

THE LAST PASSOVER

Mark 14:10-21

Intro: The fact that four men were appointed by the Holy Spirit to give us in Scripture a record of the earthly life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, is, in itself an indication of the supreme importance of the Lord Jesus Christ in Holy Scripture. In fact, no one in all of the Bible can compare with Him, nor take the place that is given to Him in the Word of God. Moses and David wrote a large part of the Old Testament, and much of the OT is about them, but basically they wrote about Christ. I love the story about the man who read through the prophecy of Isaiah, and when he had finished, he asked, “Where is He?” The Holy Spirit had enabled him to see that Isaiah wrote about a Person, and that Person was Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the major character of the Bible. The focus is upon Him in every book of the Bible. To state it another way, He is the Key Who unlocks the message of the Bible. His coming was anticipated in the OT. It is described for us in the Gospels, and it is explained for us in the remaining books of the NT.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all agree on His miraculous birth, His perfect life, His miraculous works, His amazing teaching, then upon His death on the Cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension back to the Father in heaven, and the promise of His return. Four times in Scripture, and one of them from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, we are told of the power, the authority, of two or three witnesses. These are in Deuteronomy 17:6 and 19:15, Matthew 18:16, and 2 Corinthians 13:1. But in the case of the four Gospels we have four, detailed, and strong witnesses of the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, *plus* all of the testimony concerning Christ that can be found in the rest of the Bible, both the OT and the NT.

In the Gospel of John we have the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as He reviewed four other witnesses concerning Himself. You will find them in John 5:32-39. They are John the Baptist, the works that Christ did while He was on earth, the Father Himself, and the Scriptures. The evidence concerning the Deity of Christ and His unique life and ministry are overwhelming.

As I mentioned last Sunday, in a special way, in the case of the Gospel of Mark, we come in chapters 14, 15, and 16 to the concluding events in the life of Christ upon the earth. No one ever died such a horrible death as

did the Lord Jesus. And yet, at the same time, His death was glorious and His resurrection was triumphant. Upon that death and resurrection rests the only truth concerning salvation from sin, salvation from Divine judgment, and salvation unto eternal life. The person who denies, or who even ignores, this amazing message of the Bible does so to his, or her, eternal loss and everlasting judgment. And so in dealing with the historical record of the death and resurrection of Christ we are dealing with the only message of hope that there is for a sinful humanity. Those of us who know this story the best, need to read it over and over. We must never lose sight of its truth. The better we understand it, the precious it becomes to us.

Last week at the beginning of chapter 14 we learned that it was Passover time in Israel. But the tragic information that John Mark passed on to his readers at this time was that the religious leaders of Israel, the chief priests and the scribes, were not praising God for His marvelous deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and the marvelous message that it gave down through Israel's history of the redemptive work of the Passover Lamb, but they were plotting the murder of Jesus Christ. They were plotting how they could "take Him by craft, and put Him to death" (Mark 14:1). For them to have been plotting the death of anyone, would have been tragic beyond words, but how can we possibly describe the terrible crime they were planning when their object was the Son of the living God? But that is exactly what John Mark was preparing to describe for us in the closing words of this Gospel.

Please turn with me back to Exodus 12 where we have the record of the first Passover. I want to show you how that Passover Lamb pictured our Lord Jesus Christ. Tonight Pastor Will is going to be dealing with Christ as our Passover from 1 Corinthians 5, and if he has some of the same things to say tonight that I am saying this morning, it has to be because the Lord wants us to really understand what was going on in the life of our Lord here in these closing chapters of the Gospel of Mark.

(Explain what the people were required to do on that first Passover night: Exodus 12:1-14, 23. There were not many ways that the life of the first-born son could be spared. There was just *one!*)

Now coming back to our text in Mark 14, what do we learn as we pick up the story in verse 10?

I. THE OFFER MADE BY JUDAS ISCARIOT (Mark 14:10-11).

Who was Judas Iscariot? Mark tells us in case we do not know. He was “one of the twelve.” He was one who supposedly was a member of our Lord’s family, so to speak, as Matthew Henry described him. How could he do such a thing? We learn at this point that Judas had always been an impostor, a fake. He evidently had joined the disciples because he knew that it gave him a opportunity to get his hands on “money.” But when he realized that the Lord did not have a political agenda, he turned against the Lord. But it is the Apostle John who tells us that “Satan entered into him” (John 13:27). He was not just demon possessed, but he was Satan possessed. And yet he was fully responsible for what he was planning to do. He went to those “chief priests” and offered to betray Jesus unto them. This would solve the problem that the Jewish leaders feared from the people. They promised to give Judas money, and that is just what he wanted. So he went out determined to do what the Jews had promised to give him if he would deliver the Lord into their hands. That is what it meant that they were going to betray the Lord.

At this point Mark directed our attention to:

II. THE LORD’S PLANS FOR OBSERVING THE PASSOVER (Mark 14:12-17).

It is important for all of us to realize that the Lord was fully aware of all that was going on. He knew what Judas was up to. And he knew better than any of the apostles that which was signified by the Passover feast. He knew that His hour had come. But, as the case was when the Lord needed the donkey upon which to ride into Jerusalem, and had made the preparation necessary for the disciples to find a donkey, so in connection with the Passover, all unknown to the disciples, and not recorded in Scripture, the Lord had made plans as to where He would meet with His disciples to observe this very significant feast which He was just about to fulfil in a matter of hours.

So when the disciples asked where they would eat the Passover, He told them, and He sent two of His disciples to make the necessary preparations. Mark does not tell us who they were, but Luke, in Luke 22:8, tells us that it was Peter and John. In verses 13 through 15 the Lord told them where to go, what to say, and what to do. (Read Mark 14:13-15). This is one of the passages that emphasizes the idea of “the upper room.” Who

the man was who owned this place, we do not know. Neither do we know what he had done to prepare it for the Lord and His disciples. Some day we will meet him in glory. Wouldn't we have been blessed beyond any way we could express it if the Lord had chosen our home in which to eat the Passover?

For a moment I want to go again to the Gospel of John, chapter 13, to pick up some words which the Apostle John wrote about the Lord and His disciples at this time. I am referring to John 13:1 which tells us this:

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end (John 13:1).

I believe it is important to take a look into the heart of the Lord as preparations were made for the Passover, and then as they observed it. The Lord knew that He was the Passover Lamb Who was to die very soon. But while His heart had to be heavy because He knew what was coming, yet His heart was filled with love for those eleven men who had been with Him throughout His ministry. It was a very emotional time for our Lord. He loved having His men with Him, and He was going to tell them that while He was going away, He was coming again to take them to be where He was. You and I will never fully understand how much the Lord loves us. This is why He died for the eleven, and why He died for those of us who are saved. He went through that whole terrible ordeal which led Him to the Cross for two reasons: because of His great love for the Father, and because of His great love for all of us. And you will remember how on that occasion our Lord took a towel, wrapped it around Himself, and went around the table and washed the feet of His disciples. Draw all of the strength and blessing that you can from this scene of our Lord with His disciples. And the truth is that the Lord loves us every bit as much as He loved those eleven disciples. And I know that losing Judas was not easy for Him at all.

But anyway, the Lord and His disciples had gathered in the Upper Room, and as they were eating, the Lord began to speak to them. His first words we find in Mark 14:18. (Read.)

This made them all very sad. But will you notice that not one of them said, "It is not I, Lord." Neither did any of the disciples say, "I know who you are talking about, Lord." But one by one we are told that they all said, "Is it I?" This is quite a commentary on the spiritual insight each of

them had about themselves. “Is it I?” They were well enough acquainted with the weakness and fickleness of their own hearts, that they were suspicious of themselves. Not one said, “It is Judas.” He had done a perfect job of covering up the true nature of his heart. However, each disciple was thinking about himself, knowing that he might be the guilty one.

When you have read this passage before, did it ever occur to you to say, “Lord, could I ever betray you. Is it I?” It is impossible for any of us to understand how weak we are, or how little it takes to turn us against our Lord. Maybe Judas was not the only one among the twelve who was disappointed that the Lord was not going to overthrow Rome, and set up His kingdom on earth! They all had argued with Him whenever He had spoken to them about His death and resurrection. Nothing is more important for any of us than to ask ourselves how much we really love the Lord, and to make sure that we really love Him.

Now look at verse 21, and I hope that none of us will ever forget it. Read and think about it, phrase by phrase and clause by clause. The Son of God was going to die “as it is written of Him.” The Scriptures like Psalm 22 and Isaiah 52 and 53 predicted. It has been the purpose of God from all eternity. He was, as Peter said later, “Delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” But those who had any part in it did a very wicked thing, and they would bear the responsibility for it. So what should have been written on the grave marker of Judas (if there was one). It should have said, “Good were it for that man if he had never been born.”

I am quite sure that when Judas, the son of Iscariot, was born, his parents were as happy as parents usually are when a child is born to them. It would have been very usual if their family, neighbors, and friends did not rejoice with them. But no one would ever have thought that the Son of God some day would say about that precious baby, “Good were it for this child if it had never been born.”

On millions of millions of graves throughout this world, these words could be engraved upon their markers: “Good were it for this person if he, or she, had never been born.” Was the Lord thinking about the trouble that Judas was going to cause for Him? No, not at all! The Lord was thinking about what awaits any person who goes out of this life not knowing Christ as his, or her, Savior. It would have been better for him if he

had never been born.

Concl: There always have been people in every generation who have their names on a church roll who have never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Preachers there are who deny everything that the Bible teaches. In the megachurches of today rarely, if ever, are people warned to flee from the wrath to come. Even many who profess to be evangelicals are deny that hell is eternal, and they preach that there are other ways for people to be saved except through faith in Christ.

But you don't have to be opposed to the Gospel to be among those for whom it would be better if they had never been born. The writer of the book of Hebrews raised the question, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. 2:3). You don't have to reject the Gospel, just keep on neglecting the Gospel, and death may overtake you. And if it does, the torments of eternal judgment in hell awaits you. Neglecting the Gospel is really one form of rejecting it.

What Peter told the Jews in Jerusalem two thousand years ago as he preached the Gospel to them, is still true today. He said, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ,

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

The Lord Jesus Christ is called a Savior because He saves us from the penalty of sin, which is eternity in hell. For those of us who are trusting Him, He saves us from the power of sin. And some day, when we are in glory, He will save us from ever sinning again. All people are sinners, and sinners need a Savior, and Christ is the only Savior. Cf. John 14:6.

If Christ is not your Savior, then it would be better for you if you had never been born. But you have been born. Now Christ is your only hope. Make sure that He is your Savior today.