

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Day:-

A few thoughts this week on The Passover.

Those of you who have come to know me, will realise that I love looking for “links” between texts and themes in Scripture. With the theme being the Passover there are a good number to follow, and my thoughts make it something of a “paper chase” backwards and forwards through the Bible!

St. Paul’s words from his letters to the Corinthians and the Romans are linked together in the traditional “Easter Anthems” in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

The Passover.

On that first “Maundy Thursday” evening Jesus celebrates the Passover of the Exodus with His disciples. (Matthew 26 verses.18-20: Mark 14, verse 17: Luke 22 verses 7 – 15).

Read Exodus chapter 12:- It is well worth thinking through the original meaning . Jesus and His disciples were celebrating the great deliverance of the people of God from the exile and oppression of Egypt. The blood of the sacrificial lamb was to be touched onto the the door-posts and lintel of the Jewish homes. - see verses 13 and 25 – 27.

The Gospel of John gives the timing of the condemnation of Jesus. (John chapter 19 verses 13 – 14) “it was about the sixth hour”. It is midday on the Friday of the great feast of the Passover. In the Temple the Passover lambs are being prepared for sacrifice. At the seat of judgement, the Lamb of God is handed over to be crucified. (John 19 verse 16).

The death of Jesus, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” has been linked with the Passover and Exodus since the New Testament times. There is a hint of it in Luke’s version of the Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah “appeared in glory, and spoke of His departure, which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem” (Luke 9 verse 31). The word ‘departure’ is literally ‘exodus’.

In that ‘Last Supper’ with His disciples, the Lord Jesus deliberately uses the bread and cup of the Passover as symbols of the “*the New Covenant*” (see 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 23 – 26). This Covenant was sealed by His death on the cross and the shedding of His blood.

From the witness of John the Baptist (Gospel of John chapter 1, verse 29) through to the close of the Book of Revelation chapter 22, the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as the Lamb.

On Easter Day alongside the traditional Gospel read also Psalm 98 and Romans chapter 6 verses 3 – 11. It is a time of celebration and rejoicing and of reflection and the re-commitment of our Christian lives!

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the Feast! (1 Corinthians 5, v. 7-8)

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*Thine be the glory, risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory, thou o'er death hast won;
angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave clothes where thy body lay.
Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son,
Endless is the vict'ry, thou o'er death hast won.*

Edmund Budry (1904)

