

**Mark 14:12-25, The Last Supper**  
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**A. 12-16, Preparation of the Passover**

Three characteristics of this preparation, each exemplifying something that should be true of our walk with the Lord.

1. *Why* is the Lord so oblique in his preparations?

- a) So that Judas couldn't perform his betrayal during the dinner. This supper is a foundation for the church, and must not be disturbed.
- b) Lesson: Prudence. The believer must not underestimate the evil around him, but be alert to danger.
  - 1) Pr 22:3 and 27:12, "A prudent [man] foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."
  - 2) Mt 10:16 "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

2. *How* does the Lord arrange the place? His sovereign knowledge of detailed events.

- a) This case:
  - 1) Male carrying water; usually woman's work.
    - a> Gen 24:11, Eliezer at Haran, "the time that women go out to draw water." v.13, "the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water."
    - b> (Gen 29, apparently some of those who watered the flocks were males, though Rachel came also.)
    - c> Exod 2:16, Moses in Midian; the daughters of the priest come to draw water.
    - d> 1 Sam. 9:11, Saul and his servant, seeking Samuel, find "young maidens going out to draw water."
    - e> John 4, Samaria
  - 2) Associated with the house of a disciple
  - 3) Encounter him just at the right time
- b) Other examples:
  - 1) 11:2, the ass for the royal entry on Palm Sunday
  - 2) Matt 17:25-27, the coin in the mouth of the fish
- c) Lesson: Trust. When God leads us somewhere, he knows the end from the beginning, Isa 46:10, and will not leave us boxed in.

3. *Who* would receive the Lord at this point in his life? The master of the house is ready to put his home entirely at the Lord's disposal.

- a) There is some suspicion that this may be Mark's father:
  - 1) Acts 12:12, his home was a known meeting place of the early church

- 2) Acts 1:12,13, they met in an upper room, cf. Mark 14:15
  - 3) Mark 14:51 (only in Mark) may be Mark's recollection of himself; would make sense if he were in the house where the supper took place.
- b) Lesson: Obedience. The believer owes the Lord absolute surrender of all that he is and has. Rom. 12:1,2.

## B. 17-26, The Supper

### 1. 18-21, Announcement of the Betrayal

- a) 18, Based on prophecy of Psa 41:10, cf. 21, "as it is written."
- b) 19, Their sense of sin. Contrast Peter in v.29. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. 10:12. The believer has already declared his moral bankruptcy, and is not surprised that he may have failed in unexpected ways.
- c) 21, An important tension between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.
  - 1) "The son of man goeth...": The **result** of Judas' action is good. "Goeth" is not simply a euphemism for "die." A number of travel verbs are used thus in Greek, but not *hupagw* (see marginal note in Alford on Matt 26:24). This is the verb used repeatedly in John for our Lord's return to this Father. The Lord is not saying, "I am dying," or "I am going to be tortured," but is focusing simply on his absence from them, and his presence with the Father.
  - 2) "...as it is written of him": The **fact** of Judas' action was anticipated by God. Does not lie outside the control of God's providence.
 

We might be tempted to say, "If the act was permitted by God, and if it brought about a good result, it must be OK." But consider the third part of the saying:
  - 3) "Woe to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed." Judas must bear the responsibility for his deed, and the punishment he will face is such that he would have been better off never to have been born.
  - 4) Other examples of such a polarity:
    - a> Acts 2:23. Though the Lord was delivered "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," yet the hands that killed him are declared to be "wicked."
    - b> Acts 4:27,28. The political leaders, in their opposition to the Lord, did only what God's "hand and ... counsel determined before to be done."

### 2. 22-25, The Elements

a) 22, the Bread

- 1) The blessing and breaking of the bread would not have surprised them.
    - a> cf. 6:41 (the feeding of the 5000) and 8:6,7 (the 4000).
    - b> This bread and its blessing are a regular part of the Passover service. As familiar to them as an Easter egg hunt is to us.
  - 2) What must have gone through the Lord's mind as he gave thanks for the bread that he then declared to be his body? On their behalf he thanks as a recipient, but on his own behalf, as the donor, thanking God that he is able to suffer for them. Heb. 12:2, "for the joy that was set before him [he] endured the cross."
  - 3) Mark shows that he explains the bread before they eat it. What must have gone through their minds as the matza sat upon their tongues? If they were perplexed about the traitor, how much more should they have been about this? Yet no question has been recorded for us.
    - a> They might have recalled Isaiah's prophecy of a servant of the Lord who would become a trespass offering (Isa 53:10).
    - b> He is shifting the spotlight from the passover lamb to himself. Later, Paul will recall, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. 5:7.
- b) 23-25, the Cup. Reminds us that the Lord's Supper is neither the beginning nor the end of God's work of salvation, but looks both backward and forward.
- 1) Its past significance: a standard part of the Passover service.
  - 2) Its present significance in the church age. This time, they partake first, then he explains it. Eating the bread as his body would have been shocking, but at least an extension of the Passover lamb. Drinking blood was absolutely forbidden under the OT law.
    - a> "This is my blood." Under the OT, the worshipper could eat the flesh of the peace offerings, and the priests could eat the flesh of the sin offerings, but no one could drink any of the blood. Lev 17:10-16. The blood is the heart of the sacrifice, reserved for God alone. Thus even the sacrificial table, there was always a barrier between God and the worshipper. That barrier is now removed. They drink the blood as well as eat the body.

- b> "That of the new covenant." The Greek syntax factors this off as a separate thought.
- 1> Throughout history, God deals with his people on the basis of covenants, solemn transactions that specify his relation with them and theirs with him. Like a treaty, specifying his care for them and their duties toward him.
- a: Some see Gen. 3:15 (cf. Hos 6:7) as the first.
  - b: Noah, Gen. 9:9
  - c: Abraham, Gen 15:18
  - d: Phinehas, Num 25:12,13
  - e: David, 2 Sam. 7:13 (23:5)
- 2> Two major such covenants with the nation of Israel
- a: Sinai, Exod 19:5,6. Contingent on obedience; can be broken.
  - b: New, Jer 31:31-34; cf. Ezek 36:25-27. CAUSES obedience; transforms the worshipper through the indwelling of God's Spirit; can never be broken.
- 3> Heb. 9:11-23 develops in the greatest detail the parallels and contrasts between the covenants of Sinai and Calvary. Both must be ratified with blood. By calling the cup "my blood, that of the new covenant," the Lord is identifying it as the ratifying blood of the new covenant.
- c> "which is shed for many."
- 1> "shed," primary ritual for the sin offering, Lev. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34. Not used of other sacrifices. Elsewhere the common expression for violent human death.
- 2> "for," *peri*, 19x in Lev in the expression *exilasomai peri autou*, KPR (LW, "make atonement for him," cf. Lev. 1:4; 4:26; others. The Levitical way of identifying the beneficiary of the sacrifice. *uper autwn* (Luke) is not levitical, but is the more appropriate Greek preposition for beneficiary. [Three prepositions deal with the scope of our Lord's death:
- a: *peri pollwn* (here); the targets of the main purpose of the sacrifice, as in Lev.
  - b: *anti pollwn* (10:45); the actual objects of substitution
  - c: *uper pantwn* (1 Tim. 2:6); beneficiaries in a wider sense; note Paul's reduction of the preposition with respect to Mark 10:45.]
- 3> "many."
- a: Broader than Israel. No longer a national covenant; now we as Gentiles can share in it.
  - b: Narrower than "all." The Lord has in mind a

specific company who will benefit from his offering; cf. Rev. 5:9, showing that redemption is a selective activity.

- 3) 25, Its future significance: looks forward to the kingdom of God, which is depicted in the OT as a great banquet.
  - a> Isa 25:6-8
  - b> Psa 22:28,29.
  - c> Rev 19:9, the marriage supper of the Lamb.