

like 22:7-20

Maunday Thursday

March 23, 2989

~~It was a night of great joy~~, a night of wailing sorrow. Châmes binding  
 one people were smashed <sup>that night's joy</sup> even as a heavy weight of grief was chained to the  
 hearts of another people. <sup>was</sup> One home ~~would be~~ filled with hope, the next  
 with despair. For one people the future was born that night. For another  
 people the future died <sup>on that night of the first Passover.</sup>

~~Like~~ <sup>Like</sup> ~~the days~~ when a great war has ended. In one land the victors  
parade, the air is filled with confettie and streamers and the sounds of  
brass bands. While in the land of the vanquished <sup>survivors</sup> ~~the few that have survived~~  
 sift the rubble for trinkets to remind them of a glory that was once theirs.

Over and over the scene is repeated in human life. After every football  
game, soccer match, in every gymnasium when the last last buzzer has sounded  
there is joy and sorrow, victory and defeat, the height of the one determined  
by the depth of the other. One crowd will remember and remeber, and remember,  
 while the other crowd will only want to forget.

With our houses and our cars, <sup>our jobs</sup> and our clothes it is so often the same.  
 My sweater is made more precious by the sweater you don't have, and your envy.  
 Especially your envy. Your pain, your sadness, your having ~~it~~ so much tougjer  
 than I makes my health so much sweeter, or even my lesser pain ~~as much~~ more  
 bearable.

So it was that Israel remembered the night. The first born sons of their  
oppressors were struck down. Every beating was avenged, ~~years~~ cries for deliver  
 ance ~~xgaxixixix~~ were answered. And God's people were set free. The angel of  
 death passed over them, but ~~xixixixixixxkaxxx~~ visited in Pharoah's palace.  
 and in every one and stable of the Egyptians. Even the first born of the cattl  
 was struck down. <sup>remembered</sup> Istael ~~remember~~ the night that Egyptians would forever forge  
<sup>each</sup> ~~every~~ year <sup>to remember</sup> ~~they~~ remembered with a meal. So it was that Jesus gathered his  
désciples. In an upper room they shared the meal their people had eaten on  
 this night for twelve hundred years. But this passover would be different.

this night they would not remember the sorrow of the Egyptians, their suffering in grief, but rather Jesus words: I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat of it until it is fulfilled in the <sup>kingdom</sup> ~~kingdoms~~ of God" Then he took the cup that was his, and gave it to them. "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Jesus went without, that they might be filled more full.

And he took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them saying, "This is my body which is give for you. Do this in remembrance of me." This night they would not remember Egyptians holding their dying sons, but the suffering, the body of their Lord given up to death for them.

And then after supper he gave them the cup, saying, "This cup ~~is~~ which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." Jesus blood would be poured out, given to them in the cup which he shared.

Joy comes out of sorrow. So it has always been, so it will always be in this world. But in Jesus God has done a new thing. The suffering, the pain, the loss, these belong to Jesus, that the joy and the hope and the future might be ours. This day it would not be ~~Pharaoh~~ Pharaoh holding the lifeless body of ~~his~~ his son, but the almighty God. His first born, the angel of death would claim, passing over all the rest. Passing over Israel, and Egypt and ~~China~~ ~~China~~ ~~China~~. China and South America and Ohio. Passing over every people and race and nation because he claimed the only Son of God. Jesus suffered that all <sup>humankind</sup> ~~ankind~~ might be joined in rejoicing. And be freed from our sins. And live.

And so we remember and celebrate this night. God's will is that we be joined in this by every single person on the face of this ~~earth~~ earth. Christ died for all, his suffering to bring joy to all. He wants the whole world and everyone to know that.

One suffers that all might know joy. One is enslaved that all might be set free. One dies that all who believe in him might forever live. This we



The first passover was a meal that divided, a meal that left some of God's creatures singing his praises, but ~~not these people~~ <sup>the</sup> the Egyptians, cursing the God who had brought such a terrible night upon them. In that night people's were divided, even to this day the division remains.

But in that upper room, Christ instituted a new meal of remembering. This time, Pharaoh would not be the one holding his dead son, rather the almighty God would take Pharaoh's place. Pharaoh <sup>son</sup> would not pay for the sins and suffering of God's children, ~~Jesus would~~ God's son would. The angel of death would visit God's own house that the life and freedom of God's children would not come at the expense of any of God's creatures, but at the expense of God. ~~Not a meal that divided, this new covenant in Jesus blood would be God's uniting Egyptians and Israelites, Russians and Americans, Jews and Greeks, slave and free, male and female, all God's children in one family, brought together through the suffering of Jesus.~~ We are all welcomed to feast as victors here, all given joy here, all forgiven here because the Lord has laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all.

And so we have joy this night because of what our Lord suffered. We live because he died, we are freed because he accepted the slavery of the cross. ~~God's will is that we be joined in our rejoicing by every single person on the face of this earth. He wants us to tell the whole world, and every one just that.~~ <sup>He will not see a table that divides but that through the suffering of Jesus all be gathered here -</sup>

One day when all of God's work is complete, there will need be no sorrow to bring about joy, no suffering, no death to win freedom, no death to bring about life. ~~That day we will freely give ourselves for others, serving, suffering, giving, and what else.~~ <sup>All of God's work will be fulfilled in the Kingdom and we will share the cup with Jesus one brother.</sup> Until that day we will keep our eyes on Jesus, our ears focused on his word, our hearts full of faith in him. ~~as we live, his brothers and sisters in the world - Amen~~