# Audio file

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# 1977 God’s Way of Salvation

We now continue our series of studies on God's way of salvation. And during our last presentation, we gave consideration to several of the successive points in the Passover service. Which service was given by God to teach us the fundamentals of the way of salvation. We looked at the circumcision, the choosing of the lamb, the death of the lamb, and the sprinkling of the blood upon the door post. and in this particular presentation, we will now move on to look at the eating of the lamb.

And hopefully in turn, the death of the first born of Egypt, and the subsequent departure at last of Israel and the land of bondage to begin their journey to the promised land, which of course was quite some time and distance away from the borders of the land of Egypt.

We come now to the very significant point of the eating of the lamb by the Israelites. as we read earlier, from Exodus the 12th chapter, they had to prepare the lamb whole. No broken bones, No carved-up carcass. It had to be baked. And they had to eat this with unleavened bread.

Furthermore, they ate standing up with all their garments girt on them for travel. their bags and bundles, ready for instant departure from the land of their captivity. And so, they ate the lamb on that dark and faithful night. The blood upon the doors outside, the death Angel passing by, and the great whale of sorrow bursting from the lips of thousands upon thousands of bereaved Egyptians.

The eating of the lamb must have been somewhere about the midnight hour. We can't tell exactly when they began to eat because we don't know how long it took to prepare the carcass for the feast. The Passover feast. It took quite some time, that's for sure. Because first of all, they had to kill the lamb at the going down the sun, carefully bleed it, catching the blood and quite some minutes were occupied, no doubt, with sprinkling this blood on the door posts and the lintel of the house entrance.

And then they had to skin the lamb and go wash it. They prepared it for baking. Prepare the fire. And to roast the whole lamb in the primitive conditions that they had back in those days. It must have occupied several hours. and so, no doubt, the hours approaching midnight when the first born was due to die, when they began to eat the flesh of the lamb.

It's very important that we realize that they were eating of that flesh before the death of the first born, during the death of the first born, and after the death of the first born. This is quite significant in the antitype of this event. Now, what does it mean to feast upon the Lamb, let's turn across to the New Testament to John 6 and verse 63 first of all, where Jesus Christ spoke on these very principles in His many addresses to the Jews of that day. In this verse, the Savior said, “it is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

So, Jesus said His words were spirit, and his words are life. Now in the same chapter, in earlier verses, we find that Christ has these statements to make in regard to His being the bread of life.

Let's read now from verse 47 of John the 6th chapter. “Verily, verily, I'll say to you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which came up down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever, and the bread that will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore said amongst themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them, verily, verily, I say to you except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whosoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him.”

There is a really interesting shift of symbolism in this particular passage, because Christ, first of all, talks about the bread of life. Remember that on the previous day, these were the statements in Capernaum, before this conversation took place, Christ had at the end of a long day of preaching and healing, fed 5000 people with several small loaves of bread and a few fishes. And at the end of that momentous day, the multitude had become excited and enthusiastic with the idea of making Christ King, even though it meant taking him by force and compelling him to occupy this position. Christ had sent them away refusing this honor or this disaster, as we should better regard it. That night there had been a tremendous storm from the lake and the disciple’s boat was almost engulfed, until they saw Jesus walking on the water and Peter walked out to meet him and sank halfway. The storm was still when Christ came to shore at Capernaum on the northern side of the Sea of Galilee. The vast multitude, though frustrated in their attempts to make Christ King the previous day, determined to seek him out and impose their will upon him in some way or the other, even yet. And when they met together, this conversation sprang up in regard to bread.

Now, of course, the multitude were concerned only with the physical supply of their body needs and not concerned about the change of character which Christ had come to give. And so, with the background of the previous days feeding of the 5000 with those little loaves of bread, Christ said to those people I am the bread of life.

Now, the previous day, the people saw those loaves of bread as being the end in themselves. That's all they thought about, the satisfaction of their physical hunger. But Jesus Christ desired them to look upon that merely as a symbol of himself as the as the life provider to their spiritual, and therefore to their eternal lives. But very soon you'll notice he moves away from bread to flesh and blood, and he says if you drink my blood and eat my flesh, then you most certainly have eternal life.

And of course, the poor Jews lacking spiritual discernment, asked the question how can he give us his flesh to eat and his blood to drink? Are we being invited to enter the ranks of the cannibals? That's the kind of thought they had in their minds.

Let's move across now to Colossians chapter one and verse 27. And there we read the words of the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul. Colossians one and verse 27: “to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Here Paul says that the hope of glory is Christ in you. And we recognize the very simple principle, if we get back into the symbolism again, the one that ate the lamb, and what did they have?

They had the Lamb in them. And when they had the lamb in them by the process of ingestion, then most certainly, of course, the life of the lamb had become their lives. And just as the lamb was in them said Jesus Christ himself was to be in them. there are two ways in which Jesus Christ is to enter into an individual. One is by the implantation of his life, through his divine seed, and the other is by feeding upon the seed of the word of God. Let's deal with the second one first. And I want to make the distinction between these two points very, very clear, if possible, because this distinction is quite important.

Let's turn now to Luke, then, the gospel according to Luke the 8th chapter. And in this chapter is the parable of the Sower who went forth to sow. I don't plan to examine this parable in detail. You recall, of course, that there are four different kinds of soil upon which the seed fell. Good ground, Stony ground, among thorns and thistles, and out there by the wayside. And obviously of course, only one of those areas produce good harvest.

Down in verse 11, Jesus Christ plainly says: “now the parable is this. The seed is the word of God.” And very obviously, of course, the reference is being made to the actual written word of God and the spoken word of Jesus Christ, and that is the seed of the word. Now as to that seed or to that food that Christ made reference in the first text I read this evening, in John, chapter 6, and verse 63. “It is the Spirit that quicken us, the flesh profiteth nothing. the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

Many people look upon the Bible only as a book of information and also of inspiration. God desires we shall go beyond that and look upon the Bible as a book of food. As the psalmist said, “thy words have I found, and I did eat them.” He actually digested the words of God, and as the life in the word entered and into his body, it fed both his body and his spirit and made him both physically and spiritually strong and healthy. Both directions, which of course is quite important.

Another aspect to feed upon the word is the development of faith. As Paul says in Romans the 10th chapter, that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, the foundation of our faith is the word of God, and those who believe in the mighty promises of God will most certainly develop a strong and living faith. Of that, there is no doubt and no question.

We turn now to the other way in which the life of Jesus Christ becomes the life of the individual, and we will turn to John the 5th chapter, and we'll read now versus 39 and 40. John Chapter 5, verses 39 and 40.

I'm going to read this according to the margin, which I think is the more correct translation, “and Jesus said you search the scriptures for in them, you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me, and you will not come to me, that you might have life.”

Now it's a good thing to search the scriptures. Provided that when we search the scriptures that we are looking for the right thing in the right way. Now those Pharisees back during the days of Jesus Christ were searching the scripture with great diligence. Why? Because they thought that in them was the eternal life, which is not found in the scripture, but only found in Jesus Christ himself. And that's why Christ said in verse 40: “and you will not come to me that you might have life.” In other words, Christ was saying the life which you're looking for is not found in the written word of God. It’s found only in the person Jesus Christ.

Let me stress again the fact that there is life in this word, but not the life they were looking for, was in this word. Let's turn now to first John chapter 5, to help us to further understand this. John, first John chapter 5, and verses 11 and 12. “And this is the record that God have given to us eternal life. And this life is,” where? “In His son. he that hath the son has life, and he that has not the son of God, has not life.

The first great need of any person who is coming toward Jesus Christ, the person who's taking those steps outlined in the Passover symbolism. Which involve, of course, circumcision, the selection of a spotless lamb. The slaying of that lamb. The sprinkling of the blood, eating of the lamb, and last of all, the death of the first born. Anybody who is taking those steps can only do so in response to having fed upon the word of God. The written word of God.

And therefore, in the Passover service, we find the people of the people of Israel eating the flesh of the land before the death of the first born, to symbolize the very necessary feeding upon the written word of God, which must be undertaken before we can develop the faith and the strength to be actually born again, or to receive the life which is in Jesus Christ.

And because Christ is a divine husband, as you read in the 7th Chapter Book of Romans, and therefore the one who supplies the divine seed, as you read in Galatians, the third chapter, in verse 16. it follows then that the eternal life, the everlasting life, beholding in perfect life, which every Christian must have in order to obey and to escape the bondage of the land of Egypt, is found in Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ alone.

The Pharisees of old made the sad mistake, of course, are trying to find that life, the life which is in Jesus Christ in another place namely in the written word of God. What they should have done, is what we have to do, namely, go to Jesus Christ to receive his life, which is eternal life, symbolized by the eating the lamb, after the death of the first born, and then go to the word of God to receive the food which will nourish and strengthen and fit that life for its place in the Eternal Kingdom.

Let’s now quickly summarize the three phases of the eating of the flesh of the lamb. First of all, they ate before and during the death of the of the of the first born. which symbolizes feeding upon the word of God to develop the faith and the strength and the knowledge necessary to reach out and lay hold upon the gift of Christ’s actual life. feeding on the lamb immediately after the death of the first born symbolized the receiving of Christ's life from Him personally into our bodies, in the place of the old life of sin which had been put to death, and any continued eating lamb thereafter, symbolizes the fact that during the Christian life, having received the divine life of Jesus Christ we must feed upon the word to nourish and strengthened the life which has been thus received.

There's a real close relationship, of course, between this eating of the lamb and the death of the first born. Now then, let's make a point right here and that is this: but between bondage and freedom, there were two deaths, and they are just as real and just as actual as each other. The first death, of course, was the death of the innocent. Namely the lamb. The second was the death of the first born, who was not innocent, but guilty. Guilty of oppression, guilty of warfare against God, guilty of defiance and of disobedience. the death of the lamb, was the death of the willing, the death of the 1st born, of the unwilling. the death of the lamb, that of the pure, the death of the first born, that of the impure. And so it goes on down the line.

Now, if there were two deaths between physical bondage and physical freedom, in that Passover service, which is a type, or a picture, or a symbol of the escape from land of spiritual bondage, then how many deaths must we expect to find between spiritual bondage and spiritual freedom? and the answer is very obviously 2. To confirm this, we will now turn to Romans, the 6th Chapter. Romans chapter six where Paul, the mighty apostle of the Gentiles spelled out the relationship of these two deaths to one another in the spiritual counterpart of the Old Testament picture, just as plainly as they are found back in the Old Testament Picture.

Perhaps we should read a few verses before Romans 6 and verse 6. Starting back in with verse one. Where Paul asked a very important question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound, God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein.” Now when Paul says, of course, what we say then, he must be referring back to a previous statement which would tend to lend itself toward a misinterpretation of God's word, and that previous statement, is down in verse 20 chapter 5. And the statement reads:

“Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound, but where sin abounds grace did much more abound.”

We know, of course, the grace is the power of God, it's the life of God. It's the love of God. It's that mighty transforming agency which counteracts the effects of sin in the human life.

Now when Paul said sin abounded that grace might much more abound or where sin did abound, grace did much more abound. Some people have drawn the very wrong conclusion, therefore, that the more you sin, the more grace there's going to abound to you. So therefore, sin as hard as you possibly can that grace may abound abundantly. Now Paul anticipated this misinterpretation. Quite logical, but not true, and so he said, Alright, then, what conclusion shall we draw from this statement: where Sin bounds Grace does much more abound. Is this the conclusion we should draw? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may much more abound? And what's his answer? God forbid.

Continuation of sin is not to go on. And so, he asked the question how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Now note the use of the pronoun we. He doesn't say how shall they who are dead to sin live any longer therein. Now when Paul used the pronoun, we, he included himself, and was Paul at that point in time, physically dead? No, he wasn’t. He was walking around, he was speaking, he was writing, he was doing all these things as a living entity, as a living human being, a person. And yet he says I am dead, obviously of course, he could not mean physically, he meant in the spiritual realm. The old man, the stony heart, the evil nature which resides in the flesh and blood body of the individual.

Let’s read on then in verse three, “know you not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life, for if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, we should be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

All the way for this little passage from Romans 6 verse 1 to 6, Paul has been talking about death and resurrection. The passing of an old life and the Institute of a new Life altogether. And now baptism becomes a symbol of this transaction, just as of course, in the Old Testament, the Passover serves to illustrate the same point. Now in verse 6 we find that there were two deaths being spoken of as plainly as they're pictured in the Passover service. Note the words, “knowing this, that our old man is crucified.” is that a death? Obviously. Because crucifixion was a means, not merely of torturing people, or punishing them, but of executing them. There was the purpose to execute the criminal.

And when Christ and those two thieves hung upon the cross, they all died. And as a result of, well Christ’s death was the result of Sin being placed upon Him. But the plan was, so far as the Jews were concerned, to use the cross as the means for Christ's execution. He died of course, before the cross could do that work.

So, when Paul says, knowing this, that those of us who have been baptized into Jesus Christ. That our old man is crucified. He's dead. In fact, the next part of the verse makes much plainer still that the body of sin might be destroyed. not wounded, not chained up, not imprisoned, but destroyed. done away with and brought to an end.

So, there's one death, our old man is crucified, it then says with him. Was Jesus Christ crucified? He was. Did He die as a crucified savior? He certainly did. So, there we find the two deaths plainly brought to view in that particular text. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him.”

Now the next part is prefaced with the word ‘that’ which of course, indicates purpose. The old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Let's now compare this verse with the scripture back and the Old Testament in regard to the Passover, and we can now rewrite this verse to fit the Passover story. We won't do any injustice to the scriptures of course. We're not adding to or taking away from them. We're simply relating it to an Old Testament situation, a physical situation. So it effects what we've been reading in regarding the Passover, “knowing this that the first born of Egypt is destroyed or killed or dead along with the lamb. For what purpose? that henceforth, the Israelites should no longer serve the Egyptians.

I think the parallel must be very, very obvious. and we can't overstress the point tonight that it is not by trying, but by dying that the victory is gained. Earlier we looked at the fact that sin is a slave master, and that sin which is embedded in the very nature of man is a parasite which has sprung up from the implantation of Satan’s Seed. and while sin reigns in our mortal bodies, it will always be the master of us and will cause us to do things against our will and against our desires.

Now Jesus Christ never comes and implants righteousness alongside of sin in our human bodies. It is not a contest between one strong power against another strong power within us. The only program that God knows is the putting to death or the crucifixion of the old man. The rooting of it right out of our very natures. And the placing of a new nature, altogether in the place where the old nature was. The Passover teaches that in the plainest of terms. The power of Egypt over Israel was completely taken away. So much so that the Egyptians simply stood aside and watched the Israelites depart unmolested from their land.

And when they tried to regain possession of those people at the Red Sea, all they got for their trouble with their own destruction and the surging waters as they returned over their heads. Now from that day on, the Israelite never ever saw the faces of the Egyptians again. Not until they reached the promised land, where of course, they still never saw them because no Egyptians were in that part of the world.

So likewise, it is God’s plan that once we step out of the land of sin’s bondage and overriding power. But that power becomes a thing of the past so far as our experience is concerned, and nevermore does become our concern. Living in Jesus Christ, possessing His life to go on from strength to strength and power of power.

Let’s close with Galatians, the second chapter and verse 20. Where Paul sums up this transition from a life of bondage to freedom through the death of the old man and the institution of a new Life in the place of the old.

Galatians 2, verse 20. “I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God. For righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

Now Paul says I am crucified with Christ. Did Jesus Christ hang upon the cross physically side by side with Paul? No, he didn't. Paul’s physical nature is not crucified with Jesus Christ. But his spiritual nature required from Satan most certainly was. so, he said, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live. Now what lives? The old physical body. What else lives? There lived in him the new life, which had come to him from Jesus Christ Himself.

So, he says, Yet not I. It's not me, not the old me, that the old sinful self, which is living, but Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

In the plainest of terms the Old Testament Passover story demonstrates the fact that it is only when the first born of Egypt dies, and therefore when our old nature is put to death, do we step out of the land of bondage, and begin the march to freedom, a new life altogether in Jesus Christ. Remember it is not by trying but by dying that the victory is gained.