**The Last Supper**

**A Bible Story From**

**Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26;**

**Luke 22:14-22**

**Bible Story Number: 2010410**

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**The Last Supper**

**Bible Story**

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**Background**

The Passover meal is a celebration and remembrance of how God worked when the Jews were slaves in Egypt. The tenth and final plague was the death of every firstborn in the land. The Jews were instructed to paint above and beside their doorway with the blood of an animal sacrifice. They obeyed and were spared. Passover refers to the fact that the death angel passed over their households in response to their obedience. (Exodus 11:1-12:28)

“When your children ask you, ‘What does this ritual mean to you?’ you are to reply, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord, for He passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and spared our homes.’” So the people bowed down and worshiped. (Exodus 12:26-27, HCSB)

This meal was a Passover celebration and is often referred to as the “Last Supper” because it was the last meal Jesus ate before he was killed. Followers of Jesus still share a form of this meal as a way to remember his death as the sacrifice for each believer. In addition to being called the Last Supper, it is also sometimes called the Lord’s Supper, or the Eucharist.

The customs for mealtimes were different during this period of history. One important difference is mentioned in this story—the individuals dining together at a special meal reclined at the table rather than sitting in chairs.

A record of this final meal with Jesus’ twelve disciples is described in Matthew, Mark and Luke. This presentation of the story blends these three accounts into one in order to provide all available information about this event.

In Paul’s first letter to the church at Corinth, he records how the believers used a reenactment of this event as a way to remember what Jesus had done for them. The bread represented his body that was broken in sacrifice for them, and the wine represented his blood that was given as a sign of the new covenant (see 1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

Churches continue this practice as a way to remember. The Lord’s Supper is an important way to remember and celebrate what Jesus did as he died on the cross, was buried and was raised back to life. It is a celebration of his victory over death and proof that he is God.

**Story from the Bible**

**Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-22**

This is what the Bible says.

Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples on the night before he was killed. This meal had a special meaning to the Jewish people and was a time to remember God’s protection and deliverance from slavery in Egypt.

Jesus and his disciples were reclined at the table. This was the customary way to eat a special meal in those days.

Jesus told his disciples that he had a fervent desire to eat this Passover meal with them before he would suffer. He told them he would not celebrate the Passover again until it had been fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus understood that he was going to die. He knew what was going to happen to him.

During the meal, Jesus took bread. He said a prayer and broke it. Then he gave the bread to his disciples and instructed them to eat some of it. He told them it was his body. It would be broken for them.

Then Jesus took a cup of wine. Again, he said a prayer and then passed the cup around for each disciple to drink some. He said that it represented his blood that would be a new covenant (a new profound promise). His blood would be shed for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus told them that he would not drink wine again before he died. But, he also told them he would drink it again with them in a new way in his Father’s kingdom. He also told them to continue to share bread and wine together in the future as a way to remember.

Judas Iscariot was there at the meal. Jesus knew that Judas was already planning to betray him. He told the disciples that the one that would betray him was at the table with them. Jesus already knew God’s plan, and he told them he was to go away. He also gave a warning to the one who would betray him.

After the meal they sang psalms together. Then they went out to the Mount of Olives.

That concludes this story from the Bible.

**Retelling the Story**

Let’s review this story by retelling it as a group. We want to retell it as faithfully as we can to the story from the Bible. We do not want to add to it or leave out anything important. Who will get us started?

**Questions**

* What meal did Jesus share with His disciples the night before He died?
* What was different about the mealtime custom in those days?
* What did the bread represent?
* What did the wine represent?
* Why did Jesus say they should do this in the future?
* Did Jesus give a warning during the meal?
* What did they do before they left?
* What does this teach us about God?
* What should we do in response to this teaching?

**Prayer**

Prayer is more than a way to end the session. It is time to talk to God. Public prayer is a model for others. Boldly ask God to guide participants to use the Bible story with others. Ask God to give you and the participant’s insight and understanding as you think about this biblical event.