

Lesson 50 Matthew 26.17 Jesus teaches on Putting away Sin

On the first day of the feast of unleavened bread

The purging out of leaven was a thorough task throughout the Passover festival beginning with the day of preparation. Insofar as Jesus' disciple band was concerned the presence of Judas was "the leaven of sin" even in the upper room. Jewish families would busily sweep every corner of the house to put away bread with leaven.

The leaven of sin

The true continuing significance of the idea of "unleavened bread" in connection with Christ our Passover is not that we sweep our homes symbolically but is that His work on the cross can sweep away all the refuge of sin in our lives through the completeness of His forgiveness though we must keep vigilant to see it is recognised and forgiveness duly sought

Sovereign steps toward the cross

Like (1) the *Bethphage donkey* the provision of (2) *the upper room* through the guiding of a man with a water pot on his head (itself very unusual) was provided. Later we find (3) *the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea* is just so naturally provided it would seem to have been organised. All we can usefully comment is that there existed a deep vein of LOVE for our LORD Jesus in Israel. People who loved Him would go to any length to fulfil His will. But beyond all these is the provision of (4) *Christ the Lamb* in the upper room votive offering

The disciples act early

The Lord desired to eat the Passover before He suffered (Luke 22.15) That meant staging a meal one day early hence the disciples seek the place where preparation is to be made on morning of Nisan 13 (Thursday) when the lambs were not yet slain. Not till the evening of Nisan 14 at 3pm in the afternoon would the lambs be slain and not till Nisan 15 would Passover normally be eaten. Richard France in his *Tyndale Commentary* on Matthew 26 argues both for an early Passover celebration and for a celebration without roasted lamb. What Christ undertook was indeed an anticipatory meal but that it was not a genuine Pasch is doubtful. This idea is sustained on the strength that the meal was held before the lambs were *officially* slain. However as *Alford* shows Joseph of Arimathea must also have already eaten an early Passover otherwise he would have been defiled by going to Pilate-so 'lambs' *were* available. From John we learn that vinegar wine or bitter herbs mixed with vinegar wine were available in a dish. The biblical narrative speaks of the "memorial meal" as following "supper". There certainly was no emphasis on the sprinkling of doorposts or memorials of Egypt -the memorial aspect was in respect of Christ's death

The uses of bread and wine

When Jesus said, "This is my body which is given for you" He did not lift a piece of lamb to view. There was no such intent. It was the absence of any other lamb that set this Passover on its own. He was the Passover Lamb. His body broken for ever associated with the bread of this Christian feast. In 1 Corinthians 5.7 Paul simply speaks of "Christ our Passover"



From paper to practice.

- 1 What is the human side of putting away sin?
- 2 What is the essential divine side of putting away sin?
- 3 Why should we observe communion?