

EXPOSITION

I. THE PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER – vv.7-13

- v.7 Day of Unleavened Bread, Thursday, Nissan 14th ; the killing of the lamb to be eaten at the Passover meal
- Passover – the meal commemorating Israel's release from Egyptian bondage
- v.8 Jesus chooses Peter and John to go and prepare for their celebration together as Jesus and the 12 disciples
- v.9 They ask Jesus where they are to make preparations, to set up for the meal
- v.10 Jesus gives both specific and unspecific directions; they are so specific that they could be certain, and so unspecific that someone overhearing that conversation would not know; this is likely concealing from Judas
- the city is probably a reference to Bethany, outside of Jerusalem; several commentators mention that men usually carried water in skins, while women in vessels (which would have gained their attention); when they see this man, they are to follow him into the house he enters
- v.11 there they will find the master of the house, and will simply refer to Jesus as "the teacher"; this probably indicates his familiarity with Jesus, as well as a pre-arranged agreement for him to host the meal
- v.12 they will be shown a large furnished upper room, on the roof or second story of the house; it is there they will arrange all of the things necessary including vessels, food (including the bitter herbs, lamb, and bread), wine, etc.
- we should see beyond a simple pre-arrangement in Jesus' directions; there are two things to indicate this, the first being the reference to the man with the jug (a matter of providential timing) and the other to v.13, a confirmation that they found it just as He had said (more than mere statement); they then made preparations
- Jesus is doing two things in these directions to Peter and John; (1.) He is showing His sovereignty and control of the whole situation (which is to give help later), and (2.) is concealing from Judas the place, so that the betrayal will come only after Jesus has had this meal with them and spoken to them the words of the upper room (again, showing control)

II. THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- v.14 when the hour came (c.6pm, was the sun was setting, and technically it was "Friday", Jesus arrives with all the apostles with him, and they sit down together
- v.15 Jesus expresses how he had fervently desired to eat this Passover with them (indicating that He did eat); He had been anticipating this, and indicates that this was a very special occasion
- He also tells them that this is a precursor to His suffering; there is something of a word play here; Passover = Gk.pascha; suffer = Gk. pascho
- v.16 Jesus makes a prophecy, that He will not again eat the meal celebrating the release from slavery, the suffering meal, until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God; this is a final, last, supper before one final fulfillment
- in this verse, the question is what we identify as the kingdom of God, and what is fulfilled; there are several possibilities, but I believe it to be a reference to the consummation of the kingdom at the return of Christ at the end of the age, at which time there will be a celebration like none other
- this imagery is used in Luke 14:15-16 and Rev 19:9
- v.17 What Luke writes here about a first cup is unique in the Gospels; during the Passover meal, there were several cups that marked various stages in the supper; it appears that this is the first, as the "host" began the meal officially, and asked for the LORD's blessing;
- what is difficult to ascertain is whether Jesus interwove the institution of this new celebration meal with the Passover (using all the previous elements), or "overrides" the Passover liturgy and replaces it with His new celebration; either way, it is clear that this first "Lord's Supper" was instituted in conjunction with a full meal
- the first cup is taken, and Jesus again gives a prophecy; this will be the last time He will drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes
- v.19 At some point, Jesus takes bread (unleavened, thin, and baked), gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to the apostles, saying "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." With these words we have what will become some of the most controversial words in Christianity as to their meaning;
- while Roman Catholics believe that there is an actual "transubstantiation" that takes place, we take it as an expression indicating a representation or symbol as reminder of what He was about to do
- this can be seen in that what is offered to God as a sacrifice is not bread, but His body; Heb9:28; 10:5, 10, 12, 14
- Jesus follows these words by saying "do this in remembrance of Me," showing the clear memorial nature
- v.20 After the supper (they actually ate the food there) He takes the cup and makes a statement which is very important; He makes the claim of a "new covenant." This covenant had been prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures (Jer31:31). The word covenant is equivalent to an "oath bound promise." It is a promised sealed and ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ. It, like His body, is given once for all as a sacrifice for sin
- this new covenant is the fulfillment, and completion of all the promises of God; while the others were types and shadows leading up to Christ, His death was their fulfillment; by this covenant, the other was made obsolete Heb8:13
- What does this covenant signify? Heb8:7-10
- What Jesus is doing is superseding the Old covenant memorial meal with a new one, with superior promises and benefits
- What is striking here is that it is a meal of celebration, while at the same time the announcement that it is NOW that Jesus is going to die; He is about to spill His blood, be crucified, and put into the cold tomb

III. THE NOTICE OF A BETRAYER

- During this same night, Jesus announces the means by which He will die; even there, from their own number, is one who will betray Him; it is one of them who will betray Him and hand Him over for crucifixion
- If we compare this account with the other synoptic writers (Matthew and Mark) as well as John, we have somewhat of a dilemma; reading Luke's account, it sounds like Judas is present there during and after the supper; however, when collating the other witnesses, particularly John, they portray Judas as leaving before this point
- I won't try to harmonize them at this point, but only say that this kind of thing happens frequently in the Gospels, and indicates that there is sometimes more of an emphasis on topics or themes, rather than strict chronology
- v.21 At whatever point this happens, the main point is that Judas, the betrayer, is one of them; he is one who sits at the table with them
- v.22 Jesus says two things about this: the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; what Jesus is about to do is determined by God, and cannot but happen; this has been ordained from the foundation of the world; there is no uncertainty as to what will happen and why
- the second thing is that the instrument of His betrayal is fully responsible and accountable; as we saw last week, Judas' hand is not forced, his will is not coerced, but he is following the sinful inclinations of his love of money; the outcome of this is that, in the end, it would have been better for him if he had never been born
- this is a sobering statement, and ultimately true of all those apart from God's saving grace
- the response by the disciples is questioning and wondering who it was who would do this thing; it isn't obvious to them who will do this; even when, as revealed in John's account, Jesus gave Judas the command to go quickly and do what he is about to do, they are not aware that it is him (Jn13:29)

APPLICATION

Do you have the evidence of God's work in the New Covenant in your heart?

- It is those, and only those, who should partake of the Lord's Supper.
- It is those, and only those, who will partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.