

The Knockout Punch

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read, the book of Exodus, Exodus chapter 12, and we read again in verse 21.

Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb.

Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin.

None of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning, for the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians. And when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses.

And so on. Stay at home, protect the NHS, and save lives.

[1 : 1 0] Stay at home, protect the NHS, and save lives. We're all familiar with that slogan and statement from our government. Because for months, as you know, for the past couple of years, it was a statement that was declared and also drummed into us when we began living in lockdown.

Stay at home, protect the NHS, and save lives. But you know, when we come to Exodus chapter 12 and consider what was happening on the night before the Passover, we can see that the Lord gave the Israelites a similar instruction.

He gave them a similar message. Stay at home, shelter under the blood, and save lives. Stay at home, shelter under the blood, and save lives.

And as you know, this message was given because the Passover and the last plague of death was going to be delivered and bring the final blow to Pharaoh. And so this morning, for the last time, I want us to stand ringside.

I want us to watch and witness what will be the knockout punch to Pharaoh. I want us to watch and witness the knockout punch. And I'd just like us to look at this passage under three simple headings.

[2 : 2 8] Remember the Passover. Ready for Passover. Remember the Passover. And redemption at Passover. So, ready for Passover. Remember the Passover. And redemption at Passover.

Ready for Passover. Remember the Passover. Redemption at Passover. So, first of all, we're told here, or the Israelites were told, get ready for Passover.

Ready for Passover. Look again at verse 21. It says, Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said, to them, go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. Now, as you know, last Lord's Day, we were considering the first half of this crucial chapter. And it's a crucial chapter because it records for us this momentous occasion in the history of the Lord's people. It was when the Lord defeated Pharaoh, he destroyed the Egyptian gods, and then he delivered the Israelites from slavery. And of course, this was all possible. It was all possible because of the provision of the Passover lamb. It was possible because of the provision of the Passover lamb. Because when the Lord instituted the Passover, as you know, he gave instructions for the Passover. He gave instructions to his servants, Moses and Aaron, and they were to recite and to repeat these instructions to the congregation so that they would remember the Passover. And that's what we have, what we've just read in those verses there, in verses 21 to 23. Moses is reciting and repeating the instructions that he received from the Lord, so that the congregation, to make sure that the congregation of God's people is ready for Passover.

Because as we read last Lord's Day, on the tenth day of the month, every male, that is the head of every household. He was to take a suitable and a specific lamb from the flock out in the field. And the lamb was to be, as we're told, a year old. It was to be a healthy lamb. It was not to have a defect or a deformity. It was to be without spot and without blemish. But it was also to be a personal Passover, because it was to be a lamb for every single household. A lamb for a household. And so when the lamb was taken from the flock in the field, it was taken in and then tied outside the front door of the house.

[5 : 16] And the lamb was to remain outside the front door of that house from the tenth day of the month until the fourteenth day of the month. And it was a perfect Passover lamb. It was a personal Passover lamb.

But it was also for the people a powerful Passover lamb. Because for four days, for four days, this Passover lamb stood. It stood tied outside the front door of the house. And you know, you can imagine it, can't you? You can imagine them taking the lamb from the field and from the flock and tying this lamb there from the tenth day until the fourteenth day. And it would be outside the front door of the house.

And it was a vivid and visual reminder to every home in the congregation that their Passover lamb was a perfect lamb. It was a personal lamb. And it was a powerful lamb. A powerful sacrifice and substitute for them. And as you know, my friend, we can't read the account of the Passover without seeing that it foreshadows and is also fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Because as you know, the Passover here in Exodus 12, it's always pointing us forward. It's pointing us to Jesus. Just like John the Baptist pointed us to Jesus saying, behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He is the Passover lamb. He is the Passover lamb. Our Passover lamb who was sacrificed and substituted in order to redeem us and to rescue us from the curse of sin and death.

He's our Passover lamb who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He's our Passover lamb who was chastised for our peace and smitten for our healing. He's our lamb. He's our Passover lamb who was led, as Isaiah says, led as a lamb to the slaughter. Where his hands and his feet, they were nailed to a Roman cross. His head was crowned with a crown of thorns. His heart, his heart was driven through with a spear. His hands, his head, and his heart. He's our lamb.

[7 : 37] He's our Passover lamb. He's our Passover lamb who became sin for us. And yet the wonder is, he knew no sin. And yet he became sin for us so that we could be made the righteousness of God in him. He's our Passover lamb. It's Calvary's great transaction, isn't it?

Where the worst about me was laid upon my Passover lamb. And the best about him was laid upon me. My disobedience reckoned to the Passover lamb. His obedience reckoned to me. My sin and shame transferred to this Passover lamb. His salvation and his security transferred to me. My ruin credited to the Passover lamb. His riches credited to me. My rags of righteousness removed. And then I'm clothed in his robe of righteousness. It's Calvary's great transaction where Jesus, our Passover lamb, he is a perfect substitute. He is a personal substitute. He's a powerful substitute. And you know, it's a wonderful reminder and reassurance to every home in the congregation that he's perfect, he's personal, and he's powerful. He's a wonderful Passover lamb. A wonderful Passover lamb. But you know, as we mentioned last Lord's Day, in order to be ready for Passover, in order to be ready for this great occasion, we're told that on the 14th day of the month, everyone in the congregation was to take their lamb at twilight. Just as the sun was going down, they were to take their lamb at twilight and kill it. And they would kill it by slitting its throat. And so as the Passover lamb was killed, the life of the lamb, it would be drained out as the blood was draining from it. But as we're told there in those verses, the blood was collected in a basin. The blood that flowed from this Passover lamb was collected in a basin. And of course, that's a vivid and visual reminder of what they deserved for their sin. They deserved to die for their sin because the wages of sin is death. And yet dying in their place, condemned in their place, is this perfect, personal, and powerful Passover lamb.

But you know what I find fascinating? It's that the word basin, where it says there, in verse 22, take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. That word basin, it's the word threshold. That's what it literally means, the threshold. Which means that the Passover lamb, which had been chosen from the flock in the field, tied outside the front door of the house for four days. That perfect, personal,

and powerful Passover lamb, it was sacrificed and substituted on the threshold of the house, on the front step outside the front door of the house.

And you know, that's how personal this was. The lamb was substituted and sacrificed on the front step on the front step, the front step of the door. And you know, that's how personal the cross should be to us, too. It should be personal that, as it were, our perfect, personal, and powerful Passover lamb, Jesus Christ, he was sacrificed and substituted on the threshold, on the front step, outside the front door of our heart. You know, that's why the hymn writer made it so personal for himself. When he was speaking about the wonderful cross, he said, bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place, condemned he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood. Hallelujah, what a Savior.

And you know, it was in relation to this that the 19th century preacher and writer A.W. Pink, he makes this beautiful connection between the Passover and the cross. And he says about the door of the house, the door of the Israelites' homes, he said, the door of the house where the Israelites were protected, it had blood on the lintel, on the doorposts, and on the step. It had blood on the lintel, the doorposts, and on the step. And then he says, this picture's Christ on the cross. Blood above, where thorns pierced his brow. Blood on the sides, where the nails were driven through his hands.

[12:51] And blood below, where the nails were driven through his feet. It was blood above, blood on the sides, blood below. And blood below. Just like the door of the house. It had blood on the lintel, and on the doorposts, and on the very front step. And you know, my friend, the blood on the door, it pictures and portrays to us Christ as our Passover lamb. Christ suffering on the cross.

It's a wonderful picture. Blood above, blood on the sides, blood below. But as we said, the blood, the blood was to be applied to the doorposts and the lintel using hyssop. That's what we read in verse 22. Hyssop, we're told there, take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, on the front step, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin.

And so this hyssop, hyssop was a plant with small flowers on it. And these small flowers could be, could act just like a sponge. And they could soak up the blood that was shed in the basin, in the front step of the house. And then they would smear it. They would smear it along the lintel, and then down each doorpost of the house. And what's remarkable is that this was done, this act of taking hyssop and dipping it in the blood in the basin and putting it on the lintel and the doorposts, this was done to the door of every home in the congregation. Every home did as they were commanded.

That means that there were over 600,000 homes of the Israelites. There were 600,000 family homes. That's what we're told later on in the chapter. 600,000 homes were left dripping in the blood of a Passover lamb. They had blood above, blood at the sides, and blood below.

And it was all applied by a hyssop branch. And you know, that's what David was praying for in Psalm 51 when he says, Do thou with hyssop sprinkle me? I shall be cleansed so.

Yea, wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than the snow. David was praying in Psalm 51. He was praying for cleansing from sin. He was praying to be cleansed by the shed blood of Christ, our Passover lamb. He was praying that that precious blood would be smeared upon the lintel and the doorposts of his own heart. And you know, it's no accident that John, in his gospel, he mentions hyssop right at the cross. He mentions what was applied, how the blood was applied at the doorposts and the lintel of the houses in Israel. He mentions hyssop at the cross because it's a wonderful reminder and reassurance to us that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. And so once the sacrifice, we're told here, once the sacrifice had been accomplished, and once the blood had been applied above and on the sides and below, everyone in the congregation was then ready for Passover. And they would go inside. That's what the Lord said, go inside, close the door, and stay at home. Stay at home, shelter under the blood, and save lives.

[16:31] Because as the Lord says, when I see the blood, I will pass over you. But as a congregation, they were not only to be ready for Passover, they were also to remember the Passover. They were to remember the Passover. That's what we see secondly. So ready for Passover, remember the Passover.

Passover. And look at verse 24. The Lord says, you shall observe this right as a statute for you and for your sons forever. And when you come to the land that the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall keep this service. And when your children say to you, what do you mean by this service?

You shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover. For He passed over the houses of the people of Israel and Egypt when He struck the Egyptians, but spared our houses, and the people bowed their heads and worshipped. You know, when the Lord instituted the Passover and gave instructions for the Passover, He informed the Israelites that the Passover would not only be written down in their calendar year, calendar each year. But the Passover would also be remembered. It was to be remembered by participating in and by partaking of this memorial meal. And as you know, the memorial meal at the Passover, it consisted of the Passover lamb, the Paschal lamb roasted in fire. There was also the unleavened bread, the matzah. There was the bitter herbs, the maror. And as we saw last night, there were different cups of wine. And there were cups of wine. The cups were filled with wine because this was a royal meal.

This was a meal of celebration. There was wine present because it was a meal of remembrance. It was a memorial meal that was to mark the momentous occasion when the Lord redeemed and rescued His people from slavery in Egypt. It was to remind them of when the Lord defeated Pharaoh, and when the Lord delivered the Israelites from the oppression that they had endured in Egypt.

It was to remind them that the Lord had brought about a new beginning and a new experience in the life of the congregation of the Lord's people. And you know, my friend, the memorial meal of the Passover was to help the Israelites remember the Passover. It was to help them remember the plague.

[19:02] It was to help them remember Pharaoh's knockout punch. It was a memorial meal to help them remember the Passover. And of course, this memorial meal, it points us forward to the greater Passover lamb, to Jesus Christ. That's what the Old Testament is always doing for us. It's pointing us forward to Jesus. Jesus, who brought the memorial meal of the Passover, He brought it to an end, as you know, when He instituted the Lord's Supper. And the interesting point to note is that the institution of the Passover was the Last Supper. It was the Last Supper before salvation was accomplished and applied at the cross. Because as we read in the Gospels, we read that when Jesus took bread and He had given thanks, He broke it, and He gave it to His disciples, saying to them, this is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And then we're told He took the cup. As we saw last night, the cup of Elijah. This cup, He says, is poured out for you. It's the new covenant in my blood. Do this in remembrance of me. Do this in remembrance of me. So, it's a command.

We're commanded to feed upon Christ by faith, so that we are strengthened and sustained in our Christian walk. It's a command, but it's also a confession. Because like it was for the Israelites, who marked a new beginning in their life by participating in the memorial meal of Passover, you know, we come to the Lord's table. We come to the Lord's table as a congregation.

And we're confessing. We're confessing that a new beginning has taken place in our life. We are born again. We're cleansed from sin. We've been given a new heart. We've been given a new beginning. And we remember the Lord's death because He's the one who redeemed us. He redeemed us by His blood, and He rescued us by His grace. He redeemed us by His blood, and He rescued us by His grace. And you know, it was my good friend J.C. Ryle. He said it's in his book, Practical Religion. He says about the Lord's Supper, he says, the elements of bread and wine are intended to preach Christ crucified as our substitute. They are to be a visible sermon, appealing to the believer's senses, and teaching the old foundation truth of the gospel, that Christ's death on the cross is the life of a man's soul. Christ's death on the cross is the life of a man's soul. You know, let's not make this complicated. Jesus has given us a simple instruction that we are to remember His death until He comes. And that's why it's so important to publicly proclaim the Lord's death. Because as we see with the Passover, it's a public meal. Those watching and witnessing are to see the significance of it. It's those looking on who will see how precious the Passover lamb is, and that they too will come and profess how precious He is to them. You know, my friend, the Passover was a memorial meal to remember the Lord's redemption, to remember His rescue. But it was also a memorial meal so that those who were looking on, that they were watching and witnessing what was happening. So that even as we read there, that after the exodus from Egypt, after the wanderings in the wilderness, in the years to come, the Lord says, when the Israelites enter the promised land and enjoy all the blessings and benefits of God's covenant promises, promises where they will enjoy the promised land, that they will dwell there, the Lord says to them, you are to remember the Passover so that you will tell your children, and you will tell your children's children

about what wonders the Lord did for you in Egypt. And you know, you read these verses and you see that the Bible often has this emphasis upon telling the next generation about the Lord. That's why Jesus rebuked the disciples.

Remember when the disciples tried to keep the children away from Jesus, and Jesus said to them, let the little children come to me. He says, do not hinder them, for to them belongs the kingdom of God. And you know, we need to speak and share with our children what the Lord means to us. And that's why the children in the Sunday school, that's why they'll be coming back after their Sunday school, and after at the close of the service, they'll be coming back to watch and to witness the Lord's Supper. And you know, I think it's so important that they do, because they're the next generation.

They're our covenant children. They're part of our congregation. They're part of our covenant community. And our role and responsibility as parents and as grandparents, especially as Christian parents and as Christian grandparents, our role and responsibility is to explain to them and to emphasize to them what Jesus means to us. And that our longing and our love for them, as our children and our grandchildren, is that they too, along with everyone else sitting behind the table, our longing and our love for them, is that they too will come and confess Jesus Christ as King and as Lord and as Savior and as Shepherd, that they too will know for themselves that there is power, power, wonder-working power in the precious blood of the Lamb. And so as we stand ringside, as it were, and watch and witness what is going to take place, the knockout punch, we see that the congregation was told, first of all, to be ready for Passover. Then they were told to remember the

[25 : 49] Passover, because there will be, lastly and briefly, redemption at Passover. Redemption at Passover. Look at verse 29. It says, "There at midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead.

Then he summoned Moses and Aaron by night and said, "Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel, and go serve the Lord, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also." Now, as you know, the ten plagues of Egypt, as we've learned over the past number of weeks, they are the ten blows of Egypt, where we're given this image, this illustration that's used of Pharaoh entering the boxing ring, and he's coming to blows with God.

And throughout these ten plagues, we've stood ringside. We've been those who are watching and witnessing Pharaoh going ten rounds with God. And you remember in round one, the Lord delivered his first blow, his first blow to the God Happy, the God of the River Nile. The Lord made happy unhappy when he turned the River Nile into blood. Then in round two, the Lord embarrassed and exposed this frog-headed goddess called Heket, and he did so by plaguing Egypt with frogs. Then in round three, the Lord took a swing at Seth, the aardvark god of the desert, and he did so by raising fleas from the ground with just his finger. In round four, the Lord undermined Uachet, the goddess of flies, by sending swarms of flies, which not only filled the air, but they crawled upon the ground and filled the houses.

In round five, it was the Lord who saw red because he destroyed the apis bull of Egypt, and he brought a personal pestilence upon all the livestock in Egypt. Round six got even more personal when the Lord brought a personal pandemic of pus-filled boils upon all the Egyptians, which affected their attractive appearance as Egyptians, but it also attacked this god Sekhmet, the fierce lioness. She was the goddess of healing. Then in round seven, the Lord knocked out Newt, the goddess of the sky, who was said to pour down blessings and benefits from the sky. But when the Egyptians, when they looked into the sky, all they could see was large hailstones, hailstones of ice and fire falling from the sky, destroying all their trees and all their plants. And what the hail didn't destroy the locusts then finished off in round eight? Because in round eight, the Lord sent locusts to devour the land of Egypt, to destroy Osiris, the god of fertility and agriculture and vegetation.

Then in round nine, the Lord made Ra, the goddess, the god of the sun. He made him disappear as the Lord brought deep darkness upon the land of Egypt for three days. And despite the fact that the Lord had declared and displayed and demonstrated his presence and his power, all the time the Lord was showing the ineffectiveness and the impotence of the gods of Egypt. And yet despite all

that, Pharaoh hardened his heart. He saw it all. He witnessed it all. He experienced it all. [29 : 41] And he stubbornly rebelled and resisted and rejected the Lord. And now in round 10, there's this final plague. It's the knockout punch. That's not to say the Lord needed to wait 10 rounds until the knockout punch. He could have done it in round one. But this is the point. The Lord wanted to display his glory. He wanted to display his power. The Lord wanted to reveal himself to the Egyptians and to his own people. And so in round 10, with the final plague and the knockout punch, the Lord defeats and destroys Isis, the Egyptian goddess of life. And at midnight, we're told, as it struck midnight in Egypt, the Lord struck down the firstborn sons of the land of Egypt.

And you know, you read those verses and they're so solemn. At midnight, the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne, to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where someone was not dead. He destroyed Isis, the Egyptian goddess of life. There were sons who had died. There were fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers. There was not a house where someone was not dead. And the plague, of course, it was very personal, personal to Pharaoh, because his own son died. And how does Pharaoh respond? How does Pharaoh finally respond to the Lord and to his people? Go. Just go. Go and serve the Lord, as you have said. Just go. And God willing, next Lord's Day, we'll see what happened with the Israelites as they made the exodus from Egypt. But, you know, as we conclude, what's beautifully woven into this final plague and the knockout punch is this promise of Passover. The promise of Passover, as you know, it's pointing us always to our great Passover lamb, Jesus Christ. And today, you know, we simply come to his table. We come to his table. And as we come to his table, we confess with the hymn writer.

We say, there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains. We say with the hymn writer, the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day. And there may I, though vile as he, wash all my sins away.

[32 : 49] Dear dying lamb, thy precious blood shall never lose its power till all the ransomed church of God be saved to sin no more. Ere since by faith I saw the stream thy flowing wounds supply. And this is our testimony. Redeeming love has been my theme and will be till I die. If that's your testimony, my friend, that's, you should be sitting at the Lord's table. If you can say, redeeming love has been my theme and shall be till I die, then you should be coming forward to remember the Lord's death until he comes.

Redeeming love has been my theme and shall be till I die. Well, may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray together. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to Thee for Jesus being our Passover lamb, and that we would see the simplicity of it, that He is one who has covered our door in His own blood, that not only the top and the sides, but also the bottom, that there is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains.

We bless and praise Thee today for the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin. We thank Thee for His broken body that has been broken for us, broken so that we might know healing, that we might know redemption and restoration, that we might know and experience the blessing and the promise of life everlasting. O Lord, speak to us then, we pray. Encourage us, we ask, and go before us in all things, for we ask it in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

Well, we now come to the part of the service which we often refer to as the fencing of the Lord's table. And the fencing of the Lord's table, it's a practice that some have wanted to neglect in recent years.

But I believe there should always be a difference and a distinction made between someone who is saved and someone who is not. Because a Christian, as you know, a Christian has been called out. [35 : 20] They've been called out of darkness, of death, and the dungeon of sin. And they've been called into the light and the life and the liberty of salvation through Jesus Christ.

And so fencing the Lord's table is important. It doesn't have to be a physical fence like it is this morning, because in many ways the Lord's table is fenced each week as the gospel is preached. And the fence is not to keep people away. Never think that. The fence is there to remind you that you must come. You must come.

And you know, that's why I always refer to you as either my Christian friend or my unconverted friend. The thing is, you have to decide who you are. You have to decide whether you're my

Christian friend or my unconverted friend.

But there should always be this difference. There should always be this distinction between the Christian friend and the unconverted friend. And I want to be clear this morning. I don't fence the Lord's table.

[36 : 25] The Lord fences His table. Because it is His table. It's the Lord's table. It's not a free church table. It's not Barber's table. It's the Lord's table.

And when the Lord fences His table, He does so from His Word. Always from the Word. He tells us who should and who shouldn't sit at His table. He tells us who should and who shouldn't partake and participate in the Lord's Supper.

And you know, I'd like us just to think about this for a couple of minutes. Just in relation to the plagues in Egypt. Because as you know, as we've stood ringside over the past number of weeks, we've been watching and witnessing Pharaoh come to blows with God time and time again.

He's gone ten rounds with God. But I don't know if you noticed, what would often happen with the plagues in Egypt was that the Lord would make a difference.

The Lord would make a distinction. The Lord would make a separation and a segregation between Pharaoh's people, the Egyptians, and the Lord's people, the Israelites.

[37 : 31] We saw that in round five when there was the pestilence upon all the Egyptian livestock. All the livestock in Egypt, they died while all the livestock in Israel lived.

We saw it in round seven where there was those large hailstones of ice and fire that fell from the sky, destroying the trees and the plants. And we're told that hail fell in Egypt upon the Egyptians. But no hail fell upon the Israelites. And we see it again in round nine when darkness fell over Egypt for three days.

We're told that the Egyptians sat in darkness while the Israelites stood in the light. The Egyptians sat in darkness while the Israelites stood in the light.

The Lord made a difference. He made a distinction. He made a segregation and a separation between Pharaoh's people, the Egyptians, and the Lord's people, the Israelites.

[38 : 32] And the Egyptians, they encountered and experienced death and destruction and darkness. And as we've seen in these plagues, the Israelites, they encountered and experienced life and liberty and light.

Now, this is the point. The thing about the Egyptians and the Israelites is that both were sinners. Both were sinners. They both deserved death and destruction and darkness. None of them deserved the Lord's mercy.

None of them deserved the Lord's grace. But the Israelites were given life. They were given liberty. They were given light. Because as we saw with the final plague, what it all came down to in the end is whether or not they were sheltering under the blood of the Lamb.

That's what it all came down to in the end. It all came down to whether or not they were sheltering under the blood of the Lamb. That was the difference. That was the distinction between those who partook and participated in the Passover and those who didn't.

[39 : 50] They were sheltering under the blood of the Lamb. And you know, my friend, as someone who is not sitting at the Lord's table this morning and sitting outside the fence, as it were, there is a difference.

There is a distinction being made. There is a segregation and a separation between you and those partaking and participating at the Lord's Supper.

But I want to tell you, and please hear me when I say this, that those who are sitting at the Lord's table, those who are partaking and participating in the Lord's Supper, they're not there because they're better than you.

They're not there because they're sinless. No, it's not because they're sinless. It's not because they're perfect. It's not because they're more important. It's not because they know more or have done more or have followed the Lord a lot longer than you.

No, they're at the Lord's table this morning. And they're at the Lord's table simply because they are sheltering under the shed blood of the Passover lamb, Jesus Christ.

[41 : 05] They're at the Lord's table because they're sheltering under his blood and his blood alone. And the thing is, if you're sheltering under the precious blood of Christ, then there shouldn't be a distinction.

There shouldn't be a difference. There shouldn't be a separation. There shouldn't be a segregation. Because you should be with them. You should come and sit at the Lord's table.

You should partake and participate in the Lord's Supper. Because that's what we're doing this morning. We are simply, very simply, let's not make this complicated.

We are simply publicizing that we are sheltering under the precious blood of the lamb. We are simply proclaiming the Lord's death.

Until he comes again. We are simply professing our faith. And our love for the Lord Jesus Christ. And so if you are someone who loves the Lord and follows the Lord and trusts the Lord, if you are sheltering under the blood of the lamb, then you should come.

[42 : 21] Come and sit. Come and remember. Come and enjoy this supper. And remember the Lord's death until he comes again.

And so we're going to come to the Lord's table by singing in Psalm 118. And as we sing this psalm, those who are not at the table yet, if you could come to the table and take your seat.

And while we're singing, the elements will be put onto the table. Now we're singing Psalm 118 in the Scottish Psalter, page 398. Now we're singing from verse 15.

We're singing down to the verse marked 19. Psalm 118 and verse 15. In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health.

The Lord's right hand doth ever valiantly. The right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on high. The right hand of the mighty Lord doth ever valiantly.

[43 : 27] We'll sing down to the verse marked 19 of Psalm 118 to God's praise. Amen. The right hand of the mighty Lord.

The right hand of the mighty Lord.

The right hand of the mighty Lord. The right hand of the mighty Lord.

The right hand of the mighty Lord. The right hand of the mighty Lord. For that hand of the mighty Lord.

The gospel and ■■■■ are bothória. The right hand of the mighty Lord.

[45 : 12] The Lord have me chastised so, but not to death in the world.

O set ye open unto me, the gates of righteousness, then will I enter into them, and I the Lord will bless.

Please be seated. Well, my Christian friend, we haven't sat together at the Lord's table for two years.

We haven't enjoyed this privilege as a congregation since before the pandemic, March 2020. And as you know, a lot has happened and a lot has changed in that time.

Straight after our communion, the last time we went straight into lockdown. We were living in lockdown. We were coping with COVID-19. But even in that time, things have changed.

[47 : 01] There are some who were with us then, who are no longer with us. They've gone home to be with the Lord. There are others who were with us, but for one reason or another, they're no longer able to come due to ill health.

There are some of you who weren't here two years ago, but now you're with us and you're part of our church family. And I'm so thankful to be here with you today to enjoy this great privilege.

And it is a privilege. It's a privilege that was removed from us for a time and a privilege that I do believe that we took for granted. Even the privilege of gathering together for worship.

But you know, every time I come to the Lord's table, I'm always reminded, reminded of that first catechism in the Heidelberg Catechism. It's a great question.

A question I think all of us should ask ourselves. The Heidelberg Catechism has an opening question. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

[48 : 10] What is your only comfort in life and in death? And the answer which the Heidelberg Catechism gives, it describes so beautifully the testimony of the Christian.

And it's the testimony that we all have as we sit here together at the Lord's table. What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I with body and soul am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins and has delivered me from all the power of the devil and so preserves me, that without the will of my heavenly Father, not even a hair shall fall from my head.

Yea, and all things must be subservient to my salvation. And therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and He makes me sincerely willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto

Him.

You know, friends, as we sit here, we're all different ages. We're all at different stages in life. We're all at different places in the pilgrim's progress.

Some of us are going up the hill difficulty. Some of us might be in the valley of humiliation. Others might be facing the valley of the shadow of death. And yet, even though we're all at different places in the pilgrim's progress, our proclamation remains the same.

[49 : 47] We're all here this morning to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. And our proclamation, as we've been saying all morning, is very simple.

Our proclamation is that we are simply sheltering under the precious blood of our Passover lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ. Because we all know that without the shedding of His blood, there is no forgiveness of sin.

And the doorposts and the lintels and the threshold of our house, the door of our heart, it has been shed with the blood of Christ. Because we have been rescued and redeemed.

And this is the wonder of it. We are rescued and redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold, but by the precious crimson blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. What is your only comfort in life and in death? That I, with body and soul, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

[50 : 59] And so as we sit together, and as we eat together, and as we remember together, let us think on these things that we are sheltering under the blood of Christ.

We now read our scriptural warrant for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It's from 1 Corinthians chapter 11, and we read from verse 23, where Paul writes, For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed, he took bread.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

And so according to the institution, and the command, and the example of our Savior, we will give thanks together. So let us pray together. O Lord, our gracious God, we give thanks to Thee for these precious moments in life's journey, that where we are able to come aside and sit together around the Lord's table and remember the Lord's death until He comes.

[52 : 35] And as we said, we are all on this pilgrim's progress, that we are all journeying towards the celestial city, and we have a desire to be there, because to be with the Lord is far better.

But in this wilderness, wanderings that we go through in life, we thank Thee that Thee, the Lord, the God, who calls us to rest and to come aside a while, and to remember the Lord's death, that we might be strengthened and sustained, that we might be encouraged and enabled to keep going, to keep pressing on towards the mark of the high call of God in Christ Jesus, or that this would be a means of grace for us, to strengthen us in the way, to keep looking to Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for these elements, these elements that point us and proclaim to us about a wonderful Savior. We thank Thee, O Lord, for the bread, bread that is so simple, a bread that reminds us of a broken body, a broken body that was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

We thank Thee, Lord, for the wine that reminds us and reassures us that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. O Lord, comfort us, we pray.

Assure us, we ask, that we are in Christ, that we belong to Him, that we can say that our comfort in life and in death is that we are not our own, but we belong unto our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

[54 : 11] Lord, do us good, and we pray. Encourage us, we ask, and meet us as we meet together around Thy table that we would know the Lord's blessing. Do us good, we pray, for Jesus' sake.

Amen. Well, the Lord Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed, He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and He said, This is My body, which is for you.

Do this in remembrance of Me. In the same manner also, He took the cup.

He took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is a new covenant in My blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me.

Friends, the command of Scripture is, for as often as you eat this bread, and you drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

[55 : 42] That I, with body and soul, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil, and He so preserves me.

He preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father, not even a hair can fall from my head. Yea, and all things must be subservient to my salvation.

And therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He assures me. He assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto Him.

You know, by sitting at the Lord's table, and by partaking of the sacrament by faith, we have proclaimed the Lord's death until He comes.

And in our proclamation, we have proclaimed, very simply, we are sheltering under the precious blood of the Lamb. But our proclamation is not silent, although we partake of the supper silently.

[56 : 57] Our proclamation is not silent because our proclamation has been watched, and it has been witnessed by those looking on. It has been watched and witnessed by our congregation.

It has also been watched and witnessed by our children. Therefore, we must live according to our proclamation. We must live according to our proclamation.

We must practice what we profess. And our profession is that we desire to love the Lord more deeply, to walk with the Lord more closely, to seek the Lord more earnestly, and to serve the Lord more faithfully.

But you know, our proclamation is also asking those who are watching on. It's asking those who are witnessing what has taken place this morning. Our proclamation here is asking them the same questions that the hymn writer asked.

And I'll conclude with his questions. He asked, would you be free from your burden of sin? Would you, or evil, a victory win? Would you be whiter, much whiter than snow, where sin stains are lost in its life-giving flow?

[58 : 13] Would you be free from your passion and pride? Then he says, come. Come for a cleansing to Calvary's tide.

Why? Because as we have proclaimed this morning, there is power, power, wonder-working power in the precious crimson blood of the Lamb.

So friends, will you not come? Don't let this separation be an eternal separation. You come in time so that you will enjoy it more in eternity.

Well, may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us again engage in prayer. Let us pray. Lord, we give thanks for thy goodness to us.

We thank thee, Lord, for thy word that leads us and directs us. But we thank thee, Lord, for the sacrament that points us so clearly to Jesus and that as thy people we are sheltering under his blood and that we might leave this place knowing and being assured that we are cleansed in the blood of the Lamb.

[59 : 27] That although we faint and we fail, although we struggle and we sin, we thank thee, O Lord, for that wonderful assurance that it is by grace that we have been saved through faith and that it's not of ourselves.

It is the gift of God. It is not of works lest any man should boast and that our boast is only in the Lord. Our boast is that he is that blood that is able to cleanse us from all our sin.

Bless us then, we pray. Watch over us as we part one from another. That thou wouldest keep us, we pray. Keep us, as the psalmist says. Keep our going out and our coming in from this time forth and even forevermore.

Lead us and guide us by thy spirit. Take away our iniquity. Receive us graciously. For Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, we're going to bring our service to a conclusion this morning by singing to his praise in Psalm 72.

Psalm 72, it's in the Scottish Psalter. It's on page 314. Psalm 72.

[60 : 38] We're singing from verse 17 down to the end of the psalm. It's a psalm we often sing at the close of our communion. We always sing the last three verses of Psalm 72.

But the reason we do is because this psalm, it was written by Solomon. Solomon, as you know, he was the king in Israel. He was a great and a glorious king. But in these closing words, Solomon isn't speaking about himself.

Solomon is speaking about the greater than Solomon. Solomon is speaking about Jesus. And he's reminding us that there's only one name that will endure forever. There's only one name and person that will shine like the sun.

There's only one person that can bless us. And in him, we can know all blessing. And that's who we need to come to trust. The greater than Solomon, the Lord Jesus Christ.

His name forever shall endure, last like the sun it shall. Men shall be blessed in him and blessed. All nations shall him call. Now blessed be the Lord, our God, the God of Israel.

[61 : 45] For he alone doth wondrous works in glory that excel. And blessed be his glorious name to all eternity. The whole earth let his glory fill.

Amen. So let it be. We'll sing these verses in conclusion. We'll stand to sing, if you're able, to God's praise. His name forever shall end due, last like the sun it shall.

men shall be blessed, men shall be blessed, with him and blessed.

For nations shall give home. Now blessed be the Lord, our God, the heart of Israel.

for he alone doth wondrous works in glory that excel.

[63 : 19] The entire end. The The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore. Amen.