# **The Gospel According to St. Mark**

**Mark 14:17-31**

**Concordia Commentary – Dr. James Voelz, 2019**

## **Mark 14:17-26 – A Covenant Meal**

* V.17
  + The twelve are specifically mentioned
* V.18
  + Reclining was an expression of freedom for the Jews
    - Slaves ate standing up
    - For Jews to recline while eating, indicated that they were no longer slaves.
  + Reclining was done on the person’s left side.
    - Aided by cushions
    - Eating with the right hand
    - Feet stretched out
    - Most honored guests sat near the host
  + Betrayal
    - Psalm 41:9-12 (David and Absalom)
      * Jesus shares David’s trust in God for eventual triumph
* V.19
  + “Is it I?”
    - Greek grammar here indicates they were expecting a negative response from Jesus. (“No, it is not you.”)
* V.20
  + More than the twelve there?
    - Jesus would have said, “One of you…” not “One of the twelve…” if they were alone.
  + “Bread???”
    - Bread is not used in the Greek.
      * Bread was used as a utensil
      * In the Passover ceremony, bread was used in the later stages of the meal.
      * If bread is the case, it may have been used earlier in the meal.
  + The washing bowl?
  + Jesus statement may be done to indicate how close to Him the betrayer is.
    - If it was to single out Judas, the others would be on him immediately.
      * Wouldn’t you?
* V.21
  + Note Jesus’ use of “the Son of Man”
  + It is possible that “that man” is Jesus
    - “Indeed it would be better for him, for the one handing our Lord over, if that (Son of) Man had not been born, for then he would no be able to do his heinous deed.”
      * How frightening this would be for us!
* V.22
  + The blessing and breaking of the bread is awkward
    - A standard understanding of the Passover puts the one and only breaking of the bread in the middle of the entire event, not the beginning.
    - The actions immediately preceding the breaking of the bread are the Passover Haggadah and the drinking of the second cup
      * Neither involves actual eating.
  + The blessing would be of Yahweh, not the bread
    - “Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the world, who has caused bread to come forth out of the earth.”
  + Confusion as to when the breaking of the bread takes place in the Passover meal
  + “Take it; this is My body.”
    - In the Passover ceremony, nothing is said about what the bread is.
    - “is” is the problem.
      * Jesus does not say “is like” as in a representation.
        + But for normal people like you and I, it is possible to understand “is” to be a representation.

“My body is a temple.”

* + - * + But this is not a normal person.

This is the Son of God/the very God of Israel/Yahweh Himself who says “this is!”

* + - * We need to consider the early church’s understanding
        + 1 Corinthians 10:16
      * “The understanding of the real presence in the Lord’s Supper does not rest upon an abstract linguistic consideration of the word is. Rather it rests upon a consideration of who is saying the words in this particular context: The Son of God, who is Himself God.”
* V.23
  + Confusion as to which cup is being used.
    - Possibly the cup of blessing at the end of the main meal with the Passover lamb.
  + This is odd…
    - Everybody has their own cup!
    - Jesus is doing something different and special here by having them all drink of His cup!
* V.24
  + “is” is back again
  + “shed for many”
    - Focus is on whose sake something is being done
    - Exodus 24:6
  + “blood of the covenant”
    - Exodus 24:8
* Throughout this Passover meal in Mark’s gospel, something is very new
  + This is not an addition or change to the Passover meal.
  + When Jesus declares that the bread is His body, He is replacing the Passover lamb (which is not mentioned in Mark), with His body.
    - The same goes for the cup, in which only one is mentioned of the four.
  + These things create a new ceremony that replaces and is greater than the old one.
    - Note how Paul has included “in My remembrance” in 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.
      * This “remembrance” takes precedence over the first exodus
* What is the new Passover meal?
  + All depends on replacing the Passover lamb with the real presence of Jesus
    - The very body of Jesus is the new lamb which is sacrificed
      * 1 Corinthians 5:7
    - The remember the blood of the first Passover lamb was used to cover and save the children of Israel.
      * Jesus’ blood is shed on behalf of “many”
    - The blood of the lamb is the blood of Jesus present in the cup at the Last Supper.
      * Just as the blood of the lambs at the first Passover turned away the judgment of God, as the angel of death passed over the homes (Exodus 12:12-13), now Jesus’ blood can be seen to turn away God’s judgment… but perfectly!
    - It is on this night Jesus returns to that first Passover.
      * The blood of a lamb
      * The blood being applied to the lintel and doorposts through hyssop
      * Eating in haste and lasting an evening (not a relaxed event lasting seven days)
* The Covenant
  + Exodus 24:6-8
    - The division of the blood had reference to the two parties to the covenant, who were to be brought by the covenant into a living unity… This was not a mixture of different kinds of blood, but it was a division of one blood, and that sacrificial blood, in which animal life was offered instead of human life, making expiation as a pure life for sinful man, and by virtue of this expiation, restoring the fellowship between God and man which had been destroyed by sin… In the blood sprinkled upon the altar, the natural life of the people was given up to God, as a life that had passed through death, to be pervaded by His grace; and then thought the sprinkling upon the people it was restored to them again, as a life renewed by the grace of God. In this way the blood not only became a bond of union between Jehovah and His people, but as the blood of the covenant, it became a vital power, holy and divine, uniting Israel and its God; and the sprinkling of the people with this blood was an actual renewal of life, a transposition of Israel into the kingdom of God. – Keil, *The Pentateuch*
  + In Jesus, there is no:
    - Division of the blood
    - Offering of animal life
    - Giving up of the natural life of the people to God
  + In Jesus, the Son of God is the very substitute for man.
  + In this covenant, everything is one-sided; Jesus does it all!
* Drinking instead of Sprinkling
  + The internal change that will accompany the action of God in His people
    - Ezekiel 37:14
* V.25
  + When will Jesus drink from this vine again?
    - The consummation of the eschatological reign and rule of God
      * Isaiah 25:6
      * Amos 9:13-14
      * Joel 3:18

## **Mark 14:27-31 – The truth hurts**

* V.27
  + With the shepherd struck by God, this is no mere accident or tragedy.
    - This is by God’s design.
  + As well as the disciples fall was foretold!
    - Zechariah 13:7-9
* V. 28
  + A key verse in Mark’s entire gospel account!
  + The “but” is important
    - It is not the end!
    - The resurrection is again promised!
      * Although “the shepherd” of Zechariah does not rise, Jesus will because He is doing something new.
        + Isaiah 43:19, 48:6
    - But do the disciples hear?
* V.29
  + Another “but” comes from Peter
    - He does not want this prophecy to be fulfilled.
  + Again, the disciples do not understand.
* V.30-31
  + Jesus’ response to Peter is crushing with the power of the Law
    - But at this time, Peter and the others do not fully see/hear what Jesus has to say