

The Lord's Supper

Mark 14:12-26

Meals are important. More than just a means of nourishing a person, meals serve as a means for families to draw closer, talk, and as a means of getting together. Meals have been used to bring about peace between adversaries, nations, and to secure better relations. The preparation can be just as important as the meal itself. What food is served, why it is served, the way and how it is served can carry with each task very important implications. The Passover is such a meal.

The Passover meal is celebrated to commemorate the passing over of the angel of death during the time of Moses and the exodus of the Israelite slaves from their captivity in Egypt. God promised to spare the life of the firstborn of any household that had the blood of a lamb painted over the doorframe of the house. Every Hebrew was commanded by God to remember this incident each year with prayers, a sacrifice, and a meal. The meal was and still is one of the highlights of the celebration. Here in Mark's gospel we find Jesus and his disciples sharing the Passover meal. It would be the final Passover they would share together and it would carry with it tremendous meaning.

The meal Jesus Christ eats on the eve of His death is a meal that was designed by God the Father to exalt God the Son. It is a meal that preaches the Gospel. It is a meal that displays the grace of God. It is a meal that signifies the creation of a new spiritual covenant between God and repentant sinners.

Today in Mark 14 I want us to see The Preparations For The Supper; The Problem At The Supper and The Picture In The Supper. Follow along in your Bibles as I read Mark 14:12-26:

- 12 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"**
- 13 And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him.**
- 14 Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" '**
- 15 Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us."**
- 16 So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.**
- 17 In the evening He came with the twelve.**
- 18 Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me."**
- 19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, "Is it I?" And another said, "Is it I?"**
- 20 He answered and said to them, "It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish.**
- 21 The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born."**
- 22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."**

- 23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.
- 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.
- 25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."
- 26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Before we share the Lord's Supper together, let us look into Mark's account, and prepare our hearts for this important memorial meal.

I. THE PREPARATIONS v. 12-16

A. The Purpose For The Preparations v. 12 –

We will not fully understand the meaning of the Lord's Supper if we do not understand the event it was associated with. V.12 says, "**Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"**"

The Passover was the main feast of the Jewish religious year. It was to begin on the fourteenth day of the first month of the Jewish calendar, Ex. 12:6; Lev. 23:5. The first month of their calendar roughly corresponds with April on our modern calendar.

The Passover was a feast designed to commemorate the night God "passed over" Israel when the death angel destroyed the first born of Egypt during the last of ten plagues God sent to judge Egypt. The Passover was also called "The Feast Of Unleavened Bread", because no yeast or leavened bread was to be used or even kept in the house during the days of the feast.

The regulations for the Passover are found in Exodus 12. According to verses 1-11 of that passage, every family in Israel was to take the following steps.

On the 10th day of the month, four days before the meal, they were to choose a lamb,

On the fourteenth day of the month they were to kill the lamb on the evening of the Passover, Ex. 12:3-6.

They were to take the blood of the lamb and put some on the door posts of their homes, Ex. 12:7.

They were to roast the lamb over a fire and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread, Ex. 12:8.

They were to eat this meal dressed for a journey, with their shoes on, their walking sticks in their hands and they were to eat it in as though they were in a hurry, Ex. 12:11.

This was the meal the disciples were asking about. It will be worth our time to stop here and talk about the Passover meal, because it is a wonderful picture of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were to select the lamb on the "tenth day of the month", Ex. 12:3, and they were to keep the lamb until the "fourteenth day" of the month, Ex. 12:6. There would be an attachment that would develop between the family and the little

lamb. This was intentional, God wanted them to see the high cost of sin. He wanted them to understand that salvation is an intensely personal business.

The lamb was to be without “blemish”, Ex. 12:5. This is a picture of perfection and purity. This lamb speaks of the Lord Jesus because He is also without blemish. He is the sinless Savior, 1 Pet. 2:22; 2 Cor. 5:21.

The lamb was to be slain and its blood applied to the door posts of the house, Ex. 12:7; 22-23. The family was to gather inside the house and eat the meal. When the death angel passed through the land to kill all the first born children, those who were in homes with blood on the doors would be safe.

Again, this is a picture of Jesus Christ. The only shelter anyone has against the wrath of Almighty God is the blood of Christ! If you ever hope to be saved, you must come to Jesus Christ by faith and when you do, His blood washes every sin away, Rev. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19. His blood is the only shield against the wrath and judgment of God, Rom. 5:9.

The lamb was to be roasted with fire, Ex. 12:8. Fire is a picture of judgment and it reminded Israel that the judgment of God was being poured out on sinful Egypt and the only thing that prevented Israel from being judged along with Egypt was the blood of the lamb who had died to save them. The lamb had been judged in their place.

This also pictures the Lord Jesus, Who was judged in our place, 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 3:18.

The lamb had to be eaten, all of it, Ex. 12:8. It did no good to simply select a lamb. It did no good to just kill the lamb. The lamb had to be appropriated by the individual.

The same is true with Jesus. His death on the cross is meaningless for you until you receive Him by faith. His death cannot save you until you turn to Him and receive Him into your heart and life.

There is much more that could be said about the Passover and the lamb. These few thoughts simply remind us that God gave Jesus as the perfect sacrifice to save us from the bondage of sin.

B. The Plan For The Preparations v. 13-16 – In response to their question, Jesus sent “**two of His disciples**” to make the arrangements for the Passover. From Luke 22:8, we know that these two disciples were “Peter and John”.

Jesus tells them to enter the city and look for a man carrying “**a pitcher of water**”. They were to follow this man and he would lead them to a house where they would find everything ready for the meal.

On the surface, these instructions seem a little vague. But, as always, Jesus had His reasons for why He did what He did.

It would not have been terribly difficult for the disciples to spot this man because men in that society did not carry water pitchers; that was women’s work! Jesus, however, knew that a certain servant would be carrying water from a certain well to a certain house. He also knew that the disciples would find the perfect room when they arrived at that house.

Since Jesus knows everything, He could have told them the color of the house, and He could have given them an exact street address. He hid some of the

details because He knew what Judas was planning to do, v. 10-11. He did not want the Passover interrupted by the betrayal plans of Judas Iscariot.

If Judas has known the exact location of the meal, he could have given that location to the Jews. It is possible that they would have tried to take the Lord Jesus then. Jesus wanted this meal to be a special time for His men. He wanted to use the Passover to teach them some valuable truths that still speak to us today. So, Jesus veiled His instructions to the location where the meal would be eaten.

So, Peter and John went into the city and found the house. They would have then gone to the Temple, purchased an approved lamb from the vendors there and had it sacrificed according to the law.

I. The Preparations For The Supper

II. THE PROBLEM v. 17-21

Jesus and His men arrive to celebrate the Passover. Then Mark skips right to the middle of the meal. When Jesus makes:

A. An Announcement v. 18 – After Jesus washes the feet of His disciples, He drops a bombshell on the group. He announces that one of their number is going to betray Him into the hands of the Jews. We know the identity of the traitor, his name is Judas Iscariot.

B. Their Astonishment v. 19 – When the disciples hear that one of their group is a traitor, they are filled with astonishment. They begin to look at Jesus and say, “Is it I?” Even Judas, who knows exactly what he was about to do, looked at Jesus and said, “Master, is it I?” (Matt. 26:25)

Jesus alludes to Psalm 49 by saying, **“It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish.”**

Notice the Lord’s words in verse 21, **“The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.”**

“The prophets wrote about this a long time ago,” Jesus assures them. In other words, this is what God had planned all along, but that doesn’t leave the betrayer off the hook. He is still responsible for his own actions. You see, God’s sovereignty never negates human responsibility. None of us can ever blame God for our wrong choices, but God includes even those as part of His bigger plan.

God is not surprised by the evil choices people make. He just uses them to accomplish His good and perfect will. Judas would have been better off to have never have lived, than to have lived and died lost! The same is true of every person who ever draws breath in this world.

I. The Preparations For The Supper

II. The Problem At The Supper

III. THE PICTURE v. 22-26

In this passage, Jesus teaches His men, and the rest of us, what the new covenant is all about. He wants us to learn the truth that salvation does not come through religious rituals and keeping the Law; salvation comes by receiving what Jesus did for us by faith, Eph. 2:8-9.

Let's join Jesus as he uses the Passover to teach us about His salvation. Let's learn from Him as He institutes the Lord's Supper.

A. An Example v. 22-24 – There are times when words just aren't enough. Here, at this Passover Feast, Jesus combines words and symbols to communicate His truth to His disciples. The pictures Jesus painted that day are powerful and they continue to speak to us today. Let's look at these symbols together.

As the meal progressed, the head of the family, in this case Jesus, would explain what each portion of the feast represented.

1. The Bread, Which Represents His Body v. 22 – When it came time to serve the bread, Jesus broke it and passed it around to the men at the table. On this day, Jesus added a new meaning to the bread when He said, "Take, eat: this is My body." Jesus equated the unleavened bread with His human body.

Thirty-three years earlier, in a town called Bethlehem, or The House Of Bread, the Bread of Life took on a human body. Everything Jesus did, He did in that body. He lived there. He preached there. He worked His miracles there. Eventually, He would die in that body. He would be buried in that body. He would rise again in that body. He would ascend to Heaven in that body. He will come again in that body. And, when we see Him in Heaven, we will see Him in that body!

Jesus used the bread that night to teach His disciples what He was about to do. He was on His way to the cross to lay down His life for sin. He was on His way to Calvary where His body would be "broken" for you, Isa. 53:4-6.

Jesus wanted His men, and the rest of us to know, that His broken body was more important than a piece of unleavened bread. He wanted us to understand that the only way to have salvation was to become a part of Him by receiving what He did on the cross by faith.

That is why He said, "Take, eat..." We must receive what He did for us, and we must internalize what He did for us on the cross. This great truth is what we commemorate every time we partake in the Lord's Supper. It is a truth worth remembering!

2. The Cup, Which Represents His Blood v. 23-24 – When the time came to drink the third cup of wine, Jesus passed it around to His men at the table.

On that day, Jesus added a new meaning to the drinking of the wine. He said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." Jesus equated the wine in the cup to His Own blood which was about to be shed on the cross.

The wine in the cup was produced through violence. Grapes were picked and crushed under foot to extract their juice.

Jesus was about to be crushed by the full weight of religious Israel and mighty Rome. They would combine forces to see Him dead. More importantly, Jesus was about to be crushed by His Own Father.

When Jesus was on the cross, He literally became sin, 2 Cor. 5:21. As such, He was judged by God Almighty. The full force of the awesome wrath of God was poured out onto the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is what we commemorate every time we take the cup in Communion. That cup reminds us that Jesus took our place on the cross. It reminds us that we

have been made right with God through His blood. It reminds us that our sins have been washed away and we are clean in the eyes of the Lord. It reminds us of His sacrifice for us and it fills the redeemed heart with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

The third cup of wine in the Passover feast was called “the cup of blessing.” Paul picked up on this theme in 1 Cor. 10:16, when he said, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”

Today, when the bread and the cup come your way, if you are saved and in fellowship with the Lord, take the bread and the cup with joy. Remember what the Lord Jesus did for you when He came into this world to die for your sins on the cross. Let the Lord’s supper be a time of profound worship as you meditate on His love for sinners like as us!

B. An Expectation v. 25— Jesus tells His men that He will not drink “the cup of blessing” until He does so in His future Kingdom. At this moment, Jesus is looking down the corridors of time to a day when He will return to this world and establish His kingdom. He is looking to a time when He will put down all His enemies. He is looking to a time when He will rule the world with righteousness.

Jesus went to the cross with the expectation that He would rise again, go back to Heaven and return to the earth in glory and power to rule and reign. That was His expectation, and that is exactly what will happen one day, Rev. 19:11-16.

C. An Exodus v. 26 – When they finished the meal, Jesus and His men sang the final Hallel Psalms and left the upper room. They finished the meal and headed out.

Even though Jesus knew that He was headed for a trap, He went anyway. Even though He knew that Judas would bring soldier to arrest Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that Israel would reject Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that the people would reject Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that Rome would condemn Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that the soldier would beat Him, He went anyway. Even though He knew that He would be nailed to a cross in shame, He went anyway. Even though He knew about the pain He would suffer, He went anyway.

Why would a man do that? He did it because it was that Father’s plan. He did it because it was the only hope we had. He did because He loved you! He did it because He loved me! He did it because He cares! I, for one, am thankful that He did it!

Conc: I hope you will never look at the Lord’s Supper the same way again. I hope you will be thankful, grateful and filled with love for the Redeemer Who paid such a high price for your redemption. It might just be that you would like to praise Him today. It might just be that you would like to get around these altars and worship Him for all he has done for you!

It might just be that someone here has never been saved. Today, the Lord has spoken to your heart. He has shown you that you are a sinner. He is calling you to come to Him. If that is your condition, please come to Jesus Christ today and trust Him to save your soul.

I thank the Lord for His “unspeakable gift”. Let’s honor Him and give Him the worship, the love and the praise He deserves!