

Our Passover Lamb

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, as I'm sure you can tell, the passage that I just read is set within the context of Israel's annual feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread.
- The Passover, which kicked off the week of Unleavened Bread, was and still is the highlight of the Jewish liturgical calendar.
- And if you're unfamiliar with it, you may be helped to know that the Passover meal is a really beautiful, rich commemoration of the Exodus when God delivered and redeemed his people from bondage as slaves in Egypt.
- In that Exodus, God established the feast of Passover as a means for them to remember his grace and his mercy towards them, and he commanded that they continually observe that throughout their generations.
- In fact, Exodus chapter 12 and verse 14 says this, This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations as a statute forever.
- [1 : 1 1] You shall keep it as a feast. And God went through and explained to them exactly how they were to keep this feast and what they were to do, even what they were to wear, and the times that they were to observe the meal itself.
- And the Passover meal had especially in view the final plague from God against Egypt. If you'll remember, in this tenth and final plague, God, through Moses, told Pharaoh and then also the children of Israel that the angel of death was going to pass through in the night, and he would kill every firstborn of every household.
- But in that judgment, God provided a way of escape. For any house that had, as God had instructed, sacrificed a lamb, spotless, one year of age, and taken the blood of that lamb and spread it on the doorpost and on the lintel of the house, any sign of that blood on the house, God would pass over that house.
- And we see in that a picture of our own judgment and redemption. All of us are destined for judgment because of our sin and our bondage to sin, yet God gives us a way of escape from his very own judgment against said sin.
- And that's really the point of the passage that we study today. Here's what Exodus 12 and verse 13 says. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses wherever you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.
- [2 : 5 5] Hence the name Passover. So families rehearsed this story yearly as they gathered together, typically as family units. They would gather and they would observe this feast.
- They would remember God's redemption that he had provided for them. And this celebration is actually the reason that Jesus and his 12 disciples are in Jerusalem at this particular moment in Mark's gospel.
- They have gone there to observe the feast of Passover, and of course, Jesus understanding that this will be the moment of his crucifixion. The Passover is not merely the context referring to the background of these verses.

The Passover is actually the very focus of these verses. In fact, Mark goes out of his way here in this passage to ensure we understand that this final section of his gospel is inextricably linked to the Passover and its significance and its meaning.

Just in the first three or four verses, just in the first three or four verses, he says Passover by name four different times. He goes out of his way to do that. He wants us to see this is not only in the time frame of Jesus' life, the Passover feast, but what Jesus is about to accomplish is in relation to the significance and meaning of the Passover feast.

[4 : 22] You see, there's an anticipatory element in this meal, in this celebration. As the people remembered the first exodus from Exodus 12, they also looked ahead with anticipation, with longing for a new exodus.

In their minds, this exodus would be from bondage to Rome. And as they reflected on the prophets in the Old Testament, they set that within their immediate context. And they longed for this exodus from Rome, from this freedom from bondage, and that God would then reestablish the kingdom of Israel for them.

So every year as they gather for this Passover meal, they're not only looking back, they're looking forward. And their anticipation is right, but their understanding of it was wrong.

The Passover from Exodus 12 does point forward to a greater Passover, but it's a spiritual Passover. When God would deliver his people in Christ from sin, not from Rome.

That's the entire purpose of God sending his son Jesus to us. The entire reason that he's here. The entire reason that he came.

[5 : 44] The entire reason he was sent by God was so that he would be our perfect, once for all, Passover lamb.

John the Baptist picked up on this early. You'll remember in John chapter 1, as Jesus walks through Galilee, John sees them and he lifts up his voice. And it says, the next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and he said, behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

So from the very early days of Jesus' ministry, the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist, has already lifted up his voice and assigned to him this title, this description, lamb.

Not just any lamb. The lamb. The lamb that has come from God, therefore, is the perfect, spotless lamb. And by being that lamb, he has come to take away the sins of the world.

And of course, Mark understood that Jesus' crucifixion was how he fulfilled the Passover and John the Baptist's proclamation.

[6 : 55] And as we walk through these verses together this morning, I want you to see that Jesus is indeed the lamb of God, slain for the redemption of sinners like you and me.

And not only is that the reality of who Jesus is and what he has done, but in this Passover meal, in this specific Passover meal, we see Jesus extending the invitation for you to come and receive this freedom and forgiveness that is found in him.

And I think three headings will help guide our thoughts. One, preparing the Passover. Two, fulfilling the Passover. And then finally, transforming the Passover.

Okay, let's first look at preparing for Passover. Verse 12, Remember, Jesus and the disciples are staying about two miles outside of the city in a town called Bethany.

But the Passover meal was to be observed within the city walls of Jerusalem. This meant that there was a measure of planning and preparation that was required ahead of the meal.

[8 : 22] And keen to start such preparations, the disciples asked the Lord what he would have them to do. The first day of unleavened bread here in this verse refers to the time designated for the Passover celebration specifically.

And the phrase, when they sacrifice the Passover lamb, is speaking of Thursday afternoon. Remember, Jews reckoned their days from sundown to sundown.

So typically what would happen is the lambs for the Passover meal would be sacrificed in the temple on Thursday afternoon, or at least the way it would have unfolded in this particular week with the days.

Thursday afternoon, Thursday afternoon, at sundown on Thursday afternoon, the Jews would have viewed that as the beginning of Friday. And so they would observe the meal itself between sundown on Thursday evening until midnight.

God had said, don't let it extend beyond midnight. Those were the regulations that they had to follow. And so you'll see some of the timing is being expressed by Mark here in this verse. Now the fact that the disciples asked for Jesus' wishes regarding where they would have the meal suggests that Jesus would be the one presiding over the celebration itself.

[9 : 39] The way this would typically work with families is as these family units would gather together, typically as this is fitting for today being Father's Day, it was the father of the family, the patriarch of the family, would be responsible for presiding over it, which meant he was responsible for making sure the meal is prepared appropriately, that all the elements are there, that a place to have the meal is provided.

As the meal and the celebration is carried on, it would be his responsibility to explain the significance of it, to tell the story of the Exodus. He would oversee all of these things and all of the blessings and all the prayers.

It was reserved for the head of household. Well, the fact that the disciples have come to Jesus, asking for the details of what they need to do, suggests that he is the one presiding over it.

He would have held that honored position. He would be the one teaching the significance of the Passover on that particular evening with his disciples.

Now this isn't surprising to us. We would expect it to be this way. But it is an important note as we move forward in the text. While the disciples that Jesus sends is preparing for the traditional Passover, what Jesus has done and is doing is preparing them for this final Passover.

[11 : 03] And as we continue in these verses, I want you to notice the control that Jesus has over every element of the evening. He has arranged it.

He has provided it. He has set it up in order to teach this vital lesson to these men. Verse 13, He sent two of his disciples and said to them, Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, The teacher says, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples? He will show you a large upper room furnished and ready.

There prepare for us. And the disciples set out, went to the city, and found it just as he had told them, And they prepared the Passover. So at some point in the week, Jesus had prearranged all of the details regarding where they would observe the meal.

But he moved to it with tremendous secrecy. He only sends two of his disciples. Luke says it was Peter and John who were designated to do it, And they went into the city to prepare, but he didn't tell them where to go.

[12 : 21] Instead, he told them to watch for a specific signal. The signal would be a man carrying a jar of water on his head, which in that culture was unusual.

It would be like a man in our culture carrying a purse. It was the women and the slaves that would carry the jars of water. The men would be responsible for carrying the wine skins, but not the water jars.

So as they go into the city, the crowded city, Remember, all of these people have gathered in that specific place to observe the Passover. This man with the water jar would have stuck out to the men.

They would have known, go to him, inquire of him where we are to go. And that's exactly what happened. He stands out among the vast crowds. He led them to the place where Jesus had made arrangements.

And once they were there, Peter and John found a large upper room with everything that they needed to prepare the meal, just as Jesus had said. He had arranged it.

[13 : 19] He was in control. But the question here is, Why were Jesus and his disciples acting with such secrecy? Why such stealth movements in this moment?

Why is he not wanting to be recognized as they move into the city? Well, look back to verse number one. We read last week. It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priest and the scribes were what?

Seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him. So things have intensified. It's no secret to Jesus that they've been trying to kill him.

They've been trying to do that for years now. But now things have really intensified in Jerusalem. In fact, it is John 11, 57 that says, Now the chief priest and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know so that they might arrest him.

Why is he moving in secrecy? Because they're trying to kill him. And they've told everybody in the city, If you see where Jesus is, it's your responsibility to tell us so that we can do what we want to do with him.

[14 : 35] He was moving in the same kind of secrecy. You and I would move in in this moment. But some skeptics have looked at this, and they have argued that Jesus was acting in fear, aware of the plot against him, and afraid to face death.

The same skeptics have argued that Jesus was not the Son of God. He was not the Messiah. He was a towering religious figure to be sure, but he was the unfortunate victim of his own fanaticism, they would say.

And they would point to this passage and say that Jesus was just caught up in all of this, and this is proof why he's moving in secrecy. Therefore, he's afraid of what might happen to him.

But Jesus wasn't acting in fear at all. His testimony in the Gospels, again and again, proved that he was intentionally moving towards the cross, not away from it.

He knew what lie ahead. He knew what awaited him in Jerusalem, and he was intentionally moving towards it. And with wisdom, Jesus moved in secrecy, not to avoid the cross, but to face it at precisely the right time.

[15 : 46] This was the most important Passover in all of history. And according to Luke's account, Jesus was even longingly awaiting it so that he could teach his disciples the significance of Passover in regards to what would happen to him on the cross.

Luke says this. He said to them, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. Jesus isn't afraid to die.

He's not trying to avoid the cross. He's actually working within the will of the Father. And this meal was the final step on the road to the cross.

Now before we move on, let's take a step back for just a second and look at the big picture of what's happening in Jerusalem. All the preparations across the city are unfolding.

Thousands of people have gone to the temple that afternoon to sacrifice their lambs. They've made their way. They've made their preparations. As Kent Hughes said, the whole city was redolent with the inviting aroma of roasted lamb.

[16 : 56] Yet they had no idea that a greater spiritual exodus was about to take place as the perfect sinless lamb of God was slain.

Think about that. Jesus is in the midst of the city. Everyone around him is observing and reflecting on the redemption of God.

And here is Jesus among them. And they have no idea that he is the redemption of God. But he's preparing his disciples for it. Number two, fulfilling the Passover.

Fulfilling the Passover. In the first section, we find Jesus preparing his disciples for Passover. In this section, he explains that his current circumstance is what is fulfilling what the Passover typified.

Look at verse 17. When it was evening, he came with the 12, and as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, truly I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.

[18 : 11] And they began to be sorrowful. And to say to him one after another, is it I? Is it I? We have a small glimpse into the insecurities of the disciples here, don't we?

We typically look at them because of the mistakes that they made regarding their pride. But here, Jesus says, one of you will betray me. And each one does not say, is it him?

No, they ask, is it I? They understood, I think at this point, the nature of their own hearts, their own ability to sin, their own ability to fail miserably.

At the appropriate time that evening, we're told in verse 17, when most people probably had resorted to their respective feast, Jesus and the other disciples arrive in the upper room.

And the Passover celebration began in each home sometime after sunset, as I said, it would conclude by midnight. And there was an extensive liturgy that Jesus would have followed in presiding over this meal.

[19 : 26] Mark skips all of that and he compresses it down so that what we see Jesus saying in these verses is probably a few hours into the meal itself.

And at that point in the celebration, Jesus drops a bomb on the room by revealing one of them will betray him. And in exposing this betrayal, Jesus quotes Psalm 41, declaring that the betrayal itself was actually the fulfillment of Scripture.

John is the one that tells us this. John chapter 13 and verse 18, Jesus says, but the Scripture will be fulfilled. And then he quotes Psalm 41, 9. He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.

So we see here, God has not only predetermined the crucifixion of Jesus, but he has ordained the very means by which he would go to the cross. And it's another reminder that though Jesus was betrayed and murdered by the hands of men, it was God the Father who delivered him up to be the substitute for sinners.

Do you remember Peter's sermon in Acts 2 over Easter? This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

[20 : 50] Do you see what Mark is expressing here? What Jesus is even teaching his disciples that what is about to happen is not unknown to me, neither is it unknown to the Father, neither is it beyond our control.

This is actually the plan. And everything that's unfolding, though it's sorrowful in my betrayal, I am going as it has been written of me to go. And as you might expect, a heavy, sorrowful spirit immediately descends on the room and the disciples begin to inquire about the betrayer.

Verse 20, Jesus narrows it just a bit. He said to them, it is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.

So it seems here that there was more than just the disciples in the room. Perhaps the friends from Bethany had come along with them. And perhaps it was necessary that in the room, in the midst of the inquiry, Jesus narrows down from the larger group of disciples to the immediate apostles that he had chosen, the twelve.

He says it will be one of the twelve. Meaning that it would not be someone who was on the fringes of his group, but he would actually be betrayed by someone closest to him.

[22 : 13] Not as someone whom he barely knew, at least in his relationship, earthly relationship with him, but someone who was a close friend and companion to him.

And of course, Jesus knew all along that Judas would betray him. And yet it never stopped him from expressing his love and his kindness and his friendship to Judas.

What a compassionate Lord. What a gracious God. To know what awaits him and to even know who would be responsible for it taking place.

And yet all along the way, Jesus stillers the same kindness to Judas. He shows the same love to Judas. He shows the same miracles to Judas. He teaches the same truths to Judas.

What is this a sign of, if not anything, but the compassionate grace of God? But then again, the question is, why didn't he expose Judas in this moment?

[23 : 18] Why not just say, and it's Judas? I mean, surely he could have at least prevented Judas from coming along or knowing where it was that he was gonna be on that night.

As Kent Hughes said, it would only take a nod toward Judas's direction and Peter would have had him in a headlock in a moment. Jesus doesn't do that. Why?

The answer's in the next verse. Verse 21. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him. This was a part of God's plan.

Jesus wasn't gonna get in the way of the Father's plan. You know, if God allowed us to see our future, you know what we would do? We would fight relentlessly against everything that we didn't like about what he shows us.

And we would work hard to make better all the things that we did like in what he shows us. That's what we would do. Not so with Jesus. He was always aware of what would unfold with Judas.

[24 : 28] Still, he was utterly committed to obeying the will of the Father, which he knew to be found in the pages of Scripture. Isn't that what he says?

The Son of Man goes, I am going as the Father has said for me to go in his word as it is written. But again, that doesn't mean Jesus is an unwilling participant in procuring our redemption.

He pursues the Father's plan willfully and joyfully. Remember John 17. For this reason, the Father loves me because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.

No one takes it from me, Jesus says, but I lay it down of my own accord. He's willing to do this. I have authority to lay it down. I have authority to take it up again.

This charge I have received from my Father. And then the writer of Hebrews tells us in chapter 12 and verse 2 that it was for the joy that was before him that he endured the cross.

[25 : 36] Do you see? He's not an unwilling participant. He is obedient. He is willing. He is joyful. It is his desire to provide this redemption.

So we see Jesus does not only act in obedience to the Father's will, but he acts in unity with the Father's will. Do you see the difference here? We can act in obedience without acting in unity.

My kids do it all the time. Right? Right, Ashlyn? Say, Ashlyn, it's time to go to bed. Oh, just a little while longer.

Eventually, she makes her way there. she acts in obedience to my will. Not necessarily in unity with it. Not Jesus. He acts in obedience.

He acts in unity with the Father. Perfect unity among the Trinity. With joy, he procures our redemption. Sinclair Ferguson says, Jesus is completely submitted to his Father's will.

[26 : 45] That will has been revealed in the Scripture, and he bows to it. Because his life is governed by the teaching of Scripture, his death will be neither an accident nor a tragedy.

But notice, Jesus did not believe the Scripture in merely hypothetical or theoretical ways. He believed it and obeyed it without compromise.

Now, set this thought within the context of Mark's teaching on true discipleship. what does it mean to be a faithful follower of Jesus? It means to act as he acts, to go where he goes, to think as he thinks, to be faithful in following him.

And how did Jesus lay out the plan for following him? By being obedient to the Father through the Word of God. Faithful discipleship begins with a commitment to the very Word of God, to the Scriptures.

verse 21 again, Jesus closes, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had never been born.

[27 : 59] There's a lot we could say here. It's probably best that I mention just a couple of things and move on and leave it to you to dig in a little further. But here's the main point. just because this path was the will of God didn't mean Judas wasn't responsible for his own sin.

Now there's mystery in this, isn't there? But this verse makes it clear that God's sovereignty over us neither violates our human freedom nor does it absolve us of guilt.

Judas' sin was as much his own as Jesus' righteousness was his own. It's a reminder that no person will ever stand before God and rightfully claim that they are innocent or undeserving of his judgment.

we cannot look to the sovereignty of God and say I am what I am because of you. This is your fault and judgment against me is unfair or undeserving.

Paul confronts that particularly that particular objection in Romans chapter 9. It's not always easy to understand how is it possible that God could be so sovereign over the events of Judas' life and yet still hold Judas accountable and I can't connect all of those dots in a way that would be satisfactory to you today but what I know is it's what the Bible teaches that God is both sovereign over us and yet we are still responsible and culpable for our sin.

[29 : 50] So don't think that you'll ever be able to stand before God and claim any kind of innocence. You will stand in judgment and our only hope in that way is God's grace through his son Jesus Christ.

Okay so we see the preparations for the Passover we see the fulfillment of the Passover finally we see the transforming of the Passover transforming it.

Some of you have experienced a very high church form of worship and your experience in church you know what I mean by that.

I don't mean by high church I don't mean that in a pejorative way I mean it as just in the structure it's very formal it's very structured perhaps the mood is a bit more solemn.

You've experienced that before. Others of you have experienced a very low church form of worship where basically anything goes at any time. I can remember Andy and I have talked about this before I can remember going to visit my grandparents church in West Virginia as a kid and it was they had a very low church form of worship where they would start the service by saying anybody have a song to sing or who wants to come and do the thing today there's not really any structure to it you just kind of went about it and did it as you wanted to do it.

[31 : 10] If we're not careful we'll think of the Passover meal that way that they just kind of got together and whenever the food was ready they indulged and somebody said a blessing and they just went through it and they did the thing. But that's not actually how it was there was actually a very specific liturgy that they followed and the Passover celebration had very specific things to go through very specific moments and actions and foods and descriptions and prayers and blessings and Jesus would have followed this structure as he was presiding over the meal.

and what we see Jesus doing in these verses is transforming the meaning of the Passover and instituting what we know and call the Lord's Supper and understandably the four gospel authors compress this event into the moments when Jesus instituted this ordinance but what I'd like to do as we finish today is work through these verses in the context of the Passover liturgy.

I think it would actually be really helpful for us to understand at what points Jesus interjects these thoughts and at what significance they hold regarding the Passover.

Now before you think that I'm just super smart and figured all this stuff out what I'm about to give you is the reconstruction of this liturgy done by William Lane who is a commentator and he has written a fantastic exegetical commentary on Mark's gospel but he's looked at the ancient documents to reconstruct how this would have been.

So this is coming for him. I think it will be helpful to you. Here's how it starts. The blessing of the meal and the blessing of the first cup. So just like we would do they open up with a word of prayer and a blessing and they move forward and then comes the first cup of wine.

[33 : 02] There's actually four different cups of wine served in the Passover meal. Each has a link to a promise from God in Exodus 6.

The first cup I will bring you out. The second cup I will deliver you. The third cup of redemption I will redeem you and the fourth cup of consummation is I will take you.

I will take you to be with me. And so as they would observe this meal and they would drink each cup of wine this would have a description and it would have a significant meaning attached to it as they would go through.

So they would have the first cup of wine. After they have the first cup the food is brought out and it's displayed on the table before them. It's arranged a very specific way and then the youngest son in the room or perhaps the youngest person in the room would ask a question.

It's the same question every year. Why is this night different from other nights? Why is this dinner different from other dinners? Jesus and then the father or the leader this case being Jesus would recall and tell the story of the exodus and he would explain God's redemption of his people.

[34 : 22] Now I want you to pause and consider the significance of this for a moment. Can you imagine you're in the room Jesus the son of God is presiding over the meal and he is the one explaining God's redemption.

No one in the history of Passover liturgy would have ever said it with the same passion and ability and truth with which Jesus communicated these thoughts on that night.

and you can just imagine knowing what his intention is in teaching that as Jesus explains this he does not quickly and lightly skip over the important details of the exodus.

No. He explains them with significance and with truth and perhaps the way that those people in Galilee lifted up their voices and said who has ever taught us like this?

Who has ever taught with such authority? Perhaps the disciples on this night are experiencing that emotion once again as they listen to Jesus talk about redemption what authority what truth they are receiving in this moment.

[35 : 27] And then they would sing together Psalms 113 through Psalm 115 and that part of the service would include with the second cup of wine.

Now after they finished the second cup there was an interpretation of the detailed elements of the meal. So at this point all the food is displayed Jesus would have gone one by one to each element of the foods and you can find all the descriptions about what those foods were and he would have explained the significance of that food why they were eating it as a part of the Passover and why it mattered to the Passover story.

Now I want you to notice what Jesus would have done with the bread. There's a platter of bread on the table. He hasn't broken it and distributed it yet. Okay.

We haven't got there yet. Jesus picks up the platter and this was the customary blessing. Here's what he says. This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt.

Let everyone who hungers come and eat. Let everyone who is needy come and eat the Passover meal. Now I need to keep that in mind.

[36 : 43] Jesus lifts the bread. Let everyone who is hungry come and eat this bread. Let everyone who is needy come and eat this meal and enjoy and partake in this Passover moment.

And then comes another blessing. Praised be thou O Lord sovereign of the world who causes bread to come forth from the earth.

In other words God the Father is the provider of the bread that Jesus is then inviting people to come and to eat if they're hungry and to eat if they are needy.

And then as the liturgy continues the leader or the Father would have taken a single piece of that bread unleavened and he would have begun to break off pieces of it and they would pass it along to whoever is in the room and this would be done in silence.

This is a reflective moment. This is where Jesus interjects and he breaks the silence. Verse 22 As they were eating he took the bread and after blessing it he's just done these blessings I said he breaks it and he gives it to them and then he speaks in the silence and he says take this is my body this is my body literally this is me this is me I am giving to you in this moment.

[38 : 20] Thereby Jesus takes the significant meaning of this bread to the Passover with its invitations and its blessings and he transforms its meaning in order to say I am this bread it's me take me can't remind you of what Jesus said in John chapter 6 truly truly I say to you it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven but my father gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world and they said to him sir give us this bread always and Jesus said to them I am the bread of life whoever comes to me shall not hunger whoever believes in me shall not thirst and he goes on to say truly I say to you whoever believes has eternal life

I am the bread of life your fathers ate manna in the wilderness and they died but this is the bread that comes from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die I am that living bread that came down from heaven if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh my body Jesus is the bread of life and in this final Passover he offers himself to us in the bread now put yourself in the room Jesus has just lifted the platter and said let anyone who is hungry come and eat let anyone who is needy come and take in the meal and then he immediately says God is the one who provides the bread from the earth and then he says I am that bread so come to me if you are hungry come to me if you are needy come to me and he transforms the entire meaning of this glorious beautifully rich redemptive meal and he invites all who are hungry to come and feast on him by faith and by feasting on him in faith they in turn receive the life that cannot be taken eternal life and forgiveness and he invites us to it and just as he broke the bread in that moment so would his body be broken for our sins his death brings us life he does this so come and eat he's inviting you to receive this life in his name believe on him the bread well after this they would have eaten the meal they would have enjoyed the fellowship together communion with one another in those moments another significant part of our understanding of the Lord's supper as we commune with one another and it's during this moment of fellowship as they eat that Jesus tells of his betrayal so we kind of take a step backwards in the text here this is the point he would have said that and he goes through it and this portion is closed with the third cup of wine the cup of redemption

I will redeem you God promised and then Jesus interjects something new into the liturgy again verse 23 this time and he took a cup and when he had given thanks he gave it to them and they all drank of it and he said this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many this is the third cup and he transforms its meaning this cup of redemption is no longer about the Passover and Exodus this cup of redemption is about the blood that he would spill the very next afternoon on Calvary's cross as our perfect lamb is sacrificed in our place and he says this blood is the sign of the new covenant that God had foretold in all of those prophets you can go back to Jeremiah 31 you can see the promise of this covenant there is anticipation all through the Old

Testament a greater king is coming a greater one is coming he will provide salvation he will provide redemption he will provide a new covenant and Jesus says here it is and it's in my blood it's found in my sacrifice on the cross see every year they would gather and they would slaughter a lamb and they would spread the blood on the doorpost at least in Exodus that's what they did they spread the blood on the doorpost but this sacrifice was insufficient to provide true atonement so they did it every year over and over and over it's the precursor to this system that God gave them of daily sacrifices for their sin and burnt offerings of praise and all these things they had to do to try to rid themselves of uncleanness but they could never rid themselves of the uncleanness they just had to keep coming over and over and over again all of that anticipating one day

God will give us a true atonement a final atonement and here it is said atonement once and for all no more sacrifice necessary he is the Passover lamb his blood was sufficient to pay for our sin once and for all forever this was the message of the apostles Ephesians 1 Paul says in him we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace first Peter Peter says it you were ransomed from the feudal ways inherited from your fathers not with perishable things like silver and gold you can't buy your salvation Peter says but instead it was with the precious blood of Christ that of a lamb without blemish or spot John the apostle says the same thing if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship with one another and the blood of

[45 : 04] Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin so come and drink receive the sacrifice of his blood by faith for the forgiveness of your sins they would have finished with psalms 116 to 118 they would have sung them as hymns and then comes the fourth and final cup of the meal and Jesus does one more alteration he refuses this cup verse 25 truly I say to you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God William Lane says Jesus had used the third cup associated with the promise of redemption to refer to his atoning death on behalf of the elect community the cup which he refused was the cup of consummation associated with the promise that God will take his people to be with him this is the cup which Jesus will drink with his own in the messianic banquet which inaugurates the saving age to come this was

Jesus's promise that fellowship with him through his cross will continue until the day he returns to take us home it implies both his own resurrection and our resurrection something these disciples would have looked back on with tremendous confidence comfort it's also why in observing the Lord's supper we proclaim not only that Christ has died and Christ has risen but Christ will come again as Paul says in first Corinthians 11 as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes now we're finished but track with me in this meal what does Jesus do he says I'm the bread come and eat I'm about to spill my blood for your sin come and drink and I'm promising you that so long as you come to me in faith you will have fellowship with me until the day that I finally bring you home a promise of assurance

I will return the kingdom will be ours we will reign forever together in perfect unity it's a wonderful promise so what do we do with that we believe we believe and we follow Jesus used the bread and wine as symbols of his gospel and receiving them as symbolic of believing him as savior and lord and so I want to extend Jesus' invitation to you this morning will you come and eat I don't mean eat the bread I specifically didn't do the Lord's Supper today for this reason to make this point that unlike some people have taught through the years it is not the eating of the bread itself and the drinking of the wine itself that brings us salvation it is what is represented in those things the fact that you recognize

Jesus by faith as the son of God and the savior of your sin and that you follow him as lord so come and feast by faith on him he'll turn no person away who does take