

### GOD'S LIBERATING AND LIFE-GIVING MEALS

(Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14)

**Let Us Pray:**

***Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Amen.***

The Passover Meal and the Lord's Supper have a lot in common. As a matter of fact the former is a fore-shadowing of the latter. We can call both:

### GOD'S LIBERATING AND LIFE-GIVING MEALS

Both these meals are for people who have been **FREED** from slavery! That's how it was for God's people in the Old Testament, slaves in Egypt. And when they ate that first Passover, gathered in houses protected by the blood of a lamb put on the sides and tops of the doorframes, they were on the point of being freed! The LORD their God was about to rescue and redeem them from the bitter pain and hopelessness of slavery. And God did this through the blood of a lamb! God saved his people from the slavery of Pharaoh and from the death plague that was about to sweep over the land killing the first-born in every Egyptian home.

And so the **Passover** celebrates **freedom** and **deliverance!**

So does the **Lord's Supper!**

For it is Jesus, the Lamb of God, whose body and blood we are given to eat and to drink! This is the Lamb of God who was slaughtered on that cursed tree of the cross, as Paul in Galatians 3:13 reminds us:

***"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'"***

He was raised and restored to a new and never-ending life on Easter morning so that we might be freed and delivered, redeemed and saved, from all those dark forces and powers that enslave, bruise and hurt us.

And so both of:

**GOD'S LIBERATING AND LIFE-GIVING MEALS** celebrate **freedom!** Not freedom to live as usual! But Freedom with responsibility, freedom to live the **new life** as God's redeemed people. The apostle Peter [1 Peter 2:9] reminds us of who, and whose, we are when he says:

***"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."***

So you see, as God's liberated people, we are **God's servants!** This day is called Maundy Thursday, or Mandate Thursday. We have two mandates:

**1 To BE FOOT WASHERS,**

**2 To CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENTS.**

These two commands belong together. The only way we can be God's foot washers, the lowest job of the lowest house slave, washing the dirty, dusty feet of people, is to be **strengthened** by the great **Foot Washer** himself!

**GOD'S LIBERATING AND LIFE-GIVING MEALS** are also for people headed for **severe testing and trial**.

The Exodus people would need all kinds of strength, power and perseverance as they began those forty years of travel through the wilderness!

And Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper and offers his followers this meal, for comfort and assurance and strengthening, just before they headed for the trials, the fears, and the torment in the Garden of Gethsemane, Good Friday, and the fears of persecution that would follow.

And who knows what kind of Gethsemanes and Good Fridays, we will face, beside the current Corona Virus Pandemic we face now? But there is no need to worry and fret for we have his promise that he will never leave us or forsake us; that he will be with us; that nothing whatsoever, will ever be able to separate us from his loving concern! This is a promise that he signed and sealed by his sacrificial death and shedding of his blood!

And so, even though we are physically isolated from each other, Jesus is with us, and in him we are one!

And the day will surely come when we will be able to physically gather together once again and partake of

### **GOD'S LIBERATING AND LIFE-GIVING MEAL!**

And even more certain is that the day will come when we will physically be face to face with our Lord. Remember the words of Jesus when he first gave this meal [Luke 22:15-16]:

***"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God."***

And remember the words of Paul in our second reading:

***"Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."***

This is a gentle reminder to us that Jesus, the Lamb of God, by his sacrificial death on the cross and his Easter victory has delivered us from slavery, we are still in the wilderness desert. And though this desert might from time to time bloom with beauty, it is still the desert.

It is not the home of our inheritance. We are still on the journey until we safely cross over into the arms of the One who bore the cross for us and we are at last in his kingdom.

Until that day he continues to sustain and nourish us with his loving presence.

Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Sermon by Pastor John Simboras

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