

Hebrews

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[0 : 0 0] And my memory isn't what it used to be, so I may have shared this before, too. But if I did, why, excuse the repetition. If I didn't, why, you can use the information. During a visit to the mental asylum, I asked the director, how do you determine whether or not a patient should be institutionalized?

Well, said the director, we fill up a bathtub, and then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup, and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub.

Oh, I understand, I said. A normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup. No, said the director, a normal person would pull the plug.

Do you want a bed near the window? And with or without your permission, we're going to just avoid Hebrews for one more week.

We are in Hebrews chapter 11, but being this is the week that is often referred to as Holy Week, with Good Friday coming up tomorrow, I cannot resist that reality.

[1 : 1 3] So we are going to journey just aside a little bit. And speaking of the Seder, we will be in Matthew, Matthew's Gospel, chapter 26, if you would turn to that, please.

This has to do with the evening of that meal. This is referred to as the Last Supper.

And you need to bear in mind, of course, that it is no coincidence that Christ is going to be offered as the Lamb of God in connection with that time of year when the Passover Lamb would be offered.

This, as I mentioned earlier, goes all the way back to the Exodus. And the word Passover derived its name from God having given instructions to the children of Israel that they were to take the blood of the animal and place it on the doorposts and on the lintel of each of their homes.

And their homes were probably like huts, kind of like huddles. You've got to remember, these people were slaves living in the land of Egypt. And the Lord said, I am going to send the death angel over the land.

[2 : 3 8] And you are to apply the blood on the doorposts and on the lintel of your home. And if the blood is applied when the death angel passes over, he will pass over you.

And that's where the name Passover was derived from. Of course, the Egyptians did not have that kind of protection. And there was a mighty wailing throughout the land because the firstborn son in the home of every Egyptian was taken in death by the death angel, including the firstborn son of the Pharaoh.

That, we may say, was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. It was with that tenth and final plague that Pharaoh relented and told the children of Israel, Please go.

We will not only release you, we will help you. And they exited the land of Egypt with a great deal of treasure. Some call it booty.

I call it back pay from 400 years of slavery. And when they left Egypt, they left well healed with gold and silver and all kinds of precious things.

[3 : 59] And these were going to eventually be used in the construction of the tabernacle that Moses is going to be commanded to build in the book of Exodus.

And as you read Exodus, there are 15 chapters, from 25 to 40, devoted to the building of that tabernacle. And that, of course, is going to be a temporary thing.

This is a tent, like, that will be taken down and built up and taken down and built up every time they move all throughout the land, headed toward the land of Israel. And that will be their temporary abode where the Lord said he would meet with the children of Israel during that time.

So, on this night, our Lord is celebrating that Passover. Probably, let's see, I guess maybe somewhere in the area of 1,500 to 1,700 years earlier is when that Passover actually occurred.

And the Lord has got his disciples, his apostles together. And we begin reading in Matthew chapter 26, verse 20. Now, when evening had come, he was reclining at table with the twelve disciples.

[5 : 16] Just a brief note there to notice that he is reclining. He's not sitting like you are at a table and chairs. They reclined. The table was about 12 to 15 inches off the floor on legs.

And it was usually a large table. And people situated themselves around the table. And they would lie down, often resting like this on their elbows with their face up to the table.

And it was that way all the way around. There's just a bunch of bodies around there. And they are horizontal to that table. And the table is right about at their chest height.

And it was this way, of course, that John, an apostle, was next to Jesus. And we are told that John leaned his head on Jesus' bosom.

He was right next to him. And he just leaned over and there he was, right there, because of the angle and the level in which this was situated. And when it came to Mary Magdalene washing Jesus' feet, on a different occasion, she washed his feet with her tears and wiped his feet with her hair.

[6 : 34] And Jesus was stretched out and his feet were out to the back and available so that she could easily do that. So, you've got to keep in mind a similar kind of detail like that.

It's a small, simple thing. But it helps to understand the text. And when you look at this, it says, He's reclining at the table. What does that mean? It means exactly what it says, reclining at the table. And I'm reading from the New American Standard.

And as they were eating, he said, Truly, I say to you that one of you will betray me. And being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to him, Surely not I, Lord.

And he answered and said, He who dipped his hand with me in the bowl is the one who will betray me. And this, too, needs a little cultural explanation, because they did not use knives and forks and spoons.

Didn't use silverware like we did. What they used was small pieces of bread, almost like a pancake. And they would fold it in half and use it as a scoop.

[7 : 41] And the bowl that was situated in the middle was a bowl that consisted of pieces of meat.

In this case, it would have probably been from the lamb. Pieces of meat and vegetables and other things put in there and seasoning. And it constituted a kind of gravy.

And it was a common dish. So, when the host, and in this case, Jesus was taking the position of the host, this was not a house, apparently, that any of them owned, but it was one that the apostles had made ready and made arrangements.

In other words, they had rented the place for the evening. And they were all gathered there. And Jesus was taking the position of being the host, which meant that he was responsible for caring for all his guests.

And this, by the way, just as an aside, is one of the reasons why Jesus washed the disciples' feet. It was the host's responsibility to see to it that that was done. And Jesus took the position of the servant.

[8 : 49] And he washed their feet. And when it came to the time for the dipping of the sop, it was considered an honor for the host to take the bread, dip it in the sop, and literally put it to the mouth of the person that he was honoring.

And that was Judas. Amazing, isn't it? It was an act of love and kindness that was demonstrated by the host in a way of honoring an individual who was there.

And Jesus gave that sop to Judas. Verse 24. The Son of Man, or verse 23, He answered and said, He who dipped his hand with me in the bowl is the one who will betray me.

The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of him, but woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

Judas, who was betraying him, answered and said, Surely, it is not I, Rabbi. And he said to him, You have said it yourself.

[10 : 13] Now, the great question remains, what were the others thinking when they heard this? This does not appear to have been a private conversation, because they were there in the presence of all the twelve.

And the likelihood is, they were listening to what Jesus said. And when he talked about betraying me, you may be sure that it never entered their mind that the betrayal would consist of one of the twelve going to the Jewish authorities and striking a deal with them to hand over Jesus so that they could take him at a convenient time without disturbing the population, making a deal with the religious authorities.

My guess is, they probably thought that somebody was going to betray Jesus in a way of saying or doing something stupid. But not a blatant act of betrayal like that.

Because had they suspected that, I don't think they would have let Judas out of that room. I think they would have made sure that he didn't go anywhere. But he did. And shortly, Judas will excuse himself.

And the twelve, the other eleven, are innocently going to think Judas is, well, he's probably going out to get something extra. Maybe we ran a little short on this or that.

[11 : 48] He's going out to do something, to run an errand, and he'll be back shortly. They had no idea what he was up to. He was the treasurer of the group, right? Yeah, he was the treasurer. And we're told that Judas was a thief from the beginning.

He stole from them. He skimmed off of the treasury. And we are told that he was the one that bore the bag. And that means he carried the purse for the twelve. And people would make donations along the way and whatnot.

And he was responsible for the safeguard of all the money. And he was cheating in addition, skimming off of that. So, let's read on. And 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.

And may I say, gentlemen, they did not have a clue still what he was talking about. They had absolutely no idea at all. He had earlier told them, point blank, that he was going to Jerusalem, and he told them what was going to happen when he got there.

And it didn't register. We are told that this saying was hidden from them, and they did not perceive it. But, after the fact, they would be able to look back on that and say, you know, that's exactly what he said.

[13 : 19] But we didn't pick up on it. We didn't, it didn't register at the time. We could not have believed that he actually meant that. But that is exactly what he meant. And when he said, take, eat, this is my body, I have no doubt at all that these apostles looked at each other with a question mark on their face.

What does that mean? This, this is my body. What is, what does that mean? But, asking no questions, they just partook, and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink from it, all of you.

This was a common chalice. It wasn't one of the little plastic cups that we use today for grape juice. You know, we're more hygienically concerned than what they were back then.

But they took a common cup, Jesus sipped from it, and he handed it to the one next to them, and the idea was, pass it around, and each of you drink from the cup.

Because this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Didn't understand that either, I'm sure. And this new covenant is that which is spoken of by Jeremiah 500 years before Jesus was born.

[14 : 37] And he said, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with them before, which they broke.

He's talking about the covenant of Moses, the law. But this new covenant will give them a supernatural ability to abide by its terms. And Jesus is here saying that in the same way that Moses sprinkled the blood from animals on the tablets of the law and then sprinkled them on the people, blood on the people, that was the ratifying of the covenant.

The law of Moses. The people agreed, God provided the law, Moses presented it to them and said, what do you think? Do you want this law? Do you want what God is saying here?

Because if you sign on to this, God said he will be your God and we will be his people and not only that, but we will be his only people in this special kind of a way.

So what do you think? Should we tell God that he's got a deal or not? The children of Israel said, all that the Lord has said will we do. And be obedient.

[15 : 53] Moses said, okay, we'll sum this thing up. And he sprinkled that blood and that ratified the covenant. The party of the first part was God. The party of the second part was the nation Israel.

They got a deal. Now they are going to be operating under the law of Moses set forth in the Torah. Genesis through the book of Deuteronomy.

And that's the code by which the Israelites are going to live. But on the night of betrayal, Jesus said, this cup is the new covenant in my blood.

And he had to have been referring to that mentioned by Jeremiah 500 years earlier. This is not going to be the blood of bulls and goats.

This is going to be by his own blood he is going to perfect forever them that are sanctified. So this is an update of enormous proportions.

[16 : 50] You see what I mean guys when I say the Bible is a book that must be understood in light of its progressive revelation. We must always bring ourselves to the last word that has been provided by the Lord.

And what is the last word? Last word is not the great commission. The last word is the commission that the risen Christ gave to the apostle Paul by revelation.

It updated everything else. And that's the modus operandi for the church today. It's referred to as the church epistles. If you want to know what a church is supposed to be like don't read the book of Esther.

Don't read 1 Kings. Read the letters to the churches. That's what a church is supposed to be. So, this new covenant is going to be something that will provide a basis for Israel to become obedient in a way that they never have.

And the problem is when Jesus died and paid the penalty he made provision for that new covenant to be enacted.

[18 : 08] What remains to be done? Well, the party of the first part is in place and the provision has been made. Now, what you have to do is give the deal extend the deal the opportunity to the party of the second part.

And who is that? That's the nation of Israel. And when did Peter do that? He did it at the day of Pentecost. And he also did it in Acts chapter 3.

And in the day of Pentecost, there were 3,000 who signed on. And they were baptized with John's baptism. And then when Peter preached the same thing, essentially, a chapter later, in Acts chapter 3, same message, he's saying there are two things that are necessary.

And one is for God to do his part, and the other is for Israel to repent and do their part. And I'm here to tell you, Peter says, God has done his part. Christ has died.

He has provided the basis for the new covenant to be ratified, but the party of the second part hasn't signed on. How about it, Israel?

[19 : 19] Will you agree with this? Will you buy these terms? believers? And you start reading in the next chapter, their answer is to persecute the apostles.

And they rejected, as the party of the second part, they rejected. Joe? And to sign on, they had to repent and recognize who Jesus was and be baptized.

Right, right, right. And I'm going to just skip ahead here because the verse that Joe just shared is so prominent, and we'll get back to Matthew 26.

Right now, I'm in Acts 3. And this is just a fascinating, fascinating passage. And he says, in Acts chapter 3, Peter is preaching this message, and he says in verse 13, The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered up and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.

Now, remember, Peter is speaking to an exclusively Jewish group, and he says in verse 14, But you disowned the holy and righteous one, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you.

[20 : 36] That, of course, was Barabbas. But put to death the prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

Jesus, and on the basis of faith in his name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man, whom you see and know. He's talking about the man who was laid at gate beautiful, been lame from his mother's womb for forty years, and Peter and John healed him, and the faith which comes through him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that Christ should suffer, he has thus fulfilled.

In other words, God has done his part. The prophets indicated that the Messiah would suffer, and he has. God has done his part.

One half of the deal is made available to you. You provide the second half. You are the party of the second part. Are you going to agree to the terms?

[21 : 58] And the terms began with verse 19. Repent therefore. You've got to change your mind. You've got to come to the conclusion that you were dead wrong about Jesus of Nazareth not being the Messiah.

He was. And you've got to come to terms with that. What are you going to do? Israel, the ball is in your court. God has made available this new covenant.

But a covenant is worthless unless two parties are involved. You can't have just a one-sided covenant. You need two parties at a minimum.

And there's only one. That's the provision that was made. So, if you repent and return so that your sins may be wiped away in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you.

Where is he now? He said that. He's in heaven. He's at the right hand of the Father. The ascension's already taken place in chapter 1. And whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient times.

[23 : 17] And of course this times of refreshing has to do with the refurbishing and revitalizing of the planet, of the whole earth. And it's in connection with the coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of heaven come to earth.

So, let's get back now to Matthew 26. Jesus said in verse 27, Took a cup, gave thanks, gave it to them saying, Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the new covenant as opposed to the animal blood for the old covenant, which is shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.

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.

And that will be as a result of our Lord's return in Revelation chapter 19 in connection with what we're studying on Sunday morning.

We took a brief break because of Easter and because of the resurrection time. But we'll be returning to that and Christ will be involved in phase seven of our eight stages and that will be his return and he will absolutely decimate the enemies of the Antichrist.

[24 : 46] This is when the blood will flow to the horses' bridles in the valley of Joshpatt and he alone will deal with the enemy. He will be the only combatant and it will simply be his spoken word that will decimate the enemy.

That is the sharp sword that goes out of his mouth. That is what will devastate the enemy. And following that he will engage in the victory march to the Mount of Olives in fulfillment of what the angel said when he was ascended.

And there he will meet with his chosen people. That will be the remnant that will have been spared. That will be the all Israel that will be saved. And Jesus is going to celebrate.

by drinking the wine mentioned here. It is going to be quite a time of victory. And that is what he means when he says I will drink it new with you in my father's kingdom.

And after singing a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus said to them you will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written I will strike down the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered but after I have been raised now this is all this is all coming across to them as just fazzard.

[26 : 05] They just don't get it. They just don't get it. But it will be very important for Jesus to have said what he said even though they didn't understand it so it will become a matter of the record.

And after all of these events have transpired they will be able to look back on it and say that's exactly what he said. But we didn't pick up on it at the time. We couldn't believe it meant that.

Yeah, Joe. And because of that that makes them gung ho. Absolutely. Gung ho. Absolutely. Put a spine in them that they didn't have before.

And that's why these guys, like Joe said, are going to be so bold and so positive because they know what they know.

And nobody can take that from them. And that's what they're going to be the basis for the proclamation of he is risen from the dead. And they're going to be able to do it with tremendous conviction. Scott.

[27 : 06] Yeah. After Jesus left, you will all, he's talking to the eleven now. Yeah. Only eleven left. So, Judas is out of the picture as far as any of this is concerned.

Yeah. True. Yeah. He's going to make the deal. He's going to the house of the high priest and say, I know where they're going. I know when they'll get there.

I can lead you to them. And that's exactly what's going to happen. So, let's read on. After I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.

But Peter answered and said to him, this is so typical of Peter, even though all may fall away because of you, I will never fall away.

Lord, you know you can count on good old Peter. Everybody else may let you down, but I will be the one who will be with you no matter what.

[28 : 12] And Jesus said, truly I say to you, that this very night that he's talking about just a few hours from this time forward.

It's going to be the same night. The arrest is going to occur in the middle of the night, probably around four o'clock in the morning, something like that. And it's going to be quite a scene. This very night, before a cock crows, and you all know how early it is when the cock crows.

He usually doesn't even wait for the sun. He's anticipating it. And that's not going to be very far away. What will it be? Maybe 4 or 5 a.m., something like that. And Jesus says, before you hear that cock crow, you will have already betrayed me by saying, I don't know this guy.

I never laid eyes on him before. I don't know who he is. And Peter is just stunned by that. He just can't imagine that he's going to do something like that. And he says, even if I must die with you, I will not deny you.

And all the other disciples were shaking their heads too. Yes, that's right. You can count on us, but we will not deny you. And you know the thing that's going to get to Peter? Same thing that gets to so many people today, Christians.

[29 : 31] Peter is going to cave because of just one thing. Peer pressure. Peer pressure. Hey, aren't you one of his followers?

Oh, who? Me? Me? No, I don't know him. No, and eventually he's going to swear and the text says, and then after the third time, Peter will hear the cock crow and he has a meltdown.

And I remember my old Greek teacher at Cedarville years ago, said that Peter heard the cock crow and he went out and wept bitterly. And the tense of the language there indicates that for the rest of his life, when Peter heard a cock crow, it got to him.

You can understand that, can you not? This is quite an idea. Do you have a comment or question, Paul? the part of the fear pressure, I kind of agree but I kind of don't.

Because later on, Peter said, you know, I'll die with you. I mean, what, how many hours later did he cut that Roman guard deer?

[30 : 51] that guard deer? I remember you said 15, 20 years ago and I totally agree with that part. I believe Peter was ticked off totally. I mean, maybe after the second time he denied him or the third and then the root of crowd.

Well, the denials come later. Yeah, but that's what I mean. When Peter said that, I believe the denial was he was dying. Well, I was scared. He was going to you know, but he that's the part with fear pressure.

I don't know, I mean, he had to be ticked off. Well, he was, but the problem was, and this too enters into the picture, not only fear pressure, but the mass confusion. And that is when these soldiers, and these were temple police, these were not Roman soldiers.

Rome didn't have anything to do with this at all. This is completely Jewish, all the way. These are the temple police, and the soldiers, and the Jewish militia, if you will.

They are the ones carrying the lanterns and the torches, and so on, and Judas is the one who is leading them. And when they get there, it's dark, still dark, and there's going to be these twelve figures there, only one of whom is Jesus.

[32 : 09] And from a physical standpoint, Jesus is probably about the same size as the other guys, and they're all dressed in similar kind of attire, and unless you really know and are able to see the light of the face of each one, you don't know which one is which, really.

They're just twelve bodies. And they're asking the question, no doubt, as they make their way up this mountain of olives, carrying the lanterns and torches to lighten their way, how are we going to know which one is Jesus?

Jesus. And Judas is leading the way, and Judas says, I know him, and when we get there, I'll walk up to Jesus and give him the kiss.

This is the holy kiss. This is where you embrace, you kiss on this side, and then you kiss on this side. That was customary. And this was between men. And Jesus says, he whom I kiss.

is the one taking. So when they come up, Jesus meets them, and he says, whom's seeking? Who are you guys looking for?

[33 : 24] They said, we're looking for Jesus of Nazareth. And he said, I am. And the text says in John's Gospel, all these guys just started falling all over themselves backwards.

Because he didn't say, you look at the text in your Bible, it says, I am he. It doesn't say that in the original at all. In the Greek it says, I am.

And Jesus is identifying himself with the same one who spoke to Moses when he said, I am. I'm the one who has sent you. I am the self-existent one.

I am. Jesus, as he did so many times in John's Gospel, made association with that I am. And he meant that he was the ultimate of that, the personification of that.

I am the light of the world. I am the bread of life. And each time that I am penetrates and just hits like a thunderclap. And when he said I am, he was unleashing the power of deity and these guys couldn't even stand in the face of it and they all fell down over backwards.

[34 : 36] And when they recovered from that and came up to him again, Peter pulls out his fisherman's knife and says, this is it. We can take these guys.

And he slices with that knife. I think he was probably going for the servant of Malchus, we are told. He was probably going for his throat. Probably going for his throat.

He sliced with that fisherman's knife like this. And the guy goes, and he sliced off his ear better than his head. And then Jesus said, Peter, put up your sword.

And he reached down and picked up that ear and stuck it back on the servant. Now, you've got to remember, it was dark, hard to see.

Probably some didn't even realize what had been done. But the text says that he returned the ear to Malchus' servant. And the guy was healed. Now, here's the problem.

[35 : 41] And this, I think, is what led to the denial of Peter. What is Jesus doing? We are here ready and willing to defend him, and he won't let us.

He's saying, I am the one you are seeking, and since you are seeking me, let these go their way.

And I think the consensus then had to have been, well, if Jesus isn't going to fight these guys and defend himself, I'm going to get out of here.

And they all take to the high grass. Everybody starts running in different directions, and they're all gone. And they arrest Jesus, probably put him in some kind of court, to take him away to Annas or Caiaphas, the high priest, here in the middle of the night, and the disciples have all scattered every which way.

And Peter's one of them. He's running away too. And then he gets to thinking, where are they taking him? What are they going to do? So Peter starts following this group afar off, and when they get to the place where Jesus is going to be examined for the first time by the high priest, Peter has joined them and he is there with them.

[37 : 01] But he has to be totally confused, flabbergasted. Why didn't Jesus let us defend him? Why did he make me put away my knife? Why did he allow himself to be taken?

All of these things have to enter into this, and that contributes to his denial, because when mass confusion sets in, people are capable of almost anything. Yes, Joe? Peter thought he was going to set up his kingdom right there and there.

That's what they were looking for. Sure, when they got to Jerusalem, exactly. And like I said, confusion reigns. And what all these guys were thinking of was that Jesus was the Messiah, and when God's Messiah comes, he's going to bring the kingdom of heaven to earth.

That's what Jesus is going to do. But they didn't have a clue that Jesus had to pay for what he was going to provide.

And that meant the cross. That's the part they completely eliminated. And when the cross occurred, that created more confusion. Because if Jesus was the Messiah, if God sent him, you're telling me that God allowed his own Messiah to be crucified by the Romans?

[38 : 15] That doesn't make any sense at all. And some came to the conclusion that because he died on the cross, he could not have been the Messiah. Frank? I can understand some of that confusion because when you read the parallel, the chapter over in Luke 22, and I'm 30, 36, 37, 38, Jesus asked them if they're armed.

They don't have anything to defend themselves with it. So, that would make me think, well, he wants me to defend him.

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And that adds to the confusion as well. And by the way, guys, if you want to get the fullest, clearest picture of this whole thing, you need to read all of the gospel accounts.

Because each one tends to include something that the others omit. And that's one of the dynamics of the four gospels, and that's one of the reasons we have four gospels. Because each of these men are writing from their own perspective as God inspires them, and each one sees something different.

And that's what makes it so valuable. So you don't find any, there are no contradictions, but there are certainly things that contribute in a way that you wouldn't know otherwise.

[39 : 32] So, hey, appreciate you being here this morning. Thanks for your input.