

Blood and Betrayal

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[0 : 0 0] So Matthew chapter 26, verse 26 to 29. Now, as they were eating, Jesus took bread,! And after blessing it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples and said,! Take, eat, this is my body.

And he took a cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink of it, all of you. For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

I tell you, I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the death of Jesus that gives us forgiveness and life. We pray as we listen now that you will teach us, and you will encourage us and you'll point us to Jesus who died for us.

Amen. There is an outline inside the bulletin there. So you can look at that as we go as well and take some notes. Keep your Bibles open and let's have a look.

[1 : 1 4] So it was a real Friday in history, nearly 2,000 years ago, wasn't it? That the most incredible thing happened, that God entered into a new covenant with his people.

God made this new agreement with them to bring freedom and to forgive sins. But previously, covenants that God had made with his people had been ratified with the blood of bulls and goats and lambs.

But shockingly, this new covenant, God did through disgrace and defeat. His own son dying a shameful death on a cross. Dishonourable, appalling, all his disciples fell away from him.

But it wasn't unplanned. The night before it took place, they were celebrating the ancient Passover, Jesus with his disciples, and he told them the meaning of his death, that he was going to die the next day and what that death meant by using that Passover meal.

And now, this is a new meal, which we celebrate as we remember that new covenant together. So we're going to see how Jesus celebrates and changes the meaning of the Passover meal and we're going to consider the bread, which Jesus says is his body.

[2 : 3 2] We'll consider the blood, which he says is the blood of the covenant, what that means. And we'll see this pointed forward to the promised new covenant that offers forgiveness of sins. And we'll join in sharing the Lord's Supper together.

So, the night before Jesus' death, he celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples and he changed the meaning of it while he was doing this. So, as we share in this same meal, symbolically soon, we're not looking back to the rescue from Egypt.

through the blood of a lamb, by the rescue from sin through the blood of Christ. Back in Egypt, God's people were slaves for 430 years. And then, under Moses, God sent mighty plagues, showed his power to Pharaoh against Egypt, and then Pharaoh would not let the people go, free from slavery.

Finally, God himself went through the land to kill the firstborn son in every household. Terrible judgment upon God's enemies, destroying the hope and the pride of an entire nation.

But for God's people, he provided a way out. A lamb, sacrifice as a substitute, its blood painted on the door as a sign. There has already been a death in this house.

[3 : 51] And so, God would pass over that house without bringing another death. And God's people would be spared from judgment. So, Exodus 12, 13 says, the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are.

And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. And it was this judgment on Egypt, the slave masters of God's people, which led to freedom.

The Egyptians then begged them to leave, and so they're rescued from slavery. So then God commanded the Passover to be eaten every year to commemorate this rescue, where God's people were delivered from judgment that came on God's enemies.

God's people were also rescued from slavery. And so, Jesus is eating this meal with his disciples to remember this rescue. And as he does so, he actually explains his own death and he changes the meal to something far more significant to point to a greater rescue.

So, while they're eating this Passover meal, remembering this judgment and this deliverance, Jesus does something new. He takes the bread, and this bread, it's flat bread, right?

[5 : 08] No yeast was allowed in it. Why? Because in the original Passover event, there was no time to let it rise. And why was there no time? Because that very night, when God passed over the houses with the blood on the doorpost, they were to be delivered and they had to escape quickly.

They had to eat in haste, they had to have their belts on, they had to have their sandals on, they had to have their staff in hand while they were munching. The bread was a symbol, not just of escaping judgment, but of freedom.

Eat this bread quickly because you are going free. And so, flat bread is bread of freedom. And so, Matthew 26, 26, as they were reading, Jesus took bread, after blessing it, broke it, gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body.

And so, what's Jesus doing? He's giving new meaning to the Passover meal. The bread that points to rescue from slavery and freedom is his body. Not rescue from slavery in Egypt, but rescue from slavery to sin.

A new, better, full of freedom that you can have no hope of obtaining by yourself. We need Jesus to be the sacrifice to obtain this. His body broken is what's going to set you free.

[6 : 29] And then next, verse 27, he took a cup and when he'd given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

So again, Jesus is rewriting the Passover meaning. In the original Passover, blood was from a blemishless one-year-old lamb. Sacrificed at twilight, blood's painted on the doorpost with hyssop and the blood was assigned to them and when God saw it, as he was coming through the land to bring judgment and death, he would pass over that house leaving it untouched.

The painted doorpost proclaimed, there's already been blood shed in this household so God doesn't need to bring his judgment on them. The lamb was the substitute for the firstborn, it died in place of the son.

So while the Egyptians suffer judgment with death and horror and grief and terror, God's people escape his judgment, can leave slavery in freedom and in victory.

And Jesus is now saying the blood of this new Passover is his. Not a lamb but his own. He is the one who is the substitute.

[7 : 44] He is the one who dies that we might live. He is the one who shelters us from the judgment of God so that by his blood God passes over us when he comes in judgment of his enemies.

And he calls this blood the blood of, my blood of the covenant. covenant. Now what's covenant? We often shorthand say well it's a promise. And it's true, more formally it's an agreement specifying what it is that's agreed to along with blessings for keeping it, curses for breaking it and ratified with blood.

And Jesus' blood is ratifying a new covenant, establishing a new agreement. And so this phrase blood of the covenant again points us back to Exodus.

Exodus. So through Moses there's a covenant between God and his people. He's brought them out of this land of slavery, he's promised I will be your God, you will be my people.

He showed them this is what it looks like to live as my people by giving them his good laws. So then after God has rescued his people from Egypt, he's led them through the wilderness, they've come and they've worshipped him at Mount Sinai, he's given them the Ten Commandments, all the people have heard and promised to do all the words of the Lord.

[9 : 07] Then Moses builds an altar. He takes half the blood from the offerings and he throws it against the altar and he reads out the book of the covenant and again all the people agree to obey and he throws the other half of the blood on the people.

And so Exodus 24 verse 7 and 8 says this, And he took the book of the covenant and he read it in the hearing of the people and they said, All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient.

And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, Behold, the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.

So this covenant that God has made in the wilderness at Mount Sinai is ratified with blood. So blood on the altar representing God and blood on the people, both parties. And once this covenant is sealed in blood then what's the very next thing that happens?

The very next verse says this, Then Moses and Aaron Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders of Israel went up and they saw the God of Israel.

[10 : 22] And there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel.

They beheld God and ate and drank. So a covenant is entered into and then the representatives of the people are invited into God's presence to eat and drink before him.

That's wild, isn't it? That is absolutely incredible. And in this new covenant Jesus is establishing do you see that future little promise in Matthew 26 verse 29 there?

And Jesus says I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And though his body is going to be broken and his blood is going to be poured out to seal this covenant, there is a day coming for Jesus to drink wine with his disciples in his Father's presence, in his Father's kingdom.

And because this new covenant is sealed by Jesus' blood, we too can look forward to that day. More of that on Sunday. Come back. It's going to be awesome. So Jesus' blood formally ratifies this covenant between us and God.

[11 : 41] And what's the covenant? Well, it's a new covenant. It has the same shape as the old one. But it turns out the old covenant has been pointing forward to this new one the whole time.

It's blood that redeems us from judgment. It's blood that means God passes over us when he comes to destroy. It's a covenant between God and his people that he will be our God and we will be his people.

All those got the same shape as the old covenant. But it's completely new. And this new covenant was spoken of in the old. They said there actually will be a new covenant coming in Jeremiah 31.31.

Jeremiah says Behold, the days are coming declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hands to bring them out of the land of Egypt.

My covenant that they broke though I was their husband declares the Lord. For this covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord. I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

[12 : 52] And no longer shall each one teach his neighbour and each his brother saying, Know the Lord for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sins no more.

And isn't that just what Jesus said when he was establishing this new covenant? This is my blood of the covenant for the forgiveness of sins.

The next day Jesus will shed his blood and judgment of God will fall upon him so that he cries out my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And it's by his wounds that we are healed.

It's our iniquity is forgiven through his death. Our sins are remembered no more. Now God the Son has come down to be the sacrifice for our sin.

And it's Jesus' blood that does this for there will be a judgment. We're told that it's Jesus himself who will be revealed in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

[14 : 05] The Lord himself will come in judgment and the only ones who won't suffer the punishment of eternal destruction are those who have the blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, painted on the doorposts of their lives.

We're sheltered from judgment by the blood of Jesus. When God sees the blood of Christ he knows there has already been a death there. Christ's blood was poured out as a substitute for mine.

And so judgment passes over those who are part of the new covenant. We're saved in judgment and one day we'll celebrate.

Jesus' body broken is that bread of freedom. His blood poured out is the blood of the new covenant. God is our God and we are his people. And one day we will drink wine again with the Son in the Father's kingdom.

And so we're going to celebrate this new covenant that we have now. That our sins are forgiven, that we're God's people, that God passes over us in judgment. God rescues us from sin and gives us true freedom.

[15 : 16] It's wonderful, isn't it? Praise the Lord. So we're going to celebrate this with communion. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.