

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Lesson 90, Chapter 26 Continued 2

We open today with what is known as the very intriguing Last Supper. Clearly from the way in which this event is covered in all the Gospel accounts, each writer sees it as dramatically meaningful for those who love and trust in Jesus of Nazareth, as well as one of the great mile markers along the road of Redemption History. When we closed our study of Matthew 26 last week, we were at the point that Jesus was revealing that He was about to be betrayed by one of His 12 disciples. Naturally 11 of those disciples were shocked and shaken at this news, and probably just a little bit confused. The 12th disciple, Judas, had to be equally startled as he wondered how in the world Yeshua could know about the secret plot he had hatched just hours earlier with some members of the senior priesthood to turn Christ over to the Sanhedrin in order to condemn and then kill Him. So as each disciple, in turn, asks if it is going to be him, it finally arrives to Judas who deceitfully asks the same question. To which Yeshua responds in affirmation: “the words are yours”.

Now unmasked as the betrayer, apparently Judas remained with the 12 a little longer, reclined at the table, as Yeshua led a solemn ceremony that we’re going to dissect today with some tender care. One would think that Judas might have fled at this point, or there would have been some kind of narrative by Matthew about the other disciples’ reaction towards their fellow disciple Judas, but weirdly there is none. Rather things just seem to proceed as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened. Bible scholars have, for centuries, pondered why something as obvious and expected as Judas fleeing, or the other disciples becoming enraged, or Jesus ousting him from His presence wasn’t recorded by any of the Gospel writers. I won’t present the handful of speculations to try to explain this other than to say that up to this point what we’ve witnessed is that

Christ's close circle of 12 have been self-promoting and self-concerned all along. I can't escape the sense that because of this rather unseemly mindset the innocent 11 were more relieved that they weren't seen by Jesus as the betrayers than saddened at the fact that their Master's life was soon to be snuffed out on account of the wickedness of Judas. So, they just sort of compartmentalized the thought of it (something men have always been good at doing, for the better or worse), and moved on with their meal and the accompanying traditional holiday ceremony. Yeshua, too, seems to have set this tragic reality aside for the moment to do something that would become a centerpiece of institutional Church liturgy; something that much later came to be called Communion.

Let's read a section of Matthew 26.

READ MATTHEW CHAPTER 26:23 – 30

Verse 23 says that the disciple that dips his *matzah* in the bowl along with Christ will be the one that betrays Him. Verse 24 says that Yeshua reveals that this betrayal will result in His death; however, what lays in store for this betrayer is so terrible to contemplate that having never been given life by his mother to begin with would have been far better for him. And verse 25 exposes to the group that the betrayer is Judas.

I want to pause for just a moment to highlight something that sometimes comes up among Christians about this scene. It is this: since it was written (it was prophesied, as in determined-by-God) that the Messiah was to be unjustly killed upon a cross, and therefore was something that had to happen as the pivotal moment in Redemption History, then the fact that it was largely due to the actions of Judas needs to be taken into account with some mercy in mind. That is, it seems to be that Judas was predestined from ages past to be the facilitator of this immense tragedy that at the same time is the crown jewel of atonement for humanity. Therefore, Judas perhaps should be seen as pitiable, and even exonerated by God for his treason against Yeshua since it always would necessarily have to fall upon someone close to Him to do the dirty deed. And, since God doesn't make mistakes, then for Judas to ever have been admitted to the group of 12 as one of Jesus's closest and first disciples, Judas actually was a Believer who made a lamentable mistake for which he repented and was forgiven... and what he did wasn't all that different from another disciple that gathered the unfortunate nickname of Doubting Thomas.

By the way, I've heard this same logic applied to Hitler, the author of the Holocaust. That is, it was Hitler that God predetermined to use to drive the Jews back to their homeland, and it was the guilt of the world for not intervening and helping the Jews that provided the momentum to officially give back the Holy Land to the Jews to re-form their ancient nation. Hitler had always identified himself as a Christian, right up to his suicide. Therefore, in the end, Hitler was God's tool as the facilitator of something terrible in order to bring about something good. One could wonder about this troubling and distasteful conclusion, except for one thing: Yeshua said this about the one who would betray Him... ***"It would be better for him that he had never been born"***. This can only be speaking about the **eternal** torment that Judas would suffer, and no doubt for Hitler as well. Bottom line: never, ever, is evil acceptable to God even if in the end some good evolved from it. Never, ever, is betraying Him, or walking away from our allegiance to Him, acceptable. While there is no way for me to forensically discover exactly what Judas's mind was towards Christ, there is not one recorded word said about him that implies that when He first became a disciple of Yeshua that it was not out of sincerity. All we really know about Judas is that at some point he became disenchanted, or full of doubt, or simply greedy, and turned away from God's Son as His Lord and Messiah.

With verse 26, the Last Supper (or Lord's Supper) ceremony begins. I've spent much of your time over the last few weeks slicing and dicing the biblical Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread in order to bring you to the important conclusion that it is impossible that the supper we are reading about was the biblically ordained Passover meal (or seder as it is known within Judaism). Briefly that is because the Passover meal is always eaten **not** on Passover but rather on the first day of the 7-day feast that begins the following day... the Feast of **Matzah**. And, the Apostle John tells us that Christ was crucified on Passover (also known as Preparation Day in that era). It was during the daytime on Passover afternoon that the Passover lambs were slaughtered and then cooked. Since you can't have the Passover meal without the cooked lamb, then there is no way that the Last Supper was also the biblical Passover meal. Let's hear what the Apostle John says about all this.

^{CJB} **John 19:13-18** ¹³ ***When Pilate heard what they were saying, he brought Yeshua outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called The Pavement (in Aramaic, Gabta);*** ¹⁴ ***it was about noon on Preparation Day for Pesach. He said to the Judeans, "Here's your king!"*** ¹⁵ ***They shouted, "Take him away! Take him away! Put him to death on the stake!" Pilate said to***

them, "You want me to execute your king on a stake?" The head cohanim answered, "We have no king but the Emperor." ¹⁶ Then Pilate handed Yeshua over to them to have him put to death on the stake. So they took charge of Yeshua. ¹⁷ Carrying the stake himself he went out to the place called Skull (in Aramaic, Golgotha). ¹⁸ There they nailed him to the stake along with two others, one on either side, with Yeshua in the middle.

And then at the end of John chapter 19 he reinforces this by saying:

CJB John 19:42 ⁴² So, because it was Preparation Day for the Judeans, and because the tomb was close by, that is where they buried Yeshua.

John uses the clearest language of all the Gospel accounts to pinpoint the day of Christ's crucifixion. As we've already learned, Preparation Day was a nickname used for Passover Day, because Passover Day was when all preparations for the Passover meal were, by custom, made. That is, because immediately after dark the now-prepared Passover meal was to be eaten; and since a new day begins upon sunset, then Passover ends and the 1st day of Matzah begins. And the 1st day of Matzah is a biblically ordained Great Sabbath (not the regular 7th day Sabbath) in which no work was to be done (including no food preparation). So, while the Last Supper indeed occurred on Passover, it was at the first hour or two of the day (which occurs just after sunset); it happened several hours before the slaughter of the lambs that would occur later on Passover Day.

Notice something else that is sort of buried in this verse from John 19: John says "it was Preparation Day **for the Judeans**". Our eyes sort of skip over this, but when we pause to reflect upon it, it is kind of an odd thing to say. Who else would Preparation Day be for? The issue is this: in Greek the word that the CJB correctly translates as Judeans is **loudaios**. While this is regularly translated into English as Jew or Jewish, that misses the mark. The literal meaning (depending on the context) generally speaking is Judean or a person considered to be part of the tribe of Judah. And, these two identifications are not precisely the same.

A Judean was a resident of the Roman governing district called Judea. It's like saying Floridian, or Californian, or New Yorker. The difference is that this term only applied to a resident of the district of Judea that was also a Hebrew (a gentile living in Judea probably wouldn't have called himself a Judean). On the other hand, a person from the tribe of Judah is technically a Judahite. While Judahite is a tribal identification, Judean is a national identification. In Yeshua's

era, because the tribe of Benjamin had centuries earlier sort of folded with and into the tribe of Judah, then even a person of the tribe of Benjamin would, by Christ's era, usually call themselves a Judahite. Tribal affiliations had become something of the distant past for the Hebrews, and not a usual part of their identity or conversation, but it did come up time to time the same way that on some occasions we all might talk about our distant ancestry. So, when John said it was Preparation Day for the **Judeans** we must understand that this meant that it was Preparation Day for the residents of Judea. In the traditions developed by the Hebrew residents of Judea, Passover Day at some point became deemed Preparation Day. But, neither Christ nor His disciples were Judeans; they were Galileans. Galileans had developed their own set of traditions about celebrating the feast days that were separate from the Judeans. So, the implication by the Apostle John is that the Galileans hadn't nicknamed Passover Day as Preparation Day; rather that was an innovation of the Judeans. Remember that all but the Judeans had to pack up and travel anywhere from a few to several days to come to Jerusalem for the holidays of Passover and Unleavened Bread so it is easy to see why out of practicality some traditions had to be created to allow for this.

So; the Lord's Supper was some kind of a traditional Galilean pre-Passover event that the Judeans did not practice. Among Christian Bible scholars it is common for them to observe that when we read of the bowl that Christ says He and the betrayer would put their bread into, and when we read of partaking the wine, that we are to equate this to the Passover seder protocol. While we don't know for certain, the earliest documentation about the customs and protocols of the biblical festivals is the Mishna. That problem is that the Mishna was created in the 3rd century, well after the time of Christ. That said, most of what eventually became written down were but the long-time practices that until then were handed down as oral traditions. In other words, it wasn't that upon the writing down of the Mishna that all new traditions were suddenly created; rather most of what we find in it had already been practiced for a long time. Only now it was finally formally documented. This means that the way Passover and Unleavened is celebrated today is likely very similar to how it was in Christ's era. Therefore, it is often claimed that the bowl the **matzah** was dipped into may have contained the salty water used in the ceremony, or perhaps it was the **harosheth** (a sweet mixture of apple and honey), or maybe even the bitter herbs. I don't think it was any of these because this wasn't the Galilean version of the Passover seder; rather it was some kind of pre-Passover meal.

Further, the CJB saying that it was **matzah** that was being dipped into the bowl is David Stern's assumption. Most other English translations simply say "bread". However, the Greek word is **cheir**, which means neither **matzah** nor bread; it means something like "hand". So literally the idea is that someone dipped their hand into a bowl meaning they used their hand to dip some unnamed food item into the bowl. It is only assumed that the thing that was dipped was regular or unleavened bread, but it is not stated in the passage. Because biblically it is **not** required to eat unleavened bread on Passover Day, then different Christian denominations have interpreted how to do Communion differently. Some use regular leavened bread, some use only unleavened. The only reason I would favor unleavened bread is because Jesus identifies this bread with His body, which is a sinless body, and leaven is the standard biblical metaphor for sin.

Verse 26 explains that Christ, as the officiator of the ceremony, took the bread (probably it was **matzah**) and broke it and then gave it to His disciples. This was customary Jewish mealtime protocol. When He broke the bread, and before distributing it, He would have made the blessing over it (what the CJB says is the **b'rakhah**) with the customary words: "**Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz**". In English, "Blessed are you O Lord our God, king of the universe who brings forth bread from the earth". But then He said something that was anything but customary. He says that they are to take and eat this **matzah** as representative of His body. I'm not at all sure how His disciples might have thought about this; in fact, this (along with the next blessing and what Yeshua says it is to represent) must have caused the deepest consternation among all of His would-be followers. Which is, I think, why the Apostle Paul thought it so necessary to carefully explain it (we'll get into that shortly).

Next, in verse 27, Yeshua takes the cup of wine and tells all to drink of it. But before He or they partake of it, in verse 28 we're told that He makes a blessing over it, and then tells the disciples that this wine represents His blood, but also it is in the sense of validating a new covenant. And that the blood (represented by the red wine) is to be seen as His shed blood on the behalf of many that atones for their sins. There is so much here to unpack.

First, the blessing He would have said over the wine is: "**Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen**". In English: "Blessed are you O Lord our God, king of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine". That Jesus

used those words is confirmed by verse 29 when after the blessing over the wine He tells His disciples that He won't be drinking this "fruit of the vine" until He does so with them in the Kingdom.

We should understand that this blessing over the bread and the wine was rather standard over meals and not confined to the religious holidays. What **is** different is how Yeshua uses them as symbols and metaphors for His body and His blood. How were we meant to understand all this? Let's begin by saying that body and blood together essentially mean all of what Jesus is as a human being. It is symbolic of Him as a created being, brought into this world by his human mother Miriam. So, the idea is that His followers are to fully identify with Him in His humanity and in His death (and later His resurrection). Yet it is also here that we get a fuller statement of the mysterious redemptive nature of Christ's body and blood. It is here that we learn that the sacrifice of His body and blood (His entire being) will enact a forgiveness of sins for "many". That speaks not of His humanness but rather of the divine aspect of His nature; and I'm sure it was something that must have perplexed His disciples. Further, the recorded words do NOT say that His sacrifice forgives "all" but rather forgives "many". The translation of "many" and not "all" is correct and of course in no way mean the same thing. Who are the "many" according to Yeshua who are forgiven? That is yet to be defined. There is more to sort through, however.

We've discussed on a few occasions that Yeshua has been characterized as the second Moses throughout Matthew's Gospel. Moses was Israel's first mediator and also the redeemer of Israel; Jesus is the second. Therefore, we see Christ use terms and symbols that Moses and the Prophets utilized (in order to cement that connection), and one of the chief ones used is the spiritually necessary element of blood in covenant making. In Exodus chapter 24 we read:

^{CJB} **Exodus 24:4-8** ⁴ *Moshe wrote down all the words of ADONAI. He rose early in the morning, built an altar at the base of the mountain and set upright twelve large stones to represent the twelve tribes of Isra'el.* ⁵ *He sent the young men of the people of Isra'el to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings of oxen to ADONAI.* ⁶ *Moshe took half of the blood and put it in basins; the other half of the blood he splashed against the altar.* ⁷ *Then he took the book of the covenant and read it aloud, so that the people could hear; and they responded, "Everything that ADONAI has spoken, we will do and obey."* ⁸ *Moshe took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which ADONAI has*

made with you in accordance with all these words."

So, in the Last Supper, by use of the blessings and the symbolism of the wine as blood... Christ's blood... it is **the** necessary element to ratify the new covenant. What is the **new** covenant? First we need to hear something that may be a little uncomfortable; not all of the ancient Greek New Testament transcripts include the word "new"... only some. What we find often as not in the oldest Greek Manuscripts of the Gospels is that Christ is quoted as saying "This is the blood of the covenant, which is shed for many for forgiveness of sins". The lack of the word "new" is not some anomaly with the Book of Matthew; we find the same thing in Mark's Gospel. Most ancient Greek New Testament manuscripts of Mark do NOT have the word "new" in front of the word "covenant". Mark 14:24 reads almost identically with Matthew 26:28. It is the conclusion of a number of excellent Bible scholars and researchers that the reason the word "new" even appears in some of the ancient Greek New Testament manuscripts of Matthew and Mark is because it was added centuries later by early Christian Church institutional authorities to make it conform with Luke 22:20. All the ancient Greek manuscripts of Luke seem to include the word "new" in front of the word "covenant"; so Luke writes that it is the **New** Covenant that Christ is ratifying with His blood. So why is it that all the manuscripts of Luke's Gospel call it the "new covenant", but the manuscripts of Mark and Matthew often simply call it the "covenant"? A clue is that the Gospel of Luke was written AFTER both Matthew's and Mark's. There's a very good reason that Luke would have added the word "new" to form "new covenant" and we'll soon talk about what that reason may have been.

So, what does this mean theologically if Yeshua only said "this is My blood of the covenant" and not "this is My blood of the **New** Covenant". I'll muddy this up a bit further by saying that the CJB adds the word "ratifies" to form "My blood that ratifies the New Covenant". "Ratifies" (or anything like it) does not appear in any ancient Greek manuscript of Matthew. Inserting the word "ratifies" serves an interpretational purpose for the author of the CJB by assuming there is a **new** covenant in need of being ratified by Yeshua's blood, as opposed to the text speaking about what can only be the existing Covenant of Moses. One could easily construe this verse to mean that adding Yeshua's blood upon the Covenant of Moses does something that up to now it couldn't do: making one sacrifice on behalf of many.

I've heard it said by countless Pastors that the real innovation that has been

created is that Yeshua's blood forgives sins while the Covenant of Moses, with its animal blood sacrifices, only "covers" them (whatever good that does, or whatever that is supposed to mean). That is biblically not correct. Long before Yeshua was born, a person who sinned and made the sacrifice that the Law of Moses called for indeed had their sin forgiven and it is said so unequivocally countless times in the Torah. Sincere repentance was also needed, but that along with the proper altar sacrifice indeed forgave sin in God's eyes. So, we can't look there for what the difference might be between the efficacy of the blood of bulls and goats spilled on the altar versus the blood of Christ spilled upon the cross as concerns atoning power.

Yet, if we assume that the covenant Yeshua spoke of was indeed a **new** covenant, then what exactly is He referring to? Because whatever it is, we certainly don't find in the Gospel accounts the record or even implication of Him creating some new named covenant from whole cloth; something that had never before existed. The usual interpretation is that He is speaking about Jeremiah 31; and I agree that indeed if He ever actually spoke of a "new" covenant, then Jeremiah 31 is the logical place to look for it. I'm going to first read the part that most Christians have heard quoted by our Church authorities. Then afterward I'm going to read the verses that follow this short passage that puts what was said into its proper context.

CJB Jeremiah 31:30-32 ³⁰ *"Here, the days are coming," says ADONAI, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah. ³¹ It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says ADONAI. ³² "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says ADONAI: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.*

Here is another version of this last verse that I want to share with you in the way that it is more customarily translated in English Bibles.

NAS Jeremiah 31:33 *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

Where the CJB says the Lord will put the Torah within people's hearts, all other English versions say the Lord will put His Law into their hearts. So; is this implying the creation of a brand new, never before existing "Law" that God will put into the hearts of those He has elected? The institutional Church historically sort of ignores this part of the verse and says that really what is put into our hearts is the Holy Spirit. So, with this innovation, the Holy Spirit replaces the Law. That is anything but what the passage says. So what law is this talking about? It is either the Law that already existed (the Law of Moses), or it is some mysterious, unspoken, brand new law that is nowhere found in the Bible. Rather, the only new feature about this new covenant that Jeremiah records is that instead of it existing only on slabs of stone or on sheep skins... that is, the Law as something that is external to humans... rather God will miraculously write His Law on the minds (the hearts) of His people. The external becomes internal.

Even more, who exactly, does God make Jeremiah's new covenant with? Verse 31 explicitly says He will make it with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. That is, all the tribes of Israel. No inclusion of gentiles here; and certainly, no mention of the gentile Church. And yet, that is exactly how the institutional Church spins this passage to mean. I promised we'd read a little more of Jeremiah 31.

CJB Jeremiah 31:34-36 ³⁴ *This is what ADONAI says, who gives the sun as light for the day, who ordained the laws for the moon and stars to provide light for the night, who stirs up the sea until its waves roar- ADONAI-Tzva'ot is his name:* ³⁵ *"If these laws leave my presence," says ADONAI, "then the offspring of Isra'el will stop being a nation in my presence forever."* ³⁶ *This is what ADONAI says: "If the sky above can be measured and the foundations of the earth be fathomed, then I will reject all the offspring of Isra'el for all that they have done," says ADONAI.*

That passage makes two things very clear about whatever this new covenant is: First, God's ordained laws will not disappear. And second, to make the point as graphic as possible, the Lord says that if these laws do ever leave His presence, only then will Israel and their offspring stop being a nation. The Law remains in force, and only should the sky (the Universe) be measured and the earth fathomed (an expression meaning something that cannot and will never happen), would God reject Israel. Yeshua reinforces these thoughts 700 years later.

Using very similar imagery to what Jeremiah recorded, during the Sermon on the

Mount Jesus says:

CJB Matthew 5:17-19 ¹⁷ *"Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete.* ¹⁸ *Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud or a stroke will pass from the Torah- not until everything that must happen has happened.* ¹⁹ *So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.*

In Jeremiah 31 God says the Law is going nowhere, however He is going to place that Law within humans as opposed to it existing only outwardly; and Christ reinforces that thought in Matthew 5 and really throughout His Sermon on the Mount. Assuming that Jeremiah 31 is the source of this "new covenant", then the one thing we do know is that it is not a covenant that replaces anything, and especially not the covenant of Moses. Biblically no covenant made between God and man is ever abolished or replaced; but new ones do get added. In my opinion, at the Last Supper, Yeshua announces that the moment of the prophesied new covenant of Jeremiah 31 has arrived, and it goes into effect upon the moment His blood is shed on the cross. Further, what the new covenant is, is the Laws God gave to Moses (the Torah) that have now miraculously been placed into the hearts and minds of His chosen. That is, no more mechanical obedience to what is essentially a rule book, but rather the sincere intent and substance underlying the Law of Moses will become melded into the minds of those who love God and demonstrate faith in Him by loving and committing themselves to His Son, Jesus Christ. The new covenant in Christ's blood didn't void the Law of Moses; it internalized it into our very nature enabling a deeper devotion to it, and providing the ability for Believers to carry it out in the loving and righteous spirit God intends. This would be symbolized by the very real act that would happen in about 50 days after Yeshua's death. On the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost) the Holy Spirit would come as the embodiment of the Law, and dwell within us.

Some 30 years after Christ's execution, the Apostle Paul felt the need to instruct about this Last Supper ceremony of bread and wine to his fellows, no doubt because it greatly troubled especially the Jews. The idea of eating bread as flesh and drinking wine as blood smacked of cannibalism to the Jewish people and in any case eating blood of any kind was expressly forbidden. So even Yeshua's

symbolic representation didn't go over well at all. As a result, the Jewish scholar Paul having gone to the elite Rabbinic school of Gamaliel, did what trained Rabbis do: He made a drash (a midrash) about it and taught it to his followers.

^{CJB} **1 Corinthians 11:23-26** ²³ *For what I received from the Lord is just what I passed on to you- that the Lord Yeshua, on the night he was betrayed, took bread;* ²⁴ *and after he had made the b'rakhah he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this as a memorial to me";* ²⁵ *likewise also the cup after the meal, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant effected by my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, as a memorial to me."* ²⁶ *For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes.*

We have here a perspective that Paul adds to the Last Supper ceremony that it appears Yeshua didn't include, because it is here that we find the instruction: "As often as you drink it do it as a **memorial to me**". There is no instruction in Matthew 26 from Christ for his disciples to repeat this ceremony. It is presented as a one-time event. No instruction exists in Matthew or in Mark that this bread and wine ritual was to be repeated as a memorial to Yeshua. But, such an instruction does exist in Luke 22. So why in Luke does his Gospel account refer to the covenant Yeshua is talking about as "new", and that the taking of bread and wine is meant to be a repeated memorial to Him, but the other Gospels don't? The connecting tissue must be Paul's midrash on the subject. Recall that Luke, the Gospel writer, is the same as Luke, Paul's traveling companion and student. Luke heard this interpretation from Paul and so when Luke wrote his Gospel it would seem that he incorporated Paul's understanding of the meaning of the Last Supper by what we just read in 1Corinthians 11.

Look again at Matthew 26 verse 29. This statement is also a prophecy of His death and resurrection, although no doubt the disciples didn't understand it that way at the time. That is, the reason He won't be drinking wine again is because He only has perhaps as little as 16 more hours to live. Could it mean that He won't be celebrating the Passover again until after His death and resurrection? But will at a later time in the Kingdom of Heaven? Yes, it could, but I don't know that it does. It's rather ambiguous.

One of the important take-aways from this verse comes at its end when He speaks of the Kingdom and who the owner of it is: His Father. Never does Christ called the Kingdom of Heaven, His Kingdom, and we should never think of it as

such. He will rule over it with all authority; but He will do so as His Father's agent.

I cannot close today's lesson without pulling it together and encapsulating it in the best possible context. Isaiah 53 does that in a far superior way than I could ever conjure up.

READ ISAIAH CHAPTER 53 all

We'll continue with Matthew 26 the next time we meet.