

Communion

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[0 : 00] Let's give a couple of explanatory remarks, if I may. The Jewish celebration of the Passover remains to this day the most important feast in the Jewish calendar.

And what it signifies is that which harkens back to their miraculous deliverance from the land of Egypt. Because the Jews had been there for 400 years, had virtually been enslaved by Pharaoh and his minions there in Egypt.

God raised up Moses to provide them with deliverance, and he went to Pharaoh and made the demands and so on. And most of you are familiar with the plagues and things that happened because Pharaoh was unwilling to let the children of Israel go.

And this went on for quite some time, and then the plague that was to end all plagues is that which caused the Pharaoh to cave in and actually let them go.

And you must realize that what he was letting go was virtually their entire workforce that was going to have an absolutely incredible impact on the entire economy of Egypt.

[1 : 21] Because these people had been slaves working for virtually nothing but the food that was needed to sustain them for years and years, and now they are going to lose their entire labor force.

And it created a real crisis for the Pharaoh. And each time he decided to let them go, and they would make preparations to go, he would change his mind.

So for this last and final time, the one that would really break Pharaoh's back, God said, this is going to be the plague to end all plagues.

I am going to order a death angel to visit the land of Egypt. And this death angel is going to stop at every residence in the land of Egypt and take the life of the firstborn in each family.

We just cannot imagine that kind of devastation. And that which was to preserve the Israelites from experiencing the same thing is that God told them, what you are to do is to take a lamb.

[2 : 40] Each family will take a lamb, slay the lamb, and prepare the lamb to be eaten in whole. Not a leg of the lamb will be broken.

And that's very significant. They weren't to divide the lamb up, cutting it up by breaking the legs, etc. And that too is all typical of the Lord Jesus, who as the Lamb of God would have not a bone of his broken, even while he was on that cross.

You'll recall that when the soldiers came to the thieves, they broke their legs to hasten their death. But when they came to Jesus, they saw he was dead already.

So there was no need to break his legs that the scripture might be fulfilled. Not a bone of him would be broken. And of course, it wasn't. So back to this night, this mysterious night, this darkest night in all the land of Egypt.

God told the Israelites, how you are to preserve yourselves and make certain that the death angel does not visit your house. You take the blood of that sacrificial lamb that the family has eaten.

[3 : 47] And that's called the Passover meal. And they all partook of that lamb. You take the blood of that lamb and smear it on the doorpost outside your home and smear the blood on the lintel overhanging the doorpost.

And when the death angel visits in the land, where he sees the blood applied, he will not enter. And everyone within will be safe.

But those who did not have the blood applied, which would be virtually all of the Egyptians, would experience the most horrifying night in their history. And one of the deaths was the death of Pharaoh's own son.

And that finally did it. But you know, to show you how recalcitrant people can be and how stubborn people can be, even after he agreed to let them go and told Moses and the children of Israel, go, just go, get out of here.

And people contributed things to them because they were actually collecting back pay, I think. And they hit the road and they took off en masse. And this had to have been one of the most massive, incredible undertakings in humanity that you could ever imagine.

[5 : 06] Because we're talking about the possibility of a million and a half to two million people. And none of us have any idea how many that is.

But when you think about taking Ohio State's football stadium and filling it 25 times, you're talking about a couple of million people there.

And that's a lot of people. And even after they were on their way and Pharaoh had agreed to let them go, I don't know if it was some advisors that got to him or what.

But eventually, Pharaoh says, ah! What am I doing? I can't let them go. And he'd recovered from the death of his son and he ordered his army, take off after them.

Go get them and bring them back. And you know what happened, of course, when they tried to do that and the parting of the Red Sea and so on. So this night, this special night, this became the most significant night in the history of the whole nation.

[6 : 13] And it is celebrated to this day by Jews throughout the world and it is called the Passover meal. And it got its name, Passover, simply from the idea that when the angel sees the blood applied, he will pass over that house.

And the name just stuck and it became the Passover. And Jews throughout the world celebrate that, Passover night. In all of the Jewish economy and history, that was the most significant night, significant event of the entire history of the nation because it resulted in the physical deliverance of the Jews from Egyptian slavery.

And one would think that there would be no way that that night could be excelled in any way. But it was. And it wasn't at night.

It was in the daytime. It was between 12 noon and 3 o'clock in the afternoon outside the city of Jerusalem that the most significant event, not in the history of Israel, the most significant event in the history of the entire universe took place.

You may have an insert in your bulletin that expresses that and there are extra copies on the shelf out there if you want one. It's the most important day, the most important time when he who knew no sin was made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

[8 : 00] And as stunning and as valuable and as important as was the physical deliverance of Israel from the clutches of Egypt and the slavery, the Lord's Supper depicts deliverance picture of release from spiritual slavery and spiritual bondage.

And this is just one more incident where we have a transference of incidents from the Old Testament to the New, from the Old Order to the New, and the Old Order was physical.

It involved a Passover lamb of whom the writer in Hebrews will say later that Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. And all of that emphasis was on the physical, the physical lamb and so on and the physical deliverance from a physical Egypt.

But that deliverance which Christ provided in his death was a deliverance from our own sin and the bondage that comes with it.

And it is that sin that condemns us and estranges us from God. And it was Jesus on that cross suspended between earth and heaven and as the God-man, as God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, he was Emmanuel, which means God with us.

[9 : 28] The word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have this innocent man on the cross paying the penalty for the sins of the guilty.

And it is as if with one hand he was reaching and connecting with God and the other hand he was reaching and connecting with humanity.

and in the person of Christ he brings God and man together again. There is reconciliation. And what we are celebrating today with these elements reminds us of that and it is intended to remind us of that.

And that Passover night when those Jews, 12 disciples or actually, well there were 12 that's when Judas was still with them. There were 12 and the Lord Jesus he took the role of the host and he was responsible for the whole evening and he made the arrangements for it and everything.

He even arose, girded himself with a towel, washed the disciples' feet and took a place of a servant and so on. Marvelous, marvelous illustration of the servitude that we are to have one to another.

[10:41] And then they prepared the meal. They had the meal prepared and they all ate of that Passover meal. And that was the first part of this evening but that was not the Lord's Supper.

That was the standard annual Passover meal that not only Jesus and his disciples were partaking of but all the Jews throughout the whole land of Israel were doing likewise at the same time. Each family in their own homes. That was the first part of the evening and Judas was still present. It was then it was then when Jesus said verily I say unto you this night one of you will betray me. Well that was an absolutely stunning statement because nobody could imagine those twelve those twelve who had left everything and sold out everything and began following him that one of them could actually turn on him.

But we know that it was that way from the beginning because before that night ever occurred Jesus said have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is Diabolos a devil or a demon.

[12:02] And of course that didn't register with him. And when Jesus said one of you shall betray me they had no idea what he meant by that. And the last thing they would have ever thought of was that somebody of the twelve would be in cahoots with the religious establishment and the chief priest to hand Jesus over.

That never entered their mind. Likely it's not they thought that somebody was going to say something stupid or do something stupid that would embarrass the Lord you know like followers of politicians and important people are able to do but that wasn't what he meant.

he meant an actual betrayal and one of them John leaned on his bosom and said is it I? Is it I?

And they were all wondering who's going which one of us is going to put his foot in his mouth and do something stupid and make Jesus look bad. Boy I hope it isn't going to be me.

What? And Jesus said he it is to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it.

[13:10] Now we and our culture today aren't much into giving and dipping sops because we have we have a plate and we have silverware and we have cups and saucers and things like that but in this setting in the east they had one large bowl in the center and in that would be the Passover lamb meat from the Passover lamb and gravy and it was created like a kind of stew and there would be some vegetables in it and some herbs in it and the whole thing was just a large pot.

Then they would take their bread which were for all practical purposes was kind of like a small pancake thin like that and just kind of fold it in half and use the bread as a scoop and each one doesn't sound too sanitary does it?

Each one would take their bread scoop and scoop down into the bowl and that was called the sop S-O-P that was called the sop and then you would put that in your mouth and then you'd take another piece of bread and dip down in it and of course you got the gravy and the meat and the goodies and the vegetables and everything in that kind of like a dip you know that's exactly what it was and Jesus said the one who will betray me is the one to whom I will give the sop when I have dipped it and the interesting thing about that is when the host honored one of his guests by giving him the sop that was considered to be an act of extra affection and honor and care and there was no one there who deserved it less than Judas and Judas was the one to whom Jesus gave it that is amazing

I would think that our Lord would say I'm going to give that sop to Judas and give it to eleven others before I give it to him but no no he gave the sop to Judas and then he told him that thou doest do quickly he knew exactly what Judas was going to do nobody else did but Jesus did and Judas got up excused himself left the room and of course he was going to the headquarters of the high priest where he was going to get his thirty pieces of silver and then lead them to where he knew Jesus would be I've often been convinced that if the other eleven apostles knew what he was going to do Judas would have never gotten out of that room but they didn't know and one of the texts

I don't recall if it's John or if it's Matthew but one of them says that when they saw Judas get up and leave they thought that he was going out to buy something extra for the meal that maybe they'd run out of something and Judas was the treasurer of the group we're told that he was the treasurer he bared the bag the purse strings that he was going out into the night to buy something additional that was needed for the feast but of course he wasn't he was going out to make that deal complete with the powers that be and after Judas was gone and we are told that the supper had now ended which means the Passover meal was complete it was over and done with everyone had eaten of the Passover lamb then then we are told that Jesus took bread and broke it and said this is my body which is given for you and in like manner he took the cup and said this cup is the new covenant in my blood and as often as you eat of this bread and drink of this cup you do show forth the Lord's

death until he comes and you know again this was all so puzzling to them they couldn't put it together they didn't want to challenge what he said they didn't want to question him it probably seemed like too solemn of a moment but I can see these grown men these apostles looking at each other and thinking what's he talking about this cup this is my blood in the new covenant what and it's easy for us to put all of this together because we could look back on it and we've got the chapters and verses and everything to see how it all comes together and it's quite remarkable quite remarkable but they didn't pick up on it they could not see it at all and they would not until after because they were all familiar with the new covenant because

[18 : 46] Jeremiah told about it and it is one of the most glorious things one of the most great prospects of hope for the whole nation of Israel and really for the whole world well I want you to go there for just a moment and let's see where it was originally established and let's do that let's go to Jeremiah chapter 31 this isn't the only place that it's found but it is the first place that it is found Jeremiah chapter 31 and verse 31 and what I want you to keep in mind friends is that what Jesus is or what Jeremiah is saying here by way of prophecy he is saying 500 years before Jesus would be born in Bethlehem and Jeremiah says behold days are coming declares the Lord when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast and it will come to pass it will come about that as I have watched over them to pluck up to break down to overthrow to destroy and to bring disaster and that that's because of their sin and the judgment that

God was bringing on them then the good news comes in and he says so I will watch over them to build and to plant declares the Lord in those days they will not say again the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge that's an interesting expression that we haven't time to explore but but everyone will die for his own iniquity each man who eats the sour grapes his teeth will be set on edge and then verse 31 is the beginning of this monumental statement and by the way this this is the thing which the nation of Israel and for that matter the entire world even though they may not realize it is waiting for this is the planet's bright spot that is coming days are coming declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of

Israel and with the house of Judah not like the covenant which I made with their fathers he's talking about their forefathers going back to Moses in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt my covenant that was the Mosaic covenant that was the Old Testament the law that was given my covenant which they broke and how did they break it they continually fell into idolatry which was the worship of false gods and false deities that their neighbors worshipped around them they forsook the true God that not only gave them life itself but brought them out of the land of Egypt you know as you read the account how they rebelled against Moses how they griped and moaned when God brought them out despite the fact that he provided the passing of the Red Sea the parting of the Red Sea the water from the rock the quail from heaven the manna from heaven all of those things and they still went astray they still turned against him and that was under the Mosaic covenant my covenant which they broke although I was a husband to them declares the Lord

God is charging the nation of Israel with spiritual idolatry he's saying that I have betrothed you to myself it is as if I am Israel's husband and Israel is my wife and they have been an unfaithful wife I did nothing to cause them to be unfaithful because I was true and faithful to them in every way and what was the thanks that they expressed in giving me rebellion adultery and all that went with it my covenant which they broke although I was a husband to them declares the Lord but this and this is stunning this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord I will put my law within them and on their heart

I will write it and I will be their God and they shall be my people you know what the big difference is here think about this the big difference is the law of Moses was laid on them and it didn't take they shrugged it off they ignored it they violated it but this covenant new covenant is not going to be laid on them it's going to be put in them it will become part of their very fiber and nature and makeup and character and it will be entirely new it will provide them with a supernatural ability to be obedient and respectful they shall not teach again each man his neighbor and each man his brother saying know the

[24 : 23] Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them declares the Lord for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more I dare say every respectable Jew had this passage memorized the new covenant the new covenant the new covenant and who's going to bring the new covenant who's going to fulfill it who's going to activate the new covenant the

Messiah the Messiah and when the Messiah comes he will establish the new covenant well Messiah has come Bethlehem Jesus of Nazareth Messiah and when he gathered his twelve together at that Passover meal and said to them this cup represents the new covenant wow could he possibly mean could he does that how could yeah this is the new covenant in my blood how was the old covenant the Mosaic covenant how was it settled how was it passed how was it ratified animal blood animal blood remember

Moses came down from the mount with the tables of the law and he presented it to the people and I want you to understand this because this is very very important and it involves our volition which is a precious thing that we humans have God did not impose the law of Moses on the children of Israel he presented it to them and God told them through Moses here's the deal here is the covenant here is the commandments and if you Israel if you will sign on to this if you will agree to this you see God isn't saying this is my law this is my covenant I'm laying it on you and like it or not you've got to live under no no no no wasn't that at all not at all and Moses gave them the terms of the covenant and he said God told me to tell you here's the deal if you will accept this covenant and the terms if you will agree to it then

God will be your God and you will be his people exclusively and he will not relate to you the same way that he relates to other nations of the world you will be special you will be chosen you will be different that's my promise to you and that's the terms of the covenant and Moses presented that to the children of Israel and said now what do you think and their response was quite simple they said Moses you go back up in the mount and you tell God all that the Lord hath said will we do you tell him he's got a deal and Moses said okay we'll seal the deal and they took the blood of an animal and they took the tablets of the law and sprinkled the commandments with the blood of the animal and then with the hyssop branch he sprinkled the blood in the direction of the people bringing the covenant and the law and the people together as one that was the ratifying the official signing of the covenant that's what put it in force so when

Jesus said this cup is the new covenant in my blood not the blood of animals for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin it was the blood of Jesus Christ that must have absolutely electrified those apostles as they were trying to program their minds and think about all of this and what this involved does it really mean that and what actually is going to happen and then and then just what less than 12 hours less than 12 hours from the time Jesus said that he would be on the cross that's where he would be providing his blood that's why that sacrifice that substitute has become the number one day of importance for the universe since the time of creation creation and it took place in the space of three hours wow let me tell you if this doesn't do something for you you just don't understand it it not only ought to do something for you it ought to put absolutely everything about your life and being in a completely different perspective wow so this is a time we come to the

Lord's table and we are told that each man is to examine himself so that we do not partake unworthily and to partake of these elements unworthily means to have no real respect understanding or appreciation or gratitude for what it means and what it's all about you would be surprised how many people across the country are coming to a table like this and all they can think of is yeah I ate the crackers and drank the juice big deal doesn't mean a thing to them they don't have a clue they have no idea what this is all about that's partaking unworthily in a flippant devil may care kind of way and why are you doing this well everybody else did it it would be embarrassing if I didn't do it too so I is that all it means is that where you're coming from [31 : 24] I would certainly hope not because there's no there's no merit in partaking of these elements there's no there is nothing that is added to your acceptability to God by partaking of these you do you do not become a Christian by drinking the juice or eating the bread it has nothing to do with that it is a memorial and we do not partake of these elements in order to become Christians or even to become better Christians but we partake because we are Christians and we are deeply profoundly grateful for the incredible price that was paid to make us acceptable to God never expect to get over that don't want to amazing love amazing love so elders if you will come forth we will prepare to serve the bread and for for oh huh

Let us pray. Our Father, as we contemplate what we've just been talking about, we trust that you will use it to weigh heavily upon our hearts and minds and that each of us here will be filled anew and afresh with a sense of appreciation and gratitude, even perhaps because we may have grasped something that we didn't understand before.

And we are grateful that you are able to, through your word, put these things together and connect them in a way that powerfully impacts our lives. Only you could do that, and we are thankful. We ask that as we partake of the bread, we will be mindful of that precious body in which there was housed no sin that was made to be sin for us that we might be made to righteousness of God in Him.

In that blessed name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
[34 : 11] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[36 : 47] Thank you.

Thank you.

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[39 : 17] Thank you.

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[44 : 17] Thank you.

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