



**“Feasting at the Lord’s Table”**

Matthew 26:17–30

*The Crucifixion of the King*

**Introduction:**

Communion...The Eucharist...The Last Supper...The Love Feast...Koinonia...The Passover Seder...The Lord’s Table...” The Center of Church Life”...etc.

**I. The Timing of the Feast**

Matthew 26:17 – “Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked, ‘Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?’”

Luke 22:1 – “Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching...”

Luke 22:7 – “Then came the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.”

Matthew 26:2 – “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion.”

**II. The Location of the Feast**

Matthew 26:18 – “And He said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.’”

**III. The Significance of the Feast**

Matthew 26:18 – “And [Jesus] said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is near; I am to keep the Passover...’”

**1. “My time is near...” (Matthew 26:18)**

**2. “I am to keep the Passover...” (Matthew 26:18)**

Luke 22:15 – “And [Jesus] said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer...”

Some of the Jewish Holidays

- Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement • The Feast of Unleavened Bread
- The Feast of Pentecost • The Feast of Passover • 1 Corinthians 5:7 – “Christ is our Passover...”

**IV. The Participants in the Feast**

Matthew 26:19–20 – “The disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples.”

**A. The Names of the Disciples (cf. Luke 6:13–16)**

**B. The Seating Order at the Table**

The apostle John, the youngest, sat on Jesus’ right side—closest to Jesus’ heart. Judas Iscariot was seated at Jesus’ left side, the seat of honor, the seat of an intimate friend. That means Jesus was leaning toward Judas’ heart.

Luke 22:21 – “But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table.”

**V. The Betrayers at the Feast**

Matthew 26:21 – “As they were eating, He said, ‘Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me.’”

Matthew 26:22 – “Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’” (cf. Luke 22:23)

Matthew 26:23 – “And [Jesus] answered, ‘He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me.’” (cf. John 13:26)

Matthew 26:24 – “The Son of Man is to go, 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 not been born.”

Matthew 26:25 – “And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, ‘Surely it is not I, Rabbi?’”

Matthew 26:25 – “You have said it yourself.”

Matthew 26:14–16 – “Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?’ And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus.”

How did this happen? (Luke 22:1–3). What happened to Judas? (John 13:27–30)

## VI. The Details of the Feast

Matthew 26:26–29 – “While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.’”

(cf. Luke 22:15–16)

The Passover Meal – Hebrew: *Seder* = “fixed order.” The gospels only present portions of the Passover Meal. The following is a possible order of the Passover Meal Jesus and His disciples experienced:

- Pronouncing a blessing (*kiddush*) and partaking of First Cup: The Cup of Sanctification.
- Washing of Hands (Possibly the point when Jesus washed His disciples feet!)
- Dipping vegetable in salt water
- Presenting of unleavened, pierced, and striped bread (*matzah*)
- Placing *matzah* in all three compartments of a special napkin.
- Asking of questions (*ma nishtana*) by youngest.
- Pronouncing blessing (*kiddush*) and partaking of Second Cup: The Cup of Deliverance
- Washing a second time.
- Breaking and hiding of middle *matzah*
- Eating bitter herbs (e.g., horseradish) (*maror*). (Later traditions have them serving *charoset*—a mixture of fruit and nuts, recalling the mortar with which the Jews in bondage made Pharaoh’s buildings.)
- Partaking of a full meal of Passover lamb, vegetables, etc.
- Finding the *afikomen* (the hidden *matzah*) which was in the second tier of the napkin.
- Pronouncing blessing and partaking of the broken bread (*matzah*—the *afikomen*.)

Matthew 26:26 – “While they were eating, Jesus took some bread (the *afikomen*), and after a blessing, He broke it (i.e. a second time) and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

- Pronouncing blessing (*kiddush*) and partaking of third cup: The Cup of Redemption: “I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm...” (Exodus 6:8)

Matthew 26:27–28 – “And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.’” (cf. Mark 14:24)

Note: Many New Testament scholars think Jesus stopped the Seder at this point! If they had been following the traditional seder, they were supposed to bless and drink the fourth cup: The Cup of Praise, sometimes called the Cup of Expectation, or the Elijah Cup, reminding them of God's promises: "I will take you as my people" and "I will send One like Elijah before Messiah comes." (e.g. John the Baptist). At this point in the Passover Meal Jesus breaks tradition and declares:

Matthew 26:29 – "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." (cf. Luke 22:15–16)

## **VII. The End of the Feast**

Matthew 26:30 – "After singing a hymn..." (cf. Psalm 118:22–29)

## **VIII. The Aftermath to the Feast**

Matthew 26:30 – "After singing a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives."

### **Conclusion:**

#### **1. We are to come to the Lord's Table often.**

1 Corinthians 11:26 – "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

#### **2. We are to come to the Lord's Table prepared.**

1 Corinthians 11:27–32 – "Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing, he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason, many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world."

### **Personal Examination Questions:**

- 1. Have I truly trusted in the Crucified and Risen Lord Jesus Christ alone for my salvation?**
- 2. Am I walking in the Fruit of the Indwelling Holy Spirit?**
- 3. Do I have any unconfessed sin I need to admit, confess and turn from?**
- 4. Am I coming to the Lord's Table with sincerity of heart?**

1 Corinthians 5:7–8 – "Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION ITEMS:**

1. How many communions would you guess you've participated in?
2. Have there been times when it just became rote and meaningless?
3. Have there been there times when you did it in an "unworthy manner"?
4. What does it mean for a believer to have "a Seat at the Table"?
5. How would you imagine communion in heaven?
6. What did you get most out of this message?