

Sabbath Before Passover—2013

Fred R. Coulter—March 23, 2013

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to the Sabbath before the Passover. This year the Passover is on a Sunday evening. This year is one of the earliest times that we have had in a long time for keeping the Passover, and because of the variance of things with the Calculated Hebrew Calendar; please know that this is how God keeps everything in its season and in its time. Let's examine some things concerning the Passover and what Jesus Christ has done for us, when He—as God manifested in the flesh—came to the earth to reconcile the world to Himself.

That begins with those who are the firstfruits, who are also the ones who are called the Church of the Firstborn. Only those who have been baptized and are under the grace of God should be taking of the true Christian Passover.

It's amazing—just like so many things in the Bible—they're right there, right in front of our eyes. But before God opens our eyes we can't see them; we can't understand them. We think that those who should be the experts in the Word of God turn out to be that they reject some of the most important things, and one of the most important things that they reject—as we have seen—is the Passover. That's how we've also seen that the world cannot understand what God is doing, even though He put it right in His Word.

Even the apostles and the disciples did not know. *No, they did not know!* Let's see what Jesus said to the disciples before they began to understand what really took place. Think of this for a minute: They were taught by Jesus Christ personally for three and half years. There were the 12 apostles and one of them a betrayer—Judas Iscariot. Yet, none of the other apostles knew who Jesus was talking about when He said, 'One of you will betray Me tonight.' That shows how something special has to happen in one's life before you begin to understand the Word of God.

Jesus had to bring that to the apostles, too. He had to do what we find in Luke 24. Let's understand something very, very important: ***Anything we learn and understand of the Truth of God has to come from God!*** As we've seen many times the key to understanding the Bible is this: ***You obey what you learn; as you obey you will begin to understand!***

There has to be something that occurs in our mind that is spiritual, a spiritual action from God—

- that gives us *understanding*

- that gives us the *yearning*
- that gives us the *desire*

—all of that comes from God! Yes, we have our part; our part is

- to believe
- to obey the voice of God
- to do as God as God has commanded

In that then is this marvelous operation that God has, even that which appears to be a complete tragedy is going to be worked together for good. After Jesus was resurrected from the dead and He appeared to the apostles. After they made sure that it was Him, and He made sure they knew it was Him, here's what He did: Jesus gathered them around Him and opened the Scriptures. *Everything that we learn has to come from God through Jesus Christ!*

Luke 24:44: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (vs 44-45). That's the key.

The world can hold the Bible. They can read the Bible. But just as we find in Matt. 13, if they will not believe, if they will not hear, if they will not obey, they do not understand. Jesus had to open their minds to understand the Scriptures.

Verse 46: "And said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem'" (vs 46-47)—because that's where God placed His name.

It had to begin at the temple, which it did, on the Day of Pentecost, because that's where God gave the authority:

- in the Law of Moses
- in the Prophets
- in the Psalms

Let's go back to Gen. 3 and let's see that right after the sin of Adam and Eve the first prophecy of the coming of the Messiah. Jesus was speaking of Himself because He was the Lord God of the Old Testament. He revealed, as soon as this sin of Adam and Eve—combined with Satan the devil—was brought forth to God, then He had to judge; He had to sentence. Then He also prophesied

before He gave any prophecy and before He gave any judgment to Adam and Eve, He had to combat Satan the devil first—and that’s what He did in Gen. 3. Yet, that confrontation was not going to end until we find clear in the book of Revelation. You know what happened when Adam and Eve sinned. You know all about that, so we won’t go through that.

After God talked to Adam and Eve, ‘Why did you do this?’ to the woman, and to Adam, ‘Why did you do this?’

Genesis 3:14: “And the LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this you *are* cursed above all livestock, and above every animal of the field. You shall go upon your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.’”

Here is the prophecy, because there has to be a way out. Only God can provide the way out. Since God made Adam and Eve and hence formed all of us through the operation of pro-creation, therefore, only He can solve the problem of the sin of Adam and Eve. That’s the whole lesson of the Bible. We can’t solve our own sin problems. We can’t solve the difficulties that we bring upon ourselves.

- we are limited
- we have the ‘law of sin and death’ in us
- we are going to die and return to dust, just like Jesus said

and only He can bring us out of that condition. Here’s the prophecy, speaking to the serpent, He said:

Verse 15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will bruise your head... [against Satan and everything that he has done] ...and you shall bruise His heel”—speaking of the crucifixion. That’s the main Scripture that we have in the book of Genesis before the Flood.

After the Flood we have some other Scriptures that talk about it. After the Flood we have some very unique things done between God and Abraham, and the very first thing that He does is to show that *He would come and die to fulfill His promise and the blessing* that He gave to Abraham.

Isn’t it interesting how every time something like this comes up, God intervenes to show the way out. Adam and Eve, it does not appear, were granted repentance. They were removed from the Garden of Eden and God placed cherubim at the entrance so that they couldn’t come in and eat of the tree of life.

However, God did kill goats and made them—with the skins—coverings for their bodies. These goats were also probably an atonement for their sin. Not that they could come back into the

Garden of Eden, but that they could meet with God at the east entrance of the Garden of Eden. God would come out of the Garden of Eden to meet with them there. That’s probably where there was an altar, because we know that Abel offered sacrifices, as well, and he was counted as righteous.

Now we come all the way to Gen. 15, and as you know, as we have covered, this is quite a tremendous thing that God did here. This was really very remarkable from the point of view that the only way that there would be reconciliation of God and man was for God to pay the price for the sins of all mankind.

That was not known back here in Gen. 15, but as we have learned, everything in the Old Testament being the Word of God is like a seed. When it’s planted and when it grows then we begin to understand. But when you just look at the seed, you don’t know what’s in it; you don’t know what it’s going to be’ you don’t know how it’s going to turn out.

Let’s come to Gen. 15 and let’s see what God told Abraham. He told him he would have a son from his own loins (v 4). Then God gave him a tremendous and spectacular covenant; the rest of the Bible flows from Gen. 15. In order to make that to take place, as we have seen and learned concerning the sacrifice here, God pledged His own future death.

Genesis 15:4: “...‘This man shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth out of your own loins shall be your heir.’” Then God did something very interesting, very unusual. And we know from the things that we have studied previously, that on the night that this began, that God did this, this was to be the night of the Passover.

Quite an amazing thing— isn’t it? As we have learned and studied, God has His *appointed times*. Every one of His Holy Days are the *appointed times*, and that which is the greatest to God is counted as the least by human beings and rejected.

After He told them that about his physical seed, God, v 5: “...brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘**So shall your seed be.**’” In that there is a dual meaning.

1. ***the physical seed***—through the one who would be his immediate heir, his son Isaac
2. ***the spiritual seed***—which would come through the New Covenant

Then on

- through the Millennial Covenant

- through the Last Great Day Covenant

So, there are many things—just like a seed—that are all enclosed in some of the things that God has said.

Verse 6: “And he believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness.” Why would God count it for righteousness? *Because he believed what God said!* And God gave him a task that was impossible: *to number the stars.*

Still today no one, no man, can even guess—they have finally given up on guessing—how many stars and galaxies there are out there. The latest estimate was 360-billion. Well, I think they’re going to find that there are trillions and trillions of them.

So, God’s plan and God’s creation is so great that to look at the little seed of what we’re talking about today becomes almost unfathomable that through God’s plan that would take place.

Now then, there was this special sacrifice that God told Abraham to do, v 9. “And He said to him, ‘Take Me a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.’ And he took all these to himself, and divided them in the middle... [so that there was a path that God could walk through] ...and laid each piece opposite the other...” (vs 9-10).

Then to show and demonstrate what was going to happen, God brought a *deep sleep* upon Abraham, as the sun was going down; v 12: “And it came to pass, as the sun was going down, that a deep sleep fell upon Abram. And, behold, a horror of **great darkness** fell upon him!” A prophetic inkling of the death of God at the crucifixion of Christ.

Then God swore that Abraham’s seed would inherit the land that He would give them. That’s something! Of course, time went on and we have the covenant in Gen. 17 for the physical seed, that they would become great nations; that Abraham would become a *father of nations*; Sarah would become a *mother of nations* and of kings; and his name was changed from Abram to Abraham, and Sarai’s name was changed to Sarah.

Yet, it still took another 15 years before Isaac was born. God wanted to do it when it was humanly *impossible* to do without God’s intervention. Isaac was born and then God asked Abraham, while Isaac was still a young lad, to take his son and to offer him as a sacrifice. This also likely took place on the Passover Day. Quite an interesting thing—isn’t it?—how God works.

Genesis 22—let’s see how God had developed His plan. Remember what Jesus said: ‘In the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms.’ We’re

going to examine those today and see that these prophecies are there. It’s just like a tree that grows:

- evermore knowledge
- evermore understanding

Yet, there’s still a mystery to it, because as you see a tree grow, you don’t know how it grows, but you know that it grows. Just like many parts of the plan of God, you can understand certain parts of it, but other parts of it you don’t know; we don’t know. God will open those things to our understanding in *His* time and in *His* way.

Here in Gen. 22 Abraham took Isaac and put the wood on him; Isaac carried it and Abraham carried the carryall for the coals for the fire, and went up there. Isaac asked a question: ‘Father, I see the wood, I see the fire, but where is the offering?’ And Abraham said, ‘My son, God will provide the offering.’

It shows the epitome of faith! It doesn’t tell us the reason that Abraham did this, what he was thinking of, until we come to Heb. 11, where it says that ‘Abraham counted God worthy and powerful ‘to raise him from the dead’ in the event that Isaac would be sacrificed.

God wanted to do something. God wanted to make sure. God *tested* Abraham for a period of about 40 years altogether. You know what happened: Abraham bound Isaac, put him on the altar, took the knife and was ready to do the sacrifice and then:

Genesis 22:11: “And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*.’ And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for **now I know** that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me’” (vs 11-12). This is a type of God the Father and Jesus Christ—so, you have that part of it. You have Abraham, Isaac, both were willing and obedient.

Now let’s see what God did. This becomes important because everything from the rest of the Bible then must go forth according to the plan of God. It must be done, all of these things, in their *appointed times*.

Verse 13: “And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And, behold, behind *him* a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.”

Key lesson: *substitutionary sacrifice.* Christ died in our stead! There’s an awful lot to that statement, and in fact, the whole New Testament

grows and grows out of that.

Now let's see what God said here, v 15: "And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said... [here's the message from God] ... 'By Myself have I sworn...'” (vs 15-16). By

- God's existence
- the plan of God
- the Word of God
- the coming of Christ

was going to be a sure thing! The fulfillment of the 12 tribes of Israel would become a sure thing. Because of what Abraham did, God was going to carry it out. God *swore by Himself*:

“...says the LORD, ‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you... [that means *all of his seed*] ...and in multiplying I will multiply your **seed like the stars** of the heavens...” (vs 16-17). Those who are going to be in the first resurrection at the return of Jesus Christ.

You wouldn't know that from reading here, but with the rest of the New Testament and God opening our minds to understand it, *we can understand it*.

“...and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice**” (vs 17-18).

Think about that! *All nations*—past, present and future. The scale where we are, as far as all nations—past, present and future—where are we? *I guess we're somewhere in the middle, I don't know!* That's something: *all nations!* Not just some, not just selected ones—*all nations!* That's why the Holy Days and the plan of God—the appointed times of God—are so important, because that tells us how God is going to fulfill it. ***It always begins with a sacrifice, and it always begins with the Passover!*** That's why it's so important.

Genesis 26_[corrected]—let's see why the promise was passed on to Isaac. I want you to think about how important one man is; and that one man is Abraham. That One of God is the One Who became Jesus Christ.

Genesis 26:3—now God was dealing with Isaac: “Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed, I will give all these lands; and I will establish the oath, which I swore to Abraham your father.” So, the physical seed would come through Isaac.

Verse 4: “And I will multiply your seed as

the stars of the heavens...”—because Christ would come through Isaac, and the spiritual seed would come through Christ.

“...and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because...** [there's always a cause] ...**Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws**” (vs 4-5). This is quite a thing— isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*

Now we come down to the time of the Passover with the children of Israel, which we have already covered (Exo. 12), and we have more details about it. The Passover that we have in Exo. 12 with the children of Israel has some variance from what we have with the Passover through Jesus Christ. The sacrifice was at a different time. Yet, in eating of the meal—as we will do tomorrow night—we keep it according to the way that Jesus did it on His last Passover.

Nevertheless, let's understand that the Passover was to spare the firstborn. That has a lot to do with the Church. That has a lot to do with the whole plan of God. You go back and you look at all of the situations concerning the firstborn and how important that was. Jesus was the firstborn. Jesus was the firstborn of Mary and the firstborn from the dead.

This Passover was to be special and it was to be on the 14th day of the 1st month. As we have seen, the covenant with Abraham goes back to that very same day. The important thing for us to understand here in Exo. 12, concerning the Passover, is the meaning of it for all of us for all time.

We find that in Exodus 12:11 the Lord says: “...It is the LORD'S Passover.” It's not the Jewish Passover, it's the LORD'S, given to the 12 tribes of Israel of which one tribe were the Jews. Notice how God views this: The Passover is not leaving Egypt. The Passover is *sparing the firstborn*.

Verse 12: “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast. And I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. I *am* the LORD.”

Stop and think about this for a minute. All the gods of Egypt originally came from Babylon and were renamed, just like all the false, pagan religions of all the nations of the world; it all went back to Babylon, all went back to the Tower of Babel, all went back to Semiramis, Nimrod and Tammuz. All the other names were changed as God confounded the languages.

Stop and think about this, too. When He

judged all the gods of Egypt, He judged all the gods of men and Satan the devil for all time, and He did a *double-judgment* on it with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That's why we are not to go out into the world and look at this religion and that religion and the other religion and see how they worshiped their god.

I ask you what was the first commandment? You would say, 'You shall have no other gods before Me.' That's true, but that's the second half. The first half is: 'I am the Lord your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, you shall have no other gods before Me.' That judgment is important, and that judgment comes down to the sacrifice of Christ, as well.

We're going to see some of the things concerning the Passover Day itself, the crucifixion of Christ—literally the sacrifice of God in the flesh.

- We *know* that Jesus came from heaven!
- We *know* that He was part of Elohim!
- We *know* that He was God before He became man!

After all, isn't that why God made us in His image? *Yes, indeed!*

1. That we can become like God through the process and plan of God.
2. That God, in the form of the one of Elohim Who became Jesus Christ, could become a man and be that perfect sacrifice for the sins of the *whole world*.

Remember *all nations!*

Galatians 3:29 says: "And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the* promise."

As Jesus said, 'These things were written in the Law and in the Psalms, and in the Prophets. Let's look at some of the prophecies here in the book of Isaiah. Tremendous prophecies, indeed! This is why Jesus asked the scribes, Pharisees and priests how many times: 'Have you never read? Do you not understand?' They had the Word of God, so they could have known.

We know from Isa. 28 that many of the Scriptures that we find in the Old Testament are very hard to understand, because it's a 'little here, a little there; line upon line, precept upon precept' so we have to properly put it together by rightly dividing the Word of God.

Isaiah 40—here we have something that applies dually to the coming of Christ, and just before His coming, with John the Baptist, and it also applies to His second coming. We will see, and we've seen in the past, that there are Scriptures that

go along and talk about His first coming, and then the next verse it talks about His second coming and little further on it talks about something that is current, and then right after that it talks about something that's going to take place in the Millennium.

There are many things in the book of Isaiah. As we're reading these things let's remember what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy; he said, 'You have known the Holy Writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ.'

I gave some sermons on how the Apostle Paul preached Christ from the Old Testament—*How Would You Preach Christ from the Old Testament?* (three parts). A great number of those sermons had to be based on the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 40:1: 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people,' says your God.... [That can apply to the first coming and the second coming] ...'Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished... [not yet, that's the second coming] ...that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins'" (vs 1-2),

Then it backs up to the time of John the Baptist, because we have the prophecy in Malachi saying that the Lord would 'send His messenger to prepare the way.' So, we have it right here, and this is what John the Baptist referred to. He did not refer to himself as Elijah. He referred to himself as 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness.'

Verse 3: "A voice is calling out in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'" That can apply to the first coming and the second coming.

Verse 4: "'Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked places shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.'" Didn't happen. That's the second coming. However, we can also apply this to understanding the Scripture.

Verse 5: "And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed... [The glory of the Lord through Christ was revealed when Jesus came. The glory of the Lord, when Christ returns, is going to also apply to v 5.] (here's what's going to happen): ...and all flesh shall see *it* together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Now back to the time of John the Baptist; John the Baptist crying out for repentance, v 6: "A voice says, 'Cry!' And he said, 'What shall I cry? "All flesh *is* grass, and all the beauty of it *is* as the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades because the breath of the LORD blows upon it;

surely the people *are* grass.”” (vs 6-7) Showing that this human life is temporary, and God has full control over it.

Let’s see some other Scriptures which apply more directly. Let’s come to Isaiah 42:21—speaking of Christ: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness sake; He will magnify the Law and make *it* glorious.” That one verse tells us about the ministry of Christ.

When you come to the New Testament, again, this one verse is like a seed. All of His teachings grow and expand and then from the apostle’s writings they grow and expand from there. Then from the book of Revelation they grow and expand from there. Then with the new heavens and the new earth it grows and expands from there. See how ‘the increase of His government there shall be no end.’ So, Christ came, and God was pleased with His righteousness.

Isaiah 50—here we see how Jesus was taught, but also we see exactly how the Scriptures in the Old Testament were put together: ‘line upon line, here a little, there a little’; first coming/second coming—just one right after the other.

Isaiah 50:4: “The Lord GOD has given Me the tongue of the learned...” Isn’t that what happened when Jesus went up at age 12 to Jerusalem during the Passover time, and He stayed back with the elders and priests and they were asking Him questions and He was answering and asking them questions? They were surprised at His wisdom! Why?

“...and was to know to help the weary *with* a word. **He awakens Me morning by morning...**” (v 4). That’s how Jesus was taught. He didn’t go to any rabbinic school. He had a greater Teacher—*God the Father!*

“...He awakens my ear to hear as one being taught. The Lord GOD has opened My ear, and I was not rebellious, nor turned away backwards” (vs 4-5)—His childhood education, His teaching. Remember, Jesus said on many occasions: ‘I only say what the Father commanded Me to say. I only do what I see the Father do.’ Here’s why.

Verse 6 immediately bypasses His whole ministry and goes to the day of the crucifixion—a very interesting verse, indeed: “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.” Notice how this expands out to the very purpose of the crucifixion. Jesus had to overcome Satan the devil, the government, the people, the priesthood—all who sinned—to become that perfect sacrifice.

Verse 7: “For the Lord GOD will help Me...” What happened when Jesus was praying before He was arrested? God sent an angel to strengthen Him; God helped Him.

“...therefore I have not been disgraced. On account of this I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed” (v 7)—even though He took upon Him the shame and the sin of all mankind.

Verse 8: “*He is* near who justifies Me; who will contend with Me? Let us stand together; who *is* My adversary? Let him come near Me”—and they did. Satan and the demons were like dogs and lions just *spiritually speaking* circling the cross where Jesus was dying. God was there; the Father was there to help Him. There was darkness that covered the land. But because Jesus relied on God He became that perfect sacrifice.

Let’s see something else concerning this sacrifice of Christ. There is virtually no way in the world that anyone can refute the fact that Isa. 53 is talking about God Who gave Himself as that sacrifice. We’re going to see how bad that really was. We’re going to understand that God prophesied that to happen in the way that it did down to the very last detail.

You can read in *A Harmony of the Gospels* and in *The Day that Jesus the Christ Died* 28 prophecies fulfilled in one day.

(go to the next track)

Let’s continue on in Isaiah 53 and we’re going to see that this was one of the main chapters, along with others, of preaching the crucifixion of Christ, and how that God knew exactly what He was going to go through. It had to be known; it had to be written; it had to be as with Isaiah, 700 years before the occurrence.

Isaiah 53:1: “Who has believed our report?... [that’s exactly the way it is with the preaching] ...And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?... [Who’s going to know about what God is doing?] ...For He...” (vs 1-2)—referring to Christ—we’ll see about His life, His growing up and right to the time of His ministry. Remember, from the very beginning they sought to kill Jesus Christ.

“...shall grow up before Him [God the Father] as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him” (v 2). He came as an ordinary man, not some great giant man, not some great handsome man, but an ordinary man.

From here on it talks about what Jesus experienced in His life and in His crucifixion, and all

of this was necessary. We know that He came at the *appointed time*, on the Passover Day, to be that perfect sacrifice.

Verse 3: “*He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities... [Our sicknesses and diseases. He became sin for us. He Who knew no sin became sin for us!]* ...and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (vs 3-4). ‘Yes, it’s Your fault, You’re the Savior, come down off the cross.’

Verse 5: “But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed.” Very interesting wording here—*isn’t it?* He was stricken for *our peace*, chastised for *our peace*.

Whenever you read at the beginning of the Apostle Paul’s epistles, ‘Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,’ this is what it’s talking about. He had to pay the price for that, for us, so that we can have peace with God.

Verse 6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” As the Creator of mankind He came to take upon Himself the sins of all mankind. Like Paul wrote in 2-Cor. 5, ‘He who knew no sin, was made sin so that the righteousness of God could be upon us.’ That’s a fantastic thing, brethren. It’s just like Paul said, ‘Maybe even for a good man some would die, but while we were yet sinners, at the appointed time Christ died for us.’ Here’s the prophecy of it.

Verse 7: “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet, He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” *Isn’t that amazing? Yes, it is!* That’s what Jesus went through.

- He knew why He had come
- He knew what He was going to go through
- He gave these prophecies
- He knew that they were going to be fulfilled

Verse 8: “By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken?” That could be said of no other man! That could be said of nothing else in all of history that occurred except the sacrifice of Jesus Christ Who was God manifested in the flesh.

Verse 9: “And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death; although He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.” God the Father also knew what was going to happen, too—*didn’t He? Yes!* God the Father knew that it had to be the kind of death that it was:

- with the scourging
- with the beating
- with the rejection
- with everything that He went through

Scourging with a cat-of-nine-tails literally rips the flesh off!

Verse 10: “Yet, the LORD willed to crush Him and He has put Him to grief You shall make His life an offering for sin....” You think about that, because we come to God every day and ask forgiveness for our sins. It’s through this shed blood of Jesus Christ that our sins are forgiven.

“...He shall see His seed... [talking about the resurrection] ...He shall prolong His days, and that the purpose of the LORD might prosper in His hand” (v 10). Through Jesus Christ these things are going to be done.

Finally, those of us living in this end-time generation know that the peace of the world is going to come through Jesus Christ and no other way. We are going to see come upon this world some awesome events take place; tragic events; catastrophes. We’re also going to see the advancement of mankind to a point that he thinks that he is invincible, and under the deception of Satan the devil, will literally fight against the return of Jesus Christ. Amazing, indeed!

Verse 11: “He shall see of the travail of His soul.... [We’re going to see that next. He saw it; quite a thing, indeed!] ...He shall be fully satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; and He shall bear their iniquities.” Only He could do it.

Let’s understand something what Jesus did. He came and *willingly* did this. Let’s come to Psalms 22. This is quite a Psalm, and every time I read this, I cannot help but ask: I wonder what on earth David was thinking when he gave this Psalm and wrote down this Psalm, and then gave it to the chief musician and had it put with all the collection of the Psalms? Amazing!

This goes from some of the words of David to the very words of Christ. Then it goes to what Jesus saw in His own body hanging there on the cross, bleeding, suffering and all the torment and terrible things that were going on. We’re going to see it depicted here in Psalms 22.

Let's understand something else, also: Were these Scriptures not known? *Yes, they were!* Some of these are the very words of Christ while He was hanging on the cross.

Psalms 22:1: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me, and *why are You* so far from helping me, and from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not answer; and in the night season, and am not silent. Yet, You are Holy, O You enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (vs 1-3).

- Jesus remembered the throne!
- Jesus remembered God the Father there!
- Jesus remembered what it was like when He was there with God the Father before He emptied Himself of His Divinity!
- Jesus remembered what it was like before He gave up the eternalness of His being to take on the form of a man in human flesh and be born of the virgin Mary!

Quite a thing!

Verse 6: "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men and despised by the people." That agrees with Isa. 53—doesn't it? *Yes!* This was written 250 years before Isaiah was written.

Verse 7: "All who see Me mock Me..." Just like we find fulfilled in *A Harmon of the Gospels*; all of them talk about how the chief priest came around and said, 'If you be the Christ, come down from here.' And even one of the thieves who was crucified with Him said, 'Yes, if you're the Christ, get us down from here.'

"...they shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted on the LORD; let Him deliver Him; let Him rescue Him, since He delights in Him!'" (vs 7-8). Yes, God the Father did, but not in the way that they demanded. God raised Him from the dead *after* He had been dead three days and three nights, and raised Him out of that tomb.

Verse 9: "For You are He who took Me out of the womb... [the prayer to God while He was right on the cross] ...causing Me to trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth; You are My God from My mother's womb" (vs 9-10). Didn't He say, 'My God and your God'? *Yes, He did!*

How are we to address God? *As our Father!* That is amazing! Look at all these Scriptures, how they just leap off the pages of the Bible when you understand them.

He says, v 11: "Be not far from Me; for trouble is near, for there is none to help." He knows no one is going to help. He knows that He has got to

do this by Himself; none to help.

Verse 12: "Many bulls have encircled around Me; strong bulls of Bashan have surrounded Me." Isn't that something? Just like they were there. Here's the cross and they were circling around the cross, laughing, gleefully in hideous blasphemy against Jesus Christ—all the demons, Satan and the demons. And you know that Satan was there! You know he was there gleeful!

But it says in Col. 2 that Jesus overcame all of Satan's power through the crucifixion and His love and obedience to God the Father.

Verse 13: "They opened wide their mouths at Me, like a ravening and a roaring lion. I am poured out like water... [His strength was just ebbing from Him] ...and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels" (vs 13-14). All these thoughts, prophesied thoughts, that Jesus would have. David was able to give these and have them written down for us as a record, a permanent record that, yes, Jesus *is* the Christ, and yes, Jesus *was* God before He came in the flesh.

Verse 15: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; dogs have surrounded Me; a band of evildoers have encircled me; they have pierced My hands and My feet; and You have brought Me into the dust of death" (vs 15-16). Remember what it said: ***Jesus knew that it was the will of God!***

When we partake of the Passover, which we will do tomorrow night, let's understand the great price that God paid for redeeming us from our sins, because

- God loves us!
- God wants us!
- God has called us!

But every year we renew the New Covenant at Passover, so that

- we can draw closer to God
- we can know that we have the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin
- we can understand that God Himself has done this

—and what fantastic and tremendous thing for us now to have the whole Word of God, and go back and see it, read it, prove it and understand it.

Verse 17: "I can count all My bones..." He looked down and could see His ribs because the scourging ripped away the flesh and He could see His own bones. What a fantastic thing that that was. Imagine how awful that was! The blood oozing out and all of the demons circling around—quite a thing

when you understand it.

Verse 18: “They divide My garments among them and cast lots upon My vesture.” Isn’t that something? Precisely fulfilled; done exactly as God said it would be. I’ve often thought how many times when I read this here—and in the New Testament—yes, it was fulfilled by those soldiers who never knew anything about what God was doing. Or by doing what they did, they were fulfilling the words of God.

- They didn’t know!
- Pilate didn’t know!
- The chief priest didn’t know!

They should have, and especially after Jesus was resurrected from the dead and the preaching of the apostles. There it is for the whole world to know.

Verse 19: “But You, O LORD, be not far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver My soul from the sword, My precious *life* from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion’s mouth...” (vs 19-21). Satan the devil ‘goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.’

Satan the devil is the author of sin. Human beings can never—because of our nature and because of Satan the devil—ever come to a point of perfection in the flesh. We can come a point of perfection that God wants us to while we are in the flesh, but not to the point necessary for eternal life until God raises us from the dead.

Verse 21: “Save Me from the lion’s mouth yea, and from the wild ox’s horns. You have answered Me.... [notice the whole purpose of this]: ...I will declare Your name to My brethren...” (vs 21-22). Didn’t we cover some time right after the first of the year how Jesus revealed the Father and His name is *the Father*? Yes, indeed! {note sermon series: *How Jesus Reveals the Father*} That’s been proclaimed today.

“...in the midst of the congregation I will praise You” (v 22). That’s what He’s going to do when there’s the resurrection. Think about how great that is going to be.

Let’s come back to the Gospel of John and let’s see that Jesus knew, He understood, He realized what it was going to be. In John 10 we find that Jesus did this voluntarily. He did it because of His great love for all mankind; likewise the love of God the Father.

John 10:14—Jesus said: “I am the good Shepherd, and I know those who *are* Mine, and am known of those who *are* Mine.” There are many false Christs out there; there are many counterfeits out there. Do you know the voice of Christ? *The*

voice of Christ is the words recorded in the Bible, and we know His voice! We are not to follow another. We are not to go after any other. Why should we?

Verse 15: “Just as the Father knows Me, I also know the Father; and **I lay down My life for the sheep.**”

- He did it voluntarily!
- He came willingly!
- He knew that this was destined from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8)!
- He knew from the time of the sin of Satan the devil!
- He knew from the time of the sin of Adam and Eve!

What he would have to do.

Verse 16: “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring those also, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock *and* one Shepherd. On account of this, the Father loves Me: because I lay down My life, that I may receive it back again” (vs 16-17).

There was a special covenant between the two Elohim—one Who became the Father and one Who became the Son. that when the One Who became the Son would give up His Divinity and take upon Him that pinprick of life to be conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary, that there was a covenant between them what Christ should do and what the Father would do—both.

Verse 18: “No one takes it from Me, but **I lay it down of Myself...**” He did this willingly. Let’s just stop and think for just a minute:

Today we live in times of a lot of turmoil and a lot of things take place. Lots of times we feel put upon because of various things—don’t we? Well, how much was put upon Christ. How much did He go through? How much did He put up with?

- *Willingly!*
- *Knowing* what was going to happen!
- *Knowing* how it was going to be!

Think about it! That’s really quite amazing.

“...I have authority to lay it down and authority to receive it back again. This commandment I received from My Father” (v 18). Quite an amazing thing— isn’t it? That’s what Jesus did.

Let’s see how Jesus was able to go through everything that He went through, and how we need to have the kind of heart and mind, the kind of attitude, the kind of permanent spiritual strength about us that can only come from God. Just like that what was given to Christ and what He had.

Now, here's what Paul wrote concerning the crucifixion of Christ and what we must likewise also do, and be doing. This is why we take the Passover. Think about what you have gone through in your life. We all know that Jesus said that those who attain to the Kingdom of God take it with a great struggle. Yes,

- we've got to fight against ourselves
- we have to—with the Spirit and Word of God—overcome sin through the forgiveness and grace of God
- we have to overcome human nature
- we have to build the character of God

all of this is because of God the Father through Jesus Christ and what He did when He *willingly* gave Himself as the sacrifice for the sins of *all* mankind.

Paul wrote the whole chapter—the *faith chapter*—of Heb. 11 *by faith*. And you'll notice that *by faith* you have action, because you believe, and if you believe you act upon that belief. That goes right back to what Abraham was commended for doing—he believed and he acted upon it. So Paul writes:

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight...”

- every problem
- every difficulty
- every doubt
- every fear

“...and the sin that so easily entraps *us*...” And isn't that the way it is? And overcoming the 'law of sin and death' within us—through the power and Spirit of God—takes great effort. It is a struggle. It is something that we have to continually work on every single day of our life until we yield up the last breath. Is that not what Jesus had to do? *Yes, indeed!*

“...and let us run the race set before us with endurance” (v 1). That race is the *way of life* that God has *called us to*. How do we run it?

- You have got to have the *goal!*
- You have got to have the *inspiration!*
- You have got to have the *Spirit of God!*
- You have got to have the *Word of God!*
- You have got to have *understanding in what you are doing!*

Verse 2: “Having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy... [We've read about all the sorrow and grief. We read about all the oppression and pain. But it says]: **...for the joy** that lay ahead of Him...” (v 2). The resurrection; the increase of the Family of God. What a tremendous thing that is. Just like it's so great, brethren, that God has been revealed to us

through Jesus Christ, that Christ came to reveal the Father. We have direct connection:

- through prayer and study
- through the Word of God
- through our daily living
- through our thoughts with God the Father and Jesus Christ

So, in spite of what's going on, let there be joy in knowing and understanding that God is delivering us from it. That God has something better for us. Yes, we have sorrow when we go through it, but with this Passover let there be joy and understanding and knowing what God has called you to.

“...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God” (v 2). That's how we need to view the difficulties and problems that we go through. Don't let them drag you down.

- Look at them for what they are.
- Look to Christ for what He is.
- Look to God the Father for what He can do.
- Use the Holy Spirit of God to change, grow and overcome.

Just like Jesus Christ Who has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven above, we will be raised from the dead to eternal life by the power of God. But

- we have got to overcome human nature
- we have got to overcome Satan the devil
- we have got to overcome the world

and all of that overcoming comes through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Paul says here, v 3: “Now meditate deeply on Him...” Think about the things that we have covered. Think about these things between now and the time you take the Passover tomorrow.

“...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds” (v 3). That has happened to some people.

- This is why we have the Passover renewed every year.
- This is why we go over what God has done for us.
- This is why we go through the Scriptures.
- This is why we increase in spirit and knowledge and understanding.

When that happens, we have trials come along and those are for testing and proving, and to see what we are going to do. To see how we're going to react:

- Do we have the mind of Christ?
- Do we use the Word of God?
- Do we use the Spirit of God?
- Do we constantly come before God the Father and Jesus Christ?

Verse 4: “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin.” Yes, we’re going to have those things come along. We’re going to have these things become part of our daily life’s experience. Some of them will not be pleasant; some of them will be pleasant.

But *remember* that Jesus Christ came and took *the death!* Let’s see what this is going to lead to. Why did Jesus have the joy? We will see that in laying down His life; as He said, ‘He lays it down; no one took it from Him.’ Oh yes, a man was used to kill Him; yes, there were those who were used to crucify Him, but *no one took it from Him!* He laid His life down and He knew what it would be from the foundation of the world.

The whole purpose of this is so that we can be born into the Kingdom of God, so that all things can be given to the heirs.

Hebrews 2:8: “‘You [God] did put all things in subjection under his feet.’.... [that is *mankind’s* feet] ...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.” Why? *Because the plan of God has not gotten to that point!* But we will.

This is why, in taking the Passover and renewing the New Covenant, we come before God and cry out to Him for

- His Spirit
- His strength
- His mercy
- His forgiveness
- His kindness
- His goodness
- His healing

Because by His stripes we have been healed. By His scourging and shed blood we have our sins forgiven.

“...For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing *that was* not subjected to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him” (v 8). That goes clear out into the new heavens and the new earth. Absolutely amazing! Brethren, we need to understand how vast, deep, eternal and spiritual the Word of God is.

Verse 9: “But we see Jesus, Who *was* made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering **the death**...” *The death*

that reconciles all mankind, each one individually, when they repent according to the timetable of God’s master plan.

“...in order that by *the* grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone” (v 9). Isn’t that amazing? *Everyone!*

- What love is that?
- What kindness is that?
- What mercy is that?
- How great that is!

Notice why, because as we see there in Heb. 5 that He was perfected through this. God was perfected even more with this experience.

Verse 10: “Because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

Brethren, to think of things that we’re going to have to go through, we don’t know. Look how much different it is in your life today than what you thought it would be 20 years ago. Totally different—correct? *Yes!* Because you’re being *perfected*. You look at every trial and every situation as something that is going to work together for good. We’ll see that as we go through the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Verse 11: “For both He Who is sanctifying and those who are sanctified *are* all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren... [You are the brethren of Jesus Christ; the sons and daughters of God.] ...saying, ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren...’” (vs 11-12). Which He has, and when we’re resurrected it will be declared even more—won’t it? *Yes!*

“...in *the* midst of *the* Church I will sing praise to You.’ And again, ‘I will be trusting in Him.’ And again, ‘Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me’” (vs 12-13). That’s why He did it! You see, we need to understand it. We need to realize *why* God did this, and He applies it to each one of us individually.

Verse 14: “Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that **through death** He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil.” To annul all the works of the devil. That’s something!

Verse 15: “And *that* He might **deliver those...**”—to deliver you, to deliver me, to deliver all the brethren. That’s why it’s so important, brethren, that we understand the love of God, and understand our love to the brethren. This is why, as

we come to this Passover, we need to repent of all of the squabbles and difficulties that has come between us as brethren. We need to be reconciled to each other as Christ has reconciled us to God the Father. You need to keep that in mind. ***We cannot go before God with any unforgiven sins!***

“...that He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham” (vs 15-16)—the *spiritual seed of Abraham!* This is why He became flesh and blood; because He promised it. He promised His death to Abraham, as we saw in Gen. 15.

Verse 17: “For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people.... [now, here’s a promise, right here]: ...For because He Himself has suffered, having been tempted *in like manner*, He is able to help those who are being tempted” (vs 17-18).

There isn’t one sin, one trial, one difficulty, one suffering, one disillusionment in people that you have gone through that Christ didn’t go through. There is not one thing that you have experienced that you have the right to hold back on that sin. *You must repent of it! I must repent of it!* All of us must realize that as we’re coming to this Passover, when we’re coming to partake of the flesh and the blood of the New Covenant of Jesus Christ that He is there

- to be with us
- to forgive us
- to help us
- to grant eternal life

and

- show us how that we are to walk
- show us how we are to do

—because He alone has purged our sins!

- we need to go to Him
- we need to ask for His help
- we need to ask for His strength
- we need to ask for His forgiveness

and realize that He alone can do this! When we do, and we come with the resolve, let’s see what kind of resolve we need to have. We need to have exactly the same resolve that Jesus Himself had concerning the crucifixion, ***that He***—with what He did, with what He gave—***had His mind fixed to do the will of God!***

Let’s come back to the Psalms and see this. Let’s see some very important Psalms. This is the

attitude that we need to have coming into the Feast of Unleavened Bread after we partake of the Passover. Here’s the attitude that we need to have:

- attitude of mercy
- forgiveness
- forgiving our brothers and sisters of their sins
- of reconciling with them.

You want God to reconcile with you, then you better reconcile with God; you better reconcile with your brethren.

Psalms 57:1: “Be gracious unto me, O God, be gracious unto me; for my soul trusts in You; yea, in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge until these great troubles pass by.” We’re going to experience a lot of great troubles, and we’re going to have to live through them. We’re going to have to have our lives dedicated to God so greatly, through the power of God’s Spirit.

Verse 2: “I will cry to God Most High, to God who fulfills His purpose for me.... [That’s what God wants to do to you, to fulfill His purpose for you.] ...He shall send from heaven and save me; He rebukes him who would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth His mercy and His Truth” (vs 2-3). That’s to us; then we to the world. An amazing thing!

Verse 4: “My soul is among lions; I lie among those who breathe out fire, the sons of men whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” Just like what Jesus had to go through. You see it building and building in society and in the world, and how men are looking toward those who are Christians, who believe in the Bible; how they’re becoming more hateful, despicable and arrogant. So, we’re going to go through some trials.

Verse 5: “Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let Your glory be above all the earth.... [that’s the power we’re looking to] ...They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down...” (vs 5-6)—talking about Jesus; of what He went through; what David went through; what we are going to go through.

“...they have dug a pit before me; into the midst of it they have fallen themselves. Selah. **My heart is fixed, O God...**” (vs 6-7).

- Are our hearts fixed?
- Is your heart fixed?
- Is my heart fixed?
- ✓ Yes, through Christ it is!
- ✓ Yes, through the partaking of the bread and the wine and the foot-washing!
- ✓ Yes, through loving God!

- ✓ Yes, through obeying His voice!
- ✓ Yes, through everything that we do!

“...**my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.** Awake, my glory! Awake, harp and lyre! I myself will awake the dawn” (vs 7-8). Also, spiritually speaking, we need to awaken. Awaken out of the sleep that is the pall that is around the whole earth. This is what we need to look to with the Passover that is coming.

Let’s understand deeply what it is with the bread and the wine. Let’s see what Jesus said concerning it, and why we need to take it. In this then is contained everything concerning the Passover:

Luke 22:19: “And He took bread; *and* after giving thanks, He broke *it* and gave *it* to them, saying, ‘This is My body, which is given for you...’” God applies the sacrifice to each of us individually. And each of us, individually, as we keep the Passover, God applies His mercy and kindness and forgiveness and establishes us under His grace.

Jesus said, “‘...This do in the remembrance of Me.’ In like manner also, *He took* the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup *is* the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out **for you**’” (vs 19-20).

Brethren, keep all of these things in mind. And as we come to the Passover tomorrow night let’s have a Passover that has meaning and fulfillment *so that we can be renewed and refreshed* before God through the sacrifice of Christ; ***through His mercy, kindness and goodness; and through the New Covenant ceremony of the Passover!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 24:44-47
- 2) Genesis 3:14-15
- 3) Genesis 15:4-6, 9-10, 12
- 4) Genesis 22:11-13, 15-18
- 5) Genesis 26:3-5
- 6) Exodus 12:11-12
- 7) Galatians 3:29
- 8) Isaiah 40:1-7, 21
- 9) Isaiah 42:21
- 10) Isaiah 50: 4-8
- 11) Isaiah 53:1-11
- 12) Psalm 22:1-3, 6-22
- 13) John 10:14-18
- 14) Hebrews 12:1-4
- 15) Hebrews 2:8-18
- 16) Psalm 57:1-8
- 17) Luke 22:19-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Matthew 13
- Genesis 17
- Hebrews 11
- Isaiah 28
- 2 Corinthians 5
- Colossians 2
- Revelation 13:8
- Hebrews 5

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *How Would You Preach Christ from the Old Testament?*
- How Jesus Revealed the Father

Books:

- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *The Day that Jesus the Christ Died* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo

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