Mark 14:1-25 - Our Passover Lamb

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Introduction - During Passion week, Mark presents two narratives demonstrating a heart-wrenching contrast. Jesus is both worshipped and betrayed as He celebrates Passover and the inauguration of a new covenant. Jesus should be our most treasured possession because He gave a new covenant by offering Himself as the Passover Lamb. Like many of his narratives, Mark presents these stories in a sandwich structure, intertwining different stories to emphasize the message.

v1-11 - True Adoration - This passage contrasts the murderous religious leaders (v1-2) and the traitor Judas (v10-11) with the adoration of Mary (Martha's sister) (v3-9). Passover was a memorial meal for Israel to remember their deliverance from Egypt (Exo 12:1-13; Lev 23:4-8). The religious leaders decided to kill Jesus, but they fear repercussions if done during the feast. The feast of unleavened bread was one of three times all men assembled in Jerusalem (Deut 16:16). Perhaps 2 million people were in the city.[1] Jesus stays 2mi from Jerusalem in Bethany (Jo 11:18). Lazerus, Martha, and Mary were with Him (Jo 12:1-8). John identifies the woman who breaks the perfume flask as Mary, a different event than Lu 7:36-50. Mary honors Jesus, anointing him with a pound of perfume (nard) that cost nearly a year's wages. The flask had a long thin neck that was broken to use it.[2] She anoints his head and feet (Jo 12; Ps 23:5) and wipes his feet with her hair. Some disciples (including Judas) assess this as a *waste* with a false concern for the poor. Judas is called "the son of *perdition*" using the same word (Jo 17:12). Jesus rebukes them: she has done (lit.) "a good work."[3] Mary recognized her Savior's lordship and coming death. Jesus allows this demonstration of adoration. Mary's act was an example of what happens when someone truly loves and understands the value of what God has done for us (12:41-44).

In light of this, Judas provided the religious leaders an early opportunity to kill Jesus by betraying Him privately. Jesus was worth more to Judas dead than alive. He was financially motivated (Jo 12:6) and did not accept who Jesus was. 30 pieces of silver (Matt 26:16) connects to Old Testament prophecy (Zec 11:12).

v12-25 - Celebration of a New Covenant through God's Passover Lamb - Mark covers the preparation for the Passover on Thursday afternoon (v12-16), a woe to the betrayer (v17-21), and the Lord's supper (v22-25). The triumphal entry (11:1-11) is the only other event Jesus carefully orchestrates. Peter and John (Lu 22:8) look for a man carrying a water pitcher (typically carried by women).[2] Jesus knows the heart of every man and the future. The disciples were sorrowful, but the Holy Spirit responds in those situations: He comforts us - God is with us, and He fills and equips us to follow Jesus, turn from sin and live a godly life, loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves. This fulfilled the suffering servant prophecies (Is 53; Ps 22; 41:9; Heb 10:4-5).

Jesus says the bread symbolically represents His body. He's not yet shed His blood (Jo 7:35; 8:12; 10:7,9). He gives an ordinance that the disciples will understand soon. "Given thanks" - *eucharist*. "Blood of the covenant" alludes to the Sinai covenant inaugurated by a sprinkling of blood (Ex 24:4-8). God is cutting a new covenant through His upcoming sacrificial death on the cross (Jer 31:31-34; Heb 10:20; 8:6-10, 13; 13:20; 1Pe 1:17-21; Lu 22:17-20). *Diatheke* (covenant) is not an agreement between two parties, but an arrangement from a single party.[3] The Lord's table helps us remember this covenant and deliverance like Passover (Luke 22:19). Jesus celebrates Passover before becoming the Passover Lamb. God provides Himself a Sacrifice (Gen 22:8; Jhn 1:29, 36; 1Co 5:6-8; Rev 5). The day the passover lambs are slaughtered in the temple, Jesus is crucified on a cross.[4] In the Passover meal, four cups of wine are consumed, but Jesus apparently stops after the third cup (of thanksgiving) and abstains from the cup of consummation.[3] There's a coming day where we'll be with Jesus celebrating the wedding feast of the Lamb!

So, what? Now, what? Jesus did not exclude Judas from this Passover meal - he had every opportunity to repent. Christians have been forgiven by Jesus Christ. Every sin, past, present, future is covered by the cross (1 Jo 1:9).

- What "beautiful things" can I do for my Lord (1Th 4:3; Rom 12:1-2)? How can we break ourselves in an offering?
- What do we really treasure? What would you give to have Jesus? If someone could intimately inspect every aspect of your life, would they see an outrageous love for Jesus?
- What do we remember when we celebrate the Lord's Table?

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[1] *Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. Pg. 980.
[2] *Word Meanings in the New Testament*. Earle. Pg. 45-46.
[3] *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*. Walvoord and Zuck. Pg. 175-178.
[4] *Halley's Bible Handbook. Pg. 611.*