

73. Jesus Celebrated the Last Passover with His Disciples

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to realize that not everyone who claims to be a Christian has truly repented of their sin of unbelief and placed their faith in Christ and His death and resurrection. We want to help our children learn to explain the Gospel clearly from the Word of God. Then the Holy Spirit can use the Word of God that was shared to convict those who are not true Christians of the sin of unbelief, the fact that Jesus Christ is the Righteous One and that Satan has already been judged – John 16:8-11. In this topic, we are going to see that Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples.

Peter and John had prepared the Passover for Jesus and the twelve to celebrate the Passover together. Luke 22:14-16 says, “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.’” Here, we see that at sundown, when it was time for the Passover dinner, Jesus and the other disciples arrived to eat the Passover together.

Jesus knew that He would be crucified the next day. He had a great longing to eat this Passover with the twelve before the suffering of the crucifixion. The Jews had celebrated the Passover for many years as they remembered how the death angel had passed over the homes of the Israelites as He went through Egypt. Exodus 12:12-13 says, ““For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.”” It would be the blood of Jesus that He would shed as He hung on the cross that next day that would make it possible for the Father to accept the blood of Jesus as the payment for our sin as our substitute.

That night, Jesus told the disciples that the next time He would eat the Passover would be when this was fulfilled in the kingdom of God. By His statement here, Jesus showed that the Passover had a greater meaning than just the deliverance of Israel from the land of Egypt. The Passover also gave a picture of the fact that Jesus would be the sacrifice that would make it possible for the Father to forgive the sins of all those who repented of their sin of unbelief and placed their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. Jesus said that when He next ate the Passover in the Kingdom of God, it would be a fulfillment of the fact that the Father had blotted out our sins and had given us life in the eternal Kingdom.

Jesus also instituted the Lord’s Supper at the Passover that night. Luke 22:17-23 says, “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. But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man

by whom He is betrayed!’ Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.” The Passover included the sharing of four cups. As a result, Luke mentioned both the first and the last cup. The first cup was a cup of thanksgiving and was prior to Jesus introducing the Lord’s Supper.

Jesus waited until it was time for the last cup to be shared before introducing the Lord’s Supper. By this time, Judas had already left the room. Then Jesus said something that had never before been said as the Jews ate the Passover. Jesus took some bread and broke the bread into pieces. He passed these pieces to the disciples. Then, Jesus told the disciples, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” Suddenly, Jesus had given a whole new meaning to the Passover. He had just shown by His words that the original Passover had also given a picture of the fact that He would be the One who would pay the penalty for sin and make possible the forgiveness of sins. Then Jesus said, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” The Old Covenant was the Ten Commandments. All that the Old Covenant could do was show that every person was guilty of sin.

Jesus said that His body would be given for them and that also includes us. He said that as we eat the bread, we are to remember Him. Jesus also gave new meaning to the final cup that was shared. Jesus said this cup represented His blood that was shed for the disciples and also for all people. Jesus said that this was a New Covenant, which now made possible the forgiveness of sins. The Jews had three kinds of covenants. The first was a salt covenant, which meant that it was in effect until one of the persons making that covenant died. The second was a shoe covenant, which was in effect as long as either of those making the shoe covenant had any descendants. The close relative of Boaz made a shoe covenant, in Ruth 4:8, when he took off his shoe and handed it to Boaz. That verse says, “Therefore the close relative said to Boaz, ‘Buy *it* for yourself.’ So he took off his sandal.” The third kind of covenant is a blood covenant, which is an eternal covenant.

God made a blood covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15:5-7. When it came time to confirm that covenant, Genesis 15:17 says, “And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.” Here, we see that only God signed the covenant because He put Abraham to sleep while He went between the pieces. In the same way, when Christ died on the cross, only Christ was on the cross and our sins were placed on Him. This means that only God signed the New Covenant and so only God could break the New Covenant.

Jesus also told the disciples that one of them would betray Him. Jesus said that the One who betrayed Him would face judgment because He had never repented of His sin and placed His faith in Christ. Jesus knew the hearts of each of the disciples. John said in John 6:70-71, “Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?’ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.” Jesus had shown the same love to Judas that He had shown to each of the other disciples so each one questioned who would do such a thing.

However, the disciples were also thinking about other things that night. Luke 22:24-27 says, “Now

there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called “benefactors.” But not so *among* you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who *is* greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? *Is* it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.’” At the very time Jesus was talking about His coming death, the disciples were debating which of them would be considered the greatest. This debate may have been the reason why John 13:1-17 tells us about Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and telling them that He had given them an example to follow.

These verses tell us why they needed that example. Each of the disciples wanted to be the most important disciple. In contrast, Jesus wanted each disciple to understand they were thinking the way that the world thinks instead of thinking in a way that brings glory to God. The Gentile kings wanted to be called “benefactors”, which means *one who had done service for their country*. At the same time the kings wanted such titles, they were actually often dictators who served only themselves.

Jesus told the disciples that, if they wanted to be the greatest, they should be like the youngest or the one that serves. In Mark 10:42-45, we see that Jesus had told the disciples earlier, “But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’” At that time, Jesus had told the disciples that the one who desires to be great serves others. He said that true greatness is the result of becoming the bondservant of all.

Jesus gave an example that night of serving one another by washing the feet of the disciples. John 13:15-17 says, “‘For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’” Jesus gave an example and said, “Do as I have done to you.” He then told them that true blessing comes from doing and not just knowing.

We also want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to serve others. We want to show them by our example that serving others is a key way to show the love of Christ. Galatians 5:13 says, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” May the Lord richly bless you as you show your children how to serve others in love.