

# JESUS, THE EUCHARIST & THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (MATT 26–28)

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## SETTING THE STAGE

1. Jesus' passion prediction (Matt 26:1–2)
2. Caiaphas and chief priests seek to arrest Jesus by “stealth” and kill him lest their be a “tumult” (Matt 26:3–5)
3. Jesus is anointed by the woman at Simon's house (Matt 26:6–13)
  - a. Jesus eats with the unclean right before Passover!
  - b. The disciples protest as a “waste”; could have been given to the poor (Matt 26:8–9)
  - c. Jesus teaches the act supersedes almsgiving: personal commitment to specific need of Christ
  - d. Symbolizes:
    - i. The immeasurable value of Jesus' presence; an act of worship
    - ii. “Messianic” role: high priests (Lev 8:12), kings (1 Sam 10:1), & prophets anointed (Ps 105:15)
    - iii. Jesus' priceless gift of his life
4. Judas' betrayal (Matt 26:14–16):
  - a. Stark contrast to the woman at Bethany
  - b. Sells Jesus for 30 pieces of silver: the cost of a slave (Exod 21:32)
  - c. Zechariah 11:2: “And they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver.”
5. Preparation for Feast of Passover (linked with feast of Unleavened Bread): Last Supper as Passover Meal

## LAST SUPPER

**Matthew 26:26–28:** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.”<sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you;<sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.<sup>29</sup> I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.”

1. Jesus' Establishes a New Covenant
  - a. The Sinai Covenant
    - i. **Exodus 24:3–11:** Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, “All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do.”<sup>4</sup> And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>5</sup> And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and *sacrificed peace offerings* of oxen to the LORD.<sup>6</sup> And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.<sup>7</sup> Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.”<sup>8</sup> And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, “*Behold the blood of the covenant* which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”<sup>9</sup> Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up,<sup>10</sup> and they saw the God of Israel. . .<sup>11</sup> And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; *they beheld God, and ate and drank.*
    - ii. **Exodus 32:30–32:** On the morrow Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the LORD; *perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.*”<sup>31</sup> So Moses returned to the LORD and said, “Alas, this people have sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold.<sup>32</sup> But now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and *if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book* which thou hast written.”
  - b. The New Covenant

- i. **Jeremiah 31:31**: “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup> But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And. . . *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*”
  - ii. **Ezekiel 34:23-25**: I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and *he shall feed them*: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup> And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. <sup>25</sup> “I will make with them *a covenant of peace. . .*”
- 2. Suffering Servant Imagery: Jesus as the Priestly Messiah
  - a. **Isaiah 53:10–12**: Yet it was the will of the LORD to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when *he makes himself an offering for sin*, he shall see his offspring, he shall prolong his days . . . <sup>11</sup> . . . by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make *many* to be accounted righteous; and *he shall bear their iniquities*. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because *he poured out* his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet *he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors*.
- 3. Miraculous language:
  - a. Reminiscent of Feeding of the Five Thousand
  - b. Miracle at Last Supper: “This is my body . . . This is my blood . . .”
- 4. True Passover Lamb:
  - a. Three Requirements of Passover (Exod 12): (1) Kill, (2) Spill, and (3) Eat your fill
  - b. Must eat the Lamb—Eucharist!
  - c. “Christ our paschal lamb has been sacrificed, *therefore let us keep the feast*” (1 Cor 5:7–8).
- 5. True memorial
  - a. Passover as “memorial” (Exod 13:8–10)
  - b. Not simply remembering the past
  - c. Making the past present through worship
    - i. **Exod 13:8-10**: And you shall tell your son on that day, ‘It is because of what the LORD did for *me* when *I* came out of Egypt.’
  - d. Eucharist: New Passover memorial—Liturgical participation in Christ’s offering

## THE PASSION OF THE SON OF DAVID

**2 Samuel 15:23, 31**: And all the country wept aloud as all the people passed by, and the king crossed the brook Kidron, and all the people passed on toward the wilderness. But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, barefoot and with his head covered; and all the people who were with him covered their heads, and they went up, weeping as they went... And it was told David, "Ahith'ophel is among the conspirators with Ab'salom."

- 1. Like Jesus, David crosses the Kidron
  - a. **John 18:1**: When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples across the Kidron valley, where there was a garden...
- 2. Like Jesus, David goes to the *Mount of Olives*
  - a. **Matt 26:30**: And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.
- 3. Both are followed on their way out of Jerusalem by people who weep for them
  - a. **Luke 23:27**: And there followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him.
- 4. Both discover they have been betrayed by a close friend in the vicinity of the Mount of Olives
  - a. Judas hangs himself (Matt 27:3–5)

- b. **2 Samuel 17:23:** ...and Ahithophel set his house in order, and *hanged himself*; and he died, and was buried in the tomb of his father.
- 5. Psalms of David in the Passion Narrative
  - a. Offering of sour wine
    - i. **Ps 69:20-21:** Insults have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. <sup>21</sup> They gave me poison for food, and *for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*
    - ii. **Matt 27:33-35:** And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull), <sup>34</sup> *they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.*
  - b. Dividing his garments
    - i. **Matt 27:35:** <sup>35</sup> And when they had crucified him, *they divided his garments* among them by *casting lots* . . .
    - ii. **Ps 22:18:** *they divide my garments* among them, and for my raiment *they cast lots.*
  - c. Deriding Jesus and Wagging Heads
    - i. **Ps 109:25:** I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, *they wag their heads.*
    - ii. **Matt 27:39:** <sup>39</sup> And those who passed by derided him, *wagging their heads* . . .
  - d. Psalm 22 and the Pierced Davidic King:
    - i. **Ps 22:1, 16-18:** My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? . . . <sup>16</sup> . . . *they have pierced my hands and feet* . . .
    - ii. Not forsaken! Psalm 22 ends with deliverance (cf. Ps 22:22–31)!

### THE PSALMS AND THE THANK OFFERING (*TODAH*):

1. Many of the psalms used are *Davidic* psalms written for a *todah*
2. *Todah* (Thanksgiving Sacrifice)
  - a. Peace-Offering (recall Moses sealed the Covenant with Peace-Offerings)
  - b. Meal: Eat Sacrifice (Meal), with Bread & Wine (cf. Lev 7:11–15; Ps 100; Ps 116:22)
  - c. Offers up suffering in faith
    - i. **Ps 50:14-15, 23:** Offer to God *a sacrifice of thanksgiving*, and pay your vows to the Most High; <sup>15</sup> and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.” . . . <sup>23</sup> He who brings *thanksgiving* as his sacrifice honors me; to him who orders his way aright
  - d. Celebrate deliverance with sacrifice and a meal
3. Closely associated with Passover (*y. Pesah* 27d; *m. Menah.* 7:6)
  - Philo: Passover as “a reminder and thank-offering” (*Spec* 2:146)
4. David’s kingdom and perpetual *todah* adoration at the tabernacle (cf. 1 Chron 16:2–7)
5. *Todah* linked to the Messianic / Eschatological age
  - a. **Jeremiah 33:11:** [once again there will be heard] the voices of those who sing, *as they bring thank offerings* to the house of the LORD: ‘Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for his steadfast love endures for ever!’
  - b. Rabbinic tradition: “In time to come all offerings will come to an end, but the thanksgiving-offering will never come to an end” (*Pesiq. Rab.* 9:12; cf. also *Lev. Rab.* 9:7).<sup>1</sup>
6. Jesus brings fulfillment: *Todah* psalms permeate the Passion Narrative
  - a. Jesus anticipates deliverance at Last Supper (Bread and Wine): His *Todah* Meal
  - b. Thanksgiving; Heb.: *todah*; Gk.: *eucharist*
  - c. ***Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1360:** The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has

<sup>1</sup> Cited from Jacob Neusner, trans., *Pesiqta deRab Kahana: An Analytical Translation* (BJS 122; 2 vols.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 1:151.

accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all ‘thanksgiving.’

## BARABBAS AND THE DEATH OF THE KING

1. The Choice of Barabbas
  - a. **Matt 27:15:** Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup> And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas [*bar* (son of); *abbas* (*abba* = “father”)].
  - b. **Mark 15:7:** And among the rebels in prison, *who had committed murder in the insurrection*, there was a man called Barabbas.
2. Jesus is condemned as the King of the Jews

**Matt 27:15-20:** So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas; and *having scourged Jesus*, he delivered him to be crucified. <sup>16</sup> And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the praetorium); and they called together the whole battalion. <sup>17</sup> And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and *plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on him*. <sup>18</sup> And they began to salute him, “Hail, *King of the Jews!*” <sup>19</sup> And they struck his head with a reed, and spat upon him, and *they knelt down in homage* to him. <sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak, and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

## THE REQUEST OF JAMES AND JOHN & THE KINGDOM

**Matthew 20:20–23:** Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. <sup>21</sup> And he said to her, “What do you want?” She said to him, “Command that these two sons of mine may sit, *one at your right hand and one at your left*, in your kingdom.” <sup>22</sup> But Jesus answered, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able *to drink the cup* that I am to drink?” They said to him, “We are able.” <sup>23</sup> He said to them, “You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.”

**Matthew 27:15–18:** Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup> And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. <sup>17</sup> So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?”

**Matthew 27:38:** Then two robbers were crucified with him, *one on the right and one on the left*.

1. Jesus comes into his kingdom *on the cross*—triumph *in suffering*
2. Drinks the cup on the Cross—Completes Passover Sacrifice
  - **John 19:28-30:** After this Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the scripture), “I thirst.” <sup>29</sup> A bowl full of vinegar stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar on hyssop and held it to his mouth. <sup>30</sup> When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, “It is finished”; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
3. We must drink the cup too!

## UNITING HEAVEN AND EARTH

**Resurrection and the New Creation:** Appears to a *Woman* in a *Garden*

**Matthew 28:17–20:** Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*.” <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”