

Sermon Series – Exodus 12:1-14

Preached on Maundy Thursday, April 5th, 2012

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Maundy Thursday

Old Testament Reading:	Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm:	Psalm 116:12-19
Epistle Reading:	1 Corinthians 11:23-32
Gospel Reading:	Matthew 26:17-29

Passover typified the true deliverance from death in Jesus Christ

Today is Holy Thursday in the church calendar. It is a day when we start to look back not only at the Lord's Supper, but also at the Israelites and the Passover. While I attended seminary, one of the greatest things that I learned was something that does not get talked about too much in the pulpits or even Sunday School. I learned about something called typology. I am certain that you have probably never heard of it, yet throughout almost every sermon you hear, pastors do reference typology. Typology is the study that ties together the Old Testament and the New Testament. Without the Old Testament we do not have the examples that God put into place which provides people with an understanding of what was to come.¹ The Old Testament articulated through shadows and prophecies that the Messiah was coming, He was going to be arriving, and people needed to prepare. The study of typology allows us to examine the Old Testament and see how God was preparing His people for the Messiah. In some ways, as twenty-first century readers looking back at the Old Testament, we are able to understand the shadows more lucidly. The clarity does shed light on the New Testament as well. Although the New Testament is said to shed light on the Old Testament, it also works the other way sometimes. The shadows of the Old Testament

¹ Romans 5:14 is a very specific example of typology identified within the New Testament.

in combination with their antitype of the New Testament help us to understand the aims and motivations of areas such as worship and the Sacraments. We are able to see the example and its ultimate fulfillment through the study of typology.

When the Israelites were in Egypt², they were held captive and forced into hard-labor by making bricks out of mud. They were whipped and told that they had to meet certain quotas. It really was not that great of a life. As a matter of fact, it was a horrible life. Slavery is not fun. Four-hundred and thirty years they were held captive in bondage to slavery under Pharaoh in Egypt.³ Then God came and told Moses to go and tell Pharaoh to “Let my people go”. Of course, Pharaoh did not listen, so God sent plagues. For nine of the plagues, Moses would ask Pharaoh to let the people of God go free and Pharaoh responded that he would not. When God was about to send the tenth plague, He spoke to Moses and told Moses specifically that another plague was coming and this plague was going to be death. God told Moses to gather His people together and provide very specific divine instructions to them.⁴ Moses gathered all of the people that held on to faith in the Lord. Moses relayed God’s instructions to His people. They were to go to their homes and gather a lamb. Mind you, this was not just any lamb, but they had to gather, according to God’s Word, a perfect lamb without blemish. They had to bring this lamb into their home. If they were a small household they would be invited in as neighbors. The head of the household would take the perfect lamb and slaughter it. This was a big deal. A perfect lamb was used to help increase the flock. When it came time to increase the flock, using a defective and deformed animal to breed would create

² Starts at Exodus 1:8

³ Exodus 12:40

⁴ Exodus 12:1-28

more imperfect animals. Ideally, a perfect lamb without blemish, without a gimp, without a spot on it – that was a prized possession. God told Moses to tell His people to take that perfect animal and sacrifice it. Then, they were to take the blood of the animal and put the blood on the lintels (tops of the doors) and on the sides of the doors. The lamb was then to be roasted and consumed entirely. Nothing was to be left for the next day. In addition to the lamb, they were to make bread without yeast and eat while wearing their cloak, belt and sandals. God wanted the people to be ready to hear His command to leave Egypt and the unleavened bread was a sign that they could not wait even for bread to rise. The last significant part of the meal was the eating of bitter herbs. The Lord wanted His people to eat these bitter herbs as a reminder of the bitterness of the bondage of slavery. All of this was a command, an ordinance, coming from the Lord.

That evening, while the people of God were in their homes eating according to the command of God, they could hear the death of the firstborn as the Destroyer came. Death was sent by the Lord to take the lives of the firstborn humans and animals, the first fruits of the offspring. Then, as they sat there waiting until dawn, the voice of the Lord did come to them and indicated that it was time to leave. Pharaoh's heart was softened, for a time, and he let God's people go. However, God was not finished, what has just been described was the actual event that took place. Now, God wants them remember all that He has done for His people.⁵ God told them not to forget. Tell your sons and daughters and the people of your household. Every year, as directed by the Lord, the head of the household was to take the perfect lamb on a particular day. This particular day was the tenth day of the month (Nisan 10). The head of the household

⁵ Exodus 12:24-27

selected the perfect lamb and for four days he watched the lamb to make sure there were no imperfections. Furthermore, on the fourteenth day of the month (Nisan 14) the perfect lamb was to be slaughtered. The people were instructed to, “Do this as an everlasting command from the Lord.”⁶ Throughout the Old Testament we read of people selecting, slaughtering, and eating their lambs. Whatever was not eaten was consumed in the fire. They ate the bitter herbs and they told the story of how living under the yoke of slavery in Egypt was horrible. They ate the Matzo because God told them to be ready. They recalled the time that, in a hurry, they had to leave as soon as they heard His command.

As time went on, the Temple became the place where God’s people worshipped Him. In addition, the blood from the lamb at Passover became so sacred that the head of household took the lamb to the priests so that the precious blood of the lamb could collect the lambs’ blood in gold and silver chalices. The priests lined up from where the lambs were sacrificed all the way to the Temple. As the head of household cut the artery in the lamb’s neck, the priest would collect the blood in these gold or silver chalices. Subsequently, the priests pass the blood collected in the chalices from priest to priest until it reached the Temple. The blood was so significant to them because it was the blood that saved the people from death. Everyone realized that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.

Time continued to move forward and we find that the Passover was still being celebrated during Jesus’ time. Christ was in the upper room with His disciples celebrating the Passover. They were still eating Matzo (unleavened bread), they were

⁶ Exodus 12:24

drinking wine, and they were talking about the yoke of slavery in Egypt. This is where typology starts to help us today understand what Holy Communion means. When did Christ enter Jerusalem on that last week? When was the perfect lamb for the Passover selected? I would argue that on the tenth day of the month, Jesus Christ made His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem. How do we know he was without blemish? Because for the next four days, the Pharisees and the Scribes interrogated Him and they continued to find no fault with this man. They had no basis to have Him executed by the authorities. For four days, they found no fault in Him. He was perfectly sinless. Then, through a kangaroo court, Jesus found guilty and executed. I again would argue that on the fourteenth day of the month, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, our Lord was sentenced to death and died. This is the typology of the Passover fulfilled in the New Testament by Jesus Christ.

While Jesus was with His disciples in the upper room, He took the bread and the cup and said for both of them, "Do this in remembrance of Me". Jesus made a point to His disciples and told them not to forget what He did. They probably had no idea what He was talking about at the time, but we have the ability to look back over the documents that were written and we can see why we should never ever forget what He has done for us. The perfect lamb's blood was shed, and without blood shedding there is no forgiveness of sin. We have the bread and we have the body of Christ. We know what the bitter herbs are; no one wants to live under the yoke of slavery and no one wants to live under the yoke of sin. Sin is slavery. The wages of sin is death and Christ came to set us free from death. If you believe in Him and have faith in Him, then He removes those sins. This is something that an animal could never do. Every year they sacrificed

that lamb, but Christ was sacrificed once and for all. When He said it was finished, there was no longer any need of those shadows of the Old Testament. They were there as examples to point us to what was coming. Once the real thing came there was no longer any need for the example. From this point forward following the death of Jesus Christ, He said, “Do this” and “remember”. With the bread (His body) and the wine (His blood) He is the true Pascal lamb. He who believes in Me, his sins will be forgiven and he will have eternal life. At Lighthouse Lutheran Church, we celebrate communion with the Lord over half of the year. Do you realize that? We receive Holy Communion twenty-seven weeks out of the year and we remember what He did. In addition, we also partake of His body and blood, just like those remembering the Passover. They ate the lamb. They ate the bread. We, too, eat His body and blood in the bread and the wine. We do this for forgiveness of sins. Lastly, where do we celebrate and remember our Lord’s saving grace? Right here in our home. This sanctuary is our home. We gather as a family. We are a family – a church family.

When you start to think of the typology, you must keep in mind that these examples were setup by God to point us to a future reality. Why was Abraham told to kill his son? Because, without that typology we would not understand what took place when God sent His only Son to truly die for us. Why was a man swallowed by a fish? Because, without that typology we would fail to grasp the meaning of Jesus saying, unless like being in the belly of a fish like Jonah for three days – so will the Son of Man. Jesus died and stayed in the grave for three days. And then He rose again.

When you receive the Lord’s Supper tonight, when you receive the bread and wine tonight, you must realize that you are not only looking back and remembering, but you

are also partaking of the body and blood. As you eat and drink your sins are being released. You are no longer under the bondage of sin. The true blood and the true body in our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION:

Typology

Homiletical Point: Passover typified the true deliverance from death in Jesus Christ

1. God sent ten plagues to Pharaoh and Egypt to break their hearts and leave His people go.

Explain: 400 years of captivity; Tenth plague (Death)

Who: Israelites captive in Egypt

What: Lamb (without blemish, perfect), Bread (unleavened), Bitter Herbs (reminder of bondage);

Eat all of the sacrifice, quickly, leave nothing behind

Where: In their homes

How: Blood (painted on the door post and lintel – When I see the blood I will Passover)

2. As a lasting ordinance, God commanded His people to remember their deliverance from bondage.

Explain: Who: Israelites (only those who believe);

When: Nisan 10 & Nisan 14 (lamb scrutinized for four days, lamb slaughtered at twilight);

What: Lamb (without blemish, perfect), Bread (unleavened), Bitter Herbs (reminder of bondage);

Eat all of the sacrifice, quickly, leave nothing behind

Why: Do not forget

Where: In their homes

How: Blood (taken in gold and silver cups to the Moheim)

3. God sent His only Son to earth in order to break their hearts and let His people go.

Explain: Who: Only His Apostles

When: Nisan 10 & Nisan 14 (Jesus scrutinized (questioned & examined) for four days);

And in the end no fault could be found in Him from the highest authority in the land,

Jesus slaughtered at 3:00pm

What: Lamb (without blemish, perfect), Bread (unleavened), Bitter Herbs (reminder of bondage);

Eat all of the sacrifice, quickly, leave nothing behind

Why: Do not forget

Where: In the home where they gathered

How: Blood & Body "This is my body and my blood". Eat it!

^{NIV} **Luke 24:25** He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

²⁶ Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

4. As a lasting ordinance, Christ commanded His people to remember their deliverance from bondage.

Explain: Who: Only His children

When: Often

What: Bread and Wine (No longer a promise (covenant), but a completed gift (testament))

Where: In our home – the sanctuary

Why: Do not forget

CONCLUSION: Passover typified the true deliverance from death in Jesus Christ