

Day 5 – 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2015

## 马太福音 Matthew 26:17-30

Just as the Jewish Passover meal is rich in symbolism, Jesus likewise uses the bread and the cup of wine to instill a new and important symbolism into them, to associate them with His upcoming death. By identifying the Passover bread to be His body, Jesus is in fact telling His disciples that they are to feed on Him. Just as the Jews feed on the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread whenever they celebrate the Passover, disciples' partaking of the bread means they are to be nourished continually by Jesus even after His death, for He is the bread that gives life. And by partaking of the cup of wine, the blood poured out from His broken body, we are also reminded of an earlier passage where Jesus spoke about drinking the cup that He is to drink (20:22-23). The cup that Jesus needs to drink is the cup of suffering leading to death. Thus, by drinking the cup that Jesus drinks, the disciples are invited to associate themselves with Jesus' death, to make His broken body and His poured out blood theirs. Thus, communion with Jesus involves not only maintaining an intimate relationship with Him, but also sharing His fate, and be united with Him into a new covenantal relationship to pledge our loyalty to Him. Bread and cup of wine, Jesus' body and blood, are offered to us; in turn we have to take and eat that bread and drink that cup.

But when the disciples 'take' the Passover bread-body that Jesus 'gives' them, they are not only to feed themselves. As intermediaries for Jesus, they are to 'distribute' it to the people in future celebrations of this new Christian Passover meal, the Lord's Supper. By instituting the Last Supper to be the Lord's Supper, Jesus likewise commands the disciples to repeatedly celebrate His 'taking-blessing-breaking-giving' act of deliverance with His followers. In other words, Jesus has left His disciples a new way to unify all His followers with Him and His saving death. It also becomes a sign of fellowship, of unity among all Christians with Jesus Christ as their Lord. The celebration of the Lord's Supper should bring us a fresh experience of the grace of God through the forgiveness of sins, a renewed participation in Jesus' saving death, and also a renewed sense of oneness of the members of the one body of Christ.

犹太人的逾越节含有如此丰富的象征涵义，耶稣也就地取材，赋予面包和酒以崭新和重要的意义，让它们与他即将面临的死亡连接上关系。当耶稣把无酵饼认同为他的身体，耶稣事实上是告诉门徒，要他从他得到饱足。当犹太人在逾越节吃羔羊和无酵饼，门徒也要接过这饼来吃，意味着在耶稣死后继续的从他那里得喂养，因为他是生命的粮。当门徒共享宴席上的杯，从他破碎的身体流出的血，要提醒我们 20:22-23 耶稣说他所要喝的杯。那杯就是受苦的杯，最终导向死亡。因此，当耶稣递给门徒这杯，让门徒也喝，他是邀请他们与他的死产生接连，让他破碎的身体，以及倾倒出来的血，成为他们的。因此与耶稣的生命共融（communion），不仅是与他有亲密的关系，也包括共融他的命运，与他有一个立约的关系，而我们是立约的另一方，需要表达对他的忠诚。饼和酒，耶稣的身体和血，如今赠予我们，我们的回应就是接过那饼，吃下它，然后接过杯子，喝下它。

可是当门徒'拿'（take）了耶稣'递给'(give)他们的饼/身体，他们不只是自己吃。作为耶稣的中间人，他们要在这新的基督徒逾越节晚餐中来'分派'(distribute)出去。当耶稣把最后的晚餐定位为主的圣餐的时候，耶稣委派了门徒在未来的日子，要延续他的拯救动作'拿-祝谢-掰开-分出去'(taking-blessing-breaking-giving)。换句话说，耶稣让他的跟随着以一个新的方式与他和他的死亡（带来拯救）连结在一起。圣餐也成为一种团契（fellowship）的表记，把所有的信徒与耶稣基督他们的主联合在一起。当庆祝主的圣餐的时候，应当带给我们一个崭新的经验来体认上帝的恩典，透过罪得赦、更新我们与基督的死（带来拯救）之联合，也让我们再次意识到我们之间的关系乃是同属'一个身体'。

## Day 6 – 24th Feb 2015

### 马太福音 Matthew 26:17-30

Amid the betrayal by one of His disciples, Jesus' promise of eternal heavenly banquet is for those who are faithful to Him, who acknowledge Him as their Lord and obey His command. The practice of dipping hand with the bread into a common bowl is part of the Passover ritual. It is therefore not a clear indication of the betrayer's identity (contrast John 13:26), for other disciples have done the dipping as well with Jesus. But Judas knows well that he is the betrayer. His question to Jesus is therefore hypocritical; "Surely not I, Rabbi?" It seems that he merely echoes the other disciples so as not to appear out of line. Or perhaps he just wants to see whether Jesus really knows who the betrayer would be. Jesus' answer to him is an affirmation that Judas himself well knew. Notice Judas addresses Jesus as Rabbi unlike other disciples who address Jesus as Lord. Judas, of course, is not wrong to call Jesus Rabbi, title of respect for a teacher. But he should recognize that Jesus is more than the teacher. Thus, the different title used by Judas to address Jesus underlines his separation from the rest of the disciples. Having no proper relationship to Jesus as his Lord, Judas is soon to break the bond with Jesus and betray Him.

Thus, we see the line between commitment and betrayal can be a thin one as the disciples are soon to discover in the very near future, typified by the three time denial of Peter. So, no disciples are immune to exclude the possibility that they might betray Jesus. "Surely not I, Lord?" is thus their anxious question to Jesus concerning their loyalty to Him. They need assurance from Jesus' answer. In this light, Jesus' giving of bread and cup is to be perceived as providing them with what they need. They need to feed on Him to be His faithful disciples. They need to be forgiven by Jesus' blood of the new covenant. Only with such an attitude, they will not be betrayers, but faithful disciples. As they remain loyal to Jesus when they will be separated from Him, so Jesus says: "I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." It is thus the assuring promise that Jesus gives to them, His faithful disciples.

耶稣在将会出卖他的门徒在场的情况下，应许了将来属天的永恒宴席，是给那些忠于他、认他为主、顺从他的话的人。同席的人，蘸手在同一个盘子里，一直是逾越节吃饭的习俗之一，因此不需要把这当成是一个记号来认出谁是出卖耶稣的（对比约翰福音 13:26），因为其他的门徒在席上，也会蘸手在那个盘子里。可是犹大心里知道自己就是那个出卖耶稣行踪的人，他问耶稣的话因此显得虚假，‘拉比，是我吗？’看起来他要跟其他门徒一样问这话，不要显得跟别人不同。又，或许他只是要知道究竟耶稣知不知道谁会出卖他。耶稣对他说的话显示耶稣知情。从经文中看到犹大称呼耶稣为‘拉比’，其余门徒称耶稣为‘主’。固然称呼耶稣为‘拉比’也没有错，这本是对老师的敬语称呼，可是犹大选择用不同的称呼来对耶稣，也把他跟众门徒分开了。既然他不再以耶稣为他的主，犹大很快就要背弃耶稣，出卖他了。

故事发展下来，忠于耶稣的人与背叛耶稣的人，原来只是一线之差。再过不久，彼得将要三次不认耶稣。因此没有一个门徒能把自己排除在出卖耶稣的名单之外。‘主，是我吗？’，是他们心情紧张之下问耶稣的。他们需要耶稣给他们一个回复，安抚他们的心。在这样的背景下，耶稣的擘饼，把饼和酒分给门徒，正是提供了他们所需要的答案。他们需要吃下耶稣，才能继续做耶稣忠心的门徒。他们需要耶稣的血所立成的新的约，来宣告赦免。唯有如此，他们才能免于成为背叛者，而继续是忠诚的门徒。尽管与耶稣过后要分离，他们还是能与耶稣保持忠诚的时刻，耶稣跟他们说，‘从今以后，我不再喝这葡萄酒直到我在我父的国里。’这话是耶稣给他忠心的门徒的承诺。

Day 7 – 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015

## 马太福音 Matthew 26:31-35

What does “falling away” mean? To “fall away” is to lack the courage to acknowledge Jesus in times of persecution. Jesus predicted that all his disciples will “fall away” when they are questioned about their relationship with him. Their loyalty to the Master will be put to great test. All of them will fail this test of courage and loyalty. However, this does not mean that they will cease to be Jesus’ disciples even after they have failed the test of courage. To “fall away” is not the same as “giving up your faith” or “disbelieving in Jesus”. It is simply the lack of courage to stand firm in their belief about who Jesus is during times of persecution. Their failure was also prophesied by Zechariah. Here, “for it is written” refers to a quotation from Zech. 13:7b. Note that it is the LORD of hosts who gives the command to strike the shepherd. Prophet Zechariah wrote the book after the Fall of Jerusalem in 586/7 BCE. During this period, the Jews were in Exile and many were taken to Babylon where the prophets have instructed them to build their homes, suggesting that their return will not be soon. The book of Zechariah was written to give hope for the Jews in Exile to remind them that God is at work even though their present circumstance seems to be in dire straits. The Jews believe strongly that nothing happens without Yahweh’s approval and control.

The shepherd is identified as Yahweh’s companion, who is side by side with him as his equal. The scattering of the sheep in Zechariah’s context speaks of the dispersion of Jews. In our passage today, it refers to the scattering of Jesus’ disciples. Here, Jesus identifies himself as “the shepherd” in Zech. 13:7. He is the shepherd that will be struck by Yahweh. In the present context, “to be struck” refers to Jesus’ death on the cross. His sheep, his disciples, will be scattered because of Jesus’ crucifixion. This verse actually conveys an important theological truth. This quotation demonstrates that even when God’s actions are carried out by others (“O sword”), they are a result of his sovereign activity. Simply put, God is in control, despite of all the terrible things that are now happening. Satan has no absolute power over us, over the affairs of this world, over Jesus and his falling disciples, if God did not allow it.

究竟‘跌倒’是什么意思呢？这里耶稣说的跌倒，是指当逼迫来到，门徒缺乏勇气来承认他们与耶稣的关系。当人家质问他们与耶稣的关系的时候，耶稣可以预告他们都会‘跌倒’。他们对主的忠诚，将会面对极大的考验，到时他们都会在勇气和忠诚上一塌糊涂。可是这不等于他们就不再是耶稣的门徒了。‘跌倒’与‘放弃信仰’或者‘不相信耶稣’是两码子事。‘跌倒’指的是他们在遇到逼迫的时候缺乏勇气，没有办法公开的认知耶稣是谁。这样的事，先知撒迦利亚已经预告了--‘...击打牧人，羊就分散了’（撒迦利亚书 13:7b）。让我们留意到，是万军之耶和华给了吩咐---要击打牧人。先知撒迦利亚在年耶路撒冷沦陷之后写了这些话（注：耶路撒冷在主前 586/7 沦陷）。当时犹太人被掳，许多人被带到巴比伦去，先知叮嘱他们要在那里盖房子，这意味着要等很多年才能回返他们失去的家园。撒迦利亚书的写下，是为了那些被掳的犹太人，鼓励他们，让他们知道上帝继续在工作，尽管境况严峻。在那些日子里，犹太人坚持相信，没有一件事的发生是在耶和华的许可和掌管之外。

牧人被视为耶和华的同伴，与他同等。在撒迦利亚的处境里，羊的分散，相等于犹太人的流离。在今天我们读的经文里，指的是耶稣的门徒将要分散出去。耶稣把自己视为撒迦利亚 13:7 里的牧人，他是耶和华要击打的牧人。在这段经文里说到的‘击打’，指的是耶稣将要死在十字架上。他的羊，也就是门徒，到时就会因为他被钉，于是慌张散去。这经文带出一个重要的神学真理---就算上帝的行动由他者来执行（刀剑），这一切仍旧是上帝主权之下发生的。简单来说，上帝仍在掌管，尽管如今要发生很可怕的事。撒但对世界没有最后的主权，他对这个世界上发生的事没有最后的主权。如果上帝没有许可的话，撒但对耶稣和他四散的门徒，是毫无作为的。

**Day 8 – 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015**

## **马太福音 Matthew 26:31-35**

Peter has been described as the most “human” of all the biblical characters. It is precisely his humanness which helps us identify most closely with him. Here, he was portrayed as the bravest and the proudest of Jesus’ disciples. 33 Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.” I will never fall away. Are these words of confidence or pure ignorance? We could imagine Jesus saying to Peter, “Dude, you have no idea what you are talking about; you are going to deny me three times before the day breaks!” The crow of the rooster signifies the arrival of the new day. Even that is not enough to set Peter-the-brave aback. With greater confidence, or the lack of it, he proudly proclaim, “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!” And all the disciples said the same (v. 35). Such an awesome display of loyalty! Imagine the group dynamics! What could go wrong?

Peter has frequently been singled out as the “fall guy” but the rest of the disciples were equally guilty of making such big claims. Peter was merely speaking out loud what the rest was thinking silently in their minds. Maybe it was peer pressure. Maybe they could not really comprehend what they are coming up against. Even though all the disciples made the same remarks, only Peter’s failure was highlighted at the end of this chapter. Are we not the same? So very often, we hear Christians around the world proclaiming that “Jesus is our Lord”, but yet, deny him in our lifestyle. By the same lips we sing praises to God, we also use them to gossip and say hateful things about each other. It’s so easy to say we love Jesus, but find it difficult to love the person next to us. Would you not have made the same claims as Peter and the rest? “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!”

Have we also denied Christ in our lives? Do we “fall away” like the disciples in the past? Maybe if I use another term, it might be easier for us to understand. I think an appropriate modern term we can use to describe “falling away” could be “back-sliding”. In the biblical context, when the disciples fall away, they failed in their courage to stand up for who they are as Christ’s disciples. They failed to acknowledge Christ as Master.

彼得是圣经人物当中最具‘人性’的，也因为他如此的人性化，使得我们最容易跟他认同。他被形容为耶稣门徒当中最勇敢也是最骄傲的。33节，彼得回答说，‘即使众人为你的缘故跌倒，我也绝不跌倒。’这些是表达了他的自信，抑或是他的无知？我们可以想像耶稣对他说，‘你不知道你自己在说什么。今夜鸡叫以前，你要三次不认我。’鸡叫表示迎来新的一天。耶稣就算说了这样的话，也不足以挫败彼得的大无畏精神。他更加勇敢或者无知的说，‘我就是必须和你同死，也绝不会不认你。’然后所有的门徒都是这样的说（35节），大家都表达了对耶稣的忠诚啊。这一票人之间的小组动力真是好啊，还能发生什么不好的事呢？

彼得经常被挑出来说成是那位‘跌倒’的，其实所有的门徒都跟他一样信誓旦旦。彼得只是大声说了，而其他人脑子里也同样这么想。可能他们觉得有来自同伴的压力，也可能他们无法想像事情可以有多糟。尽管所有的门徒都说了一样的话，可是这章结束的时候只有彼得的失败被挑出来写了。难道我们不也是这样吗？我们常听见世界各地的信徒宣告‘耶稣是我们的主’，可是我们的生活方式却跟这宣认唱反调。我们可以用同样的嘴唇来颂赞上帝，然后用同样的嘴唇口沫横飞的议论别人，或者说出憎恶别人的话。我们能够轻易的说我们爱耶稣，可是觉得要爱那个就在我们旁边的人难上加难。你不也会像彼得和其他门徒一样，做那样的宣告？‘我就是必须和你同死，也绝不会不认你！’

在我们的生活里是否也否认了基督？我们是否像门徒一样‘跌倒’了？可能换个近代的词汇会好一些吧，有些人不说‘跌倒’了，但他们说‘冷淡’了或者‘后退’了。在圣经里当门徒跌倒的时候，他们没有勇气站起来说他们是基督的门徒，他们不曾认基督是他们的。主。

**Day 9 – 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015**

## **马太福音 Matthew 26:36-46**

Here, we see Jesus in deep sorrow. We must recognize a 'Son' who is walking with us in our lives, who is deep in touch with human lives, who identifies with us, and is with us. At this moment, at Gethsemane, this weak Lord who said "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow" redeemed for us the honour and glory of the power and image of the Son that was lost with Adam. Three times he said: "My Father, yet not as I will, but as you will." How did this 'Son' triumph over this temptation? The Jesus portrayed in Matthew is one whose identity was constantly being ridiculed and challenged. If Jesus made a wrong judgement at any point in time to defer to those who annoyed him, he would have failed and become another Adam. The most representative situation is found in Matthew 27: 40-44. Although the chief priests and teachers of the law were mocking him, their words were more precise than those uttered by the snake to Eve. Back then, the snake twisted the truth by suggesting "did God really say...", but the chief priests just repeated verbatim what Jesus had previously said. The specious words were to confuse us. When we feel that our lives are being threatened, when we are afraid of disasters and persecution or feel oppressed, none of us would be able to respond rationally and we would enter into a state of confusion. Jesus found himself in a similar situation. Even as children of God, we are unable to remain alert, we are always in confusion.

How did Jesus overcome this confusion? We see that he calls out "My Father!" He is very clear that he is the 'Son'. Today, he is at the right-hand side of God the Father, praying and pleading for us every day, so that we will not lose our way in every minute of our time on earth. Truly, when we are in trouble, lost or grappling with indecision, Jesus Christ is here, let us pray together with Him. Back then, His three disciples could not keep watch with Him, hopefully the disciples today are able to. Let us always be alert and pray before Christ, because Christ kept watch for us, was victorious for us, and He will walk with us through our confusion, our weakness and our failures.

此刻我们见到主耶稣流露极其悲伤的一面。这一幕让我们看到一个与我们的生命同行、完全明白生命、跟我们认同、跟我们同在的‘子’。此刻在客西马尼园，亚当所失落的尊贵、荣耀儿子的能力和形象，被这位软弱、口说‘我心里极其悲伤’的主，替我们给挽回了。他三次祷告，“我的父啊！然而不要照我的意思，只要照你的意思。”这位作为‘子’的，他怎样去胜过试探和迷惑？在马太的记载中，我们看到主耶稣的身份定位不断地受到嘲笑和挑战--只要在任何时刻，假设他做了错误的判断来迎合迷惑他的人，他就彻底失败，成为另一个亚当！最具代表性的情境，出现在马太福音 27 章 40-44 节。祭司文士虽然语带讥笑，然而他们的话比蛇对夏娃说的话更为准确。伊甸园里的那条蛇以“上帝岂是真说。。”为开场白，然后把上帝的话扭曲和加油加酱，在福音书里，祭司们却是引述耶稣曾经说过的话--也就是这样的似是而非，构成迷惑。当我们感到生命受到威胁、对灾害逼迫怀有恐惧和压迫感，就无法作出理性的正确反应，我们就进入迷惑，而主耶稣也曾置身在这种状况之中。即使我们是上帝的儿子，也总是做不到做醒，我们总是进入迷惑。

那主耶稣怎样胜过迷惑？我们看到他说“我的父啊！”--他很清楚自己是‘子’。今天他已经在父上帝的右边，天天为我们祷告、祈求，使我们在地上每时每刻不会迷惑、失去方向。真的，我们在最困难、迷失、模拟两可的时候，耶稣基督就在这里，让我们跟他一起做醒祷告。当年这三位门徒做不到，但希望现在的门徒能够做到。让我们常常到主面前做醒祷告，因为主为我们做醒、为我们胜过，他一定能够跟我们一起走过我们的迷惑、软弱，失败。

Day 10 – 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015

## 马太福音 Matthew 26:36-46

Gethsemane in the Gospels showed us that Jesus was victorious over confusion, and the secret to this can also be accomplished by you and me. If we are destined to fail, then there is no need to delve more into this. When we read the bible, we have some erroneous framework, such as “It is human nature to be evil, we are destined to sin”. This is never mentioned in the bible. These inappropriate and incorrect framework often blind us to the reality and importance of event that happened in Gethsemane. Jesus was victorious over temptation through one method and one path, and that is the insistence of “Father, My Father!” From beginning to end, He was insistent that God the Father was His Father, and he the Son. From the start of his ministry, when Jesus was baptised and came out from the water, there was a voice from the heavens "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." When Jesus was in the wilderness, He was tempted by Satan who told Him thrice “If you are the Son of God...” It does not take any special power to overcome temptation, it is by faith, to believe that God is the Father, and to persist with the personal identity of being the Son.

Brothers and sisters, in the days ahead, when you face the trials and temptations of life, remember that there is no supernatural power, remember this scene with Jesus. He persisted with His identity of the ‘Son’ for our sake. He believed that the Father would always be His Father and this led to His victory. You might insist that you are the husband of your wife, or the subordinate of your boss. It is only when we insist on these normal and regular relationships that we would not betray our souls or betray others. Our physical bodies are not destined to be weak. When Jesus said this, he was citing the common words usually used by people, and not indicating that the physical bodies of men were weak, which was the viewpoint of the Greeks. If the physical body was destined to be weak, the New Testament would not teach us to use our bodies to live out the Word of God. We can use this body to respect God, we can also use this body to disobey God. Here, this Jesus who has this physical body just like you and I, this Jesus who was full of sorrow, who persisted in God the Father and Himself as the Son, such that He was able to face the temptation. After praying thrice, He said: “Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!” He faced this situation calmly. He carried with Him the faith that ‘The Father is My Father, I am the Son’.

西马尼园里耶稣胜过迷惑，那唯一的秘诀是你我皆能的。如果那秘诀非一般人能做，那么多说无益。我们读圣经时经常带着一些错误的框架，譬如‘人性本恶，注定我们犯罪’。圣经可没有这样说！这些不恰当、不正确的框架，常常蒙蔽了客西马尼园里的事件之真实性和重要性。耶稣胜过试探只有一个方式、一个管道，就是坚持“父啊，我的父！”他自始至终坚持父上帝是他的父，他是子。耶稣开始公开服事之初，他受洗时从水里上来，有声音从天上来说“这是我的爱子，我所喜悦的。”之后，耶稣进入旷野受试探，撒旦三次对他说“你若是上帝的儿子。。”神儿子能够胜过试探没有什么神奇的力量，最重要的是他继续信得过神，信任上帝是父，也坚持自己是‘子’这样的身份地位。

弟兄姐妹，在未来的日子，当你面临人生考验试探的时候，记得你不是靠什么神奇的力量来胜过，请你务必记得主耶稣在客西马尼园这一幕。他为了我们持守‘子’的身份。他信任父永远是他的父，这使他能胜过。你在面临考验的时候，你得坚持你是你太太的丈夫，得坚持你是你老板的雇员。只有当我们坚持这种正常正规的关系与定位的时候，我们不会出卖自己的灵魂，也不会出卖别人。我们的肉体不是注定软弱的---耶稣用的这一句话（26:41）是以一般人的讲法，而不是讲人性里面肉体是软弱的（希腊人的观念里认为肉体是软弱的。）如果肉体注定软弱，那么新约圣经就不必教导我们用身体去行出上帝的话。事实上我们能用这个身体去遵从上帝，也能用这个身体去悖逆上帝。在客西马尼园里，带着像你我这个真实肉身的主耶稣，他虽然悲伤，但他定意持守父是他的父，定意持守自己的身份是子，以至于他能够面对这个试探。经过三次祷告之后，他说“走吧，卖我的人近了。”是的，他坦然的去面对。他带着‘父是我的父，我是子’的信念去面对。