

Sunday, October 20, 2024 | Holy Week

Week 9 | Luke 22:7-13 | "The Last Passover"

Last week, we focused on what made Judas the betrayer. And we learned that he communed with the devil and collaborated with the Sanhedrin. When you allow Satan a foothold in your life (Judas's case, greed), he'll lead you to do deplorable things with dark people. Sin loves company.

But lest we so focus on Judas' faults that we overlook our own, we must remember that sin crouches at the door of us all. If an apostle could fall, so can we. Thus, the lesson from last week was this: while it is good to be in close proximity to Jesus (i.e., Church) and to have a known profession in Jesus (i.e., testimony, baptism, etc.), the key to avoiding Judas' mistake is being possessed by Christ. Only by giving ourselves totally to Christ will we avoid being possessed by Satan. For if the Lord is our all in all, there's no room left over for anything else. But should we give place to the devil, be it by our pride, lust, jealousy, or whatever, he'll take more than we're willing to give and take us farther than we're willing to go. Give him an inch, and he'll take a mile.

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**READ:** Luke 22:7-13 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. <sup>8</sup> So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it." <sup>9</sup> They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?" <sup>10</sup> He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters <sup>11</sup> and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' <sup>12</sup> And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there." <sup>13</sup> And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Imagine for a moment that it's Thursday afternoon during Holy Week and you're Jesus Christ. Remember, you have a divine nature, knowing *everything* that will occur.

For instance, you know you've been betrayed by one of your closest friends. You know that all your followers will abandon you in Gethsemane. You know that even your most outspoken disciple will deny you multiple times before sunrise Friday morning. You know you're about to

be mocked, beaten, and scourged. And, to top it all off, you know you'll end up naked, hanging on a Roman cross.

What would you do?

Would you run? Would you tell your closest followers (those that you trust the most) about the betrayal? Would you try to see your family, maybe your own mother, one last time? If we were to take a poll, answers would vary. But I doubt any of them would be like what Jesus did: *he feasted with friends*. Though he could've done anything, he chose to spend his last few moments with his followers, celebrating the Passover.

I want you to notice two things:

i. Vs. 7-8 – Jesus **keeps** the Passover

Luke tells us, “Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which **the Passover** lamb had to be sacrificed.” As a timestamp, this event occurred on the latter half of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, aka Passover Eve, aka Thursday afternoon of Holy Week (cf. Ex. 12:6).<sup>1</sup> Passover would be celebrated during the **front** half of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, which we'd consider Thursday evening. Over the next 24 hours, the Lord will eat the Passover, institute the Lord's supper, wash the disciple's feet, excuse Judas, give his farewell discourse, pray in Gethsemane, be betrayed, tried, scrouged, and, finally, crucified.

Now, if you're unfamiliar with phrases like “**the day of Unleavened Bread**” and “**Passover**” and that a “**lamb had to be sacrificed**” during this time, then you're going to be lost. In order to understand what this N.T. passage is trying to tell us, we must understand the significance of an O.T. festival like the Passover. Therefore, let's take a moment and unpack the Passover.

The Passover was the **main celebration of the year** for the Jews. It even kicked off the year, occurring in the month of Nisan, which is equivalent to late March or early April. It was instituted 1,200 years earlier during the Exodus. God sent plague after plague to convince Pharaoh to let Israel go. And though God turned the Nile to blood, sent frogs/lice/flies, a plague on the livestock, boils on the people, hail/locusts/darkness from the sky, still the king of Egypt refused to let Israel go. That is, until the **tenth** plague, when the Lord “passed over” the land of Egypt, taking all the firstborn children with him. Ex. 12:30a says, “**And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead.**” **Because of Pharaoh's stubbornness**, the Egyptians paid a heavy price.

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards (2015), p. 620; Bock (1996), 2:1710, “Passover lambs were slain between 2:30PM and 5:30PM in the temple court.”

Of course, no Jewish households lost a firstborn that night. **But do make the mistake of thinking it was because the Israelites were worthy** as if they were inherently better than the Egyptians. The events throughout the rest of the Pentateuch demonstrate the Jews were as flawed as everyone else. The only reason why the Israelites didn't experience a death in the family was because **they obeyed God's command.** If you'll recall, before passing over Egypt, God commanded the Israelites to take a lamb and keep it for five days. On the evening of the fifth day, they were to kill the lamb, eat it, and then use its blood to mark the posts and lintel of the door. **Doing this would signify to all that that particular household was under God's protection.**

Thus, do not miss this: whether it was a firstborn child or a spotless lamb, **there was a death in every household in Egypt.** With a substitute, followers of God survived. Without a substitute, enemies of God suffered. For those who put their faith in God's commandments, there's a way to avoid death. For those who disregard God's word, death is unavoidable.

As a nation, the Passover served two primary functions: **commemorative** and **celebrative.** Ex. 12:14, "This is a day you are to *commemorate* [emphasis added]; for the generations to come you shall *celebrate* [emphasis added] it as a festival to the Lord—a lasting ordinance" (NIV). By upholding the festival every year, the Passover reminded Israel of their national identity and invited them to worship God. Jewish children would grow up participating in this tradition, learning about who they were at a very young age. **It is hard to overemphasize how important Passover was to the Jewish mind.** In the same way we celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Jews commemorate the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

Even Jesus would not miss out on celebrating the Passover. This is why he commands Peter and John to "**prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.**" Preparations would've included securing a room to celebrate (a tricky thing with the Sanhedrin out to get him), a lamb slain in the temple, bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and wine.

ii. Vs. 9-13 – Jesus **supplies** the Passover

All but the meeting place could easily be taken care of. However, where to hold the Passover was a difficult question. Not only would availability be limited due to the influx of people in Jerusalem during the Passover, but also because the Sanhedrin was out to get Jesus. Discretion was of the utmost importance. This is why, rather than try to go at it by themselves, Peter and John ask, "**Where will you have us prepare it?**"

In response, Jesus gives the men six-fold instruction on what they should do: first, they “entered the city;” second, “a man carrying a jar of water will meet you;” third, “Follow him into the house that he enter;” fourth “tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples;” fifth, “And he will show you a large upper room furnished;” and, the sixth and final instruction, “prepare it there.”

From these instructions, we can make a few observations. While we may want this meeting to be miraculous, four things suggest it is far more likely that Jesus prepared things ahead of time.

First, instead of saying something like “you’ll happen upon,” Jesus says to Peter and John that someone “*will* [emphasis added] meet you” as if that person were actively looking for them. In other words, the meeting was intentional; it had been prearranged.

Secondly, the man who meets them will be carrying a water jug. This would’ve set him apart from almost every other man on the street since women typically carried water jugs.<sup>2</sup> The man would stick out. However, since male slaves also carried water jugs, such an act wouldn’t be so unusual as to draw attention. The disciples would notice this man immediately and interact with him discreetly.

Thirdly, using the moniker “Teacher” rather than Jesus’ name assumes that the owner knew Jesus personally by that name. Arguably, a lot of people called Jesus by that name. But it’s just as likely that the man had some rapport with Jesus (cf. Mar. 4:38; Lu. 7:40; 8:49; 9:38; 21:7; Jn. 11:28; 13:13). Coincidentally, this theory coincides with church history where, according to tradition, Jesus observed the Passover in the house of non-other than John Mark’s mother.<sup>3</sup>

Lastly, and most convincingly, this man still had “furnished” accommodations when the city would’ve been maxed out. Though this might’ve been a pure happenchance, an act of God’s sovereignty, it is far more likely the owner of the house held the room because Jesus had reserved it beforehand.

Admittedly, all these things could be explained by divine providence. I am not dogmatic about this position. Nor am I denying the miraculous. **If we focus on Jesus’ *foreknowledge* here, we miss how this passage illustrates Jesus’ *circumspection*; he was being covert and stealthy.** The Lord didn’t want the location of his last Passover meal to be known. He didn’t tell all the disciples, just two. Jesus didn’t even tell Peter and John exactly who they were meeting or where they were going. He set them on a path, giving them only the barest of instructions, and

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<sup>2</sup> Edwards (2015), p. 621.

<sup>3</sup> Bock (1996), 2:1713.

he allowed circumstance to guide them. The description "a man with a jar of water" and the words the disciples were supposed to tell the master of the house strike me as codes, a way for Jesus' followers to know what to do without giving away their intentions to anyone watching.

Ultimately, whether this meeting was miraculous or arranged beforehand is beside the point.

**The point is that Jesus is in control of events.** Whether by divine providence or careful planning, the Lord provided a place to observe the Passover with his disciples. Judas had collaborated with the enemy, looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus, but the Son of God would not be betrayed until he said it was time (cf. Jn. 13:27). Though his disciples were clueless, Jesus knew exactly what he was doing.

### **So, what's the takeaway?**

Just as lambs were once a substitute for **Israel's** sin, the Lamb of God is now the only substitute for **humanity's** sin.

**READ:** Isaiah 53:4-7 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> Surely he has borne **our** griefs and carried **our** sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for **our** transgressions; he was crushed for **our** iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

<sup>6</sup> All we like **sheep** have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid **on him** the iniquity of us all. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like **a lamb** that is led to the slaughter, and like **a sheep** that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

**READ:** John 1:29 (ESV)

The next day, he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

God has been in the business of providing substitutes for a very long time. In Gen. 3:21, we're told, "the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them." The fig leaves weren't enough; the first man and woman needed a sacrifice to cover their nakedness.

**READ:** Genesis 22:1-14 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt

offering?”<sup>8</sup> Abraham said, “God will **provide** for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together.

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. <sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. <sup>11</sup> But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” <sup>12</sup> He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

<sup>13</sup> And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will **provide**”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be **provided**.”

## **Video Description:**

### **Holy Week | Week 9 | “The Last Passover” (Luke 22:7-13)**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

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**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

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