

## Jesus Introduced the Lord's Supper

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn, from the example of Jesus, to show respect even to someone who treats them with a total lack of respect. In our topic today, we will see that Jesus used the Passover meal to teach the disciples about the New Covenant and introduce the Lord's Supper.

Jesus taught the disciples many different lessons during their last evening together before His death. In Matthew 26:26-30, we read, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.' And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." Here, we see that one of the things that Jesus explained to the disciples was that He was going to shed His blood as the blood of a new covenant.

The disciples were eating the Passover together. During the meal, Jesus took some of the bread, blessed it and then gave the bread to His disciples. Then, Jesus gave a whole new meaning to that bread when He said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Here, we see that Jesus used a piece of ordinary bread to represent His body. 1 Corinthians 11:24 says, "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.'" Then, 1 Peter 2:24 adds, "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed." Jesus wants us, as Christians, to regularly remember that our sins were placed on His body as He hung on the cross. He died in our place and for our sins so that His righteousness could be placed on us at the moment of salvation.

After the bread, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks and then passed the cup to the disciples. As He passed it, Jesus said, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Here, we see that Jesus gave a whole new meaning to the cup. During the Passover, the Jews drank the juice in the cup to remember the blood that was placed on the top and sides of their doors in Egypt so the death angel would pass over their houses without killing the firstborn as he did the firstborn of all the Egyptians. In that case, the firstborn was spared from physical death. In this case, Jesus said this cup was to represent the blood of a new covenant. That new covenant was to give spiritual life and not just physical life.

This made it possible for us to be healed from the spiritual death that was passed on to every person by the sin of Adam and Eve. Romans 5:12 says, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned." Then, Hebrews 9:22 adds, "And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and

without shedding of blood there is no remission.” In this verse, we see that the same word is used for the remission of sins that is used in our verse in Matthew. This is the same word that is translated “forgiveness” in Ephesians 1:7, where we read, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Each time we take the cup, we are remembering that the cup represents the blood Jesus shed for us, in our place, so that we could receive the forgiveness of sins. That is why this is called the blood of a new covenant.

Jesus went on to tell the disciples that He would not again drink of the fruit of the vine until the time when He will drink it with the disciples and all believers in His Father’s kingdom. Until that time, we are to eat the bread and drink the cup in remembrance of what Jesus did for us that day. Paul explained the results of that action, for each one of us, when he said, in Acts 26:18, “‘To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’” Here, we see that we are remembering the fact that Jesus made possible five things for us: our eyes to be opened; to now walk in the light, instead of darkness; to be turned from the power of Satan to God; to receive the forgiveness of sins; and to receive an eternal inheritance. After hearing the new meaning Jesus gave these events, we see that Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives.

We go on to read, in Matthew 26:31-32, “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 of the flock will be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’” Here, we see that Jesus told the disciples several things that would happen that night and gave them instructions about what they were to do after His resurrection. Jesus told the disciples that they would all stumble that night. We will see, in the next verses, that Peter said He would never stumble. However, Mark 14:50 says, “Then they all forsook Him and fled.” Matthew 26:58 adds, “But Peter followed Him at a distance to the high priest’s courtyard. And he went in and sat with the servants to see the end.” We will see in a few paragraphs what happened there.

Jesus then 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 Jesus said that those against Him would strike the Shepherd. Less than twenty-four hours after Jesus said this, His body was placed in the tomb. We also see that Jesus predicted that His followers, particularly the disciples, would be scattered. When they fled to get away from the men who arrested Jesus, their only concern was to escape before they were also arrested.

However, at the same time, Jesus also gave a promise. He spoke of what was to happen after He was raised. Here, we see that Jesus pointed forward to His resurrection to give the disciples hope. The disciples did not really understand that hope until they saw Jesus after His resurrection. Instead, they were filled with fear. John 20:19 says, “Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace *be* with you.’” The disciples were controlled by their fear of the Jews until they saw Jesus after His resurrection.

Jesus also told the disciples that He would meet them in Galilee. This was the same message the women were told to give the disciples the morning of His resurrection. Matthew 28:7 says, ““And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”” We see in John 20 that the disciples did not leave to go meet Jesus in Galilee for at least a week, as Jesus appeared to them both on the day of His resurrection (John 20:19) and also a week later (John 20:26). In 1 Corinthians 15:6, we read, “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.” Since Acts 1 tells us that Peter stood up in the midst of about 120 disciples (while they waited in Jerusalem after Christ’s ascension), it is probable that the appearance to more than five hundred brethren at once happened in Galilee.

Jesus had just told the disciples that they would all stumble that night. Matthew 26:33-35 says, “Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And so said all the disciples.” We see that Peter depended on his own strength that night and did exactly what he said he would never do. In Matthew 26:69-73, we see the first two denials of Peter. Then, 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 Peter did the very thing he said he would never do as he denied Jesus three times that night.

This teaches us a very important lesson. A few hours earlier, in John 15:5, Jesus had said, ““I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”” Peter boldly defended Jesus while he was standing next to Jesus when the religious leaders came to arrest Jesus. However, when he and the others fled, Luke 22:54 says, “Having arrested Him, they led *Him* and brought Him into the high priest’s house. But Peter followed at a distance.” Here, we see that Peter was no longer standing with Jesus but was following at a distance. Luke 22:61 tells us what Jesus did after Peter denied Him the third time. That verse says, “And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’” Here, we see that Peter did not even remember, until he had already denied Jesus the third time. When we depend on our own strength, we will also deny Jesus by our words, actions or both. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to yield to Christ moment-by-moment, instead of depending on their own strength. Only as we yield to the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment will we be able to stand in the strength of Christ. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand this important lesson.