

Session 2 The Last Supper

Ash Wednesday/Lent collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent:
create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that we, worthily lamenting our sins
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Background knowledge

Exodus and escape from Egypt – Exodus 12

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbour in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They 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 lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; 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 live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance. ¹⁵Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶On the first day you shall hold a solemn assembly, and on the seventh day a solemn assembly; no work shall be done on those days; only what everyone must eat, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your companies out of the land of Egypt: you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a perpetual ordinance. ¹⁸In the first month, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day, you shall eat unleavened bread. ¹⁹For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether an alien or a native of the land. ²⁰You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread.

The Passover seder (order) - modern

Preparation (Nisan 14) – clean the house, remove hametz (yeast), prepare the table [1st century this was the day when the Passover lambs were slaughtered]

Seder night (Nisan 15) [1st century this was the Festival of Unleavened Bread]

1. First cup – to life!
 Sanctification -blessing over the wine
 Drink first cup of wine
 Wash hands
 Eat celery of lettuce – dipped into salt water
 Divide the middle of the three pieces of matzah (the afikomen is hidden)

2. Secod cup – to freedom!
 Four questions ('why is this night different from all other nights?') and passover story ('we were slaves...') – the 10 plagues
 Wash hands
 Blessings of the matzah; sing Psalms 113 and 114 (Hallel)
 Second cup drunk
 Eat bitter herbs (dipped into haroset) with matzah

Main meal

3. Third cup – to peace!

 Finding the afikomen (ends the meal)
 Grace after the meal (Psalm 126 or a pilgrim psalm of ascent)
 Blessing of the wine 'Blessed is our Lord, God, King of the Universe who creates the fruit of the vine'
 Third cup of wine is drunk

4. Fourth cup – to Jerusalem!
 Sing psalms and prayers (eg. Psalm 118)
 Fourth cup of wine is drunk
 'Next year in Jerusalem!
 Song – 'The seder is over'
 Songs round the table

Messianic banquet - Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
 a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
 of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear...
 Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
 and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
 for the LORD has spoken.

Key events and questions

Questions: Gooder page 167

- Judas and plot to arrest Jesus
- Footwashing and meal (John 13:1-30)
- Preparation for the meal
- The last supper