

April 1st, 2021
Maundy Thursday
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INI - SDG

Three In One: The Feast of the Lamb

Luke 22:14-20 ¹⁴ When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, "With *fervent* desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ "for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide *it* among yourselves; ¹⁸ "for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke *it*, and gave *it* to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

Some of you looking at the theme of our sermon might think that I have the wrong the celebration. The festival of the trinity is May 30. However, my reference to three in one is not a reference to the trinity but to the Lord Supper. True it is a very different type of three in one, nevertheless with the Lord's Supper Christ did give us three in one.

It is the fulfillment of the Passover Feast

"This is my body, this is my blood." With these words Jesus makes it clear that not only is his body and blood truly present in the bread and wine but that also the Lords Supper is the continuation and fulfillment of the Passover

There was no more important celebration to the Old Testament believers than the festival of the Passover. It was the core festival, and in fact in a sense it is this festival in which the Lord reveals himself to the Israelites. Before giving his law, he tells the Israelites and us, "I am the Lord who brought you out of Egypt."

Further it is quite clear that the Passover was not only a remembrance of how God saved the people and brought them out of exile it was also a look ahead to the coming of the Messiah. The festival did not die with the coming of the Messiah but found its fulfillment in Christ.

Genesis 22:6-14

In genesis 22 Abraham is told to take his son, his only son, and sacrifice him. As the two are walking up the mountain alone to the spot where God told Abraham to make the sacrifice. Isaac asks a very astute question, "Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?"

Abraham answers his son, "the Lord will provide for himself the sacrifice." And when God does give to Abraham a ram to take the place of his son Isaac. Abraham names the mountain "The-Lord-Will-Provide." Because in the mount of the Lord it will be provided.

We might ask the same question as Isaac did. Where is the lamb? If the Lord's Supper is the fulfillment of the Passover, then where is the lamb? The central aspect of the Passover was the lamb. So where is the lamb? We have the unleavened bread and the wine but where is the lamb?

Well as soon as we ask the question, we know the answer. Jesus is the Lamb, and this Lamb is present in the Lord Supper for he himself said, "this is my body and this is my blood." And he, the lamb, is the central element of the Lords Supper just as the lamb was always the central element of the Passover.

Just as the Lord provided the lamb for Abraham and Isaac so the Lord provides for himself the lamb tonight. The Israelites had to provide their own lambs for the Passover, but we have received from God the better lamb. Jesus Christ who is the lamb of God. We bring the bread and the wine, but the Lord provides the lamb.

The lambs which the Israelites brought to their Passovers were only ever a place holder for Christ. But now as Abraham prophesied so long ago, the Lord has provided for himself a lamb. It was always meant to be from the beginning that the lambs which the Israelites chose would be replaced with the one which God chose. And so it is that when we now celebrate the Passover it is God who provides the lamb.

And just as it was the Passover through which the Israelites knew the Lord, so it is through the Lord's Supper that Jesus reveals himself to us. We receive his very body and blood, the body and the blood that was sacrificed for us.

The Lord's Supper is the fulfillment of the Passover, the lambs chosen by the people have been replaced with the Lamb chosen by God.

It is the joining together of Christ and us

He broke the bread, he took the cup, take eat, all of you take and drink." With these words Jesus unites us to himself and unites us to one another.

There are many things that seemingly cannot be brought together, Israel and Palestine for example. There are marriages which people would swear or not fixable. Broken families etc. But what Man cannot fix God can bring together. Here in feast of the lamb, God and man are brought together, and if we are brought together with God we are also brought together

Exodus 24:3-9

In Exodus 24 Moses reads the word of God's law and the people promise to follow all that God has said. After this Moses builds an altar. Again Moses reads God's law and again the people promise to do all

that God said, and again Moses sprinkles blood on the people. Notice that every time the people say "we will do all that God commands" Moses offers a sacrifice.

The promise of the people is nothing, it is empty, it is laughable. Not more than thirty days from this very day all the people of Israel make a golden calf and worship it. They did not even last thirty days. No wonder Moses offers a sacrifice and sprinkles them with blood. The promise and commitment of the people is worthless but the blood of Christ purifies and unites.

When the elders go up to eat with the Lord, Moses remarks almost as though surprised, "He did not lay his hands on them." Why? Not because of their vow to obey his word, but because of his sacrifice and his blood. God brings the elders into his feast and joins together with them through the blood of the lamb.

We do the same thing whenever we receive the Lord Supper. We confess faith and promise to obey all that God has commanded, immediately the blood of Christ is sprinkled upon us. Our vow, our confession is nothing, we immediately break that vow. But the blood of Christ which we receive in the wine is what joins us together, and not only with him but with one another as well.

There is one bread and there is one cup. Even if we use little plastic cups and wafers that are individual. Nevertheless, it is still one loaf and one cup, and we also are one with Christ and with each other.

I could stand up here and preach love and forgiveness and unity all day long, it would do no good. We all could stand and vow to love one another in Christian unity, it would do no good. It is not our vows or determination that unites us but the blood and body of Christ.

Jesus has joined together what cannot be joined together. He has joined us to him and even more amazingly us to one another. The Lord's Supper is the communion of His people, to Him and to one another.

It is the appetizer to the heavenly feast

"do this as often as you eat it in remembrance of me" "do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me" - With these words Jesus makes it clear that the Lord's Supper is itself a foretaste of the feast that is to come when we sit with him in his heavenly kingdom.

We all have pictures, rings, trinkets that reminds us of those we love. When those loved ones have passed away such things are a memorial of what was. When those loved ones still live they are a looking forward to what is and will be again.

Since Jesus lives this supper is looking forward to what we have and what will be. It is a simple appetizer of the great feast which is to come.

Isaiah 25:6-8 6 And in this mountain The LORD of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, Of well-refined wines on the lees. 7 And He will destroy on this mountain The surface of the covering cast over all people, And the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.

Time and time again in the Old Testament that Lord pictures the kingdom to come and our time with him as a feast, as he does here in Isaiah. It is one of the saddest things of our time that families no longer make a practice of sitting down to eat together. Now many would say that it is not really that big of a deal. It is a small thing. But here is what Jesus thinks of taking the time to actually sit down together and join in a meal.

Luke 22:15 15 Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;

On the eve of his death, his desire is to take the time to sit and eat with his disciples. And he still fervently desires to eat it with you. Eating together brings us together.

This supper which you will receive tonight, is not here because we need it. To be clear we do need, but that is not why it is given. It is given because God desires it. God desires that you should eat with him, but also he desires that He shall eat with you. "I have desired to eat this Passover with you.

In our sinfulness we often do not desire it. In His love he "fervently" desires it. We need it but often do not really want it. He does not need it but fervently desires it. Jesus fervently desires to sit and to eat with us both now and in eternity, therefore he has given us His Holy Supper.

Many of you are parents, and often your kids may not have the best attitude about sitting down together at the family meal. Do you say to them well only come if you really feel like it? Probably not, more likely you want them to come and join even if they do not have the best attitude.

In the Lord's Supper God wants you to come and partake so that he can dine with you even if we do not always have the perfect attitude. But even this communion with God is but a foretaste of what will be.

Mark 14:25 ²⁵ "Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

The Lord's Supper is the preview of the feast to come, now and then Christ desires fervently to dine with us.

The Lord's Supper, Three In One, what was and is and will be. The feast of the Lamb, Passover, communion, and festival to come. Amen