

201417 passoverprophecies joeamaral 20140804pm

Good evening. You look scared. Well, this is it, you're finally rid of me? That's exactly what I was hoping for.

Thank you so much, I appreciate that. No, I've had a great time ministering with you guys here this weekend and teaching. And as I've walked around, just, you know, hearing the nice things you guys have been saying about how the ministry has helped you in your faith.

And someone was saying before the service, just how much it's really inspired them to go back and reread the Bible and study and study deeper. And that's what it's all about. You know, that's what we're hoping to do as a ministry is to cause people to fall in love again with God's word and wanna go back and learn more.

So I'm so thankful that that goal has been accomplished. And it's hard to believe that we've had so many sessions together. I think this is our sixth or seventh session this weekend together.

It's been just go, go, go. But it's been a good kind of a go. And tonight, we're gonna conclude with doing some more teaching about the Hebraic roots of our faith.

And in the process of it, I will make mention about what's happening in Israel because people have been asking about it. And I was asked to actually to address it from the podium. I normally don't talk about this kind of thing, but because of it's happening right now in Israel, and there's a lot of questions, there's a lot of misunderstanding about what's happening.

I thought I would spend a few minutes partway through the message and just kind of just bring some clarity to what's happening on, or what's happening in that part of the world. So tonight, we're gonna be looking at one of my favorite things, which is the Feasts of the Lord, the biblical holy days. And many of us as Christians, we know the holidays, but we don't know the holy days.

And so tonight, I'm gonna say some stuff that'll surprise you which is no surprise. I think I've done that this weekend. I think everybody's okay with knowing that Jesus didn't celebrate Christmas.

Do we understand that? We're okay with that? Okay. Jesus did not do the Easter egg hunts. He wasn't a big Easter kind of a guy.

And I don't have the time tonight to go into how we got all this stuff, but there's some material back there, which I'll talk about in which we go a little bit deeper into that. So I'm not gonna do my usual big intro because a lot of you have been with me for the entire week. Like I said earlier, you know that Karen and I host a weekly television program called First Century Foundations, which you can watch online.

You can follow us on social media. We have a tour that's coming up later on in May. And I've

already talked a lot again about all the good stuff that we do while we're there.

I'm just gonna kind of flip through this stuff and really get to the teaching tonight and just spend a few moments, one last time, what we have back there. Tonight, I'll be talking about Passover. We'll be looking at some of the parallels of Passover between the life of Jesus and the requirements for the lamb.

And the teaching comes from a DVD called God's Holy Days. And it's a three and a half hour long DVD teaching series. And it comes with a seven week Bible study included.

So you watch a segment, you do a Bible study, and you do this for seven weeks. This has been a really popular thing for churches to use in their midweek services, or like a Friday night Bible study, something like that. Let me see, somebody on, okay, this dear lady here.

I didn't even ask who wants it. She's already waving like there's a fly around her head. There you go, dear.

Okay, I hope you enjoy that, okay? Thank you. You're very welcome, enjoy. What else? The other thing I wanted to just pause for a little bit on is a brand new documentary.

Where is it? Is it up there, Karen? No, it's not on this one. It's called Understanding Jesus, the Documentary. It's a 60 minute film that we just finished doing.

It took us six hours to complete the project. Six, what'd I say? Six hours, oy vey. Six years, six hours would be amazing.

No, no. Oy vey. It took six years to make this documentary.

We started filming it on location in Nazareth years and years ago. And we actually hired out a village in Nazareth that recreates what life was like at the first century. So we have actors in full costume.

We recreated a wedding. We recreated the building of a home to help you understand how when the man was lowered through the roof and was brought before Jesus, how that happened. Really, we talked about farming.

We shear sheep. We have guys in the fields harvesting wheat just to help you as a Christian to understand what life was like at the time of Jesus. And so the documentary Understanding Jesus, 60 minutes long, is back there.

That's brand new. I think we just picked it up on Thursday before we came up. And the final thing I just wanna draw your attention to is the one there in blue called Conflict, the Power of Propaganda.

And in light of what's going on in Israel right now, sadly, we made this documentary years ago thinking it would be about one conflict and it would be over. But sadly, the conflict seems to be

ongoing. And the broadcasters love it because it has a long shelf life, but it makes us sad because there's always conflict.

And you would not believe what comes out of the Middle East, what comes out of the news channels. To these people who live in closed society, who don't have Facebook, who don't have Twitter, who don't have Instagram, they're not allowed by law to go on social media. So all they hear is what their own corrupt government tells them about what's going on in their part of the world.

And sometimes we can't imagine how can people be so evil over there? How can they do such horrible things to one another? Because of what they're taught from the time they have ears to hear until the time they become suicide bombers at 13, 14, 15 years old. And you say, how can a person do that? How can a parent do that to their child? You need to understand the culture in which these people grow up. And the film Conflict, the power of propaganda is a 90 minute film where we interview former Muslims, Muslims, Christians, Jewish people.

We interviewed people on all sides just to really help you get an understanding of why there's a conflict there. And sadly, again, now more than ever, we in the West need to understand why there's a war going on in that part of the world. So anyways, that stuff is back there.

And if that interests you, please feel free to stop by. Now tonight, I'm gonna start with, I call them the wow factor. Have you guys had some wows this weekend? Okay, everybody seems really tense tonight.

I don't know if it's me or it's the lights. Everybody seems really tense tonight. Just, we're gonna do this again.

Look at the person beside you. Tell them, relax, okay, okay? I promise it won't get any worse than what it's been this weekend, okay? I'm not gonna freak you out too much, but I am gonna do my best. We're gonna endeavor to teach you as much as I can.

Because I may never see some of you ever again. I may never come back to this camp again. I may never see no one again.

Next week, I don't know what's gonna happen. So I wanna leave with you as much as I can. And well, when I leave you, I wanna know that I did everything I could to bring you closer to Christ.

And if I go home knowing that I did my best, then that I feel good about what we've done this weekend. So we're gonna talk about an event that takes place in the book of Exodus. And we all know about the Passover because we've all seen the movie, The Ten Commandments, right? You may not know that that was about Passover, but that was about Passover.

That was about the great plagues that God sent to Egypt because God had spoken to Moses and called Moses when he was 80 years old. Some of you who are thinking of retiring, Moses entered into ministry at 80 years old. And at 80, he went back to the Pharaoh and through the

power of God, brought down 10 powerful plagues.

And the last plague is the plague that we're gonna focus on, which is the plague of the slaying of the firstborn son. We're gonna talk about those events that happened in that time. And what I'm gonna do is I'm gonna start with something that I call the letter of blood, okay? And this is found in Exodus 12, seven.

And we're gonna have some audience participation this evening. Men, we're the men who were here this morning, okay? There was a couple of ladies who snuck in. Anyways, I was just sitting here on a stool and we were talking just kind of casually and I invited the guys to interact.

So I'm gonna invite you guys to interact with me. I'm gonna have you do motions tonight. I'm gonna have you repeat Hebrew words after me because I find that when you participate, it goes in deeper and it stays with you a little bit longer.

So what we're gonna do is we're gonna talk about the night of this Passover when God spoke to Moses and God told him very specifically how to slaughter the lamb. First of all, what kind of a lamb to use? It had to be the firstborn, had to be a male. It could have no broken bones.

It could have no spots or no blemishes. It had to be perfect in every way. You had to tie it up and examine it for four days.

And once you saw that it was without fault, then the father would wash his hands. He would hand over the lamb and it would be sacrificed. It was a whole step, a whole process.

And then we get to the end and the animal is finally chosen and it's slaughtered on behalf of the family. God spoke to Moses and he said, I want you to take the blood of this lamb and I want you to apply it in a very particular way to the doorposts of your home. Now, do you guys remember how God told Moses to do that? Right, it's up on the screen.

Now, did you guys remember to bring your hyssop plants to church this evening? Yeah, a few of you, okay. Well, let's all pretend we have our hyssop plants in our hand, whether you're a lefty or a righty, okay? I want you to take your hyssop plant and I want you to dip it in that nice congealed lamb's blood that's been just collecting and thickening in the heat of the Egyptian sun, okay? I don't know why I told you that, but anyways. So, so you dip it.

Now, go ahead and put the blood on the side, over the top. And down the side. That's what God said to do, right? God could have said, you know what, take the blood, the bucket, and completely douse the door, cover it to make sure the angel of death can't come in.

He could have said to do that. He could have said to do it on a certain pattern. He could have said to do it in stripes.

God could have told him anyway to apply the blood. And when you read it, you wonder, did it really matter how? But yet God says to do it in a very specific fashion. So do it again with me,

guys.

Dip the blood and put it on the side, the top, and the side. Very good. You didn't know, but you just wrote in Hebrew.

Yeah, mazel tov. You all just wrote the eighth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Okay, and this letter in Hebrew, now this is how we can tell if you're white or not, okay? Is whether or not you can make the guttural sound, okay? The word is chet, not het, okay? That's the white version.

You have to say it, the Middle Eastern version, chet. Like there's phlegm caught in your throat, right? Okay, chet, chet. That's why everybody sounds mad in the Middle East.

Sounds like they have phlegm in their throat all the time. So chet in Hebrew is the symbol for life, and you'll see on Jewish people all the time, they wear it around their necks, don't they? They'll see this little sign, or they'll have a glass of wine at a wedding, and they'll say l'chaim, to life, okay? So this is the official symbol for life, and I want you to think about it. So what God said was, I want you to take the lamb's blood, and with it, I want you to make the sign for life over the doorposts of your home.

That way, when the angel of death comes, he'll see the life that's in the blood and pass over the home. Come on, that's a wow. Now, I didn't discover this.

It's been in the Bible the whole time, and God even said the blood will be a sign, like a street sign for you. But yet, as Westerners, we don't see the systematic approach in which God told them to do it. And when we understand how and why God told them to do it, all of a sudden, it makes sense for why he did it that way.

You know, people say, well, they were saved because they were Jews. That's why God saved them. Now, let me correct something, and this will come back to help us understand later.

The Jewish people, Israel, they are God's chosen people, but they're not God's favorite people. Did you hear the difference? God chose the nation of Israel. He chose the Jewish people to be a light to the Gentiles of the earth.

He chose them for his own reasons, but they're not his favorite people. God loves you, God loves me, as much as he loves any race in this world. That needs to be understood.

So just because they were Jewish, it wasn't enough. They had to take what the lamb had done, and they had to apply it personally to the doorposts of their own homes, and that's the only way that salvation came to their homes, amen? You're not saved automatically because of a nationality. You're not saved automatically because your daddy was a pastor, or your grandpa was a pastor.

You have to decide for yourself to either accept or reject the grace of God, amen? Am I preaching here? Yeah, okay, I just wanna make sure. Now, one of my favorite things to do, or

has been to do over these past 12 years is I've gotten to travel all around the world. My parents came from Portugal.

Is it okay if I come down here microphone-wise? Okay. My parents came from Portugal to Canada when I was just two years old, and we grew up in a very poor part of Toronto. There was gangs.

I grew up on Sterling Avenue in Toronto, across the street from a junkyard. I didn't know we were poor. I thought living across the street from a junkyard was the coolest thing in the world, because every day they'd bring in new cars.

We'd slash the tires, break the windows. It was great. We had drug dealers and prostitutes on our street.

I didn't know we were poor, and we didn't have the money to travel. I had no idea that when I grew up that God was gonna cause me to travel around the world and preach his gospel, and so I've had some wonderful, wonderful opportunities. And how long ago was China, Karen? Six, seven years ago? Maybe, let's say six years ago, I got invited to go to China.

I'd never been to that part of the world. I've been asked back several times, and I think I know why they love me in China. It's because I look so Chinese.

That's the only thing I can think of. I've been back several times to Malaysia, to Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, just always going to that part of the world. But my first time, I didn't know what to expect in China.

And Karen was a little nervous about letting me go because Canadian, white, Western pastors were being arrested at that time for preaching in China, so she was a little afraid. But we prayed about it, and we felt released to go, and I'm really glad that I did. So as a guest speaker, if you're good, I mean like you're really good, you have 45 minutes before people's attention starts to wander.

50 minutes if you raise a dead person or two, but that's it, that's it. Starbucks is calling. People just, they don't have the attention span they used to.

And because I was the guest speaker, and I was flying all the way to China, I thought, you know what? I'm gonna prepare for two hours of teaching. Two hours is more than enough. Who would sit through two hours of teaching? Not very many people.

Nobody raised their hands, by the way, anyways. So I thought two hours, more than enough material. We get to the border, we cross over from Hong Kong into China, we get on a bus, we get to the church, which was a person's apartment.

And they had just moved their sofas to the side. And you might complain that you have benches. They had like those little kindergarten chairs.

You know the ones that are primary colors that you can barely fit into? That's what the chairs were. And we're sitting there, and we had security downstairs. And if the police came, they would call up and we would disband.

So I'm thinking this is kind of cool, right? Because I've never experienced this before, but I'm kind of afraid at the same time. So we get into it, and I said to my translator, who was translating into Mandarin, I said, please ask these pastors who have come. There was 41 or 43 pastors from Southeast China who had driven 19 hours to come hear me speak.

One pastor had just spent two years in prison for preaching the gospel in China. He got out of jail, went home and showered, changed his clothes, got on a bus, and came to hear me preach so he can learn to become a more effective evangelist. These are the kinds of people that came to this meeting.

These were committed people who were ready to be arrested, ready to die for the gospel, no problem. So I felt incredibly honored to be there and a little intimidated to be truthful with you. So I said, can you please ask these brothers who have gathered how long they would like me to speak for? And I'm thinking two hours, no problem, I got it covered.

And it's all Mandarin, I don't understand a word. And all of a sudden he asked, how long would you like Pastor Joe to preach? And it's like they rehearsed because they all answered at the same time. They all said, 10 hour, 10 hour.

I said to the guy, what's that mean in Chinese? There's no way that's English. Yes, Pastor Joe, he says, that's English. That's English? Yes, that's English, go.

Now? Yes, go. He did this, I love it. Oh, all right, cool.

So we had a seven hour first session. Seven hour, no pee-pee break. No, sorry, no washroom break.

No, no, no snack or coffee time. Seven hours, these people sat there with tears, streaming down their faces as they're learning more about their master, about Yeshua, about what he did for them as their Messiah. And they're writing down, they're writing down.

And after seven hours, I said, guys, I need to stop. So I can't, I can't do it anymore, I'm tired. Pastor Joe, can't do it no more.

And they were quiet during the whole message. And if you've known me this weekend, you know I like interaction. I like participation.

And I would say something I thought was really funny or really good, and crickets. With a Chinese accent, anyways. I don't know.

This gets worse every time I tell it, doesn't it, honey? Yeah, yeah. So seven hours, nothing, nothing. And guess what happened next? Nothing.

And I'm just, you know, I learned after a while. I said, hey, you're supposed to be Mr. Culture. Teaching about culture, respect their culture.

They're quiet. Of course. So I would just, I would do my thing.

He would say his thing. I would do my thing. He would say his thing.

And we went on like this for seven hours. And I was exhausted. I took my jacket off.

I was so tired. And finally, we got to this part of the message where I talked about putting the blood on the side, on the top, on the sides of their homes. And all of a sudden, I heard something that I didn't expect to hear.

Sound from the pastors. All of a sudden, I hear, oh, hallelujah! Hallelujah, I love it, no matter what language in the world. We all know hallelujah and amen.

They're like, hallelujah, hallelujah! And this guy's just having, he's getting blessed. He's having a wonderful time. Oh, praise the Lord! I'm like, that's wonderful, but why are we praising him? And this one pastor started to tell him why they were so excited.

And he knew, and they started to tell me. And they said, tell Pastor Joe about the Chinese New Year. I said, what does Passover have to do with the Chinese New Year? He said, tell Pastor Joe what we do every year in China.

Every year, all across the Chinese empire, we put red over the side, the top, and the sides of our homes. Come on, don't get Chinese on me now. They said, for thousands of years, we've been putting red over the side and top and the sides of our businesses and our homes because we're taught in our religion that this makes some kind of a symbol that keeps an evil spirit from coming into our homes.

But we don't know what the symbol is, and we don't know which spirit it is. We just know we don't want them in our house. And as Christians, we've never done it because we were taught that it was an old Chinese, you know, demonic or pagan background.

But now we know it's not. It's the blood of Jesus that keeps the enemy out of our homes. I gave them the biggest wow I've ever given in my life.

I went there to teach me, but I got to tell you, on that day, they taught me, isn't God good? How He embeds things in cultures all around the world. Well, we had the seven-hour service. And then I said, I'm done.

They said, you come back tomorrow morning. I said, more? Yes, come back tomorrow morning, quick service. They said, just give us a little devotional, a quick three-hour devotional.

And I wish I was kidding. Just a three-hour devotional. It's a really quick Bible study, and then we'll go back 19 hours to our towns.

So next morning, I got up. I did a three-hour quick devotional. Got on a train, went across the border, went back to Hong Kong, drove straight into a service, and started to do it all over again.

It's been amazing what God has done. And teaching this message, it doesn't matter if you're a missionary, if you're a Presbyterian, if you're Baptist, Pentecostal, Chinese, German, it doesn't matter what you are. The power of the gospel, it transcends, and it crosses all cultures and languages.

And as I taught them, I'm gonna teach you. You see, today, when we talk about Passover, if you went to a Jewish home, there wouldn't be a lamb at their house. There wouldn't be a high priest at the house.

There'd be nobody there to slaughter a lamb and take the blood with hyssop plants and put it on the doorpost of their homes. They don't do that anymore. Why? There's no temple.

You had to bring the lamb to the temple. So there's no temple, what do you do now? In today's times, the matzo bread is the most important. Karen, in that blue box in the back while I'm talking, can you bring me a matzo bread if it's in there? A piece of matzo has now become the symbol for Passover.

Have you seen this before, matzo? Do you guys know what I'm talking about? It's like, think of a Ritz cracker, just multiple times the size of a Ritz cracker. And this piece of matzo bread, it's flat, and it's got some patterns on it. And if you don't understand the meaning behind the patterns, you'll wonder why it's made in that way.

Thank you, honey. I wasn't planning on doing this, so, but I think it just makes sense. Thank you.

So this is a matzo bread. You guys in the front here, you can see it. I don't know how far back this goes, but you can see.

It's just, it's a flat piece of bread. You see that? You know, growing up in a Portuguese culture, and when we became Christians, whenever we did communion, we always had big Portuguese or Italian bread full of yeast, which is actually against the command of Passover. You're supposed to have bread without leaven.

No yeast, because leaven represents sin. And because it was a time of cleansing, God said, even the bread you eat can have no leaven. It can have no symbol for sin.

And then if you look closely at this bread, you'll see there's these dark spots all over them. And those dark spots are caused when the bread is burned, and they're burned on purpose. And those are called the bruising of the bread, okay? And I don't know if you can see here, if the light goes through, there's like little pinholes.

Can you guys see it here, pinholes? I'll put this at the back book table, okay? And you guys can look at it if you want after the service. There's pinholes, and these are called the piercings of the bread. And those piercings are in perfect stripes.

You see that? This way or this way. And those are called the stripes of the bread. So the bread that represents Passover is without yeast, has no sin, it's bruised, it's striped, and it's pierced.

Wow. Remember what we call the last supper? It wasn't a last supper. It wasn't like a, the last supper makes it sound like, you know, it was kind of a going away dinner.

He knew he was gonna die. He had us have one more meal together, and then I'm gonna go to the cross. It's like one last meal together.

No, it was a final Passover. And Jesus said, how long I have desired to eat this Passover with you. And imagine the Messiah, the one who was the lamb.

Remember what John said, behold, the lamb of God. He knew that he was the one that was to be sacrificed for the sins of the people. And on that last Passover, he took that bread, and he said, this bread is my body.

It's unleavened, it's gonna be bruised, it's gonna be striped, and it's gonna be pierced. And then he takes the bread and he breaks it, symbolizing what was gonna happen to him. And everything that we learned about the Passover, guys, it points us towards to Christ.

But in the Bible times, it wasn't matzo bread that was the official symbol. It was the lamb, and the lambs had to be perfect. You know, you didn't go to Walmart to the discounted section, look for the lambs that are on sale, you know, missing a leg, 75% off, that kind of thing.

You had to have a perfect lamb, no bruises. It had to have no broken bones, no imperfections, no diseases, no sicknesses, nothing could be wrong with this lamb. And so the rabbis, the rabbinic system came up with a method to authenticate the lamb so you would know that you were getting a truly perfect lamb to die on behalf of your sins.

Because if the lamb was spotted and was imperfect, it couldn't cover your sins. It was a waste of a sacrifice. The lamb had to be perfect.

Do you see where this is going, by the way? And so in Bethlehem, Bethlehem kind of became the central place for where you would raise the lambs for Passover. So they were born there, they were cared for there. And Bethlehem in Hebrew was made up of two words, Bet, Lechem.

Do you guys know what Bet is? House, like Bethel, Bet El, house of the Lord. Lechem is bread in Hebrew. So Bethlehem literally means the house of bread.

And was it a coincidence that Jesus, who said he was the bread of life, was it a coincidence that he was born in the house of bread? I think not. And there were certain fields in Bethlehem that were allocated for the Passover lambs to be born and protected. And if you remember on the

night of Jesus' birth, which wasn't December 25th, we learned that a couple nights ago, remember? Remember when the angels appeared, they came to shepherds who were over a certain field.

It is very likely that the angels came to the shepherds who were in charge of the Passover lambs. And the angel said, we have news for you. Right up the hill on the other side of that crescent, the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior has been born.

Could you imagine what it must have been like? I can't do it justice, no matter how many funny jokes I do or voices I try to mimic, I can't do it any justice. None of us can. But a host of angels appear and declare to the shepherds that the Messiah has been born.

And they said to the shepherds, we are here to help you, so we're gonna give you a sign so you will know who the Messiah is. And the shepherds said, that's awesome. That's what the Hebrew says, awesome.

No, it doesn't, I'm kidding. Some of you are gonna Google that, it's not. And they said, wow, that's amazing.

Thank you for your help. What's the clue, what's the hint? And they said, okay, are you ready? Write this down. So the shepherds pull out their smartphones, go.

And they said, here is the hint. When you get to the house, you will find this Messiah, this newborn baby, he'll be wrapped in a blanket. And the shepherds said, wow, that was completely useless, thank you.

What does the text say in Luke two? It says, you will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths. Now, as Westerners, when we think of the term swaddling cloth, moms, do you remember sometimes the baby would cry and you would take the baby and you would wrap it really tight and you would hold it next to your body, right? And you would rock it back and forth. You would kind of like swaddle the baby.

That's what we think of. But that's not what a swaddling cloth was or is still to this day in the Middle East. And I mean, you can see here in Luke two, 12.

And this will be the sign to you. You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in the manger. I did some investigating as to what a swaddling cloth was in the time of Jesus and how it's still used to this day.

Swaddling cloths were carried by men in Middle Eastern culture. And especially when you went on a long journey, you carried it with you because a swaddling cloth was actually a burial cloth. You only use it to wrap dead bodies in.

So Joseph, as a Jewish man with his Jewish wife coming down from Nazareth, who's pregnant, could very well die along the way. So he brought a swaddling cloth. God forbid something

happened to her.

So here he is, he's in this manger in the stable in Bethlehem. The babe is born, he doesn't know what to do, so he wraps it in his swaddling cloth. And you can see he was marked for death even at his birth.

Both by his earthly and his heavenly father. Come on. Did you get that? That was good.

Okay, next. If you missed it, it's on page 43 of my book, Understanding Jesus. Okay.

I wanna talk about something that happens just before the crucifixion. And we celebrate it in some traditions, in some churches. Do you guys still have Palm Sunday in your church? Yeah, some do, some don't.

I was raised as a Roman Catholic, and I used to love that about church. I used to love Palm Sundays. You know, wave branches, poke my brother in the eye, all that kind of.

But on that day that we commemorate as Palm Sunday, of course it wasn't Palm Sunday then, but the Bible records and says that when Jesus came from Bethany down the side of the Mount of Olives, and he came across the Kidron Valley, and he got to the Eastern Gate, when he got there, the text says all of Jerusalem was there. All of Jerusalem was there, and everybody happened to bring a palm branch and an extra jacket with them. That's what the Bible says.

At least that's what it implies. So I always ask the question, well, why was this crowd there? There's 360 days on the calendar. There's several gates into the city.

Why did everybody in the city wake up on that day and have the same vision? Doesn't that happen to you sometimes? You wake up and you said, you know what? I'm just gonna climb a palm tree. I don't know, I'm gonna grab a branch, just in case, I don't know, the Son of God shows up or something, I don't know. Do we do that? Is that what they did? Well, because he doesn't tell us, we don't understand why there was this massive crowd and why they all brought an extra jacket to throw on the floor to make a royal carpet for Jesus that day, and why were they waving palm branches and did a little bit of research? And I learned about something called the procession of the national Passover lamb.

And it was this. Four days before Passover, according to Exodus, the commands that God gives in the Torah, four days before Passover, you're supposed to select the lamb, and then you're supposed to take that lamb and inspect it for four days. And once you verify that it's spotless, then you have it killed on your behalf.

So in the time of Jesus, while the temple was standing, the high priest would go to which village? Remember? Why Bethlehem? That's where the lambs had to come from. So four days before Passover, the high priest would go to Bethlehem and he would find and select a perfect spotless lamb. Four days before Passover, then he would take that lamb and he would carry it and bring it back to Jerusalem and walk in through the Eastern gate to present the lamb to the

people for inspection.

Hmm. Is anybody getting this? So every year, four days before Passover, the priest would come with the lamb through the Eastern gate to be inspected before it was to die on behalf of the people. So everybody comes on that day.

It wasn't a random thing. They knew the lamb, what they call the lamb of God, the one who would die for us was gonna be carried in through that gate today. So they all went to the gate and the lamb came.

They saw the priest, he carried in the lamb. Oh, what a cute little lamb. And the priest brings it to the temple and he ties it.

And now for four days, it's gonna be inspected. And everybody's looking at this cute little lamb, but while they're looking, there's commotion after the smoke clears and all the dust settles and all the confetti from Jerusalem settled. There was no confetti.

You ever watched the New Year's Eve thing from New York? This is how you know you're getting old. You know, at midnight, when all the confetti falls on the floor, what do you say? Who's gonna clean that up? That's how you know you're getting old. So they clean up the confetti.

When the lamb comes in and it's all said and done, they look over. Hang on a second, there's something else coming in through the gate. What is that? Who is that? Jesus.

The one whom John declared the son of God, the lamb of God. Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And the day they expected the lamb of God to come in through the Eastern gate, that's the day Jesus comes in through the Eastern gate.

Come on. How are your brains? What? Who said 10 hour? I gotta stop telling that story. I won't go 10 hour, but we'll go a little bit longer.

I wasn't gonna teach this, but this is kind of a freebie because you guys are good tonight. Remember after he comes in through the Eastern gate and people begin to praise him and the teachers of the law who were there weren't happy with that? Just, hey, tell your disciples to stop it. Stop it, stop praising him.

And what did Jesus say? Said, I'm telling you, if they don't praise me, I'll cause these stones, right? To rise up and praise me. Now, how many people think that Jesus was referring to literal actual stones lying on the ground? Had you ever thought that growing up? Don't be embarrassed, that's fine. I thought that too.

We're all wrong, but that's okay. Me too. I was in a church once and they had these big stones on the platform and they had hallelujah, praise the Lord, Maranatha, all these worship words.

Based on that, that the rocks would cry out. That's where Christian rock music came from.

Anyways, that was good.

Come on. Thank you. Actually, that's how I became a Christian.

I became a Christian through a Christian rock band named Striper in 1987. Anyways, God can use all things, why not? Okay, boy, this is going really far from, all right. Bring it back.

So Jesus is standing there and he says, I'm telling you, if they don't, I'm gonna cause these rocks, these stones to cry out. What was he referring to? When you stand at the Eastern gates, all around you, everywhere you look around you is the Mount of Olives. And it is filled with cemeteries with tombstones.

One week later, Matthew 27, 52, I believe it is. It says that after the resurrection, the tombs of the saints were broke open. They were seen walking around Jerusalem, giving praise to God.

You're welcome. That's a free one. Guys, it's limitless.

The Passover parallels are limitless. Even with 10 hour, we would still need more time. God is so, God is so precise.

He's the same yesterday, today and forever. He's a God of order. He's not a God of chaos and confusion.

God with precision, he planned out salvation. And we see this as we look at the Passover over and over again. And people say to me, but Joe, we're not Jews.

So why would we celebrate Passover? We're not Israelites. We're not in the Old Testament. Am I telling anybody to celebrate Passover? All I'm doing is I'm saying that we as Christians can learn from Passover.

We can learn from these feasts. Not to celebrate them for salvation, but to learn from them and glean from them. Has anything I said so far about the Passover taken away from your faith in Christ as the Lamb of God? No, it adds, it deepens, it strengthens.

Well, this next slide, as I was preparing, I thought this would be a time of transition. Let me just take a few minutes to explain what's here on the screen. This is the Middle East, pretty much as it appears today.

And you can see in the center, you guys see here, there's Israel. Israel constitutes about 0.04% of all the land in the Middle East. Not a big place.

Not a stitch of, not a drop of oil in all of Israel's land. And all my Jewish friends say, yeah, great choice, God, thanks a lot. Little to the left, little to the right.

No, you have to put us right here. It's like you gave the borders no oil for you. And around Israel, we have Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, all of these

wonderful nations that love Israel.

No, but seriously, the Quran teaches that the Muslim's job is to drive the Jews into the sea. Can you see how easily that could be done? If all the Arab nations, these Muslim nations who hate Israel, if they all got together, they could drive Israel into the Mediterranean, right? Why hasn't that happened yet? It's not for lack of trying. 1948, 1967, 1973, 2002, 2008, 2012, 2014, over and over again, these nations around Israel are always trying to destroy here, but in the end, God has preserved Israel.

Why? Because they're his favorite people, chosen people. If God doesn't protect Israel, he's a liar. Do you hear that? If God does not protect Israel, he's a liar.

Because he said that he who watches over Israel would never slumber nor sleep. I can't trust him to protect real estate. Then can I trust him to protect my life? The fact that Israel exists is evidence that God keeps his promises.

Okay? People have been asking, what's going on in Israel? Why are they fighting in Gaza? And the news will say, well, Israel has been occupying Gaza. And so now the people who live there are ruled by a group called Hamas. Have you heard this term? Don't confuse it with hummus, which is delightful on PETA, very different.

Okay? This is Hamas, which are a terrorist organization. The UN recognizes this, EU recognizes it, Canada, the US, every stable nation in the world recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization. They are the legally democratically elected government that represent the people who live in Gaza.

The number one line on the charter of Hamas, why we exist, is to kill Jews. We exist to eradicate the Zionist entity. They won't even call it Israel.

These are the people who run Gaza. I'm not saying that all the people who live there are part of Hamas, that's not true. But the government that runs it is called Hamas.

And the news right now is saying that the Jews are occupying Gaza, that's why they're fighting to push them out. But I'm sorry, that's a total lie. In 2005, if you remember, Israel sent in their own army into Gaza and pulled every Jewish person out of Gaza.

With tears in their eyes, the IDF soldiers were taking people out of their homes. They left 3,000 greenhouses. Israel said, we'll come in and show you how to use the greenhouses.

Like when China gave Hong Kong independence, they turned Hong Kong into a blossoming, powerful economic society. Israel said, we'll help you do that. But instead of Hamas said, we're gonna burn and destroy every greenhouse.

We want nothing from you. What they did was they brought all the rocket launchers to the border closer to Israel and began firing. So to this day, there's not a single Jewish person that's

living in Gaza.

So to tell me or to tell the world that it's about land, it's completely untrue. So what is it about? It's hatred. Hatred that's being fed by a radicalized ideological view.

People say Israel are bombing schools. Have you heard that? They're bombing hospitals and mosques. When you hear about a mosque being bombed, what do you think of? Somebody in the mosque praying for peace in the Middle East.

But what the news, I don't know why, but what the news is not showing us guys is that when Israel bombed this mosque, they got footage of it from the air. And there was one explosion and there was all kinds of other little explosions proving that the mosque was empty, was being used as a weapon storage facility. So when the news say Israel bombed the mosque, yes, it's true, they bombed the mosque, but they don't think it was filled with rockets whose sole purpose was to kill innocent civilians.

Same with the schools. The school that was exploded two days ago was a UN school. They evacuated the school, they filled it with rockets.

And when they launched the rockets, the Iron Dome, the interception comes back to where the rocket was launched. And sometimes it's a school, but there's no kids in it. And even those who are killed, it's so, so tragic.

I have a video that I couldn't bear to show you today of an uncle who filmed on his iPhone, gave his 12 year old niece a machine gun, threw her into the streets where the IDF were and said, shoot the Jews, shoot the Jews, hoping that they would shoot back and she started firing the guns. And this is happening guys. And it's a horrible, horrible thing that's happening, but it's happening.

I don't have my phone up here, Karen. I'll just kind of, it's okay, I'll paraphrase the story of things that are going on in the Middle East. I'm gonna say it one more time.

Israel are not God's favorite people, but they are his chosen, chosen people. And a story came out of the IDF, the Israeli Defense Forces, either today or yesterday, about a guy who operates the Iron Dome. Do you guys know what this is? When Hamas, these terrorists launch rockets into Israel, Israel have developed this technology that can analyze where the rocket is coming from and accounting for wind, atmosphere and speed can launch it within four seconds and blow it up in the air before it hits Israel.

So people will say, how come no Israel? People aren't dying in Israel. This is one of the reasons. But I think it was yesterday.

Some larger rockets were coming in and Israel were firing back at the rockets to detonate it in the air and it missed once. It missed twice. And in four seconds, the missile was gonna hit what could have been the Pentagon of Israel.

That's what they were aiming for. And this soldier who's not a Christian, who's not even a religious says, out of nowhere, a strong wind came and knocked the missile into the sea. He said, I'm not a believer, but I saw the hand of God protect Israel today.

There's no winner in war. There's no winner in war. Jesus died for both sides, amen.

And what I wanna leave you with on this note before we continue with the Passover is we need to pray. Not for this side to win or for that side to win, but what's gonna bring peace to the Middle East? The Prince of Peace, Yeshua, Jesus. Because when he comes into the hearts of people, he changes people.

We support churches in Israel that are made up of Jews and Arabs. And the craziest thing to see is an Arab man, a Palestinian wearing a prayer shawl with his Jewish buddy beside him and they're blessing each other's family. See, that's what Jesus does.

That's what love does, amen. That's what we need to pray for. Not for a winner or a loser, but to pray that souls would be saved.

Jesus truly is the only answer to peace in the Middle East. Amen? All right. That's it, no more politics, okay? But does that help clarify why there seems to be a bias against Israel when certain sites are hit? It's because of what those sites contain, okay guys? So let's get back to this part here.

Talking about Israel in the ancient times, you can see what a small, tiny little country it is. And even then, neighboring countries were always at war. Whether it was an Arab country against an Arab country or an Arab country coming to attack Israel, there was war.

There was this guy in the Bible, I forget his name, who said there will be wars and rumors of wars. There always has been wars. And even in the dark ages, in the Middle Eastern times, in the Bible times, there were rules for war.

Like today, we have the Geneva Convention. You cannot fire weapons from within a populated area. That's against the law.

You can be charged with war crimes. This is happening in the Middle East. You cannot use children and women as a shield.

So you can't line up women and children and then start firing at your enemy knowing he won't shoot back because you have women and children. This is happening in the Middle East. So rules have to be put into place.

And they were put in place even in the Bible times. So what if you were a Jewish person living in Jerusalem? You went out and you got some fresh chickpeas. You were gonna make hummus for breakfast.

I joke a lot, but hummus, they eat it on everything. It's the mayonnaise of Israel. So you come

out with your fresh chickpeas.

You have your fresh breads for the day. You come out of the market, you look up on a hill and there's an army. Right away, you wanna know one of two things.

Is this army here to attack us, Israel? Or are they passing through to refuel, to rest and then continue on their journey? Now you wanna know, right? Really fast. How would you know? There was no public service announcements. There was no social media.

The king wouldn't tweet, hey, come and attack your country, get ready. You come out, oh Lord, look, there's a massive army on the hill. How would you warn the people about your intentions? If I was a king from Egypt and I wanted, let's say, to attack a country in the North, I wouldn't go all the way around.

It's too much time spent. It's a waste of making my men go all the way around. So I would just cut through Israel.

It's the shortest way to get to the nation I wanna attack. So if I was simply passing through, if I was on a mission of peace and it was just there to refuel, what I would do is as the king, I would come ahead of my army riding on a donkey or a mule and that would be a sign to the people, I'm not here to attack, I'm just passing through. I'm here on a mission of peace.

Now, what animal did Jesus ride into Jerusalem? Why? He didn't come this time to judge or to make war, did he? He came on the mission of peace to reconcile man and God. So even the method of transportation was important. Now, if you come with me to Israel, and I hope some of you, I'm gonna wrap up in a few minutes.

I'm gonna take you to the Mount of Olives where you can have an authentic camel ride in a parking lot. Yes, you heard me. And you'll ask Ali, Ali, how much is it to ride the camel? And he's had the same line for 100 years.

It's free to get on, \$5 to get off. It's a great line. So while he's doing that, this other Muslim man comes, he's got the whole Muslim Middle Eastern dress on and he's got like two teeth and they're both brown, you know? And he has this donkey that looks like it should have been put down 30 years ago.

And I think the donkey is from the time of Jesus. And he drags the poor donkey up and down the Mount of Olives and he says, who would like a ride on the Jesus taxi? The Jesus taxi. Ride the same donkey like Jesus.

Everybody knows that Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. So if you were there on a mission of peace, that's what you would do. And Zachariah picks up on this.

And he says, rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout, daughter of Jerusalem. See your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation.

The donkey will literally be carrying salvation. The name of Jesus in Hebrew is Yeshua, which means salvation. So in our language today, the donkey will literally be carrying Jesus into Jerusalem.

Come on. Now the mood's gonna change. What if I was a King who was coming to attack you? They wanted to make war against you.

What was the symbol? That's right. The King would ride out ahead of his army, riding a horse. And John talks about the second appearing of the Messiah.

He says, I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true. With justice, he judges and makes war. Let me give you a closing thought.

As I leave family camp 2014 here at Stainer, I would be amiss if I didn't use this. People were asking all weekend, what in the world is that thing? What is it? A shofar. How am I doing? Shofar's so good.

I'm sorry, George. It wasn't funny last weekend either. I'm sorry.

I'm just enjoying this. This is good. This has never happened before.

So what's the shofar all about? Why do I carry this with me? Why do I travel with it? What's the point of it? It's a beautiful, a beautiful piece. Here, one of you guys, you wanna hold this for a second? Okay. Feel that.

Is that solid? Okay, don't poke his eye out. Are you guys related? No? You're friends? Okay, now I want you to feel that. Is that solid? Like, right, that's solid, right? Okay.

This grows out of the side here. You wanna be my volunteer for a second? You have no choice. Look at these people.

You see, look at them. I'm not gonna hit you, don't worry. This grows out of the side of the animal's head.

So imagine one antler on each side. This grows out of a mountain goat called an ibex. Thanks, bud.

And an ibex can be seen in the Judean wilderness, still to this day. They're all over Israel. When you go out to the Dead Sea, you drive by En Gedi, where David hid from Saul.

You see the ibex running around. Everybody's taking, they're magnificent creatures. And when they die, they fall to the ground.

In order to be kosher, you can't kill the animal and take it, it has to die of natural causes. And then you take the horn, you clean it, you sanitize it, and then you shine up one side, and then

they put it in fire and they twist it in a certain way to get better airflow, so they can get a better sound out of it. To the Jewish people, this actually represents the voice of God.

If you remember when Israel got the 10 Commandments, the Bible says they never heard God's voice, but they heard a trumpet blast, a shofar from heaven. So to Israel, whenever they hear the shofar blast, it represents the voice of Almighty God. So you don't blow it for fun, you don't blow it just for the sake of, no, no, only on the holy days when God commands you to blow the shofar.

So if this represents the voice of God, I want you to consider this as we close this evening, okay? Jesus is the Son of God, correct? And he's hanging on the cross. He was actually nailed to a tree, not a perfect cross like we see in the movies, it was a tree. And he was made to carry his own beam to the tree, affixed to the tree, which gives the appearance of what we have as a cross today.

And as he's crucified, hanging on that tree, the gospel writers tell us in unity that it was at three o'clock in the afternoon that Jesus died. Have you heard this before, right? Why did they record it was three o'clock? Was it a special number? Was it a magical number? Like, what's with three o'clock? Does it matter when he died? If he died at two o'clock, would he not atone for our sins? If he died at four o'clock, would it? Like, why three o'clock? I wondered that. That's how I learned.

I asked questions. I asked the rabbi, hey, what's with three o'clock on Passover? And he looked at me like, you didn't know? I'm like, no, I'm a Gentile. I don't know about Jewish Passover customs, excuse me.

He goes, oh, at three o'clock, that's when Passover is done. I said, what do you mean? He goes, well, three o'clock is called the twilight hour. It's the perfect time when one day is ending and the next day is beginning.

So three o'clock is the official time when our holy days start and end. I said, oh, okay, that's kind of cool. Still doesn't explain why the Bible records he died at three o'clock.

Further to that, he said, the assistant of the priest would take the steps up to the southeastern part of the temple. And at three o'clock, the assistant of the priest would sound the shofar. And when you heard the voice, when you heard the shofar at three o'clock, it meant that it was finished, that it had come to a close.

At three o'clock, you close the gates of the temple. No more lambs could be brought in for slaughter. No more blood could be shed.

At three o'clock, it was finished. At three o'clock, Jesus, the son of God, is hanging, hanging, hanging on that tree. And at three o'clock, he hears the voice of Abba, of daddy, and what does daddy say? Son, it's finished.

And at three o'clock, Jesus breathed his last, and he says, it's finished, it's accomplished. Can you imagine at three o'clock, in the lull of the afternoon as the holiday or the holy day is coming to a close, the shofar would ring through the city. Now, I'm gonna do my best to do the same series or the same sequence of blasts that the priestly assistant would do.

Now, when you blow it right, it'll put chills up and down your spine. But if you do it wrong, it sounds like a moose that's waiting to be put out of its misery. And I'm sorry to say, I've done both.

I was in front of 10,000 people one time in Edmonton, and I did the dead moose thing. Oh, you remember that, honey? Yeah. So let me try to imitate what they heard at three o'clock.

I'm so glad that worked. Went away to end the service if it didn't. But guys, I wanna leave you with this, it's finished.

Not just our time together, but the work on the cross, it's finished. Everything necessary for our salvation to secure a place in eternity with God, it's finished. The only thing left to do is to take the blood.

Like my Chinese friends taught me, remember? One last time, can we do that together? Let's apply the blood to the side, the top, and the sides. Saying, God, we take what you've done for us, and we apply it to our own hearts today. And if we've done that, it's not goodbye today.

I may not see you at this camp, but I'll see you in heaven. Amen? Amen. George, please come.