**Luke’s Passover Why Jesus had to Die Luke 22:14-23 2014**

**It is Passover** And the people travel to Jerusalem – to share with each other this most important of feasts

And, as usual, Jesus is in town. Which earlier in Luke had ASTONISHED his disciples. The fact that he turned his face toward Jerusalem …for it was Jerusalem where he had his most opposition.

And we see this darkness in 22 v 2

**2 And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death,** **(for they feared the people)**

They are hungry to destroy the Lord of glory - v.5. So, when Judas comes and makes his offer ….. they (literally) “rejoice” Q. But why this joy? It was Passover (the feast of unleavened Bread) and Jesus, who was popular - was surrounded by… people. And the authorities were already fearful of how people would react before Passover (19:47-48) But now Judas presents them with an opportunity Judas has sided with Satan – rebelling against Jesus. But Jesus came to destroy Satan – and he was so powerful – he would use his agents to do it. There is an awful lot of ink dedicated to trying to ascertain WHY Judas betrayed his master …but the only reason the bible gives us is…MONEY …. **Judas was greedy** . A very real idol creeping at all our doors!

But **Satan has met his match.** See Jesus’ control **in v. 7?** *….”Then came the day…”*

Jesus has chosen when to die and is getting the ball rolling. And he makes arrangements for the meal

And it all sound a bit mysterious …A man carrying water? –….He will lead them into the city and then the room But this is surely because the disciples didn’t find out where they would be to eat the meal – and in particular… JUDAS. So the enemy can’t organise and ambush him. Judas will have his betrayal – But Jesus will designate when.

Look at 22v.15 …. *“I have earnestly/eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you ….before I suffer”.*

Jesus has important things to teach his disciples before he goes to the cross. And he uses this important meal to teach them a vital truth:

**1. The Passover had to be fulfilled x 2 v.14-18**

Documentaries are very popular. Every now and then you come across one about the life of Jesus.

So many **secular historians** want to put the responsibility of Jesus’ death ….firmly as the responsibility of the Romans …or the Jews …..or…something else. And to a certain extent that is true… But the Bible tells us…. that first and foremost… **Jesus died because God wanted it.** This was the time – the day…the hour. WHY? – **because it was Passover** .

And the Passover HAD to be fulfilled. Look at v.14..

**14**When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.**15**And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this **Passover** with you before I suffer.

**16**For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds **fulfillment** in the kingdom of God.”

There are two key words there …’Passover’ v.15)… ’fulfilled’..(v.16)

Luke is very precise. The climax is arriving …

v.14… *‘the hour has come…’*

v.15 …*’I am to suffer’*

v.22 …*’The Son of Man… will go…’*

This is all perfectly planned….for the Passover is about to be fulfilled

We have already established what the Passover is all about…(see Dan’s sermon on November 5th 2023 )

**Passover - see Exodus 12**

**The rescue** (from slavery and Judgement) = the blood on the door. Every household there was a death – the firstborn or the lamb

**The Meal** – nourishment for the journey. At Passover today: the child asks “Why Daddy?”

And the answer comes: “Because of God’s deliverance – He called us out of Egypt (slavery and Judgement)” God delivered us and his Judgement **passed over** us. It was and is the foundation of the nation.

And …. Jesus is saying he is fulfilling that (v.16). In other words …THAT rescue from Egypt was just a **proto-type** of something much greater! And we wonder whether Israel sort of knew this – because since that great rescue for Egypt – Things hadn’t gone well. They fell back in to the slavery of sin – time and again

- they kept slipping back from their devotion to God **(as we do).** And as the centuries went by there was a longing for something better. A great longing for something that would change the hearts of God’s people,

that would bring them into an experience of God’s rule within their lives, that was deeper and richer and more real.

And Jesus says, all that the Passover foreshadowed is about to be fulfilled…..in my death (v.16). ‘It will find fulfilment in the Kingdom of God’.

And as we read on in the narrative of this…..the last Passover…

**Q. In which phrase do we see Jesus totally transforming the meaning of the meal?**

Look at the end of v.19 *“Do this in remembrance of* ***me****”*

(SEE THAT! Jeus is saying…. “No longer “remember the way God rescued you out of Egypt…etc”

NOW … “Remember ME ! –

This is blasphemy!?..unless…it is all God’s plan.

All the elements of the meal point to the rescue.

**- Passover Lamb** = to remind them of the blood on the door

**- Unleavened bread** to remind them of escaping in haste.

**- Bowl of Salt water** – to remind them perhaps of crossing the Red Sea,

and the tears (salt water coming from the eyes)

**- Bitter herbs** = remind the of the slavery

**- Fruit concoction**  – to remind them of the clay bricks they used to make when they were slaves

**- Four cups of wine mixed with water**  – reminding them of the promises of God

And by coordinating Jesus’ death with that of the Passover – and by Jesus taking some of the elements of that meal (the bread and the wine) - and infusing them with new meaning – there was a connection being made: This was the time where Jesus, as the Lamb, was going to be laid down.

Remember John the Baptist at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry? He turned to the disciples and said…

*“Behold the* ***Lamb of God****…… who takes away the sins of the world”*

Q. What did he mean by that?

A he was picking up this idea – That the Passover lamb – who’s **blood was shed** so that we might be delivered -..is being fulfilled in Christ. His blood is shed for the sins of, not just a household, not just a nation but the sins of the world.

And we see this idea all over the Old Testament

Near the beginning **a lamb** is killed for ONE MAN Abraham and Isaac. Abraham is told to go and sacrifice his son on Mount Mariah (despite Isaac being the heir of the promise made to Abraham) .

And just as he was about to obey and kill his son …the angel stops him – and says there is a ram ..caught in the bushes. That animal is a substitute FOR Isaac. In the Exodus it is a lamb **FOR** the Family

All the family shelter under the blood of the lamb, and they are saved from the avenging wrath of God

And then, as the NATION grew and developed…the annual sacrifice was made ..on THE DAY OF ATONEMENT - when the blood of the animals were shed for….. A NATION

But what was for a MAN, and then a FAMILY, and then for a NATION…becomes in the New Testament, *“……the Lamb of God…… who takes away the sins of* ***the world”***

That …is the ‘coming of the Kingdom’…and it’s going to come very soon, says Jesus

**16** For I tell you I will not eat it *again*  until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

Jesus is saying:

*“What is about to happen – is the fulfilment that everything that the Old Testament Passover pointed to”*

Peter leant this very well. He was there! – now reflects on these things:

1 Peter 1 v 18-20

18For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.

So here – in v.16

Jesus says *“it is going to be fulfilled in the Kingdom”* And looking back – Peter says “YES!”

And that was something God was going to do – before the foundation of the world! – before he even created a world! He knew that there would be people in that world – He knew that they would be sinful people. He knew that the only way to bring them into relationship with himself…would be by sending his Son – to be the Lamb of God …to die in their place…before the creation of the world ..it was all settled by God. This is no emergency plan. This isn’t things going wrong, and God trying to rustle-up a **plan B** to get out of it.

This is the very wisdom and grace and love of God, from before time began, to send the Lord Jesus to be your Saviour. When did you last thank him for that?

Do you live your life day-by-day as though it were the most important thing that you could ever know ?

…that your life might be lived in thankfulness to a God…….who ….before you were even created ….or before any of us were created (before Adam and Eve!), He had already determined – to send his Son …..to be the Lamb of God **…to bear your sin.**

**Do you live in thankfulness?** Because when you do – it gives a whole different perspective

to everything else ……that may or may not be going on in our lives.

and…..**Why does he pass round the cup?** v.17 = Jesus closes the old order….The benefits of his death can be SHARED by all those who truly trust him

**17** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among you.

**18** For I tell you that I will not drink it again until it finds fulfilment in the Kingdom of God”

= until Passover is fulfilled When the Lamb has been slain And the way of salvation is opened

T.S. Why did Christ have to die?

So **1. The Passover had to be fulfilled v.14-18**

**2. The New Covenant had to be Inaugurated v.19-23**

Q. In v.19 something **revolutionary** happens!…. It is so familiar we can miss it

Up until this point he has been speaking in Passover terms – and now – all of a sudden - he changes it.

The bread = no longer the unleavened bread of the Passover meal –Now it is…. “MY BODY”

**19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

The “**last”** Supper / Passover – becomes the “**first”** Supper… of a **new order**

The King – who has entered the city – establishes a new covenant. The broken Bread symbolises his BODY given for you - v.20

**20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is **poured out** for you is the **new covenant** in my blood.

This meal – is now to be a remembrance feast for him. It is to be the seal of a new covenant in his death

**Q. And how does v.20 show us how Jesus Viewed his death ?**

It’s a key verse: Not many verses tell us about how Jesus viewed his own death – but this one does.

…And it is full of important meaning:

**20** In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is **poured out for you.**

Q. Where in the Old Testament does God promise a New Covenant? = Jeremiah!

He said the New Covenant would be different ! The Law (Old Covenant) – was written on tablets of stone …and they had to try and live by it (Jeremiah 17:1; 24:7 (29:13?) **31:31 /** Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26).

But the problem with that was …THEIR HEARTS! Throughout the Old Testament their hearts were hardened. They could not keep the Law – and did not really want to keep the Law. And God told Jeremiah (and other OT prophets) ..that he would one day begin again….with a new covenant And a new people **(Jer.31:31-33)** And the thing about these new covenant people …would be that …their hearts and minds would be so open to God …that he would write his Laws….NOT on tablets of stone, but on their HEARTS! …..It would be **written in to their lives** !

So they would actually WANT to fulfil it - ! = a heart of obedience that wanted to do God’s will.

And the new covenant would mean knowing God….personally…deeply...wonderfully. All sins would be blotted out, and they would have a new power within them – that would enable them to live as God would want them to. And so – down the centuries – the Jews looked forward to this. And they said *‘When the Messiah comes…he will inaugurate the New Covenant”* And in this upper room –

Jesus says to this band of 12 men**… *“here it is !”*** *“….as my body is broken – like this bread - the new covenant that is longed for and looked for …..for Centuries… Is beginning” “And I open the Kingdom of heaven to anyone* ***who trusts in me.”*** *“No longer are you following a code - written on tablets of stone -*

*…but if you trust me for the forgiveness that I am going to bring through my death …I WILL WRITE MY LAW ON YOUR HEART.” …I will blot out your sins and iniquities and remember them no more.*

*You will be absolutely ..and totally forgiven by God, and I will put your spirit within you ,…so that, within your very being,* ***The life of God will flow.*** *And you will long to obey that law …to carry out in practise in your life You will be a new people , and the new covenant comes through my death on a cross “*

**Q. How is this Covenant binding ? (v.20) (how can we be certain?)**

v.20 = “in my blood” (It is by his death that the new covenant springs into life)

**Q. And this idea of the covenant …being sealed in blood was a familiar thing to Jewish people ….**

At Sinai - with Moses and the 10 Commandments. The Old Covenant was ratified in BLOOD.

We read in EXODUS 24 …. when Moses finishes the Covenant ratification ceremony he does something very important = He sprinkles the people with the blood. (from the young sacrificed bulls)

He says (v.8ff) ‘the blood of the covenant is sprinkled upon you.  **You belong to God now…**Sealed by the blood of the sacrifice**.** And in a similar way , the new covenant is sealed in the blood of Jesus ….

….poured out… (v.20) And in his blood – he ratified the new covenant promise of God.

That you can be completely forgiven. And know God personally. So for those of us here who have sheltered under the blood of Christ …who have put their trust in him ..who have his blood on their hearts

You belong to God now.

**Sealed in my blood**

He will never let us go.

**That’s why Jesus had to die.**

**Q. And as Jesus shares this meal with his friends did you notice the object of this great sacrifice?**

It is quite unique to Luke. The object of God’s love is ..**YOU !**

Mark says this

22While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

23Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

24"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

Matthew says virtually the same thing.

**But Luke** says something slightly different:

v.19b “this is my body….which is given for YOU”

v.20 “this cup, that is poured out, is given for YOU”

THIS DEATH ….was for YOU

You literally means – in your place! Just like the blood on the door-post. This is for YOU

= His sacrifice was a SUBSTITUION. In the same way that the Passover Lamb was. The object of God’s love is…? ..YOU! (YOU!!) It’s for all of us.

And those who ate that bread and drank that cup…were signifying their acceptance and personal involvement as they sat at the table with Jesus ….saying*….“this is for me…I am a member of the New covenant of God” He’s done it for me!*

**OUR LORD’S SUPPER**

And the same thing happens whenever we share in the Lord’s Supper together…

We are saying “IT WAS FOR ME! - A SINNER WHO WAS GUILTY AS EVER COULD BE”

HE DID IT FOR ME! His Blood shed for my sins. That’s what makes you a Christian.

**Final point v.21-23**

**21** But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table.

**22** For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined,

but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

**23** And they began to question one another,

which of them it could be who was going to do this.

Judas was there ?

**Q. What does that say about communion ?**

We can take communion but –doesn’t save us. His death is for us. But each of need to say “it was for me” and trust in Christ. Judas never did that

**What is communion ?**

Coming to the table = one of the ways to strengthen our faith. Not as a ritual / performance - But simply to say “Thank you Jesus for dying for me.” Because it means that **Satan has been defeated**

It means my sins have been forgiven. It means that the Spirit of God lives with in me. That the new covenant is inaugurated – and I have a part in it. It means that Christ’s sacrifice was not just for the sins of the world …BUT FOR MY SINS. …and I long to show him how much I love him, because he first loved me.

Are you regularly found at the Lord’s table

You should be.

The Lord’s table is the place where we show God how much we love him. And what I mean by this is that …sometimes – when we gather for communion – we can somehow act as though we were not at the Lord’s table (During / afterwards).

The object of God’s love is YOU. We are supposed to remember….. **Jesus.** Not a creed. Not a rule.

Not a religious ritual, but a person. **Jesus**. The man who died for us all. So that the wrath of God passed-over on to him – so we might be spared. “How Deep The Father’s Love for Us”

A GREAT SONG. The words accompany the Supper so well. “Behold the man upon a cross”. That is what we are supposed to remember. One line really hits me hard “*Why should I gain from his reward.”*

*I cannot give an answer. But this I know with all my heart, his wounds have paid my ransom.*

And the Lord’s Supper helps me to remember that.

That God, through Christ, 2000 years ago, paid the full penalty for what I deserve – just at the right time, Christ died for me. (PAUSE)

**Let’s pray**

*Heavenly Father we thank you so much – for sending Jesus – at just the right time –*

*That you displayed your love, for every one of us here. That He was the great Passover Lamb – who died in our place – so that your wrath would pass over us. We pray Lord, specifically for everyone here today that we would know this. That those who do know this – who have accepted you as Lord and Saviour – as we come to your table, we will remember Jesus – and “behold the man upon a cross”*

*We ask this in Jesus’ name.*

*Amen*