



## **Easter Story- Beginning with the Last Supper**

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples asked Jesus, "Where would you like us to plan for you to eat the Passover feast?"

Jesus replied to them, "Go into the city and you will find a man. Tell him that we would like to come to his house for Passover."

First of all, what is the Feast of Unleavened Bread? What is the Passover? These are actually the same things. The Jews celebrated the Passover ever since the time of Moses, when the Lord saved all the Israelite babies. This was when the Lord 'passed over' their houses, and they were kept safe. This is another big story your teacher will have to tell you another time.

During the time of the Passover celebrations, the people didn't eat or have any bread in their homes with yeast in it. Yeast is what makes the bread all big and puffy. Without yeast, the bread is flat and that is called unleavened bread. Now back to the story.

The disciples did just as Jesus asked, and they found a place and got ready for the Passover.

The evening came, and Jesus and the twelve disciples sat to eat the meal. The disciples were eating quietly because they had a lot on their minds. They were worried. Some people wanted to kill Jesus since he was getting so popular.

Jesus could see the disciples were worried. He said to them quietly, "I tell you the truth, one of you here will betray me."

The disciples looked at each other in shock, and some of them asked Jesus, "It isn't me, is it Lord?"

Jesus replied, "The one who dips his bread into the bowl with me will betray me. I will die, just as it is written, but the man who betrays me will feel sorry forever.

Then Judas, with his head down spoke quietly to Jesus, "It isn't me, is it?"

Jesus answered, "Yes, you are the one."

Judas' head went down even lower; he had hoped that the other disciples had not heard what Jesus said. Luckily, they were paying more attention to Jesus breaking apart some bread.

He thanked God for the bread and shared it with the disciples and said, "Take this and eat it. This is my body which is given for you". Then He took a full cup, thanked God for it and said, "This is my blood, which will be poured out for many people so their sins may be forgiven." They all took a sip from the cup.

The meal continued after this; it was a long celebration. The disciples took their time because they enjoyed talking with Jesus and asking Him questions. (Just like when you go out to eat with your parents and their friends, sometimes they seem to talk forever, and you just want to go home...).

After some time, Jesus got up from the table and went to a different part of the room. He took off his everyday clothes and put a large towel around himself to look like a servant. After that, he poured water into a large bowl and began to wash the disciples' feet. Then dried them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.

First of all, Jesus is like a King - but even greater than a king: He's the King of Kings! By washing the disciples feet, He was doing something that only a servant would do. This would be like if someone famous came to your house and started to clean your room -- even getting down on their hands and knees to clean under your bed! It probably would never happen.

When it was Peter's turn to get his feet cleaned he said to Jesus, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You don't understand what I am doing, but you will later."

"No," said Peter, "you will never wash my feet." He said this because he didn't feel right having Jesus wash his feet. He knew Jesus was very special.

Jesus replied back to him, "If I don't wash your feet, you cannot be with me."

"Then, Lord," Peter replied, "don't just wash my feet but my hands and head too." Jesus then explained that He only needed to wash his feet; and that, this would make his whole body clean.

When Jesus had finished washing all of the disciples' feet, he put his everyday clothes back on and returned to the table. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" Jesus asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and that is who I am. And now that I have washed your feet, you can also wash one another's feet."

This is an example of how you should treat others. You don't have to actually wash other people's feet, but doing nice things for others and acting like a servant for Jesus, that is what He wants you to do. If you do these things, Jesus will bless you.

**Jesus Prays:** After singing a song at the Passover meal, Jesus and his disciples went to a garden called Gethsemane. It was getting to be quite late in the evening, so everyone was whispering.

Jesus was especially quiet, and walked a bit ahead of the rest of the group. He looked as if He was sad and upset about something. He stopped and whispered to some of the disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

Then, with Peter, James, and John he walked just a little bit further and told them, "My heart feels heavy, and I feel very sad. Please stay here and keep watch, I need some company close by." The disciples looked at each other; they had never seen Jesus like this before.

Then Jesus walked a bit further by himself. Next to a big tree he knelt down with his face to the ground and began to talk to God. He prayed, "My Father, I know that I am about to go through some horrible things; I wish I wouldn't have to, but it doesn't matter what I want, I will do whatever you want."

When He had finished praying, He went back to where the disciples were to find that they had fallen asleep on the ground. Jesus woke them and said to them, "Couldn't you have stayed awake for me for just a little while? You should also pray that you will continue to do what God wants."

The disciples felt bad, and tried to keep their eyes open. But when they started praying, they fell asleep. Two more times Jesus went off to pray the same prayer as before, and when he was finished He came back to his friends -- disappointed to find that they had fallen asleep once again.

The third time Jesus woke them saying, "Are you sleeping again? Enough! It is time to go. Here comes the man who is about to give me up to the people who want to hurt me."

While He was still speaking, Judas, one of Jesus' disciples was coming towards them. He was followed by a large crowd of people who were carrying swords and clubs. Judas walked right up to Jesus and gave Him a kiss on the cheek. This was a sign to the chief priests that this was Jesus, and that He was the man that they wanted to arrest.

Jesus let them take Him. But one of Jesus' disciples didn't like what was happening; he wanted to stick up for Jesus. He took out his sword and cut off the ear of a chief priest.

Before the situation got more out of hand, Jesus spoke firmly, "Enough!" He reached up to the man whose ear had been hurt and healed it instantly.

Jesus spoke to all those around him. "If I wanted I could pray to my Father for help. He would send angels to protect me and stop this. However, I know this needs to happen to finish what it says in the Bible."

The disciples did not know what to do. They were afraid that they might be arrested for being with Jesus; they quickly retreated, leaving Jesus to be arrested alone. Peter was the only disciple that followed Jesus. He was careful to follow at a distance because he was afraid. He wanted to see what would happen to Jesus.

They took Jesus to a man named Caiaphas, who was the high priest (a man who made a lot of decisions). This is where all the other 'important' people had gathered. They were trying to find a reason to arrest Jesus, but He had never done anything wrong. People tried to make up bad stuff that they knew wasn't true.

Finally, Caiaphas asked Jesus, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?" When Jesus replied that He was the Son of God, Caiaphas couldn't believe it. He even tore off some of his clothes because he thought what Jesus was saying was untrue. These people didn't believe Jesus, and that's when they decided that they would kill him.

Meanwhile, Peter was just outside the building where they had taken Jesus. A servant girl saw Peter and had recognized him and asked, "Weren't you with that man named Jesus?"

But Peter lied and said, "You don't know what you're talking about."

Peter started to walk away, but the girl spoke louder so the other people who were around could hear, "I'm sure you are one of the men that is friends with Jesus."

Again, Peter said, "No, I don't know what you're talking about."

After a while, more people asked Peter the same thing; Peter started to get upset by this, and he said in a loud voice, "I don't know the man you are talking about. I've never talked to him."

Right after Peter said this a rooster crowed and Peter remembered something Jesus had said to him: "Before the rooster crows, you will turn your back on me three times." When Peter remembered this, he was very sad. Peter was one of Jesus closest friends, and now he had lied and said he didn't even know him.

Peter started to cry. How could he have done this to Jesus?

## **Jesus Dies:**

Very early in the morning, the soldiers brought Jesus to Pilate, the governor at the time. Pilate asked Jesus, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus replied, "Yes, I am."

This upset the chief priests because they were jealous of him and the Jewish friends He had made.

Pilate listened to the complaints of the people that brought Jesus, but he couldn't find any reason to punish Him. Pilate questioned Jesus, but Jesus didn't stick up for himself (He knew that they wouldn't listen anyway). He had done nothing wrong.

Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people. He said to them, "I have talked to Jesus, and I find no reason to kill Him."

After they heard that, all the people shouted, "We want Jesus! Release Barabbas instead!" Barabbas had been in jail because he had killed someone, and the people wanted him to be free, and Jesus to be punished. (It sounds strange but it was like peer pressure. The chief priests went around telling people lies about Jesus, so that they would be afraid of Him, and would want to kill Him).

Pilate didn't like this one bit. He wanted to let Jesus go, so he tried to talk to the people but they didn't let him. They just kept shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate tried again, yelling, "What has Jesus done wrong? I can punish Him but then I must let Him go, He doesn't deserve to die!" But the people just shouted louder to crucify Jesus and Pilate wanted to please the crowd so he freed Barabbas and sent Jesus to die.

The soldiers led Jesus into the palace and made Him put on an old royal robe and they twisted together a crown of thorns to put on His head. Then they made fun of Him and said, "Hail, king of the Jews." They didn't understand that He was a king; that's why they made fun of Him.

Next, the soldiers led Jesus toward a hill called Golgotha. They made Him carry the cross on His back, but because Jesus couldn't carry it the whole way, He fell down. The soldiers had whipped His back and it hurt so much that Jesus couldn't handle the weight of the cross on His shoulders.

A man named Simon happened to be near Jesus when He fell, and the soldiers grabbed him, and made him carry the cross the rest of the way. The soldiers offered Jesus wine mixed with myrrh. This was supposed to help make it less painful, but Jesus refused to have any.

When they reached the top of the hill, they nailed Jesus to the cross. There were three crosses: Jesus was in the middle, there was a criminal on His right, and on His left. Pilate made a sign to be put on the cross. It read what He was being punished for: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.

The soldiers watched Jesus and made fun of Him; they even divided up His clothes to be even more mean. Some people walked by and shouted, "You saved others, why can't you save Yourself?" Jesus could have saved himself, but he chose not to. He wanted to save us instead.

Jesus ignored the people, but He did see His mother, His aunt, and some other women He knew. Jesus felt bad for His mother, she was so sad to see her son die (just like your parents feel when you get hurt).

Then Jesus saw one of His disciples close to His mother, and He said, "Mother here is your son, and friend here is your mother." Jesus couldn't say too much for he was very weak. But He wanted His friend, the disciple, to be like a son to His mother and take care of her. And from that day on, the disciple did.

Later, Jesus could not handle the pain any longer and He said, "It is finished." That is when Jesus bowed His head and went to Heaven.

Suddenly, a huge curtain that hung at the temple was torn in half, from top to bottom. And a man that had wanted Jesus to die saw all of this and he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

He realized he had been wrong about Jesus.

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It seems like a really sad story, but its one of the greatest stories of all! Jesus died knowing that you (--put in the children's names) would do things wrong (that is what a sin is) -- things that you're not supposed to -- not obeying your parents, saying something mean to your sister or brother, or not telling the truth. He knew what you would do when He died so many years ago. Jesus died for **everybody's** sins, so now when we ask God to forgive us, and we are truly sorry for what we've done, He will act like it never happened. That's right He forgets what we did! Now that doesn't mean we should ever make the same mistake again, because by doing that it's like we're hurting Jesus all over again.

So, next time you do something you're not supposed to, remember to say sorry to Jesus, and remember what He did for you!

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)**

*\*\*Story edited from Danielle's Place*