

A Meal to Share

Introduction

This short series will be a three-part focus in Luke leading up to Easter 2016. During Jesus final days he did not give his disciples theories or anything similar but he gave them a *meal*. God's chosen people were very familiar with meals that he had initiated for them from centuries past. The table that they would gather around would become a metaphor for family.

Text

“Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching,² and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.³ Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.⁵ They were delighted and agreed to give him money.⁶ He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.⁷ Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.⁹ “Where do you want us to prepare for it?” they asked.¹⁰ He replied, “As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters,¹¹ and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’¹² He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.”¹³ They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.¹⁵ And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”¹⁷ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you.¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.²¹ But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!”²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.” (Luke 22:1-23)

began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.” (Luke 22:1-23)

The Final Passover Meal...looking back to look forward.

The Passover Meal that Luke is telling us about was a unique meal and was important to Israel’s identity. For Israel it was all about remembering and looking back to Egypt, the past slavery and bondage and by God’s mighty hand deliverance from that place.

Jesus would celebrate by looking back but he would “look back to look forward”. Jesus would be the first person to tie the past with the future, specifically our deliverance from sin (Egypt), through the blood (on the doorpost) of the lamb.

This was all about justice and judgment; there can be no favoritism. No one can be passed through because of heritage or anything else. The only thing that will save you, will be taking shelter under the blood of the lamb.

Here is the focus of our study:

“And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 22:15-16)

This is an interesting phrase, “*eagerly desired*” that Jesus used:

“I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover supper with you before I suffer.” (:16)

In the original language it would literally read:

“With desire I have desired to eat this meal with you.”

This is a strong word that alludes to an almost overwhelming desire and longing. It was used elsewhere in scripture as “lust”.

Many atheist in our day ask why all the gore, all the blood, why can’t God just forgive? What we will see today is that:

“Words are not the currency of forgiveness”

We see this even in our lives consider this:

If someone really hurts you, wrongs you, betrays you, you have two choices:

- You could become hateful and angry or;
- You could forgive them

“It is an emotional fact of life that you cannot forgive without suffering yourself”

Real forgiveness is about suffering, nails, thorns, agony, blood, tears and sweat. This is what Jesus did for us and it will be the same for us, we will

Real forgiveness is about suffering, nails, thorns, agony, blood, tears and sweat. This is what Jesus did for us and it will be the same for us, we will experience pain as we forgive.

“At the heart of forgiveness is painful suffering”

If we think about it we will suffer either way, whether we hate or forgive. The only difference is there will be victory in the end if we forgive.

This is part of what Jesus was alluding to when he talked about the “cup”. When he asked the Father, **“O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me”**. Even at the site of his first miracle at the wedding in Cana he was thinking of His death:

- Jesus sat in the middle of joy and sipped the cup of his coming sorrow.
- Because He died, you and I can sit in the midst of sorrow and sip the cup of coming joy.

There is always hope

The cross-represented defeat – But Jesus turned it into the symbol for Victory!

The cross-represented guilt – But Jesus turned it into the symbol for grace.

“In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” (Hebrews 9:22)

The cross-represented condemnation – Now it represents freedom.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2)

The cross-represented pain – Now it represents healing.

“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:5)

The cross-represented death – Now it represents life.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Discussion Questions

- 1) As we consider this passage, we see of all the things that Jesus could have left us: he left us a meal. What is your initial reaction to this and

- 1) As we consider this passage, we see of all the things that Jesus could have left us; he left us a meal. What is your initial reaction to this and thinking back in Israel's history how did God use meals in the past?
- 2) Looking back on page 2 of your notes how did Jesus look back to the past to look to the future? How did he use this very familiar meal from the past to reveal and solidify his work on the cross until he returns?
- 3) On pages 2 and 3 Randy showed us the interesting insight into this phrase; "*eagerly desired*". Please discuss why Jesus experienced this almost overwhelming desire and longing to share this meal with them.
- 4) Many around us may ask why all the blood and gore? Please discuss these statements:
 - a) "Words are not the currency of forgiveness"
 - b) "It is an emotional fact of life that you cannot forgive without suffering yourself"
 - c) "At the heart of forgiveness is painful suffering"
- 5) If you have time review the series of statements "The cross represented..." on page 4 discuss what each means to you.