

"God's Love Story Sermon Outlines"

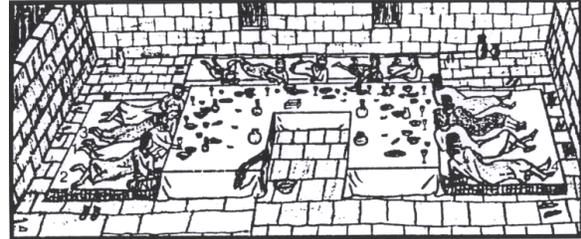
by Doug Hamilton

Section 30: Bread and Wine: Important Symbols of God's Love Story

Part #1) The Breaking of the Bread

Matthew 26:26-29 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

- Here is just a little information to "set the table" for this part of the lesson. It was the inauguration of the Lord's Supper Jesus had arranged an upper room for Him and His disciples to use for the Jewish Passover. The disciples would have been reclined at a triclinium table. The triclinium was the type of table of the Jews in the first-century which was "U" shaped and standing about 6" to 8" tall. They would recline on their left elbows and eat with their right hands.
- Some important information would be in understanding the positioning at the last supper. The host position on this table would have been on the second seat in on the left side. The host would have been the one who chose the "right and left hand" positions (Matthew 20:21). This would have been the seat of Jesus, for He was the one Whom organized the feast (Mark 14:14). In front of Jesus, leaning on His breast, was John (John 13:23). The "chief seat" of this table was the third seat from the left, the one directly behind Jesus' location. It appears that evening the occupier of that seat was Judas. One can derive this from two pieces of evidence. A) Jesus dipped the morsel and directly gave it to Judas and B) Jesus had a private discussion with Judas during the meal (Matthew 26:25). This has led many scholars to conclude that Judas was located directly behind Jesus in the chief seat.
- With that in mind, Jesus took some bread, blessed it, broke it and gave to His disciples. He said, *"Take, eat; this is My body."* He was not saying that it was His literal body, for He was referring to a figurative truth of a different nature. In just a few hours soldiers would come with weapons and torches to violently arrest Jesus. From that moment until His last breath on the cross, His body was broken for the glory of God at the hands of men.
 1. His prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane, the location of His arrest, were seriously intense in consideration for what was about to happen. Matthew 26:39 *"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."* He knew His body was about to be broken.
 2. When the soldiers came, they arrested and violently bound Him (John 18:12-13).
 3. When they brought Him before the High Priest, the officials spit in His face, blindfolded and beat Him with the fists and slapped Him repeatedly in the face (Mark 14:65).
 4. When Jesus appeared before Pilate the first time, He was forced to go through a truth scourge to validate His word that He was a king (John 19:1-4). This was designed to "beat the truth" out of Jesus and confirm whether He would stand on His word. They painfully pushed a crown of thorns upon His head and dressed Him in a purple robe like a king. They repeatedly beat Him and questioned His



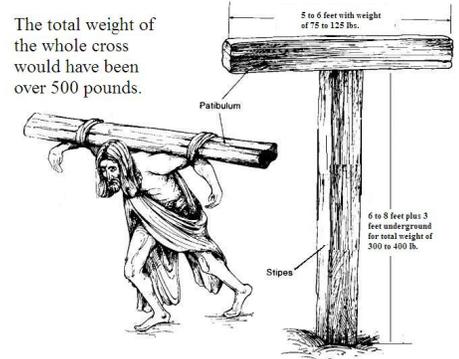
Triclinium Table

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"Kingship", hoping He would cave, but He did not. He was extreme pain, but was returned to Pilate sticking to His word.

5. The people chose to release Barabbas and have Jesus crucified. Pilate then turned Jesus over for the death scourge to prepare Him for crucifixion (Matthew 27:26). The concept of the death scourge was to bring the victim very close to death through a much more violent flogging. In this scourge they used not rods, but the flagellum. This device was a leather band of cords with bits of glass and bone woven into the ends. When raked across the backs of the victims it would rip strips of skin right off the body. There would have been large amounts of pain and blood loss with exposed muscle tissue. It was one of the most horrific and painful tortures the Romans ever brought forth.
 6. Once the death scourge was complete, it was time for Jesus to be loaded up with a cross-beam to carry six-hundred yards to Golgotha. Jesus was in no shape to carry the 150-200 pound piece of wood on His back, falling forward onto His face. Not even the forced help of passerby named Simon of Cyrene (Mt. 27:32) could alleviate the pain of Jesus' breaking body.
 7. Arriving at the "Place of the Skull", Jesus have His hands and feet nailed to the beams of wood for His crucifixion, not because it was required, but for additional suffering. The nailed would have pierced through the most tender nerve roots of His body, causing a pain which few on earth have ever suffered. The weight of His body would pull on each of the raw nerves with every breath he took.
 8. He had no clothing to protect Him from the heat or cold; He had no bathroom or lunch breaks; He had no way to shoo away the flies and gnats that gathered on His face to feast on blood and sweat. His thirst was great; His hunger was great; His pain was great and the loneliness was severe. When God turned His face from His suffering Son, the sky grew dark as the sins of the world were being placed upon Him (Mt 27:45).
- Jesus' body was broken in every way imaginable. He went through more than anyone ever has nor ever will go through concerning suffering. This is why Jesus took the bread and broke it, for He had his body broken in every possible way for us. When we break the bread and partake of it, think about what Jesus had to do for you and for me. As you break up the bread of the communion in the dish and in your mouths, remember that Jesus broke His body for us. We do this in remembrance of the broken body of Jesus.



Part #2) The Drinking of the Wine

Matthew 26:27-29 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

- The Jews of the first century and even today, used four ceremonial cups of wine in the Passover Feast. They based this on the four phrases of deliverance of *Exodus 6:6-*

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7 "Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.' 7 Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. This was the forward looking statement from God summarizing the deliverance of His people out of enslavement of Egypt.

- They celebrated the Passover of that historical night not only to commemorate their deliverance, but to be afforded the protection from the death of the first-born plague by the blood of the lamb on the doorpost. The Passover was a commanded Jewish feast about being delivered from both death and slavery. That was why the tradition of the Jews using four cups of wine developed around the passage of Ex 6:6-7, for each cup symbolized a form of that deliverance.



Cup One: I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians...

- The first cup was usually taken with the hors d'oeuvres in the main house in preparation of the primary meal of the lamb. They would take some of the blood of the lamb and spread it on the doorpost of the entrance to the home just as directed in *Exod 12:7* 'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They drank the first cup of wine in recognition of the lamb that was slain and spreading of the blood on the doorposts. Because the meal was being taken in an upper room and the doorposts of the house were downstairs, this cup of wine would have been taken downstairs. That was probably why we do not find this cup occurring in the upper room. We do have record of eating the hors d'oeuvres in the form of morsels.

Cup Two: I will deliver you from their bondage...

- This cup of wine was to be taken with the inquiry prior to the meal of the Passover. A young boy from the family was to ask "What does this mean?" (*Exod 12:26*). After explaining the history of the Passover they would drink the wine of the second cup. Since we have no record of a young boy in this upper room, perhaps we might better understand why John, the youngest of apostles, was next to Jesus in the "good" seat. Perhaps he was in the place of the youngster?
- Cup of wine #2 was actually the first of the two cups mentioned in the Luke account and is found in *Luke 22:17* And when He had taken a cup {and} given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves..." The sharing of that cup communicated complete agreement and understanding of the meaning of the meal they were about to partake of. They are united that God delivered them from BONDAGE (*Exod 12:8*).

Cup Three: I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

- The third cup of wine was to be taken after the completion of the meal, focusing further on the salvation from the Lord, not necessarily from bondage, but JUDGMENT. *Exod 12:12* 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the

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first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments-- I am the LORD. They would drink this cup in recognition of the “passing over” of judgment of death of the first-born. God with His outstretched arm used his power to deliver His people from the plagues and particularly the death of the first-born. That was the second cup mentioned not by Matthew or Mark, but by *Luke in 22:20 And in the same way {He took} the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.*

- It was the third cup that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. All mankind was facing death and the necessity of the shedding of blood for a “Passing Over” of judgment that was to occur. *Heb 9:22 “...all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”* Jesus was focusing on the impending shedding of His blood for us on Calvary. If we did not nor will not keep that in memory, then there would be no “Passing Over” of the judgment of God for us.

Cup Four: I will take you for My people, and I will be your God.

- The fourth cup was referred to as the “Cup of God’s Presence”. This was because it was the closing of the meal and the focus was the gathering of God’s people into ONE and in the PRESENCE OF GOD. We do not see this ceremonial cup being mentioned by any of the gospel writers, perhaps because it did not take place for this last Passover. In fact, following Cup #3, Matthew and Mark both similarly state *Mark 14:25-26 "Truly I say to you, I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." 26 And after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*
- It appeared that Jesus closed His last earthly Passover by rejecting any further drinking (Cup #4) and going right to the closing hymns of the *Hallel*. Jesus’ abstention from Cup #4, the cup of God’s presence, was because the TRUE GATHERING to come in the KINGDOM of GOD when the church was set up in Acts 2. We partake of the fourth cup in the Lord’s Supper as members of His kingdom in commemoration of ultimately in the very PRESENCE of GOD Himself!
- When the saints of the kingdom of God partake in the fruit of the vine on the first day of the week, they are saying, “I fully recognize the blood sacrifice of Jesus and the forgiveness He paid for me on the cross.” In this way we are drinking it new in the kingdom of God with our Lord and Savior Jesus. Those of us that been saved by the blood of Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, have His blood smeared on the doorposts of our heart. We are commemorating a future date with Jesus Christ in heaven when we will sit down for Cup #4, the Cup of the Presence of God.

Conclusion: God has a Love Story and it all points to Jesus. Particularly it refers to Jesus breaking His body in every way for us and in the blood atonement shed upon His cross. This is what we commemorate every first day of the week when we are gathered together as His kingdom. If we always have these two facts in our memory, we will always hang onto the Love Story of God.