**THE BLOOD COVENANT**

**Luke 22:1-38**

**Key Verse: 22:20**

**"In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'"**

**Study Questions:**

1. What did the Passover celebration commemorate? (Ex 13:8-10; Dt 6:20-25) What were the religious leaders doing? What did Judas do? (1-6) According to Luke, why did he do this? How did Judas show himself to be an opportunist? What is an opportunist?

2. Who prepared the Passover for Jesus and the disciples? How did these disciples exemplify faith, obedience and humility? (7-13) Why did Jesus eagerly want to eat the Passover with his disciples? (14-23) When would he eat it with them again? (Rev 19:9)

3. How is Jesus like the Passover lamb? (Ex 12:12-13; Isa 53:7; Jn 1:29) Read verses 17-19. What does the broken bread mean? (Jn 6:35; 2Pe 1:4b) Read verse 20. What is the meaning of the cup? (Lev 17:11; Heb 9:14,22; Mk 10:45) What is the blood covenant?

4. What sad and shocking prophecy did Jesus make? (21-23) What blinded Judas to Jesus' love? What did the disciples dispute about? Why? What did Jesus teach them about human greatness and true greatness? What was Jesus' example? (24-27)

5. Read verses 23-38. What did Jesus promise those who learn his serving life? What was Peter's spiritual condition? How did Jesus help him? (31-37; Isa 53:12) Why didn't they understand? What does the Last Supper teach about the power of Jesus' blood?

**Before the crucifixion, Jesus ate the Passover in a large upper room. We call this event "The Last Supper." Through the Last Supper Jesus taught his disciples the mean­ing of the new covenant of blood. May God somehow teach us to know the spir­itual meaning of the new covenant of blood.**

**First, Judas, an opportunist (1-6).**

**Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Pass­­over, was approaching. The chief priests and teachers of the law were supposed to teach their people and children the meaning of the Passover, as Moses had commanded. (Ex 13:10; Dt 6:20-25) But they were carried away by their conspiracy to get rid of Jesus, completely ignoring their spiritual duties. (1,2) In ancient times, as was customary, fol­lowers of a teacher loved their teach­er more than themselves. It is to­tally unbe­lievable that Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, betrayed Jesus. Both Luke and John saw Judas' betrayal quite simply. They said, "Satan entered into Judas." (Lk 22:3; Jn 13:27) Here we learn that anyone captivated by Satan becomes as evil as the devil. Judas went to the chief priests and officers of the tem­ple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Je­sus. They made a deal. Since then, Judas watch­ed for an op­portunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was pre­sent. (4-6) Verse 6 says, "...and watched for an oppor­tuni­ty." This phrase well describes Judas' character. He was an oppor­tunist. In his­tory, oppor­tunists have thought they were smart. But mostly their lives ended up tragically. Judas Iscariot was so tragic that he could not but commit sui­cide by hanging himself on a tree. Judas should have com­mitted him­self to Jesus. But it was too late. Here we learn that uncom­mitted people are all opportunists.**

**Second, the new covenant of blood (7-23).**

**Now it was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on which the Pass­­over lamb had to be sacrificed (7). Look at verse 8. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make pre­parations for us to eat the Passover." It was cus­­tom­ary for them to eat the Passover. But they could not af­ford a room in which to do so. So they asked Jesus, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover?"**

**Look at verses 10-12. "He replied, 'As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there.'" It was not unusual for the disciples to hear this sort of command from Jesus. When Jesus had to make the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, he told two of his disciples to go out and untie a colt that belonged to someone else and bring it to him. They did exactly as they were told to do. (19:29-34) This time was the same: As soon as the dis­ciples were told to find a room, they said, "Yes, sir, aye aye, sir!" and left. They were Peter and John. Their obedience was indeed re­mark­able, for the city of Jeru­salem, as well as its satel­lite towns, was packed with pil­grims, with no room left. They were ordinary men, but they were extraordinary men because of their obedi­ence. They left and began to look for a room, and found it just as Jesus had told them. They say that this was Mark's house. Peter had such an attitude from the beginn­ing. One day, early in the mor­ning, Jesus said to Peter, "Put out into deep wa­ter, and let down the nets for a catch." Peter said, "Master, we've work­ed hard all night and haven't caught any­thing. But be­cause you say so, I will let down the nets."(Lk5:4,5) Despite his abrupt­ness, it was his humbleness that made it pos­sible for him to grow in Jesus as the great­est man who ever lived.**

**When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." (15) It seems that Jesus want­ed to eat a big Passover with his disciples just once. But it was not so. What Jesus really wanted was to teach them the true meaning of the Paschal lamb at the Pass­over time.**

**The Passover had historical meaning. (Ex 12) It commemo­rated the deliv­er­ance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. Their life in Egypt was misery itself. Just to eat three meals a day, they had to undergo forc­­ed la­bor day after day. They worked hard and did not eat enough. So their skin clung to their bones. Their drained bodies were full of marks of whipping. Their lives in Egypt were an ex­act picture of slavery to Satan, and a description of hell.**

**God had mercy on his people and decided to deliver them. But Pharaoh, king of Egypt, did not let the Israelites go. God sent plagues on Egypt, one after another. As each plague came, Pharaoh promised to let the people go. But when the plague abated, he changed his mind. The plagues were repeated nine times. Finally God gave Pharaoh a choice: ei­ther let the people go, or see God strike down all the firstborn of all kinds in Egypt. (Ex 12:29) Pharaoh did not listen to God's words through Moses. In this way, he invited the plague of death. No firstborn was exempt, not even the first­born of Pharaoh the king. Pharaoh was a symbol of the power of sin. In the meantime, the Israelites were to slay a lamb. With a bunch of hyssop they were to smear the lintels of their door­posts with the blood of the lamb, and when the angel of death saw the doorposts marked with the blood of the lamb, he pass­ed over that house. We call this the Passover. In this way God saved the Israelites from the death plague. In this way God made the Exodus pos­sible for the Israelites.**

**Therefore, to eat the Passover was to remember God's grace of deliverance from the yoke of slavery in Egypt. In order to eat the Passover they had to slay a defectless, one-year-old male lamb and sprinkle its blood on their doorposts to remem­ber their deliverance. They also roasted the meat of the lamb and ate it. They dried the bones to be used as fire­wood. They dried the skin and used it as paper. The Pas­chal lamb was completely sacrificed. The complete sacri­fice of the Pass­over lamb symbolizes the complete sacri­fice of Jesus Christ.**

**Look at verse 16. "For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Verse 16 implies that Jesus himself is the Paschal Lamb at this Pass­over. In John 1:29, John the Baptist said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" Isaiah also proph­esied concerning the Paschal Lamb. Isaiah 53:7 says, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."**

**Now, it was the Last Supper with his disciples before he would suffer. Jesus would eat no more Passover meals until the coming of the kingdom. Finally, their fellowship will be consummated in the great Messianic "Wedding Supper" to come. Revelation 19:9 says, "Then the angel said to me, 'Write: "Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!"' And he added, 'These are the true words of God.'"**

**Look at verse 19. "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'" The Israelites sat­isfied their stomachs by eating the meat of lambs. Like­wise, men can really satisfy themselves when they take the body of Jesus. Otherwise, human life is too tiring. One young man said, "I am tired of the cross of mission." But he was not tired because of the cross of mission. He was tired be­cause of his life of sin influ­enced by the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (2 Pe 1:4b) People are tired because of their sins. They are thirsty be­cause of spiritual dehydra­tion. But when we parti­cipate in the divine nature, we are greatly satisfied, for Jesus is the living water well­ing up to eternal life. (Jn 4:13,14) As John 6:35 says, Jesus is "the bread of life." When we eat the bread of life, we can be abundantly happy.**

**Look at verse 20b. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." Jesus came to the world to die on the cross to shed his blood for many as a ransom sacrifice. (Mk 10:45) When he had to ransom his people from their sins, Jesus had to sacrifice himself by shedding his blood, be­cause only his blood can satisfy the demand of sin. Sin demands only lifeblood. (Lev 17:11; Heb 9:22) No one else's blood could meet the demand of sin be­cause all other people's blood is sinstained. For ex­ample, one young man want­ed to quit the life of sin in order to restore himself in the holi­ness of God. But he failed, because he did not depend on the blood of Jesus but on his own willpower. He could not control his abnormal sinful desires, because his sinsick blood was circulating in his soul. He went back to his old life of sin after 6 years of conflict. No one can ransom such a person. Only the blood of Jesus can deliver man from the power of sin. If one goes to the hospi­tal for treat­ment, his doctor first checks his blood, because sick blood makes a per­son sick. Likewise, only the blood of Jesus trans­fuses our sinstained blood. When we believe that the blood of Jesus has power to heal the sinsick soul, we can be healed. We should not despair because of our sins; we must have faith in the power of Jesus' blood. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our sinful desires. When we are healed from our sin­sickness by the blood of Jesus, we can come to realize that God loves us until he sent his one and only Son to the world to die on the cross to save us from our sins. Romans 5:8 says, "But God demon­s­trates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God prom­ised to send his one and only Son to shed his blood for our sins. We call this the blood covenant.**

**While they were eating the Passover, Jesus said in verse 21, "But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table." He was Judas Iscariot. He was eating the Last Supper with Jesus. But he could not realize God's love, because he was blinded by his selfishness. Selfishness blinds us from realizing the love of God. Selfishness causes us to come under "woes." Jesus said in verse 22, "The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who be­trays him."**

**Third, the truly great man in the kingdom of God (24-38).**

**To the disciples, the Last Supper was the most precious time to learn the meaning of the Paschal Lamb. Still they were on the level of dog-fighting. A dis­pute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. (24) What did Jesus say to them? Look at verse 25. "Jesus said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call them­selves Benefactors.'" Rulers of the world exercise power and authority over peo­ple by op­pressing and squeezing them. At the same time they ex­pect the peo­ple under them to respect and flat­ter them by saying, "You are the best Bene­factor, sir." But in the spir­itual world, the concept of greatness is quite opposite to that of worldly greatness. Look at verse 26. "But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves." In the spiritual world, greater peo­ple are obliged to serve the needy, hum­bling themselves like servants. Read verse 27. "For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves." This explains how Jesus served people in accordance with the constitution of the kingdom of God.**

**Look at verse 28. "You are those who have stood by me in my trials." In this verse, "in my trials" refers to Jesus' en­­tire earthly ministry. They had seen how Jesus served peo­ple as his expression of serving God. Jesus promised his dis­ciples that if they learned how to serve God and serve his people as Jesus had done, they would attain pow­er to rule in the kingdom of God, together with Jesus, sit­ting on thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Thank God for this promise! We, the chil­dren of God, must learn how to serve others. Read verses 29,30. "And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."**

**What was Peter's spiritual condition at the time? He did not understand Jesus' glorious promise; he was still spiritually harebrained. Read ver­ses 31, 32. "Si­mon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have pray­­ed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." Jesus knew that he would stumble. But Jesus pray­ed that Peter would stand up again and help his brothers spiritually in the fu­­ture. Peter was not happy about Jesus' words and said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." (33) Jesus answered, "I tell you, Pe­ter, before the roos­ter crows to­day, you will de­ny three times that you know me." (34)**

**When Jesus saw that his disciples were not at all spiritu­al men, he helped them prepare for the future without him. Jesus asked, "Did you lack anything when you were with me?" (35) "Nothing," they answered. Then Jesus said to them in verse 36, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one." This verse does not mean that they should buy swords and fight, but that they must prepare them­selves spiritually to meet upcoming hardships and sufferings with­out Jesus.**

**Jesus told them about what was going to happen to him. Look at verse 37. "It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be ful­fill­ed in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." This is a quotation from Isaiah 53:12. This prophecy would be ful­filled in the body of Jesus. How great is the love of God that he included his one and only Son as one of the trans­gres­sors to save us from our sins! But his disciples did not under­stand the spiritual mean­ing of his words. So they said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." Here we learn that human beings are very slow to understand spiri­tual things.**

**In this passage we learn the meaning of the Last Supper. Especially, we learn that Jesus' blood has power in it. May God help you believe the power in the blood of Jesus.**