

**Peace** be with you. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our journey through the Holy Scriptures, we are presently studying in the Gospel – or *Injil* - the holy book that tells the Good News about Jesus the Messiah. Jesus is the holy Redeemer who came into the world to deliver the children of Adam from the dominion of Satan. **The Redeemer was very different from all other men; He is the Word Who was with God in the beginning, who appeared upon earth as a man.** The Man Jesus was unique in His **birth**, because He was born of a virgin by the power of the Spirit of God. Jesus was also unique in His **character**, because He was born with a holy nature; He never sinned. His **works** were also unique; no one ever did miracles as He did. The Lord Jesus had power over Satan and his demons, the wind and the sea, and sickness and death. His **teaching** was also unparalleled; even His enemies said, *"No one has ever spoken like that man!"*

Yes, Jesus Christ was unique in His birth, His character, His works and His words. But that did not cause everyone to recognize that He was the Savior who came from heaven. Most of the children of Adam did not understand who Jesus really was. They considered Jesus to be a prophet, but they did not realize that God Himself had come to visit them! As for the Jewish religious rulers, they not only failed to understand who Jesus was, but they even conspired together to have Him put to death! In our last lesson, we heard how Jesus rebuked the religious leaders and the teachers of the Law because of their hypocrisy and wickedness. But Jesus' words to them did not cause them to repent. In fact, the religious rulers were obsessed with one thought: **Jesus must be put to death!**

The Lord Jesus knew that He was going to die in Jerusalem, and that those religious rulers would be the ones who would put Him to death. Thus, we saw that Jesus told His disciples that the Priests and the teachers of the Law would condemn Him to die. They would turn Him over to the Romans, so that they might mock Him, spit on Him, beat Him, and nail Him to a cross. But after three days He would arise again! In this way, Jesus predicted both His death on a cross and His resurrection from the grave. And Jesus not only announced **how** He would die, and **where** He would die, but in the chapter before us today, we will see that Jesus even announced **when** He would die!

Now let us continue in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty-six, and hear how Jesus prepared for His crucifixion, which literally means, death on a pole or cross. God's Word says: *When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away-and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."*

Did you hear what Jesus said to His disciples? He told them that the sons of Adam would nail Him to a cross **on the day of the Passover feast**. This is very important. In our study in the Torah, we learned about the day of the Passover. The Passover took place in the first month on the Jewish calendar, which is in March and April, around Easter time. Every year, at that festival, the Jews recall what happened in the time of Moses when the Israelites were the slaves of the cruel king Pharaoh. Back then, God, in His righteous judgment and great plan, had condemned to death every first born male in Egypt. But God also provided a way of deliverance for those who believed Him and obeyed Him. God commanded every Israelite family to sacrifice a lamb without blemish and to stain the blood on the doors of their houses. God had promised them, saying, *"When I see the blood I will pass over you!"* The people of Israel did as God had commanded and, consequently, God delivered their firstborn sons from death. God redeemed them by **the blood of a lamb**.

For one thousand five hundred years, the Jews sacrificed lambs every year at the festival of the Passover, in order to remember how God had saved them from the plague of death that fell on the land of Egypt. However, God did not want them merely to **look back** and to remember what had happened. By means of those sacrificial lambs, God wanted them to **look forward** and anticipate the day when the Messiah would shed His blood on the cross. The blood which the Messiah would shed would save sinners from the plague that is worse than any other plague: the eternal fire of hell! The Redeemer's death on the cross would be the final and perfect sacrifice which God's righteous law required. God in His wisdom planned that the Redeemer would pour out His blood on the day of the Passover Feast and thus **fulfil the symbolism of the sacrificial lamb**. Thus, Jesus the Redeemer would finish the plan which God had designed to save sinners from His righteous judgment.

Now let us return to the Gospel, beginning with the verse we already read.

*When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, "As you know, the Passover is two days away-and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified." Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. "But **not** during the Feast," they said, "or there may be a riot among the people."... Then one of the Twelve-the one called Judas Iscariot-went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So they counted out for him thirty silver coins. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over.*

*On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" So he sent two of his disciples, telling them,*

*"Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.*

***When the hour came,** Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, **"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."** While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, **"I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me."** They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, **"Surely not I?"** **"It is one of the Twelve,"** he replied, **"one who dips bread into the bowl with me. The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."** Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, **"Surely not I, Rabbi?"** Jesus answered, **"Yes, it is you."** As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night. While they were eating, Jesus took **bread**, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, **"Take it; [this is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.]"** Then he took the **cup**, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. **"This cup is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many..."***

That is what is written in the Gospel concerning the last supper which Jesus had with His disciples, before He poured out His blood as a sacrifice that erases sin. Jesus made known to His twelve disciples that one of them would betray Him. It was Judas Iscariot. In the eyes of man, Judas was a faithful disciple, but in his heart, Judas only cared about money and the things of the world. That is why he went to the High Priests and said to them, *"What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?"* Thus the Priests counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. This took place to fulfil what the

prophet Zechariah had predicted hundreds of years earlier, when he wrote that the Messiah would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver.

However, the most important thing in what we have just read is what Jesus said when He shared the bread and the cup with His disciples. Did you hear what He told them? Let's read it again:

*While they were eating, Jesus took **bread**, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my **body** given for you; do this in remembrance of me." Then he took the **cup**, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. "This cup is my **blood** of the covenant, which is poured out for many..."*

Thus we see how Jesus placed **two symbols** before His disciples: the symbol of **the bread**, and the symbol of **the cup**. The bread, which Jesus broke and gave to His disciples, **illustrated** His body, which He was going to give as a sacrifice. The cup with the juice of grapes **illustrated** the blood which Jesus the Redeemer would pour out to pay the debt of sin for the children of Adam so that they might live in the presence of God forever.

Thus, through **the symbol of the bread** and **the symbol of the cup**, Jesus taught His disciples that the reason He came into the world was **to give His life**-His body and His blood-as a sacrifice for sinners. Just as everyone on the earth must **take in** food and water in order to stay alive, so also, everyone who wants to live forever in heaven with God must **believe** that Jesus Christ gave His body and blood to give us eternal life. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One who can give eternal life and the blood He shed is God's only remedy to redeem you and me from the curse which sin brought.

If you remember only one thing from today's study, let it be this: **Jesus Christ came into the world to bear your burden of sin**. That is **the message** of God's prophets.

That is the **meaning** of the ram, which Abraham sacrificed in place of his son. The way of forgiveness is the way of the Perfect Sacrifice. God can forgive you of your sins through the sacrifice of the holy Redeemer, who poured out His blood for you. For thousands of years God required animal sacrifices so that He could pass over – cover or overlook - the sins of the children of Adam. That is the Old Covenant, which God entrusted to His prophets. However, Jesus the Messiah is the One who brought the New Covenant. He is the One who came to **fulfil the symbolism of the animal sacrifice**. Jesus Christ Himself is the final Passover Lamb that was slain, so that whoever believes in Him might be saved from God's righteous judgment. That is why the Holy Scripture says: *"[Jesus] Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed."* **"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."**

**The blood of Jesus is of infinite value.** Listen to what the Word of God declares concerning the cleansing power of Jesus blood. The Scriptures say:

*"The blood of Jesus [Christ]...purifies us from all sin!" "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a Lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified him and so your faith and hope are in God!"*

Think carefully about what you have heard today, because God wants to give you insight into these great truths. In the next study we plan to complete the story about the last supper and see how the religious rulers arrested Jesus so that they might kill Him....

God bless you as you think about the deep meaning and great blessing contained in this verse from the Word of God,

*"The blood of Jesus [Christ]...purifies us from all sin!"*

If you have any questions about what you have heard today please email Rock International at: [Resources@rockintl.org](mailto:Resources@rockintl.org)

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