

**Tech Sermon for Maundy Thursday, 2020 –
presented via, Facebook, Elim’s Facebook page and web page**

Greeting

May you be welcomed in the holy and blessed name of God, Son, and Holy Spirit, where we see the sacrifices our + Lord Jesus Christ made for all people.

Maundy Thursday - Hymn 1

Ah, Holy Jesus

Text by Johann Heenrman

Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended
That we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted.

Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee.
“Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.

Word and Gospel

Moving quietly along the outer stone walls of the buildings, the shadows were lengthening as the sun was lowering in the sky. The out-stretched shadows made it easier to remain unseen. Entering the building and closing the door, the darkness seemed to take away my sense of sight, so I was able to make my way up the steps to the Upper Room. The dark, cool dampness of the stone walls filled my senses until I reached the top of the stairs. Then the welcome scents of the Passover meal – the bitter herbs, the apples and dates, the roasted lamb, and the wine – replaced the dank scent of the stone walls.

It was then I saw them, my dearest friends, reclining at the table with Him. All were talking in hushed tones as if something heavy, a sense of fear, was hanging in the air just above our heads. I couldn’t say what it was. But it wasn’t the feeling we experienced when we usually ate the Passover, the same meal as that of our ancestors.

A reading from the 26th Chapter of Matthew.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" ¹⁸ He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" ¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal. (Matthew 26:17-19)

So we ate the Passover meal, and then He did something odd. He stood up and took the last loaf of bread. He held it up and said thanks. Then He broke the bread and said these words, "This is my body given for you. When you eat this bread, remember me." Eat His body? If that isn't strange enough, He said more as He raised the cup. "This is my blood which is shed for you, and for all people, for the forgiveness of sins. When you drink from this cup, remember me."

What does this mean?

Eat His body and drink His blood? Jews are forbidden to drink blood so why is He, a Jew, telling us to drink His blood. Then he did something else that was strange. He washed the feet of each of us. But why? I don't understand.

A second reading from the 26th Chapter of Matthew and the 13th Chapter of John.

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." ²⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:26-29 NRSV)

He got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." (John 13:4-8 NRSV)

Another reading from the book of Matthew.

So much has happened. I can scarcely take it all in. We've eaten and our feet have been washed. Judas has left to go where, I don't know. And now it is dark. When everything is dark, things seem so much more uncertain, frightening even. As we leave, He says, "Let's go to the Garden. Peter, James, and John, come with me and wait while I pray. So they left.

The four of them were gone for a while. But they returned. He looked deeply upset. He looked defeated and denied. Apparently, Peter, and James, and John fell asleep while He was praying. Couldn't they have stayed awake like He asked them to?

The 4th Gospel reading is from Matthew Chapter 26.

³⁶ Then Jesus went with the disciples to a place called Gethsemane; and He said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." ³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸ Then He said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." ³⁹ And going a little farther, He threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." ⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and He said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴² Again He went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." ⁴³ Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So leaving them again, He went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand." (Matthew 26:35-46 NRSV)

When He and the other three came out of the Garden, the crowd with Judas was standing there with clubs and swords. There was some conversation between Judas and Him. And one of us drew a sword and cut off the high priest's servant's ear. He went to the one with the sword and said to put it away. They went to Him and took Him. and He went quietly, without a fight. And all of us departed. We had abandoned our dear Friend.

A while later, Peter was in the courtyard and a young girl said to Peter, "You were with Him." Peter said that he wasn't. Two more times, this girl asked him if he knew the Man that was led away. And again Peter said, "I do not know the Man."

Judas betrayed Him. Peter denied knowing Him. We couldn't stay awake. He was certainly betrayed by those who were dear to Him. He told us we would betray Him. We did. We betrayed Him.

The final reading for tonight is also from the Gospel of Matthew.

Then He said, "My betrayer is at hand." ⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." ⁴⁹ At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. (Matthew 26:46 - 49 NRSV)

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." ⁷⁰ But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." ⁷¹ When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." ⁷² Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." ⁷³ After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." ⁷⁴ Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. ⁷⁵ Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And Peter went out and wept bitterly. (Matthew 26:69 - 75 NRSV)

We did this to You, Lord. We did this. We betrayed You. We denied You. Forgive us our sins.

Maundy Thursday - Hymn 2

Go to Dark Gethsemane

Text by James Montgomery

Go to dark Gethsemane,
All who feel the tempter's power,
Your Redeemer's conflict see.

Watch with him one bitter hour;
 Turn not from his griefs away;
 Learn from Jesus Christ to pray.

Prayers

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was the servant of all.

Eternal God, in the sharing of a meal your Son established a new covenant for all people, and in the washing of feet he showed us the dignity of service. Grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these signs of our life in faith may speak again to our hearts, feed our spirits, and refresh our bodies, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 Hallowed be thy name.
 Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
 On earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this daily bread our daily bread.
 And forgive us our trespasses
 As we forgive those who trespass against us.
 Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil,
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
 Forever and ever.
 Amen.

Sending

As we stand and watch and wait for his coming, let us know that his promises are true.
 As we stand and watch and wait, let us bide our time by serving those who need us most. **Amen.**