

Mark 14:22-26 “Communion”

Jesus wanted His last Passover meal to go exactly the way He planned it. Verse 16 of chapter 14 says, “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.”

Why all this care? He didn't want Judas to interrupt this last Passover. It would be the **final meal** Christ would eat on this earth. He wanted to control every aspect of this last Passover meal.

JESUS KNEW JUDAS WOULD BETRAY HIM AND YET HE OFFERED LOVE AND FORGIVENESS TO THE VERY END. Hughes points out, “What an act of love! In the culture of the day, to take a morsel from the table, dip it in the common dish, and offer it to another was a gesture of friendship. For example, when Boaz invited Ruth to fellowship with him, he said, “Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar” (Ruth 2:14). Jesus was reaching out to Judas. Quietly, intimately, he was saying in effect, “Here is my friendship and forgiveness. All you have to do is take it, my old friend. Will you?”

If we miss His love towards Judas - **REJECTED LOVE, TO BE SURE** - if we miss that love, we miss the whole story. Jesus will offer love and forgiveness to the very end. **What a tragedy when we wait or never receive it.**

Tragic, the clock had struck midnight in Judas' soul!

Did Jesus fall to the fate and will of man? **Not a chance!** 21 The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him.

No one took His life... **He gave it!** According to the will and plan of God. From the moment Adam fell in the garden, God had a plan of redemption.

He is a MASTER who brings his MASTERY to our dark time when we see only doom around us

OOPS is not in God's vocabulary! Where is God in relation to your life? Fate will never determine the course of your life. If you follow him, you will never be crushed in the gears of history, though all of Hell comes against you. PRAY

The best part of a book is always the pictures... In God's book, the Bible He sure does paint a lot of pictures.

Parables: Pictures... earthly stories with heavenly meaning. Oh now I get it. Ah haa moments.

Baptism... going under the water... buried in the water. Like Jesus was buried in the grave. **DYING TO SIN.** Coming out of the water... rising from death to new life. Resurrection from death. Ah haa, I get it!

In Jeremiah 27 we read how Jeremiah made a yoke and wore it to prophesy the Babylonian Captivity.

In 1 Kings we read how The prophet Ahijah tore his robe into twelve pieces, and gave ten pieces to Jeroboam to indicate to him that God was going to tear ten tribes from Solomon's kingdom and give them to him, thus forming the Northern Kingdom God painting pictures... using symbols to bring to life heavenly meanings... In our well known text today God brought to life the meaning behind all the elements of the Passover meal

Turn with me now to Mark chapter 14 verse 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.

As the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world, Jesus will give fresh understanding to the Passover meal.

Everything that will happen in this final Passover meal will have symbolic meaning.

*** The bitter herbs recalled their bitter slavery.**

*** The stewed fruit, by its color and consistency, recalled the misery of making bricks for Pharaoh.**

*** The roasted lamb brought to their remembrance the lamb's blood applied to the doorposts, their eating of the lamb within the house, and the "angel of death" passing over them as it destroyed the firstborn of Egypt.**

We do not have record of the words of Jesus' explanation, but it must have gone far beyond any ever given before this time.

Tonight Jesus would be the head of this family and as such He now sat erect from his reclining position, took a piece of the unleavened bread, and pronounced his blessing:

"This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let everyone who hungers come and eat; let everyone who is needy come and eat the Passover meal." "Praised be Thou, O Lord, Sovereign of the World, who causes bread to come forth from the earth," to which the apostles responded, "Amen." Jesus then broke the bread, which was then distributed in silence from hand to hand around the table. During this silence Jesus shattered the Passover custom with the radical words recorded in verse 22 of our text: **"Take, eat; this is My body."**

When the meal was complete, Jesus rose again from his reclining position and repeated the traditional charge:

"Speak praises to our God, to whom belongs what we have eaten." The disciples responded, "Praise be to God for our food we have eaten." Then with his right hand

he took the third cup of red wine, and gazing upon the cup gave thanks: “May the all-merciful One make us worthy of the days of the Messiah and the life of the world to come. He brings salvation of his king. He shows covenant-faithfulness to His anointed, to David and his seed forever. He makes peace in His heavenly places. May He secure peace for us and for all Israel. **And they respond, ‘Amen.’**”

Again in silence Jesus passed the common cup with the words found in verse 24 **And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.**

THE RICH SYMBOLISM BEHIND THE BREAD.

To begin with, Jesus was not saying that the bread was **literally** his body, and thereby teaching the Roman Catholic Church’s doctrine of Transubstantiation. In a word, bread referred to the life of Christ. In the Incarnation at Bethlehem, (Bethlehem meaning House of Bread) the Bread of Life, took on a human flesh. **Prophetically fulfilled**

As Hughes points out. **“He demonstrated his divine life to all the world by living a sinless life in that body.** He bore our sins on the Cross while in that human body. He triumphed from the grave by bringing that **body** back to life, and he now lives in that glorified **body** at the right hand of the Father where he prays for us. As members of his **Body** we share that life.”

Thus, through the bread we see Jesus’ **Incarnation, death,** and **RESURRECTION.** Our partaking of the bread symbolized our real participation in his life! If we are believers, we all partake of the life (the body) of Christ. This is what the bread means to us.

The bread also means that we participate in each other’s lives. WE are the “body of Christ” participating in the “body of Christ”. Communion promotes a deep understanding of our family... as ONE, unified as the “body of Christ”

THE RICH SYMBOLISM BEHIND THE CUP.

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" .

The new agreement that God makes with men by faith, and not by works; by believing, and not by performance.

Isaiah 53:12, which speaks of our Messiah as one who **"POURED OUT HIS LIFE UNTO DEATH."**

As one commentator notes... This described a violent death. Shed for "Many" referred to those who would benefit from his atoning death. His blood was the blood of the new covenant (1 Corinthians 11:25... *In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*)

In Exodus Chapter 24 verses 6-8 we read how The old covenant of the Law at Sinai was solemnized by **THE SHEDDING OF SACRIFICIAL BLOOD**. (*And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient." ⁸ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."*)

No mere man could ever institute a **new covenant** between God and man, but Jesus is the God-man. He has the authority to establish a **new covenant**, sealed with blood, even as the old covenant was sealed with blood (Exodus 24:8).

WHAT IS THE NEW COVENANT ALL ABOUT?

It is all about an inner transformation that cleanses us from all sin: *For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more (Jeremiah 31:34).*

This transformation puts God's Word and will in us: *I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33).*

This covenant is all about a new, close, relationship with God: *I will be their God, and they shall be My people (Jeremiah 31:33).*

With the bones of the Passover on the table and the aroma of sacrifice in the air,

Jesus' words confirmed the prophetic declaration that he was "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Jesus shed his blood for our sins!

As we take the cup we will benefit most by saying in our hearts, **"YES, I REALLY AM FORGIVEN"** and resting in that glorious truth!

WHAT CAN WASH AWAY MY SINS? NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS!

Through the divinely instituted parable of the Lord's Table we proclaim the following:

Our sin - that apart from the redemptive blood of Christ we are eternally separated from God and lost.

Our Faith - that we believe in the death, resurrection, exaltation and bodily return of Christ.

Our dependence - that without him we cannot live and **dare not die**.

Our hope - that Jesus' words in verse 25 of our text are certainly true:

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." This expresses Jesus' eager anticipation of the Messianic Banquet when the Passover fellowship with his children will be renewed in the Kingdom of God.

Ray Stedmen makes an acute observation: Now we

can understand why Mark has put this account alongside the story of Mary of Bethany. For here our Lord is showing these disciples that he was doing to them what Mary had done to him. She brought a beautiful alabaster flask, and she broke it. He said, "My body is that flask, and I am going to be broken for you." She poured out of the flask all the ointment that was in it, so that the fragrance of it filled

the room, as it has filled the earth in the centuries since. And Jesus said, "I will pour out of the flask of my body [what Peter calls 'the precious blood'], all of it, for you, that the fragrance of it may fill your life, and fill the whole earth."

This is love's extravagance. When you and I partake of the table of the Lord together, Jesus is saying, "Look, it is I who break the flask of my own body, to pour out upon you all the precious ointment, so that you may understand that it is no longer law which governs your life; ***IT IS LOVE.***"