

Week Ten reading: Matthew 26 | Mark 14 | Luke 22 | John 13 - 18

PASSOVER WITH JESUS

{video clip of Michael Card, “Dinner with Jesus”}

What we know about the seating arrangement at the table:

- In the place of the honored guest: **John**
- In the place of the most intimate friend: **Judas**
- In the place of the servant: **Peter**

We also know from Luke 22:7, that Peter and John were tasked with the preparations of the Passover meal. This task of making preparations for the meal was compounded by the sense that he (Peter) was left out of the more intimate conversations during dinner. What might Peter’s mindset/mood be at this time, particularly in light of the disciples’ tendency to argue about which one of them was the greatest? _____

What emotions have you felt when a situation left you feeling slighted or insignificant? _____

ONE FINAL LESSON IN SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Only John records Jesus’ washing their feet. Jesus had been sitting in the midst of bickering among the disciples about their status with the Teacher and had the realization that His previous teachings on servant leadership were not sinking in. But, we should extend a little bit of grace over their cluelessness. In this Jewish culture, status was all based on the Rabbi they followed as it gave them religious stature to continue studying the scriptures. The training stages of raising a ‘good Jewish boy’ in those days were:

- Bet Sefer – **ages 6 – 10**; tasked with memorizing the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy)
- Bet Talmud – **ages 10 – 13 or 14**; memorizing the rest of the scriptures through Malachi; learning the Jewish art of questions and answers
- Bet Midrash – **age 13 or 14**; if a boy had proven himself in his first two levels, he would go and present himself to a well-known, respected rabbi and request to be part of his house of study. And if the rabbi believed that he was the best of the best, that he had the makings of a rabbi, the teacher would say, “Come, follow me.” And he would leave his family. He would leave his family compound. He would leave his village. He would leave the local synagogue where he had been studying. He would leave everything and would follow that rabbi. He would become a talmudeen, a disciple, a student. He would give his life to being exactly like that rabbi. And he would follow him everywhere.

The men chosen by Jesus were already practicing a trade so we know they did not make the selection by any of the other rabbis in their vicinity. Jesus, in characteristic fashion, found the rejected and was raising them to be leaders. We can actually see the development of some of these men from the moment Jesus, the Rabbi, selected them:

- Some were disciples of John the Baptist and left him to follow the teachings of Jesus (John 1:37)

We study Him to know Him, and by knowing Him, learn how to better live for Him.

- Some were called by Jesus directly (John 1:43)
- Each of them left their trade to follow Jesus (Matthew 4:21-22)
- These disciples lived in the footsteps of their Rabbi
- It was important to their families that they succeed in this (explains why James and John’s mother is trying to secure the elite placement of her sons, Matthew 20:20)

Now, three years of following and they are sharing a Passover meal with their Rabbi. These disciples are expecting that their Rabbi will actually become the King of the Jews that overthrows the Romans. So, naturally, all of Jesus’ teaching about being a servant did not make sense in their worldview. At least four separate times, Jesus taught this principle:

Mark 10:43-45	Luke 14:7-11	Luke 22:23-27	John 13:14-15
<p>⁴³ But it must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever wants to be first among you must be a slave to all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life—a ransom for many.”</p>	<p>⁷ He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noticed how they would choose the best places for themselves: ⁸ “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, don’t recline at the best place, because a more distinguished person than you may have been invited by your host. ⁹ The one who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this man,’ and then in humiliation, you will proceed to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ “But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ You will then be honored in the presence of all the other guests. ¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”</p>	<p>²³ So they began to argue among themselves which of them it could be who was going to do this thing. ²⁴ Then a dispute also arose among them about who should be considered the greatest. ²⁵ But He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles dominate them, and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors.’ ²⁶ But it must not be like that among you. On the contrary, whoever is greatest among you must become like the youngest, and whoever leads, like the one serving. ²⁷ For who is greater, the one at the table or the one serving? Isn’t it the one at the table? But I am among you as the One who serves.</p>	<p>14 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. 15 For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you.</p>

And at this Passover, on the eve of His death, He found it necessary to demonstrate one last time to equip them for their greater purpose.

How hard is it for you to follow Jesus' example by serving others, particularly when that involves the most menial of tasks? _____

THE FOUR PASSOVER CUPS

The traditional Passover Seder is an extended dinner and Bible history lesson. The common order of a Passover is:

1. Brechat Haner – kindling of the candles
2. Kiddush – The cup of sanctification
3. Urchatz – washing of the hands
4. Karpas – dipping of the parsley
5. Yachutz – breaking of the middle matzah
6. Maggid – the story of the Passover
7. Ma-Nishtanah – the four questions
8. Makkot – the cup of deliverance
9. Rachatz – washing of the hands
10. Maror – eating of the bitter herbs
11. Korech – eating of the bitter herbs with the Charoseth
12. Shulchan Orech – the supper
13. Tzaphun – eating of the afikomen (post Jesus' time)
14. Ha-geulah – the cup of redemption
15. Hallel – the cup of re-gathering

Mark 14:22 picks up at the end of the Shulchan Orech portion of the Passover. Jesus is distributing some of the unleavened bread during the meal when He draws the new connection of the breaking of the bread with the breaking of His body. There are four cups incorporated in the Seder, all drawn from promises in Exodus 6:6-7:

⁶ “Therefore tell the Israelites: I am Yahweh, and **I will deliver you** (cup of **sanctification**) from the forced labor of the Egyptians and **free you from slavery** (cup of **deliverance**) to them. **I will redeem you** (cup of **redemption**) with an outstretched arm and great acts of judgment. ⁷ **I will take you as My people** (cup of **re-gathering**), and I will be your God. You will know that I am Yahweh your God, who delivered you from the forced labor of the Egyptians.”

The cup in Mark 14 is the third cup of the Passover Seder. It represented the promise of “**I will redeem you**” from Exodus 6. That symbolism of the Exodus would have been clear to the disciples. But, Jesus' statement, “This is my blood that establishes the covenant” is the introduction of a new fulfillment of scripture as He points to the Messianic covenant of a Redeemer as promised in Jeremiah 31:31-33: “*Look, the days are coming*”—*this is the Lord's declaration*—“*when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. This one will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant they broke even though I had married them*”—*the Lord's declaration*. “*Instead, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days*”—*the Lord's declaration*. “*I will put My teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people.*”

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Because of this revelation and the verge of the fulfillment of one prophecy, Jesus declines the fourth cup of the Passover service. He came to be the Passover lamb, shed once and for all, for all sin. It was not His time to re-gather God's people...that will occur at His second coming, which we are still looking toward.

We observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him. Seeing His final Passover with possibly new context, what new significance might be worth remembering the next time you take the elements? _____

THE HALLEL

The benediction of the Passover Seder was the recitation of Psalms 113 through 118 (**read #118**). Imagine Jesus, on the eve of His death, reciting Psalm 118. What stands out when you imagine that scene? _____

APPLICATION FOR WEEK TEN

As a result of obedience to God's word, when we humble ourselves and serve others, when we consider others higher or greater than us, when we do good to those who even betray us and wash their feet, we will be blessed. How have you been blessed by a servant lately? _____

To serve is what it means to lead. We cannot call ourselves followers of Jesus and be unwilling to serve in humble ways. What might God be calling you to do as an act of service this week? _____

Lord, may we lead by serving. Please teach us, with compassion, how to serve like Jesus. And may we, with humility, follow His example.

Memory/meditation verse: So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done for you. John 13:14-15 (HCSB)

Week Eleven reading: Matthew 27 | Mark 15 | Luke 23 | John 18 - 19