**The Day of Christ’s Last Passover**

Luke 22:7-21

*Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." So, they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." So, they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover. When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."* *And He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise, He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.* NKJV

The Passover was the first of the feast that God ordained for Israel. When it was given, it was given to have Israel escape the devastating loss of life that was coming in Egypt. To help Israel escape slavery in Egypt, God was going to go through the land of Egypt on a particular night and destroy the firstborn in every house unless the door frame of the house was marked with the blood of a lamb. If the blood was there, God would PASS OVER that house and no one would die. As a memorial to that event, the Jews were instructed to do this feast every year. It is still observed among Jews to this day. Central to the meal was a lamb, a loaf of unleavened bread and a glass of the fruit of the vine.

The significance of the elements used in the Passover is amazing. The lamb, in addition to providing food, provided the way to distinguish between those determined to follow God and those who loved Egypt. It is important to know that the Egyptians could have put lamb’s blood on the frame of their own doors and God would have honored this and passed over the Egyptian dwelling also. God said, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Grasp that an Israelite without the lamb’s blood on his doorframe would also have suffered the loss of any firstborn in his home. Unleavened bread and fruit of the vine were used because they required no extra time for preparation like would be required for regular bread and wine needing a fermentation process to be completed.

From the perspective of both the Father and the Son, this Passover would be the final one. Why, if is this so, are Jews still observing the Passover meal? The answer? Israel to this day refuses to accept Jesus as their redeemer. Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). Peter teaches us that Christ was foreordained to be the sacrificial lamb needed for our redemption (1 Peter 3:19-21) When we are covered by the blood of Jesus, on Judgement Day, the vengeful God will PASS OVER us and not impute the guilt of our sins to us. Paul says the symbolism is in Christ’s blood*. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.* (1 Corinthians 5:7). Those whose heart is in the Law given by Moses won’t let it go.

Hopefully, you noticed in the text for this lesson that Jesus said He would not any longer eat or drink of the Passover meal until it was fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. In the design of God, Jesus became the Passover lamb that very weekend, and by His blood delivered those who believe in Him from the slavery to sin. What is even more amazing is that Jesus in figure lets us share in His sacrificial death by our baptism into Him (Romans 6:1-7). By this “death,” we have been freed from sin (Romans 6:7).

Having fulfilled His role as the sacrificial Passover lamb, those who belong to Christ are now able in every location in the world share in this “meal” with Him. God is the ultimate “minimalist.” We share in the death of Christ in baptism, and we share in His role as our Passover Lamb in the Communion. This design by God is what makes the “Last Supper” of Jesus so important. Look again at His language. *And He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise, He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.* From the very beginning, the church of Jesus Christ was gathering on the first day of the week to “break bread.” See Acts 20:7.

The most complete discussion of the communion for the church is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 11. Paul tells the church that the function of coming together on the Lord’s Day is to share in the communion (verses 17-22). He stresses that it ought to be shared together and that it should not be observed as though it is a regular meal. He emphasizes that no Christian in the group should be left out. There should be sufficient for everyone. Paul tells us plainly that the Last Supper of Christ was in fact the institution of the Communion. *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 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."* ***For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes*** (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Please understand the totality of the Communion. Not only are we remembering the death of Christ for our sins, we are also recognizing His promise to return for us.

It is equally important to have the correct attitude in participating in Communion. *Therefore, whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason, many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.* (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

What if I cannot be at the assembly? In such case, become the church where you are and arrange to have the Communion. What if I don’t have bread and the fruit of the vine? Can I substitute coke and chocolate chips? In all humility, we suggest this would be inappropriate. It is better to do nothing rather than deciding to use your own will and design. (See the story in I Samuel 15) What if I am too tired to share or just don’t want to go? The writer of Hebrews says that to miss the church assembly on purpose is to trample on Jesus and insult the Spirit of Grace. (Hebrews 10:25-30) Why is the day of Christ’s last Passover important? THE COMMUNION!