

## Jesus: Our Passover Lamb

### 1. Remembering the past sacrifices

- On 26<sup>th</sup> April in Australia we commemorate ANZAC Day
  - One of most significant events in Australian history
  - It's the day we remember the sacrifice of Australian and NZ soldiers at Gallipoli during WWI to give us freedom
  - This is the 100 year anniversary of that event
  - Right we remember it
- All cultures do this
  - The most significant events in a cultures history are commemorated to ensure future generations remember those events and what they represent to that culture
- The Passover that we've just read about in Exodus 12 is THE most significant event in the history of the Jews
  - So significant they still commemorate it to this day
- Like
  - ANZAC Day for Australians
  - Independence Day for Americans
  - Bastille Day for French
- No coincidence that one the Passover is remembered by the Jews for reasons similar to ANZAC Day
  - It's an event that centers on a sacrifice to ensure others could be saved
  - For Jews ... the Passover is an event that defines who they are
  - For Christians it's a revised Passover meal – the Lord's Supper, is the central act of Christian worship is what is commemorated by Christians at Easter
- When you look at both these events and commemorations ... what's at the centre of them both?
  - The bloody death of a lamb
- Why?

### 2. Remembering the Passover sacrifice

- God's people > Israelites > enslaved in Egypt
  - 400 yrs earlier immigrated from Israel down to Egypt during famine

- Over years and decades that followed they prospered and grew in number
- However, the Egyptians became worried that God's people would become too numerous and overthrow them
- So they forced the Israelites to become slaves for Pharaoh
- People hated this and they cried out to God to save them and eventually God raised up Moses to rescue his people
- Moses repeatedly called on Pharaoh to let God's people go but Pharaoh refused
  - So God sent a series of plagues on Egypt
    - Frogs, locusts, storms, river turning to bloods, gnats, flies, boils
- The final plague would be the death of the firstborn
- It would be the final act of judgment on Pharaoh and the Egyptians who repeatedly shook their fist in God's face
  - But in order to spare his people from the judgment that God was going to bring on the land, God provided a rescue plan
- The plan was to take a lamb, without defect
  - Sacrifice it and daub its blood on the door frame of the house
  - When God came to bring judgment on Egypt, he saw the blood and 'passed over' that house
  - Those who were inside those houses protected by the blood of the lamb, did not die > God spared them
- However, that night there was great distress in Egypt for there was not a house among the Egyptians without someone dead
  - From least to the greatest
  - No household was spared > no one was exempt > not even Pharaoh
- That tenth plague was the last straw for Pharaoh and his people
  - They insisted Moses and all the Israelites leave Egypt
  - So Moses led them out of Egypt, > through the Red Sea towards the Promised Land
- That event is the greatest event in the Old Testament > the greatest event in the history of God's people
  - This event that is known as the Exodus ... was THE great event where God rescued his people from slavery and lead them to the Promised Land

- Like ANZAC Day is a significant day in the history Australia, so significant was that day, God instructed the Israelites to commemorate that day with a special ceremony
- We commemorate special events in different ways
  - ANZAC Day > marches > laying of flowers and wreaths > Last Post
  - Christmas > gifts to others
  - Birthdays > favourite meal
    - God son Noah > Macca's for brekky > KFC for lunch > was trying to go the trifecta and get Pizza Hut for dinner but his mum put her foot down and insisted they have a salad!
- In the years that followed the Exodus from Egypt ... the Israelites commemorated that event with a special meal
  - Called the Passover meal
  - They were to eat roasted lamb, flat bread (no yeast)
  - They would remember how God passed over them and spared them the judgment because of the blood of the lamb

### **3. Remembering the Jesus sacrifice**

- You might be sitting there thinking
  - "Why are talking about all this Old Testament stuff like Passover, lamb's, the Exodus at Easter time?"
  - "Shouldn't we be talking about Jesus and the cross?"
- Well I don't know if you know this ... but the day Jesus was crucified it was the Jewish Passover
  - Jesus knew the religious leaders hated him and wanted to kill him
  - So he had deliberately timed his arrival in Jerusalem for the Passover Festival
  - Not only would there be thousands of people who had travelled to Jerusalem for the festival who would there see what was about to unfold at the cross
  - But most significantly ... Jesus death at Passover would help the people / help us to understand the significance and meaning of the cross
- Why would he do this
  - Why would Jesus deliberately turn up in Jerusalem at Passover knowing the authorities were going to arrest him and put him to death
- We get a clue to this from John 1:29

- 3 years prior to this > right at the start of Jesus ministry
- John the Baptist sees Jesus coming towards him and says to everyone who's there with him
  - *"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*
- What's John saying here?
  - He's saying that Jesus is the true Passover lamb
  - Jesus is like the lamb who will be sacrificed to spare people from God's judgment
- This was Jesus own understanding of his whole coming to earth
  - It was to be the true Passover Lamb
  - And this is what he wants to teach his disciples that night where they share their last meal together
- On the night before Jesus died, he instructed his disciples to prepare a Passover meal for them to share
  - As they share the Passover meal together ... Jesus re-appropriates the Passover meal > he reinterprets it and helps them to see that his impending death is actually the fulfillment of the Passover
- So as they share the meal together Jesus says to his disciples
  - "This is my body which is given for you"
  - "This is my blood which was shed for you and the forgiveness of sins"
  - The disciples are no longer to remember the Passover and the sacrifice of the lamb ... but to remember the cross and the sacrifice of Jesus
  - He's telling them in advance how to interpret his death on the cross the following day
  - He is the true Passover lamb
- You might be scratching your head and wondering "how?"
  - Passover lamb was to be a perfect lamb, a lamb without blemish
  - Jesus was a perfect man, a man without sin
  - Passover Lamb was to be sacrificed for the sake of the Israelites
  - Jesus was sacrificed for the sake of the whole world
  - Blood of the Passover Lamb was shed on the wooden doorframe
  - Blood of Jesus was shed on a wooden cross
  - Death of the Passover Lamb meant those who trusted in God would be spared his judgment

- Death of Jesus meant those who trusted in him would be spared God's judgment
- You see the Passover in Exodus ... was pointing forward to an even greater sacrifice and an even greater rescue
  - It was the sacrifice of Christ, his blood shed for you and I for the forgiveness of sin
- A lot of people object to this
  - "I don't believe this"
  - "I object to all that"
- What are those objections?
- Two objections
- First is this
  - "I don't need to be forgiven by God"
  - "I'm morally upright; I live a pretty good life"
  - "I'm not a bad person"
- OK lets run with that
  - Let's just say we put aside the truth about God and the Bible and we're all judged according to our own moral values
  - Forget about the 10 commandments or Love God and love your neighbour
  - Say we put a invisible digital recorder around your neck for you entire life and it recorded every instance you say things that other people ought to do
  - It only picks up standards and morals that you call other people to
- If at the end of your life we were to take off that recorder and say
  - "Let's evaluate your life according to what's on the recorder"
- There's not a person on the face of the earth who could do it
  - Not a person who would be able to live up to even their OWN moral standard ... let alone God's standard
  - No one has
- Second objection is this
  - "Okay, I know I'm not morally perfect, but why do I need my sins forgiven?"
  - "Jesus death on the cross, was it really that necessary?"

- “Surely if there is a God and he’s all loving ... then surely he could just forgive me? God can just forgive can’t he?”
- No!
  - No he can’t just forgive without the sin being paid for
- You think about it because this is how we operate when people offend us
- Imagine if someone really really wrongs you
  - What happens?
  - There is a debt between you and the person who has wronged you that needs to be paid / needs to be forgiven
  - And it can’t be wished away, it can’t be ignored ... you can’t just forgive and forget
  
- Only two things you can do with the debt
- Either ...
  - You can make them pay it off
    - In other words you can retaliate, you can hurt them, berate them, find ways of making them suffer
    - As that happens you sense the debt being paid off until a certain point its gone
  - You can forgive them > right thing to do
    - But forgiveness also has a cost
    - Because forgiveness means when I want to retaliate ... I don’t
    - When I want make them suffer for hurting me ... I don’t
    - When I want to think awful thoughts about them and what awful people they were to me ... I don’t
    - As you do that ... over time ... your anger slowly subsides
    - Why? Because you’re paying the debt yourself
    - You’re bearing the cost and pain for the wrong done against you, yourself
- You see, there’s no such thing as a serious wrong without payment
  - Either you pay or they pay
  - Either way someone has to pay or the barrier remains
  - There’s no such thing as a wrong that can just be forgiven without somebody paying
- And we know that’s true for us and our imperfect moral standards ... how much more is it true for God as at cosmic and eternal level
  
- What’s interesting from passage in Exodus in v22 it says
  - *Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning*
- What this means is ... the destroyer is not just coming for Egyptians

- God is saying to the Israelites ...
  - You're just as culpable as the Egyptians
  - You're the oppressed, they are the oppressor
  - You worship the one true God, they worship idols
- Yet if you were to go out of your house and outside the protection provided by the blood of the lamb ... you too would face judgment
- That's because in themselves ... whether its by the 10 commandments or the 2 great commands of Jesus or the digital recorder standard ... they are no better than the Egyptians
  
- You see ... in the final spiritual analysis God says to even the
  - Most moral person
  - Most religious person
  - Most theologically correct person
  - He says ... if you go out tonight and you try and face judgment on your own .. and do not sit under the blood of the lamb
    - Your race
    - Your successes
    - Your wealth
    - Your moral goodness
    - Your religiosity
  - None of that will help you
  
- But when you sit under the blood of the Passover Lamb ...
  - God judgment passes over you ... because the lamb was sacrificed in your place
  
- That first Easter, Christ willing, deliberately, went Jerusalem at Passover ... to be our Passover Lamb
  - ... the one who was sacrificed so that his blood would be shed for our sake and for our rescue
  
- Will you trust him?
  - Will you entrust your eternal future to Christ who gave up his life for you and shed his blood for you
  - I pray we all will this Easter

## **PRAY**