

Dr. Mark Jennings, Mark, Lecture 21, Mark 14:1-25, The Passion, Anointing, and Last Supper

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This is Dr. Mark Jennings and his teaching on the Gospel of Mark. This is session 21, Mark 14:1-25, The Passion, Anointing, and Last Supper.

Hello again, and welcome back as we are beginning to come to the end of the Gospel of Mark.

We'll be looking at today, starting in with Mark chapter 14. Mark chapter 14 is the longest chapter in Mark. Of course, chapter divisions are something that were created later.

But with Mark 14 and Mark 15, we come into what is now known as the Passion of Jesus, his betrayal, his arrest, his trial, and his crucifixion. One of the things that we discover is that the narrative of the Passion in Mark 14 and Mark 15 is pretty fixed in terms of what we see also in Matthew and Luke. And it's not surprising, because we know that the crucifixion of Jesus is at the heart of the proclamation of the early church.

Paul, for example, will proclaim that he preaches Christ and him crucified. The crucifixion is the centerpiece. And so, it's not surprising that perhaps even in the oral tradition before the Gospels were written the narrative of the Passion of Christ would become a fixed piece.

One of the things we're also going to be looking at, however, is how Mark's themes and Mark's subjects that he's been working through are also coming into the fore here in his presentation of the Passion. We're going to see now how the predictions that Jesus has been giving throughout the Gospel of Mark have come true, specifically how he'll be handed over into the hands of men. One of the things we'll see, too, is the crucifixion, which, by the way, the crucifixion of Jesus is perhaps one of the more established facts in ancient history.

There is little historical doubt that a man named Jesus was crucified, judged by Pontius Pilate, and died on the Roman cross at this time period. But we're going to see, for example, in Mark 14, how Jesus is simultaneously one who has authority as he is going to his death, that the one who brings the kingdom of God is also abandoned. One of the arcs of Mark 14 is the truth that when you strike the shepherd, the sheep will be scattered.

But in all of this, of course, is the unfolding of God's great plan. Mark in his depiction of the Passion makes it clear that none of these events are outside of God's control. None of these events are an accident or an unfortunate occurrence in the life of Jesus.

So let's begin by looking at Mark 14 and looking at verses 1-11. With verses 1-11, we have again one of those Markan sandwiches, those intercalations where you have two stories kind of bracketing a middle story. Here, we have the depiction of the religious leader's desire to kill Jesus.

In fact, Judas's own role begins to take shape. In the middle of those two, we have this beautiful picture of an unnamed woman in Mark anointing Jesus, breaking an alabaster jar full of expensive perfume upon him. So, you get this contrast in the way Mark has structured it in Mark 14 verses 1-11 between the stance of the religious leaders, and even Judas, with the full devotion and love and affection of this woman.

So let's look at, as has been our custom as we've been walking through Mark, let's look at these verses and then kind of discuss what Mark is telling us here. So, Mark 14 verses 1-11. It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him.

For they said, Not during the Feast, lest there be an uproar from the people. And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon, the leper, as he was reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. There were some who said to themselves indignantly, Why was the ointment wasted like that? For the ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.

And they scolded her. But Jesus said, Leave her alone. And she said, Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could.

She has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her. Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.

And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him." We look at this, we begin, and we see with verses one through two, and we get some timestamp information as well that helps

us here. So we are, as verse one tells us, we are two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Now, interesting enough, the two-day references are somewhat hard to pin down because of the way time would work, this could be; this idea of two days could be sort of concurrent. In other words, it could mean on the second day, or it could mean two days away. And so is it trying to pin this in if it is Tuesday or Wednesday rather, becomes a little bit problematic.

But perhaps we can nail this down just a little bit more. The Jewish Passover, of course, was a festival where the Jewish people corporately remembered the events of Exodus, the events that were coming out of Egypt, specifically the final plague where the angel of death on the tenth plague passed over the homes of the Hebrews who had smeared the blood, who had put the blood over or on their doorpost, the blood of the Lamb. And so, this reference to the Passover is a time when the people would gather together and corporately remember this as one of the great festivals, as one of the great times of the practice of their faith.

Now the Passover itself, though, is interesting. The language of the Passover could refer to the Passover day, the Passover meal, and the entire Passover festival. There is a little bit of fluidity in how that term could be used.

And that I think actually plays in a little bit to some of the discrepancy in trying to determine the date of the events that are occurring in the Passion Week, especially in the relationship between the Synoptics and the Gospel of John, where when the Gospel of John refers to, you know, preparation for the Sabbath or the Passover, well when that day occurs, that preparation day is determinate somewhat on how Passover is being understood. Is it being understood in reference to the particular day or the Sabbath of the Passover of which they are making preparation? There is some fluidity I think we recognize in that. But the festival of the Unleavened Bread began with the Passover and continues for seven days.

Now, the festival of the Unleavened Bread, of which the Passover is part, is also part of this remembrance. Remembrance of when Israel was forced to leave very quickly from Egypt and were only able to take the Unleavened Bread with them. And so, during this festival, they remember this time period when they removed the leaven from their homes, and they only eat Unleavened Bread.

And I put this out because we need to remember as all of these events are unfolding with the Passion of Christ, they are unfolding in the context of the Passover. They are unfolding in the context of God's great act of salvation in the Old Testament when he brought the Israelites and the Hebrew people out of slavery. And that great act of establishing them as his people and making a covenant with them.

This helps us understand a little bit of the significance of what Jesus will say later. Now the Passover occurred on the fifteenth day of the Jewish month of Nisan, roughly April-May in terms of our calendar. And then the Passover lambs are sacrificed on the fourteenth day.

Now, again, in the Jewish calendar, the day began in the evening, and the evening day started in the evening. And so, when we look at this, what we're looking at here is probably the Last Supper, which we're getting to, and I'll talk about more in a second, being a Passover meal with the Passover beginning on a Thursday night. So this event in particular, this breaking of the alabaster jar, is either on a Tuesday or Wednesday as it kind of plays into this chronology.

Now we see some things too that are available here in this first couple of verses, things that do not surprise us. One is that the chief priests and scribes are seeking to arrest him by stealth. They've already had since Mark 3 the idea of trying to plot against Jesus and to kill Jesus.

We've been tracing that through the entire thing of Mark. And now, of course, what is evident is they want to see if there's a way to do that privately, in other words, not in public. The concern is if they do it in public, it might engender a riot.

This was part of the concern that they had when Jesus was speaking in the temple, for example, when he was rebuking them, telling the parable of the tenants against them, and cursing the temple prophetically with his actions. So, this sets the scene of this desire to arrest him in secret, which is what Judas will ultimately provide for them: this opportunity. But in the first two verses, Mark then immediately shifts to telling us about what's happening with Jesus in Bethany.

So, he's in Bethany which is where he's been going to every night. He'll go into Jerusalem, and then he'll leave Jerusalem and spend the night in Bethany. It's not surprising that, remember, Jerusalem during festivals could become two times as large, perhaps even three times as large as the city population.

So, you'd have these pilgrims coming in, and the city would swell in size, and they would often, of course, find lodging outside of the city of Jerusalem. That would have been not uncommon. And we know that as he's been staying in Bethany which is on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, and here we're told he's at the house of Simon the leper.

Now, I think we can presume here that this is a person who no longer has leprosy per se, no longer has leprosy but has had leprosy. I think that is the idea. And so, you even have this moment, this man Simon the leper, you have a subtle hint of healing.

That there is one who is now hosting, is now showing hospitality when at once before, as a leper, all he could do was be shunned because of his disease. And we've spoken about leprosy before. So, I think it's interesting where Jesus is staying.

Now, Mark doesn't tell us who this woman is, this woman who came in with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard. Now, most likely, this is the same event that John is describing in John 12, 1-8. And John does tell us that it's Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who is Mary and Martha.

So, we do get the name. And that's often what we'll see, this interplay between the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John. Where much of what Mark depicts seems to be assumed and understood in John.

John provides names for people that Mark stays silent upon, which is why many have believed that John is actually aware of Mark or knows Mark and is making clear some of the things that might have been quiet in the Gospel of Mark. But by not mentioning the woman's name though, Mark signals that the focus is on the act, the act of devotion that this woman does. And what she does is she takes a flask of alabaster, which in and of itself is important.

A flask of alabaster is not a cheap vessel, but it is something that is used for the most precious perfumes and oils. And then she breaks that flask. Notice she doesn't just pour, she breaks it.

And I think the stress here is that in breaking of it, it ensures that all that was inside of it, all of this expensive ointment was poured out. Nothing was left behind. And of course, Mark tells us that this was extremely costly.

Indeed, in verse 5, it could have sold for more than 300 denarii. And 300 denarii would have been about the annual wages for a day laborer. So, think of a day laborer and their entire year's worth of income being in this alabaster jar and being poured out over Jesus.

Now the act of pouring an ointment or an oil or perfume on someone's head can happen in several different contexts. We know from the Old Testament, it often was used when a king or a priest was inaugurated or installed. It was part of the ceremony that could happen there.

It's possible, too, that there is a messianic quality that is associated with it. Though I don't think that's what's happening here. I don't think it's a messianic gesture on the part of the woman.

Because the one, when Mark describes the act, not Jesus' interpretation of the act, but when Mark describes the act, he doesn't use the term anointing, which one

would have expected. And even then, it isn't perfume that is used in those contexts, it's oil that is used. It also though, could it be pouring perfume, pouring an ointment is a sign of devotion and a sign of hospitality.

And that's probably more in line what the woman is doing, is showing this beautiful expression of devotion. Now Jesus himself will connect it with the burial and we'll talk about it, that in a second. But I don't think the woman is connecting it with Jesus' burial, but rather just showing a beautiful act.

And of course, though, you get this rebuking of this woman. You know, there are some who said to themselves indignantly, is the translation here. This term is indignant; this is the same term used when Jesus is indignant about the disciples' refusal to bring children to him.

Or when the disciples, they're indignant about what James and John were doing, they were trying to become the top people in Jesus' kingdom. So this isn't a sort of minor disgruntle; these people are indignant that this woman would do it, and they're rebuking her. They scolded her, is what this translation reads.

Even the way the Greek sets up there, it's this idea of a continual scolding, that they are really going after her. Because they said, right, that this could have been given to the poor. And I think the Passover context makes sense. Why would they say that? Giving of alms was one of the acts of obedience that was expected by the Jewish people, especially at the Passover.

This was something that would have been customarily done on the evening of the Passover. And so, you can understand, too, why they see it this way. And also, Jesus himself, as we know throughout the Gospel of Mark, has been standing for the disenfranchised, has been rebuking the religious leaders for how they have been ignoring the poor, and ignoring the widows, and ignoring the helpless.

And so even Jesus' own teaching might have contributed to why they are upset here. Yet, Jesus responds differently. His statement, he stands up for this woman, leave her alone, why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

And then Jesus' statement in 14:7 has always been interesting to try to take. He says, so you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them, but you will not always have me. Interestingly, Jesus' words at the beginning about how the poor you always have with you, and you can always do good towards them, is not too dissimilar from Deuteronomy 15:11, where Moses said that there will always be poor in the land, therefore be open-handed with them.

And so, Jesus' words are very similar to the statement about there's a continual presence of the poor, and even here, this continual presence of the poor means

there's always an opportunity to do what God's design is, which is to serve the poor. So, I don't think we need to read this statement as some sort of Jesus dismissing of the poor, or even a statement that would read of, well, if you have some money and you have to choose between giving to the church and giving to the poor, that you're to give to the church. I don't think that's the principle of this statement, especially since the church itself should be advocating for the poor and helping those who are without power.

But I think what he's bringing at is this, is stressing that this is a very unique moment and that it demands the right attention to it, that Jesus himself, the right response to Jesus is full devotion, of lavishly giving, if you will, to what God is doing, and honoring Jesus here. It's hard not to see parallels to what Jesus said when he talked about the disciples not fasting, and how things are different when you're in the presence of Jesus, and that they weren't to be fasting in the morning, but that would come later. There's something about in his presence where the right focus is also upon the devotion towards Jesus.

I see a very interesting connection, too, with what Jesus said about the widow who gave all that she had at the temple, in contrast to the religious leaders who only gave out of their excess or their leftovers. That Jesus was affirming what this widow was doing, and giving all that she had to the work of God in temple. Here, what the unnamed woman is doing with the alabaster jar is similar, giving great and lavishly to the work of God.

But he takes what this woman does, and he reinterprets it. He reinterprets it in the significance of the moment, in the significance of his coming death. He says, but you will not always have me.

There will be a time when the bridegroom goes away. She has done what she could. She anointed my body beforehand for burial.

Notice that Jesus is associating what she has done here, not with a messianic king inauguration, not with an installation. In fact, I think it would be better to look at the baptism as that installation installment moment. If you remember, we had references to the Davidic Psalms and the installation of the king there.

He is connecting this, not messianically, if you will, in that sense, but with his death. This brings on the idea of preparing a body for burial. You have also in this a miniature passion prediction, if you will, that here is Jesus again predicting that he will die.

And then, before we finish out verses 1-11, Jesus declares, truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told

in memory of her. In this statement, there is a threefold prophetic element here. One is that the gospel will be proclaimed to the whole world.

There is a messianic mission, a gospel to the nations that is hinted at here, that there will come a time when the gospel is proclaimed. Two, that what she has done will be told. Three, that it will be told in memory of her.

And I find it very interesting that now, well into the second decade of the 21st century, in a far-off continent in a different language than what Jesus spoke, we are doing this very thing. We are showing the fulfillment of Jesus' words because we remember what she has done, and we do it in memory of her. And so there is a prophetic beautiful element here, I think, as well, where the religious leaders are the ones who that culture would have held up in high regard and would have held up in high honor.

Not a woman, let alone an unnamed woman in the gospel of Mark, a woman who seemingly just wasted a jar of ointment according to those who are around. Yet it is this person who we are remembering and are giving honor to. And we are giving honor to because of Jesus' words that we would do so.

And then after this beautiful picture of devotion, this picture of devotion that will be few and far between from now on until we get to the end of the passion of someone fully giving and standing for Jesus, this highlight comes, of course, into a somber context with verse 10 and 11. Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray them. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money.

And he sought an opportunity to betray him. And so we have here in Mark, and Mark is a little bit less forthcoming with the exact reasons for Judas' betrayal, but we know that connected with this moment, at least in the gospel of Mark, it becomes more clearly connected with it in the rest of the gospel, that Judas goes and allows and agrees to find that opportunity, the opportunity for them to arrest Jesus in private. That is what they are seeking.

And you notice here that one of the twelve receives money to betray Judas Iscariot. And Judas has this unnamed woman pour out a year's worth of wages in love and devotion. And the moment becomes even more poignant.

Money is clearly part of the bargain between Judas and the religious leaders here. You know, Mark is interesting. The full gospel story tells us more about Judas' motivation or Judas' reasons.

Greed comes into play. Satan's inspiration, direction, and dwelling come into play. It has been argued that Judas betrayed Jesus because after the temple, when he

refused to step in as a political leader but walked away, perhaps as a zealot, Judas became disillusioned that Jesus was not going to do a military uprising.

Others have suggested that Judas was simply trying to force Jesus' hand, that maybe if he could stir the pot enough, Jesus would do what Judas wanted him to do. It is as early as the second century in the gospel, the Gnostic gospel of Thomas. You have in the Gnostic gospel of Thomas this speculation that Judas understood that Jesus needed to somehow be freed from the mortal body that he was in in order to accomplish this work.

And so, on Jesus' orders, Judas agrees to do the betrayal. I think we need to be clear here, though, that even if Mark does not give any reason or specific reason for Judas doing what he did, it is certainly not something that is presented in any positive light or something that is presented in even a rational explanation. Judas is not excused in Mark.

In fact, we will see Judas is judged for it. We can't lose sight of the warning that Jesus gave earlier in the gospel of Mark to the disciples to beware the yeast, the Pharisees, to beware of how close the disciples were and how much closer they were to Jesus' religious opponents who were seeking to kill him. That the disciples' understanding or misunderstanding of who Jesus is and why he has come put them on a trajectory that made betrayal possible.

Jesus' warnings, of course, now we see were true and needed. And so, Judas began to look for a time and a place. Mark 14 then moves again in verses 12:31 to now a discussion of the Last Supper.

We have here, of course, another loose, if you will, Markin sandwich, not a tight one. We have the Last Supper in verses 22-25, and it is sandwiched between Judas' betrayal and the denial of disciples, and we have the themes here of rejection playing in. Before that discussion we have an introduction narrative in 12-16 that is the preparation of the Passover meal that sets the setting for the Last Supper.

I think the Last Supper is to be seen within the Passover meal idea. There are several references to it which you will find here. In other words, all the events of Mark 14:17 through 15:47, I think, are taking place on Nisan 15; that would be 6 pm Thursday to Friday evening as well.

When we look at this event, its writing and depiction, we see that it is a very interesting event. I think to understand the Last Supper is a Passover meal and the symbolic elements of the Passover meal are now being reinterpreted or maybe pointed to in association with God's great act in Egypt. So I want to look into, as we set up this passage, I want us to begin to see some of the elements that are very similar with the Passover meal, including the fact that they do it in Jerusalem, which

would have been appropriate during this time period, the fact that there is a hymn that is sung, which one would have expected at the end of a Passover meal, and even the elements and the interpretive moments of the elements.

Now to be true, we do not get a full description of the Passover meal here. We don't have mention of bitter herbs; we don't have mention of paste, which was to remind them of the bricks they made; we don't have mention of the bowl of salt water or even the eating of the lamb. We don't have perhaps even the typical schedule presented that you would have expected with the lowest or the youngest asking why this night is different from any other night.

We don't have the host or the highest recounting the events of the Passover, these are absent. We have the bread, and we have the cup, but we don't have the bowl of salt water and the tears and the Red Sea, the bitter herbs, and the bitterness of captivity. The four cups of wine, which is part of the Passover meal, for the four promises of Exodus, I will bring out, I will deliver, I will redeem, I will take.

We don't have even the specific psalm mentioned and it probably would have been one of Psalms 114 to 118, the Hallel Psalms after the drinking of the fourth cup. So, there is a lot that is indeed left out in terms of this, and I think in part it's because the focus isn't simply on that Jesus and the disciples had a Passover meal but on the specific new elements or the new change that Jesus gives. So, with this, let's begin to look a little bit, starting with the preparations of the Last Supper here.

And on the first day of the unleavened bread, this is verse 12, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover? And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, go into the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you, follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, the teacher says, where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will show you a very large upper room furnished and ready, there prepare for us. And the disciples set out and went into the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. It's interesting when you look at these verses, there's a striking similarity, I think, to the first part of chapter 11, verses 1 through 6, where Jesus gives very specific instructions of how to go and acquire the cult that he will ride in upon.

And here, there are also these very specific instructions. So, they go into, he tells them to go into the city, so that was probably uttered in Bethany, and instructions about that he wants to have his Passover in Jerusalem. And I find it very interesting that notice he tells them to go into the city and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you.

The scene then is that there is someone there who has been instructed, as I read it, to look for the disciples to come in. There's a prearrangement that is already

occurring. Jesus doesn't tell them to go into the city and go find a man carrying a jar of water and ask him.

He says a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him. And wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, the teacher says, where is my guest room? In a little ways it seems a cloak and dagger. And maybe, indeed, it was.

Maybe because of the knowledge that there are those who are trying to find Jesus, Jesus has set in motion a system of where this is going to be portrayed. I don't think we need to strip this of the tension that is in this pattern, in this idea. And so they go, and they find the upper room, and he prepares.

And the disciples, verse 16, set out and went into the city and found it just as he had told them and prepared the Passover. And when it was evening, now when Passover had begun, he came to the twelve. As they were reclining at the table in the evening, in verse 18, Jesus said, truly I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.

They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, is it I? He said to them, it is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the son of man goes that it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.

And as they were eating, he took the bread. Before we even get into talking about the Last Supper, notice here what he is saying about the betrayal. First of all, in this setting, this intimate setting of the Passover, a time that is set for remembrance and for unity, a moment when the Jewish people would remember that they were one, that they were brought together, that God had liberated them and had established them a people and been in covenant.

It is in this setting of unity where Jesus announces that there is one who would betray. And they are all very troubled and sorrowful for it. And they say after one another, is it I? And really the sense of how the language there is in the Greek is not really, is it I? But it's more, it's not me, is it? Where the expectation is that Jesus would say no.

They are not actually wondering if it's them. They are assuming it's not them, or at least they are portraying it this way. And then Jesus, of course, makes it very clear saying that it is one of you.

It's in fact one of you who is here with me this evening and is even dipping bread with me. And then in verse 21 Jesus reminds into this that his betrayal is not something that is a surprise, but actually is a fate that's been awaiting the Son of

Man. He's been predicting that he would be turned over, that he would be handed over to human hands.

And now he's making it clear that this whole process will begin by one who is one of his own group, one of the twelve. Of course, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 13, Psalm 41, and Daniel 9 have also played into this. And then he gives a two-fold condemnation upon the betrayer.

There's no attempt as I said to exonerate Judas. Even though the willful act stands with the sovereignty of God, the judgment of the act still remains. And the statement of woe I find very somber because typically woe was given unto a group, unto a people, unto a country.

You would see in the prophetic literature woe to the enemies of Israel, or woe to those who stand against God, or woe to their leaders. But here, this prophetic woe, this judgment woe, is given upon a single person, and it is given upon the one who betrays with the clarifying statement that it would have been better if he had not even been born. I think it's one of the more dreadful statements in the Bible.

So, I find it interesting that there are attempts to exonerate Judas that have stood the test of time even, or to excuse Judas when Judas himself clearly judges him for it. Then as they were eating he took bread, and after blessing it, broke it and gave to them, and said, Take, this is my body. And he took a cup, and we had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.

And he said to them, This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many. There is a blessing, there is a distribution, there is a word about the bread. There is a Thanksgiving, there is a distribution, and there is a drinking of the common cup.

There is an interpretive word about the cup. In other words, Jesus is redesigning, if you will, the symbolism now associated with the bread and the cup. And this setting up in this Last Supper, he is taking the moment of the Passover in which the people of God remembered the great act of salvation that happened in the Exodus narrative.

Here, Jesus is now taking this moment and saying this bread and this blood and is now re-constitutionalizing, if you will, the great communal meal of the people of God. The great act of salvation in the Exodus narrative is actually pointing towards the act of salvation that is available in Jesus. The irony here, or maybe not the irony, the amazement is perhaps better, that the bread and the cup which were symbols of what God did in the Exodus narrative, now the Exodus narrative itself becomes a symbol for what God is about to do in Jesus and in his death and on the cross.

And so, this pointing here, now this idea of this is my body, I don't think is, then talking about blood, I don't think we should impose upon here a Cartesian duality. Whether this is my body is really in parallel with this is my blood. There is a sacrificial, there is an intent.

The idea is about the whole person. The bread represents the whole person. And I don't know if I would want to press the bread being broken and compare it with Jesus' body also being broken in terms of the distribution of the bread and the reference and all that.

I think the sense of it here is that this body being broken is in terms of the wholeness, the whole of the sacrifice that is being an idea, not necessarily the physical ripping or tearing or breaking. The cup here, which people speculate might be the third cup, if you will, of the Passover, because that's the cup all drank from a single cup, is my blood, Jesus says. And I think the response of the disciples indicates that they understand what Jesus is doing here, not that this is his actual blood, because the twelve have no qualms about drinking it, which would be a clear prohibition in the Old Testament between the drinking and eating of blood, but sort of understand that Jesus is talking about blood in the terms of the blood of the covenant and the sacrificial aspect to it.

Indeed, the blood of the covenant probably refers to the sacrifice that seals the covenant in Exodus 24 and Zechariah 9, the idea that in the blood is the life of every creature. So, Jesus' death then is a sacrificial act that addresses sins and seals a covenant. It's doing both aspects in this symbolism.

The death is a new covenant. The Old Testament has already been sealed by blood in Exodus 24 and Zechariah 9, but this is the new covenant that Jeremiah 31 spoke to. And of course, we even have in Mark 10 the reference of being poured out for many.

And so, I think then as we look at this with the Last Supper, that the great covenant act is still being remembered and we're to remember corporately as a people, just as Israel was to remember corporately the Passover, we are now to remember corporately what the Passover and the Exodus pointed to, which was what is occurring in Jesus' death and resurrection. And then, Jesus' abstinence, he says, truly I say to you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung a hymn they went out to the mount of olives.

Jesus' abstinence here begins after the Passover meal, not before it. And I think the emphasis on not drinking of the cup is this idea of when feasting will resume, that he will not feast again. One, the suffering, the fasting begins aspect, but I think there's an eschatological idea here too, the idea of a messianic banquet that Jesus will not

drink of, will not participate in the great messianic banquet until all that is supposed to come to pass to us.

So, we'll come, we'll pick up the rest of Mark 14 and start into it next time. But notice that in play we have now set up as Jesus begins his move towards the cross, the betrayal has been put into motion, that we have Jesus' death is connected with the great story of God, the great story of God and his people, the great story of God as the one who brings his own out of captivity. We'll pick that up again in Mark 14.

This is Dr. Mark Jennings and his teaching on the Gospel of Mark. This is session 21, Mark 14:1-25, The Passion, Anointing, and Last Supper.