

Luke 22B

- Tonight we join Jesus and disciples in an intimate moment
 - The thirteen men join in a small room on the upper floor of a Jewish home in Jerusalem
 - They are preparing to celebrate the most solemn meal on the Jewish calendar
 - It's the night of the fourteenth of Nisan
 - It's Passover
 - And they gather to celebrate the Jewish deliverance from Egypt
 - And as they assemble to celebrate a centuries old tradition, they will unknowingly establish a new tradition
 - One that will be repeated by Jesus' followers for centuries to come
 - The meal we have come to know as the Last Supper
- We join them as the meal begins

[Luke 22:14](#) ¶ When the hour had come, He reclined *at the table*, and the apostles with Him.

[Luke 22:15](#) And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;

[Luke 22:16](#) for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

- As nightfall comes, it's time for the Passover meal
 - This is a meal intended for a small group, a family or two
 - It involves a very specific, prescribed pattern of activities intended to memorialize the events of the Jewish exodus from Egypt
 - The rules were a combination of instruction from God's Law in the Torah and rules prescribed by the rabbis

- The combined effect of both the Law and the rabbis' regulations was the creation of a remarkable picture of the Jesus' work of redemption
 - But Jesus also changed some of the practices in how He conducted the meal
 - So as we examine the events of that night in Jerusalem, we need to also look at how the Passover meal ceremony should be done and try to understand why Jesus changed what He changed
- One other thought as we look at Luke's account
 - Each of the Gospel writers records the Last Supper, but the four accounts differ in important ways
 - Matt and Mark largely agree in their account
 - Luke's account is similar to the other synoptic gospels, yet he rearranges some of the events and includes more details
 - John's account, on the other hand, completely ignores the institution of the Lord's Supper
 - And instead John includes a detailed account of Jesus' discussion with the disciples after the meal
 - A description so detailed that it covers four chapters in his gospel and includes details not found in the other gospels
 - Given the significant differences, we won't spend much time tonight trying to harmonize the gospels
 - First, time wouldn't allow for it
 - Secondly, this is a study of Luke so I want to focus on that writer's viewpoint
 - As Luke's account begins tonight, the apostles and Jesus recline at the table
 - Here's an opportunity to bring together several things we've already learned in our study of Luke
 - First, we learned in Luke 7 how men in that day reclined at tables to eat a meal

- Tables were low to the ground
- Men reclined with their feet stretched out behind, resting on the left elbow
- The second thing we learned about a table came in Luke 14, where we last saw the disciples competing for the best places at the table
 - We learned there are prescribed places at the table
 - In this scene, the same was true
 - Jesus would have sat at the place of the host
 - The disciples would have been seated according to honor
 - But as we will see later in Luke's account, they are still burdened with illusions of grandeur
- By looking at the various Gospel accounts, we can place the exact position of three of the disciples as well as Jesus position
 - First, the table was probably a long rectangle made up of two table placed end to end
 - The main table, the dining table was the larger table
 - A second smaller table stuck to one end of the larger table
 - The smaller table was the Paschal table, which held the Passover meal elements
 - The rules for seating prescribed that the host take the first position at the main table
 - On the end with the smaller paschal table immediately to his right
 - We know that the guests reclined with their feet behind them
 - So if they lean on the left elbow, they are perched and an angle leaning to the left
 - John tells us in chapter 13 that he was leaning against Jesus' breast

- This means that John was seated immediately to the right of Jesus in front of the paschal table
 - This was the position reserved for the youngest member at the table
 - This would tell us that John was the youngest disciple
- We'll wait for later in this study to identify the other two disciples
- As the meal is set to begin, Jesus says something intriguing
 - He says that He has been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to eat this Passover, because He won't eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom
 - When the disciples first heard this, they must have expected that the kingdom was right around the corner
 - After all, Jesus would expect to eat this meal at least once per year
 - So at the very least, the kingdom must arrive in less than a year
 - If they did think this, we know it was misguided
 - Jesus wasn't promising a quick arrival of the kingdom
 - He was promising that the ultimate purpose of the Passover itself was about to be fulfilled in His body
 - And the next time they would feast together, would a memorial to His death and return for the kingdom
 - Rather than a memorial of the first Passover, the meal will be a celebration of what that first Passover itself anticipated, which was Christ's sacrifice
 - Just as we honor that memory now by our own celebration of the Last Supper
 - But we need to be clear

- What we do know in the form of our Communion or Last Supper is not the same thing as the Passover meal
 - And Jesus indicates here that we will once again celebrate the Passover itself when He returns
 - Which implies we will enjoy a roasted lamb
 - And we will remember the Passover sacrifice on the cross
- But the Last Supper was a new institution build upon the Passover, but yet different
 - We'll see that more clearly in a while

[Luke 22:17](#) And when He had taken a cup *and* given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves;

[Luke 22:18](#) for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes."

- Luke's narrative drops the reader into the middle of the Passover meal
 - And we know this based on some clues in the narrative itself
 - To understand this completely, let's familiarize ourselves on the basic format of the Passover meal
 - I won't try to teach an exhaustive overview on the traditions of the seder meal, but some of the details are important to this scene
 - The meal consisted of three courses interspersed by four cups of wine mixed with water
 - The courses were bitter herbs, unleavened bread and the Passover lamb
- Gamaliel said:

Whoever does not explain three things in the Passover has not fulfilled the duty incumbent on him. These things are: the Passover Lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs

The Passover Lamb means that God passed over the blood-sprinkled place on the house of our fathers in Egypt. The unleavened bread means that our fathers were delivered

out of Egypt in haste. The bitter herbs means that the Egyptians made bitter the lives of our fathers in Egypt.

- Furthermore, every Jew was look upon the experience as if it applied to him personally

From generation to generation every man is bound to look upon himself not otherwise than if he had himself come forth out of Egypt. For so it is, and you shall show your son in that day, saying, this is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.

- So the meal proceeded through these steps
 - The first step was to recite a specific prayer of blessing
 - This was followed by the drinking of the first cup of wine, mixed 50/50 with water
 - The drinking of wine was not prescribed by God's law but had long since become a standard feature of the meal
 - It's important to note that not only did Jesus keep God's law, but He also observed prescribed tradition and rules, so long as they didn't contradict God's law
 - The drinking of the wine therefore was an added tradition, yet it was one Jesus observed and eventually incorporated into the church's communion celebration
 - The very fact that the wine has become a picture of Jesus' blood tells me that God intended that man would add wine to the Passover celebration
 - After the first cup of wine, bitter herbs were dipped in salt water and small pieces of bread were dipped in a relish mixture
 - Both were were passed around the table
 - In Mark and Matt's gospel, we hear of a moment in the meal when the disciples are dipping herbs into the bowl
 - John mentions the dipping of the bread in the sop
 - In Luke's gospel, none of this is mentioned

- And these were just preludes to the Passover meal itself
 - After the herbs, there is a second cup of wine and water
 - Before the cup the group sang from Psalms 113 and 114
 - Followed by a prayer and the second cup of wine
- Following the second cup, the meal proper begins
 - The herbs are eaten, which could include lettuce, beets, or similar bitter vegetables
 - Then the unleavened bread broken into pieces and passed around the table
 - Once everyone has the bread in their hands, then the host gave a prayer of thanksgiving
 - The rabbinical rules were very specific here
 - The prayer was to following the breaking of the bread and not to proceed it
 - Because it was the bread of poverty while in captivity
 - And the poor have not whole cakes of bread only broken pieces
 - This distinction becomes more important in a moment
 - Following the bread, the lamb would be eaten
 - Nothing else could be eaten after the Lamb, since taste of the Lamb was to be the thing that lingered in the mouth
 - Following the meal there was a third cup of wine called the cup of thanksgiving
- This is the moment when Luke's account joins the meal
 - In verse 17, Jesus is giving thanks and sharing the cup of wine with the table
 - There are a number of clues to tell us this
 - First, Jesus says a prayer of thanks associated with this cup

- Only one of the four cups was consumed with a prayer of thanksgiving, the third cup
- Second, Jesus says he will not drink wine again until the kingdom
- If this had been one of the earlier cups in the seder meal, then Jesus' announcement that He won't drink wine again would have meant He wasn't going to participate in the remainder of that meal
- But as the third cup, it made sense
- The first cup was a cup of blessing, the second the cup of plagues, the third was the cup of thanksgiving and the fourth was the cup of redemption
 - Jesus would have naturally participated in the first three cups
 - But He pauses after the third, and He states He will not drink any more wine until the Kingdom celebration feast
 - And this makes sense, in that Jesus would not have observed the drinking of the cup of redemption until the redemption itself is fulfilled in his blood
 - Jesus is not just observing the early Passover
 - He was instituting the true Passover in His body
 - Therefore, there could be no observance of God's redemption until the day when the redemption is complete
 - That day awaits until the kingdom arrives
- So Jesus has paused at this point in the meal
 - The herbs and bread have been eaten and the Lamb has been consumed
 - Now last week I mentioned that I didn't see the lamb present in this meal except in the form of Jesus himself
 - But in looking at the text this week, I feel I need to back away from that viewpoint
 - In light of Jesus' statement that He came to fulfill the Law

- And based on some things I saw this week in the events of the meal, I believe its more likely that Jesus and the apostles did eat the Lamb as required in the Law
 - Therefore, I believe it's the case that the meal has proceeded as expected up to this point including the Lamb with one exception

[Luke 22:19](#) And when He had taken *some* bread *and* given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

[Luke 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.

[Luke 22:21](#) "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table.

[Luke 22:22](#) "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

- In verse 19, Luke says that Jesus toke bread, gave thanks, and then broke it and distributed it
 - He tens said eat it in remembrance of me
 - This was not a seder meal tradition
 - First it came after the Third cup, which means it came after the lamb had been eaten and the meal finished
 - There was not supposed to be anything else eaten after the lamb
 - We know this bread is different than the bread eaten as part of the seder meal because Jesus gives thanks before breaking it
 - First, it occurs after the third cup, which ends the meal
 - Secondly, In the tradition of Passover, the bread of the passover meal is supposed to be broken and distributed and then thanks is spoken
 - Since Jesus reversed that order, it tells us that this is a new institution created apart from the Passover meal itself
 - Next, Jesus picks up the cup again, and distributes it saying this is the cup of my blood for the new covenant

- Jesus himself doesn't drink from this cup in keeping with His earlier vow
- Secondly, he doesn't call this the cup of redemption
 - He says it's the cup of a new covenant
 - He specifically calls it out as different than then the fourth cup of the Passover meal
- This suggests that the Passover meal that Jesus enjoyed with His disciples is in a sense suspended
 - There is no evidence that Jesus included the fourth cup in that meal
 - Which means the meal ended without the fourth cup being shared
 - At the very least we know Jesus Himself didn't partake of that final cup of wine
- And meanwhile, he gave a new ceremony that Christians are to observe in the interim while we all await for Jesus to return and complete the seder meal He began with His disciples that day
 - We will all be there for that final cup, the cup of redemption
 - At which point we will all celebrate in a new feast that began on that night
- And when we observe the Last Supper, we remember how Jesus lived out the meaning of the Passover meal
 - How he endured the bitterness of His own rejection
 - Of how he carried our sin and shame so that we could be seen as sinless, without leaven
 - Of how He became our sacrificial lamb
 - And of how his blood was poured out for us
 - Blood mixed with water just as it will be in the cup of redemption which we all await to drink in His presence

- How exciting...we have a ticket to that dinner

[Luke 22:21](#) “But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table.

[Luke 22:22](#) “For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!”

- Luke doesn’t mention the moment of the betrayal itself, but in the other gospels we learn that after the second cup but before the meal began, Judas leaves the room
 - Specifically, he leaves at the point where the bitter herbs and pieces of bread are dipped into the salt water and relish, Jesus identifies His traitor

[John 13:21](#) ¶ When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.”

[John 13:22](#) The disciples *began* looking at one another, at a loss *to know* of which one He was speaking.

[John 13:23](#) There was reclining on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

[John 13:24](#) So Simon Peter *gestured to him, and *said to him, “Tell *us* who it is of whom He is speaking.”

[John 13:25](#) He, leaning back thus on Jesus’ bosom, *said to Him, “Lord, who is it?”

[John 13:26](#) Jesus then *answered, “That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.” So when He had dipped the morsel, He *took and *gave it to Judas, *the son* of Simon Iscariot.

- Remember the seating arrangement we mentioned earlier?
 - Here we see its significance
 - When Jesus announced that a traitor was among the group, everyone wondered who it would be
 - Doesn’t that amaze you?
 - We know that Judas was an unbeliever
 - He was a wolf in sheep’s clothing
 - Satan indwelled him
 - And yet when Jesus tells of a betrayer among the group, no one suspects Judas

- This man was able to play the part of a believer, a follower of Jesus,
- And he did so convincingly, even to men who lived together with Jesus for three years
- Should we therefore be surprised to hear that there are potentially unbelievers among us
- Men and women who act the part of a Christian but are not
- The solution for this problem is to remain true in our words and witness
 - Let the word of God take a prominent place in the activities and priorities of the fellowship
 - Teach the congregation to obey all that Jesus commanded
 - And trust that if we honor and obey God's word, than it will do its perfect work in the hearts of those who hear it
 - And when we discover those who won't obey the word, we call them out, we preach the gospel, we disciple them,

[Eph. 4:13](#) until we all attain to the **unity** of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

- But back to the scene in John
 - After Jesus' statement, Peter gestures to the one reclining on Jesus, the one He loved
 - We know that the one He loved refers to John himself
 - And it's likely that if Peter gestured to John, he would have been directly opposite John
 - This meant that Peter had chosen the lowest place at the table, which is somewhat in keeping with Peter's style
 - Peter was prideful at times, but in an ironic way, Peter would often take pride in his humility

- You only have to look a little farther in John's gospel when Peter protests at having Jesus wash His feet
- So Peter sat opposite John and asked John to find out what Jesus meant
 - Luke says the one who will betray him has his hand with Jesus on the table
 - In John's gospel Jesus responds by saying whoever receives this dipped bread
 - In Matt and Mark it was the one who dipped his hand into the bowl with Jesus
 - In all three cases, it means that the person sitting immediately to Jesus left was the betrayer
 - This was the position of honor at the table
 - Which means that Judas had chosen for himself the position of honor at the table
- This also means that Judas left the room without participating in either the Passover meal itself nor the Lord's Supper that Jesus inaugurated at the same time.
 - For he could not share in the promises Jesus made
- This suggests a couple of principles about the way we observe the Last Supper
 - As Paul teaches in 1 Cor 11, it should be a solemn occasion, reflecting on Jesus words and on our worthiness to participate
 - Ultimately, this reflection means are we partaking because we are believers in Jesus' work on the cross
 - Believers in His sacrifice as the Lamb of God
 - If not, we should not partake
 - Unbelievers should not be a part of this meal, as Judas was not
- Jesus identification of Judas lead to one of the most bizarre scenes imaginable

[Luke 22:23](#) And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing.

[Luke 22:24](#) ¶ And there arose also a dispute among them *as to* which one of them was regarded to be greatest.

[Luke 22:25](#) And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called ‘Benefactors.’

[Luke 22:26](#) “But *it is* not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.

[Luke 22:27](#) “For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who serves.

- The disciples are first taking about who will betray Jesus
 - Which means the conversation must have been about who was capable of being so low, so despicable
 - And then somehow, incomprehensibly, the conversation swings to the other extreme and the disciples begin to talk about who is the greatest
 - How do you even make that transition?
 - Who among us could be so low, so dirty to betray Jesus
 - Simon → Bartholemew doesn’t clean his beard
 - Bart → Peter he’s always bragging about his name, Peter’s rocks
 - Peter → I can’t help it if Jesus gave me a better name,
 - Besides I can’t be the traitor, since I’m going to be the greatest one in the kingdom
 - Jesus just sighs and shakes His head
- This argument wasn’t over who would be the most effective minister
 - Or who would have the greatest success in ministry
 - Or who would leave the greatest legacy
 - Or who would do the most to help God’s people

- The word for greatest here in the Greek is megas – as in biggest, most important, who will have the distinction of being the #1 apostle - the leader, in other words, of the group
- In response, He turns to them and says:
 - You know, the Gentiles have kings too – leaders who lord it over them
 - We know Jesus is upset at these men because He rebukes them with a particularly strong comparison
 - He compares them to Gentiles
 - The Gentile was the lowest of low to a Jew – the dogs of society – completely without worth
 - So Jesus says that the Gentiles have leaders too
 - There's nothing noteworthy in being a leader
 - There are plenty of ways you can be a leader if that's your goal
 - There is nothing godly about desiring leadership for the sake of ruling over people, and as proof Jesus reminds them that the ungodly gentiles want that very same thing
 - So if you mimic that desire, you are imitating godless behavior
- When Gentiles rule, they lord over their people – act like a master, as if the people exist to serve them
 - These leaders use their position of leadership to gain something for themselves at the expense of those they rule over
 - And everyone of those disciples knew exactly what Jesus was talking about, because they had all grown up in a Jewish culture that was under the constant oppression of the Gentile Roman empire
- Then Jesus adds in verse 25 that a Gentile ruler adds insult to injury by portraying himself as the people's benefactor, their provider, the one who supports the people
 - The word benefactor is e-uru-getes – it means simply doer of good
 - The ruler sees himself as the doer of good for having given back some small piece of what he took in the first place

- How hypocritical, to assume the image of a benefactor by returning something you took in an unjust manner to begin with
- Then in verse 26, Jesus says that leadership in His church must look different than it does in the world
 - The one who is greatest is the one who serves to rest – Matthew uses the world slave (doulos) to describe a leader
- The world’s model of leadership – where those in charge aim to benefit in some way from their leadership position – is the wrong model for leaders in the church
 - The one who wishes to be greatest – to lead the church - must be the one who aspires to the lowest stature
 - To give himself up, to deny himself – and serve others with no expectation of reward or even thanks – like a slave
 - A man ready to assume roles that result in others in the fellowship being lifted up – rather than himself
 - Personally, I have always thought that if we give a pastor a reserved parking spot, it ought to be the spot farthest from the church entrance
 - Or the smallest office
 - A leader should be someone willing to make personal sacrifices of his time and wealth to ensure that the church’s resources are used first and always to further the work of God in the body of Christ
- The trend today, however, seems to be for churches to model themselves after businesses
 - We have marketing plans,
 - We develop corporate branding
 - We hire fundraising consultants to ensure high giving
 - We pay for demographic studies to determine where to plant our next church to ensure the fastest growth
 - We teach our pastor to adopt Harvard business school leadership principles – to become experts in business trends and business thinking

- Now, none of these things are wrong in and of themselves, as long as we are confident that God has directed us to do these things
 - But when they become the church's principle tools for moving the kingdom forward, rather than relying on God's word and His will,
 - Then we've stopped being the church and we're just another business – we're no longer salt and light
- And when we run our churches like businesses, is it any surprise that so often the men we have leading them turn out to act more like CEOs than pastors
 - Seeking after personal reward, prestige and honor for themselves rather than for God
 - Remember, Christ is the CEO of His church and He's not looking for help – He doesn't need a CEO
 - He doesn't need slick marketing, He doesn't need fancy new business leadership principles, He doesn't need seeker-friendly programs
 - He personally appeared to the most vehement Christian hater of His day and called that man to a life of extraordinary faith and service without the help of a single person –
 - Christ turning Saul into the Apostle Paul
 - If he can do that without a church or a program or even an evangelist, then He doesn't need our help to build his church
 - But He desires to work through us for our own benefit