

# Feast

Mark 14

March 11, 2018

## DAY 1: Passover

1. As we continue through the gospel of Mark, we come to the Lord's Supper, also referred to as the Last Supper or Communion. Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with His disciples, but with some significant differences. Before we look at what Mark records, we'll review the meaning of Passover.

*Exodus 12:12 "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals--and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD.*

*<sup>13</sup> The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.*

*<sup>14</sup> "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD--a lasting ordinance."*

2. The Hebrew people had been in the bondage of slavery for four hundred years to the nation of Egypt. There was no human hope of deliverance. Egypt was the dominant world-power for hundreds of years.

3. The exodus of the people came about only after ten debilitating plagues on Egypt, and even, then it wasn't until the most devastating one struck the land, only then did Pharaoh relent to the pleas of Moses.

4. The nation of Egypt had come to that point where divine wrath was needed to shake a heathen culture from its oppression. The tenth plague would involve the death angel taking the life of every firstborn in Egypt. Pharaoh willfully, stubbornly, arrogantly, and foolishly refused to listen, to humble himself before God, in spite of nine devastating plagues that preceded this one.

5. God would bring judgment on sin while simultaneously offering mercy. The people were to slaughter a lamb, a sacrificial lamb, and spread the blood on the doorframes of their homes. It was a statement of repentance regarding sin, and faith that sin could be atoned.

6. The choice before Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt was this: either you take God up on His offer of mercy for sin by offering a sacrificial lamb in your place for sin, or you can refuse God's offer of mercy and take a chance on "riding through" God's impending judgment. Pharaoh and the Egyptians rolled the dice on the latter.

7. What strikes you about the Passover?

## DAY 2: Jesus celebrates the Passover

1. What is the significance of a lamb being a substitute for a human being?

2. The lamb was also to be “spotless.” What is the significance of that?

3. Jesus leads the disciples through the Passover meal. It is divided into four sections corresponding with four promises God makes.

*Exodus 6:6 "Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.*

*<sup>7</sup> I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.*

*<sup>8</sup> And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.'"*

4. The four promises are these:

a. Promise 1: Rescue from Egypt.

b. Promise 2: Freedom from slavery.

c. Promise 3: Redemption (I will redeem you)

d. Promise 4: Renewed relationship with God

5. When Jesus was presiding over this Passover meal with His disciples, they naturally assumed He would follow the Passover protocol that had been handed down for over fifteen hundred years. But though the imagery is the same the pronouns are not!

*Mark 14:22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."*

*Mark 14:23 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.*

*<sup>24</sup> "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.*

6. Instead of the bread referencing the unleavened bread (a thing) of the Passover meal, the bread is representative of a person!

7. Instead of the wine referencing its normal places (a drink) in the Passover meal it is now referenced as a person! And that blood has the power to enact a new covenant with the people!

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

### **DAY 3: The “missing” main course?**

1. As this Passover meal continued, all the imagery was appropriate and expected. However, the imagery was now impregnated with much richer and deeper meaning.

2. Jesus started by praying over the bread, and making His statement about the bread. He proceeded to bless the wine, and made His statement about the significance of the wine.

3. But what should have come next was the main course of the meal, the lamb. It was the eating of the lamb that was at the heart of the Passover meaning and the Passover meal.

4. But what’s strange is that in this Passover meal, the main course seems to be missing!

5. Didn’t Jesus make any preparations for the main course? Did one of the disciples drop the ball regarding the main course?

6. Surely Matthew records something about the lamb, the main course. No, not there. Surely Luke records something about the lamb. No, it’s not there either. And John makes no mention of the main course.

7. How can you celebrate the Passover without the lamb? Jesus and the disciples had not suddenly become vegetarians.

8. The symbolic message, the imagery was now unmistakable. There was no need for a lamb to be killed and served because THE Lamb would be served and killed in sacrifice!

9. This is what John the Baptist realized right from the beginning.

*John 1:29 (RSV) The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*

10. Isaiah made the same connection, about seven hundred years before Jesus.

*Isaiah 53:7 (RSV) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.*

11. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

## DAY 4: What does it mean to eat the bread and drink the cup?

1. Luke's recording of the last supper adds the application for us.

*Luke 22:19 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."*

*Mark 14:22 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "**Take it**; this is my body."*

2. When I was growing up, one church we attended had communion every Sunday. I remember taking the little wafer and putting it on my tongue. It would begin to melt. Then I'd take a sip of wine from a gold chalice. I did this because I was supposed to, it was "just what we did."

3. But if God had asked me upon my death why He should let me into heaven, I would have answered, "Because I am basically good." I went to church. I took communion. I "believed." As soon as church was over, though, I just lived as if I was my own boss. I knew what I wanted. I lived primarily to fill my needs, or if I occasionally did something for someone else, it was usually driven by some amount of self-interest.

4. What was missing? Everything! I had substituted several meager "fixes" for my sinful human nature. Not a one of them brought about the kind of fruit that should have been evident in my life. And in fact, all of them combined brought about much of any other-centered, God-centered fruit.

5. What was I to be "taking"? I was to be "taking" the substitutionary death of Christ, in my place for my sin, a recognition and reality enough that this was not just a religious act or rite or deed, but a statement about my life. I was throwing in my lot in life as a Christ-follower, my hopes pinned not on any goodness I could manufacture, but wholly on the kind of divine love that volunteered to take my place.

6. This is similar to what Paul warned the church in Corinth.

*1 Corinthians 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." <sup>26</sup> For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

*<sup>27</sup> Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. <sup>30</sup> That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. <sup>31</sup> But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. <sup>32</sup> When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.*

7. The symbolism in Communion is meant to draw us into the **surrendered life**, not the "religious" life. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 5: Pictures of our delight-filled future

1. We finish our passage from Mark with Jesus' last words regarding the Passover meal.

*Mark 14:25 "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."*

2. Jesus has given the disciples a delightful taste of what we will experience in heaven—rich fellowship with one another and with Him! (without all the annoying sin that messes this up).

3. The image of a banquet is prevalent in scripture. It is a picture of several human delights all wrapped up together:

a. Deep connection with people,

b. Delightful connection,

c. We're "included" at God's table, we "belong" in His family,

d. We share the same privileges and delights as Jesus, God's Son, and

e. Oftentimes, the banquet is a victory banquet, a celebration of victory over enemies or evil.

4. Let's look at some of the banquet images:

a. The joyous return of the prodigal son!

*Luke 15:22 "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.*

*<sup>23</sup> Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.*

*<sup>24</sup> For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.*

b. The second coming of Christ.

*Luke 12:35 "Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, <sup>36</sup> like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him.*

*<sup>37</sup> It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. <sup>38</sup> It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night.*

c. The wedding of Solomon and his bride.

*Song of Songs 2:4 He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.*

d. The wedding feast of Christ and His bride, His people!

*Revelation 19:6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. <sup>7</sup> Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. <sup>8</sup> Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) <sup>9</sup> Then the angel said..., "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."*

5. What's your biggest takeaway from this week's look at the Last Supper?