



PART FOUR INTRODUCTION

The Passover cup is one of the central symbols of the Easter holiday. When Jesus and His disciples observed the Passover, drinking a cup during the meal was an official part of the observance. An ancient rabbinic source, the Mishnah, instructs those celebrating to drink from the cup four times during the Passover meal. The tradition remains to this day. What is the significance of the cup Jesus uses during the Passover observance? In fact, there is not one cup but four - each time the cup is filled, it has a different name which links to a unique promise.

The first and second cups remind us that God has come to rescue and renew us. The third cup is the “Cup of Redemption” in which God promised to redeem His people. Lastly, the fourth cup is called the “Cup of Rejoicing/Praise”. The Jewish people call the last cup of the Passover ‘hallel’ (which means praise or celebrate), because with it they celebrate the fact that they were formed into a new nation after their rescue and deliverance from Egypt.

The Cup of Praise is based on God’s promise that He will take us as His own people and He will be our God. We get to be a part of His Kingdom and live a life of meaning and purpose.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which aspect of the Passover meal was especially meaningful to you?
2. Read Luke 22:15-16. Jesus did not drink the fourth cup at the Passover table (neither did the disciples). Instead, that meal was suspended at the point of drinking the third cup. What did Jesus mean that the passover would be fulfilled in the kingdom of God? *"I shall not eat it until it (the passover) is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."*
3. Read John 14:1-4. Do an inductive bible study (observations, interpretation and application). You can use the following as a guide.

- i. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.
 - ii. Read the passage aloud
 - iii. Ask some context questions of the passage:
 - What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
 - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
 - What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?
 - iv. Some observation questions of the passage:
 - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
 - What is the main point or points?
 - What surprises are there?
 - What are the keywords? What words or ideas are repeated?
 - v. Some leading questions of the text:
 - How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
 - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
 - What does this teach us about God?
 - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
 - vi. Some application questions of the passage:
 - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
 - Is there some attitude I need to change?
 - How does this passage call me to change the way I live?
4. Jesus said “I go to prepare a place for you” in John 14:3.

In Jewish weddings, the groom has to go to his father to help prepare a place for the bride (before the wedding ceremony takes place) but leaves a gift behind. The construction of the new home will take several months and the bride-to-be does not know exactly when her groom will come for her. She has to wait and get herself prepared. When the groom returns to collect his bride, then the marriage ceremony begins followed by the marriage supper.

Similarly, Jesus went to the Father to prepare a place for us and left us the gift of the Holy Spirit. He promised to return and there will be a wedding feast for all who are in Christ, as prophesied by John in Revelations 19.

“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” ~ Rev 19:9

What does the second coming of Christ mean to you in your current circumstances? How does His return encourage you in your times of need, or comfort you in your times of disappointment?

5. How can we, the Church as Jesus’ Bride, live in preparation for Jesus coming? What practical changes do we need to make now?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

In Luke 22:16 and Mark 14:25, Jesus said the passover meal would be "fulfilled" (or completed) in the Kingdom. This statement tells us that the Last Supper continues to be underway until the Kingdom of God is established.

What does this mean for us as the Church?

While waiting for Jesus' return, the Church has work to do. We are His representatives on earth. We are to live and love others like Jesus did.

Jesus, through His death, burial, and resurrection, created a new people of God on earth to be the living temple of God, which is filled with the Spirit of God, so that all people on earth have unmediated access to God. Though in this world, we will face tribulation (John 16:33), but we need to look beyond all the trials and evil to the promise of Jesus' second coming and rejoice in anticipation.

CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." ~ Mark 14:24-25 (NIV)