

**“The Passover to the Lord’s Supper” – Pr Jim Sprenkle – Maundy Thursday
April 14, 2022**

I. Exodus 12 & Mark 14.

II. Thousands of lambs... and their blood.

- a. This is the history of the Passover.
- b. The Israelites, God’s chosen people, were suffering in a foreign land under a cruel leader: Egypt and its pharaoh.
- c. Egypt was not their own land, but an exile... as this line of pharaohs had forgotten the saving work of Joseph and how he had delivered Egypt from a horrible famine.
 - i. So, they took the Hebrew people as slaves to do hard labor... as they were forced to build cities and monuments.
 - ii. The Hebrews were faced with daily hardships... brutal masters... despair, and hopelessness.
 - iii. Exodus chapter 2 says they groaned under the burdens placed upon them, and the Lord God heard their cries, and He remembered His covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Ex 2:23-24)
- d. Being the great Rescuer that He is, God sent Moses to bring the people out.
 - i. Moses was sent to tell Pharaoh on behalf of God to let the Hebrew people go...
 - ii. Moses was sent by God to deliver them out of exile.
- e. However, Pharaoh was stubborn and hard of heart.
 - i. Plagues... one after the other... water to blood, frogs, gnats, flies, livestock diseases, boils, thunder and hail, locusts, and darkness simply made him more stubborn.
- f. And then... God’s plan to deliver His people out of exile would culminate in the tenth plague... and this is where our reading in Exodus begins tonight.
- g. To prepare for the worst plague yet, the Israelites were told to take a lamb from their flocks—a perfect male without blemish or spot—one lamb for each family.
 - i. Then, they were to sacrifice the lamb and spread its blood above and around the door to their homes.
 - ii. Why? Because this blood would protect and save their firstborn males from the angel of death.
 1. The blood of the lamb would save them from the plague of death that God would bring upon the people of Egypt.
- h. That night, death did visit Egypt – and every firstborn male... without regard to status was taken.
- i. That night everyone learned that only the blood of a lamb could save you.
 - i. Every door covered with the blood of the lamb was passed over.

- ii. It was by this final, terrible judgment upon Pharaoh that he gave up, and the people of God came out of Egypt... out of exile.
 - j. And so, each year the people of Israel were commanded to celebrate this great rescue...
 - i. They were supposed to remember the great Passover as they sacrificed a lamb... that they were rescued and delivered by its blood.
- III. **Thousands of lambs later... and their blood...**
 - a. This is the history of Passover... AND where Jesus sits with His disciples in our Gospel reading tonight.
 - i. They're in the Upper Room to celebrate the Passover meal.
 - ii. They consider God's deliverance and salvation as He delivered them from their exile – He brought them out of the land of Egypt.
 - b. But then... something different happens... Jesus says, "I have something new for you."
 - i. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, takes bread, gives thanks, and gives it to His disciples... and says, "This is My body."
 - ii. He then takes the cup, drinks, gives thanks, and passes it to His disciples... and says, "This is My blood."
 - c. The Passover of the Old Testament is now fulfilled... and replaced by the New Testament Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
 - i. The blood of thousands upon thousands of lambs reaches its fulfillment, replaced by the blood of one Lamb who takes away the sin of the whole world... Jesus Christ.
 - ii. All of those perfect lambs, the best from each flock... lambs without blemish or spot, are replaced by the perfect and holy Son of God.
 - iii. Jesus, the Lamb of God, delivers us from the exile of sin and death.
- IV. **One holy meal gives way to another.**
 - a. This is our journey from exile too... as God's chosen people, we come up out of the Egypt of sin and death, through the waters of Baptism... and receive a new meal in Christ.
 - b. And we are the people of this new covenant.
 - i. We are the people called out of the land of exile.
 - ii. We are the people washed in the blood of the Lamb.
 - iii. We are the people who have received the grace of God in Word and Sacrament.
 - iv. We are the people saved by the blood of the Lamb that was poured out on the cross.
 - v. We are rescued, redeemed, and restored... our relationship with God is now repaired and we have nothing to fear.
 - vi. Out of exile and into a new land in the presence of our God.

- c. Thousands and thousands of lambs slain—untold amounts of blood smeared—all of the Passover lambs, all of the blood points to the cross.
 - i. Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
 - ii. Our Savior’s blood that He poured out on Calvary brings us to the Upper Room and the words of Jesus:
 - 1. “Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you...
 - 2. Take, drink; this is My blood which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of Me.”
 - iii. The Passover meal from long ago points to the new meal that Jesus gave in the Upper Room and by His work on the cross.
 - 1. You see, as we eat His body and drink of the cup of His blood, our eyes turn to the cross.
 - 2. We remember the sacrifice of the Lamb as He delivers us from sin and guilt.

V. **From the Passover to the Lord’s Supper...**

- a. God delivers His people from exile...
- b. Jesus is our Passover Lamb.
 - i. His blood covers us... gives us safe passage... and delivers us.
 - ii. His blood poured out is our victory over sin, death, and Satan.
 - iii. His blood poured out gives forgiveness, life, and salvation to us... the new-covenant people of God.
- c. As we partake in this holy meal tonight, remember the deliverance of God.
 - i. He has gone to great lengths to offer us His true body and blood.
 - ii. He wants us to be in communion with Him... and our fellow believers
 - iii. He calls us to participate in a simple faith – which trusts in the promises He makes.
 - iv. Come again to His table of forgiveness, life and salvation – as we return from exile. Amen.¹

¹ based on the sermon series, “Return from Exile: A Lenten Journey,” Concordia Publishing House: St. Louis, 2017.