

2019 Maundy Thursday – welcome...

**Maundy Thursday** (also known as **Holy Thursday**, Covenant **Thursday**, Great and **Holy Thursday**, and **Thursday** of Mysteries, among other names) is the Christian day falling on the **Thursday** before Easter.

**Mandatum**: (Anglo French from the Latin) mandated or commanded by Jesus that we remember him in this way. The new Passover – the lamb slain for us. Also the New Commandment to love one another as Jesus loved us. *John 13: 34*.

**JESUS chose to share this last meal with his disciples and friends before the night of his arrest and torture.**

**After his arrest and up to his crucifixion was a time of intense ridicule and pain:**

According to the gospels, after the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples went out to [Gethsemane](#), a garden located at the edge of the [Kidron Valley](#), thought by scholars to probably have been an olive grove. Once there, he is described as leaving the group so that he can pray privately.

The [synoptics](#) state that Jesus asked God the Father that his burden of sorrow or cup of suffering be taken from him, though giving the final choice to God his Father – *not my will but yours be done*. [Luke](#) states that an angel appeared and strengthened Jesus, who then returned to his disciples. The synoptics state that the three disciples (Peter, James and John) that were with Jesus had fallen asleep, and that Jesus was sad at them for failing to stay awake even for an hour, warning that they should pray so that they could avoid temptation.

[Judas gave Jesus a kiss](#), as a pre-arranged sign to those guards (Temple or Roman) that had accompanied Judas as to who Jesus was. They arrested Jesus, although one of Jesus' disciples Simon Peter tried to stop them with a sword, he cut off the ear of one of the arresting officers - Malchus. Luke adds that Jesus healed the wound. John, Matthew, and Luke state that Jesus was not pleased on the violent act, insisting that he must drink the cup of suffering.

From the garden Jesus is taken first to the house (*John 18:13-15*) of Annas, and, after a brief delay here, to the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest;

(Jesus was led from Gethsemane to Annas first, and then sent by Annas to Caiaphas, is mentioned only by John. According to Matthew, He was led to Caiaphas, the high priest, and in his palace, before the priests and scribes and elders, the trial took place. Mark and Luke say merely that He was led away to the high priest, without naming him. The preliminary examination mentioned by John, they all pass over in silence).

Peter and John follow him *Matt. 26: 57, 58*. Here, whilst the council or Sanhedrin is assembling in the middle of the night, he is subjected to preliminary examination by Caiaphas about his disciples and doctrine. *Luke 22: 54, 55. Mark 14: 53, 54*.

The Sanhedrin having assembled (in part at least), Jesus is put on trial. *John 18: 19-23 Matt. 26: 59-66*.

As the witnesses disagree and no charge can be proved against him. He is pressured by Caiaphas to tell whether he is the Christ. Upon his confession he is condemned as guilty of blasphemy *Matt. 26: 69-75*.

During this period, Peter, who had followed him with John to the high priest's palace, there denies him, and, reminded of His words *John 28:15-18* by the crowing of the cock, goes out to weep. Jesus is then taken before Pilot in chains as the Sanhedrin want Jesus executed and they do not have the power to order this. (He is sent by Pilot to Herod for questioning and then back to Pilot). Here he is both badly beaten with the cat o nine tails and also taunted and mocked by the Roman soldiers. He is so smashed and exhausted he cannot even carry his cross but requires the help of Simon from Cyrene). He had been tortured throughout the night.

**READ John 12: 24 – 28. (Hilary) Unless a corn of wheat falls into the ground...**

***V26 Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. And my Father will honour anyone who serves me.***

During these days leading up to Easter we are called upon to remember just what Jesus went through because of his love for the world.

Jesus does not want to be “on his own” – and declares using the picture of a grain of wheat – unless a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies it abides alone. Jesus is sorrowful as he knows that he will experience separation from the Father and the Spirit (as he becomes sin) but he also wants to be with the followers, the friends who he loves BUT he knows that he must face suffering and death itself. He must die or he will continue to be alone – separated from humanity.

It is the decision of Jesus again and again – including in Gethsemane to submit to the will of the Godhead. He chooses to allow his own self to die to self, to fall into the ground and die. Within a grain of wheat is the potential in the ground to sprout and grow, to send a root, a radicle deep into the ground and a shoot up to the sunshine. And from one grain of wheat a harvest can come. Leave a grain of wheat on the shelf and it will do nothing but dry and die. ***V25 Those who love their own life too much to die to self will lose life itself.*** As Jesus died to himself then he lived for others.

And Jesus calls us to follow him in this...we too are called to die to ourselves and live for others. Our dyings to our false selves can lead to resurrection of our true selves.

Jesus' teaching here on death was both a physical and a spiritual teaching. He laid down his physical life in a way we can't for the sin of the world. It was also a spiritual struggle to keep saying yes to doing the right thing. From the death and resurrection of Jesus innumerable people have received spiritual life and ultimately resurrection bodies. From this one Jesus – a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying so much life has come. A great harvest.

And Jesus certainly is not on his own but has given birth and life to so many. Our friendship with Jesus is possible because of his willingness to die. To his enemies and persecutors, he was just one man that they would torture and seek to silence but he was the corn of wheat that was willing to die so that he did not abide alone.

Through this death and resurrection great glory was brought to God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit.



**Songs of Fellowship** 102 Father we love you we worship and adore you, glorify your name in all the earth...