

Luke 22:1-37 // Maundy Thursday

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[0 : 0 0] Luke 22, beginning at verse 1, on page 1057 in the Bibles in front of you. Now the festival of unleavened bread, called the Passover, was approaching. And the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officials of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted. And agreed to give him money. He consented and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present. Then came the day of unleavened bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.

Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover. Where do you want us to prepare for it? they asked. He replied, As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

Follow him to the house that he enters and say to the owner of the house, The teacher asks, Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples? He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished.

[1 : 1 3] Make preparations there. They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

And he said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.

After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

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

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.

[2 : 1 4] The son of man will go as it has been decreed. And woe to that man who betrays him. They began to question among themselves, Which of them it might be who would do this? This is the word of the Lord.

Thank you. Well, good evening. I'm very happy to be up here with us today. My name is David. I'm one of the members of the church here.

And I believe you can all hear me now, which is helpful for me and maybe less so for you. But let me pray for us as we start. Father, we thank you for your word tonight.

We thank you for this passage that's before us. Perhaps well-known words for many of us. But Father, I pray that as we look through it tonight, you will be very near to us. You will help us. You will help us to see in clarity what it is that Jesus asks us to remember when we remember his death. We ask you in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So I'm taking it on trust that we're out here on a Thursday night. So we are the ones who are keen.

[3 : 1 8] We're happy to get stuck into a bit of text tonight, which is good. Because we're going to see a few of the things that Jesus really wants us to focus on, or that Luke wants us to focus on, when we think about the meal that's before us tonight, and when we think about this Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples.

And straight away, I'm going to focus our eyes onto particularly verses 14 down to 23 in particular. And we're going to see throughout this passage that there is a massive focus on Jesus' death. The anticipation of Jesus' death works its way through this entire passage, even as the disciples and Jesus take part in this Passover meal together.

Now, Passover, what's Passover? Passover is a time of celebration in the Jewish calendar. It's a festival. It's a festival when you remember a time when Israel had been in slavery in Egypt, and God rescued them, God redeemed them.

This was the key moment that showed that God was going to bring death to each Egyptian household, but Israel were instructed to kill a lamb and to put blood on their doorpost, and God's angel would pass over this house.

[4 : 55] I'm sure for many of us, that's a well-worn story and a well-understood Sunday school story, but it's a story that was retold over and over and over again, year upon year upon year, in the Jewish festival of Passover.

They remembered that if you had the blood on your house, you were safe. And if you didn't have the blood on your house, then death came to your house.

And this was the final straw for Pharaoh who then allowed the Israelite people to be released from Egypt and they gained their freedom.

Jesus in verse 15 of our passage says, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. That's actually the fifth time that Luke tells us in these first 15 verses that this is a Passover meal.

He says, it's a Passover, it's a Passover, it's a Passover, it's a Passover. It's a Passover. So that we get the idea that the meal that they're eating together is a Passover.

[6 : 07] It's a reminder of that Exodus story. Now, there's absolutely nothing at all that is strange about a Jewish rabbi and his disciples eating a Passover at Passover time.

That's what you expect them to do. There's nothing weird about that. There's nothing weird about them taking bread and taking wine together, taking some lamb together, although it's not mentioned here, and various other things.

That's normal. That's what you expect. But... Yeah, so it's normal for them to remember that Exodus story together.

It's normal for them to look back. It's normal for them to praise God. But also it's normal for them to look forward. To look forward in anticipation of God's future blessing.

So each element in that Passover is designed to get you to remember God's salvation. So the bread that they take together is like the bread that they ate that night when the Egyptians left Egypt.

[7 : 17] But when Jesus takes the bread, it says in verse 19, and he took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them saying, this is my body given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. That's the weird bit. That's the strange bit. The eating of Passover bit, that's not the strange bit. This is my body broken for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. That's the strange bit. He's essentially saying, this really important Passover bread, this bread that reminds you of the time when Egypt was in, or when Israel was in Egypt, and it reminds you of salvation, it reminds you of rescue year upon year upon year.

Now you're going to use this bread to remember me and my body. Specifically, what does he do in these verses? Specifically, he takes the bread, he breaks the bread, he distributes the bread among the disciples as they're there.

And this broken bread shared among them all was to be a picture of Jesus' broken body given for them. Now just think about how bold and how wild it is for Jesus to take the main picture of Old Testament salvation, the big picture of Israel being removed from Egypt and given salvation by God and saying, from now on, you're going to take this symbol and you're going to remember me and my body broken for you on your behalf.

[9 : 03] Yet that is exactly what he's asking the disciples to do. And it says something about how he expects them to understand his death. He's tying his death to these symbols, just as Israel needed the Passover lamb to die, just as they needed to be safe, to be redeemed, so also we need Jesus to die so that we can be safe, so that we can be redeemed in a much greater way.

Yet the Passover doesn't just look back, the Passover looks forward. Verse 20, in the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you.

Now there was more than one cup of wine at a Passover and particularly the cup of wine that was taken after supper had the function of looking forward. You looked forward in hope and expectation of everything that God was still about to do from your perspective, all the promises that he had promised, the new covenant promises he had promised, the kingdom that was coming which was to

be yours, you looked forward to all of that in anticipation.

And as I say, just as the Lord has saved his people before, you are to say he's going to do it again. We'll see salvation in the Lord's kingdom.

You are to say together as his people that he will be our God and we will be his people. His covenant promises, his promises to us will be fulfilled.

[10:49] And Jesus says those promises that you're looking forward to, called here the new covenant, those things that you're hoping for, the knowledge of God, security with God, being close with God and his kingdom, they're going to come about through my death too.

This cup is the new covenant in my blood. And he does something really interesting with that wine imagery. See, wine in the Old Testament, it can be an image of celebration, like feasting under the new covenant, feasting with God, feasting in the presence and celebration.

And it can be a cup of God's wrath and anger, two different ways the Old Testament can take wine imagery and cup imagery. And Jesus seems to bring both of these pictures together.

As the disciples hold in their hand a cup of celebration, Jesus seems to be saying to them that the pathway to that celebration is through my blood being poured out for you.

my blood is the blood of the new covenant. If you have the blood, you are safe. So Jesus is picturing all of Old Testament blessings as he draws the attention to the bread and to the cup.

[12:21] He's pointing to the redemption that's in the Exodus, but also the future hope that the people feel as they look forward to their future redemption. And he's saying, all of this, all of this is going to come through my death.

And when you remember this feast in the future, you'll be remembering me. Now, all that Jesus is saying about the impact of his death, it's good for us briefly to focus on Jesus as king.

Because there are a couple of mentions in this, in these verses and a couple of verses that follow them. See, throughout Luke, Jesus has been pictured as a king. You may remember that, I mean, he's given gold when he's born and all the way through he's preaching this gospel of the kingdom. And here we see Jesus having authority now in this passage, but also in this passage you see him having a future kingdom. Now, did you notice as we read through, and this is one of these things that I think you only notice if you're reading it for the first time and you don't know what's coming. So if you're here for the first time, you have an advantage on everybody else in the room because nobody else noticed this, but you might have. Did you notice in verse 6 how much tension is created in this passage?

[13:46] It says, this is about Judas, he consented and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present. Judas is looking to betray Jesus whenever there is no crowd present.

Then immediately what happens? Verses 7 to 13. Jesus is like, Peter, Andrew, go and prepare a really quiet room for us to have this Passover meal together.

Go somewhere where there's no crowd present. Go somewhere where we can be alone and we can have this very quiet and intimate gathering together and we can have the Passover together. And you should be thinking if you're reading through this for the first time, Jesus, what are you doing? Jesus, you're setting a trap for yourself. Judas is going to get you. He knows where you're going. You've just set something up where there's no crowd.

He's going to come and he's going to get you. But Jesus isn't setting a trap for himself, is he?

Throughout the rest of this passage, we see over and over again that he knows how he will die.

[15:02] He knows who will betray him. he knows in the following verses who will deny him that Peter will deny him. We didn't read it so I'll just point that out to you.

It's in verse 31 and 32. He points out Peter here called Simon will deny him. And he knows how life is going to change for the disciples if you read further down towards verses 36 and following. it's going to get really difficult for the disciples. He knows all of these things. From here until the end, every moment is under control.

Everything is under Jesus' knowledge. It's all in the plan. The outcome is certain. Now, consistently throughout the Gospels, the disciples struggle with ideas in Jesus' teaching, but there's one in particular that they really struggle with.

Jesus tells them that both things, he's going to be the king of the kingdom and he's going to be the one who will be betrayed and who will be killed, who will die.

[16:17] And they really struggle to see how these ideas can go together and we sympathize with them, don't we, because they don't seem to go together. How can you be the king who's also betrayed and dies?

Yet Jesus seems to deliberately place these ideas together. You see in verse 16, for I tell you I will not eat it again, that's past the meal, until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.

Then in verse 18, I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. You actually see a few verses later, 28 to 30, he says, you are those who have stood by me in my trials and I confer on you a kingdom just as my father conferred on me so you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

See, Jesus seems to be very clear and showing us very clearly that although he is currently in control, his kingdom is going to come in all of its fullness through his death.

These things, these symbols are pointing to towards his death, that's what's going to bring his kingdom because all of the blessings come through his death.

[17:35] So Jesus won't have Passover again but as that meal is transformed into remembrance of his death, he looks forward to feasting and drinking again with his disciples in his kingdom after his death.

So the feasting and the joy and the glory of Jesus' kingdom comes after and in response to his death. He is the eternal king of God's kingdom.

So, so far we've seen Jesus' death gives us this new picture of redemption, this new hope of God's future blessings and it's the new stage in the victory of God's kingdom.

But very briefly just to close off, how exactly does it do all of these things? How is it effective in doing all of those things? See, there's a picture in here that's so subtle that you could miss it.

Look with me down at verse 27. Jesus says, for who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? It's not the one who is at the table but I am among you as one who serves.

[18:50] I am among you as one who serves. Now, on its own that doesn't mean much, does it? Luke doesn't even mention the feet washing stuff that John mentions that maybe people feel has been missing out of this passage.

The point's more subtle. By the time it gets down to verse 37, his disciples are confused by the word sword and as they're taking an inventory of swords.

Jesus quotes Isaiah. And he quotes from Isaiah 53 verse 12. Verse 37. As it is written, he is numbered with the transgressors.

He says, and I tell you this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment. This is a quote from a passage in Isaiah that describes a man a faithful man, a servant of God who stands apart from all of the others in the book of Isaiah.

In Isaiah, there is a problem. We've got an unholy people and a holy God. And how can the unholy people ever be with the holy God? Because the people were failing to serve God.

[20:04] They were supposed to be a servant of God, but they were failing to serve God consistently, consistently, consistently. And God promised he would raise up his own servant, one who is faithful. But one who is killed.

One who doesn't die for his own sin, but dies as a substitute for the sins of others bearing their punishment. Now, when the New Testament authors quote the Old Testament, they tend to expect you to be thinking about the passage that they quote.

So let's read, I'll just read two verses from Isaiah 53, verses 11 and 12. It's on page 741 if you want to come with me. Sorry, it's on page 742 if you want to come with me.

It says, after he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied. By his knowledge, the righteous one, my servant, will justify many. He will bear their iniquities.

Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great. He will divide the spoils with the strong because he's poured out his life unto death and he was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

[21:16] Here the servant stands in glory in the kingdom. Why? Because he did what no one else could do. He stood as a substitute.

And that righteousness before God that nobody had, he had it and he gave it. You see it in verse 11.

He will justify many. By his knowledge, my righteous servant will justify many. He will bear the their iniquities. And for the first time, an unholy people could approach a holy God.

So why does Jesus get away with making such bold claims about himself? He gets away with it because he is the servant. He gets away with putting all these images onto himself because he is the servant.

and so as we take the bread, we remember that his death in our place, if it is for us, if we are his, if we trust in him, secures our eternal redemption.

[22 : 31] because he is our substitute. He is the one who takes away our sins. He is the one who makes us righteous. And as we take the cup, we remember that his blood secures those future promises of God for us, that we will be with him in his kingdom feasting in resurrected glory because he is our servant.

He is our king. He is our substitute. He is our Lord. Amen.