

FEBRUARY 4, 2024

"A Sacrament of Transformation"

Scripture: Matthew 26:26-30 NRSV



A SACRAMENT OF TRANSFORMATION



AUTHOR

Matthew, (also called Levi), a former tax collector and disciple of Jesus, wrote the gospel of Matthew around AD 60-65 to reveal Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah in fulfillment of God's promises to the Jewish people. His audience is Greek-speaking Jewish Christians. Matthew, (also called Levi), a former tax collector and disciple of Jesus, wrote the gospel of Matthew around AD 60-65 to reveal Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah in fulfillment of God's promises to the Jewish people. His audience is Greek-speaking Jewish Christians.

CONTEXT

In this passage, the religious leaders have been plotting to kill Jesus and Jesus and his disciples are now sharing the Last Supper. Jesus has just said that one of his disciples will betray him. They each asked, "Am I the one, Lord?" Jesus confirmed to Judas that he is the one. Jesus proceeds to share a meal with the disciples before he will be betrayed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Exodus we read that God sent 9 plagues on Pharaoh and Egypt to try and get him to let the Israelites go, who were being kept in bondage. God told Moses he would send 1 more plague which would result in the Israelites being freed. Read Exodus 11:4-5. What would the 10th plague be?
2. Read Exodus 12:3-11. What directions did God give to Moses and Aaron? What was the requirement of the lamb?

3. Read Exodus 12:12-13. What did God promise?
4. Read Exodus 12:21-23. What directions did Moses give the Israelites?
5. What did God say about the Passover in Exodus 12:14 and 12:25?
6. The meal that Jesus and the disciples shared was a Passover Meal. It was during this meal that Jesus instituted the Lord's table, and what we now observe as the Sacrament of Communion. Passover foreshadowed the Jewish Messiah as the true Passover Lamb. Read Isaiah 53:3-9 to see how the Messiah is described.
7. Read Matthew 26:26-30. When you hear these words spoken to you as you are served Communion, "The body of Christ broken for you; the blood of Christ shed for you," what connection do you feel with Jesus, who became the sacrificial Lamb for us, so that we might be delivered from sin and have eternal life? What change or transformation might take place? What connection do you feel with your fellow sister or brother in Christ as you wait together to receive Communion or kneel at the altar together in prayer? What does it mean to you to be served Communion and to receive God's grace? Another name for Communion is the Eucharist which means thanksgiving. When you are served Communion you may want to say a prayer of thanks for Christ's work in you.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Through Communion we commune with God and with other believers.