

# Make Ready the Passover

(Sermon Notes)

By Warren Zehrung – January 19, 2013

Matthew Mark and Luke each wrote very similar narratives about the Passover service.

## Matthew 26:

- 14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,
- 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.
- 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.
- 17 Now the first *day of the feast* of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?

The King James Translators knew little of the Feasts so they sometimes stated it wrong.

This verse should read,

“Now the first of unleavened bread...”

**Leviticus 23:5, Leviticus 23:6; Numbers 28:16, Numbers 28:17**

When is the first time unleavened bread is eaten each year – it is at the Passover Service!

## Exodus 12:

- 18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

That is at the beginning of the 14 of Abib – not the 15 which is the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## Matthew 26:

- 18 And [Jesus] said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.

Title here:

## Matthew 26:

- 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they **made ready the Passover**.

\*Brethren, there is preparation before the Passover – **physical and spiritual**.

## Matthew 26:

- 20 Now when the **evening was come**, he sat down with the twelve.

There it is – that is the proper time – evening – at the beginning of the 14 of Abib.

## Matthew 26:

- 21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.
- 22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?
- 23 And he answered and said, He that dips his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.
- 24 The Son of man goes as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.
- 25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

Judas knew good and well that he was the one who betrayed Jesus.

**Matthew 26:**

- 26** And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.
- 27** And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;
- 28** For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
- 29** But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

It was the night of the final and last Passover supper that Jesus introduced these New Testament emblems - the unleavened bread and the wine - in place of the lamb that was always slain annually.

God does things on time. He has given us an exact time for this ordinance.

Jesus instituted the New Testament symbols "when the hour was come."

**Mark 14:**

- 12** And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou may eat the Passover?
- 13** And he sent forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.
- 14** And where-so-ever he shall go in, say ye to the good-man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?
- 15** And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

**Luke 22:**

- 7** Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed.
- 8** And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat.
- 9** And they said unto him, Where wilt thou **that we prepare?**
- 10** And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entered in.
- 11** And ye shall say unto the good-man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?
- 12** And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there **make ready**. [the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples]

Title:

**Luke 22:**

- 13** And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they **made ready the Passover**.

Jesus saw to it that **preparations** were made for the Passover service. He had His disciples **make ready** the arrangements ahead of time.

Three times in John Chapter 19, John refers to the Passover – as the Preparation Day.

**John 19:**

**31** The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an High Day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

The High Day John is speaking of is the First Day of Unleavened Bread - - the 15th of Abib. (**Leviticus 23:6**)

We find that there is an instruction in the Bible that tells us **to prepare** for the Sabbaths and to **get ready** for the Passover and all the Holy Days.

We often mistakenly think only of the physical aspects of readiness. John will develop the spiritual aspects in John 13.

**Luke 22:**

**14** And **when the hour was come**, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. (Judas Iscariot was there)

Paul writes next – some 20 years after Matthew and Mark

Specific Purpose Statement

- \* We will see a **progression and development of thought** as the meaning of the Passover is fully developed – first in the Synoptic Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke – then in Paul's writings – and finally John, in chapter 13, puts the icing on the cake with the addition of the Footwashing and explanation that Christians are to serve one another – even to laying down their lives for one another – just as Jesus did at Passover – and so we have come full circle.

John had all the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul in front of him as he wrote under the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit.

As John grew in understanding and wisdom throughout his latter years he came to realize what was needed to complete Jesus Christ's intentions for the Passover service – and John came to realize the paramount importance of the Footwashing in showing the overriding lesson of self-service and Godly love toward others.

Paul had adequately shown the problem with **division** among the brethren – John rounded out the equation with the Footwashing showing the willingness to lay down our lives – **AS** Jesus did – for our brethren.

**John 14:**

**26** But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, it shall teach you all things, **and bring all things to your remembrance**, whatsoever I have said unto you.

So John, writing very late – nearly 100 AD – puts it all together for us.

Let's see what Paul adds to development of Passover by going over to 1 Corinthians:

Jesus Christ inspired Paul to send us these words of **1 Corinthians 1**

**1 Corinthians 1:**

**10** "Now I beg of you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be **no divisions among you**; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Satan uses the oldest war tactic in the book of divide and conquer.

Let's go to **1 Corinthians 11** where we will see some "On the scene coverage" of a typical Passover Service in the church in the mid "50's AD.

Passover has gone awry and amiss.

Paul describes the problem to us:

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**17** Now in this that I declare unto you **I praise you not**, that ye come together not for the better, but for the **worse**.

Please keep your marker here – we will come back and expound on some of these thoughts in a minute.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**18** For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be **divisions** among you; and I partly believe it.

Paul says "I partly believe it" - I believe it **in part**. Not everyone was guilty of **causing division** – but an awful lot of them were!

Passover is supposed to be a Unification Feast of the Lord.

Make a list of the things that cause division:

Pride separates people. Arrogance. Haughtiness.

All SIN divides people. Drunkenness. Selfishness. Intolerance. Fear. Hurt. Abuse.

Can you believe it – that is what was going on at Passover services.

Continuing...

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**18** ... there be **divisions** among you; and I partly believe it.

**19** For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

There we see that some had the right attitude of Forgiveness, Understanding, Patience, Reconciliation, Discretion and Discernment.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**20** When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

The Old Testament Seder Passover supper is no longer a part of the New Testament Passover Service – in that it looked **forward** to the slain Lamb of God.

Now, Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, **has been** slain ONCE and for all. (**Hebrews 10:10**)

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**21** For in eating everyone takes before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is **drunken**.

**Disorderly** and **drunken** is no way to understand and appreciate Christ's sacrifice.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**22** What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? **I praise you not**.

That is a stern admonition from Paul.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**23** For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

**24** And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Not a bone of Christ's Body was broken. (Exodus 12:46, John 19:31, 36)

There is deep meaning in these Scriptures – the Church Brethren are not to be broken apart.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**25** After the same manner also [Jesus] took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often [once each year] as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

**26** For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

**27** Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

“Unworthily” – Paul is referring to the **improper divisive conduct** of the people.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**28** But let a man **examine himself**, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. [That is Making Ready for Passover]

**29** For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, **not discerning the Lord's body**.

Some of you will remember that the Moffatt translation was one of Herbert Armstrong's favorite translations.

Moffatt has for “not discerning the Lord's body,” “**without a proper sense of the Body**,” with Body capitalized.

“**Discerning**” means to discriminate, decide, look at decisively,

Translation of **1 Corinthians 11:29**:

“Since he does not discern the Lord's Body, he is eating and drinking condemnation to himself.”

Passover will be here soon (**Leviticus 23:3-4**).

Passover is the next Feast of the Lord for which we are told to “Get Ready.”

We are told that a **spiritual examination** of ourselves is the correct way we are to prepare.

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**28** “*Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*”

John, in chapter 13, closes the loop with regard to our dealing with one another with the addition of the Footwashing and explanation that Christians are to serve one another

– even to laying down their lives for one another – just as Jesus did at Passover – and so we have come full circle.

There is so much to the Footwashing that goes unnoticed.

Keep in mind that John had all the writings of Matthew, Mark and Luke on the Passover...

And John also had the explanations by Paul...

And so, John – being one of the original eye-witnesses of the Passover, felt it necessary to include the narrative of the Washing of Feet to the Gospel accounts.

There is something very important in the Footwashing Lesson that Jesus taught to His disciples – and us.

The Footwashing is so much more than a lesson in humility by getting down on the floor for a minute and washing some stink old feet.

**John 13:**

- 1** Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

Jesus compares the Footwashing to His own ultimate act of love to save us all.

**John 13:**

- 3** Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

Jesus Christ was given the authority and power from on High to change-up the Passover procedure and symbols for a Spirit led congregation – and add the meaningful and necessary Footwashing.

**John 13:**

- 8** ... Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.  
**14** If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.  
**16** Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither He [Jesus Christ] that is sent greater than He [God the Father] that sent Him.

Jesus is telling us that when we willingly lower ourselves in service to our fellow man – He assures us our place in His Kingdom will be high.

**John 13:**

- 34** A **new** commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; **AS** [the same way that] I have loved you, that ye also **love one another**.

Notice how Jesus compares the Footwashing to His own ultimate act of sacrificing Himself for others!

**John 13:**

- 35** By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have **love one to another**.

But we are not to **love one to another** in their sins – but help them **out of** their sins. Come out of Egypt – come out of sin.

**James 5:**

- 20** Let him know, that he which converts the sinner from the error of his way [come out of sin] shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins..

This is the explanation of how we are to be to one another as we **prepare for Passover**.

For a much more complete explanation of the Footwashing, see the **notes** and **listen** to the sermon, "A Servant's Towel."

It can be found here: <http://sabbathcog.net/sermons2007.htm>

As we prepare for Passover and Unleavened Bread, we put leavened bread and leavened products out of our homes as Israel of old did.

As New Testament Christians, we apply the spiritual lesson by also **putting sin out** of our lives.

We are told to examine ourselves. It is appropriate that we examine ourselves **throughout the year**, but especially, as Passover approaches.

In the days of the apostle Paul, the brethren de-leavened their homes.

### **1 Corinthians 5:**

**7** "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

Though the brethren were meticulous in physically cleaning their homes, there was the recurring problem then – just as today – of not spiritually **discerning the Lord's body**.

\*Christianity is about the Godly interaction of brethren – one to another.

Jesus said in

### **Matthew 25:**

**40** ...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Are we able to **discern** who our brothers and sisters in Christ are?

Taking Passover – while refusing to be reconciled to others – renders the Passover service contemptible in God's sight.

We must recognize all true Christians, without exception, counting them as brethren – our very salvation is at stake.

There is no more important preparation for Passover than to understand what *discerning the Lord's body* means, and then doing what Paul indicates we must.

Paul was correcting a terrible situation in the church that was occurring at the Passover service. Members were treating each other horribly – totally disregarding that Christ made His abode in those brethren. There was division – strife – drunkenness – and bickering.

*Discerning the Lord's body* is recognizing who our brothers and sisters in Christ are – and then acting accordingly toward them!

*Discerning the Lord's body* is the correct way to **make ready** for Passover.

When reading the phrase, "the **Lord's body**," in this Scripture, many will mistakenly think about the **dead** body of Jesus.

They will then begin to try to "discern the **dead body**."

This is not about how many holes, stripes and thorn scars were in Christ's physical body – or which “part” of Jesus' torso covered our ailments.

That is not what is meant here. Not at all! That is getting things all mixed up.

"The Body of Christ" is a very common term meaning **all the converted people of God**. Those who are led by God's Holy Spirit.

Surprisingly, after all these years in God's Church there is **not** a good knowledge of this concept.

Just this morning, I received an email from another Elder in God's Church – in response to this week's "Countdown" – expressing the same concern.

He wrote, "The term, "the Lord's Body" **is not well understood**.

Brethren, we must answer the question, what does Paul mean by the "**Lord's body?**" Paul was speaking of the Church of God brethren!

"The Body of Christ" is a common term meaning all the converted people of God.

Addressing the division within the Church, Paul shows that our very salvation depends on our caring for one another.

Please turn back to your marker:

#### **1 Corinthians 11:**

**18** "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there **be divisions** among you."

"**Division**" was the subject when Paul wrote that the Lord's Body was not being properly discerned.

Paul said that we must examine ourselves as to whether or not we are **a part of any division** before we take Passover.

We cannot hate, despise, or reject any of the saints; as that behavior defines **not discerning** the Lord's body.

We are obligated to extend our realm of fellowship to include all who have the earnest of God's Holy Spirit.

Paul characterized our **self-examination** as properly "discerning the Lord's body." Do we understand the full intent of this Scripture?

First of all, we must absolutely grasp the definition of the Lord's Body from the Bible itself.

\*The Body of Christ is the Church of God. This concept of Christ's Body being composed of all Church brethren is solidly established in Scripture.

\*All the brethren who are in the Church of God constitute the "Body of Christ."

Notice Paul's consistency as we highlight "Body" as he uses it:

#### **\* Colossians 1:**

**24** "For [**Christ's**] **Body's** sake, which is the Church."

That is very definitive.

**Colossians 3:**

15 "You are all called into **one body**; and be ye thankful."

**Ephesians 1:**

22-23 We read "The Church, which is **His Body**."

**Ephesians 4:**

12 "For the perfecting of the saints...for the edifying of the Body of Christ."

...the **saints**, the **Body of Christ**

**Romans 12:**

4-5 "We, being many, are one **Body** in Christ, and every one members one of another."

"Members one of another," - that shows why divisiveness is so detrimental to the Body.

**1 Corinthians 10:**

16 "... The bread which we break, is it not the [fellowship] of the **Body of Christ**?

17 For we being many [brethren] are one bread, and **one Body**. ... "

**1 Corinthians 12:**

\* 12 "... All the members of that one **Body**, being many, are one **Body**: so also is Christ."  
[Again, very definitive.]

13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into **one body** ... and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

The Lord's body," is a direct reference to **us** - the people of God's Church.

**1 Corinthians 12:**

25 There should be no schism [translated **division** in other places] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

27 Now you are the **body of Christ**, and members in particular."

Many Biblical verses firmly establish that "the Lord's Body" is a direct reference to the people of the Church of God.

When Paul said that we must be properly "discerning the Lord's Body," he meant that we cannot take the Passover and at the same time be responsible for any of the division: the broken, shattered condition of the Church.

The Church of God is not to be broken.

It is abundantly clear from these Scriptures that in explaining the meaning of the **Lord's Body**, Paul is referring to all the members of the Church of God.

Paul spoke of the tremendous importance of **discerning the Lord's Body**.

How do we then, examine ourselves with regard to all the members of the Church of God – the Body of Jesus Christ?

It is a big job – isn't it? And it's an important task at Passover time.

Paul said that because of the ongoing **division** between members – described as, not discerning the Lord's Body,

"many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (1 Corinthians 11:30)

Is Paul speaking of brethren who are physically sick and prematurely dead, or is he describing the spiritual state of some members?

Paul then calls for self-examination using the same word again:

**1 Corinthians 11:**

**31** *"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."*

**Two** different words are translated "Judge" here:

"If we would **discern** ourselves, we should not be **condemned**."

"If we would **examine** ourselves, we should not be **condemned**."

We need to personally prepare for this upcoming Passover season by beginning to focus our studies on the meaning of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

Today, Church of God groups are operating independently from one another.

They have no policy to recognize the other groups, or the scattered brethren.

The Scriptures do not allow for groups of Christians to co-exist side-by-side without recognizing one another.

Unity is required, and unity comes only when we have a right relationship with God and man.

Jesus tells us that, as Christians, our priority must be to reconcile, not only with God, but also with one another.

Christ taught that reconciliation has a higher priority than even church attendance.

**Matthew 5:**

**24** "Be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

It is Jesus' desire that we work toward unity and oneness.

If we stop laboring for unity among God's people, we have fallen into one of the Adversary's traps.

We need to understand from Scripture that God does not allow us to have an attitude of independence from other brethren.

**John 17:**

**21** "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

As we approach the Passover season, we remember our own sins and shortcomings and our deep, personal need for Christ's sacrifice.

We **examine ourselves** and know that somehow God will forgive us one more time.

Sometimes the road has been a lonely one, and we find ourselves just a little weary from the journey.

We reflect often on the times we did not get it right, on the mistakes we made, the many times we fell short.

Brethren, as we "**make ready for Passover**" let's act accordingly toward **all** of God's people.

End – Make Ready the Passover