

HEBREW PASSOVER & CATHOLIC MASS

KNOW YOUR FAITH SERIES

Every good Hebrew celebrates Passover year after year. This has been done since the time of Moses, when, as we read in the Old Testament, the people of Israel were liberated from slavery and were led to freedom, into the Promised Land. (Book of Exodus)

The people of Israel celebrate Passover In “THANKSGIVING” for the signs and wonders worked by God on their journey to freedom.

Jesus also celebrated Passover like every good Jew. It happened during this celebration, on Thursday evening, during the Passover meal, that Jesus added something different to the usual supper ritual.

The three evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke, report the unique event which remained engraved forever in the memory of the twelve apostles who were present at that last supper. (Matthew 26:26-29 // Mark 14:22-25 // Luke 22:14-23. // 1Corinthians 11:23-26).

The apostles were familiar with the “Thanksgiving” prayers which were part of the ritual. But when Jesus picked up the bread and, as usual, pronounced a prayer of thanksgiving to God the Father, he added something NEW, something DIFFERENT from the previous years!

He said: “TAKE AND EAT, THIS IS MY BODY!”

Then He took the cup of wine, and after giving thanks He gave it to them, saying: “DRINK FROM IT, ALL OF YOU; FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE COVENANT, WHICH IS POURED OUT FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”

Can you imagine the faces and the looks of the apostles at Jesus words?

What was their reaction, at least inwardly, if not externally?!

“Did we hear correctly? Did He say “take and eat, this is MY BODY?”

THAT WAS THE FIRST MASS, PRESIDED AND OFFERED BY JESUS HIMSELF, HIGH PRIEST, and his apostles were the first participating congregation and concelebrant priests!

Those twelve men may not have understood the depth of the mysterious event that just took place, but surely must have felt its supernatural effect and peace that enveloped the room they were in!

The yearly Jewish Passover was meant to recall and relive Israel’s last evening in Egypt, and the offering of the sacrificial lamb, whose blood on the door posts of the Hebrew’s house caused the Angel of death to “PASS-OVER” and saved them from death.

At the last supper, Jesus offered himself to the Father as the SACRIFICIAL LAMB, whose blood in a few hours would save the entire humanity from sin and death!

TODAY, the Sacrificial Lamb is given to us Catholics in the shape of bread, that white host or wafer, which the Priest hands to us to eat, after, by the power invested on him by Christ himself, he has blessed and consecrated it with the same words of Jesus: “take and eat, this is MY BODY!”

This is so amazing! It’s literally out of this world! We are given to eat Jesus’ Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the form of bread!

We are to be grateful to the Father for this tremendous and awesome gift!!!

NEXT WEEK: Why doesn’t the Gospel of John report on the last supper?