

The Passover Seder

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Shalom Avarim. Erev Tov. I said, hello, friends, good evening. It is a delight to be here with you tonight. I'm real excited about this, and I appreciate the chance to be here.

Somebody has noticed that we're doing something Jewish today. You're not allowed to say hello to anybody else the rest of the night. You have to say shalom. Okay? And this is called a kippah. Now, in Hebrew, it's a kippah.

In Yiddish, it's a yarmulke. And how many of us think the pastor really needs to wear one of these? Yeah, I thought so. You're on, Doc.

Somebody get a picture. All right. Yeah, we can't hardly do this if pastor doesn't have his kippah on.

[1 : 03] Yeah. That's a good one, too, man. Yeah, I always, you know, I always wonder how the bald guys keep it on their head. They actually use hairpins to keep them on, but I don't do the hairpins.

What we're doing tonight is called a Passover Seder. Passover in Hebrew is Pesach, and you guys know the story of Passover. We are going to talk briefly about it, but I'm not going to belabor it since you do know quite a bit about it already.

The word Seder is just a Hebrew word that means order because there's a particular order of service that they go through. So this is called the Passover Seder. It's actually, I think that you know that in Exodus, the children of Israel were in bondage and slavery to the Egyptians, and God delivered them through a great deliverance.

And he told the people at that time that they should commemorate that, that there should be a memorial of that every year at that time that they should have a Passover Seder.

And the Jewish people have been doing this for, you know, give or take 3,500 years. They've been doing this, and much of what we see here tonight and that we will do tonight is what Moses, what God told Moses to tell the people to do back in the day.

[2 : 19] Although the Jewish people, you know, 3,500 years, you get a lot of traditions that have been added to it. And so we're going to go over and we're going to go through a Seder tonight similar to the way that it's done.

Now, I say similar. There's some things I want to say. A Seder is not something that's done by the pastor in the church, clearly. It's not done by the rabbi in the synagogue either.

A Seder is something that is led by dad at home with his family, okay? And so this isn't really the right format. The right format is the family sitting around the table. So you're all my kids now.

Mama, how did we do this? And so it's a family holiday. Now, it's a very, very important time. In many ways, it's the highlight of the Jewish year, okay?

And so is it serious? Yeah, it's very serious. But it's not a somber time. It's a celebration, okay? I mean, if you were in Egypt and you were facing genocide and God delivered you like he delivered them, I mean, you wouldn't go around with a long face about it.

- [3 : 23] It's a time of rejoicing. And one of the things I love about the Seder is it's about the kids. Now, I was telling somebody the other day, I like adults okay.
- But really, like, I'd rather speak to the kids any day than the adults. Kids are awesome. I love the kids. And the Seder is about, it's not just about the kids, but throughout the Seder, they do things to include the children.
- And I really like that because God said, when I've delivered you, when you get into your land, you've got to pass it along to the kids, okay?
- By the way, is there a lesson in there for us? It's not enough for you to have faith in Christ. You've got to pass that, what God has done for you along to your kids, your love for God, your passion to God.
- If your kids don't get it, you've failed in your job. You've got to get it along to the kids. And so that's what a Seder is all about. Now, some people say, what in the world are we doing a Seder in a Baptist church for?
- [4 : 21] Well, there's a lot of reasons. Number one, it helps us to better understand the Scriptures. Did you know that when you read the Gospels, you are reading the accounts of Seders that were held and you didn't know it?
- Okay? Seeing the Seder will help you better understand the Scriptures. It'll help you understand various events in the life of Christ better. One of the things that's amazing about the Seder, the Seder is not a Christian thing.
- It's a Jewish thing. And the rabbis, this will come as a great shock to you, really aren't that interested in Jesus Christ. Okay? They are powerfully against Jesus Christ being the Messiah.
- And yet, in the Seder that they've set up, there are symbols of Christ all through it. One of the things, you're going to see some things tonight that I, to me, mind-blowing things, obvious.
- Just brilliant, shining in your face, examples of Christ in the Jewish Seder. Pastor was talking about, I believe it was Sunday evening, about a book called Peace Child by Don Richardson.
- [5 : 28] Great book. If you haven't read it, you ought to read it. It talks about how that in every culture, God has planted symbols of the Gospel. So that when you get into that culture, you can find those and use those to open up the Gospel to those people.
- Well, in the Jewish culture, the Seder is one of the symbols. So much of what we will do here tonight that's Jewish points straight to Christ. And so, that's an exciting thing for us.
- And if you have a heart to witness to Jewish people, this is one of the ways you can do it. By knowing about the Seder, you can do that. And so, there's a lot of reasons for us to study the Seder.
- I want to tell you briefly, before we even begin what we're doing, about four very important Passovers. Four Passovers you need to know about. The first one happened in Exodus 3,500 years ago, when the people were in slavery and God delivered them.
- That's one Passover you need to know about. The second one is the holiday that God commanded the people to celebrate. It's the holiday that was prescribed in Exodus where God said, every year you need to do this, this, this, and this.
- [6 : 33] And so, there's the initial event. And then you've got the Seder as God prescribed it to be celebrated every year. Now, the third thing is, 2,000 years ago.
- See, we're doing all kinds of history. 3,500 years ago. Now, 2,000 years ago, there was a Seder when a gentleman gathered with 12 of his friends in an upper room in Jerusalem and had a Passover Seder that has great meaning for you and I.

That was a Passover Seder. And then the fourth Seder that, unfortunately, we need to talk about is a lot of the Seder as it's practiced today.

Because today's Seder in many ways resembles the biblical Seder. But there are some very important reasons why it cannot properly reflect it.

And so, in many ways, it's very different than the Passover Seder that God described. And we'll touch on that as well this evening. All right. Now, before you start the Seder, okay, now we're at home and this is family.

[7 : 34] And so, mom and all you kids have gone around all week long cleaning the house. You guys have done spring cleaning from the cellar to the dome.

You've gone through and cleaned the house because the Bible is extremely strict that there cannot be one tiny speck of leaven in the house. So, you clean the whole house head to toe. Big time spring cleaning.

In fact, the whole concept of spring cleaning probably comes from the Passover Seder. Okay. That's where they got the idea is everything has to be cleaned. And so, every tiny granule of leaven has been removed from the house except for one little place where there's been a little bit left.

Because when it's all done, then Papa comes home. And he takes a candle in one hand and a spoon and a feather. And he begins to inspect the house. And he goes all over the house and inspects everywhere until, inevitably, he finds that one little bit that's been left.

He says, ah! We got to get this. And he takes the spoon as a dustpan and the feather as a broom. And he sweeps that last little bit up. And they take it out and they burn it in a fire. And the house has been purified.

[8 : 42] It's been sanctified. It's been clean of all the leaven. Now we're ready for the Passover Seder. And so, the family gathers and it's an exciting time.

Everybody's all in their very best. But a Seder, according to the rabbis, cannot be started by a man. Mama has to start it. Mama has to bring the light.

And so, Rhonda, if you will come. Mama comes and she is going to start it out. Is this on? Somebody tell me what I do with this thing.

Mute button. Can I go? You're on. Okay. Okay. Okay. Thank you.

Thank you.

[10 : 25] Thank you. Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with your commandments and commanded us to kindle the candles of this good day.

Amen. And so mom starts it out by lighting the candles and by praying that prayer. Now, everything that is done is accompanied by a prayer. And honestly, by very long, intense, lots of prayers.

We pray a lot. The whole thing is done in the course of an evening. It takes four and a half hours. And so the pastor asked me to try to be done by eight o'clock. He did not designate in which time zone.

And so we're going to kind of condense it and just do the short version of everything and skip a bunch of stuff. But we'll try to get the important stuff in. And so that's the start.

She sang the prayer in Hebrew as they do. And then she gave you guys the translation in English. It's interesting that only the lady can do that. She's the only one that can bring the light in because it required Mary to bring the light of the world into the world, didn't it?

[11 : 31] Amen. All right. Now, the next thing we're going to do, open your Bibles, if you will, to Exodus chapter 12. And we are going to try to stay in English for most, well, not all the time, but a lot of the night we're going to stay in English.

We'll just read this off in English. Exodus 12 is the story. Now, in Exodus 11, Moses has made one more trip into Pharaoh's throne room and said, let the people go, and Pharaoh said, not on your life.

And Moses said, okay, now you're going to get it now. It's going to be the firstborn. One last plague is coming. And then in chapter 12, verse 1, we read this.

And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, this month shall be unto you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year to you.

Speaking unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month, they shall take unto them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.

[12 : 29] I want you to notice as we go through this that the lamb is central. It's very, very important, okay? And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls.

Every man, according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You shall take it out from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month, and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in the night, in that night, roast with fire and unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire his head, with his legs, with the pertinence thereof. And you shall let nothing of it remain unto the morning, and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

And thus shall you eat it with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, your staff in your hand, and you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and beasts, and against all the gods of Egypt will I execute judgment.

[13 : 51] I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt.

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial. And you shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. Ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

And so every spring when the Jewish people have this, they are fulfilling the 14th verse here. They are keeping this memorial every year forever. That's what they're doing. There are so many things I want to say here.

Did you notice that it says in verse 18, it says that you're supposed to eat it with unleavened bread. And so we have the matzo, the unleavened bread. And it says that we're going to eat it with the bitter herbs.

We have the bitter herbs here. And what we have, we have a plate here with various things that you use during the Passover Seder that symbolize different parts of the thing.

[14 : 54] We'll talk about that as we go on through. And so much of what we're doing here is prescribed in Exodus. And yet there are parts of it that strangely have changed. For instance, it says here you should do it with your standing with your loins girded.

Okay? Why is that? Because you're about to leave and you need to be up and ready to roll. But today, you do it sitting down. And in fact, lying down.

There's supposed to be a pillow here. And the guy who's leading, it's supposed to be half reclining. That's the way it's done today. That's a difference. Another difference is, well, we'll talk about some of the other differences as we go.

We won't do all of that right now. And so we see this. Now, the first thing I want to do, I'm going to take it two or three times during the course of this Seder and stop and preach at you for a minute.

The first one is right here. And if you don't see this, you're blind. Okay? I'm sure you know this. The Passover is one of the Bible's most brilliant and vivid and powerful symbols of Christ.

[15 : 56] The people were in slavery in Egypt. They were enslaved. They had no power. They had no ability. They could do nothing but build buildings and die. And that's what they were doing.

Just like you and I are sinners. And we may try to reform. We may try to get better. But we have no power to free ourselves from the bonds of sin.

Just as they had no power to free themselves from the bonds of slavery in Egypt. And they cried out unto God. And you know, God could have done many things. But what God said is, take a lamb. Take a lamb.

And the first thing is they took the lamb out of the flock and they set him aside. They took him on the tenth day. But then they watched him for four days until the fourteenth day. They had to examine him to make sure.

It said he had to be a perfect lamb. A male of the first year and a perfect, a spotless, there couldn't be any kind of disability, any brokenness, any sickness in him. He had to be a perfect lamb of the first year, a male lamb.

[16 : 57] And then he had to be slaughtered. He had to be sacrificed. His blood had to be poured out. I spoke to a lady once and she said, I'm not going to worship any God that requires animals to be killed.

Did you ever wonder, well, why would God require animals to be killed? Because sin is deadly serious to God. And he wanted us to understand what a big deal it is.

My first emphasis when that lady said that, I was going to say, well, you know, it's not that big a deal. But the truth of the matter is, she's right. It's a very, very big deal.

And that's why God wanted us to understand that sin is a big deal. And it brings about death. And so the lamb is slaughtered. But it wasn't enough for that lamb to die. His blood had to be shed.

And then that blood had to be applied to the doorposts. And if it was, then the plague would pass by. And we see here the first of several vivid pictures of Jesus Christ.

[18 : 05] Because as John said, he is the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Okay, Jesus was God's lamb who came over in 1 Corinthians 5, verse 7.

He is referred to, it says, Christ, our Passover lamb, is sacrificed. Okay, he is the Passover lamb. And we were, like Israel was in slavery in Egypt, we are in slavery to sin.

As they could not deliver themselves, we cannot deliver ourselves. But God had a solution. He sent a lamb, Yeshua HaMashiach, Jesus the Messiah, who came to earth.

And we observed him, not for four days, but for the whole time of his earthly ministry, everyone observed him, and they could find no fault in him. And then he was taken.

And he was put to death. And his blood was poured out for us. And unlike this lamb, on the third day he rose again. But folks, just like back in the day of Passover, that sacrifice of that lamb would do no good unless the blood was applied.

[19 : 13] And the sacrifice of Christ will do you no good whatsoever unless it is applied to your heart. And so we see here the first picture, the Passover itself is a beautiful picture of Christ.

Now, do you all mind me eating in front of you? If we do this at home, everything that I do up here, you would be doing also. But, gracious, I'm just going to have to enjoy myself.

There are four cups. We're good Baptists, and so we have grape juice. But there are four times when they pour a cup and they drink of the cup. Okay?

And all four of these cups, they're based on Exodus 6, 6, and 7, four places. The four cups are the cup of sanctification, the cup of praise, the cup of redemption, the cup of acceptance.

I won't go into great detail about that because I just want to move along. But we'll make mention of the first cup right now, the cup of sanctification. And we'll also mention the third one.

[20 : 14] And so they would pour the cup. It's from the verse where it says, I will bring you out from under the burden of the Egyptians. I'm going to bring you out of Egypt. A picture of being taken out of the sinful world.

And so it has to do with sanctification. And then, of course, they would pray. And the prayer that they would pray would be, Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melek aulam, Baroi pere agafan.

It means, Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who has created the fruit of the vine. And then, after we would pray, we would drink. And so, excuse me. And so that's the first cup, the cup of sanctification.

And then they would wash their hands ceremonially, which they do frequently. And that would be good. And then we'd come to the Carpus. Now, this is the Carpus. Now, we know that it's Carpus, but you might think it's either celery or parsley.

This one is particularly celery. Pesach, Passover, is a springtime celebration. And that the joy of springtime has entered into it.

[21 : 19] And they say that Carpus is a symbol of the green of springtime, of new life coming into the world. And yet, they always take the Carpus and they dip it in salt water.

Because the salt water reminds them of the tears that were shed in their captivity. Of the tears of their captivity. And so, they do the Carpus. They pray the prayer, Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, Baray Peri HaAdama, Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, creator of the fruits of the earth.

And they dip it in the salt water. They remember the suffering that their people suffered in Egypt. But they also remember that the green of spring reminds them that there is new life.

And there is a new covenant. And there is new life in Christ. And so, they eat of that. And we'll just take a bite and go on. And you kind of have to do the Carpus thing.

Now, that's important. All right? Now, we come to one of my favorite parts. And we come to the Matzo. Matzo is unleavened bread. This is the Matzo.

[22 : 27] I don't know how well you can see the Matzo. Matzo is pretty neat stuff. They're flat. It's unleavened. The reason that we use unleavened bread is that they didn't have time to do leavened bread.

It takes time for bread to rise. And, you know, he went home and he said, Listen, guys, sacrifice the lamb and we're leaving. There's not time for the bread to rise. Guys, just get some unleavened bread and make some unleavened bread.

And we're hitting the road. We're on our way out of here. We're leaving this area. Now, oh, you back road Baptist. You miss out. I'm sorry. You should have been sitting closer to the front.

And so, at the start of the ceremony, you have three pieces of Matzo. Now, Matzo is a very interesting thing. I want you to notice that, okay, it's a symbol of the affliction and suffering about how they had to leave very quickly.

But there's this thing called an Afikomen. Now, you've got to get the Afikomen. You've got to listen to this. This is, to me, maybe the coolest part of the whole thing. You have three pieces of Matzo.

[23 : 39] One, two, three. Okay? Now, the rabbis insist that you take not the first one, not the third. You have to take the second piece of Matzo.

And you have to break it. Okay? And you break it. And the part that's broken is called the Afikomen.

Now, put it back in a second because you've got to keep this straight. You break the Afikomen in half. It has to be broken. And you put it in the Afikomen bag. John, I need your help.

Now, the Afikomen, strangely enough, is hidden then. Hide the Afikomen. Now, kids, you're going to want to watch which direction John goes. Because John's going to go and hide the Afikomen.

And later on this evening, the kids have to go find the Afikomen. And whichever, and so they're going to go roaring out of here at high speed. And they're going to go, look.

[24 : 34] Now, I told John to stay in the foyer out there. So it's going to be somewhere in the foyer. And do not tear anything apart because it doesn't require the destruction of anything in order to find it. And pastor will be happy if we don't tear things apart.

And so the Afikomen, and then we'll bring it back. And then one of the kids will discover the Afikomen. But see, I have got to get the Afikomen back. And I'm not sure the kids are going to be willing to do it.

So we have to redeem the Afikomen. And so we will buy it back from the child who finds it with a prize. This is what they do, honestly.

I'm not making any of this up. And then it's important that the Afikomen be broken into pieces and everyone present has to eat part of the Afikomen. Okay.

Now, I don't know if you see anything in all of that. But I worship somebody who is called the bread of life. Okay.

[25 : 31] And leaven is a symbol of sin. So unleavened bread is a symbol of purity. And he was the unleavened bread of life. Now, we know the Bible speaks of God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost.

The Afikomen is taken from the second member of the Trinity. And as the Afikomen is broken, so Christ had to be sacrificed, had to be broken.

Now, I want you to notice about the bread, about the matzo. I don't know if you can tell, but there's little holes in it. Can you see the holes? See, because it's pierced. Just like our Savior.

When it says, they had looked upon him whom they seers. And by the way, it has... Can you see the stripes? And by the stripes, you're here. So it's striped, the matzo that they use, that every Jewish family uses, it's striped and it's pierced.

Okay. And then the second part has to be broken. And then it's taken away. And it's gone. As if perhaps it had been... died and been buried.

[26 : 36] And yet then suddenly it comes back and it has to be redeemed. And then everyone has to take part. This is a Jewish ceremony.

Can you believe that? Okay. Interesting, the word athikomen is not Hebrew. All the other strange words I'm using tonight are Hebrew, but athikomen is not Hebrew. It's Greek.

Nobody really is sure how a Greek word got into the Seder. There's a little bit of debate about what athikomen means in Greek. The rabbis insist it means dessert because when we take part, we do it toward the end part after we've eaten supper.

But Greek scholars say that really athikomen probably actually means he is coming. So the athikomen is my favorite part, I think.

I love it because everything about the athikomen tells me about our Savior. And it's right there. You know, you're like, okay, you made all this up, right? No, no. This is how the Jewish people do it every year.

[27 : 42] This is how they do it. And so the athikomen is a wonderful part of it that speaks to us about Christ. So let's move on past that. There's another part. It's for the children.

We're going to just skip about it. I'll tell you briefly about it. At this point in the ceremony, one of the kids comes and says to the father, and it's a stage thing. The kid has practice. He knows how to do it. And he says, Father, why is this night different than all other nights?

And he begins to ask questions. Why are we reclining instead of sitting up? Why are we dipping our stuff in certain ways? Why are we eating unleavened bread rather than regular? And he asks these questions.

And this is kind of a programmed way. And then the father answers. And in doing so, he explains the story of what God has done for the people. By the way, they also make a point during the Passover.

We don't say, well, back then they did it for them. They always say, it's what God did for us. God delivered us from bondage. God saved us.

[28 : 39] Because it is an us thing. Then after the four questions, the father tells the story. And that's... I need just a little bit of wine here.

Excuse me for a minute. He tells the story. And as he tells the story, he goes through and he talks about how the people of Israel ended up back in Egypt. How they ended up in Egypt in the first place.

And he talks about how the Egyptians began to oppress them. And how they suffered terrible oppression and even genocide. And then finally they cried out to God. And they said, God, deliver us. And God raised up a great leader whose name was Moshe.

And God called Moshe to deliver the people. And he came and he said to Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord God, let my people go. And Pharaoh said, I know not the Lord, neither will I let the people go.

And God said, want to bet? And God sent ten plagues on the people. He sent, first of all, and they dipped their finger.

[29 : 43] I think it symbolizes blood. And they dip it in the juice, in the wine. And they say, first of all, he sent, he turned the water into blood. And then he sent frogs upon the land.

And then he sent lice upon the land. And then he sent fleas upon the land. And pestilence. And boils. And hail.

And locusts. He sent the darkness upon the land. And last of all, he sent the death of the firstborn. And they repeat the whole story of the Passover.

And they talk about how God delivered the people from the torment that they were in, in Egypt. And so they go through the whole narrative. Skipping, skipping, skipping, skipping.

They come to the place then where they take the matzo. They take the first piece of matzo. I like this.

[30 : 43] Of course, it's interesting. They take the unleavened bread. And Father takes it and he divides it among everybody that's there. Each member of the family gets it. And then they pray and they bless it.

And then everyone takes part. Does that sound like anything familiar to you? Does it sound like something? Maybe we did Sunday evening. It's right there in the Seder. Okay, that's where Christ got it.

And they pray and then they eat of the matzo. They go on to the next part. And you have the maror. Now, some of the brothers already tried the maror. The maror.

They said, what is it? I said, it's maror. And they said, well, what's maror? And I said, well, this is maror. It's horseradish. And some of the brothers that tried it didn't think that it was that tasty. But the horseradish is part of the bitter herbs.

To remind them of the suffering and the bitterness of life in Egypt. And so they take the maror. But it's interesting. A lot of wisdom in a lot of things they do. They take some of the maror.

[31 : 45] Anybody want a big old spoon of maror? No, but you know what? You take it and you take a dip of that. And then you put in a big thing of haroset. Who tried the haroset?

John, how's the haroset? Oh, haroset is good. The haroset, can you see? It's kind of brown and lumpy. It symbolizes the mortar that was used in building when they were building cities for pharaoh.

But this is a pretty good mortar. It's made of apples and nuts and raisins and honey all mixed up together. You like the haroset. So you take the bitterness of the maror and the sweetness of the haroset.

And you put it on a little piece of matzo and you eat it together. It's pretty good. There's that much left.

Anybody wants to take a little bite? You're welcome to later on. All right. I think I'm making a mess. And, of course, each one of these things is accompanied by prayers in various languages and so on.

[32 : 45] The next thing we have is the betza. The betza is a boiled egg. You say, well, what does a boiled egg stand for?

Well, that's a problem. What does a boiled egg stand for? We have a historical problem. We have a great, big, giant historical problem.

You see, the whole system of worship that God lined out for the Jewish people all throughout the Old Testament. You guys have just been doing Leviticus, Numbers. You're in Deuteronomy now.

Okay. It's all centered on the temple. God was incredibly specific. The sacrifices could be done only, only at the temple.

And that's what they did. They sacrificed at the temple. And then in the fullness of time, Messiah came. And he came. And John said, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

[33 : 44] And he served for three years here on the earth. And then he gave himself on the cross. And he shed his blood. He died. He was buried. On the third day, he rose again. And God's plan was that the people of Israel would say, We see that the sacrifices that we have done were a picture to take us to Messiah.

And now Messiah, the once forever sacrifice for sin, has been sacrificed. We believe in him. And so rather than continue sacrifices for sin, now we will trust Messiah for our sin.

But Israel didn't do that. Israel did not. Many Israelites did. Multitudes. Thousands of Israelites did receive Messiah. But the nation as a whole rejected him.

The leaders of the nation rejected him. When you're talking to Jewish people, they'll say, Well, if this is true, then why did our people reject him? For the same reason the rabbis do today. Because if they choose to believe in Messiah, they lose their place and their power with the people.

It's not. Read the New Testament. It wasn't about their faith. They knew the truth. It was about their politics. They wanted that place. They wanted that position, that power, that prestige.

[35 : 00] They wanted the riches that comes with being the leaders. And if they believed in Messiah, they would lose their place. And so they said, Let's just kill him instead. And so the nation as a whole, the leadership, turned away from Messiah.

That's what happened then. And so God said, Okay, I gave you the temple worship to teach you about Messiah. I brought Messiah and you rejected him and held to the temple worship.

Well, I can fix that. And so God allowed that in 70 A.D. the Romans came to Jerusalem. They destroyed the temple. All right, now what are you going to do?

The only way for your sins to be forgiven is on Yom Kippur to bring a sacrifice to the temple. But there is no temple. What are you going to do? Are you going to believe in the Messiah that I sent you?

No. No. And so the rabbis were like, What are we going to do? Everything that it says in the Tanakh, in the Old Testament, we can't do it. It's all about the temple.

[36 : 03] What are we going to do? We'll make up a bunch of traditions instead. You remember when we read in Exodus at the start of the thing about how the lamb was central in everything they did?

Do you see a lamb here? Do you know where the lamb is here tonight? Here is the shank bone of a lamb. That's all that's left of the lamb.

We got no lamb. Okay? And interestingly, they still put the shank bone of a lamb on the plate, but they don't know what it's for. And they don't do anything with it.

It just sits there on the plate. You know, we eat the haroset and we eat the maror and we eat the baitzaba. We have no idea. Why do we have this here bone on this thing? I don't know what that's about.

There's no lamb. There's no lamb. And this is the tragedy, folks. The tragedy is that Israel has no temple and no sacrifice and no atonement.

[37 : 03] And they're scratching around desperately trying to find a way to be okay with God when they don't have one. And so, you know what they said? They said, well, we'll do an egg instead. How about that?

That work? Does that remind you of Cain? Okay, I'll bring the fruit to the ground. Maybe that'll cover it. And so, at this point in the Passover, we ignore the bone.

One, we ignore the fact that there is no lamb. There is no sacrifice. There is no forgiveness of sins. And we have an egg instead. That's a tragedy.

That's heartbreaking. That's the condition of the Jewish people that are living all around us. They have a religion that cannot save them. So, they've invented a bunch of traditions.

And they are so intent upon those traditions. But that egg cannot save. And so, they're lost and perishing. And that's the tragedy of Judaism today.

[38 : 05] Now, at this point in the ceremony, you'd like this part. Mom brings in this great big meal and we eat until we're ready to burst. Okay? That's part of the reason it takes four and a half hours to do this.

We've got to have a big meal in the middle of it. And, I mean, it's Christmas dinner for them. Okay? A huge meal. They have a great time. Everybody enjoys it. But when they get done with the meal and they're all sitting there relaxed, they look at the kids and they say, Kids, where is the Afikomen?

All right. Now, there are kids here in this room. And we need an Afikomen. So, all you kids, go get the Afikomen right now and hurry. We need the Afikomen right now. Let's go. Let's go. What are you doing? Sitting around. Move, move, move, move.

Go find the Afikomen. Prize for whoever finds it. Run! All right. And so, you say, I can't believe we're doing this in the middle of the church. That's how we do it. Yeah. It's fun.

We try to, we have fun because we want to involve the kids in it. We want them to be a part of it so that they will also apprehend how important this is. And so, they're looking for the Afikomen. I hope John didn't hide it too good.

[39 : 07] He's in there to make sure they don't destroy anything. Oh, I see movement. Somebody find it? Hurry, hurry, hurry.

Did they find it? Let's go, let's go, let's go. Who found the Afikomen? What's your name? Leah? Leah? Leah? Come on up here. Come on up here.

Come on up here. Now, we need this Afikomen really bad. Is there, you got to deal harder than that. You got to be tougher than that. If I were to give you these three suckers that I stole from Pastor, would you give me the Afikomen?

Okay, good deal. So, we've redeemed the Afikomen. We got the Afikomen back. And as I told you before, now, the Afikomen has mysteriously returned. It was gone, but it's returned. You guys broke the Afikomen into pieces.

Man, I don't know doctrinally how to go with that. You've destroyed the Afikomen. But I guess it's okay because then what we do is we break the Afikomen into pieces.

[40 : 08] And like I said earlier, it's absolutely necessary that every person there has to partake of the Afikomen. Just as it's absolutely necessary that each one of us receive Christ.

All right. Brother Bo, you get the last piece. Okay. There we go. And so, that's the Afikomen. Now, we get to the third cup. Now, we skip the second one because that's what we're doing. And so, they pour the third cup of the four.

The third of the cups is known as the cup of redemption. In Exodus chapter 6, verse 6, it says, I will redeem you with a stretched out arm and with great judgments.

And so, they remember the power of God, how in his great power he redeemed them from slavery in Egypt. Okay. Now, when they fill the third cup, they also go down here and they fill this cup.

Now, perhaps you didn't notice that there was another cup down here. This cup is very important. There's also a chair down here. It seems that there's nobody sitting in the chair.

[41 : 14] This is Elijah's chair. At every Passover, you might have five members of the family, but there will be six chairs. There's always one more chair than there are members of the family because we're all hoping that Messiah will come.

And the scriptures tell us that before Messiah comes, Elijah will come. He will be the forerunner. And so, there's always a chair for Messiah because we're waiting for Messiah. And so, we come to this third place.

Now, we're going to get back to Elijah in just a minute. But we come to the third cup. It has to do with the cup of redemption. And we pray the prayer. Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Aulam.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Aulam. It's just the same one. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who has created the fruit of the vine. And they drink the third cup. And that's how they do it in the Seder.

But something happened. Something very strange happened at this moment in the Seder. 2,000 years ago in the upper room.

[42 : 20] Jesus was doing the Seder. And they got to the third cup. And he poured the cup. And the disciples, they've done this every year, all of their lives.

They've done the Passover. And he got to the third cup. And they expected him to say the prayer just like we did and hand him the cup. That's how we all do it. But that's not what he did that day.

He said to them, see this? This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. Drink ye all of it. You see, our communion service, our Lord's table that we celebrate, was the Passover Seder.

And it was at this moment, at the cup of, what was it, the cup of what? The cup of redemption that he stopped the whole Seder and said, hold it, hold it. Change in plans.

This isn't just what it's always been. From tonight on, this is the cup of redemption. This is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. The disciples had no idea what he was talking about.

[43 : 26] They didn't know that tonight he will be arrested. He'll be tried. He'll be imprisoned and then beaten and then crucified.

That he'll rise. They didn't understand any of that. But he knew. And so at that moment, at the third cup, he said, this is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins.

Now, also we have this cup of Elijah thing. Here at the third cup, we understand that Malachi 4.5 says, behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

They understood that before Messiah comes, Elijah's got to come. And so when we get to third cup time, we need a kid to help. Do I have, I need a kid who's fast. Is there a kid here that's fast?

Boy, girl, I don't care. What, you all got slow kids here? Who's fast? You and the green. Come here. Come here. What's your name? Gracie. Gracie. I need you to run out the front door.

[44 : 27] Look both ways and see if Elijah's coming. Run, hurry, and come back and tell us. And they do that in the Seder. They send one of the children to go check to see, is he coming? Is he coming?

Maybe this is the day. We've made a place for Elijah. Honestly, it'll be the best chair in the home. We've got, his cup has been poured. Nobody dares set in his place. Is he coming?

Is he coming? For 3,500 years, Gracie has come back and said no.

Elijah's not coming. The ministry God's called Rhonda and I too is a ministry of taking the gospel to the Jewish people. Folks, in this city there are 120,000 Jewish people.

Can you imagine that? That's a fair good size city. Just of the Jewish people here. They're waiting for Messiah. And for 3,500 years, they've been sending a child to the door to say, see if Elijah's coming.

[45 : 34] See if the forerunner will come tonight. Maybe now is the time of Messiah. 2,000 years ago, he came.

And they missed it. And so what you've got, it's heartbreaking. For 2,000 years now, they are standing and looking.

They're waiting. They're watching. For one who has already come. That's the situation they're in. That's why we desperately need to take the gospel to them.

That's why, short commercial by the missionary, I've got gospel tracks here for your Jewish friends. Okay. I've got one about Passover right here. Excuse me.

Yeah. There's Passover. Passover. Little bookmark. Verses from the Old Testament that have to do with salvation. One for each one of you here. How to win the Jews. Gospel tracks for Jewish people.

[46 : 37] I implore you. Get a burden for your Jewish friends and neighbors. Over and over and over, the Bible talks about the need to take the gospel to them.

And I've preached here about it before, and I'm not going to preach a whole message about it. But, Paul's verse, and Paul said in Romans 10, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.

How can we be indifferent to God's chosen people all around us who are perishing? And most of them have never, ever, ever heard the gospel.

Because Christians are scared to witness to them. Okay. We've got to go to them. And with love, tell them about their Messiah. Tell them about the Messiah. I just beg of you to take that seriously and to think about that.

Get some materials and go and do that. Tell them, hey, what's an Afikoman? Write that word down and go ask them about what an Afikoman is. What you do with an Afikoman. And then have them tell you about an Afikoman.

[47 : 47] And then you tell them what an Afikoman means. Okay. Or just ask them. So on Passover, what is it that you guys are celebrating? Have them tell you the story of the Exodus. And then tell them the story of your Exodus.

Okay. There are so many. People say to me, Sam, it's so hard to witness to Jewish people. Okay. Now, I'll agree with that in that very often they don't want to be witnessed to.

But you want to know the truth? It's so easy to witness to Jewish people. We have so much in common with them. Please do that. After the cup of Elijah, I got to tell you this.

There was a very, very important rabbi in Jewish history who at this point, after the cup of Elijah, and after thousands of years of disappointment in Elijah not being there, he taught his people, and the Orthodox do this to this day, he taught them to pray a prayer at this point.

Here's the prayer. I believe with a perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah. And though he may tarry, nevertheless, I will wait for him every day until he comes.

[48 : 51] They pray that at the Passover. They're waiting for their Messiah. You want to know my very, very, very favorite question to ask a Jewish person?

What does it say in your Jewish Bible about the Messiah? Hmm? Because if they'll ever look at that question, it'll lead them to Christ.

We've got to get the gospel to them. Fourth cup is the cup of acceptance. You say, why acceptance? Because in Exodus 6, verse 7, it says, God promises, I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God.

I will accept you. Jeremiah 31, 31 talks about the day cometh, saith the Lord, when I will give a new covenant. I won't write the word, I won't write my covenant on tablets of stone this time.

I'll write it on your hearts. And I will be your God, and you will be my people. The cup of acceptance. When they know the day is coming, when they are going to be accepted by God.

[50 : 03] And so the fourth cup is the cup of acceptance. And they pour that. They remember those words in Isaiah that God says, I'll be your God, and you'll be my people. And they pray. And, of course, they drink the fourth cup.

They read the scriptures. One of the scriptures they often read is Psalm 118.

I will praise thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. They read this. The stone which the builders refused has become the headstone of the corner.

This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made. We'll rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord. We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord. They often read also Psalm 126. When the Lord turned again, the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

[51 : 06] Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue was singing. Then said they among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as it streams in the south.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Folks, this is a call to us.

To go forth weeping for God's chosen, for God's special people. Go forth weeping with precious seed, seed of the gospel, of the word of God, and coming in with rejoicing, bringing the fruit in with us.

And they usually close the Seder by saying something, and you've heard this before, next year in Jerusalem. And May, next year, by next year, I hope that they will come to know the Lord and be in the heavenly Jerusalem.

I hope they'll have that. And they usually close with some singing. But first of all, I can't sing. And second of all, we're out of time. So we're going to close this now. Let me say, all through the Seder, the story of the first Passover, the lamb that almost does not exist, the athikomen that speaks so wonderfully of Christ, the matzo, so many of these things speak so powerfully of Christ.

[52 : 37] Their testimonies, it's their peace child. It's the thing that God has put in their culture. That speaks about Christ. And it's a wonderful opportunity for us to do that.

It's a time for them to remember how God delivered them. And for us to remember, first of all, how our God is powerful enough to deliver God from Egypt. How he's powerful enough to deliver us from sin.

It's a time of rejoicing. But it's a time when we remember that we need to take the gospel to him. Pastor. Let's bow our heads forward a prayer, if you would.

Father in heaven, I love you. And I thank you so very much for Jesus. I thank you for making it so clear in the scriptures how you loved us and you came and died for us.

And the picture's all through the Bible. I pray to your God that we would love the Jewish people and pray for them. We'd want to see them saved. We want to see other people saved that our hearts would break to get the gospel around the world.

[53 : 43] Lord, we want to thank you for how you work in our lives and how good you are in what you're doing in us. Tonight, I thank you that we are already accepted because of what Jesus did.

I thank you for the blood that was shed. And I pray you'd help us to be a church that would carry your gospel. I do what? Would your heads bowed and your eyes closed just for a second? I have no idea if you'd like to pray for Israel and lost people in the world.

I want to give you a chance to do that. And they'll be playing. And if you feel like, man, I'd like to share the gospel. I'd like to care about people being saved. I'd like to pray that God would get the gospel around the world.

Why don't you get out of your seat and come find a place to pray? Let's have some prayer together and just ask God for lost people. Ask God to make them understand Jesus.

That Jesus would come alive to them. They'd realize He's the Messiah. Maybe also you could pray and ask God to help you see how beautiful Jesus is and how God put it all through the Scriptures.

[54 : 49] What a wonderful picture of the Father's love for us. I love the way that second piece of bread was the one that got broken, the one that went away, the one that came back.

Let's pray for God to save people, God to bring the gospel to Israel, and then God to get the gospel to the world. And the name of Jesus will be magnified all around the world.

Amen. Amen. And if you're here tonight and you've never accepted Christ, He's not your Savior, you don't know that you'd go to heaven if you died.

Jesus loves you, and He died on the cross for you, and the story was told tonight about how His blood was shed for you, and you've never been saved. Tonight's the night that you can be. If you'd like to be saved, you'd like somebody to share the gospel with you, pray with you if you hold your hand up.

I'll get somebody to come talk to you. We won't embarrass you, but we will help you. Would there be any like that in the room? Would you raise your hand? Father God in heaven, bring honor to your name, bring glory to your name.

[55 : 59] We praise you, and we love you. God, help us to be a church that carries the gospel to the world. And I'll give you great grace and great praise for all that you do.

In Jesus' name, Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

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