

“The Passover – The Darkness before Dawn”

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Becoming the People of the Resurrection

Read Mark 14:12-26

Mark's narrative provides the second of two shadows speaking to the larger reality of our Lord's impending sacrifice. All of this will speak to the nature of the offering and the one who offered it. I am not wishing to become overly embattled or bogged down by the question as to whether or not the Supper noted in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is the actual Passover meal and how to reconcile the Synoptic narrative with John's account. The discussion is worthy of having, but is unnecessary at this point in our own journey.

The Passover

Our text would suggest that a day or two passed between the anointing in Bethany and the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed (cp v. 1 with v. 12). Here is the second link in foreshadowing the approaching event.

First, the Passover meal is the shadow whose significance is found in the fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 promise. To divorce this event from the Genesis 3:15 promise concerning the woman's seed is to betray the biblical type.

Second, the Passover meal commemorated Israel's Exodus from Egyptian bondage. What existed in type is now fulfilled in the antitype. Exodus 12 provides the reader with the necessary background to understand the import of the first Passover meal.

¹² “For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments--I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and **when I see the blood I will pass over you**, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt” (Exod. 12:12, 13).

Spiritually, the angel of death continues to pass through the land striking all those who raise their hearts and hands in rebellion against God and refuse to trust God's provision. God, however, will continue to pass over those who trust His provision and apply the blood of His sacrifice to their “doorposts and lintels” and eat of the sacrifice (John 6:53).

Third, the uniqueness of the preparation for the Passover meal speaks to the uniqueness of this moment (vv. 12-16). A man with a pitcher of water and a provided room speak to the uniqueness of this special moment.

Fourth, the circumstances are marked by darkness and unbelief. The disciples shuddered at the language used by their teacher. They could not process, or simply refused to believe, His

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death was looming. All of the disciples recognize their own inability to remain faithful and the very real threat of their own apostasy. This much becomes apparent when each asked the question when confronted by the menace of betrayal, "Surely not I" (v. 19).

Fifth, the imagery of the bread and wine speak to His death and blood sacrifice and the inauguration of the New Covenant. The shed blood ratified the covenant being cut. Luke 22:20 identifies the covenant as "new". Many, rightly so, align this covenant with that of Jeremiah 31:31-33. Hebrews 8 speaks to this moment as the founding of a "new" covenant. Hebrews 12 likewise proves the nature of this event.

²² "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and **to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant**, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel" (Heb. 8:22-24).

Careful thinking must prevail when handling the various aspects of these elements, but the manner in which the New Testament author handles the Old Testament text must be heavily weighed as to the inauguration of the New Covenant promises.

Sixth, although there is great sadness in the air, there is a promise that in the end He will come again and drink once more from the fruit of the vine when new in the kingdom of God. Light is infused within the darkness. Although the promise is to assure His disciples that what they are about to encounter is not the end, they are in the grip of fear.

All of this is still shadow. They are in the moment looking through the glass dimly. They as of yet cannot see or hear.

How often do we find ourselves blinded by and blind to the shadow? O how dark the night for many who are crushed by chronic conditions, oppressed by demonic spirits, paralyzed by emotional upheaval, and haunted by transgressions past. Friend, His anointing and the Supper remind us of greater realities. In the shadow we see love without condition, acceptance without requirement, forgiveness without limit, favor without merit, and service without reward. He is all of this and more for His people in obedience to His Father. Let us not faint. He is coming again to drink anew the fruit of the vine in the establishment of His kingdom on Earth. Thus we continue to pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

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