

PASSOVER AND LAST SUPPER

I. Intro: Blessing and encouragement in troubled times

We are so very blessed with the technology that we have.

I was reading about the bubonic plague of the 15th century and the plague of the 5th century and it reminded me of our technological and infrastructure blessings immensely. I have always felt blessed as an American but the Corona situation has made me realize that I am more blessed than previously thought. I have realized that I can have packages delivered, eat restaurant food (curbside pick-up), shop without going to an open market, call on my phone, facetime on my phone, have Zoom meetings with friends and loved ones, worship virtually, and work from home... *all without putting someone else in danger of corona virus.*

How great is our God who has provided use with such blessings in a time like this!!!

So, in the environment we are in, we still have the blessing of meeting at our digital presence like we are right now, the LRBC Facebook page. It has been set it up so that we can maintain much of the consistency of our previous physical worship, but do it digitally while protecting the weak among us. Just as at our previous, physical worship gatherings, we digitally begin the worship in Song, which s followed Prayer and Scripture Reading. We then worship God by Encouraging One Another and Building each other up. We end the worship service by Worship in Word, or in other words, Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus Christ. As members and regular attenders used to come to the LRBC building to gather and worship God, we now gather to worship online. Just as visitors who had never been to the LRBC building might stop in the building because that is our physical presence, now also, visitors can stop in at the LRBC Facebook page.

We have a great opportunity to be the Light and Salt of the Gospel of Jesus Christ during these challenging times. We can minister to our community in so many ways so that they can see the Love of God through us. Let us make every effort to redeem the time, knowing that the days are short, and that Jesus' return, our blessed hope can happen at any time. Only the strong can help the weak, only the prepared can help the needy, and only Christians can be Christ in this world.

II. Body: God has provided a way of Deliverance from judgement since the very beginning. That started in Genesis 3:15 where God promised eternal deliverance by the seed of a woman. God told Abram that his descendants would be captive in a foreign land and that God would bring them back as an instrument of judgement in Genesis 15:13 – 21 which is alluded to in God's conversation with Moses in Exodus 3:8. God continued to promise deliverance not just eternally from judgement, but also, temporally, that is in this life God has made promises for deliverance from certain judgements. We are going to look at God's promise for deliverance of physical death during the First Passover, Jesus' Promise for Deliverance from eternal death as He ate his Last Passover Supper, and the Promise Jesus made of a Future Deliverance in His Kingdom.

The Last Plague, Death of the Firstborn and Passover for Deliverance, is a climax to Egypt's rebellion and Israel's deliverance. The climax is both in the plagues and also in how much information is written about them in the historic account from the beginning of Exodus 7 to the end of 12.

A. The 10 plagues Moses cries to Pharaoh, Let My people go that they may worship My God in a place of His choosing. Now, I did not know about the situation with the Corona virus when I deciding on the topic for this message, But God knows. The 10 Plagues of Egypt are a judgement on the false gods of Egypt from the Nile River and Sun god Ra, to the Firstborn (Exodus 12:12; 9:16; 18:11). Ultimately, the 10 plagues of Egypt are a theology lesson that there is one God and He determines how He will be worshipped (Exodus 8:22 – 25). Even the Egyptian sorcerers declared that the signs and wonders were coming from God.

- The idea of a plague has various uses in the Scripture and is used about 50 times in most translations. What is a "Plague?"
- Plague generally means "to strike" in the original and when used in this context it refers to God striking judgement on a person, usually death but not always.
- Numbers 16:46; Moses says, "The plague has begun" in reference to God's judgement for Israel's sin

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1. Exodus 11:1 – 12:32 describes the first Passover was when God declared that he would PASS-OVER the house of everyone in Egypt who applied the blood of a lamb (goat or sheep) that was one year old. This is the only plague out of the 10 plagues where the Israelites were required to do anything to be delivered from judgement. The Destroyer is most likely a reference to the Pre-incarnate Christ because the destroyer is identified as God Himself, the phrase is used in other places as a reference for God such as Numbers 16:41 – 50, 2 Samuel 24:16, 1 Chronicles 21:15, and 1 Corinthians 10:11, and every appearance of God in the Old Testament is God the Son, not God the Father (John 1:18 and 12:38 – 41).

Instructions for Passover. Every observance of this holy day is a memorial of the deliverance in Egypt. The importance of this day is evident in that even though a person who is ceremonially unclean cannot observe it, God made a provision for Passover to be observed the following month (Numbers 9:1 – 4; cf. 2 Chronicles 30:2, 15).

Also the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

- Watch lamb for 4 days (Nisan 10 – Nisan 14) to make sure that there were not any blemishes. The lamb was in its prime and did not have any broken bones, a symbol of innocence.
- Kill the lamb at the evening. This action was a clear reminder for every generation and every year that God spared the first-born among them by the death of a substitute, much in the same way that Isaac was spared in Genesis 22.
- The lamb was to be roasted with fire, not boiled. The flesh of the lamb was eaten inside the house
- Bitter herbs were eaten as a reminder of the suffering and hard labor as slaves in Egypt.
- Hyssop was placed on the door, the two doorposts and the lintel. The head of the house would have to pass under the blood to get back inside
- Meal was eaten with sandals on and staff at your side
- Not permissible for a slave or foreigner but a proselyte, one who had been circumcised could partake of the observance. Circumcision was the Sign of the Covenant God made with Abraham and indicated

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commitment and submission to the God of Abraham (still, this was neglected during the wilderness wanderings and at other times during Israel's history).

- Passover as One of the Feasts of Israel; Leviticus 24
- Unleavened Bread, Passover, First Fruits, followed by the counting of 50 or as it is usually referred to: Pentecost

2. The Mercy of God was revealed in the 10 plagues.

3. Egypt had 9 plagues of warning prior to judgement whereas they did not repent. God could have poured out all judgement in a moment. Instead there was a prolonged period for people to recognize God, which many did, and then for them to turn toward God.

4. Mercy is also displayed in God holding back judgement on the inhabitants of Canaan where the Israelites went after the Exodus. The Israelites will be the instrument of God's judgement as God promised Abram in Genesis 15

B. Let's look at the Last Passover of Jesus, the Last Supper.

1. The Passover meal was likely it was held at John Mark's house, the writer of the Gospel of Mark. The Feasts and Festivals were a shadow of the reality of what is to come with the reality of them belonging to Christ (Colossians 2:15-16; Hebrews 10:1).

- By the time of Jesus the observance of Passover had been traditionalized into a specific Order with specific elements by the time of Jesus. You might have heard someone refer to Passover as the *Seder* Meal. That is because the word Hebrew word Seder means "Order" and refers to the traditional order developed around the second or third century before Christ. The Seder ritual prescribes Scripture readings, songs, prayers, and actions in the service; much of it is filled with symbolism.
- The Seder meal that is observed today is much the same as it was during the time of Jesus with a few changes and embellishments. The sacrificial lamb stopped after the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. and the name of the Matza is changed Afikomen, which I will speak in more detail about at the end.

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2. The Seder table of Jesus day is set with the leader of the household at the head of the table. The youngest sits at his right and the seat to the left is reserved for the guest of honor. It is set with candles, bitter herbs, 4 cups of wine, Matza (unleavened bread), and the sacrificial lamb.

- The bitter herbs represent the hard labor that the Israelites experienced in Egypt and each of the four cups of wine have a name and meaning. The first cup is the *Kiddush* that the leader lifts and gives a prayer. The second cup is poured and initiates the recounting of Deliverance from Egypt as God commanded this holy day as a memorial for all time. The third cup is the cup of redemption and the fourth cup is the cup of Acceptance.
- There is washing for ceremonial cleansing and eating the Matza and also the lamb sacrificial lamb. At the end of the meal they would sing a hymn.
- When we read the Gospels, we can see that these elements of the Seder are present. Now I am going to review the Passover Meal that we call the Last Supper and touch on some of the symbolism.

3. The dinner guests took their places and the leader, that is Jesus, stood up with the first cup and gave thanks as recorded in Luke 22:17. The second step in the order is to wash and this is likely the time that Jesus stood up and washed the feet of the disciples in John 13:4-12

[Jesus] got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. **5** Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. **6** So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, "Lord, do You wash my feet?" **7** Jesus answered and said to him, "What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter." **8** Peter said to Him, "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." **9** Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." **10** Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." **11** For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean." **12** So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"

By washing their feet, Jesus revealed that He was about to become the Suffering Servant.

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4. There is a period of Questions by the youngest at the table who would recline on the leader's chest. The questions would be about why they are eating unleavened bread, why there are only bitter herbs, and about the dipping of Matza. We can learn from this tradition that the Apostle John was probably the youngest from what he records in John 13:23 that there was leaning on Jesus bosom, one of His disciples, whom He loved. This also puts John in a position to ask Jesus other questions as directed later by Peter.

5. Now the Second cup of wine is poured and the history of the Exodus account and how God delivered the nation from slavery is retold beginning with Abraham and up to the Exodus. When each plague is described a little wine is poured out to express the sorrow felt for the suffering of the Egyptians. As the history is explained each piece of the Passover table is used to explain meaning in the story. When the story is completed the dinner guests recite Psalms 113-118 in a responsive manner, Praising God with Hallelujah!

6. This next part of the Seder sheds light on what we read when Jesus speaks about the one who will betray Him. First there is another washing of hands and then the Matza is broken into pieces and distributed so that everyone has a piece. In John 13:21-27 Jesus said that one of His disciples would betray him.

21 When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." **22** The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking. **23** There was reclining on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. **24** So Simon Peter gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking." **25** He, leaning back thus on Jesus' bosom, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" **26** Jesus then answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. **27** After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

- If Judas was at the place of honor, to Jesus left at the table, then after breaking the Matza it would be natural to dip and pass it to Judas, and so it might not be as revealing to the rest of the disciples that the person honored by Jesus was the person who betrayed Jesus.

7. After the meal is eaten the third cup is filled. This is called the Cup of Redemption. We read in Matthew about this Matza and this Cup.

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Matthew 26:26–28 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” **27** And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; **28** for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

8. The fourth cup is the Cup of Acceptance and Praise and after has been drunk the dinner guests would sing a hymn. Jesus said that he would not drink from the cup anymore until His kingdom. Jesus knew that He being betrayed by Judas and that he would soon be rejected by the religious leaders and the nation as a whole.

Matthew 26:29–30 “But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.” **30** After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

- Jesus is toward that future day when He will be accepted as the Messiah as written in Zechariah 12.

Zechariah 12:10 “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

III. Conclusion; Jesus is the Passover lamb who died in my place. Just like the lamb was slaughtered and the blood applied to each individual house, so also, the sacrificial blood of Jesus must be individually applied to each person for deliverance from Judgement. Isaiah 53 reminds us that each and every one are like sheep and have gone astray and we have turned, to our own way. BUT the Lord has laid on Himself the iniquity of us all. Eternal salvation is only available through the shed blood of Jesus as a substitution for your own sin.

The Israelites offered up their sacrificial lamb year, after year, after year because those imperfect animals cannot take away sin. Jesus Christ has died once for all having nailed the judgements against you to the cross. The Passover Lamb saved the First-born of Israel from physical death that day and every lamb since then has been a memorial to that sacrifice. Only the Passover lamb, The Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, can save anyone from eternal death in the lake of fire.

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I received an email from my friend Andy Ferrier with the Midwest Messianic Center that compares the Passover Lamb and Jesus. It says this:

LORD'S SUPPER

The night that Jesus was betrayed he said that we are to observe future Passover meals "In Remembrance of Him."

We are going to observe what Christians refer to as "The Lord's Supper" which is taking the elements of the Passover meal that Jesus indicated as a representation of Him and remembering that He is our sacrificial lamb. The Lord's supper is for anyone who has put their trust in Jesus death on the cross as a payment for their personal sin. Biblically speaking, you can partake of the elements at home. The leader of the home is usually the person who presides. That is taken from the First Passover in Egypt and the tradition that developed up to Jesus' day.

So, I'll give you a moment to get your bread and your wine or grape juice and we will observe the Lord's Supper together.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NASB95)

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

25 In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.