

# JESUS IS MY SALVATION MESSAGE SERIES PART - 4 IS JESUS YOUR LAMB<sup>1</sup> OF GOD?

Isaiah 53 tells us that Jesus was crushed for our sins. Have you meditated upon all that was involved in that? From the image of the olive press in ancient Israel we understand what He endured for you and me!

Has Jesus Christ become your Passover Sacrifice by Faith? Have you had His shed blood applied to protect your life from God's wrath? Have you eaten Him for your salvation? Do you rest safely in the shelter of His great salvation?

When John the Baptist stepped forward in John 1:29 and introduced Jesus as the Lamb of God he did so as the final Old Testament prophet, the son of a priest, and as the chosen forerunner of Christ. He identified Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God, how powerful, complete and transforming is that truth. Think of the dramatic sequence God had planned just on the day of Christ's crucifixion. On day Christ<sup>2</sup> died on the Cross-for our sins, it was the fourteenth day of A' bib, A.D. 33.

At the third hour (9:00 A.M.), Israel's high priest tied the Passover lamb to the altar for sacrifice.

At that exact moment outside the city walls of Jerusalem, Jesus, the Lamb of God, was nailed to the cross.

For six hours both the Passover lamb and Jesus the Lamb of God, awaited death.

Finally, at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.), the high priest ascended the altar in the temple and sacrificed the Passover lamb.

At that exact moment from the Cross Christ's words thundered out over the city of Jerusalem, "It is finished!"

On Calvary's stark mountain, God the Father, the final High Priest of all creation, placed His holy hand on the head of His only begotten Son, allowing the total sin of the world to descend upon Jesus. Barely able to lift His blood-spattered face toward heaven, Jesus shouted in triumph, "It is finished!" (John 19:30).

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<sup>1</sup> Sheep Numbers: WorldSheep Population. 1.062 billion head.

<http://melpub.wool.com/enews2.nsf/f32b26289d07c6894a25684d00086e1b/beef68d3cacbdd574a2568880009ff0a?OpenDocument>

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from McQuaid E., *The Outpouring: Jesus in the Feasts of Israel*, (Bellmawr, New Jersey: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.) 1997.

Jesus as the Lamb of God summarizes God's Word completely. It is the greatest summary of Who Christ WAS, What HE DID, and how we participate. This morning the panorama of Scriptures cries out to us:

- In the Old Testament the question was, "Where is the lamb?" (Gen. 22: 7)
- In the four Gospels, the emphasis is "Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:29) Here He is!
- In Heaven all who come to Jesus sing with the heavenly choir, "Worthy is the Lamb!" (Rev. 5:12)

The people of Israel were familiar with lambs for the sacrifices. At Passover, each family had to have a lamb; and during the year, two lambs a day were sacrificed at the temple altar, plus all the other lambs brought for personal sacrifices.

- Men brought those lambs to men, but here is God's Lamb, given by God to men!
- Those lambs could not take away sin, but the Lamb of God can take away sin. Those lambs were for Israel alone, but this Lamb would shed His blood for the whole world!

Now read with me John 1:29. Who was Jesus? Say it with me: THE LAMB OF GOD! Pray

Now, please turn to I Corinthians 5:7, what Lamb is Jesus? Christ our PASSOVER!

THE PASCHAL LAMB<sup>3</sup> AND THE SEDER: The Passover lamb stood apart in Israel's sacrificial economy. It was like, yet unlike, the other sacrifices. Alfred Edersheim notes:

"It was neither exactly a sin offering nor a peace offering, but a combination of them both." Israel's paschal lamb was a kind of summary expression of all that the sacrificial system projected prophetically. Although every sacrifice and ceremony set forth a particular aspect of the Messiah's person and ministry, it is Passover that is singled out as the unifying typical illustration: "For Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." There is a sense in which all other sacrifices were taken as grafts from Passover and rooted into the trunk of Levitical typology.

## **JOHN EXPLAINS JESUS BY THE SEVEN TITLES IN CHAPTER ONE**

In a gospel written to the whole world, John presents us with the Divine Jesus. He is the Son of God -- his Divinity -- the Divine nature of God is very clearly seen. We have already seen John's incredible introduction of Jesus as the Word, the Dwelling Presence and the Glory of God. John reveals Jesus as God's unique ("only begotten," KJV) Son, and refers to God as His Father more than any other book of the Bible. The Old Testament refers to God as Father only 12 times, John 120 times! But there is one major theme that runs throughout John's Gospel: Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and if you commit yourself to Him, He will give you eternal life (John 20:31). In this first chapter, John recorded<sup>4</sup> seven names and titles of Jesus that identify Him as eternal God.

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<sup>3</sup> McQuaid E., *The Outpouring: Jesus in the Feasts of Israel*, (Bellmawr, New Jersey: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc.) 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Drawn from comments written by Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

1. **Jesus is The Word (John 1:1–3, 14)**
2. **Jesus is The Light (John 1:4–13)**
3. **Jesus is the Son of God (John 1:15–28, 49)**
4. **Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29–34)** John the Baptist called Jesus “the Lamb of God,” a title he would repeat the next day (John 1:35–36). This morning as we celebrate the Lord’s Supper, the message of the Bible can be summed up in this title.

The Lord<sup>5</sup> Himself established seven occasions of worship to guide Israel through the centuries until the Messiah comes. Christians often falsely assumes these feasts are exclusively Jewish occasions. But the Bible makes it clear these days belong *to the Lord*. These feasts of the Lord are established for divine purposes, and everyone has a right to draw near. Just as seven days finish a weekly cycle, seven festival occasions complete the work of God on earth. Each holiday was and is a trail marker pointing to the future. The seven feasts are: *The Feast of Passover*, *The Feast of Unleavened Bread*, *The Feasts of Firstfruits*, *The Feast of Pentecost*, *The Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)*, *The Feast of Atonement (Yom Kippur)*, *The Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)*. Each of the feasts of Israel points to and describes what lies ahead.

The seven Jewish feasts also became the outline for Jesus’ ministry. It is amazing how precisely Jesus fulfilled the feasts that had been celebrated for more than 1,450 years.

- **Passover** speaks<sup>6</sup> of *redemption*. Messiah, the Passover Lamb, has been slain for us. He died on Passover (as God’s Lamb),
- **Unleavened Bread** speaks of *sanctification*. He was set apart. His body would not decay in the grave. He was buried on the Feast of Unleavened Bread (as the Bread of Life),
- **Firstfruits** speak of *resurrection*. Death could not hold her Foe. On the third day, Jesus rose triumphantly from the grave. He arose on the feast of First fruits (as the first fruits of those who will be raised to life),
- He sent His Spirit on **Pentecost** so His followers could begin “harvesting” those who would believe. Pentecost can be a powerful reminder to Christians that they have become the dwelling place for God’s Spirit- His Temple.
- **Rosh Hashanah** (the trumpet call to judgment).
- **Yom Kippur** (judgment day) in some sense will be fulfilled upon Jesus’ return, though He has already fulfilled some elements of these two feasts.
- And what comes after the final judgment? Heaven! The new Promised Land! **Sukkot** is the feast that celebrated the Promised Land, God’s deliverance, living water, and God’s blessing. **Sukkot** is a feast that will be fully realized in heaven. There will be living water (Revelation 7:17), the eternal presence of God (Revelation 21:22), and the light (Revelation 22:5). Sukkot taught the Jewish people to be joyful, in anticipation of heaven. Take the most joyful celebration that ever existed and imagine it lasting forever. That is heaven. No wonder some Jewish Christians (and some Gentile ones, too) celebrate Sukkot.

<sup>5</sup> John Hagee, *Final Dawn Over Jerusalem*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998, p. 166-191.

<sup>6</sup> Kevin Howard, Marvin Rosenthal, *The Feasts of the Lord*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1997, p.

The Passover unleavened<sup>7</sup> bread in the New Testament is, of course, the body of our Lord. He is described as "the Bread of Life". He was born in Bethlehem, in Hebrew "House of Bread". He utilized bread as an image of Himself ("If a kernel of wheat fall into the ground..."). God fed the Israelites in the wilderness with manna from heaven, and He feeds the Christians in the world on the Bread of Life. The very piece of bread used by the Jews during this week of Unleavened Bread is a good picture of our Lord. Anyone who has seen the Jewish matzoh sees that it is striped ("By His stripes are we healed"), pierced ("They shall look upon me whom they've pierced"), and, of course, pure, without any leaven, as His body was without any sin.

The Passover ceremony of breaking and burying and then resurrecting a piece of this bread (the middle piece, as the Son in the Trinity) very obviously presents the Gospel in the midst of the modern Jewish Passover celebration. God performed this exact ceremony with the burial of Jesus, our precious piece of unleavened bread, and more importantly, He performed it on the exact day of the feast. Once again, the required feast was fulfilled in a remarkable and unmistakable way. We readily see from the Gospel that Jesus was buried at the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread since His body was interred at sundown of Passover Day, the beginning of the fifteenth of Nisan, the first month. Our "kernel of wheat" was indeed placed into the ground, and at the appropriate moment. It was to rise again, of course, and again in accordance with the schedule of the feasts. One cannot permanently bury Christ or a Christian.

**Jesus was the Lamb of God for the Feast of Passover.** On the tenth day of A' bib (March or April on the English calendar), preparation for the annual Passover observance begins. The Lord demanded, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household'" (Ex. 12:2-3). For four days a one-year old male lamb without blemish was tied close to the house so the family would know and remember the lamb like a beloved pet. At 3:00 in the afternoon, the father of the house laid his hand upon the head of the lamb and cut its throat. Then he applied the blood of innocence to the sides of the door and smeared it on the doorposts. The house was literally sealed with blood. The family not only remembered but also reenacted the death angel's fearsome journey through Egypt. The firstborn sons of the Egyptians died, but the houses of Israel were spared. Where there was lamb's blood, the angel passed over. If the door was not sealed with the animal blood, the firstborn child would die that night.

**Jesus was the Lamb of God at the Feast of Passover when Death Died** - On the fourteenth day of A'bib, A.D. 33, at the third hour (9:00 A.M.), Israel's high priest tied the lamb to the altar for sacrifice. At that exact moment outside the city walls of Jerusalem, Jesus, the Lamb of God, was nailed to the cross. For six hours both the lamb and Jesus awaited death. Finally, at the ninth hour (3:00 P.M.), the high priest ascended the altar in the temple and sacrificed the lamb. His words thundered out over the city of Jerusalem, "It is finished!" On Calvary's stark mountain, God the Father, the final High Priest of all creation, placed His holy hand on the head of His only begotten Son,

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<sup>7</sup> Zola Levitt, *The Seven Feast of Israel*. Dallas, Texas: Great Impressions Printing and Graphics, 1979, Pgs 5-6.

allowing the total sin of the world to descend upon Jesus. Barely able to lift His blood-spattered face toward heaven, Jesus shouted in triumph, "It is finished!" (John 19:30).

The paschal lamb was typical. Christ<sup>8</sup> is *our Passover*, 1 Co. 5:7.

1. **A LAMB:** It was to be a *lamb*; and Christ is *the Lamb of God* (Jn. 1:29), often in the Revelation called the *Lamb*, meek and innocent as a lamb, dumb before the shearers, before the butchers.
2. **A LAMB SPECIAL:** It was to be a *male of the first year* (v. 5), in its prime; Christ offered up himself in the midst of his days, not in infancy with the babes of Bethlehem. It denotes the strength and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus, on whom our help was laid.
3. **A LAMB SPECIAL, SPOTLESS:** It was to be *without blemish* (v. 5), denoting the purity of the Lord Jesus, a Lamb *without spot*, 1 Pt. 1:19. The judge that condemned him (as if his trial were only like the scrutiny that was made concerning the sacrifices, whether they were without blemish or no) pronounced him innocent.
4. **A LAMB SPECIAL, SPOTLESS, SET APART:** It was to be set apart four days before (v. 3, 6), denoting the designation of the Lord Jesus to be a Savior, both in the purpose and in the promise. It is very observable that as Christ was crucified at the Passover, so he solemnly entered into Jerusalem four days before, the very day that the paschal lamb was set apart.
5. **A LAMB SPECIAL, SPOTLESS, SET APART, SACRIFICED:** It was to be *slain*, and *roasted with fire* (v. 6-9), denoting the exquisite sufferings of the Lord Jesus, even unto death, the death of the cross. The wrath of God is as fire, and Christ was made a curse for us.
6. **A LAMB SPECIAL, SPOTLESS, SET APART, SACRIFICED, SPECIFICALLY:** It was to be killed by the whole congregation between the two evenings, that is, between three o'clock and six. Christ suffered in the *end of the world* (Heb. 9:26), by the hand of the Jews, the whole multitude of them (Lu. 23:18), and for the good of all his spiritual Israel.
7. **A LAMB SPECIAL, SPOTLESS, SET APART, SACRIFICED, SPECIFICALLY, AND SCRIPTURALLY:** Not *a bone of it must be broken* (v. 46), which is expressly said to be fulfilled in Christ (Jn. 19:33, 36), denoting the unbroken strength of the Lord Jesus.

The sprinkling of the blood was typical.

1. **THE LAMB OF GOD'S BLOOD WAS APPLIED:** It was not enough that the blood of the lamb was shed, but it must be sprinkled, denoting the application of the merits of Christ's death to our souls; we must *receive the atonement*, Rom. 5:11.
2. **THE LAMB OF GOD'S BLOOD WAS APPLIED OBEDIENTLY:** It was to be sprinkled with *a bunch of hyssop* (v. 22) *dipped in the basin*. The everlasting covenant, like the basin, in the conservatory of this blood, the benefits and privileges purchased by it are laid up for us there; faith is the bunch of hyssop by which we apply the promises to ourselves and the benefits of the blood of Christ laid up in them.

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<sup>8</sup> This section adapted from Henry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997

3. **THE LAMB OF GOD'S BLOOD WAS APPLIED OBEDIENTLY, PUBLICALLY:** It was to be sprinkled upon the *door-posts*, denoting the open profession we are to make of faith in Christ, and obedience to him, as those that are not ashamed to own our dependence upon him. The mark of the beast may be received on the forehead or in the right hand, but the seal of the *Lamb* is always *in the forehead*, Rev. 7:3. There is a back-way to hell, but no back-way to heaven; no, the only way to this is a high-way, Isa. 35:8.
4. **THE LAMB OF GOD'S BLOOD WAS APPLIED OBEDIENTLY, PUBLICALLY, PRECIOSLY:** It was to be sprinkled upon the *lintel* and the *side posts*, but not upon the *threshold* (v. 7), which cautions us to take heed of trampling under foot the blood of the covenant, Heb. 10:29. It is precious blood, and must be precious to us.
5. **THE LAMB OF GOD'S BLOOD WAS APPLIED OBEDIENTLY, PUBLICALLY, PRECIOSLY, PROTECTINGLY:** The blood, thus sprinkled, was a means of the preservation of the Israelites from the destroying angel, who had nothing to do where the blood was. If the blood of Christ be sprinkled upon our consciences, it will be our protection from the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and the damnation of hell, Rom. 8:1.

The solemnly eating of the lamb was typical of our gospel-duty to Christ.

1. **THE LAMB OF GOD MUST BE PARTAKEN:** The paschal lamb was killed, not to be looked upon only, but to be fed upon; so we must by faith make Christ ours, as we do that which we eat, and we must receive spiritual strength and nourishment from him, as from our food, and have delight and satisfaction in him, as we have in eating and drinking when we are hungry or thirsty: see Jn. 6:53–55.
2. **THE LAMB OF GOD MUST BE PARTAKEN COMPLETELY:** It was to be all eaten; those that by faith feed upon Christ must feed upon a whole Christ; they must take Christ and his yoke, Christ and his cross, as well as Christ and his crown. *Is Christ divided?* Those that gather much of Christ will have nothing over.
3. **THE LAMB OF GOD MUST BE PARTAKEN COMPLETELY, IMMEDIATELY:** It was to be eaten immediately, not deferred till morning, v. 10. *To-day* Christ is offered, and is to be accepted while it is called to day, before we sleep the sleep of death.
4. **THE LAMB OF GOD MUST BE PARTAKEN COMPLETELY, IMMEDIATELY, SORROWFULLY:** It was to be eaten *with bitter herbs* (v. 8), in remembrance of the bitterness of their bondage in Egypt. We must feed upon Christ with sorrow and brokenness of heart, in remembrance of sin; this will give an admirable relish to the paschal lamb. Christ will be sweet to us if sin be bitter.
5. **THE LAMB OF GOD MUST BE PARTAKEN COMPLETELY, IMMEDIATELY, SORROWFULLY, AND REPENTANTLY:** It was to be eaten in a departing posture (v. 11); when we feed upon Christ by faith we must absolutely forsake the rule and dominion of sin, shake off Pharaoh's yoke; and we must sit loose to the world, and every thing in it, forsake all for Christ, and reckon it no bad bargain, Heb. 13:13, 14.

The feast of unleavened bread was typical of the Christian life, 1 Co. 5:7, 8. Having received Christ Jesus the Lord,

1. **AS OUR JOYFUL WORSHIP:** We must keep a feast in holy joy, continually delighting ourselves in Christ Jesus; no *manner of work must be done* (v. 16), no care admitted or indulged, inconsistent with, or prejudicial to, this holy joy: if true believers have not a continual feast, it is their own fault.
2. **AS OUR LOVING MINISTRY:** It must be a feast of unleavened bread, kept in charity, without the leaven of malice, and in sincerity, without the leaven of hypocrisy. The law was very strict as to the Passover, and the Jews were so in their usages, that no leaven should be *found in their houses*, v. 19. All the old leaven of sin must be put far from us, with the utmost caution and abhorrence, if we would keep the feast of a holy life to the honor of Christ.
3. **AS OUR CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE:** It was by an *ordinance for ever* (v. 17); as long as we live, we must continue feeding upon Christ and rejoicing in him, always making thankful mention of the great things he has done for us.

Now turn to Isaiah 53.

But<sup>9</sup> why does God call us His sheep? It may be, however, because sheep are the most helpless creatures known in the world of zoology. They always lose their way. In the amazing aggregation of entertainment and instruction that modern man calls the circus, we have seen almost every known animal perform, but we have never seen a trained sheep. A dog or cat, all the farm animals, and everything that can be caught in traps, may be taught to perform for the amusement of man with the apparent exception of the sheep.

Perhaps the Lord God, considering the utter helplessness of the human family, just shook His head and said, "We will call them sheep."

1. SHEEP ARE UTTERLY HELPLESS and cannot find their way without a guide... Though there be pasture within easy reach, the sheep is apparently incapable of finding it for itself. It must have a guide. So God, looking at stupid, lost humanity, said, "All they like sheep have gone astray."
2. SHEEP ARE AMONG THE DIRTIEST ANIMALS associated with man. The natural tendency of wool in its raw and wild state is to pick up any defilement with which it comes into contact. There is a very unpleasant odor that is natural to the sheep, and this has been one of the chief reasons for the dislike engendered in the cowboy's breast. Mud dries on the pelt of the sheep in the most bedraggled patterns imaginable. The adherence of the mud is persistent. No matter how dry it may become, it does not seem to powder and fall away. Above all creatures that are associated with the life of man, the sheep is unquestionably the dirtiest. The poet who sings the praise of the snow-white sheep rarely sees them in their typical natural conditions, journeying together in great flocks. The dust of their passage adheres to their person until they become as brown as the terrain over which they travel.

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<sup>9</sup> Rimmer, Science, p. 248.

3. Of all the creatures in the world, THE SHEEP HAS THE GREATEST NEED OF CLEANSING. So God looked at pitiable humanity, foul and unclean, bearing the marks of their passage through centuries of sin, and said, "We will call them sheep."
4. Sheep are one of the few animals TOTALLY INCAPABLE OF SELF-CLEANSING. The dirtier a sheep gets, the more helpless it becomes. In this respect it seems to be below the hog. Many times we have seen a pig rubbing its person against the lower railing of the fence, scratching off the caked mud – but a sheep, never. So God looked at poor faulty humanity and said, "If We don't clean them, they'll never be cleansed. We will call them Our sheep."
5. Sheep are among the MOST TENDER OF CREATURES, always suffering hurt and pain. We have skinned the carcasses of many of them, but we have never seen a sheep pelt that was unscarred or unbruised. They spend half their days bleating because of physical distress, and the rest of their time bumping into something else to hurt themselves again. Without natural joy because of the tenderness of their constitution, they become the perfect type of man. They are dependent, and must always be provided for. Indeed, their only alluring quality is their very helplessness.

The only way to rescue we God's sheep that were headed to destruction was to come down and show them the way out. And that is exactly what God did in Jesus. So when John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and exclaimed, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29), he identified Jesus Christ as the perfect, personal fulfillment of all the Jewish sacrificial system.

How do we apply the truth that Jesus is the Lamb of God?

### ***Understanding<sup>10</sup> Christ's Accessibility***

The meal, the work of the cross, also goes only to those "outside the camp"—those who do not subscribe to the old Jewish system. Here the preacher uses a very Hebrew argument to make his point: "The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood" (vv. 11, 12).

The logic goes like this: the sacrifices offered on the Jewish great Day of Atonement were a prophetic type for the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). On the Day of Atonement a bull was slain to atone for the sins of the priest and his family, and a lamb likewise was sacrificed for the sins of the rest of the people. The blood of these sacrifices was taken into the Holy of Holies, but both the carcasses were taken outside the camp and burned up (Leviticus 16:27). Therefore, those under the old sacrificial system could not partake of this great offering as a meal.

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<sup>10</sup> Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Hebrews Vol 1&2—An Anchor for the Soul*, (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books) 1998, c1993.



But Jesus, the ultimate atoning lamb, was sacrificed outside the camp—outside Jerusalem's walls, on Golgotha—as an offering to God. This means two great things:

- All those who remained committed to the old Jewish system were excluded from the benefit of partaking of Christ's atoning death. And,
- Jesus' death outside the camp means that he is accessible to anyone in the world who will come to him. Jesus planted his cross in the world so all the world could have access. And there he remains permanently available!

There thus remains only one thing to do, and so the writer exhorts us: "Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come" (vv. 13, 14). The cities of the earth—all earthly institutions—will fall apart. Only the heavenly Zion will remain. We must go, flee to him outside the camp, and willfully embrace his "disgrace," for such an act is worth doing a million times over! Thus Jesus Christ, who is "the same yesterday and today and forever," becomes our constant meal—our food, our drink, our life—and we will receive from him grace upon grace upon grace. And because he is outside the camp, he will always be accessible. In fact, he is with us, in us, and coming to us! This understanding that he *nourishes* us and is *accessible* to us will help us keep on course.