



Sermon for the Lenten Service 2 (22 February 2018)

Greeting: Grace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come. Amen.

• The Reading for this Devotion is written in Mk 14, 12-25:

- **ESV 12** And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?"
- **13** And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him,
- **14** and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'
- **15** And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us."
- **16** And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.
- **17** And when it was evening, he came with the twelve.
- **18** And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me."
- **19** They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?"
- **20** He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.
- **21** For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."
- **22** And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body."
- **23** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.
- **24** And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.
- **25** Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

• *(Here ends the reading: O Christ, the Lamb of God, ...)*

• *Dear Brothers and Sisters under the Cross of Christ!*

• A secret place, a secret upper room, furnished and prepared. Provided by

Jesus. Jesus, as housefather, had to choose and provide for a place to eat the Passover. Jesus and His disciples followed the ceremonial law of the OT. On the right day and time they prepared and ate the Passover. The last Passover as foreshadow of the New Covenant. Within the foreshadow, Jesus takes over and fills the foreshadow with the new substance- Himself!

- But we are running ahead of ourselves now. First the preparation. It started off secretive. Only two disciples received orders how they would find the upper furnished room, already prepared! Judas was not one of them. He would not be able to organise a surprise capture at the meal. To find that place a specific man carrying water would meet them and take them to the place. No way for anyone to figure out where this room was. Jesus secured that He would be alone with His Twelve disciples that evening whilst eating the Passover and instituting the Lord's Supper.

- And, we see God's providence. None of us could devise such directions and hope that they would ever find the right place. It is also out of the question that Jesus could have arranged this. The whole point the Gospel teaches in this regard is, everything is prepared! Everything runs according to plan. Jesus knows what He is doing. He willingly came to Jerusalem to be *the* Passover Lamb Himself.

- It is significant that Jesus tells the two disciples that they must tell the houseowner, "*The Teacher says, where is my guest chamber, where I together with my disciples may eat the Passab*".

- So, clearly this is a special room which Jesus had secured for His disciples and Himself. And it was in the city of Jerusalem as stipulated in the Law of God.

- And the disciples went and found it just as Jesus had described it.

- This prefigures the heavenly banquet where all Jesus' disciples will be guests at His table in the new upper heavenly Jerusalem. In verse 25 this is confirmed when Jesus says the following Amen word: "*Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*" Jesus is fasting from the fruit of the vine until

He will drink it with His disciples in the kingdom of God.

• This was not heaven yet, because one of His disciples, reclining and eating with Him at table, was a hypocrite. He had joined the enemy of Christ, waiting for an opportunity to pounce the Lamb!

• And the other disciples had to deal with their own hypocrisy in their hearts, all having a bad conscience when Jesus taught the Law [18]: *“Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.”* They were grieved and one after another they said to Jesus, “Is it I?”

• And here we see why it is necessary and good to hear the Law of God being taught to us before we go to Holy Communion which will reveal our sinfulness to us and lead us to confession of our sins and receiving the Word of forgiveness before we partake of the Lord’s Supper.

• But, beware, Judas also asked that question and although the Lord even told him that he was the one, according to the Gospel of Matthew, he did not repent with his heart. It was all lip-service. By that time he had already spoken to the chief-priests and scribes.

• So, let us take serious the time provided in the liturgy for reflecting on our sins- think of Judas if nothing comes to mind. Ask the Lord, am I like Judas, Lord? Have I forsaken you, where I could have and should have confessed You before the world? Did I keep quiet where Your Name was pulled through the mud? Am I maybe secretly working against you?

• Then confess it whole-heartedly with the rest of the congregation, in reality with all true Christians. That is what Christians do, while in this world- we confess our sins and Jesus removes the result, the payment of sin from us, by speaking His Gospel over us.

• This is necessary, because Jesus speaks an utterly stern word of warning to the one who would betray Him. *“It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”* Jesus’ own words! There is no forgiveness for Judas! Which is beyond terrible. And he had participated in both the Last Passover and the first Lord’s Supper! Just doing it, without any trust in Jesus is not only

futile, it is highly dangerous!

• The reason being, Jesus is THE Passover Lamb. He is the real one, has always been. The animals were just foreshadows. With Jesus came the real substance, the real body, the true Lamb of God to be sacrificed once and for all sins of the whole world! Whoever knowingly and willingly mocks the Lord's Supper mocks with Jesus suffering and death. That was a high price Jesus has paid for us. If that is not good enough for someone, the way of Judas is the only way left.

• So, we see that whilst we are still in the battling church, the Lord's Supper will always have this serious, penitential tension embedded in it. This will be the case until we are all in the eternal upper room, where Jesus will serve us in the heavenly banquet and will again drink of the fruit of the vine.

• Then Judas and our old Adam will finally be separated from us forever. That will be a glorious joyful feast, something we can really look forward to.

• Nonetheless, the Lord's Supper, is true heavenly, spiritual and eternal food, which we may eat and drink of as an antidote against all evil spirits, as a gift of forgiveness of sins and to sustain our weak faith. Those who trust and confess that Jesus is Lord will also like children hear the words of institution and believe that the Lord can give them what He says.

• Namely, the body of Christ and the blood of Christ in, with and under the bread and wine.

• And Jesus nowhere explains how this is possible. So, that is something we don't need to know or worry about. We simply do what Jesus told us to do and what the true Passover was from the beginning, namely eating the true Passover Lamb out of the hands of our Lord, in His place, where Jesus is assembled with His disciples, the Body of Christ. Glory be to Jesus! **Amen.**

• *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.***