

### ***READ MATTHEW 26:26-29***

**What** – This event is recorded in some form by all the gospel writers (John's is a bit different, but the dinner is mentioned) and by Paul in Corinthians. Matthew's gospel is the quintessential description of Jesus' famous table blessing. Jesus took the opportunity of blessing the meal to remind the disciples that there was a purpose to His coming, that they had a huge role to play in that purpose and that the time had nearly come for Jesus to take the biggest step in fulfilling that purpose.

**Why** – This importance of this scripture cannot be understated. It describes very purpose, plan, and mission of God in the lives of His people. It describes God's love for us, His willingness to sacrifice everything to see us redeemed and reminds us of the fact that our sin cost Him greatly. It also reminds us that our sin will cost us greatly as we try to follow Jesus. In the Old Testament sin was "atoned" for by the shedding of blood. A sacrifice was given to God to "pay" for a transgression of His law. The problem with this system, as much of the bible reminds us, is that it was incomplete. We continued to sin and had to offer sacrifices continually. Jesus tells us here that His sacrifice, on our behalf, will be for all sin for all time. In one fell swoop, God is giving us a chance to be redeemed. A more important event HAS NEVER TAKEN PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

**WOW** – There is so much here that we can hardly do it justice in a devotion. First, Jesus said that this was HIS BODY. Can you imagine the surprise (and possible disgust) of the disciples? Jesus was willing to die for us. He wants to be our sacrifice. Then He reminded the disciples that what was being invoked was a NEW COVENANT. Essentially, He told the Jews that the old covenant with God (Covenant and Testament mean the same thing) was being replaced by a new one. This one depended on His blood. We know what that means, and three days later the disciples would too. Covenants are different from contracts because they are not dependant upon the paper they are written on but depend upon the character of the one making them. Jesus showed here that GOD is made a promise to pay our debt of sin to Him through Jesus. Nothing more important was ever done. Finally, Jesus reminded the disciples that He would return. He was fixing the problem, but the new covenant did not clean up the mess. That will happen "when we drink it anew in God's kingdom". Revelation 16 prophecies Jesus' return to clean up the mess. The scriptures are connected by the reminder that Jesus will be back. Until then we are empowered by the covenant to do the will and work of the Father, will and work we can now understand because Jesus has made us right with God.

The full descriptions of the Last Supper are found in Matt 26:17-35, Mark 14:12-26, Lk 22:7-23, John 13:1-17 and 1 Cor 11:23-25