

As it is Maundy Thursday, a few thoughts this week on The Passover. We will return to Ezekiel next week as the reading will fit in with one of the resurrection appearances.

Those of you who have come to know me, will realise that I love looking for “links” between texts and themes in Scripture. With the theme being the Passover there are a good number to follow, and my thoughts make it something of a “paper chase” backwards and forwards through the Bible.

St. Paul’s words from his letters to the Corinthians and the Romans are linked together in the traditional “Easter Anthems” in the Book of Common Prayer. (if you have a paper copy, of this study, they are on the other side of this sheet)

The Passover.

On that first “Maundy Thursday” evening Jesus celebrates the Passover of the Exodus with His disciples. (Matthew 26 verses.18-20: Mark 14, verse 17: Luke 22 verses 7 – 13). If you are not familiar with the format of the Jewish passover celebration, please ask and I can lend you a simple outline! (Again supplied with the paper copies)

Read Exodus chapter 12:- It is well worth thinking through the original meaning . Jesus and His disciples were celebrating the great deliverance of the people of God from the exile and oppression of Egypt. The blood of the sacrificial lamb was to be touched onto the the door-posts and lintel of the Jewish homes. - see verses 13 and 25 – 27.

The gospel of John gives the timing of the condemnation of Jesus. (John chapter 19 verses 13 – 14) “it was about the sixth hour”. It is midday on the Friday of the great feast of the Passover. In the Temple the Passover lambs are being prepared for sacrifice. At the seat of judgement, the Lamb of God is handed over to be crucified. (John 19 verse 16).

The death of Jesus, “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” has been linked with the Passover and Exodus since the New Testament times. There is a hint of it in Luke’s version of the Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah “appeared in glory, and spoke of His departure, which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem” (Luke 9 verse 31). The word ‘departure’ is literally ‘exodus’.

This Easter is going to be far different from anything that we can remember! Physically we are restricted in what we can do and where we can go. No meeting together to remember the Last Supper. No Vigil at the Cross on Good Friday and no celebration together of the Resurrection on Easter Day. However we need to remember that whatever we think or do, the truth still remains!

Christ has died,

Christ is risen,

Christ will come again!

On Easter day at 10.00 a.m. you are invited to celebrate with the Redeemed People of God. Go out of your front door and sing “Thine be the glory, Risen, Conquering Son, endless is the victory, Thou o-er death hast won”.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Easter Anthems (Book of Common Prayer)

1) Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us *1 Corinthians 5.7b, 8*
so let us celebrate the feast,

2) not with the old leaven of corruption and wickedness:
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

3) Christ once raised from the dead dies no more: *Romans 6.9–11*
death has no more dominion over him.

4) In dying he died to sin once for all:
in living he lives to God.

5) See yourselves therefore as dead to sin:
and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

6) Christ has been raised from the dead: *1 Corinthians 15.20–22*
the first fruits of those who sleep.

7) For as by man came death:
by man has come also the resurrection of the dead;

8) for as in Adam all die:
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.