For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.**

**27So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. 29For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on *themselves.***

***Front cover--Praise* God From whom all blessings flow**