

Holy Week in Biblical Perspective
Maundy Thursday
“The Lord’s Supper and the Resurrection”
John 13:1–11
Dr. Harry L. Reeder III
March 29, 2018

In this study on Maundy Thursday the Lord has brought to us the Lord’s Supper and instituted it for us. I want to answer one question which I know many of you have, give one reminder and then one thought as we prepare to come to the Lord’s Table. In John 13, John will lead us in the institution of the Lord’s Supper in words given by Paul and it will secure this one thought I will share with you on our way to the Table.

John 13:1–11 says [1] *Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.* [2] *During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,* [3] *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,* [4] *rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.* [5] *Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.* [6] *He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”* [7] *Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”* [8] *Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.”* *Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”* [9] *Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”* [10] *Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”* [11] *For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”*

So the question that many have is “Pastor Reeder, the service we’re having tonight, is it Maundy or Thursday?” In the south we can sometimes be sloppy with our words and think that Maundy is just a southern way of saying Monday. No, Maundy has accompanied the celebration of the Lord’s Supper during Holy Week for hundreds of years because it comes from a Latin word *mandatum* in which we get the word mandate. So it means mandated night of celebrating the mandate from the Lord.

Now the question has always been what mandate, the mandate of the Lord’s Supper (‘do this in remembrance of Me) which replaces the Passover or is it the mandate our Lord gave at the Lord’s Supper recorded in the Gospel of John when Christ said ‘A new commandment I give to you that you love one another’? I would say that I think it is both, for both combined make this a very pointed time in the life of God’s people. At the Table the focus is on the mandate to remember the Lord and from the Table we are mandated to love one another. After the Savior said ‘a new commandment I give to you that you love one another’ He said “By this the world will know that you are My disciples.” So we manifest our relationship with Him not only in our obedience to come to the Table but also in our obedience to love one another distinctly and differently from the worldly love which is done with a Christ sacrificing love to one another.

The reminder is that our Savior is celebrating the last Passover. This is a week of lasts as well as firsts. It’s the last Sabbath of the Old Covenant when He rests in the grave. It is the last Passover that He now fulfills being the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world and

reestablishes the Passover just as the Sabbath will be refurbished into the Lord's Day, the Christian Sabbath of the resurrection of Christ. So the Lord's Supper is now replacing the Passover. That bloody meal is now replaced by the bloodless meal, the one pointing to Christ and the other pointing back to what Christ has done, remembering the body and blood of the Lord. It is also the anticipation of another meal that He will eat with us and that is the meal with the Lamb in all of eternity when all of His people gather from every tribe and nation to give praise to the Lamb.

So here is the thought I want to share with you. June 6, 1944 is D-Day and that is military language where H-Hour and D-Day. It actually didn't begin in WWII but it was officially embraced in military protocol in WWI because of a particular attack known as Field Order #9 in St. Michael in which the day (D) and hour (H) kicks off. So it became military language to identify the moment in which an assault against the enemy is to take place. Probably the worst kept secret in the military happened during WWII when there was about to be an invasion of the allied forces but while the invasion was a poorly kept secret, where (they were going to land) and when (they were going to show up) was actually a pretty well-kept secret. D-Day was June 6 and H-Hour was the time when all the planes took off, some bombers and some carriers. Bombers were to go to the targets and soften them up. Then the carriers would take 20,000 paratroopers into Europe and drop them on the flanks of the invasion. This was when the assault was to take place.

I thought it would be a good idea to stay in the Gospel of John as we looked at these eight days to glory in this Holy Week and on Easter I will be preaching from John 20 on the resurrection discovery. There were five different elements of the crowd that came to meet Jesus as He entered Jerusalem that John describes for us. They all have their own agenda about this moment of coming to Jesus. The last group that comes up to Him at the very end through two of His Disciples, Philip and Andrew, were the Gentiles. The Gentiles said to Philip "Sir, we would see Jesus." When Jesus hears this He responds this way 'My hour has come.'

That is a very significant moment because signals His refusal to say something that He had said multiple times during His three year ministry which was this; "My hour has not come." He will never say that again. He now says "My hour has come" and it won't be the only time He says it. He says it on that Palm Sunday after He had cleansed the Temple and from which He would return back to Bethany that night. Then He will say it five more times.

He will say it to His Disciples and He will make very clear that there is a mixed reaction that He has to this hour. He says 'My soul is troubled (for my hour has come)' (John 12:27). It is a glorious hour because He says 'In this hour My Father will be glorified and My Father has said the Son will be glorified. I will be lifted up and will save My people. I will draw all My people from all the nations to Myself.' On the one hand it is an hour He rejoices in and embraces but on the other hand it is an hour He recoils from for He will even say in the Garden of Gethsemane a few days later 'is there any way this cup can pass from Me' (Matthew 26:39).

He will say it again as He prays the High Priestly prayer in John 17:1, 9-11 says [1] *When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you. [9] I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. [10] All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. [11] And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one."* He doesn't ask the Father to take

His people out of the world but He calls upon the Father to bring them to Himself as He is lifted up to save them.

He will also say it again when He gives the new commandment. He says it right here in John 13 when He initiates the New Covenant meal, when He celebrates the last Passover and institutes the New Covenant meal of the Lord's Supper. John 13:1a says *[1a] Now before the Feast of the Passover, when **Jesus knew that his hour had come** to depart out of this world to the Father...* It is a statement He continually repeats and a statement of significance.

It is an hour in which the Father will be glorified through His atoning work on the cross. It is an hour in which Jesus will be glorified as He satisfies the justice of the Father to save His people from their sins. It is an hour in which His people will be redeemed from their sins because of His atoning sacrifice. It is an hour of Him being described as Him being lifted up on that cross from which He is proclaimed that He will draw all kinds of men to Himself from all the nations. It is an hour that we are to bring our focus upon even as the Apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 2:2, *[2] For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.* It is the hour where the holiness of God is satisfied by the grace of God through the Son of God out of the love of God to save sinners for the glory of God. It is a glorious hour!

This is the greatest week in all of history, Holy Week. On Good Friday, tomorrow, we'll remember the greatest day, D-Day, because our Savior will also say in John 'The hour has come when I will destroy the works of the evil one.' The all out, no holds barred assault upon the kingdom of darkness upon Satan, sin, and the grave is D-day and it has arrived. The hour has come. Paul says that whenever he preaches he always brings people back to this hour, Christ and Him crucified. There is your hope. There is your salvation. There is your life.

Brothers and sisters, it is so important that it is in many of the hymns we sing and it's not only the thread that unites every expositional sermon from the Word of God that is faithful to the Word of God but it is also displayed before you every time we come to the Lord's Supper. You are reminded on that Day, Christ ascended not a throne but a cross. On that Day the King of Glory laid aside His glory to take your sin and my sin. On that Day the blood of Christ saves me from my sins. On that Day the righteousness of Christ has been placed upon me that I might be accepted in the Beloved.

Our Lord says it will not only be before all faithful sermons, in all faithful worship but He puts it at the very foundation of the meal of the Covenant every time we celebrate it. Remember the body and blood of the Lord. Remember the cosmic warfare and D-Day. Remember that hour when our Savior satisfied the justice of God to save us to the love of God by the grace of God. Remember at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. At the right time God demonstrated His own love for us when Christ died for those who are His enemies, even as He defeated enemies, to save us to Himself. Remember that moment as you come to His Table. He did when He made this Table for you knowing His hour had come. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You so much for the great privilege to be together around this Table. Father, as we come to this Table will You allow us to fix our eyes on Jesus for our glory is in the cross and not just any cross but the cross where Christ was crucified. Many have died on crosses but there is only one Savior and our Savior went to that cross at that hour, at the right time and won the victory. Jesus we would see You. Fix your eyes on Jesus, hallelujah, what a Savior, Amen.