

Mark 14:12-26

“Christ, Our Passover”

Last week we dipped slightly into the origin and purpose of the Passover. However it's more appropriate concerning our text today to be more fully aware of what's going here as we see Jesus keep the Passover so as to gain a little more insight as to why it is that the nation (of Israel) keeps this annual celebration. So on your way to Mark Ch 14 I want you to stop off at Exodus Ch 12, it's in Ex Ch 12 that we find where the Passover came from and what it was all about.

By the time you come to Ex Ch 12 Israel has been enslaved to Egypt for some 400 yrs. It's gotten to the point whereby they are forcing them to serve with rigor and with hard bondage. They have been crying out to God to deliver them and God has raised up a deliverer by the name of Moses to come and set them free as God's representative. You're no doubt familiar with the history of what happened, God had sent a series of plagues upon the nation of Egypt but with each passing plague the Pharaoh's heart has only grown more cold, more calloused toward God. So God says, “Ok, I'm going to bring 1 more plague upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt. Afterward he will surely let you go, as a matter of fact when he lets you go he will drive you out altogether.”

I know you're in Ex Ch 12 look back to Ch 11 beginning in Vs 4 (4-7)...Here's the deal, we're not “all God's children.” There is a definite distinction between those who've called *upon* Him, have been delivered *by* Him, and those who have not. To those who have been delivered God will spare them from certain judgment, the wages of sin; death. To those who are both *in* the world, and *of* the world, the bible is clear that the wrath of God abides upon them. “Well how does one make the transition from being in the world and of the world to calling *upon* God and being delivered God and *by* God?” I'm glad you asked. Let's look at Ex Ch 12 beginning in Vs 1 and read all the way through Vs 17.

So we have Passover, and the Feast of Unleavened bread. They were to take a male lamb of the 1st yr on the 10th day of the month, inspect it to insure that it was without blemish, 3½ days later (on the 14th) day of the month at twilight they were to slit the lamb's throat spilling its blood. They were to take the blood, paint it on the doorposts and lintels of their houses, roast the lamb and completely consume it. Whatever they didn't eat they were to burn in the fire, they didn't have time to bake leavened bread, it was to be unleavened. They were to eat the lamb with their belts on their waste, their sandals on their feet, and their staff in hand. They were to eat in haste because that night the Lord would pass through the land and every house not found covered by the blood of the lamb would be visited with the judgment of death. But when the Lord seen the blood He would “pass-over” that home and they would be spared His judgment. As you well know Israel obeyed, Egypt was judged and with that the Pharaoh drove Israel out of the land, God delivered them as by the blood of the lamb.

Now you may be thinking, “Jeff, this is all interesting and well but what does a history lesson concerning the nation of Israel have to do with us?” Listen, it has *everything* to do with us because you're going to find that for every OT picture there is a NT principle; when Paul

was writing to the Corinthians he said, *“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”* 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 He wasn't writing to Jews, but to Gentiles, “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.” He told the Colossians that these things were a shadow of things to come, but the *substance* is of Christ.

What does a shadow do? It testifies of substance right? If there's no substance, there's no shadow, and these things were a foreshadow that testified of the substance to follow which was Christ. So it has everything to do with us.

Every detail of Passover points *to* and finds its fulfillment *in* Christ. The lamb was to be a male, Jesus was/is God's *Son*, they were to keep it 3½ days, Jesus ministered upon the earth approximately 3½ yrs. It was to be unblemished; Jesus was with out sin (unblemished), none of its bones were to be broken, even so not one of Jesus' bones would be broken (His body was broken, not His bones). Blood would be found on 4 points of the door, the lintel, each door post, and the threshold where the blood would drip from the lintel. Even so we realize that both hands His feet and His head would stain the cross with blood. Once the lamb was slain it was to be roasted in the fire; it was to be completely consumed. Jesus bore the full heat, the totality of the wrath of God upon the cross for us as He was made sin for us. They had to eat the Lamb that had been roasted. Even so we're to internalize and personalize Christ (as we'll see today in Mark 14). They had to eat in haste, ready to go with their sandals on, staff in hand, belt around their waste. Even so we're to be ready at anytime for Christ to come for us, we're to be prepared to go, not found sleeping but awake and alert spiritually. We read that there was to be no leaven in the house throughout the entire week of the feast. Leaven in the scriptures is a picture of sin, it corrupts, it influences, spreads quickly and it doesn't take much to permeate an entire loaf. Once the blood of Christ has been applied to the doorposts and lintel of our heart we're no longer to continue in sin, it's to be purged from us. And of course once the Lord saw the blood His judgment would Passover, they would live and not die. Same with you and with me, as God looks upon us and sees the blood of Christ appropriated *to* us His judgment passes over us, everlasting life as opposed to the wages of sin which is death.

Every bit of it is concerning Christ and that concerns you, they were to eat it with bitter herbs dipped in saltwater, the bitter herbs reminding them of the hard bondage and slavery they'd been delivered from, the saltwater to remind them of the tears they'd shed longing for deliverance. It's so easy to forget what God has delivered us from, the bondage of sin, the tears we cried of desperation, isolation, and a longing to be made whole, the emptiness filled. We can begin to look back longingly on the world, we're to remember the work of God's deliverance in our lives. And they were to celebrate this feast annually at the time that they were delivered as a nation, it was a joyous celebration. Now, with that we turn to Mark Ch 14 and fall back into the flow beginning in Vs 12.

Vs12-16

So on the 14th day of Nisan (Mar-April) before the sun was going down the disciples asked Jesus (now less than 24hrs away from the cross) where He would like to partake of the Passover. Now they had to eat it with in the city limits of Jerusalem and so Jesus sent 2 of them out with explicit/detailed instructions as to where they were to go, what they were to look for

and what they were to do. Or to understand that another way; they consulted with Christ concerning His will and His want for them. They didn't just say, "Lord I think we have a read on this, don't really need your input here we'll just hook You up." It was something they were doing *for* Him therefore they wanted to hear *from* Him on the matter.

How important it is that as we do what we do on behalf *of* the Lord that we're seeking to hear *from* the Lord. So many times we get what we consider to be a good idea; we don't really pray about it, consult God's word regarding it, we just set out to do it; what could possibly go wrong right?

What we don't realize is that we'd have received a different direction *from* the Lord if we'd have only consulted *with* the Lord but now we're in the middle of a mess. These guys were going to act on behalf of the Lord so the very 1st thing they did was to inquire *of* the Lord. Seems obvious yet it's worth stating. Don't just assume you know God's direction, unless it's laid out in the word right there in b and w. Seek Him, inquire *of* Him, endeavor to hear *from* Him on the matter 1st.

As we already noted Jesus gave them incredibly detailed instructions (is God concerned for the details of our lives, or does He just work in generalities and let the details work themselves out) leading them to an undisclosed location. Numerous reasons for that, partially so that He could meet with His disciples privately with out everyone knowing where they were, also it kept Judas out of the loop so that the betrayal couldn't go down until Jesus allowed it to. Jesus didn't tell them where the place was, only what to look for and who to follow so as to find it. He said when you go into the city you're going to run across a guy carrying a pitcher of water, that's the signal follow Him. We read that and think, "Uh wouldn't there be 100 guys carrying water?" No, there wouldn't, generally only women would carry the water pitchers, guy carried water in wineskins. Exactly why the cultural distinction is there I don't know, why are women in our culture the only one's who carry purses? I'm not sure, if a guy needs to tote something he'll carry a backpack or a briefcase, purses are what women carry. So the sign was distinct. Jesus said, "He'll lead you to a location once you get there ask the master of the house where the guest room is and he'll hook you up."

Now back in Vs 13 we read that Jesus sent 2 of them out, we know from Luke's gospel that it was Peter and John. I've mentioned this before but it's worth mentioning again, there's a reason that Jesus never sent guys out alone. Numerous reasons actually; there's a safety and a strength in 2 that you don't get in 1. There's an accountability in 2 that you don't get in 1, if I'm by myself I might have a tendency to lower my guard or go places and do things that I wouldn't do if I were with a brother, or another believer. If something happens along the way that brings questions to my endeavors I have a ready witness with me (a testimony) that can safeguard my integrity, there are 2 witnesses not just 1. 2 can encourage one another to carry on and follow through whereas one may lose heart alone. It's just wise when possible to never undertake ministry endeavors alone, take someone with you. Look at Vs 16

Vs16

Was this prophetic insight on the Lord's behalf or something He had pre-arranged? We don't know, it seems most likely that He had arranged it in advance, though we can't know for sure.

Here's what I want you to see, "His disciples found it *just as He had said to them.*" They *inquired*, He *instructed*, they (by faith) *obeyed*, the *result* being that they found His word *reliable*, they're learning more to trust in His word. Because really would we expect to find it *any other way* than *just as He had said to them*? No, things *always* happen just as He says; why then do we struggle believing what He has said and/or obeying His word? Be it about principles *spiritually*, the way we're to lead our lives *practically*, or beyond that about things that pertain to *eternity*... I'm telling you that in each of those spheres we're going to find it *just as He has said to us*. When you obey the Lord it will serve to build up your faith, because as you follow His instructions and find it just as He has said to you, you will be encouraged to obey Him all the more. His word is reliable.

Vs17

Why the evening? Because the Passover didn't begin until sundown, at twilight (remember)? Now between Vs 17-18 Mark leaves out some details that John gives us in Ch 13 where Jesus knowing from where He'd come and where He was going, that His hour had come to depart from this world, He rose up from the supper laid aside His garments and began to wash the disciples feet. After which He returned to the supper and the bible tells us that He began to be troubled in His spirit; then as we read in Vs 18...

Vs18-19

Things were going so smooth, there was such sweet fellowship taking place, then (seemingly out of nowhere) Jesus' countenance changes and He drops this bomb on His disciples that completely changes the tone. He says, "You guys, here's the truth of the matter, one of you is going to betray Me..." They were shocked, literally stunned, and you can just see them surveying the room looking for the "one." But they can't figure it out, they've been running tight for 3 yrs now, they know each other, have had great times together, have gotten on each others nerves, they know every disgusting habit about one another, have been through thick and thin. So Peter's looking at John thinking, "It can't be John, no way, Nathaniel? No, Philip? Couldn't be...James...what am I thinking? Judas? Man, we trust him the most he carries the money...could it be *me*?" They're just bummed and blown away all in one fatal moment of time, they start asking the Lord. "It's not me is it?" They didn't really think it could be themselves, yet at the same time there was no way it was one of the others, they're literally stupefied, they don't know what to think.

But here's what they *do* think, "I don't think it's me, but I wonder if it could be?" They each begin to note their own personal propensity to betray Him, to fall short of their desire to stand with Him. Not *one of them* said, "It's Judas isn't it! I knew it! Judas how could you!? I could tell by the way you rebuked Mary that there was something sinister about you, I should've seen it coming." If Peter had suspected Judas then Judas would've probably been dead already... Here's the deal, everyone of us have the potential to fall short of our desire to stand firm for Christ and wise is the one who will acknowledge their weakness. In us, that is in our flesh there is not a single good thing that dwells, we're totally depraved, you're not a basically good person, you're a sinner to the bone, it's woven into your DNA strand, we're all capable of turning our back on God (and each one of them will discover that). There are people who go to church every week who don't realize that they're sinners and that they're lost. There are people who are saved who don't realize the weakness of their own flesh, each one of them

had a question mark about their commitment... Safeguard your relationship with the Lord, it takes but a moment of weakness to slip, to stumble, can you be restored? Absolutely; why dance on the edge? Why take the chance, stay close to Jesus.

Vs20-21

What Jesus said in Vs 20 probably wasn't a whole lot of help, they were all dipping. Yet John tells us that He identified His betrayer; however in that moment it was subtle, they didn't get it. The whole time Jesus was reaching out to Judas, giving him opportunity after opportunity to repent. Jesus knew what was in Judas heart yet as you study the scriptures you realize that at the supper Jesus gave Judas the seat of honor, to His immediate left. As they would recline and lean on their left elbow they would eat with their right hand, and the person to the immediate right of you would have their head right near your chest, near your heart. The order of the table went Judas, Jesus, John.

Jesus head was right at Judas' heart, at anytime Judas could've leaned into Him, quietly confessed to Him, repented and been restored with out a big scene. In Matt's gospel we read that after Jesus says what we'll read in Vs 21 that Judas (in the same form as the other disciples) said "Rabbi, is it I?", when Judas said that Jesus leaned quietly into him and said, "You have said it." Even then he could've broke down and repented, Jesus washed his feet, gave him the seat of honor, was communicating to him, "You don't have to do this Judas, forgiveness is available."

Peter motioned to John to ask the Lord who it was, John leaned into Jesus to ask and Jesus said, "The one I give a piece of bread to after I have dipped." Even that was a gesture of incredible love and affection, the host offering to share with you personally, being nurtured from the same bread, becoming one with each other in that fashion. We read that He handed the bread to Judas and when He did Satan entered Judas, rather than break before the Lord he hardened himself against the Lord. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." Then Judas went out to seal the deal, but the disciples thought that Jesus was sending him for more supplies, perhaps to do something for the poor, that's how trustworthy Judas had been, they *still* didn't suspect him.

Vs 21 I find to be one of the most sobering Vs in all of the bible (read). Jesus would be betrayed, He would go to the cross just as it had been written, but concerning the one who betrays Him...it would've been better for him had he never been born...Such is the sad and tragic reality of *anyone* who rejects Jesus Christ who leaves this planet apart from Jesus. The life of Judas will end in tragedy, both circumstantially and eternally; it doesn't have to be that way for you. You have a choice, just as Judas did, just as we all do, you don't have to reject Jesus, you can receive Him; and I'm encouraging you today to do what you gotta do to make your calling and election sure. I'd implore you not to leave this place today until you're certain that you're right with Christ. Don't think you lead a pretty good life, go to church, and treat people right so you're ok, that's not what makes a person ok, you've got to be found under the blood of Christ. Has the blood of Christ been applied to your heart, your life? If not you would do well to ensure that it is today, you don't want to leave this planet with the epitaph, "Would've been better to have never been born."

Now don't think of Judas as the helpless victim of prophecy, he made a decision, we all make decisions. The fact that God knows the decision that you'll make in no way interferes

with your capacity to make that choice. The psalmist had written, “*Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.*” Ps 41:9 Jesus gave Judas opportunity to repent up to the very end, and He does the same thing for you and me, can we reach a point of no return? It would seem so, however I don’t know that point for each person, best to repent while the opportunity avails itself. When we come to Vs 22 Judas is gone from the room.

Vs22-25

One of the most sacred moments in scripture, the establishing of the new covenant; this is another one of those exclusive “Son of God” moments. No one but the Son of God Himself could say these things with any form of merit whatsoever. What would you think if after a giant BBQ the church had I grabbed a cup of soda, raised it up before you all and said, “Today I’m establishing a new covenant between God and mankind...” You’d think, “Jeff, you’ve confirmed our suspicions, you’ve finally lost it!” Who but God has the authority to establish a covenant between God and all of mankind? This scene has deity inscribed all over it.

As I pointed out in our time of introduction each part of the Passover feast had significance.

And the host (usually the father of the family) would say specific things at specific portions of the meal to remind the family of its meaning. Jesus had no doubt been doing that, but Mark brings this up (as do the other gospel writers) because at this point Jesus changes it up. Jesus didn’t give the expected explanation of the meaning of these elements at this point. He began to *reinterpret* them in Himself. Now focus when these elements would be partaken of would no longer be on the suffering of Israel in Egypt, or the lamb that slain that had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. The focus would now be upon the sin-bearing and suffering of Jesus, and the fact that *He* was slain that *we* might be delivered from the chains and bondage of sin.

Now when they received the broken bread, they weren’t to remind themselves of the affliction of Egypt, or the body of the lamb slain in Egypt, but of *His* body (not His bones) that had been broken for them.

When they received the cup, they weren’t to remember the blood of the lamb slain in Egypt that delivered them from Egypt’s bondage, but the shedding of *His* blood that delivered us from sin’s bondage. He has fulfilled all that the Passover has foreshadowed. His body was broken that we might be made whole, His blood was shed for our salvation.

Couple of things briefly here. #1 We need to note the voluntary action required on behalf of the recipient, it was up to them to take it, it wouldn’t be forced upon them. Jesus won’t force Himself upon you, you come to Him, partake of Him voluntarily. #2 We note the need to internalize and personalize Christ; He says, “Eat, drink; take Me down into the inner recesses of your being.” We recognize that it is Christ who nurtures us, who sustains us, He is our common bond.

We also recognize what Jesus was *not* saying, He wasn’t saying that it was His literal body or blood. The bible does not teach *transubstantiation*, a fancy word to impress your friends with that means that the juice and the bread literally become the body and blood of Christ. That is what the Roman Catholic church teaches, it is not what the bible teaches and it implies on going sacrifice and denies the finished work of the cross. Not to mention it defies the

law of God concerning eating or drinking blood, Jesus would never advocate something the law had clearly forbidden not to mention that's cannibalism.

The fact is that the bread *represents* the body, the juice *represents* the blood; now I wouldn't say that it's merely symbolic so we don't need to reverence the Lord in the partaking of the elements of communion. We absolutely should, and in so doing we acknowledge that even as with out bread (food) we perish so to with out Christ we perish, He is the bread of life.

Having said all of that we should see that the primary focus of these few Vs is that of the *new covenant*. Something God had promised throughout the OT, a covenant that wouldn't be based upon man, but upon God, not based upon what we do, but upon what He's done, whereby He would put His law in our minds and write His law in our hearts. Whereby He would put away our sin and remember it no more, not simply "covering" our sin as under the O.C. but casting it away, and Jesus was saying that He was instituting that covenant through the sacrifice and shedding of His blood.

And you should understand that this isn't a 2 sided covenant whereby we work things out with God, come to an agreement and sign on the line. This is a 1 sided covenant, much like when a nation wins a war the other side surrenders unconditionally, the winning side presents the terms and you either sign or we're still at war, there's no negotiating the terms.

God has laid out the terms, salvation by grace through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the cross. Amnesty is offered in Christ, the forgiveness of sin, He bore our sin so that we might be covered in His righteousness. If you don't agree to those terms that's fine, you're at war with God, and will be until you agree to surrender unconditionally; it's there (at that place of surrender) that you'll find forgiveness, peace, wholeness of heart. Not an ez life, but salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

Vs26

Think about this...Jesus was with in about 12 hrs (give or take a few) of the cross. Do you think you'd feel much like singing if you knew death would visit you in an excruciating way in about 12 hrs? Yet Jesus took the time to worship the Father in song...I'm going to tell you, God likes to be worshiped in song, we're to sing to the Lord.

Maybe you're thinking, "Jeff it really doesn't please me to sing...it definitely doesn't please others when I sing." I don't care, it pleases God, sing to Him. We don't have time to go there but if you want to know what Jesus was singing that night read Ps 116-118, the Hallel psalms and think of how they must've encouraged Him in that hour. "I called on the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me and set me in a broad place/ The Lord s on my side I will not fear what can man do to me?"

"You pushed me violently, that I might fall, but the Lord helped me, the Lord is my strength and son, and He has become my salvation." Ps 118 end, "Give thanks the Lord for His is good, For His mercy endures forever."

Christ, our Passover, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, receive Him, rejoice *in* Him...

Prayer Points:

Lord free us from inhibitions, things that seize us and hinder us in our open worship and praise of You. May we draw near to You, and walk *intimately* with You. May we learn to trust

You more, to walk in obedience to Your word, to lead lives well pleasing to You. We thank You that You concern Yourself with the details of our lives, help us to seek You, to endeavor to hear from You and to walk in Your ways.

If you're not sure where you are with Christ, you don't remember that you've ever really given your heart *to* Christ, you have surrendered unconditionally to His terms and God is dealing with you on that level I want to give you the opportunity to do that right here, right now. Your legacy doesn't need to be, "It'd have been better to have never been born" you can know Christ, be forgiven *by* Christ and receive everlasting life never again to be separated *from* Christ. If God is knocking on the door of your heart, why not open it now and just say, "I surrender, unconditionally, Lord take all of me..."