

13th April 2017 Last Supper – Maundy Thursday

JESUS willing and able to do what was needed.

John 13: 1 - 17

The Last Supper took place in an upstairs room in the city of Jerusalem. In attendance were Jesus of Nazareth; and 12 apostles (*from Matt 10: 1- 4 and Luke 6: 12 – 16*). All male event – at least the eating bit. (Even though from *Luke 8* we know that women supported, sponsored and accompanied Jesus and the 12. **Revelation 3: 20** Jesus wants to eat with **all** of us – Pentecost extended full blessing to sons and daughters). SYMBOLISM and inclusion – 12 tribes, 12 Apostles, 12 foundations of the walls of the New Jerusalem, *Revelation 21:14*.

1. Simon Peter;
2. Peter's brother Andrew;
3. James and brother
4. John, the sons of Zebedee;
5. Thomas;
6. Philip;
7. Bartholomew or Nathaniel;
8. Thaddaeus or Jude;
9. Matthew or Levi
10. James – the lesser or younger, the son of Alphaeus;
11. Simon the Zealot; and
12. Judas Iscariot.



During their meal, Jesus announced that one of those in the room would betray him. Afterward, Jesus broke bread and shared wine with his followers, telling them that the bread was the body and the wine the blood of God's new covenant. Judas participated in this ceremony despite his eventual betrayal.

According to references in the synoptic gospels, the last supper took place on the evening of the Jewish Passover, a celebration (Sedar) that symbolized the escape of the people of Israel from Egypt. In the account of the first Passover in the book of Exodus, the blood of the sacrificial lamb protected the firstborn children of Israel from the angel of death. In Christian tradition, this equated Jesus with the Passover lamb and indicated that his blood protected Christians from the plague of death.

Venue: unconfirmed but Jerusalem on Mt Zion probably just outside the old city.



Jesus got up from the meal. Having removed his outer garments he wrapped a towel around His waist. He poured water into a large bowl. Then He began to wash His disciples' feet. He dried them with the towel that was wrapped around Him. In those days, foot washing was needed in every home. The streets were dusty and dirty. Roads even had garbage and dung from the animals that traveled up and down the same streets. People in those days wore sandals without socks, and their feet could become very dirty.

The dinner-time custom was to lean back around the table at the evening meal. It's hard to enjoy a meal when there is a very bad smell, isn't it? Usually, the lowest servant in the household was expected to wash the feet of guests. Having your guests' feet washed was a way to show honor to your guests.

Since the last supper was held in a private home, with just Jesus and His disciples, we can easily see why there were no servants there.

For JESUS, this was a true display of humility and willingness to serve humanity. It both shocked and I think shamed the disciples cos they hadn't offered. (Disciples hadn't learned from the incident where Jesus had challenged Simon the Pharisee about his lack of good hosting, and where the woman's washing and anointing brought her praise – Luke 7:44). It challenges you and me to as to what our following of Jesus means in terms of our willingness to "wash one another's feet" as Jesus says.

But this evening my thoughts are simply of the willingness of Jesus to deal with the dirt and exhaustion of humanity by an act of washing and removal. Here in the Upper Room but also upon the Cross – where JESUS dealt with human dirt and

exhaustion once and for all. He was willing but also, he was the only one able to do it. Jesus deals with inner dirt and pain – failings and wrong doing and lack of doing.

Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow...Isaiah 1: 18 (p671)
God reprimands the people for their unjust treatment of others.

No other name under heaven given to humanity whereby we must be saved – Acts 4: 12 Salvation is found in no one else.

1 John 1: 8, 9 fol (p303) – *if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us BUT...*



Foot washing pictures 1,2,3.

(p40) **JESUS showed his willingness to do what was necessary – even though he had to wrestle with his fear and horror** of being the sin bearer and being separated from the community of the Godhead. He prayed in Gethsemane, *My Father, if it is possible, take this cup of suffering from me! Yet not what I want, but what you want.* Matt 26: 39.

For this we are eternally grateful. **From his willingness, we have found Salvation.**

We will never be called upon to bear the sin of others – we are just not able to bring Salvation...

But we may be called upon to do things we feel inadequate for, or that embarrass us. We may be humiliated for following Jesus and seeking his Kingdom.

He now calls us to “wash one another’s feet” in very practical ways but also maybe to follow his example of showing love for our friends by laying down our lives. And even praying for our enemies.