



Feast on Jesus (Part 1) – Passover

Pastor Jerry Gillis – April 23, 2017

So, last week on Easter, many of you gathered around with family and friends and had a feast, and celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Some of you ate so much that you are quickly headed to the grave, and thus are even more grateful for the Resurrection. But this time frame and this feast is not something that is just common to Christians, to those of us who follow Jesus and we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus during this time. We're not the first ones to have this time frame of celebrating a feast during that exact time. In fact, our Jewish brothers and sisters have been doing this for 3,500 years during this time frame, which is a season that we are going to focus on in just a minute.

Now let me say this, kind of from the outset. Part of the reason that we're doing this series is because here at The Chapel we believe that the whole of Scripture actually points to Jesus. All of it. Even well before the time where Jesus was born in the flesh in Bethlehem, we believed that the Old Testament is pointing us to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, what we're going to do in this series is we're going to take a look at the Old Testament feasts and we're going to see and meet Jesus in that. In other words, the idea is

this. It's that we're going to set the table with the Old Testament feasts so that we have the opportunity to feast on Jesus. That this is what we're going to endeavor to do. And we're going to start out in this first week by focusing in on the central feast for all of Judaism and all of Israel, and that is the Feast of Passover.

Now some of you remember the history, and if you don't, here's a quick shot on that. God raised up Moses in the midst of His people Israel while they were under the oppression of Egypt during that time, and had been for hundreds of years. And so God raised up Moses to deliver the people out, and he was going to lead them toward the Land of Promise, which would have been in fulfillment of exactly what God had promised to Abraham many, many centuries and many generations before this time, where He said to Abraham I'm going to take you in, your people are going to have your own country, you're only going to be in captivity for a certain number of years, around four hundred and then you're going to be out. And so this was in fulfillment of that, so God knew exactly what He was doing.

Now He raised up Moses. And Moses didn't think that God knew what He was doing because Moses said, "You know God, I don't talk real good. I don't know that I'm going to be able to represent you really well in front of Pharaoh. But God gave him the power to be able to speak to Pharaoh. And He continued to say, through Moses to Pharaoh, "Let my people go!" But Pharaoh, as you know, was not overly inclined toward that end. He would say, okay we're going to let you go, but then he wouldn't. And so God responded to that, because Pharaoh had established in Egypt, kind of a

hardened heart toward the God of everyone, the God of Israel. And of course, Egypt had their own gods.

So God began to send the plagues to Egypt. And those plagues, by the way, when you look at them were consistent with the gods of Egypt and were demonstrating that God is God and that Egypt's gods are nothing. That's what you see when you start walking through these plagues. But finally, when you get to the last plague, you realize it's kind of the worst one. In just a moment, we're going to be reading in Exodus chapter 12 and that's where we're going to base out comments out of today. But prior to that, in Exodus chapter 11, we have the opportunity to see kind of a demonstration of this very last plague that's being discussed.

Here's what it says in Exodus 11. "So Moses said, "This is what the Lord says: (he's talking to Pharaoh). 'About midnight I will go through Egypt. Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the female slave, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. There will be loud wailing throughout Egypt - worse than there has ever been or ever will be again. But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any person or animal.' Then you will know that the Lord makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel."

So there's a significant plague that's coming, right, of the first ones that came, whether those were with locusts or boils or frogs or any of those kinds of things, now you've got this plague surrounding the death of the firstborn. And it seems extraordinarily harsh, but keep in mind that this is

God honoring His covenant with Abraham. Remember with Abraham He said, "I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you". And this is God actually acting out the reality of the covenant with Abraham.

Also, keep in mind that God is doing that equitably, because if you remember, you kind of read this and go wow, that seems like a harsh judgment, the firstborn of Egypt, all the firstborn males of Egypt are going to die. Well, keep in mind what Egypt did around the time of Moses. At his birth, there was instructions that the firstborn males that were born among the Israelites were killed. They were thrown into the Nile, to drown or to be eaten by crocodiles in the Nile. It was a gruesome, horrible kind of thing to even think about, right? And so God is equitably dealing with Egypt during this time, and tells them what He tells them.

Well, as you know, Pharaoh is not going to be responsive to Moses' last plea to kind of repent and let the people go, so this is actually going to happen. This is going to go down. And so what we find in Exodus chapter 12 is we find God's instruction to His people through Moses about how that is going to transpire. What is going to happen in this night of great judgment. Notice what it says beginning in verse 1 of chapter 12: "The Lord said to Moses and Aaron is Egypt, 'this month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount

of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and the tops of the door-frames of the houses where they eat the lambs. That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or boiled in water, but roast it over a fire - with the head, legs and internal organs. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: With your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover. On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of both people and animals, and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt."

Now this is loaded with things that we could talk about, and for the sake of time there's no way for me to be able to unpack everything that's here, but let me summarize saying this, kind of just to caption all of this under one heading. Here's what I could say about what is about to transpire. That the lamb is God's centerpiece for the deliverance of His people. The lamb is God's centerpiece for the deliverance of His people. In fact, it's interesting that He chose the idea of a lamb, because Egypt, in their god named Amun,

he was always shown with a lamb, by the way. And the season that this is happening, what we call the season of Passover, was the season in Egypt where they worshiped the god Amun. So God is actually showing judgment on their gods through the plagues and very specifically even with this last thing where He talks about the sacrifice of a lamb.

Now, I want to unpack just a couple of things in that passage of Scripture in Exodus chapter 12 for us to investigate and talk about, because we're going to learn a little bit of what happened with the people of Israel, and then we're going to transition in just a few moments to looking at this through a different lens. So look with me in verse 3 and in the beginning part of verse 6 of chapter 12. It says, "Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. Take care of that lamb until the fourteenth day of the month."

So this is an interesting and very specific instruction that God has given to His people. He said, "Here's what I want you to do. On the tenth day of the month, which is now, I want you to select a lamb and I want that lamb, it's very specific, it needs to be a one-year old male, it needs to be without defect, and I want you to keep that lamb until the fourteenth." Now, why in the world would God say "I want you to choose a lamb on the tenth, and I want you to keep the lamb until the fourteenth." What exactly was going on there? Well, there's a few things, at least as best as I could see it, you may be able to see more. But at the very least, it's a symbolic gesture. You know, I want you to keep this lamb one day for every hundred that you've

been in captivity. It's kind of a symbolic reminder, so to speak, of the four hundred years, or so.

But it's also a reminder of the gravity of their sin. Think about it this way. They choose a lamb, and then they bring that lamb into the house. What happens? He's like a pet. Have you ever brought a cat or a dog into your house? Some of you are going I'd never bring a cat into my house, but whatever. You're not a cat person. But you bring a cat or a dog into your house, right? And after a day or two, right, they're kind of yours. They're kind of your pet. In fact, in some translations, in the English translation from Hebrew, you'll actually read in these instructions where it first begins talking about 'a' lamb, then it switches to talking about 'the' lamb, then it starts to talk about 'your' lamb. It's a very interesting progression, actually, and that's what happens in the life of these people. That they're taking this lamb in, and it almost becomes like a pet, but then what happens on the fourteenth is the lamb gets sacrificed. It's a reminder that God is giving to His people of the gravity of sin, and actually what God is going to do in the midst of their sin.

But it also does something else. That time frame gives that family an opportunity to really inspect and investigate that lamb, because that lamb was supposed to be a lamb without any defect. And so, this was their opportunity to be able to look over that lamb, make sure that was the case. And they could be assured of that, because that lamb was going to be in their home for a period of time.

Now scholars and historians who talk about this, Jewish scholars and historians who talk about what happened during this time, and even at a later time, they would talk about what these families would do. These families would select a lamb, a lamb without defect, and then they would bring the lamb into their home and oftentimes what they would do is they would then put a name tag on the lamb that had the family name on it. It wasn't a name tag like 'oh, this is Muffy, we named it 'Muffy', no it's not that, right? Like we would do with a pet, they would put the family name on it for a couple of different reasons. Number one, if they found the lamb that they wanted to find that was without defect, they wanted to make sure that if the lamb ran away that people know, okay, that's the Gillis lamb, so we bring it back to them, right? So in case it got away in the area there in the town, which can happen, right? You're talking about an animal, they don't always stay in the same place.

And secondly, they wanted to make sure that when all of them, because all of them would be slaughtering their animals at the same time, at twilight, that's what the Scripture says, that they would all do this simultaneously. They wanted to make sure that they got back their lamb because they were going to be eating that lamb, they were going to be roasting that lamb and consuming that lamb afterwards. And they wanted to make sure that the lamb that they got back was the same lamb that they sacrifice because that was important to them. And they wanted to make sure because if it was a lamb without defect, they wanted to make sure that they were honoring what God had asked. So they put a little name tag on it that probably had a family symbol or name or whatever on there.

Now, why do I tell you all of these things? I tell you because this is a part of the history of understanding what they were doing, and we're going to see in a little while why it's so significant. Why it teaches us some things.

But then notice what the Scripture also says in chapter 12 in verse number 6. "After taking care of those lambs until the fourteenth day of the month, then all the members of community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs." It's a very specific statement that God makes to His people Israel. God is not playing around, He gives them something very specific. He tells them to take the lamb, and they all together, at twilight, they sacrifice the lambs, and then they are to do something with the blood.

Have you ever wondered, have you ever paused to wonder - why blood? Have you ever thought about that before? Maybe you have. Why blood? Well, God actually speaks to this idea in a couple of different places, but maybe foundationally it would help us to remember a way that God looks at the idea of blood. In Leviticus chapter 17, it says this: "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life". That's important for us to remember that the way that God used these things, even in terms of sacrificial offering, is that there is life in the blood. That is kind of where the life is according to what God says to us.

And we remember how God also values human life because back when the first murder happened in the book of Genesis with Cain and his brother

Abel, after that God says something specific in Genesis chapter 9. He says: "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind." In other words, the idea there was "blood for blood" or "life for life". That was kind of the idea. So what we learn when we begin to pull those things together is that blood is the God ordained currency for life, because life is in the blood. That's what the Scripture teaches us, right? That blood is the God ordained currency for life, because life is in the blood.

Okay, so now that we understand why blood, maybe we could ask this question. Why blood on the door, on the doorposts? That's a fair question, right? They were supposed to take the blood and they were going to put it on the doorpost. Now that could have looked, I don't know exactly how it looked, it could have looked this part of the top of the door with this side of the doorpost, it could have been that. It could have been blood smeared on these two edges of the doorpost, and then right above the door. You can see the picture, right? You're seeing the picture, aren't you? I mean that picture becomes really clear either way that you look at it, whether they put it over the door top and over the doorpost this way, or whether they put it this way. But remember, there was nothing at the threshold, there was no blood on the bottom, right, to give you a full picture. Remember that Hebrews actually tells us that we're never to trample underfoot the blood of Jesus and treat it as a common thing. Just a reminder there.

So you've got the blood on the doorpost, but why the doorpost? Well, I've thought about that significantly. Let me give you what I think my best answer is. Because God said so. I know that sounds funny when I say it, but

I think everything else might be a stretch. Might be a reach. Certainly we know that Jesus has said in the New Testament that I am the door, right, and whoever enters by me. We know that that's the case. But really as far as they were understanding, and as far as the people of Israel understood, this was simply God choosing His means of delivering His people.

And so, what that meant is that when the Jewish people put the blood on their doorpost, they were doing that publicly. So in other words everybody was seeing this. All the other Israelites were seeing it and the Egyptians were seeing it. It was a public demonstration of obedience to God. They were publicly identifying with God's chosen way to deliver them. Now that's important for us to remember, because we'll see that in just a little bit.

And they had to do this by faith. They may not have understood why the doorpost and the door top. I don't know, because God said. And so we're going to, by faith, do what God said and we're going to smear blood on each of the doorposts and on the top of the door, because that's what God said to do, and we are trusting Him by faith. We are going to publicly identify with God's chosen way of deliverance, and we are going to do so by faith.

Now the beautiful thing is is we read out the rest of the story is that we realize that their faith in God was well placed. Because everyone who put the blood of that lamb with no defect that was a year old. and put that blood on the door, that when the death angel came through, the angel of judgment so to speak came through, that they were, if there was blood on

the door, they were passed over in judgment. But everyone who chose to reject the way of God, they were dealt with in judgment. It's significant.

Now, what does that say to us? What does this mean for us and how do we see Jesus in this? I want to pause here to tell you, I'm going to now try and endeavor as best I can to fill in some gaps and to maybe make some connections that you may or may not have ever seen before. There's a possibility today, wherever you are on whatever campus, wherever you may be watching this message, there's a possibility that today, I'm not saying for sure, I don't know more than everybody in the world, and there's things that you know that I don't know, so I'm not trying to put myself in any weird position. But I think today that I may potentially teach you some things that you didn't know before. Maybe not, but maybe. Maybe some things that we didn't see before. But here's the hope. Not just that we learn new information, but that we are immensely grateful for Jesus who we can feast on, because He is the Passover Lamb.

So let's begin. Are you ready? That was weak. Are you sure? Okay, alright, I'm just making sure, because it took a couple of prompts at the 9:00 worship gathering as well.

So, let's start at His birth. The birth of Jesus. Many of us know some of the prophecy related to the birth of Jesus, as to where He was going to be born, right? Micah chapter 5 gives us one of those prophecies, here's what it says: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." Right? We've got

this beautiful prophecy in the book of Micah, hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, that tells us that the Messiah, the King, is going to be born in Bethlehem. We're familiar with that, right? Because we've been to Christmas services before. So we're familiar with that passage.

But I wonder if we're as familiar with the chapter prior to Micah chapter 5, which is Micah chapter 4, which also tells us something prophetically as well. Notice what it says, "As for you, watchtower of the flock, stronghold of Daughter Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to Daughter Jerusalem." So within these two chapters, you've got in chapter 4, this idea that God says, and you, watchtower of the flock, I want to remind you that there's going to be a King and dominion that's going to rule over Jerusalem. And then in chapter 5 we find out that that King, that Messiah is going to be born in Bethlehem. That's the prophecy that we see in Micah chapter 4 and chapter 5.

Well, that word "watchtower of the flock" or "tower of the flock" is translated Migdal Eder in the Hebrew language. And that's an actual place in Israel right in the outskirts of Bethlehem. It's mentioned in the book of Genesis. And it's also a place that they have dug around archaeologically even in present day and have found ruins in Migdal Eder.

Now why do I tell you some of these things? Well, I tell you because we know His birth is in Bethlehem, but what the Jews believed is that because of what Micah chapter 4 says, is they believe not only was He going to be born in Bethlehem but the announcement was going to occur at Migdal Eder, which was on the outskirts of Bethlehem, roughly the same place. So

the announcement's going to occur there. Now you remember that there was an announcement, you remember the Christmas story, right? Some of you have seen the Charlie Brown Christmas account and you remember that, right? You remember the Christmas story, and that there was an angelic announcement and where did that occur? It occurred out in the fields of Bethlehem, which is basically the same place as Migdal Eder.

Let's refresh our memory in Luke chapter 2: "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'"

Have you ever asked the question, maybe to yourself, what was that a sign of? To whom was that a sign, and what was that a sign of? Stay with me here. No less a scholar, Jewish historian and scholar than Alfred Edersheim actually talks about the idea that there was a kind of sanctified circle around Jerusalem. Here was the idea in the ancient time, even the time of Jesus. There was a sanctified circle around the place of Jerusalem that kind of extended out, certainly on the one side to Bethlehem or to Migdal Eder. And all around Jerusalem, there were animals that were being prepared or that were kind of considered sacred or set apart, because they were animals that were being grown and prepared ultimately for sacrifice, particularly the sacrifice of Passover. Because you can't imagine how many

people are returning back to Jerusalem in the time of Jesus for the time of Passover where all of these animals are slain during that time. It's an extraordinary number of people. The city would swell enormously during that time.

And so, Edersheim actually contends and talks about historically that maybe we have not seen the shepherds in as clear a light as we should, because they are undoubtedly shepherds that are out in the fields, that's clear. But he said that they are a priestly kind of shepherd, because they have been given the duty to be set apart to deal with animals that are being raised for sacrifice. They are within kind of the sanctified circle around Jerusalem, and they are actually raising animals for the sake of sacrifice. So it is functionally a priestly duty that shepherds are actually doing.

Now when they would actually be out in the fields, particularly at Migdal Eder, Migdal Eder had a stone tower that was two stories, and there are places right now that archaeologists have said these are remains from one of the stone towers at Migdal Eder. Likely there were many of them. And they were only two stories. And so on the second story the shepherds would go up, again two stories isn't overly high, but they would go up so that they could take a view over their sheep. They would be able to look them over, see what was going on. It was much easier to do from that vantage point. There were also shepherds that were tending them among them, but there were those that were watching from above. Why? Because when they saw one that was about to give birth, they wanted to make sure that they took care of it, because these lambs had to be lambs without what - defect, right? Without blemish.

And so when the lambs were born, what these kind of shepherd-priests would do is they would take cloths when they were born, mostly taking cloths that were excess or remains from priestly undergarments. They had these cloths readily accessible to them because of their role. And they would take those lambs and they would wrap them up in those undergarments, and they would place them on the first floor of the tower where there were feeding troughs, mangers. And they would place them in the manger in cloths, so that they would be unblemished for the sake of sacrifice. Are you following what I'm saying here? This is extraordinary.

So do you think that this was a sign of signs to these shepherd-priests that are out in the fields, and there's an angelic announcement at Migdal Eder right on the outskirts of Bethlehem that says to them, "I have a sign for you, you are going to find this child, the one who is going to be the Messiah, the one who is going to be the Savior, you are going to find this child wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." In other words, what they would have been hearing is they would have been hearing "God has chosen a Lamb and you will have the opportunity to find Him through this sign. You will see Him wrapped in cloths."

What kind of cloths were Jesus wrapped in? I would contend that the likelihood, I can't say this for sure, but the likelihood is He was also wrapped in priestly undergarments. Jerry, how would you even know that? Where would you get that from? Because, if you would remember his mother took a trip when she was pregnant, and visited her cousin Elizabeth. If you remember who Elizabeth was married to, that was Zacharias, who was a high priest. And so she would have had the

opportunity to return, knowing as Elizabeth did, that the one to whom Mary was giving birth was going to be the Messiah, the very lamb of God. And she gives to him cloths from a priestly garment. He is wrapped in those, and there he lays in a manger. Do you think those shepherds knew what was up? The lamb of God.

You see, in his birth, we begin to see all of these things. But that's not the end of the story. Because when Jesus grows and begins his ministry, where he goes about preaching the Kingdom of God, the first thing that we're introduced to in the Gospel of John. The first statement, almost, that we're introduced to is Jesus coming to the waters to be baptized by the John the Baptizer, his cousin by the way. His cousin who is Elizabeth's son.

And what does John say when Jesus is walking up? John chapter 1 verse 29. The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, (or behold) the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John knew full well this is exactly what was talked about regarding Jesus. And there John is, his cousin, who's talking about the Lamb of God.

And as you know, Jesus in his ministry, he celebrated Passover every single year. He would make his way with his disciples into Jerusalem, and they would celebrate the Passover. But when they were coming into Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus had left Bethany and was now making his way into Jerusalem. He was coming into Jerusalem for the very last time. There was some significant fanfare around this time when he came into Jerusalem. Do you remember it? There were people waving branches. What do we call that day? What Sunday? Palm Sunday. But do you know what day that

was? That was lamb selection day. The tenth of the month. When Jesus is entering into Jerusalem, it is as if God has said, I've selected my lamb. And he is coming into the midst of his people.

And upon doing so, do you know what happens when the Lamb comes into Jerusalem? Over the next number of days, the Lamb, ultimately, toward the back end of that way, the Lamb gets inspected. Investigated. The Lamb stands before the Sanhedrin and is tried. The Sanhedrin shifts him over to King Herod and he is talked to there and investigated and interrogated there. Then they ship him over to Pontius Pilate, where he stands before Pilate, hardly saying a word, like a sheep before their shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. He did speak to Pontius Pilate, but it was very rare.

And after all of this, almost unknowingly, Pontius Pilate says something that in the sovereignty of God is an incredible reminder. After all of this interrogation and this investigation, here's what Pilate comes up with. In John chapter 19, it says, As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw Jesus, they shouted, "Crucify! Crucify!" But Pilate answered, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him." In the language of Exodus chapter 12, I find no defect. I find no blemish. Why? Because this is God's chosen Lamb.

So what happens? The Lamb sacrifices. The Lamb is put on a cross. His hands and his feet are nailed to a tree. And as that tree is raised up, we notice something. Above the head of the Lamb of God. In John 19, it says, Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF

NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. The chief priests of the Jews protested to Pilate, "Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that this man claimed to be king of the Jews." Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

Now this was written in multiple languages when we understand both Greek and Latin and Hebrew, Aramaic that this was all written in. And when the Gospel writers, Matthew, Mark and Luke and John, when they recount this event, each of them definitely focuses on the idea that the sign had on it, the idea of the King of the Jews. But maybe each of them might be focusing on one of the particular translations.

Now you may have seen before a picture of this where above Jesus' head, you see a sign, but it just says, "I N R I". Have you seen a picture like that before? Do you know what that is? That is actually the short form, or the abbreviated form of what the Latin would have been that was written above his head. You see, in Latin it would have rendered this way. Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum. Okay? I.N.R.I. That's where that comes from, alright? It comes from the Latin rendering. But of course, what was written about his head was written in multiple languages.

Now, many of the writers, the other Gospel writers, maybe concentrated on of the other languages in terms of their interpretation. But John is actually trying to make a point here. When you read the Gospel of John, John is always trying to make a point of Jesus being the Son of God. He starts out in John chapter 1 talking about him being very God. He talks

about John the Baptizer saying he is the Lamb of God. So John is making this point all through his gospel.

And many who have, even though we can't know this for absolute certain, many who have talked about what the Hebrew translation above Jesus' head would look like, there are a number of scholars who have said it would render this way. Y'Shua HaNatzri V'Melech HaYehudim. Okay. But if you look at how that abbreviated form would be. Y.H.V.H. Yahweh. The covenant name of God.

Now, whether John was trying to make that point, or not, I don't know for absolute certain. But here's what I do know. That just as the people in the time of the Passover in Exodus chapter 12, the Israelites would select their lamb. A lamb without blemish or defect. And just as they would put a name tag on that lamb, so to God the Father put His name on Jesus.

In fact, Philippians tells us this in no uncertain terms when he says this. Jesus, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Listen to this. God chose His lamb for His family and put His name on him. So that he might be sacrificed in our place, the sinless Lamb for the sinful people, so that judgment might pass over us because of his blood shed for us. This is the Lamb of God.

So, what do we do with that? What do we say about that? Well, I'll say it simply. We need to choose our lamb carefully. If there's a challenge or an application for everybody's who listening to me, it would be this. We need to choose our lamb carefully.

You see, what happens in the culture that we live in, in western culture, is that often times we will choose a lamb of gold instead of a Lamb of God. We think maybe that if we can have financial success, and we can have all of the stuff that we're really looking for, that somehow that will satisfy us, that will help us. But here's what we have failed to remember. That there is no amount of money, there is no pot of silver or gold that can buy you back from slavery to sin. The only way that can happen is through the blood of God's spotless Lamb, the Lord Jesus.

And that's what Peter teaches us. Listen to what Peter says in 1 Peter. "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 ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect."

You see, we have to be careful how we choose our lamb. Because there is one who can take away our sin, and redeem us and buy us back. There's only one.

Maybe others have chosen to make the Lamb of God more like a pet than a savior. We've domesticated Jesus. So what Jesus becomes to us is just our little buddy that helps us out if we're feeling a little lonely on Friday night and our friends are out, and we're feeling kind of sad, that Jesus helps us out a little bit. Come over and cuddle up with me. Or, maybe we don't just feel lonely, but maybe we're just a little sad and we need Jesus to just come and cheer us up.

Now, don't misunderstand what I'm saying. In our loneliness, Jesus will meet us there. No question. In our sadness, Jesus will meet us there, and he will walk with us in the midst of it. But when we domesticate Jesus, here's what happens. If we're not careful, we forget very quickly the gravity of our own sin. That the spotless Lamb of God died for us.

You see, we're not comfortable with the fact that our sin is so bad that Jesus had to die. We're comfortable with the fact that maybe some other really bad people he had to deal with. So we want to domesticate Jesus and treat him more like a pet than a savior. But our sin, ladies and gentlemen, that he died for was that bad. Mine. Yours. It was that bad, that the Son of God came and gave his life so that we might be saved.

Here's what I'll tell you. If you try and domesticate Jesus and make him your little pet, and just make him like your little feel good buddy that you've created in your image, I can assure you that that kind of idea will not rescue you from persecution, will not deliver you out of tribulation and trial. It is only the power of the blood of God's spotless Lamb that will empower you to be able to do that. Asks the martyrs of Revelation what it

was that they gave their lives for. It wasn't for a domesticated Jesus. It was for the Son of God, who put on skin, went to a cross, died for us so that the judgment of God would pass over us.

In fact, in Revelation chapter 7, listen to what it says. I answered, "Sir, you know." When he asked, who are these people? He said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." That is the only hope that we have in the midst of persecution and trial, particularly as we face these last days.

But let me give you one other reminder. There's people that maybe choose a lamb of gold instead of a Lamb of God, and there's people that want to domesticate the Lamb and make it more like a pet instead of our Savior. And then there's others that just don't think they need a lamb. They're doing good. Everything seems to be working out for them. Right? The job's okay. You're making money. Things seem to be working out for you in every way. Kids are grown, and they're facing the world fine. School seems to be going okay. You've got your set of friends, doing your deal. Everything seems to be cool. We don't feel like we actually need the Lamb of God.

But I want to remind you of something. Worldly success does not equate to spiritual victory. Because the enemy of our souls, he may want to use worldly success in our lives to take us far from our understanding of our need for a Lamb who died in our place. Who shed his blood on our behalf because that was the only way that God determined that could be. You will

not have spiritual victory just because you have worldly success. If you want to deal with the accuser of your life of the enemy of our souls, it will require the blood of the Lamb of God. This is not something you can just puff your chest out and deal with.

In fact, in Revelation chapter 12, notice what it says beginning in verse number 10. It says, "Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

The only way that we can deal with the enemy of our soul who comes to kill, to steal and destroy, the only way we can deal with that is because we have been covered by the blood of the Lamb. And judgment now passes over us because of what God has done for us in His precious chosen Lamb, the one He chose for His family and put His name on, so that we now can find forgiveness and grace and hope, and our sins being cast away, and victory over the enemy. The only hope we have is in the blood of the Lamb.

Now, I want you to pause for a moment. This isn't a time to get up or move. Cause I've got another thing to say. But I want you to pause for a moment and just let that reminder flood over your soul in gratitude for what God has done in Jesus, by the power of His blood on our behalf.

See this is why the New Testament writers were clear that Jesus is the Passover lamb. Paul said it plainly in 1 Corinthians. Notice what he said.

For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. The sacrifice that our Passover lamb made enables us to have judgment passover us, because we put our faith in him.

You see, just like the Israelites of old who took the blood of the lamb and they put it on the doorposts so that there would be a public identification with God's chosen means of deliverance. So too, those of us now that look at the cross, we publicly identify with God's chosen lamb as the only vehicle for our deliverance and for our salvation, and we have to make that choice by faith. It is by grace that we have been saved. The grace of God initiating this on our behalf. It is by grace that we have been saved through faith. It is not of ourselves. It is a gift of God, so that no one can or should boast.

This is the hope that we have. Because when we put our faith and trust in Jesus, we are now forgiven for sin, because the sinless one has taken our place. The Lamb of God in our place. His blood poured out. My sin erased. What a sacrifice that saved my life. The blood of Jesus covers me. I mean, this is what we've been singing about today. This is what we've been teaching about today.

And because of that, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because the law of the spirit of life set us free from the law of spirit of death. We're not under the bondage of sin anymore. We've left Egypt! We're free! This is who we are now in Jesus Christ, because we've put our faith in him. But it is because of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God who died and who rose again. And who when we see Him in eternity, He is

announced as the Lion of Judah. But when John the Revelator turns to see who He is, He's announced as a lion, but he sees a lamb. Because we will forever in eternity be reminded of the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf.

So if you're here, and you've never publicly identified with God's chosen way of deliverance, which is the shed blood of Jesus, and through His resurrection, then I encourage you when we dismiss that you'd come by the Fireside Room. Let us talk to you about what it means to begin a relationship with Jesus.

For those of us who maybe have already come to that place in our heart where God has drawn us, and we've been transformed and made new, I want to remind you that we always ought to live in a sense of gratitude for what Jesus has done on our behalf. Because we could never save ourselves, never forgive ourselves, never buy ourselves back. And Jesus has done that through His shed blood. The perfect, spotless, blemish-free Passover Lamb of God.

So Father, thank you for all that you have said to us this day. We worship you Lamb of God, because you are worthy of our worship. Cause you have done everything on our behalf that we could not do. That even in our sin, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Thank you that even in this season, we can be reminded of the powerful nature of how we can feast on you, Lord Jesus, because of what you have done on our behalf. May your life live out through us so that the world can see the death of our old ways, and the resurrection of new life that comes through the Lamb of God who died and rose again. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Love you folks. Have a great week.