

In Nomine Iesu

Midweek Lent 1 2024

Until I drink it new in the kingdom of God - Mark 14:1-26

Consider the dilemma facing Jesus' disciples "two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread." They, and everyone else in Jerusalem, including the woman in the house of Simon the Leper who anointed Him for burial, knew that the leaders of Israel were looking for a way to kill Him. What to do? One of them, Judas, probably the cleverest of the twelve, decided to join the winning side by betraying Jesus. The other eleven just followed Him, not knowing what else to do, but knowing it could lead to their own deaths. They asked Him only the simple question of where did He plan to eat the Passover, fearing to ask other, more difficult questions. It was only there in the room prepared for them for the Passover that Jesus told them one of them would betray Him into death, so they "began to be sorrowful."

It is always easier to look backward in time to see clearly what **was** coming then than to look forward into the future to see what **is** coming. Hindsight, as they say, is 20/20. We could say that the disciples should have realized how clearly Jesus saw what was coming. They should have realized this just from their having asked Him about where they would eat the Passover. He already knew where. Everything was prepared. All they had to do was to show up in the upper room. He knew because He knew the Old Testament Scriptures. He heard them through ears unhindered by sin. He understood what His Father gave the

prophets to write, trusting only Him and not in any wisdom of man. He saw what was coming, and He comforted the disciples accordingly.

Let us consider only one such thing tonight. After concluding the last Passover with them and then instituting the Supper of the New Testament, Jesus said to the eleven, “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.” This is a prophecy and a promise. Think about the sequence of these events from the point of view of the eleven. They’d asked Him where they would eat the Passover. Obviously, they knew of no such arrangements. He told them that all was ready, not to worry. They trusted that it was so. Then they went and found it to be just as He had foretold. There they celebrated the Passover for what He said would be the last time. After that Jesus took some Passover bread, and said of it, “This is My body.” Then He took some of the wine and said of it, “This is My blood.” These, He said, He was giving them to eat and to drink for the remission of sins. They ate and drank as He commanded, believing what He said, trusting His words over and above what their own eyes told them. But – and here was a first - He had not partaken of this new meal with them as He had with the Passover. Why? And why did He say that He would not drink again of the fruit of the vine “until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

If you search through the New Testament scriptures, you will not find any reference to Jesus drinking wine after His resurrection. No such thing is recorded. Are we then to think that He promised something and did not fulfill it? Or are we looking in the wrong place? Carefully consider His

words once more: “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.” What does He mean, “When I drink it new?”

Remember what the thief on the cross asked Jesus: “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” (Luke 23:42) What did he have in his mind when he said, “When You come into Your kingdom”? What did he see? He knew what was written above his head on the cross: Thief! But he also knew what was written above Jesus: King of the Jews! What had he been hearing from the crowd in those agonizing hours on the cross? He heard how the leaders of the people denounced the title Pilate gave to Jesus. They would have preferred it to say: Imposter! The more the thief listened to them the more he came to see that Jesus was indeed the king, that He was the son of David, who came to bring salvation to God’s people, something he must have heard about in his younger pre-criminal years, and so He asked, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” Remember me when You take up Your power and rule as king. Remember me when You make all things new again in the new creation.

Then he heard Jesus cry out, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” And after that, “I thirst.” The thief had seen Jesus refuse to drink before when the soldiers had offered Him sour wine. But now He asks for it. Now He drinks, because, having suffered damnation and separation from God to atone for all sin, including that of the thief himself, the Messiah’s kingdom had come. His rule of forgiveness, grace, and mercy was set into motion. All things were being made new again. He watched Jesus as He

savored the sweetest and best vintage ever tasted by any man ever, the sour wine even Roman soldiers would not drink but gave to the condemned.

So, the prophecy John had heard the night Jesus was betrayed was fulfilled. John was there at the cross. He heard Him, saw Him, and wrote years later, “After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), ‘I thirst.’ A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished,’ and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (John 19:28-30) John wrote his gospel account in the 80’s A.D., when he was an old man. The other three gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke had all been written by then. So, His promise delivered to the eleven on the night when He was betrayed, had become Scripture, not of the Old, but of the New Testament. And John made sure that the world knew that Jesus’ promise to drink of the fruit of vine new in the kingdom of God, spoken that night in the upper room was fulfilled **the very next day**.

Dear friends, Jesus put the Supper He instituted on Maundy Thursday together with Atonement He made for the sins of all on Good Friday. He tied them together, bound them together, not only for the sake of the eleven who witnessed all these things in those fearful days but also for us today who eat and drink His very body and blood, which secured our forgiveness and salvation, so that it would be just as St. Paul said, “As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:26) You

proclaim that He who instituted the Supper on the night He was betrayed, made it the New Testament in His blood the very next day when He drank the bitter cup of God's wrath in our place, and then drank the sour wine to show His disciples of every age that that the New Creation in Christ had come, that the King had come into His kingdom, so that you can know as surely as the thief did, that you too will be with Him in paradise. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria