

Christ Church

“The Passion of the Christ”

Passage: Matthew 26 & 27

Main Idea: The nature of the cure indicates the severity of the disease

Doctrine: Sovereignty of God/Feasts of Israel/Cross

PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

Open your Scripture Journal to Matthew 26

26:1-5: “When Jesus had finished all these sayings (Olivet Discourse), he said to his disciples, “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. But they said, “Not during the feast (Passover), lest there be an uproar among the people.”

- Notice that leaders said, “Not during the feast”; but Jesus said, “Yes, it will be during the feast”; guess who won that debate?
- God is sovereign over every event & the timing of every event in these chapters; just like in our lives & world, He moves heaven & earth, & people, to accomplish His purposes = massive implications

What is this “feast” & why is it so important events happen during it?

- In Old Testament, God prescribed 7 Feasts for His people; special times for Israel to remember & celebrate what God had done
- But more than that, these 7 Feasts are a picture book; celebrations about Jesus; categories to help understand what Jesus would do in 1st coming, AND they anticipated what He would do in 2nd coming

“God’s Calendar”; all-inclusive, that’s why there are 7 of them; give a complete picture of Jesus – not only historically, but also prophetically

- Picture the past work of Jesus in 1st coming; the present work of Holy Spirit in the world; & what’s in the future when Jesus returns
- So, to understand these 7 Feasts is to understand Jesus’ work in Gospel; think they will also help us understand Matthew 26 & 27

Four Spring Feasts, which picture work of Jesus in His first coming

1. Passover: Feast of deliverance; remembering & celebrating freedom from slavery in Egypt when God killed firstborn of Egyptians, but passed over those houses that were marked with blood of a lamb
 - Picture: Like lamb was killed in place of Israelites' firstborn son (substitute), Jesus died in our place as our Passover Lamb; why His death was precisely & purposely timed to take place on Passover
 - Passover was a one-day celebration on 14th day of month of Nisan (late March or April); day of the week changed every year, like Christmas, but year Jesus died, Passover was on a *Friday*
 - Followed immediately by a 7-day celebration = Unleavened Bread
2. Unleavened Bread: This Feast was a reminder of swift departure of Israelites from Egypt before they had time for their bread to rise
 - In Bible, leaven most often represents sin
 - Feast pictures Jesus, One who knew no sin, taking *all* our sin on Himself, not only to the cross, but also to the grave
3. Firstfruits: One day celebration beginning day after Unleavened Bread began; time for Israelites to thank God for firstfruits of the spring harvest; to give Him the first & to trust Him for the rest
 - When Jesus died, Feast of Firstfruits was on *Sunday*, so you know what this Feast pictures – Jesus' resurrection; He was the "firstfruits" of all who would rise from the dead

These first 3 Feasts came to be referred to collectively simply as "Passover" or "Unleavened Bread" (Matthew 26:17)

- Taken together, picture what God did for us through Jesus in past
4. Feast of Pentecost (Weeks or Harvest)
 - Firstfruits was *beginning* of harvest, Pentecost was 50 days later, at *end*; time of gathering & thanking God for His abundant provision
 - Picture of Acts 2 where Holy Spirit came 50 days after Jesus' resurrection; 10 days after ascension; founding of the church when a great harvest of believers were brought into God's Kingdom
 - Pictures the work of the Holy Spirit in believers right now

No Feasts in summer (church age); Jesus preparing place for Bride; God is equipping & enabling church to take Gospel to ends of earth

- 3 Fall Feasts (September/October); picture Jesus' work in 2nd coming
5. Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah): New Year; new beginning

- Pictured the next event on God's calendar = 2nd coming of Jesus when He will return with a trumpet call (24:31) to get His Bride
6. Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur): Once a year when high priest went behind curtain in temple to offer sacrifices to atone for sins of people; make amends for people's sin so God wouldn't destroy them
- Day of judgment picturing judgment following 2nd coming when Jesus separates sheep from goats; separates those who've received His sacrifice in payment for their sins from those who haven't
7. Feast of Tabernacles (Booths or Ingathering): Reminder of how God protected Israelites as they traveled in wilderness living in "booths"
- Time of gratitude for all God had done for them throughout year
 - After Jesus returns & separates in judgment, this Feast pictures how God will "tabernacle" or dwell with His people forever
 - Together, these 3 Fall Feasts picture the future work of Jesus
- "God's Calendar"; complete picture of Work of Jesus in Gospel
- Now know why Jesus said, "IT IS going to happen during Feast"
 - He was working on God's timetable, not that of religious leaders

Outline (quickly through)

- I. The Preparation (Matthew 26:6-16)
- II. The Passover (Matthew 26:17-35)
- III. The Prayer (Matthew 26:36-46)
- IV. The Passion (Matthew 26:47 – 27:66)

MAIN IDEA: The nature of the cure indicates the severity of disease

- They don't amputate your leg when you get a mosquito bite
- If cure for our sin was Jesus' unjust suffering; betrayal; flogging; mocking; being spit on; crown of thorns; being nailed to cross & having His Father turn His face away – if that's what it took to have our sins forgiven & reconcile us to God, what does that say about the severity of our sin?
- We won't understand the depth of God's love displayed in cross of Jesus unless we understand depth of our sin that put Him there
- The nature of the cure indicates the severity of the disease

I. THE PREPARATION (Matthew 26:6-16)

Other gospels say woman who anointed Jesus was Mary, sister of Martha & Lazarus; found 3 times in gospels, always at feet of Jesus

- Here, she's anointing Jesus with expensive perfume in preparation for His burial; her actions criticized by disciples, especially Judas
- But Jesus commends her actions; *Verse 13*: "Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her"
- This IS gospel; Jesus dying; giving His life as a ransom for sinners

Waste of expensive perfume was the straw that broke camel's back for Judas; realized Jesus wasn't going to be earthly king he thought

- So, he went to chief priests & negotiated for 30 pieces of silver in payment for delivering Jesus over to them

II. THE PASSOVER (Matthew 26:17-35)

Jewish day began at sundown, so it's after 6 on Thursday night

- Disciples had prepared Passover meal as Jesus instructed them
- All 12 disciples at meal; Jesus predicts one of them will betray Him
- Jesus privately identifies His betrayer as Judas; *John 13*: "What you are going to do, do quickly"; & so Judas leaves
- After he leaves, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper

26:26: "Jesus took bread; blessed it; broke it; & gave it to disciples & said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, & when he had given thanks gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

- God established the Feast of Passover AND the Passover meal itself as a picture, a preview of Jesus' work in the Gospel
- Jesus body is the Bread, broken to give life to all who come to Him
- Jesus' blood was poured out to satisfy God's requirement of death for sin; that's an indication of the severity of our disease of sin
- Lord's Supper is to be a reminder to us that this is what it took for our sins to be forgiven & for us to be reconciled to God

Verses 30-35, Jesus predicts all disciples will leave Him that night when He's arrested; but Peter says, "They might leave, but not me"

- Jesus tells Peter that he will deny Him 3 times before rooster crows
- *Why does Jesus prophesy things like this? Like Olivet Discourse?*
- *John 14:29*: "I have told you before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe"; proves God is God & Bible is God's Word

III. THE PRAYER (Matthew 26:36-46)

Jesus prays in Garden of Gethsemane (Mount of Olives); familiar place to Jesus & disciples; He wanted Judas to know where to find Him

- Jesus knew what next hours would bring, & being Fully Man, He was “*sorrowful & troubled*”

Learn from Jesus how to respond when we’re feeling that way:

- Don’t isolate; surround yourself with friends; open your soul to them; be vulnerable & truthful, rather than saying “I’m fine”
- Ask them to pray *for* you & ask them to pray *with* you
- Pray for *yourself*; pour out your heart to Father; be honest with Him & let Him know what you want – but, at the end of it all, we must say, “*Not my will, but Yours*”; takes high view of God to trust Him
- Jesus knew if there was any other way to accomplish redemption, God wouldn’t ordain that His Son suffer & be murdered in this way

IV. THE PASSION (Matthew 26:47 – 27:66) – 5 Parts:

1. Arrested (Matthew 26:47-56)

- Judas brings “*great crowd with swords & clubs*” to Garden
- Judas identifies & betrays Jesus with a kiss; soldiers arrest Jesus
- Then Peter takes out sword & cuts off ear of high priest’s servant
- Jesus: “*You’re thinking all wrong, Peter; I got this; I don’t need your help; God’s plan is not falling apart, it’s falling into place*”

2. Tried (Caiphas 26:57-68; Pilate 27:1-14)

Religious leaders tried to find something they could use to accuse Jesus of blasphemy but they couldn’t; & Jesus was silent

- So, in frustration, high priest, Caiphas, just came out & asked Him in 26:63, “*In God’s Name tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God*”
- What Jesus was waiting for; answered his question & added details
- Verse 64: “*Yes; and from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power & coming on the clouds of heaven.*”
- Jesus was sentenced to death for being the God He said He was

Leaders took Jesus to Pilate, Roman governor, because they didn’t have power to kill Him; every detail of God’s plan was falling into place

- Jewish method of capital punishment was *stoning*, but the Romans crucified convicted criminals, which was method the Old Testament & Jesus said would be used

3. Denied (Leaders 26:57-68; Peter 26:69-75; People 27:15-23)

a. Religious leaders had denied Him (*above*)

- b. Judas denied Him – regretted what he’d done; returned money & hung himself; full of remorse & regret for his sin, but no repentance
- c. All disciples had denied Him & fled when Jesus was arrested
- d. Peter: Followed Jesus into courtyard of high priest’s house, but when confronted by servant girl, he denied he even knew Jesus
 - More emphatically denied it when confronted by second servant girl
 - When a bystander said Peter’s Galilean accent betrayed him as one of Jesus’ followers, cursed & swore he “*did not know the man*”
 - Peter was ready for big things: “*Thou art the Christ; given keys to kingdom; Jesus going to build church on his confession*”; it was the little, unexpected things that knocked him down; I can relate to that
- “*God cannot use us fully until He’s broken us completely*”
 - God had great plans for Peter; Jesus loved Peter enough to let him fall because Peter had to learn not to think too highly of himself; not to make rash promises; not to sleep when he should be praying;
 - Even our failures have a good purpose in God’s sovereign plan
- e. Crowd denied Jesus by choosing notorious prisoner, Barabbas, to be released rather than Jesus = Gospel; Barabbas, guilty one, walks away free & the innocent One, Jesus, dies in his place (substitute)

Jesus is arrested; tried; denied; then crucified at 9:00 Friday morning

4. Crucified (27:27-56)

Each gospel writer records crucifixion, each with different emphasis

- Matthew’s account is very short & focused on mocking of Jesus

Soldiers mocked Jesus; religious leaders mocked Jesus; people passing by mocked Jesus; robbers crucified with Him mock Jesus

- Much like Matthew 4, “IF you really are the Son of God – save Yourself; come down from the cross & we’ll believe in You”; “If God really is Your Father & if He loves you, why doesn’t He deliver You?”
- But, if Jesus IS the Son of God, if He’s doing work God planned for Him to do, it’s not that He *can’t* come down from cross - He *won’t*
- If He is to save others, Jesus cannot save Himself

Five miracles in the death of Jesus:

1. Darkness from noon to 3 pm: Symbolizes divine judgment; God judging sins of world; Jesus, “*My God, why have you forsaken Me?*”
 - Our sin put on Jesus; Holy God cannot look on sin; Father turned His face away from Son so never have to turn His face away from us

2. Temple curtain torn: By God, from top to bottom, opening the way into the Holy of Holies so God's people can approach Him directly
3. Earthquake: Precisely at 3 pm when Jesus died
4. Graves opened: Old Testament saints raised to life; a foretaste of what was going to happen to Jesus in 2 days; promise of what happens to all believers because of Jesus' work on cross
5. Cry of centurion: *Verse 54: "Truly this was the Son of God"*
 - Pictures greatest miracle of all; inner transformation that takes place when we come face to face with Jesus

Jesus is arrested; tried; denied; crucified; buried Friday before 6 pm

5. Buried (27:57-66)

Even burial of Jesus is a testimony of His deity & of God's sovereignty

- First, Jesus' burial proved He really was dead; didn't faint on cross
- Prophecies were also fulfilled in His burial, when a rich disciple of Jesus, Joseph, takes Jesus off cross & buries Jesus in his own grave *before* 6 pm Friday, when new day began so Jesus would be in tomb for 3 days & nights (part of Friday; Sat; Sunday)

God even used religious leaders to be sure there would be no way Jesus' body would be stolen or destroyed; Joseph put stone in front, but religious leaders made sure tomb was sealed & guarded

- They thought they were doing their work, but all the time they were doing God's preordained work

CLOSING

The nature of the cure indicates the severity of the disease

- Easter means we are so lost, so unable to save ourselves, that nothing less than suffering & death of Son of God could save us

- That means we're not people who can simply pull ourselves together & live a good, moral life - & that's really good news; Jesus didn't come to tell us how to save ourselves; He came to save us Himself

Frankly, at end of *Matthew 27*, things don't look good for the home team, but relax because the game's not over; still the bottom of 9th

- That's next week - *Matthew 28*; Feast of Firstfruits

PRAYER