

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Mark 14:12-26

Key Verse: 14:24

"`This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,' he said to them."

First, on reflection of Judas Iscariot and Mary Magdalene. In the last passage, we studied about a man of "sly way" and a woman of heart. Judas Iscariot was the treasurer of Jesus' company. Through this fact, we learn that he was deeply trusted to the [degree](#) that he could handle the money of Jesus' company, although they were always poor. But he was a double-minded man. I don't know exactly what was his main purpose of following Jesus. But we can tell it by the fact that he went to the enemies of Jesus and made a contract [to sell](#) Jesus for thirty [silver coins](#). Judas Iscariot did not imagine what would happen if he sold Jesus. But an immediate result happened to him and to the world. Judas Iscariot went through the backyard gate of the temple where the secret agents' room was. He entered and gave them information about where Jesus would be and received thirty silver coins and came out. Usually a man of sly way is like a third-world country congressman. They speak and act at random. They don't think about the future.

Judas Iscariot accepted the bribe money, but was he happy? After receiving the bribe money, Judas Iscariot was not happy at all. As Romans 2:8-9 say, "But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile...." This verse vividly describes Judas Iscariot's remorse and the torment of his soul. The thirty silver coins all looked like giant devils who chased him from the four corners to rip him open with their fingers and gouge out his eyes and pull out all his hair. Suddenly, he felt blinded by something. He could not see in front of him. It was because he was overwhelmed by the power of darkness. Matthew 27:3-5 says, "When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 'I have sinned,' he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood'...So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself." Judas Iscariot's mistake is that he thought he was smarter than others. He probably thought that when he sold his Master, Jesus would not be arrested, tried and killed. But his smart mind killed the body of Jesus and killed himself. Judas Iscariot's second mistake was that his thinking never sunk into his heart. The heart is the center of a person. The heart is the center of the universe. But he blocked all the good things which came from his heart and only thought about everything from his head. In short, he was a man who never connected his head and heart together. I am saying this because the world praises Judas Iscariot kind of people. We have to seriously think about Judas' smart mind and the fact that he hung himself.

On the other hand, there was a woman who met the glorious Risen Christ when she was going to Galilee, where his followers were promised they would meet him again after his resurrection. When she saw Jesus, she was so happy that she wanted to touch him. Then Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to

my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'" (Jn 20:17). This woman was a sinsick woman. She knew that she had once been a beautiful woman. But because of her sin she became a loner. A "little lesser" sinner despised her most. But when she went to Jesus, he accepted her as his own daughter. She could not hide anything. So she told him all her sins of the past. Jesus forgave her and promised her that she would be a child of God. Since then, she found God. Since then, she found a new world. Since then, she came to know what happiness was. Since then, she wanted to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in the best way she could. In Luke's Gospel we see that Jesus and his disciples had no means to support themselves. But several women, who were changed from living a sinful life to living a new life in Jesus, supported Jesus' company continually. Luke 8:2,3 says, "...and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means." There is the name of Mary Magdalene. She was once in darkness. Now she lived in the light. She was happy, though she had to wash every day twelve pairs of socks of young disciples. Humanly speaking, she was a failure. But she was a daughter of God who would inherit the kingdom of God as Saint Paul promised us. Hebrews 11:6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Let's pray that all American women will receive the kingdom of God-built by the blood of Jesus Christ-by living for the glory of God.

Second, the Passover meal (12-16). Look at verses 12-16. "On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, 'Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, "The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.' The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover." To the people of Israel, the Passover had a most significant history. It was the day God freed from the Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, his people Israel through Moses. Their slavery had extended for 430 years. So how wonderful it was that they were liberated and that they remembered the Passover. The Passover Feast lasted for seven days. Even seven days were not enough for rejoicing in the Lord for his grace to liberate them from being captives and to make them God's chosen people, a royal priesthood and a holy nation. The celebration of the Passover became a historical event.

In Jesus' time, the Passover Feast had become like an Easter gathering or a Christmas celebration for children. Look at verse 12. "On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover Lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, 'Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?'" His disciples really did not want to omit eating unleavened bread. Unleavened bread was the symbol of soldier spirit for the people of Israel when they had to eat unleavened bread at the time of the Exodus and in the time of living in the wilderness. In other words, they had to eat uncooked bread.

Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." In surprise, the disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover. The preparation of the Passover was so easy, and at the same time, it was very difficult for them spiritually because they had to prepare it out of nothing. The same is true with us. Our religion, Christianity, is preparing something out of nothing, as God made the heavens and the earth out of nothing.

Third, the meaning of Jesus' bread and the cup. Look at verse 17. "When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve." They were ready to eat the Passover, but Jesus had a serious problem in his heart. It was a person's repentance problem. If anybody wants to join the Lord's Supper, that is the blood covenant, he must have a repentant heart before God. But Judas Iscariot really disturbed the Lord's Supper.

Bob Kerry grew up in Nebraska in the 1950's imbued with a sense of patriotism. He entered the Vietnam War in 1969 as a naval lieutenant. On his first combat mission, he and six soldiers under his command, elite Navy SEALs, made a night raid on a village in a "free fire zone," that is a designated combat zone. Under the command of his superiors, Kerry's goal was to capture a tribal chieftain friendly with the Viet Cong. Kerry and his men were fired on from a group of huts. They returned fire, pouring 1,200 rounds into the area. They also used phosphorous grenades. It was over in 90 seconds. Upon investigation they found 21 dead Vietnamese women and children. There were no adult males among them. The report of the incident credited them men with 21 kills of Viet Cong soldiers and Kerry was awarded the Bronze Star. Kerry said later, "Though it could be justified militarily, I could never make my own peace with what happened that night." For years, he relived that event in his mind. He talked about it with his first wife, his parents and a few fellow veterans. As his sense of guilt and shame welled up, sometimes he considered making a public confession. But his fellow veterans persuaded him not to, saying he was getting "soft in the head." Still, his feelings of shame could not be suppressed. He said, "It is worse than guilt or regret. It's shame, life-altering shame...I thought dying for your country was the worst thing that could happen to you. Now I don't think it is. I think killing for your country can be a lot worse. Because that's a memory that haunts." But he repented and participated in the Lord's Supper.

Those who have never been to a real war do not know how controversial it is; it does not have any moral title. In war, the conqueror becomes the conqueror. All become enemies among the people of the world. When battling against enemies, no one is sane. They just act according to senior officers' orders. Lieutenant Bob Kerry did what all other soldiers had done. In fact, many American soldiers shot each other out of their fear. But he heard Jesus' calling, "Come to me, my son. Eat the Passover dinner together with me." According to his article, he accepted Jesus' invitation and ate the Passover lamb. We thank God for such Americans

who have a clear conscience.

One of his disciples was going to betray Jesus (18). He was Judas Iscariot. Jesus never abandoned even a person who was like Judas Iscariot. How did Jesus treat Judas Iscariot? Judas Iscariot had sold Jesus, but he came back. Jesus did not abandon him. Jesus was waiting for Judas to come and join the Lord's Supper. While waiting for him to repent, all the Passover food they cooked became cold. Then Jesus began to explain that there was one who would betray him: "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me." Jesus said this because he wanted to convict Judas Iscariot of his sin of betrayal so that perhaps he might repent and turn to him.

In Luke 15:11-32, we can understand the heart of Jesus through the parable of the lost son. There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, "Father, give me my share of the estate." So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, and set off for a distant country. And there he squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in the whole country and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to feed pigs. He shared the pigs' pods joyfully when he was terribly hungry. Later, he could not eat the pigs' pods and could not endure the pigs' pen where there were so many insects and dirty smells. When he came back to his senses, he said, "How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death. I will go back to my father's house." But whether his father would accept him, or not accept him—that was the question. When he came back to his father, he said to him: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired men." But the father had already forgiven him. His coming home was the act of begging forgiveness. His father's joy to see him was the expression that the father forgave all his sins. The father said to his servants, "Quick, bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. This son of mine was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found." This parable reveals the forgiving heart of God, who humbled himself even though he is holy and holy God and his glory is shining everywhere.

King David's crying over his son Absalom also helps us know the heart of Jesus. When the messenger came to him with news of the battle, David did not ask which side won. He only asked in 2 Samuel 18:32, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" At the beginning, Absalom's army seemed to be winning. But David's commander-in-chief Joab lured them out of the city and brought them to the forest of Ephraim. At the same time, Joab mustered his soldiers. During the battle, when Absalom was marching into the field to fight Israel, he happened to meet David's men. Absalom was riding his mule. As the mule went under the thick branches of an oak, Absalom's head got caught in the tree. As soon as Joab, David's commander-in-chief, heard of this, he took several javelins and went to him and plunged them into his heart. Absalom was dead after a few minutes. While King David was sitting between the inner and outer gates, the watchman went up to the roof through the gateway by the wall. He reported Absalom's death. 2 Samuel 18:33 says: "The king was shaken. He went up to the room over the gateway and wept. As he went, he said: 'O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you—O Absalom, my son,

my son!'" We can guess how painful it was. We can guess how painful it was for Jesus while he was waiting for Judas to come back and join the Lord's Supper.

Look at verse 12. "On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb...." Jesus sent two of his disciples into the city. They found everything just as he told them and prepared the upper room in which they could eat the Passover meal. Look at verse 18. "While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, 'I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me.'" At the Passover dinner, it was too painful a story.

Look at verse 19. "They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, 'Surely not I?'" Look at verse 20. "'It is one of the Twelve,' he replied, 'one who dips bread into the bowl with me.'" Here Jesus revealed divine forbearance. His other disciples only wanted to eat the Passover dinner. But Jesus was deeply attached to Judas Iscariot, who had already received thirty silver coins and sold Jesus to the high priests. Jesus did not give up on him. Here Jesus warned him to repent. But Judas did not repent. Mark does not comment on Judas' response. But John's expression in his gospel is indeed superior. John 13:30 says, "As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night." On one hand, Judas received Jesus' love. That was the Passover bread. On the other hand, thirty silver coins were in his mind. He had to decide to choose Jesus, the Savior of the world, or money. He took the bread and went out. And it was night. This one word, "And it was night," tells us what Judas Iscariot's future would be. From Judas Iscariot we have to learn that we must repent before God when the chance comes to repent. But Satan always grabs us and never lets us go to Jesus to repent.

Peter, the top disciple, who bragged about himself that he would die with Jesus, denied Jesus three times in the courtyard. But he soon came out of the courtyard and cried until he lost his voice. Peter was Peter. Peter was not Judas Iscariot. Peter made a mistake. But he knew how to recover from his mistakes.

As a human being, everybody wants to be an ordinary person. There is a young man who wanted to do something good. But he did not want to carry the heavy burden to become a great man. So he decided to become an elementary school teacher for fourth graders. At the same time, everybody wants to be somebody, like Julius Caesar or Herod the Great. They want to sit on the throne and rule the world with a finger motion. They want to be attended by 120 palace girls. But these human wishes are nothing. James 4:14b says, "You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." Human beings are like a mist that appears in the morning and vanishes as soon as sunshine smiles in the east. These human beings have too much political ambition and vanity. They say that there was a king in Sudan. He was sitting on the throne. But one night he had a dream that he wanted to be a king and dance with the queen at a party. Out of passion in his sinful human dream he screamed from his bed, sweating a lot, and surprised his queen. The next morning he became insane. He never acknowledged that he was a king. Peter said in 1 Peter 1:24,25a, "For, 'All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever.'" St. Peter's understanding that men are like grass is most adequate. These grass-like human beings have too much of

a dream but swim in laziness. They don't know what to do before God.

We don't know what to do before God. But we must know one thing to do before God. When King David conquered the promised land, his kingdom was firmly established. He had fought as a mighty warrior and king and a good shepherd for his people. But one day in springtime he was too tired and overslept. When he woke up, all the soldiers had already marched out of the city. That evening he committed adultery with his most loyal general's wife. From that time on, he lost everything. He was unhappy. He was too fearful to come to God. In order to cover his sin, he had his loyal general killed. After that, he almost became insane. So he cried and cried, not knowing what to do. God gave him wisdom to come to him. Then he could see a beam of light. He cried out, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned..." (Ps 51:1-4). Here his greatness is that he said, "Against you, you only, have I sinned." As the king, David was the law. Abusing a general's wife was nothing to the king. But he had the Spirit of God in his soul. He was King of Israel. But God was the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. For several days he cried and repented. Then God restored his joy of life. He could not be happy when he was in sin even as a king. The palace and palace girls could not make him happy when he was not right before God. So he came to God. The purpose of telling this story is to say that our Lord Jesus Christ gave Judas Iscariot so many opportunities to come to him. But Judas rejected his invitation. What a pitiful story it is.

How did the disciples respond to this shocking news? One by one, each said to himself, "Surely it is not I! Maybe it is I!" They were overwhelmed by sorrowful feelings. The food was getting cold; their pain and sorrow grew and grew until all of them were knocked down, with the table in the middle. When we think about Judas Iscariot we shudder. But we must know that Judas is a warning to those who love money more than God. His love of money did not make him happy. History branded him as a betrayer of Jesus. Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve disciples, but he became a betrayer. It is indeed a sorrowful story. But human beings are so base that even the chosen Twelve could not trust each other.

Fourth, the meaning of the Passover Feast (22-26). Look at verses 22-26. "While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take it; this is my body.' Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,' he said to them. 'I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.' When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." What then is the blood of the covenant? As we know well, blood is life. If lifeblood is bad, a man dies sooner or later. Spiritually speaking, those who do not drink the blood of the covenant of Jesus cannot have eternal life in the kingdom of God.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take it; this is my body'" (22). When Jesus said, "this is my body," he was talking about man's happiness and joy. John 6:35b says, "He who comes to me will never go hungry,

and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." Jesus satisfies man's soul. Jesus satisfies man's desire for happiness. Jesus is the holy Son of God. If we have a good father, we are happy when we are young. Likewise, without eating the body of Jesus, we cannot experience happiness, bestowed in the paradise after the creation of the heavens and the earth.

Look at verse 23. "Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it." He went on to say, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (24). What is the blood of the covenant? We have thought about the blood covenant through Jesus' blood and body. One thing we must remember is that we must really drink the blood of Jesus and eat the body of Jesus.

What does "my blood of the covenant" mean? It is simple to explain. John 15:1 says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener." We must have a life-giving relationship with Jesus. Especially we must have a blood relationship with Jesus. The blood covenant is the covenant sealed by Jesus' blood on the cross. The main meaning of the "new covenant" refers back to the old covenant. John the Baptist condensed this idea most excellently by saying, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29) Jesus came to the world to die on the cross to pour out his holy blood to cleanse our sins. As we know, blood is life. Praise and thanks be to Jesus who gave his life to save us from our sins.

Have you ever drank the blood of Jesus in your soul? Have you ever eaten the body of Jesus? It is absolutely necessary. Our Christian religion is not based on mass production, as our modern technology demands. Our Christian religion is very personal, as Jesus saved a Samaritan woman, and as Jesus talked with Nicodemus in the night.

May the blood of Jesus cleanse all our sinsicknesses. May the blood of Jesus make us pure and humble children of God so we may live with joy and the peace of God in this troubled world.