

Thursday: A Unique Passover

For today's journey, read Matthew 26:17-20, 26-30;
John 18:28-32, 2 Corinthians 5:20-21

REFLECT

In Jesus' culture, the Jewish people did everything they could to remain pure, so as to not jeopardize their standing before God, which would prohibit them from participating in the Passover. Even in their act to hand Jesus over to the Romans, the Jewish leaders would not enter Pilate's residence because it would make them unclean. Insidiously, they demanded Jesus die at Pilate's hands because to kill Him themselves would have disqualified them from celebrating the Passover.

It is ironic how much these leaders respected laws of the Passover Festival but not its meaning. Passover started over 1400 years prior when Israel was rescued from Egypt's bondage. Each home that applied a spotless lamb's blood to their doorposts would be "passed over" by the Angel of Death. From that point on, "Passover" was a celebration of God's plan that saved His people from judgment. Jesus was God's purest Lamb given by His Father to rescue this world. It is terribly ironic that these group of misled leaders were so compelled to keep Passover "free from sin," yet so deceitfully driven to kill the sinless Son of God. They incited the killing of God's Only Son.

Make no mistake; this was God's plan. The Lamb of God is what every other Passover lamb pointed to. The blood of Jesus applied to individual hearts has the power to rescue an entire world. If you are looking for a path to righteousness, it is only available through accepting that Jesus is the True Lamb, presented to us by the Heavenly Father. He is the True spotless Lamb slain so that God's righteous judgment could pass over all who believe in Him. That is quite a Savior.

ASK

- How did the religious leaders' desire for purity during the Passover festival contrast with their willingness to betray and kill Jesus?
- How does understanding the fulfillment of Passover in Jesus help you better appreciate the significance of the cross and the salvation it provides?
- In what ways did Jesus' identity as the Passover Lamb challenge and subvert the expectations of the religious leaders and the people of his time?
- What lessons can you learn from the irony of the religious leaders' actions during the Passover week? How can you apply these to your own life?

Pray that your devotion to and love for Jesus surpasses ritual and becomes a passion for you.