

Good Friday 4/9/2020

- I. The night before Christ was crucified, He gathered with his disciples for the Passover meal. Passover was the most significant time on the calendar of the Jews, and all of his disciples (being Jewish) would have anticipated and understood the **historical** significance of what was taking place in the upper room in Jerusalem where they went through the familiar ceremony.
  - A. Passover looked back 1,500 years before Christ, when the Israelite people were slaves of the Pharaoh in Egypt. God had heard their cries for deliverance from a power that was terribly oppressive and too great for them to overcome.
    1. So God sent 9 plagues in quick succession in order to devastate the power of Egypt, and humble Pharaoh, and to persuade him to let God's people go.
      - a) He turned the river Nile to blood, he sent frogs, lice, flies to cover the land. He brought pestilence on their livestock. They suffered from boils. God destroyed all of their crops with hail and locusts. Lastly he covered the entire land of Egypt with a darkness that could be felt.
      - b) But after all these crushing blows, Pharaoh's heart was not softened, but hardened further. He refused to let the Israelite people go no matter what.
    2. So God sent a 10th and final plague to crush Pharaoh and glorify himself. He would dispatch a destroying angel to go throughout the land, striking down every firstborn son in Egypt, including in the very household of the King.
      - a) But God gave his people an ordinance in order to preserve them. They were to kill a Lamb, and eat it all with bitter herbs before morning. They were to have no leaven in their households during this process, and they were to eat the meal fully dressed, staff in hand, ready to leave Egypt.
      - b) Most importantly, they were to take the blood of the slaughtered lamb and smear it on the top and sides of the doors into their homes. **Exodus 12:13 ESV** "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."
    3. So as God exercised judgement on the great nation, his own people were spared, and walked out of Egypt, having plundered their former oppressors.
  - B. So in their commemoration of this event, the disciples understood what it pointed to in their national past. They celebrated Passover every year with their families. They heard of God's deliverance many times, and understood the lamb that was slaughtered, the bitter herbs, the absence of leaven, the need to be fully prepared for a quick deliverance from Egypt. They understood sacrifice, and that only the lamb's blood would protect them from God's outpoured wrath.
- II. But while they might have understood the meaning of Passover for their past, they missed the meaning of it entirely for their present and future. They did not comprehend that Passover was a directional arrow, pointing to a much greater, all encompassing deliverance, wrought for Jews and Gentiles, Egyptians, and Americans alike. They didn't know this deliverance would happen before their eyes.
  - A. They knew that the lamb each family sacrificed so long ago was sacrificial. It represented a high cost that must be paid in order for them to be forgiven.
    1. Even though some of them had once been followers of John the Baptist, they weren't remembering his grand testimony about Jesus. **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!”

2. They didn’t understand the Lamb to be sacrificed was seated at the table with them, silent before his slaughterers, willing to lay down his life for theirs.
  - a) Furthermore they didn’t understand that consuming the Lamb entirely was only a symbol for our need to take Christ, the perfect Lamb into ourselves, consuming him, nourished and sustained only by his grace.
  - b) **John 6:54 ESV** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. **55** For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. **56** Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.
- B. They did not understand that the bitter herbs they consumed represented sin, that never satisfies; that the herbs also represented the cup of bitter suffering the Lamb of God was about to drink down to the dregs for them, so that they could enjoy the sweet wine of renewed fellowship with the Father.
  1. Though Christ had told them plainly 3 times during his time with them that he would go to Jerusalem, suffer much from the chief priests and eventually be crucified, the Bible tells us they did not understand these words.
  2. They were blinded by their political dreams and aspirations of what they thought Jesus was **supposed** to be, and what he was **supposed** to do.
- C. As they scurried through the house year after year, making sure that no leaven was found within the house on that sacred night, they missed the fact that Jesus, with the same diligence would remove the power of sin from their souls.
  1. **1 John 3:5 ESV** You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.
  2. The Bible says that a “little leaven leavens the whole lump”. None of us (in ourselves) are without the corrupting influence of sin constantly dogging us. But Christ has broken all power of sin even as we struggle with the presence of it. He hides us in himself, where we are untouched by sin’s poison.
- D. But most of all, they failed to see that it was the blood of Jesus, not the blood of a lamb from the flock, that when applied to their hearts (as the doors of their souls), that would serve to satisfy the holy wrath of God. It was the blood of Jesus that mean utter devastation for all the enemies of God and his people: sin, curses, the devil and his hordes, and the final enemy to be defeated: death! Meditate on these few verses that explore the power of Christ’s blood for you:
  1. **Colossians 1:19 ESV** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood of his cross.** (peace with God)
  2. **Ephesians 1:7 ESV** In him we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,** according to the riches of his grace... (forgiveness of sin)
  3. **Hebrews 9:14 ESV** how much more will **the blood of Christ,** who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, **purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.** (freedom from dead works that we may serve God).

4. **Hebrews 10:19 ESV** Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus** (Confidence in Prayer)
  5. **Hebrews 13:12 ESV** So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. (Makes us holy)
  6. **Revelation 12:11 ESV** And they have **conquered him by the blood of the Lamb** and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. (Jesus blood enables us to overcome our enemy in temptation, fear, persecution, sickness, death, etc.)
- III. We have benefits the first disciples did not yet have. We have the Word of God, completed and able to remind us of these things. We have the Spirit of God dwelling within us as believers to prompt our hearts to consume Christ. It is the Spirit who applies Christ's blood to the door of our hearts, resulting in salvation.
- A. Pastor Dave is going to read the story of Christ's crucifixion to us. Though you may have heard it 1,000 times, don't sin by tuning it out! Put aside all distractions. Let your heart be broken as you see in your mind's eye the precious blood of Jesus spilled, as you see his sacred head, now wounded; as you hear his groans of agony mingled with love. Be moved toward the savior!
  - B. Meditate, remember, and prepare your hearts to come thoughtfully by faith in a few moments to his table; to feast on the riches of his grace and the fullness of his purifying blood.
- IV. (Words of Institution) **Luke 22:14 ESV** And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. **15** And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. **16** For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." **17** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. **18** For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." **19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **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.
- V. **Benediction:** (May) Christ...dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19** and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.