

Jesus said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Jesus eagerly desired to share this most Holy of all meals with his friends. Yet when he grasped the cup, he did not drink. When he lifted the loaf, he did not eat. "Take this and divide it among yourselves," he said to his disciples as he handed them his cup.

When he had given thanks he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, This is my body which is given for you.

He gave them what was his, his food, his drink. For he would not eat and drink this meal until it was ~~filled full~~ Fulfilled. *Filled Full until everything God intended was complete.*

This meal was about freedom. Long ago it was freedom from slavery in Egypt <sup>for which</sup> ~~that~~ answered the peoples <sup>longed for</sup> ~~longing~~. If only our chains would be broken. If only we had our own land.

On that night of the passover the Lord answered their longing. They were free.

But as Jesus gathered nearly two thousand years later with his disciples Egyptians had become Romans. The land of their freedom and promise had become a land of a new subjection. Pharoah had become Caesar.

As Jesus gathered with his disciples the longing had not changed. Time and history marched on but the longing had not changed.

I will not eat this meal any more. That is what Jesus was saying. No more until it is filled full.

For the evil empires of this earth would come and go and the joy over their demise would be shortlived. But Jesus heart was filled with a deeper longing.

It is as if the Passover in Egypt was only a shadow, only the outline of the real thing. The political freedom that God granted then was only a shadow of a deeper freedom. Jesus would not settle for shadows.

I will not eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Until the chains of death were broken, Jesus would not take his own cup, eat his own portion. No he took what was his and gave it to his own as a sign and a pledge to them that he would not settle for shadows any more.

And then he took their portion, and our portion, death itself and drank that cup to the very bottom. His life he gives to us: Take this is my body given for you. His blood he shares with us, This is the new blood of the covenant poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. And the death that is rightly ours became his.

I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

No more shadows, no more chains of death, no more guilt and shame and sorrow. When God and all his children are gathered at one table, an eternal table, then Jesus will feast.

You and I like our Lord come to this night with many longings. We long for health that was once ours, we long for loved ones separated from us by distance or discord or death. We long for an end to the awful loneliness that is the companion of our hearts, an end to the forboding that every tomorrow brings. *These are important to us, but they are shadows.*

Our Lord puts his body to our lips, his blood as well. They are his answer to our longings. I will not rest until the true passover has come. With my blood I will cause the angel of death to eternally pass over you. With my body ~~give~~ I will gather my true family into one household. Then the meal will be filled full, and the shadows will be no more. You will be in the presence of the one who is light forever. *ad*