

"the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about Jesus"

THE DAILY JESUS NEWS

An ATJ Ministries Publication

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #278 Thursday... Day of Instruction and Arrest The Last Supper

Jesus' Disciples Prepare the Supper For Him

MK 14.12-16 (Parallel Texts: MT 26.17-19; LK 22.7-13)

=====

12 On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

13 So he sent two of his disciples, ^LPeter and John, ^Mcommanding them, "*Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him ^Lto the house that he enters. ^MSay to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher says:*

^{MT}*"My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house. ^MWhere is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"*

15 *"He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."*

16 The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

=====

NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Streets of Jerusalem
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	D. Thursday: Day of Instruction and Arrest
	The Last Supper
Title	Jesus' Disciples Prepare the Supper for Him

COMMENT:

Today's reading begins the single day in the life of Jesus that contributed the most Scriptural content to the story of his life. It was the fifth day of Passion Week, Thursday. The amazing thing is that all of this content was packed into the final six hours of the day, from roughly 6.00 PM to midnight (reckoning by our modern method of beginning each 24 hours day at midnight).

Furthermore, the 24 hour period from Thursday evening to Friday evening contains the most extensive, detailed record of any 24 hour period in Jesus' life. This is no surprise, for these 24 hours cover the death of the "Lamb of God." John, who chose to feature this title for Jesus in his writings, devoted seven chapters (out of 21) to his narrative of these 24 hours. Don't miss the significance of his emphasis.

The only other 24 hour periods that are detailed so extensively in the Scriptural life of Jesus are the day he rose from the dead, and Tuesday of Passion Week. Taken together, these three days are the heart of the good news about Jesus. The selection and arrangement of the material by all four gospel writers makes this collective emphasis clear. Jesus' life was all about his death and resurrection from the dead.

Today's reading begins the story of Jesus' final, in-depth instruction to his disciples, his prayers that sustained and empowered him to triumph over the sufferings of the cross, and his humiliating, heart breaking arrest.

Jesus' glory is on full display in these hours. The radiance is enough to blot out the light of the sun if we can only open up our minds and hearts to see it. Everything we have seen and heard our Lord do in the preceding 277 DAILY JESUS NEWS readings were all designed to set up and prepare us to see the glory of how Jesus died and rose again.

The preparation of Jesus' final supper with his disciples was similar to the narrative of his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Everything was prepared in advance. Jesus had already spoken to the caretaker of the house with the large upper room that became the headquarters for the church in Jerusalem. So the two disciples "*went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them.*" This is always our experience when we follow Jesus' orders.

Our Lord chose Peter and John, his two closest friends on this earth for the privilege of preparing his final supper. Note how Jesus told them to speak to the owner of the house. "Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" Jesus was the true owner of that house. The believer who temporarily had his name on the deed was honored to manage it in his Lord's interests.

For all the joy and anticipation that Jesus and all his disciples felt as they looked forward to the evening meal that day, there was an ominous sense of foreboding, too. Jesus had instructed Peter and John to look out for a man carrying a water pot who would meet them as they entered the city. The sense of secrecy and intrigue here sounds like a modern spy novel. This was all necessary because there was still a bounty on Jesus' head, and the conspiracy to arrest and kill him was in place. Jerusalem was dangerous, enemy territory for Jesus that night. He would be dead before nightfall the next day.

The Seder, or Passover meal required extensive preparation. It was a scrumptious feast, but along the way the ancient traditions were observed; words were spoken; prayers were prayed; the exodus story told; and the proper foods were eaten such as unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Everything in the meal and observance was rooted in Scripture and seasoned with the rich flavor of over a thousand years of tradition that kept it alive. Jesus expressed how much the meal meant to him in our next reading.

APPLICATION:

The Passover was an elaborate tradition. It had to be. It was intended to be a five-sense extravaganza that would bring God's people into a full, vibrant remembrance of the way he had delivered them out of slavery in Egypt, and it also looked forward in anticipation to Jesus, our true Passover Lamb.

Jesus instituted his own memorial meal--the Lord's Supper--that same night. Compared to the Passover, our Lord's Supper is incredibly simple. Why is this?

For one thing, believers in Jesus have the Holy Spirit living and ministering within us, while the Jewish people under the old covenant didn't (don't). We do not rely upon our outer five senses to remember and glory in what Jesus accomplished for us when he died. The Spirit fills us on the inside with the love, glory, and sense of unspeakable wonder at what Jesus' broken body and shed blood means to us, both individually and collectively.

Secondly, as great as the deliverance from Egypt was for God's people, it was nothing compared to the Creator of the universe becoming a genuine human being, and giving his life for sinners so that we might be set free from sin forever. The death and resurrection of Jesus are such enormous, spectacular events, that no mere five-sensory, outer liturgy or experience can do justice to it. The simplicity of the Lord's supper is the best witness to the surpassing greatness of what it symbolizes and memorializes.

Jesus has prepared his own Supper just for you, and those you have chosen to live in fellowship with in your own church.

What can you do to better prepare your own heart for the Lord's Supper the next time you observe it?

What does this narrative say to you about preparing for that Supper?