

Mark 14:12-25 – The Gospel Passover

Again, there are two “Passovers” in this passage. There is the old Jewish festival, remembering how the nation was redeemed out of Egypt. There is also the preparation for the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross for the redemption of the nations. Jesus had come to Jerusalem as an obedient Israelite, to remember the old Passover – but also to offer himself in the new Passover, to bring in the kingdom and the New Covenant through his blood.

1. Jesus in control (v12-16)

The disciples asked where to prepare the Passover. Jesus gave them some secret directions. Probably he was making sure that Judas would not betray him before the proper time. Also, his very exact instructions would have given the disciples confidence that Jesus was in full control. It reminded them that he was the Son of God, and knew everything. Terrible things were about to happen – and they needed this comfort to help them keep going when they did. Everything happened exactly as Jesus had said it would (v16). It always will! There is a lot of evil in the world – but Jesus has all power over it all, and will only allow it to fulfil his purposes. Our duty is to trust Jesus, however dark things seem. He really is in full control.

2. Jesus betrayed (v17-21)

As they ate the Passover, Jesus made a shocking announcement. Somebody would betray him – and it would be one of the twelve! Of course, Jesus had enemies – but the one who betrayed him would be a friend. Judas had seen Jesus, received Jesus' love, heard his teaching, witnessed his miracles – and yet in his heart he did not love Jesus. He put a price on Jesus, and was willing to sell him. Sadly, Jesus has always been betrayed by those who should be his friends. Christian preachers have preached so much false teaching in his name. In his name, they get for themselves money and power instead of being the people's servants. Many people just use Jesus' name for their own benefit, but without loving him. Jesus gave a terrible warning. He would certainly be betrayed as God had determined – but for the man who betrayed him, it would have been better never to have lived at all. There is something worse than even dying – we can go to hell, forever and ever (Mark 9:42-48). To die as an enemy of God is a terrible thing. Are you ready to die? Will you be safe, dying with Jesus?

3. Jesus died for us (v22-25)

Jesus then gave his disciples a new meal to remember him by – the “Lord's Supper”. This does not come from men or church tradition, but from Jesus himself. It is a simple meal of a piece of bread and a drink of wine. It was to symbolise the new covenant (v24), spoken of in Jeremiah 31:31-34. A covenant is an arrangement which describes how God can live together with his people, and be their God. In the “New Covenant”, God's people have God's laws written on their hearts, and each knows him personally and truly – do you? This came only through the blood of Jesus, because God is a holy God; to know him, our sins must be atoned for. The New Covenant is given freely by Jesus to every sinner who believes in him. He welcomes us. As Jesus spoke, the kingdom was about to arrive. Are you part of it?