



Dr. Harold & Myrna  
Carpenter

**TEXT: Exodus 12:2**

**1 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 "This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. 3 "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. 4 '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. 5 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month , then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. 7 'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8 'And they shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 9 'Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. 10 'And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. 11 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: [with] your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste--it is the Lord's Passover. 12 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the Lord. 13 'And 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. 14 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance** (Exodus 12:1-14, NASB).

### INTRODUCTION:

This week we mark the beginning of a New Year. As we approach this new beginning it is common for us to make resolutions to live a better, healthier, and more productive life.

Pastor Mickey Anders of Pikeville, KY tells of a lady in his congregation who drew up a list of resolutions for the New Year. They are as follows:

1. I am going to clean up this dump as soon as the kids grow up.
2. I will go to no doctor whose office plants have died.
3. I'm going to follow my husband's suggestion and put a little life into my life by living within our budget.
4. I'm going to apply for a hardship scholarship to Weight Watchers.
5. I will never loan my car to anyone I have given birth to.
6. And just like last year, I am going to remember that my children need love the most when they deserve it the least.

Many people make their resolutions like the boy in my home church who responded to our pastor's request that we make a resolution for the New Year. He responded, "I resolve not to eat spinach anymore. I don't like it anyway."

In our text passage this morning God himself established a New Year's festival for the Jewish people. It commemorated their deliverance from Egyptian slavery. It had multiple connotations:

1. Politically it marked the deliverance of Israel from 400 years of Egyptian bondage.
  2. Religiously it marked their redemption from their bondage to sin.
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- a. A lamb was to be selected from the flock on the 10th day of Nissan.
  - b. The lamb was to be sacrificed on the 14th day of Nissan.
  - c. It was a time of renewal--All leavening (a type of sin) was to be removed from the house on the first day of the month and they were to eat unleavened bread for 21 days.

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- d. It was to be a perpetual memorial of God's redemption.
  - 1. Agriculturally it marked the beginning of a new cycle of crops.

- a. New Year (Nissan) Early April (Lev. 23:6)
- b. Pentecost (Sivan)--Early June marked the end of the wheat harvest (Lev. 23:16)
- c. Trumpets (Ethanim)--October--thanksgiving for the harvest (Lev. 23:34, 39)

### **I. NEW YEAR'S HISTORY AND TRADITIONS**

#### **A. New Year--The oldest festival or holiday**

- 1. First record of a New Year festival in Babylon @ 2000 BC.
- 2. Celebrated at the first new moon following the *vernal eqinox* (The beginning of Spring)
- 3. Record of New Year's resolutions found
- 4. Most common resolution was to return borrowed farm implements

#### **B. New Year--the most universal holiday**

##### **1. The Greeks**

- a. Used a baby to signify the New Year around 600 BC.
- b. Worshipped the god of wine, Dionysus, by parading a baby in a basket representing the annual rebirth of that god as the spirit of fertility.

##### **1. The Romans**

- a. Adopted the Babylonian New Year in the month of March.
- b. The lunar year was out of sync with the solar year
- c. The Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the New Year
- 1. The Teotihuacan and Aztecs

- a. Aztec calendar stone.
- b. Pyramids of the Sun and Moon with 13 steps on each side (a total of 52).
- c. Corn, the single crop economy.
- d. Human sacrifices--up to 10,000 people were murdered.

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### **1. The Aymara**

- a. La Puerta del Sol
- b. Marks new year and planting time
- c. Potatoes and hard barley main crops. C. New Year The most idiosyncratic holiday
  - 1. Bolivia--throwing mud and paint on unsuspecting pedestrians
  - 2. Ecuador--"El Ano Viejo"--man-sized effigy burned at midnight
  - 3. Spain--Twelve grapes eaten at midnight
  - 4. Japan--Sobasoba noodles, rice cakes, and sake to drink (3 sips from oldest to youngest); Beautiful wooden boxes with three layers of rice cakes and fruits
  - 5. United States--Black-eyed peas and collard greens

## **II. NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**

### **A. Traditional resolutions survey results:**

- 1. More exercise.....37%
- 2. More diligence in study or work.....23%
- 3. More healthy diet or eating habits.....13%
- 4. Less tobacco, alcohol, caffeine or drug use.....7%
- 5. Variety of other types of resolutions.....20%

### **B. Biblical resolutions:**

- 1. I will fulfill God's will in my life!

**4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we are of [the] day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. 11 Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing. 12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, 13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. 14 And we urge you, brethren,**

**admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.**  
15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not quench the Spirit; 20 do not despise prophetic utterances. 21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.

(1 Thessalonians 5:4-25, NASB).

1. I will fulfill God's will in my Church:

**48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect** (Matthew 5:48, NASB).

**1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven** (Matthew 6:1, NASB) .

a. When you give:

**2 "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you** (Matthew 6:2-4, NASB).

b. When you pray:

**5 "When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you. 7 "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. 8 "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. 9 "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 11 'Give us this day our daily bread. 12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.] 14 "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions** (Matthew 6:5-15, NASB).

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c. When you fast:

**16 "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites {do,} for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 17 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face 18 so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you. 19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also** (Matthew 6:16-21, NASB).

1. I will fulfill God's will in the world:

a. Christian testimony:

**2 You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men** (2 Corinthians 3:2, NASB).

b. Christian witness:

**19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"** (Matthew 28:10-20).

### CONCLUSION:

Our common greeting for the New Year is "May you have a happy and prosperous New Year!"

God gave Joshua instructions on exactly how to achieve both of the above;

**8 "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success** (Joshua 1:8, NASB).

The best New Year's resolution you can make is to:

1. Read God's Word.
2. Meditate on God's Word.
3. Keep God's Word (Be a doer and not a hearer only):

**21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and [all] that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer , he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for [once] he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the [law] of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer,**

**this man shall be blessed in what he does**

(James 1:21-25, NASB)

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This is the outline of the sermon Dr. Harold Carpenter preached 29 December 2002. Dr. Carpenter and his wife served as missionaries for twenty years. Dr. Carpenter also taught missions for twenty years at Central Bible College. He now serves as Pastor of Fair Grove Assembly of God, Fair Grove MO.

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**In Essentials: Unity; In non-essentials: Liberty; In all things: Charity**—Peter Meiderlin  
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