

**“More Than Just A Final Meal”**

3/8-9/08

6 pm; 9 & 10:45 am

Luke 22:7-20

*Series: Final Days*

## **INTRODUCTION**

*“What do you want to be remembered for?”*

*“What would you like your legacy to be?”*

These two questions are often asked of presidents and other influential people.

“A number of years ago a man picked up the morning paper, and, to his horror, read his own obituary. The newspaper had reported the death of the wrong man. And he saw his legacy through the eyes of the newspaper.

The headline read: ‘*Dynamite king dies.*’ The story identified him as a ‘*merchant of death.*’ He was the inventor of dynamite and he had amassed a great fortune from the manufacture of weapons of destruction.

Seeing how he would be remembered disturbed him so deeply that he radically changed the focus of his life. It became his hour of complete transformation.

Thereafter, he devoted his full energy and money to works of peace and human betterment. Today he is best remembered as the founder of the Nobel Peace Prize -- Alfred Nobel.”

Jesus didn’t need to ask, “*What will be My legacy?*” He came on assignment with a clear purpose, to which He was fully dedicated. He even said that He didn’t come to do His Own will, but the will of His Father.

Clearly knowing His purpose – *to seek and to save people who were lost from God* – His final meal with His chosen apostles was a very significant time. It would embody Who He was and why He came.

**OPEN** to Luke 22 (**PAGE** 1637)

*To understand Jesus’ life purpose, we must...*

**I. Look to the Past** (Luke 22:7-13)

**READ** Luke 22:7-13

Four times the **Passover** is mentioned in these verses. Understanding the Passover is key to understanding Jesus' purpose.

**Passover** was one of three Holy Festivals in Israel. It celebrated God delivering Israel from slavery in Egypt.

God sent Moses to set the people free from Pharaoh, but Pharaoh refused to release them. So God sent 10 plagues upon Egypt, each one a demonstration of His great power. Each plague targeted one of the gods of Egypt. These plagues broke the back of Pharaoh, and finally he relented and set Israel free.

The name, "**Passover**," came from the night before the Israelites left Egypt – the night God sent the last plague – the death of every first-born son in Egypt: both human and cattle. The death angel carried out God's Word on this.

The one way to be protected from the death angel's orders was to wipe the blood of a lamb above the door of their house, and down both sides. God said the death angel would see the blood and "**pass over**" that house... i.e., the first-born son would not be killed.

The **Passover** lamb or goat, from which the blood came, was to be a one-year old male, a perfect physical specimen. It was to be killed, cooked by roasting over a fire, and then eaten in specific ceremonial ways to remind the generations to come of the details of that first **Passover**:

- When they ate the meal, they were to be **dressed to travel**, sandals on, staff in hand, outer cloak stuffed in belt; symbolizing leaving Egypt the following morning.
- The bread they ate was to be **unleavened bread**, which symbolized the quickness with which they left Egypt. (i.e., "unleavened" means there was no yeast in the bread because they left Egypt so quickly they didn't have time to put it in the dough).
- And they ate **bitter herbs**, which likely symbolized the bitterness of their slavery in Egypt.

This was an annual holy feast that was to be observed by the entire nation ... every household that was a part of Israel ... no matter where they lived.

**Passover** was so important that God re-oriented the whole Jewish calendar for it. He declared that the month in which **Passover** occurred would become the first month of the Jewish calendar year. ("Nisan" equivalent to March-April).

Nisan 10<sup>th</sup>: A **Passover** lamb or goat was to be selected by each household.

Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>: The **Passover** meal was prepared and eaten; remembering the night the death angel **passed over** their homes. (Ex. 12:1-11, Lev. 23:5)

Nisan 15-21: The Feast of Unleavened Bread was Observed; remembering the day Israel left Egypt (Lev. 23:6-8)

So, from that first Passover forward, Israel started each year being reminded of God saving them from slavery.

So, Peter and John go to prepare for the **Passover** ... locating the room, getting the lamb and preparing it, the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread, all a part of the **Passover** meal.

This is what Jesus and the Twelve were observing that last night together.

*But, Jesus changed it* – something far more significant than Passover was going to happen within 24 hours of their final meal. Jesus was going to connect the sacrifice of the Passover lamb with His perfect, once-for-all sacrifice. As John the Baptist had declared, Jesus was **“the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world.”**

*To understand Jesus’ life purpose, we must ...*

### **I. Look to the Past**

*To understand Jesus’ life purpose, we must ...*

### **II. Understand the Present** (Luke 22:14, 19-20)

**READ** Luke 22:14, 19-20

Luke 22:14, 19-20 **“When the hour came, Jesus and His apostles reclined at the table.**

**19 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.’**

**20 In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.’”**

Jesus knew that the **Passover** pre-figured His own life ...

**The purpose of the Passover:** to free God's people from slavery in Egypt

**The purpose of the New Covenant:** To free all people because all are enslaved by sin

**In the Passover:** A unblemished lamb was the sacrifice

**In the New Covenant:** Jesus, perfect and sinless, was the sacrifice

**In the Passover:** The bitter herbs were a reminder of the bitterness of slavery

**In the New Covenant:** The bitterness of life is the daily reminder of our former slavery to sin

**In the Passover:** The blood of the sacrificial lamb would save the life of the firstborn son *if* the blood was applied around their door.

**In the New Covenant:** Jesus' blood saves the lives of everyone who will believe in Him.

You see, Jesus re-formed the **Passover meal** into **the Lord's Supper** ... a transformation of the remembrance of the Israelites being freed from slavery, into a remembrance of all people being offered eternal freedom from slavery to sin through the sacrifice of Jesus.

Covenants in the OT were authorized with a blood sacrifice: Hebrews 9:22b  
**"...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."**

Jesus' blood would authorize God's new covenant / His new promise to people. This is what we're living under today, the present, the New Covenant in Jesus.

The **unleavened bread** representing Jesus' body, the **wine** representing His blood; both foreshadowing and eternally symbolizing Jesus' willing sacrifice on His cross the very next day.

And just as the Passover was a lasting, every-year observance, so Jesus said of this new observance, "**Do this in remembrance of Me.**" This is why we observe the Lord's Supper today, in this present time.

For, as we read in 1 Corinthians 5:7 “... **Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**”

Today, we live under this New Covenant, the New Agreement between God and people, through the sacrifice of Jesus.

*To understand Jesus' life purpose, we must ...*

## **II. Understand the Present**

*To understand Jesus' life purpose, we must ...*

### **III. Anticipate the Future** (Luke 22:15-18)

**READ** Luke 22:15-18

Luke 22:15-18 “**And He said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.**

16 **For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.’**

17 **After taking the cup, He gave thanks and said, ‘Take this and divide it among you.**

18 **For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”**

Please look at v. 15: Jesus said, “**I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.**”

The Twelve were Jesus’ closest friends. They were also His followers, but Jesus said in John 15, “**I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from My Father I have made known to you.**”

He was telling His closest friends, “*This is our last time together and I’ve really been looking forward to this moment, of sharing this last Passover meal with you.*”

(“**eagerly desired,**” literally, ‘*with desire I have desired;*’ carries sense of great emotion)

Jesus knew He was going to suffer and die in less than 24 hours. This was the last time with the Twelve in this very significant Passover ... or, really, the transformation of the Passover.

The men into whom He had poured His life would be separated from His physical presence.

It would be a very real change in their relationship, one they would struggle to understand ... and things would never be the same ... until the future.

*Now, notice how Jesus speaks of the future:*

**v. 16: “For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the Kingdom of God.”**

The Passover foreshadowed and found its fulfillment in Jesus.

And His sacrifice will find its’ fulfillment in Heaven; in all the people Jesus’ sacrifice purchased – souls of people from every tribe, language and nation in the world.

**v. 17-18: “For I tell you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”**

Jesus is speaking of the fulfillment of the kingdom of God.

And, then comes the **marriage supper of the Lamb**, the celebration of His bride, the Church, meeting her Groom, Jesus, in the consummated kingdom!

**Revelation 19:9** “Then the angel said to me, ‘Write: “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”’ And he added, ‘These are the true words of God.’”

## **ILLUSTRATION**

*This scene caused me think of my future* – what if – 30-40 years from now, I get word that I have only a few months to live. So, as I feel in my body the day approaching, I call my family together ... those I love the most.

Sharon, my faithful, loving, sacrificial life partner. Our four children, their spouses, our grandchildren.

And, I say, “*I have been anticipating this time with you for many years, a time before I taste the sting of death and go to Heaven to meet Jesus face to face.*”

Then, I share some special words with each one, and then we have the Lord’s Supper together.

And I say, “We’ll not have a moment like this again until the great wedding feast of the Lamb in Heaven. I’ll see you all there one day because of the sacrifice Jesus made for each of us.”

*To understand Jesus’ life purpose, we must ...*

### III. Anticipate the Future

#### **ILLUSTRATION**

A well-known painting of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. depicts a young widow and her daughter standing at the wall, reaching up and touching the name of the husband and father who died. The reflection in the polished granite is not what we would expect ... a reflection of the of the mother and daughter ... but we see the husband and father reaching out his hand to touch theirs.

That’s a picture of the Lord’s Supper. We arrive at the table and reach out our hands to take this unleavened bread and this fruit of the vine. In response, Jesus reaches out to us, anticipating the day we will be with Him at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

*“Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for making it possible for me to be forgiven now and forever through Your sacrifice on the cross! I open my life to You and entrust my life to You. Only in You can I be forgiven. Thank You! Amen.”*

Next week in “Final Days” Have you ever been in a situation where you knew what God wanted you to do but you didn’t want to do it? In fact, you even asked God to change His mind for you? That’s where Jesus found Himself after the Last Supper and before He went to the cross. Next week we’ll see how Jesus handled it, and how we can too.