

Explore the Bible: April 25

Remembered • Luke 22:7-20

By Laura Lee Leathers



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Wedding venues have grown in popularity over the past few years (that is, before the pandemic). Usually, there is a rehearsal the night before the wedding. The wedding director makes sure the wedding party knows what should happen and when, and it may take several practice times before everyone has their part down pat.

Afterward, there is usually a rehearsal supper traditionally provided by the groom's parents. It is a time of celebration, but it's also a time of reflection and remembering.

It's Thursday in the final week of Jesus' life on earth. He has much to impart to His disciples, so in God's sovereignty everything comes together at what comes to be known as The Lord's Supper. It's the Final Passover, but the First Communion (John MacArthur). It's a time of remembrance, celebration, and teaching.

Prepared (Luke 22:7-13). Luke refers to the Day of Unleavened Bread and Passover as one celebration. Passover was one of three annual festivals and required a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Deut. 16:6). The city was packed. The estimation is around two-and-a-half million pilgrims, and then there were the lambs. Jewish historian Josephus reported more than

250,000 lambs were sacrificed.

Jesus singles out Peter and John, two of the three men in his inner circle. He places the responsibility for Passover preparations in their hands. They knew how, but the question was where? Jesus answers with specific instructions. When they entered the city, they would meet a man carrying a water jug. Would he be difficult to find in the crowd? Probably not. It was usually a chore performed by the women of the household.

Peter and John were to follow the man to the house he enters. The owner of the house probably was a believer who would understand Jesus' reference to Himself as "The Teacher." The owner would show them "a large, furnished room upstairs" (v. 12). The room needed to be large enough for 13 men to recline on cushions at low tables while they ate.

Peter and John did as Jesus instructed. They found the unnamed man, entered the unnamed house, and met the unnamed owner "just as he had told them." They began the preparation process by acquiring unleavened bread, wine, bitter herbs, charoset, and a bowl of salt water (Exodus 6:6, 7).

Looking forward (Luke 22:14-18). Later, Jesus and the disciples arrive at the upper room. "When the hour came" probably means the beginning of a significant event that had been predicted (see Luke 22:53; John 13:1; 17:1; LifeWay).

Verse 15 is unique to Luke's account. Jesus says, "I have earnestly desired" (ESV). Why? Jesus had shared the Passover meal with them before, but this time it was different because it would be His last time before He suffered. He knew the hours ahead would consist of His being arrested, beaten, and crucified.

Jesus' statement, "until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God," is a reference to the end times and the messianic banquet (Rev. 17:7-9).

Jesus then takes the cup, the first of four, and gives thanks and instructs the disciples to share it among themselves. Then Jesus tells the disciples, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes," a reference to the second coming of Jesus.

Looking back (Luke 22:19-20). Next, Jesus takes the bread, breaks it, and gives a portion to each one of them. Jesus states, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." This statement was unprecedented in Judaism. "In other words, Jesus transformed the Passover elements with new meaning designed to commemorate the new covenant He would inaugurate with His death and resurrection" (LifeWay).

With the next cup, probably the third in the sequence, Jesus tells the disciples this is the "new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (v. 20), symbolizing Jesus' life as the atoning sacrifice. The new covenant references the prophecy found in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

There is much to study and learn from this passage of Scripture. Additionally, Jesus taught (John chapters 13-16), and He prayed (John chapter 17). He tells Peter that Satan wants to sift him. There's a discussion over who's the greatest, and Jesus washes their feet. Then, Jesus goes to the Garden.

Since that night, Christ followers have observed The Lord's Supper in remembrance of His atoning sacrifice and as a celebration of the new covenant. We will continue to do so until the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9)!

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