

Maundy Thursday 2009

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be always acceptable in your sight, O Lord our strength and redeemer.

April 9, 2009

We have gathered here as a Christian family on a very special day.

Yes, of course you say.. but lets consider others for a moment.

Is it also a very special day for our Jewish brothers and sisters around the world as they gather in their family units to commemorate their freedom from slavery.

To help them know what to do and to remember the event.. God gave them very special directions.. roast the lamb, do not

take the time to let the bread rise.. but cook it unleavened, and eat it with bitter herbs. Be prepared for a major change in your life.

The gift to God's people,.. God's family.. things to do, symbols to use to remind people what God has done, is doing... giving them the food for the journey.

The journey from physical bondage....
The journey from spiritual servitude...
The journey from social degradation...

And...as we read just a little further in Exodus...

In each generation, each of us should feel as though we ourselves had gone forth from Egypt, as it is written: "And you shall explain to your child on that day, it is because of what the Eternal did for me when I, myself, went forth from Egypt"

On Sunday we heard the story of Jesus and his disciples eating this “Passover meal”.

I am sure that in the thousands of years since it first inaugurated there have been many changes.. changes even before Jesus gathered his friends in the upper room... but... some things do not change. God’s gift of freedom.. the yearly reminder, the command to celebrate it as a festival to the Lord.. a perpetual ordinance...

And the Jews have been faithful even unto this day.. they are remembering what God has given them.. and the challenge to live into the freedom God has decreed. To continue on that journey from the physical bondage.. the spiritual servitude .. the social degradation... begun so long ago in Egypt.

We too have gathered to remember.. remember the gift that Jesus gave us.

In the midst of a city in turmoil.. When the religious leaders were afraid of anything that might upset the status quo.. and the Romans were afraid of loosing control of this conquered country.. this upstart from Galilee with his followers.. being watched.. knowing his life was threatened...

Jesus gathered his friends to commemorate freedom.. freedom especially from spiritual servitude..

Just as God gave the Hebrew slaves actions and symbols before the Exodus..

Jesus gave us actions and symbols before the act of redemption...

Tonight let us imagine that we are actually around the table with Jesus.. that we do not know what is about to happen.. that we are just glad to be with this man we call Teacher..Master.. Rabbi.. to whose every

word we listen and try to remember, but we do not always understand.

We want to be leaders.. but Jesus our teacher kneels and washes our feet.

We are wash one another's feet.. for Jesus has set us an example.. and we are not greater than or Lord and teacher..

And we must remember that we messengers of the gospel are not greater than the Lord who has sent us out..

So in humility we let the Christ in others wash our feet... we follow the example and wash other's feet..

Then in humility.. we eat the bread and drink the wine Jesus gives us.. and pray for the strength to follow the command... to love one another just as Jesus has loved us.