

Thursday 9th April 2020

Maundy Thursday

Scarlet/Purple



Collect

God our Father, you have invited us to share in the supper which your Son gave to his Church to proclaim his death until he comes: may he nourish us by his presence, and unite us in his love; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Exodus 12:1-14 English Standard Version (ESV)

The Passover

12¹ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ²“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. ⁴And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbour shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, ⁶and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.^[a] ⁷“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. 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. ¹⁴“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.

Footnotes: a. Hebrew *between the two evenings*.

COMMENT: Just as Christians mark the beginning of Redemption by the (alleged) year of our Lord's birth – the Israelites would mark their annual calendar beginning with the Passover. Originally the months were not marked by names but by Ordinals – and would be quoted as the 3rd month since we gained our freedom – every month would commemorate Israel's freedom. The later practice of naming the months owes itself to the period of exile, and influenced by the Babylonian calendar. The fact that the month is not named in this text suggests that it is much older than the exilic or post exilic period, and is indeed a tradition maintained by the community of faith as to the redemption of Israel by God. As the lamb was sacrificed for sacred purposes it all must be consumed, either by eating or the remnants destroyed by fire (verse 10) – there is an echo of this in the Christian Eucharist, where all the elements consecrated must be consumed. Perhaps the most valuable lesson drawn from this account, is that Israel was to live the faith – this event was (and is still today) to be commemorated every year.

John 13:1-17 English Standard Version (ESV)

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

13¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet,^[a] but is completely clean. And you^[b] are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean." ¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, 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 to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant^[c] is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

A New Commandment

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Footnotes: a. Some manuscripts omit *except for his feet* b. The Greek words for *you* in this verse are plural c. Greek *bondservant*

COMMENT: It might be seen as a mystery why John would have lifted up this practice as having been instituted on the night before Jesus’ death while omitting the Lord’s Supper entirely from his narrative. Yet the other hand, John is aware of the tradition as he notes the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in another context. It is contained in the discourse following the feeding of the five thousand in chapter 6. We also find an oblique reference to baptism in Jesus’ reply to Peter when he wanted Jesus to wash not only his feet, but his hands and his head (13:8-11). Before a meal began Servants would wash the feet of the assembly, and so John is concentrating on this act of humility of Jesus. It is clear the context is the last supper. One other reference to washing feet as a common practice in the early church occurs in 1 Timothy 5:10. This points to Christ’s command to wash one another’s feet having been understood from the beginning in a literal sense. The Timothy passage implies that a widow to be honoured and consecrated in the Church should be one “having a reputation for good works: if she ... has washed the feet of the saints ...” There is good reason to believe that this Pastoral Letter was written early in the 2nd Century AD although possibly including some selections by Paul himself. So the practice would have been continued in much the same way that baptism and the Lord’s Supper continued because they had been instituted by Christ.

Psalm 116:1,12-19 *Dilexi, quoniam* Grail Psalter

✠ The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ.

¹ I love the Lord for he has heard
the cry of my appeal; ✠

¹² How can I repay the Lord
for his goodness to me?

¹³ The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord’s name. ✠

¹⁴ My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people.

¹⁵ O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful. ✠

¹⁶ Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.

¹⁷ A thanksgiving sacrifice I make;
I will call on the Lord's name. **℟**

¹⁸ My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people,

¹⁹ in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem. **℟**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: This psalm is one of six in what is known as the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) with great emphasis on praise to God. In this instance, thanksgiving is offered for recovery from a near fatal illness. Not only were the assembled congregation witnesses to the sacred rite, the celebrant believed that the LORD was also present, ready to hear his prayer and accept his offering. That this is a temple ritual becomes clear in the last verse.

Short Preface

And now we give you thanks because, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; and on the night before he suffered, sitting at table with his disciples, he instituted these holy mysteries, that we, redeemed by his death and restored to life by his resurrection, might be partakers of his divine nature.

Post Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that in this wonderful sacrament you have given us the memorial of your passion: grant us so to reverence the sacred mysteries of your body and blood that we may know within ourselves and show forth in our lives the fruit of your redemption, for you are alive and reign, now and for ever. **Amen**

There is no blessing at the end of the Maundy Thursday liturgy.

Dismissal

When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, 'If it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me.' He said to his disciples, 'How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinners.' Christ was obedient unto death. Go in his peace.