

51. Jesus Taught the Meaning of the Lord's Supper

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to show the love that Jesus showed to Judas, even though Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him. In our topic today, we are going to see that Jesus showed the disciples, while they were eating the Passover Supper, that we are to remember Him by what has become known as the Lord's Supper.

Jesus, and the disciples, were eating the Passover meal together. Suddenly, as they were eating together, Jesus did something He had never done before. Mark 14:22-26 says, "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.' Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave *it* to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, 'This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. 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.' And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

We see that it was while they were eating their meal together that Jesus taught the disciples something very important. Jesus taught this lesson by taking something that was very simple, and can be found in every culture in the world, bread and the cup. During the meal, Jesus took a piece of bread, thanked the Father for the bread, broke it, and then gave each of the disciples a piece. Then, Jesus said, "Take, eat; this is My body." The disciples may have just eaten the Passover Lamb or were getting ready to eat it. They understood that, at the original Passover, the blood was placed on the doorposts of their houses, and, as a result, the death angel passed over their houses and did not kill the oldest child as he did in the houses of the Egyptians. It was just a few months later that the Lord gave Israel the Law, which was the Old Covenant God made with the nation of Israel, through Moses.

For hundreds of years, the Jews had eaten the bread and drank the cup as they ate the roast lamb and remembered the Passover and the giving of the Old Covenant. Here, we see that Jesus said the bread represented His body. John the Baptist had introduced Jesus in John 1:29, by saying: "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" The Jews had offered many lambs as sacrifices to provide a covering for their sins. However, Hebrews 10:4 says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins." That night, Jesus introduced the New Covenant to His disciples. He said that the bread represented His body. The next day, the disciples would see His body hung on a cross to pay the penalty for sin once for all, so that sin could be forgiven, removed as far as the east is from the west, buried in the depths of the sea, blotted out, and remembered no more. Then, they would understand that the bread represented His body.

After the disciples had eaten the bread, Jesus took the cup. When He had given thanks, the cup was passed from disciple to disciple. They each drank some of it, until all of them had drank from the cup. Then, Jesus said, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many." Jesus had said, in Matthew 5:17-18, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one

jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.” Jesus fulfilled the righteous demands of the Law when He gave that cry of victory, “It is finished!”, while on the cross. His blood paid the penalty for sin, so He could now offer forgiveness as a free gift. That is why Galatians 3:24-25 says, “Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.” The Law shows us our sin and need for One who could save us from our sin. However, at the moment of salvation, we are set free from our sin, because Christ fulfilled all of the requirements of the Law by shedding His blood for us.

John 19:28-30 says, “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, ‘I thirst!’ Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” The Romans gave sour wine to people on crosses to prolong their suffering. Jesus knew that purpose and let them put it to His mouth to fulfill the words of Psalm 69:21, “...And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” However, there was no need for Him to drink that sour wine, because He immediately said, “It is finished!” The penalty for sin had been paid in full. Jesus then handed over His Spirit to the Father and willingly gave up His life to complete the finished payment for the penalty for our sins. Jesus will next drink the fruit of the vine when He drinks it with us in the eternal kingdom of God. Then, the disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

As they went out, Jesus said, in Mark 14:27-28, “Then Jesus said to them, ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: “I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’” Here, we see that Jesus warned the disciples, in advance, that they would stumble because of Him that night. The word translated “will be made to stumble” means *to be made to stumble or fall away*. Jesus quoted from Zechariah 13:7, which says, “‘Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones.’” Here, we see that Jesus explained to the disciples that something would happen to Him, and they would all be scattered like sheep that night.

Later that evening, Judas betrayed Jesus. Mark 14:45-46 says, “As soon as he had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him. Then they laid their hands on Him and took Him.” At that point, John 18:7-11 says, “Then He asked them again, ‘Whom are you seeking?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus answered, ‘I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,’ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, ‘Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.’ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, ‘Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?’” Then, Mark 14:50 says, “Then they all forsook Him and fled.” The disciples probably did not realize until later that they had fulfilled the prophecy Jesus had quoted earlier that evening.

One other thing Jesus told the disciples, before the answer of Peter was, “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.” Here, we see that Jesus promised He would be raised from the dead. He also told the disciples that, after the resurrection, He would meet them in Galilee. In Matthew 28:16-17, we read, “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.” The appearance mentioned, in 1 Corinthians 15:6, may also have happened in Galilee. That verse says, “After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.”

Peter, and the other disciples, did not expect to forsake Jesus and flee. Mark 14:29-31 says, “Peter said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble, yet I *will* not *be*.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that today, *even* this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.’ But he spoke more vehemently, ‘If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And they all said likewise.” Peter made a very strong statement that he would not stumble and forsake Jesus that night. He certainly did not plan to forsake Jesus.

Peter had good intentions to protect Jesus, and even used his sword to try and defend Jesus. However, Peter was depending on his own strength, instead of asking the Lord to give him strength. Jesus warned Peter, in Matthew 26:41, “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.” We will also fail when we depend on our own strength, instead of yielding to the Lord. Romans 7:19-20 says, “For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.” Jesus knew that Peter would fail, and told him in Luke 22:31-32, “And the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren.’” Jesus prayed for Peter in advance knowing that Peter would fail. Jesus promised that Peter’s faith would not fail. His faith did remain strong and later the Lord gave Peter a great ministry.

Jesus told Peter what would happen that very night. Jesus said that before the rooster crowed twice, Peter would deny him three times. In his fear, Peter did not remember what Jesus had said. Matthew 26:74-75 says, “Then he began to curse and swear, *saying*, ‘I do not know the Man!’ Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ So he went out and wept bitterly.” Here, we see that it was when Peter heard the rooster crow, after he had just finished his third denial, that he finally remembered what Jesus had said. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that when we depend on our own strength, we will also fail. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn about the danger of depending on their own strength.