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THE FOOTWASHING AT CHRIST'S LAST PASSOVER

Exactly where does "THE FOOTWASHING" fit into the sequence of events at our observance of the Passover? Specifically, did the footwashing take place BEFORE Jesus Christ introduced the symbols of the bread and the wine, OR did the footwashing take place AFTER Jesus Christ had introduced the symbols of the bread and the wine? It is important that we understand exactly where the footwashing fits into this sequence because that understanding will affect how we conduct the Passover. Understanding the correct sequence of events also affects a speculation about the footwashing in the 1st century AD, which I introduce towards the end of this article.

There are at least two ways in which we can clearly establish the correct sequence of events, as to whether the footwashing fits into the Passover before or after the bread and the wine. The first way to do this is to examine two accounts written by two participants at that last Passover. The second way is an expansion of this approach, by looking at ALL the gospel accounts and identifying the timing for various events by how they relate to comments Jesus Christ made about Judas.

Let's start by using the simplest and clearest means available to us for establishing a correct sequence.

THE TWO EYEWITNESSES

Of the four gospel writers only MATTHEW and JOHN were present at that last Passover. So by comparing IDENTICAL STATEMENTS by both these writers, we can establish a very clear sequence of events for that Passover evening. Whatever JOHN says BEFORE a specific statement must therefore come BEFORE THAT SAME SPECIFIC STATEMENT in Matthew's account! And whatever MATTHEW says AFTER that specific statement must therefore also come AFTER that same statement in John's account!

Let's go through this very slowly and carefully, because both, Matthew and John, were there that evening, and both of them witnessed the whole proceedings.

SO HERE IS THE POINT!

MATTHEW 26:21 and JOHN 13:21 quote THE IDENTICAL WORDS of Jesus Christ! It is not correct that Jesus Christ would have said the identical sentences TWICE that evening, just so that we can hold to the sequence of events we would like to believe. Christ said those words ONCE, and both eyewitnesses accurately recorded those words. Here are these two verses.

And as they did eat, he said, VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT ONE OF YOU SHALL BETRAY ME. (Matthew 26:21 AV)

When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT ONE OF YOU SHALL BETRAY ME. (John 13:21 AV)

Here we have without question THE IDENTICAL STATEMENT BY JESUS CHRIST RECORDED BY THE TWO EYEWITNESS WRITERS OF THE GOSPELS! There can be no mistaking this clear

statement recorded by these two eyewitnesses.

Therefore two things should be very clear:

1) Whatever happened BEFORE JOHN 13:21 must therefore ALSO have happened BEFORE MATTHEW 26:21.

2) Whatever happened AFTER MATTHEW 26:21 must therefore ALSO have happened AFTER JOHN 13:21.

The IDENTICAL QUOTATION from Jesus Christ, recorded by the two eyewitnesses, leaves us no other option!

To make this really clear and beyond question, THE CONTEXT of this quotation in both gospel accounts also makes clear that Matthew and John are indeed speaking about EXACTLY the same thing. Thus:

A) Matthew 26:22 is the parallel to John 13:22. Notice ...

And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?
(Matthew 26:22 AV)

Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. (John 13:22 AV)

Here Matthew and John have expressed the same assessment of the response of the apostles to this statement by Jesus Christ.

B) Matthew 26:23 is the parallel to John 13:23-26. Notice ...

And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. (Matthew 26:23 AV)

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. (John 13:23-26 AV)

Matthew and John both followed that up with references to "dipping a sop".

C) Matthew 26:24 presents a warning from Jesus Christ which John did not record. Notice ...

The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. (Matthew 26:24 AV)

D) Matthew 26:25 is a parallel to John 13:27-30, with John just giving more information than Matthew. Notice ...

Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. (Matthew 26:25 AV)

And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of *them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. (John 13:27-30 AV)

So Matthew and John both followed up their previous statements with identifying Judas, and a conversation between Christ and Judas.

TO SUMMARIZE: THE CONTEXT makes very clear that Matthew 26:21 and John 13:21 are a quotation of THE IDENTICAL STATEMENT BY JESUS CHRIST! THERE IS NO WAY TO DISPUTE THIS! Matthew 26:21 and John 13:21 pinpoint the same identical moment in time in that last Passover.

THEREFORE AS STATED ABOVE:

- 1) Whatever went BEFORE John 13:21 must automatically ALSO have gone BEFORE Matthew 26:21.
- 2) Whatever went AFTER Matthew 26:21 must automatically ALSO have gone AFTER John 13:21.

So we now have a clear sequence of events:

- 1) Since THE FOOTWASHING took place BEFORE John 13:21, therefore the footwashing must also have taken place BEFORE MATTHEW 26:21.
- 2) Since Jesus Christ only introduced THE BREAD AND THE WINE AFTER Matthew 26:21, therefore the bread and the wine must also only have been introduced AFTER JOHN 13:21.

Note carefully:

For the purpose of establishing the correct sequence for these events it is really immaterial whether all these things took place during the meal, or whether only some of them took place during the meal. THE MEAL does not make a difference to this sequence one way or the other. Matthew 26:21 and John 13:21 identify one specific moment in time during that last Passover observed by Jesus Christ. WHATEVER went before that moment in one of these two accounts must automatically also have been before that same moment in the other account. And WHATEVER went after that moment in time in one of these two accounts must automatically also have been after that moment in the other account.

Matthew and John were both there that night and they knew EXACTLY where in the proceedings they should place Christ's statement of "verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me". That statement is a key common ground for the two Passover accounts by these two eyewitnesses of that event.

NOTHING THAT MARK OR LUKE CAN SAY CAN DETRACT FROM THIS CLEAR QUOTATION OF JESUS CHRIST'S WORDS BY THESE TWO EYEWITNESSES!

Never allow anyone to try to use Luke's account to somehow argue AGAINST this clear quotation, which has been established in the mouths of TWO eyewitnesses (Matthew and John). However "correct" Luke's account may be, Matthew's and John's accounts are if anything MORE SO, because these two

men were there that night! They did not need to get this story secondhand from someone else.

So from the accounts recorded by Matthew and John we get the clear sequence that the footwashing comes first, which is then followed by Christ's statement in John 13:21. That statement is then the identical point in time as the statement in Matthew 26:21, and that is then followed first by the bread and then by the wine.

Therefore THE ESTABLISHED PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH IN THIS PRESENT AGE OF HAVING THE FOOTWASHING BEFORE THE BREAD AND THE WINE IS SUPPORTED 100% BY THE EYEWITNESSES MATTHEW AND JOHN!

For most people this evidence out of the mouths of these two eyewitnesses will be completely adequate to give them the confidence that the Church has indeed been "doing it correctly all these years"!

However, some people may still feel that the footwashing should be placed AFTER the bread and the wine because of the way Luke has presented this information in his account of this last Passover observed by Jesus Christ.

A LOOK AT LUKE'S BACKGROUND

We need to understand that Luke was NOT present at that last Passover, that he was NOT one of the original apostles, and that he was NOT EVEN one of the original "120 disciples" (see Acts 1:15 for this number). Luke would CERTAINLY not in his gospel account have referred to OTHER PEOPLE as "EYEWITNESSES" to Christ's ministry (see Luke 1:1-2) if he himself had been an eyewitness. Realize that by "eyewitnesses" Luke was not just referring to the twelve apostles, but to that greater number of 120 disciples. And his comments make quite clear that he himself was NOT an eyewitness. Had Luke been one of those 120 original disciples, then he would surely have been an excellent candidate to replace Judas (see Acts 1:23-26), since God would have known that Luke would later write two books of the New Testament. But Luke was not amongst that number of 120 disciples ... Luke only came into the Church at a later time.

A fact we should take note of is that NOWHERE does Luke ever claim to have been given any special understanding by God. He claims nothing more than having a good understanding. Notice what Luke said ...

It seemed good to me also, HAVING HAD PERFECT UNDERSTANDING of all things FROM THE VERY FIRST, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3 AV)

Let's understand what Luke is actually saying in this verse, because this KJV translation creates a wrong impression.

1) Luke's expression "it seemed good to me also" makes quite clear that HE HIMSELF thought of the idea of writing another gospel account. "It seemed good unto me" is an old-fashioned way of saying "I thought it would be a good idea for me to also write an account of the gospel". That is not the same as saying: "I was moved by God's Spirit within me to write another gospel". Luke here very clearly does not claim any kind of special inspiration in writing down his particular account of the gospel. He simply tried to be as objectively correct as possible.

2) The word "perfect" is an INCORRECT translation from the Greek text. The Greek adverb "akribos", which is here incorrectly translated as "perfect", really means "accurately" or "diligently" or

"circumspectly". The word "akribos" is derived from "akron" which means "the topmost point". It refers to having a good view of everything.

3) The expression "understanding of all things" is a translation of the two Greek words "parekolouthekoti pasin", and this literally means "having traced the course of all things".

4) The expression "from the very first" is another MISTRANSLATION! It is a translation of the Greek adverb "anothen" which actually means "from above" or "from a higher place". For example, the expression "born AGAIN" in John 3:6 is "gennethe ANOTHEN" and in John 3:7 it is "gennethenai ANOTHEN"; and this expression really means "born FROM ABOVE". The word "anothen" does NOT mean "from the very first". It is incorrect to believe that Luke was somehow claiming a good understanding "from the very first".

The reason why Luke makes this statement is because HE HAD SEARCHED OUT THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION which he presents in Luke 1:5 - Luke 3:38, which information the other writers do not present. Now all of that information Luke had SEARCHED OUT DILIGENTLY, but it is not information that God had somehow put into Luke's mind. Luke depended for this information on what other people had told him. Realize that with this English language expression "from the very first" Luke is NOT claiming to have been "around" from the start of Christ's ministry ... he is referring to the information he had searched out through making diligent enquiries, like Luke 1:5 - 3:38, as well as the many other places where Luke presents information that is just not found in the other gospel accounts ... Luke had done his research as carefully as possible.

Green's Literal Translation actually captures the thought Luke was expressing far better than the KJV. So here is Green's rendering of this verse.

it seemed good also to me, HAVING TRACED OUT ALL THINGS ACCURATELY FROM THE FIRST, to write in order to you, most excellent Theophilus, (Luke 1:3, Green's Literal Translation)

It would have been more accurate still had Green translated this verse as: "... having traced out all things DILIGENTLY FROM ABOVE, from a higher perspective, to write in order ...".

With this expression Luke is acknowledging that he had not seen these things himself. He is showing HOW he had acquired all this information ... BY TRACING EVERY ACCOUNT to its source until he became convinced of its truth. Luke had used his mind in coming to the conclusions he presents in his gospel account. And God approved of that process by including Luke's gospel account in the Bible.

Now it is one thing to "diligently trace out all the historical facts", but it is another matter altogether to have been AN EYEWITNESS to the things one writes down. Luke certainly believed that what he was presenting was accurate, because he was confident of the reports given to him by various eyewitnesses, some of whom had witnessed some things, and some of whom had witnessed other things. And WHAT Luke presents is indeed accurate.

But let's ask this question:

Luke presents all the right information, but sometimes he presents this in a sequence that differs from the sequence Matthew presents. Sometimes Luke presents a sentence earlier or later in the correct context than Matthew presents that same sentence. In such a situation: TO WHOM ARE YOU GOING TO EXTEND THE GREATER CREDIBILITY? To THE EYEWITNESS Matthew or to the diligent HISTORICAL RESEARCHER Luke?

It is NOT a matter that Luke ever presents information that is wrong! THE INFORMATION Luke presents is not questioned, and it is emphatically supported by the other gospel writers. But sometimes THE SEQUENCE OF STATEMENTS which Luke presents is AT ODDS with the sequence in which the eyewitness Matthew presents those statements. When Luke presents a statement LATER IN THE PROCEEDINGS than Matthew presents that very same statement ... WHO IS RIGHT?

They cannot both be correct! It does not make sense to assume that Jesus Christ must somehow have made THE SAME STATEMENT TWICE in the same proceedings ... where Matthew then supposedly quotes THE EARLIER OCCASION when Christ made that statement, while Luke (who wasn't there and who could not possibly have known about that statement unless someone else who was an eyewitness reported it to him!) supposedly quotes the SECOND time Christ made that same statement. That line of reasoning is ridiculous!

Further, we are dealing with THE SON OF GOD! Christ didn't just repeat Himself endlessly like some ordinary public speaker. Christ said what He wanted to say, and later He would give those men the gift of the Holy Spirit, which would help them to recall everything He had taught them. Notice ...

But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, AND BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, whatsoever I have said unto you. (John 14:26 AV)

WHY would Jesus Christ possibly want to confuse us by having one eyewitness "remember" a statement He made earlier in the evening, and then have a different eyewitness report to the historical researcher Luke that he "remembered" that same statement later in the same evening? That is confusing ... and we want to blame God for that sort of confusion??

THE FACT IS THIS:

It doesn't really make a difference whether Luke presents one or ten or a hundred statements Christ made in a time-context slightly before or slightly after any of the actual eyewitnesses (Matthew, John and Peter, who very likely dictated Mark's gospel account) present those same statements. THE STATEMENTS are important, not the timing of those statements in the written gospel accounts. It was never God's intention that we draw any number of conclusions regarding the timing of specific events from THE WAY LUKE PRESENTS CHRIST'S STATEMENTS! For THAT purpose God saw to it that we have eyewitness reports from Matthew and John and (very likely) Peter (dictating Mark's account).

Like I said, UNLESS you are trying to use Luke's account to contradict the evidence Matthew and John provide, THEN IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE that Luke presents some statements slightly later in his account or with slightly different wording than the other writers present those same statements. Does it really make a difference that Luke presents "sentence X" after "sentence Y" instead of placing it before "sentence Y"? It makes no difference at all UNLESS you are trying to draw specific conclusions from Luke having placed "sentence X" AFTER "sentence Y".

And outside of the Passover WE ALWAYS READILY OVERLOOK SUCH MINOR DISCREPANCIES, because they don't really change anything. But we need to face the fact that there are many "minor discrepancies" between the various gospel accounts, which don't really change anything, and about which we would never even dream of making an issue.

Luke placing certain statements into a slightly earlier or later context are just a few more examples of those "minor discrepancies". It is only when people wish to build a case on one or other specific one of those "very minor discrepancies" that then suddenly "divine inspiration" is invoked in order to uphold

whichever version of that "minor discrepancy" is essential to support the case being made. But "DIVINE INSPIRATION" guaranteed that John wrote down the identical statement in John 13:21 that Matthew had many years earlier recorded in Matthew 26:21.

But isn't the Bible refined seven times?

UNDERSTANDING PSALM 12:6

THE WORDS OF THE LORD *are* pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES. (Psalm 12:6 AV)

There is a difference between "the WORDS of God" and "the WORD of God". What Psalm 12:6 is speaking about is "THE WORDS (plural) of God", meaning the words that God Himself has actually spoken.

On the other hand "THE WORD (singular) of God" is a reference to the whole Bible. It should be easy to understand that THE WORD of God (the Bible) contains A VAST NUMBER OF WORDS which are not the actual WORDS of God. The Bible includes some words of Satan, many words of liars and hypocrites, many opinions of numerous people, and many words of servants of God. It should be immediately apparent that all those of Satan's words which happen to be recorded in the Bible, are most certainly not "purified seven times"! Nor are the words of any number of HUMAN BEINGS, which words happen to be recorded in the Bible, purified seven times.

Applying Psalm 12:6 to Luke's account of the Passover is like comparing apples with onions ... they have nothing in common. Such appeals can certainly not erase the obvious discrepancies in the sequence of statements recorded by Luke, when compared to the sequence of statements recorded by Matthew and Mark.

It is only the words that God has actually spoken that are "purified seven times".

But now what about drawing an analogy between the four gospels on the one hand and the first five books of the Bible. Is such an analogy justified?

CAN WE COMPARE THE GOSPELS TO THE BOOKS OF MOSES?

I have heard people draw parallels between the different gospels and the first five books of the Old Testament. Are such parallels valid?

First of all, whenever anyone points out any "parallels" to us, then that is obviously always for the purpose of laying a foundation for presenting specific assertions. If I tell you that "in the four gospels we see a parallel to the first five books of the Bible", then I am making that statement in order to support certain assertions I wish to make. Do you follow? I do that because I want to draw certain conclusions that really apply to the first five books (Genesis to Deuteronomy) and I then wish to apply those conclusions to the four gospels.

But is that a valid argument?

NO, THAT IS NOT A VALID ARGUMENT!

For a start, the first five books of the Bible are sequential in content. You don't come to the time of the Book of Exodus until you have reached the end of the Book of Genesis. Leviticus then follows Exodus

and Numbers then follows Leviticus and Deuteronomy then follows Numbers. They FOLLOW one another. It would be an impossible task to present "A Harmony of the Books of Moses", because they simply don't discuss the same events.

But that is NOT how the four gospels are written. The four gospels are very clearly PARALLEL accounts, which all take place at the same time! Anybody who has ever looked at "A HARMONY Of The Gospels" should immediately understand this. We could examine several hundred statements in the gospels to conclusively prove this. But you know that already, right? So the point is this:

THERE IS NO WAY THAT ANY GIVEN ACCOUNT RECORDED BY MATTHEW MUST COME BEFORE THAT SAME ACCOUNT IN MARK! THERE IS NO WAY THAT ANY GIVEN ACCOUNT IN MARK MUST COME BEFORE THAT SAME ACCOUNT IN LUKE! AND THERE IS NO WAY THAT ANY GIVEN ACCOUNT IN LUKE MUST COME BEFORE THAT SAME ACCOUNT IN JOHN!

When two or more gospel accounts discuss the same incident, then one account may mention something that comes before OR after something that is mentioned about that same incident in another account. But it is NEVER a matter that anything mentioned in John must automatically come "AFTER" something that is mentioned in Luke, simply because John's Gospel happens to come after Luke's Gospel. Specifically, it is totally unjustified to claim that John's discussion of the footwashing must (supposedly) come after the Passover accounts recorded in the first three gospels, simply because John comes after the other three gospels in the canon of the New Testament.

Such a line of reasoning is flawed from the outset. The facts simply don't support such a conclusion.

The IDENTICAL QUOTATION of the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 26:21 and in John 13:21 also negates that line of reasoning. When two or three different gospels quote IDENTICAL STATEMENTS for what Jesus Christ said, then we are dealing with the identical point in time in those two or three different gospels. And which gospel account supposedly comes before which other account in the canon (i.e. Matthew before Mark, and Mark before Luke, and Luke before John) has nothing whatsoever to do with that! The particular gospel in which a specific statement happens to be recorded has nothing whatsoever to do with the timing for that statement. All statements must always be evaluated on their own merits, without attaching some special significance to those statements simply because they happen to be contained in one specific gospel as opposed to being in one of the other gospels. It is WHAT God tells us that is important, rather than WHAT BOOK that statement happens to be in.

Now let's examine a mistranslation in the KJV of John 13:2.

JOHN 13:2 EXAMINED

This verse reads as follows in the KJV.:

AND SUPPER BEING ENDED, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], to betray him; (John 13:2 AV)

The phrase in question here is "supper being ended". Since this was supposedly AFTER supper had ended, some people reason, THEREFORE this footwashing must have occurred later than the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine. But this is not correct.

There are several things to consider here.

For a start, there is NO WORD FOR "ENDED" in the Greek text of this verse. The words "being ended" are a translation of the Greek verb "genomenou", which is the Second Aorist tense, middle deponent voice participle of the verb "ginomai".

The Second Aorist tense with the middle deponent voice participle of this verb "ginomai" is used 97 times in the New Testament, and in 8 of those 97 places it is the identical ending of "genomenou" (the other 89 times it is in the forms "genomenes" and "genomenai" and "genomenos", all four endings being the Second Aorist middle deponent participle) that we find here in John 13:2. And it doesn't really mean "ended" at all.

The verb "ginomai" is somewhat unusual. It is usually possible to translate it into English as "to become". However, the English word "become" typically requires a predicate nominative (as in "I have become the new owner"). But the Greek word "ginomai" in very many cases has no predicate nominative. In such cases this verb then means "to happen", "to come about", "to come into being", "to come to pass", "to be made", "to arise", etc. However, it does NOT mean "TO END"! Keep in mind that this is the verb for "to become" and not the verb for "to end". So in the KJV we have a mistranslation in John 13:2.

Now here in John 13:2 the verb "ginomai" does not have a predicate nominative, since the Greek word translated as "supper" (i.e. "deipnou"), the only noun in that context, is the genitive case of the noun "deipnon". The Aorist middle deponent of "ginomai" in such cases has the meaning of "TO TAKE PLACE" (see also Gresham Machen's "New Testament Greek For Beginners", page 181, footnote 2, the 1989 edition from Macmillan Publishing Company, New York; Machen himself wrote this 80 years ago in 1923).

I realize that this may all sound rather technical to most of us, but the point is that John 13:2 should really be correctly translated into English as follows:

"AND WHILE SUPPER WAS TAKING PLACE ..."!

There are many different translations that recognize this fact. Here are some of them:

AND DURING SUPPER, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], to betray him, (John 13:2, ASV of 1901)

AND DURING SUPPER, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas [son] of Simon, Iscariote, that he should deliver him up, (John 13:2 , 1889 Darby Translation)

AND DURING SUPPER, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, [the son] of Simon, to betray Him, (John 13:2, NAS of 1977)

THE EVENING MEAL WAS BEING SERVED, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. (John 13:2, NIV of 1984)

AND DURING SUPPER, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, (John 13:2, RSV of 1947)

The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. AND DURING SUPPER Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, (John 13:2-3 NRSV)

AND SUPPER BEING COME, the devil already having put [it] into the heart of Judas of Simon, Iscariot, that he may deliver him up, (John 13:2, 1898 Young's Literal Translation)

UND WREND DES ABENDESSENS (German for "and DURING supper"), als der Teufel schon dem Judas, Simons Sohn, dem Iskariot, es ins Herz gegeben hatte, da er ihn beriefere, (John 13:2, 1871 ELBERFELDER GERMAN TRANSLATION)

EN GEDURENDE DIE MAALTYD (Afrikaans for "and DURING the meal") --die duiwel het dit al in die hart van Judas Iskariot, die seun van Simon, ingegeen om Hom te verraai-- (John 13:2, 1953 AFRIKAANS TRANSLATION)

So while some translations may elect to adhere to the traditional KJV way of mistranslating this verse into English, it has been well-known for more than 100 years that grammatically this verb here in this verse must be translated into English as "and DURING supper ...". The above 9 different translations are an acknowledgement of the correct meaning of the Greek word used in this verse.

Next, let's now look at two more verses in this context in John chapter 13.

Verse 4 reads:

HE RISETH FROM SUPPER, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (John 13:4 AV)

And verse 12 reads:

SO AFTER HE had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and WAS SET DOWN AGAIN, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? (John 13:12 AV)

In verse 2 John was addressing something that happened DURING the meal. We then see that in verse 4 Jesus Christ gets up from the meal, washes the feet of the disciples and THEN SITS DOWN AGAIN to whatever part of the meal that still remained (verse 12).

Now consider carefully:

Since it was DURING the meal when Jesus Christ got up to wash the feet of the twelve apostles, it is INEVITABLE that the meal simply MUST HAVE CONTINUED WHEN HE SAT DOWN AGAIN! There is no other possibility. If the meal had not continued AFTER THE FOOTWASHING, then supper would indeed "have ended" by the time that Jesus Christ got up to do the footwashing. The fact that this was "DURING SUPPER" tells us that the consumption of food and drink continued after the footwashing.

In the KJV we have A MISTRANSLATION in John 13:2! It is that mistranslation which implies that no further food and drink were consumed after the footwashing. Once we have corrected that mistranslation, it becomes very clear that THE MEAL CONTINUED AFTER THE FOOTWASHING ... that

is the only possible way that the correct expression "DURING supper" in John 13:2 can be understood.

We cannot draw any conclusions from a totally incorrect translation into the English language other than that the translation is incorrect. That should not be too difficult to understand.

Now it has been suggested that Judas was present when Jesus Christ introduced the new symbols of the bread and the wine. Let's look at this more closely.

WAS SATAN PRESENT FOR THE BREAD AND THE WINE?

In his account John tells us as a preface to the footwashing that Satan had already influenced Judas in John 13:2. Earlier we saw that Matthew 26:25 (where Christ told Judas "you are the man") is a clear parallel to John 13:27-30. And John 13:27 states very plainly: "and after the sop SATAN ENTERED INTO HIM"! John 13:27 is BEFORE Matthew 26:26, which introduces the bread for the Passover.

This means that Judas was in fact SATAN-POSSESSED before the bread and wine were introduced by Jesus Christ. That is the only possible conclusion when we correctly identify Matthew 26:21 with John 13:21.

Now the difference between being "Satan-influenced" in John 13:2 and being "Satan-possessed" in John 13:27 is only one of degree. In the second situation Satan is simply exerting a far greater influence over Judas than in the first situation. But either way Judas was throughout that entire Passover to one degree or another under Satan's influence.

So the question is:

When Jesus Christ introduced the bread and the wine to represent His total sacrifice for mankind, did Christ ALLOW SATAN TO BE PRESENT? Did Christ EVER allow Satan to just "hang around" in Christ's presence? Surely we understand that Christ ALWAYS rebuked demons to "get out of here" when He was confronted by demon-possessed people? Can't we see that Judas being taken over by Satan was THE TRIGGER for Jesus Christ to tell Judas "now get out of here"?!

And after the sop Satan entered into him. THEN said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. (John 13:27 AV)

The Greek particle "oun", which is in this verse translated into English as "then", is far more frequently translated as "THEREFORE"! [Comment: 263 times as "therefore" and 197 times as "then".]

In other words, BECAUSE Satan had now entered into Judas THEREFORE Jesus Christ told Judas "now get out of here". That's what Christ ALWAYS told demons.

This statement is clear evidence that Jesus Christ wanted Judas OUT OF THERE! He was no longer prepared to have Judas around. And the obvious reason for WHY Christ now wanted Judas out of there is because Jesus Christ was going to do something FOR WHICH SATAN SHOULD SIMPLY NOT BE PRESENT!

So consider the following points:

1) At the very start of His last Passover Jesus Christ already knew full well that Judas was the one who would betray Him that very night.

- 2) Throughout His ministry Jesus Christ made clear that He hates hypocrisy ... acting and pretending.
- 3) Jesus Christ knew that He was bringing His sacrifice for POTENTIALLY all human beings, including POTENTIALLY all those who never repent and end up in the lake of fire.
- 4) So Christ's act of humility (washing the feet of the disciples) was brought for ALL human beings. Therefore JUDAS HAD TO BE PRESENT FOR THE FOOTWASHING.
- 5) But CLAIMING that sacrifice is very much limited to those who meet GOD'S conditions of faith and real repentance. God is VERY STRONGLY OPPOSED to any person taking the Passover in "AN UNWORTHY MANNER", meaning in the wrong frame of mind. Do we not understand that those who are "spiritually uncircumcised" should not be permitted to take the New Testament Passover?
- 6) This concept Jesus Christ impressed VERY FIRMLY on the mind of the Apostle Paul when He instructed Paul in Arabia. You are familiar with 1.Cor. 11:27, 29. We find these specific verses in Paul's instructions for the Passover because this is VERY IMPORTANT TO GOD!
- 7) Since Judas had already days earlier made up his mind to betray Christ for money, Judas was without contradiction in an "unworthy" frame of mind at that last Passover. TODAY anyone who is in the frame of mind that Judas was in leading up to that Passover should likewise be PREVENTED from participating in the Passover.
- 8) Jesus Christ knew Judas' frame of mind and THEREFORE, once Satan took over Judas, told Judas to get out of there and do what he (Judas) had determined to do BEFORE Christ was going to introduce something from which God most emphatically wants to exclude all people that are in a wrong and hostile frame of mind.
- 9) Note! It is not a matter that all of the apostles had to at that point be totally repentant, because God was not yet ready to give His Holy Spirit. And God does not require people to repent MONTHS before He will give them His Holy Spirit. But it IS a matter of those apostles having to not harbour any negative attitudes towards God Himself. Judas' premeditated intention to betray Jesus Christ that very night meant that there was NO WAY that Jesus Christ would have allowed Judas to partake of the bread and the wine. Judas being totally POSSESSED by Satan made this even more so the case.
- 10) As a parallel for today: any minister who today conducts a Passover service and who KNOWS that a certain man is currently having an adulterous affair is absolutely duty-bound to prevent that man from participating in the Passover service which he (the minister) is about to conduct. When the evidence of adultery is known, then it is an extremely weak cop-out for the minister to reason: I know that he is currently committing adultery, but it is not for me to tell him that he can't take the Passover; that is really between him and God." That would be absurd, if not downright cowardly, reasoning. In such a situation the minister would have A RESPONSIBILITY to bar the man from attending not only the Passover service, but church services in general. And with Judas' premeditated attitude of wanting to betray Christ an hour or so later, Christ was absolutely going to bar Judas from participating in what He was about to institute. Any other course of action would have amounted to hypocrisy.
- 11) We need to understand that Jesus Christ FULLY CONTROLLED exactly when Judas was going to walk out of that meeting. It was what Jesus Christ said and did that identifies when Judas became Satan-possessed and triggered his subsequent departure from the Passover meeting. How can anyone think that Jesus Christ made this statement at a totally random and arbitrary moment in the evening's proceedings? When Christ addressed Judas, that was Jesus Christ's way of saying to Judas: "NOW I want you to go and leave us alone, because what I am NOW going to do is not for you or Satan to be involved with".

12) Next, can you imagine the **UTTER HYPOCRISY** of Jesus Christ saying:

"Judas, I know that about an hour from now you are going to betray Me for money. But that's only an hour from now. So right now why don't you have a piece of this bread, which represents My body that will soon be broken for **YOUR** healing? And why don't you also have a sip of this wine, which represents My blood that is soon going to be shed for **YOUR** sins. And **THEN** you can leave and do your dirty work."?

Can we not understand that Judas was simply **NOT ELIGIBLE** to partake of the new symbols for the Passover? Do we understand that at that point Judas was demon-possessed? Satan had taken over Judas' mind. Can we not see the **EXTREME INSULT** it would be to Jesus Christ and His sacrifice to let Satan be involved in partaking of those new emblems at their very institution ... by having someone who was possessed by Satan have a piece of bread and a cup of wine passed to him by Jesus Christ Himself? Would Jesus Christ ever, ever, ever pass Satan a piece of unleavened bread to represent Christ's broken body and a cup of wine to represent Christ's shed blood?

Don't we understand that participation in the Passover is very strictly limited to those people who have made **A COMMITMENT** to God? Judas had **BROKEN** the commitment he had previously made, when he decided to betray Jesus Christ. The other apostles, even though they were at that stage not yet fully repentant, had nevertheless **ALREADY** made a commitment to God, to which commitment they continued to hold fast for the rest of their lives. Sinning out of weakness (e.g. Peter under pressure denying Jesus Christ, and us sinning between one Passover and the next) does not take away from that commitment. But when Judas **DELIBERATELY** decided to betray Christ, he broke that commitment ... and that **DISQUALIFIED** him from participating in the new Passover symbols Jesus Christ instituted that evening.

Consider this:

IF Jesus Christ had wanted Judas present for the bread and the wine, that would mean that **EVERY ADULT ON EARTH CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE PASSOVER** ... Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Catholic priests and cardinals, every unbaptized adult on earth. If Jesus Christ would have judged Judas to be in an acceptable frame of mind for participating in the symbols of Christ's suffering, then **NOBODY** could possibly be excluded. There would be nobody who could possibly take the Passover "in an unworthy manner" if the premeditated frame of mind Judas was in at that point was somehow "acceptable" for taking the Passover.

It is not compatible with the mind of God for Jesus Christ to have let a Satan-possessed Judas partake of the new emblems of Christ's sacrifice for us. Judas simply had to get out of there (and Satan with him!) **BEFORE** Jesus Christ was about to introduce the bread and the wine.

So to recap what we have covered so far:

From the accounts written by the eyewitnesses Matthew and John we can clearly establish the following sequence:

- 1) Already before the footwashing Judas was being influenced by Satan.
- 2) **DURING THE MEAL** Jesus Christ then washed the feet of the apostles, including Judas.
- 3) After the footwashing the meal continued.
- 4) Then Jesus Christ had a discussion with Judas, which concluded with Satan entering into Judas and Judas then going out. By that time the meal was certainly "far advanced", very likely nearing the end of

the time they spent eating.

5) THEN Jesus Christ introduced the bread to represent His body.

6) THEN Jesus Christ introduced the wine to represent His blood.

7) THEN followed the lengthy period of Jesus Christ speaking to them, as recorded by John.

It is immaterial to the sequence of events whether the meal was completely finished before Jesus Christ instituted the bread and the wine, or whether Christ did this during the latter part of the meal. THE SEQUENCE of the things we are to do at the Passover is established totally independently of how far the meal had progressed.

But to further solidify the facts we have already established, let's now look at all of the different biblical accounts of Christ's last Passover.

PUTTING ALL THE PASSOVER ACCOUNTS TOGETHER

At His last observance of the Passover Jesus Christ introduced certain changes. Included in the things that took place on that evening before and up to when Jesus Christ and His disciples went out to the Mount of Olives are the following things:

1. Christ and His disciples ate a regular Passover MEAL, their "supper" for that evening.
2. Judas was present to start with.
3. Jesus Christ washed the feet of His disciples during the meal.
4. Jesus Christ specifically speaks about Judas' role in betraying Him.
5. Judas is identified as the traitor.
6. Judas goes out immediately after Jesus Christ has identified him.
7. Jesus Christ introduced the bread to represent His broken body.
8. Jesus Christ introduced the wine to represent His shed blood.
9. Strife about who would be the greatest in God's kingdom.
10. Jesus Christ gave a lengthy discourse to His disciples.
11. They concluded their Passover and went out to the Mount of Olives.
12. Christ speaks about Peter denying Him.

An examination of ALL the biblical accounts will show that the above 12 points are basically in their correct chronological sequence. A question regarding the sequence of points #10 and #11 and #12 does not affect how we are to observe the Passover. So let's now examine all the accounts.

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS: MATTHEW

Here is Matthew's account of these events.

Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. (Matthew 26:20-30 AV)

Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. (Matthew 26:34 AV)

To summarize these verses, Matthew records the following of the 12 events I listed earlier in the following sequence:

- A) They all sit down to the meal (#1 in the above list).
- B) Judas speaks to Christ and is therefore obviously present (#2 in the list).
- C) Then Jesus Christ proceeds to speak about Judas (#4 in the list).
- D) Judas is identified as the traitor (#5 in the list).
- E) Christ introduced the bread to represent His broken body (#7 in the list).
- F) Christ introduced the wine to represent His shed blood (#8 in the list).
- G) They all go out to the Mount of Olives (#11 in the list).
- H) Only then does Christ speak about Peter denying Him. (#12 in the list)

SO MATTHEW ONLY PRESENTS: the meal ... Judas ... Judas ... Judas ... the bread ... the wine ... going out to the Mount of Olives ... reference to Peter's denial. That is Matthew's sequence.

COMMENTS:

Matthew omits to mention 4 things from the list of 12 things: Matthew does not mention the footwashing (#3 in the list), Judas leaving (#6 in the list), the arguing about who would be the greatest (#9 in the list), and the lengthy discourse (#10 in the list).

Now let's look at Mark's account.

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS: MARK

Here is Mark's account of these events:

And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?* and another *said, Is it I?* And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. (Mark 14:17-26 AV)

And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. (Mark 14:30 AV)

To summarize these verses, Mark records the following of the above 12 events in the following sequence:

- A) They all sit down to the meal (#1 in the list).
- B) The context indicates that Judas is obviously present to start with (#2 in the list).
- C) Jesus proceeds to speak about Judas (#4 in the list).
- D) Christ introduces the bread to represent His broken body (#7 in the list).
- E) Christ introduces the wine to represent His shed blood (#8 in the list).
- F) They all go out to the Mount of Olives (#11 in the list).
- G) Only then does Christ speak about Peter denying Him. (#12 in the list)

SO MARK ONLY PRESENTS: the meal ... speaking ABOUT Judas ... the bread ... the wine ... going out to the Mount of Olives ... reference to Peter's denial. That is Mark's sequence.

COMMENTS:

Mark omits to mention 5 things from the list of 12 things : Mark does not mention the footwashing (#3 in the list), nor does Mark identify Judas as the traitor (#5 in the list), nor does Mark record Judas leaving (#6 in the list) or the arguing about who was the greatest (#9 in the list) or Christ's lengthy discourse (#10 in the list). Note that in Mark's entire account THE NAME OF "JUDAS" DOES NOT APPEAR!

Now lets' notice Luke's account, which is somewhat longer.

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS: LUKE

Here is Luke's account of these events:

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired TO EAT THIS PASSOVER with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And HE TOOK BREAD, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. LIKEWISE ALSO THE CUP after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. But, behold, THE HAND OF HIM THAT BETRAYETH ME *IS WITH ME ON THE TABLE*. And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing. And THERE WAS ALSO A STRIFE among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye *shall not be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is not* he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough. And he came out, and went, as he was wont, TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES; and his disciples also followed him. (Luke 22:14-39 AV)

To summarize these verses, Luke records the following of the above 12 events in the following sequence:

- A) They all sit down for the meal (#1 in the list).
- B) The context implies that Judas is present (#2 in the list).
- C) Jesus Christ speaks about wine, but without referring to His shed blood (thus NOT #8).
- D) Jesus Christ introduces the bread to represent His broken body (#7 in the list).
- E) Jesus Christ again focusses on the wine, this time to represent His blood (#8 in the list).
- F) Jesus Christ proceeds to speak about Judas' role (#4 in the list).
- G) There was strife about who should be the greatest (#9 in the list).
- H) Christ predicts Peter's denial (#12 in the list).
- I) They all go out to the Mount of Olives (#11 in the list).

SO LUKE ONLY PRESENTS: the meal ... the bread ... the wine ... Judas' role as traitor ... strife amongst them ... Peter's denial ... going out to the Mount of Olives. That is Luke's sequence.

COMMENTS:

Luke omits 4 things from the list of 12 things: the footwashing (#3 on the list), Judas being identified (#5 in the list), Judas going out (#6 in the list) and the lengthy discourse (#10 in the list). Luke also mentions wine TWICE, though at the first mention he does not say anything about this representing Christ's shed blood. We'll look at this point some more later. Note that in Luke's entire account THE NAME OF "JUDAS" ALSO DOES NOT APPEAR!

Now let's examine John's account of these events.

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS: JOHN

Here are the references from John's account. This starts in John 13:2 and concludes in John 18:1, a total of some 155 verses. Rather than quote this entire section I will only refer to the items that John records. They are in the following sequence:

- A) They are all having the Passover meal (John 13:2-4, #1 in the list).
- B) Judas is obviously present (#2 in the list).
- C) Jesus Christ washed the feet of His disciples (John 13:5-12, #3 in the list).
- D) Christ speaks about Judas (John 13:21, #4 in the list).
- E) Judas is identified (John 13:25-26, #5 in the list).
- F) Judas went out IMMEDIATELY (John 13:27-30, #6 in the list).
- G) Christ then gave a lengthy discourse (John 13:31 - John 17:26, #10 in the list).
- H) They all go out to the Mount of Olives (John 18:1, #11 in the list).

SO JOHN ONLY PRESENTS: the meal ... the footwashing ... Judas ... Judas ... Judas ... Judas ... the lengthy discourse ... going out to the Mount of Olives. That is John's sequence.

COMMENTS:

John also omits 4 things from the list of 12 things: John does not mention the bread (#7 in the list) or the wine (#8 in the list) or the strife amongst them (#9 in the list) or the prediction of Peter's denial (#12 in the list). But note that John pinpoints exactly when Judas went out "IMMEDIATELY"!

Now let's examine Paul's reference to these events. Paul was in fact explaining to the Corinthians how they should CORRECTLY conduct the Passover service. Earlier in this same letter Paul had already stated that Jesus Christ is "our Passover" (1.Cor. 5:7).

THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS: 1.CORINTHIANS 11

Paul's comments in 1.Corinthians chapter 11 are:

When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is NOT to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come. (1 Corinthians 11:20-34 AV)

To summarize Paul's comments:

A) Paul starts off by explaining that at our observance of the Passover we are NOT to have a full meal, we are NOT to eat A SUPPER (we are not to have #1 from the above list).

B) Paul then mentions the bread (#7 from the above list).

C) Paul then mentions the wine (#8 from the above list).

D) Paul concludes by again mentioning that we are NOT TO HAVE A FULL MEAL at our observance of the Passover (we are to leave #1 from the above list out of our Passover observances).

SO PAUL ONLY PRESENTS: we are NOT to eat a meal ... the bread ... the wine ... we are NOT to eat a meal at the Passover. That is Paul's sequence.

COMMENTS:

Paul was obviously not trying to give a complete rundown of all the events that took place at Christ's last Passover. Paul was only concerned with setting out the correct procedure for the observance of the Passover, and with THE ERADICATION OF A WRONG PRACTICE that had crept into the Corinthian observance of the Passover ... the Corinthians had expanded their Passover observance to include a whole feast-meal and THEY JUSTIFIED THIS PRACTICE by calling this feast-meal "the Lord's Supper", meaning they were supposedly emulating the meal (#1 in our above list) that Jesus Christ had eaten at His last Passover.

Paul TWICE dogmatically states that at our observance of the Passover we are NOT to eat a supper or a full meal. The words "supper" and "meal" are simply not appropriate to refer to what we are commanded to do at the Passover. We are NOT to do EVERYTHING that Jesus Christ did at His last observance of the Passover ... we are NOT to have THE MEAL that He had at that occasion. We are NEVER to eat "the Lord's Supper"!

Paul was very EMPHATIC that the Passover for the Church today does not involve A MEAL! He wanted

the Church to understand that THE MEAL is no longer important ... when we think about the Passover, we are not to think about a meal. And this, in turn, should at least cause us to think about whether or not Jesus Christ introduced "the bread and the wine" RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MEAL?

If Jesus Christ introduced these new emblems for the Passover RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE of all of them eating meat and drinking wine, with such eating of meat and drinking of wine CONTINUING after these new emblems had been introduced, if Jesus Christ had no objections at all to that type of setting for the new Passover emblems, then WHY did He inspire the Apostle Paul to speak out so strongly in 1. Corinthians 11 AGAINST having any type of meal with the Passover? If it was supposedly perfectly acceptable for the apostles to carry on eating meat and drinking wine after the introduction of the new emblems, what would possibly be wrong with Christians TODAY doing exactly the same thing?

We should also ask ourselves the question: Once God has decided to CHANGE something, does God then still continue with the way things were BEFORE He changed them ... or have those things that God has changed been changed with immediate effect? In other words, IF Jesus Christ actually changed the emblems for the Passover DURING the Old Testament Passover meal, rather than when that Old Testament Passover meal had come to an end, it would mean that the Old Testament Passover continued even AFTER THE NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER HAD ALREADY BEEN OBSERVED IN ITS ENTIRETY FOR THE FIRST TIME ... if they indeed continued eating the meat and drinking the wine after they had taken these new emblems. Is that the way God would have done it? YOU answer this question.

If the apostles observed the whole New Testament Passover (they had experienced the footwashing, eaten the unleavened bread, and drunk the wine) and THEN continued eating THE MEAL for another 10 or 20 or 30 minutes ... how could such a procedure POSSIBLY be pronounced to be WRONG FOR US TODAY? How could Paul possibly have spoken out so strongly against ANY KIND OF MEAL at the observance of the New Testament Passover, if the top ministers in the Church (the apostles) had in fact experienced their very first New Testament Passover right in the middle of a meal ... eating their meat and vegetables both, before and after taking the new emblems? Just think this whole scenario through very carefully.

To get back to Paul, Paul also reserved the right to straighten out any other problems with the way the Corinthians observed the Passover by concluding his comments with "THE REST will I set in order when I come". Paul gives no hints at all as to what he might have meant by "the rest", so it is hard to know what he may have had in mind.

We have now looked at all five of the biblical accounts that refer to the events pertaining to Christ's last Passover.

AN ANALYSIS OF THESE ACCOUNTS

Let's now examine what all of the above accounts reveal.

We need to recognize that one of these gospel accounts is at odds with the other accounts, in addition to some accounts mentioning things that are omitted in some of the other accounts. That discrepancy does NOT allow us to choose the account that is to our liking, while ignoring the accounts that contradict the sequence of events we would prefer to see.

When we examine the four gospel accounts in terms of the sequence of the 12 things we listed above, here is what we find:

MATTHEW lists the following sequence: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12.

MARK lists the following sequence: 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12.

JOHN lists the following sequence: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11.

LUKE lists the following sequence: 1, 2, 7, 8, 4, 9, 12, 11.

So for all of those items which they do include in their accounts from that list of 12 we have set up, we find the following picture:

Matthew, Mark and John are agreed in maintaining the sequence we established. They all leave out SOME of those 12 items, but they never break the sequence. They always move on to a higher number. But Luke's account TWICE BREAKS THE SEQUENCE! After mentioning item #8 (the wine) Luke then goes back to item #4 (speaking about Judas) before continuing with item #9. Then Luke presents item #12 (references to Peter denying Christ) before presenting item #11 (going to the Mt. of Olives).

Now Matthew and Mark are quite clear in presenting #4 BEFORE #7 and #8. And Matthew and Mark are also quite clear in presenting #11 BEFORE #12.

Therefore there is an undeniable conflict between Matthew's and Mark's accounts on the one hand, and Luke's account on the other hand. The conflict is NOT about "WHAT" Luke says ... the conflict is strictly limited to WHERE IN THE CONTEXT Luke has placed the statements in question.

As far as the things Jesus Christ said that evening are concerned, we need to keep in mind that WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE SON OF GOD! And Jesus Christ did not just ramble over the same things repeatedly that evening. He was very cognizant of the fact that in less than 24 hours He would be dead! Christ said things in a meaningful way. The reasoning of: because they didn't "get it" therefore Christ said the same things again later that evening, thereby justifying a change in the sequence of how statements are recorded by Luke, who wasn't even there and who had no firsthand knowledge of what transpired, ignores that we are dealing with the Son of GOD and not with some average man, who might repeat himself a number of times.

We have a responsibility to reconcile the different accounts with one another.

Of these 5 writers ONLY MATTHEW AND JOHN were actually present at that last Passover. Mark and Luke and Paul were NOT present at that occasion, none of these three men being one of the original 12 apostles. (It is, however, very likely that Peter dictated the gospel account that bears Mark's name.) So, as already noted earlier, we can count on both Matthew and John to have given us a correct sequence of events. Neither one presents us with a complete list of events, but those events that they DO present are in their correct sequence. Mark and Luke were recording events that they themselves had not actually witnessed, and Paul had those things he needed to know revealed to him later by Jesus Christ in visions and revelations (2.Cor. 12:1-4).

JOHN was writing his gospel account approximately 30 years after Matthew and Mark and Luke had written their gospel accounts, and after Paul had written 1 Corinthians. John decided to mention in his gospel many things that are not mentioned or addressed in the other three accounts. His intention seems to have been to provide additional information throughout his gospel account, information that was not included in the other three accounts. This does not mean that whatever additional information John provides has to automatically come "after" what the other writers have recorded. That line of reasoning would make it impossible for John to actually record something that PRECEDED the things the other writers recorded. The information John adds could come time-wise before OR after things that are mentioned in the other gospels.

This point also applies to John's very different approach to the discussion of Christ's last Passover. However, a comparison between John 13:21 and Matthew 26:21 makes quite clear that the footwashing MUST precede the bread and wine. Later I will present a possible explanation for John's totally different perspective of this Passover.

JUDAS is identified as the traitor (item #5 in our list of 12 things) in only TWO of these accounts. These are the accounts written by THE TWO EYEWITNESSES to these events (Matthew and John), both of whom had been fellow-apostles with Judas throughout Christ's ministry. The writers who themselves were not present at that particular Passover (i.e. Mark and Luke) do NOT record Christ's words which identify Judas as the traitor.

It is only John who records that Judas went out IMMEDIATELY AFTER Jesus Christ had talked about him and to him. THIS IS VITAL INFORMATION TO OUR DISCUSSION HERE! The word "immediately" in John 13:30 tells us that NOTHING happened between the time when Jesus Christ spoke about Judas and the time when Judas then left the group. It follows that whatever happened AFTER Jesus Christ had spoken about Judas, took place AFTER JUDAS HAD LEFT THE GROUP!

Neither Matthew nor Mark nor Luke record any part of THE LENGTHY DISCOURSE that Christ presented, and which was later recorded by John in John 13:31 - John 17:26. While this information was not essential for knowing how God wants us to correctly observe the Passover today, it does represent Christ's final teachings to the Church before He would suffer and die for our sins, and is thus also extremely valuable information for us to have.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul all present the information about "THE BREAD AND THE WINE" (items #7 and #8 in our list), which information John omits. Matthew, Mark and Paul are very clear in presenting THE BREAD FIRST, AND THE WINE SECOND. Keep in mind that MATTHEW was an eyewitness and that PAUL specifically stated that he had received this information "of the Lord" (1.Cor. 11:23). In fact, Paul's appeal to having received this instruction directly from Jesus Christ leaves no alternative to this sequence being correct ... the bread comes first and the wine comes second.

LUKE CREATES SOME CONFUSION

Luke, who himself was not an eyewitness to these events, CREATES SOME CONFUSION by mentioning wine TWICE: both, before and after mentioning bread. However, a careful examination of Luke's account solves this confusion.

Luke mentions both "eating" and "drinking" each TWICE. The first mention of eating and drinking focusses on not doing this again UNTIL the kingdom of God comes; and the second reference to eating and drinking focusses on the symbolism Jesus Christ was attaching to each of these two things.

Notice again how Luke starts his Passover account:

And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. (Luke 22:14 AV)

Then Luke states:

And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I WILL NOT ANY MORE EAT THEREOF, UNTIL IT BE FULFILLED IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (Luke 22:15-16 AV)

So here Luke focusses on Jesus Christ not EATING something until a specific point in time in the future. Now notice the next two verses.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide [it] among yourselves: For I say unto you, I WILL NOT DRINK OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE, UNTIL THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL COME. (Luke 22:17-18 AV)

Here Luke focusses on Jesus Christ not DRINKING something until a specific point in time in the future. Luke clearly intended these two verses to be a counterpart to the preceding two verses. In neither case (not with the eating and not with the drinking) has Luke presented anything that refers to THE SYMBOLISM Jesus Christ attached to the bread and the wine. They are only references to "eating" and "drinking" without any specific meanings being attached to such eating and drinking. Luke has not yet said anything about "Christ's BODY" and "Christ's BLOOD".

THEN Luke AGAIN refers to eating and drinking, but now in both cases Luke provides THE MEANING we are to attach to such eating and drinking at the Passover. Notice:

And he took BREAD, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, This is MY BODY which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. (Luke 22:19 AV)

Now Luke focusses on THE BREAD and explains the symbolism that is to be attached to the bread at the Passover service. Continuing with the next verse ...

LIKEWISE also THE CUP after supper, saying, This cup [is] the new testament in MY BLOOD, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:20 AV)

And now Luke focusses on THE WINE and explains the symbolism that is to be attached to the wine at the Passover service.

The Greek adverb "hosautos" here rendered as "likewise", and which introduces this statement, is also at times translated as "in like manner" and as "after the same manner". It is saying that Christ gave the wine here in verse 20 "THE SAME SPECIAL TREATMENT" He had given to the bread in the previous verse. Luke's use of the word "likewise" (Greek "hosautos") here makes quite clear that Luke intended for us to understand that, as far as the symbols of the Passover are concerned, the bread comes first and the wine comes second. "Likewise" refers to what went before, otherwise "likewise" would not make sense! So Luke is clearly saying that the bread came BEFORE the wine. Luke did not intend his earlier reference to wine (verse 17) to refer to the wine that would represent Christ's blood during the Passover service, because that intent is expressed by Luke in verse 20.

A careful examination of Luke 22:15-20 should make clear that Luke does not mention the wine that is to represent Christ's blood until verse 20. Thus Luke is also in full agreement with Matthew, Mark and Paul regarding the bread coming first and the wine second. I mention this because sometimes some people are puzzled by Luke's first reference to "wine" in this account. And I have on occasion heard speculations, WITH APPEALS TO LUKE'S COMMENTS HERE, about the wine perhaps coming before the bread in the Passover service. That would clearly be wrong.

So note! Matthew, Mark and Paul are VERY CLEAR in the way they present the information about "the bread and the wine". There can be no mistaking that the bread MUST come first, and the wine MUST come second. Matthew was an eyewitness, Paul received his information through visions directly from

Jesus Christ, and Mark was recording what the eyewitness Peter told him to record. All three of these are very clear and in full agreement on this matter.

But the historian Luke, who had no firsthand knowledge of what had happened, who had undoubtedly heard conflicting reports about many things from different people (this seems to be implied in the opening verse of his gospel) UNINTENTIONALLY creates SOME CONFUSION by specifically referring TWICE to "WINE". It is not that what Luke says is wrong; it is just that the way he has presented his information can be misunderstood far more easily than the other accounts of this. Keep this in mind when we later examine Luke's comments regarding Judas, because in exactly the same way that it is possible to misunderstand the sequence of "bread first and wine second" when we look at Luke's account, in the same way it is also possible to misunderstand what happened before Judas left and what happened after Judas left, if we just look at Luke's account.

Let's now examine all the references to Judas.

THE INFORMATION ABOUT JUDAS

Now let's look at THE INFORMATION ABOUT JUDAS that is presented in the various accounts. References to Judas further confirm the correct chronological timing for the other events, which has ALREADY been established by a comparison of Matthew 26:21 with John 13:21.

Thus:

1) MATTHEW shows Jesus Christ speaking about Judas and identifying Judas (points #4 and #5) BEFORE He introduced the symbols of THE BREAD AND WINE (points #7 and #8). From John's account we know that Judas IMMEDIATELY WENT OUT after Jesus Christ had spoken about him. This indicates that Judas must have gone out BEFORE Christ introduced the bread and the wine.

There is obviously A REASON WHY John states that Judas then went out IMMEDIATELY. It was clearly important to John to spell out Judas' IMMEDIATE departure after Christ had spoken about him. John would never have used the word "immediately" in a casual and insignificant way. The word "immediately" conveys a sense of urgency. And the reason is that Christ wanted Judas to leave as soon as Satan had entered into Judas.

2) MARK shows Jesus Christ speaking about Judas (point #4) BEFORE He introduced the symbols of THE BREAD AND WINE (points #7 and #8). This agrees fully with Matthew's account, and so the same comments about Judas apply.

So Mark's sequence of events agrees fully with Matthew's sequence.

3) JOHN shows Jesus Christ speaking about Judas and identifying Judas (points #4 and #5) AFTER THE FOOTWASHING (point #3). This shows that Judas was present for the footwashing. Recall that John does not say anything at all about the bread and the wine. It is Matthew 26:21 and John 13:21 that provide us with a clear correlation for these two accounts.

So note carefully:

IF Luke's Gospel did not exist, if Matthew, Mark and John were the only gospel accounts in existence, THEN THERE WOULD BE NO UNCERTAINTY! THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WOULD BE CLEAR AND ABOVE ANY POSSIBLE CHALLENGE!

4) But LUKE then records Jesus Christ speaking about Judas (point #4) AFTER introducing the symbols of THE BREAD AND WINE (points #7 and #8). This is in OPEN DISAGREEMENT WITH MATTHEW AND WITH MARK! These accounts can all be correct in WHAT they tell us happened, but they CANNOT all be correct with THE SEQUENCE in which they present these statements to us. We cannot and should not pretend that these accounts are all in agreement with the sequence of events they present.

Keep in mind that Luke has already created SOME potential confusion with his two references to "wine". A careful examination of that context easily clears up that matter. But Luke's references to Judas are not cleared up quite as readily.

HOWEVER ...

Any appeal to Luke's account of the last Passover must also consider EVERYTHING that Luke has presented about that occasion. And so here is another quotation from Luke's account.

WHERE LUKE PLACES THE BREAD AND WINE

Notice how Luke presents this information.

And he took BREAD, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. LIKEWISE ALSO THE CUP AFTER SUPPER, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:19-20 AV)

Notice that Luke states that Christ presented the wine AFTER SUPPER! The word "likewise" tells us that the bread in the preceding verse was also AFTER SUPPER!

The Greek text here translated as "after supper" reads "meta to deipnesai". This is the preposition "meta", which is here used with the "accusative articular infinitive" of the verb "deipneo". This verb "deipneo" means "to eat supper", being formed from the noun "deipnon" which means "supper".

Note! The verb "deipneo" is NOT the usual Greek verb for unspecified "eating"! Greek verbs in the New Testament that mean "eating" include "phago" and "esthio" and "trogo". The verb "deipneo" specifically means "to eat SUPPER"! So Luke 22:20 is most certainly NOT a reference to after having eaten "THE SMALL PIECE OF BREAD IN THE PREVIOUS VERSE"! Luke 22:20 is very clearly and without contradiction a reference to having this wine "AFTER SUPPER"!

[Comment: As far as the parsing of this verb is concerned, it can also be stated as the aorist active infinitive, but that is of secondary importance here, because the use of the definite article in this expression means that this verb is being used like a noun. There is no intent in this usage here to convey any specific tense for this verb ... thus the choice of the Greek aorist tense.]

In the expression "meta to deipnesai" the word "to" is the definite article "the". When the definite article is used with a verb in a context like this, it means that the verb is being used like a noun, i.e. a verbal noun.

Now if you check the preposition "meta" in a biblical Greek dictionary, you will find that it tells you that this word "meta" means: WITH, AFTER, BEHIND, AMONG.

So does that therefore mean that YOU can decide in which verses in the New Testament this word "meta" should be translated as "WITH" and in which verses it should be translated as "AFTER"? Or did the translators have the freedom to decide when to translate "meta" as "with" and when as "after"? Is

there such flexibility with this preposition?

CERTAINLY NOT!

Can YOU decide which meaning applies where?

CERTAINLY NOT!

Every single translator of the Greek text of the New Testament into the English language knows quite clearly that the preposition "meta" governs TWO CASES! This preposition can only be followed by THE GENITIVE CASE (i.e. the possessive case) or by the ACCUSATIVE CASE (i.e. the direct object).

Now when "meta" is used with the genitive case, then it means "among, amid, in company with". That applies to the 345 times this preposition "meta" is translated as "WITH" in the KJV.

But when "meta" is used with THE ACCUSATIVE CASE, then it always means "AFTER IN CONNECTION WITH TIME"! That applies to the 88 times "meta" is translated as "AFTER" in the KJV.

By itself this preposition does not tell you exactly how it should be translated into English. It is the context in which it is used, and specifically, it is the case of the accompanying words that determines the meaning of "meta" in every situation.

So the ACCUSATIVE articular infinitive in the expression "meta to deipnesai" makes quite clear that this is a reference to "AFTER SUPPER", rather than "with supper". [It literally means "after EATING SUPPER".]

THERE IS NO GETTING AROUND THE FACT THAT LUKE 22:20 IS A REFERENCE TO
"AFTER SUPPER"!

And every single translator of the Greek text knows this! I have checked 17 different English language translations of the Bible, plus 4 different German language versions, one Dutch language version and one Afrikaans language version ... AND THEY ALL, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, STATE "AFTER SUPPER", or words to this effect (like "AFTER the meal", etc.).

I have not found a single translation which would imply that Luke 22:20 took place DURING the meal. None! That is because the Greek grammar in this verse simply does not allow for the meaning of "during supper".

The English translations I have checked are: KJV, 1982 NKJV, Modern KJV, 21st Century KJV, 1947 RSV, 1989 NRSV, 1901 ASV, 1977 NAS, 1889 DARBY, 1898 YOUNG'S LITERAL TRANSLATION, 1833 WEBSTER BIBLE, 1995 REVISED WEBSTER BIBLE, 1899 DOUAY RHEIMS VERSION, 1965 BIBLE IN BASIC ENGLISH, 1984 NIV, GREEN'S LITERAL TRANSLATION, and MOFFATT.

It is absolutely irrefutable, and every translator has acknowledged this, that the expression "meta to deipnesai" MUST be translated into English as "AFTER SUPPER"!

So Luke is stating that the bread and wine were AFTER supper, and John states that the footwashing occurred DURING supper. It is Luke's use of this preposition "meta" together with the accusative case that makes this clear. There is no mistranslation in Luke 22:20.

So while Luke may imply that Judas was present when Jesus Christ introduced the bread and the wine,

Luke ALSO states categorically that the bread and wine were instituted AFTER supper! And John shows that the footwashing was DURING supper. That is sufficient information to establish a correct sequence, independent of when Judas left the gathering, and independent of what parts of the Passover Judas did or did not participate in.

SO EVEN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE HELPS TO ESTABLISH THE CORRECT SEQUENCE OF:
THE FOOTWASHING, THEN THE BREAD, THEN THE WINE!

So let's now examine Luke's comments about Judas, which comments are recorded in a slightly different sequence in Matthew and in Mark.

LUKE'S ACCOUNT

MATTHEW and MARK show Christ introducing the bread and wine only AFTER He had dealt with Judas. And after Christ had spoken about Judas, Judas immediately went out. So Judas must have gone out BEFORE the bread and the wine were introduced.

However, in his account LUKE then introduces SOME CONFUSION by discussing the bread and wine before Christ's comments about Judas. It should be clear that these three accounts (Matthew, Mark and Luke) cannot all be chronologically correct!

The chronological differences between Matthew's and Mark's accounts on the one hand, and Luke's account on the other hand STARE US IN THE FACE! WE CANNOT AVOID ACKNOWLEDGING THEM! IT IS A COP-OUT TO CLAIM THAT "ALL THREE MUST BE CORRECT"!

The facts are:

It is THREE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS (Matthew, Mark and John) that are in PERFECT AGREEMENT! And it is ONE GOSPEL ACCOUNT (Luke) that IS AT ODDS WITH THE OTHER THREE!

The facts are:

The three accounts that agree are all the work of eyewitnesses ... Matthew, John and Peter (who it seems dictated Mark's Gospel). The one account that is at odds with the other three is the work of a man who was NOT AN EYEWITNESS HIMSELF (Luke).

So how can we reconcile these three accounts?

EITHER Matthew and Mark have the sequence correct and Luke's account is not strictly chronological ... OR Luke's account is correct and then the eyewitness Matthew and also Mark are chronologically in error. That would make two eyewitnesses (Matthew and Peter, who dictated Mark's gospel) who place the bread and wine AFTER Christ's discussion of Judas, as opposed to one non-eyewitness (Luke) who places the bread and wine BEFORE Christ's discussion of Judas.

I believe that we can take it as A FACT that Judas went out IMMEDIATELY after Jesus Christ had spoken about him. John 13:30 leaves no room for any other possibility.

As pointed out earlier, Luke makes quite clear that his gospel account was NOT based on one specific eyewitness having told him the whole story. Luke had heard all these things about Christ's ministry from MANY different eyewitnesses to various events, and LUKE THEN PRODUCED A COMPOSITE ACCOUNT from everything he had been told. Also keep in mind that Luke shows that Luke 22:20 took

place AFTER supper, and it is only after that reference that Luke discusses Christ's comments about Judas. That in itself calls Luke's sequence into question, because Luke implies that Judas was still around AFTER the eating of the whole meal had been completed ... which is highly unlikely in view of John 13:30.

Now let's examine the next verse in Luke's account.

But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me ON THE TABLE. (Luke 22:21 AV)

What is the picture that Luke is painting here? Are they still eating? NO!

In the previous verse Luke said that it was AFTER supper. And in this verse Luke is showing them all still sitting "at the table". But Luke does NOT say anything about "eating"!

It is clear from John 13:31 to John 18:1 that Jesus Christ spoke for an hour or more. What did they do for that hour or more of listening to Jesus Christ ... did they all get up and stand in one corner? What do you do when you dine out with a large group of friends, and are in the mood for conversing about many topics with all these friends ... do you get up and leave the expensive restaurant the minute you have eaten your last bite of food? No, you just stay seated at the table in a relaxed atmosphere, because the setting is pleasant and comfortable. Christ and the apostles did the same thing.

Luke is in verse 21 simply showing the whole group still sitting AT THE TABLE, even though the eating of the meal had been completed. Since Luke makes no reference at all to when Judas left the proceedings, it seems he was not very clear on this ... unlike John who states that Judas left "IMMEDIATELY" after one specific statement from Christ. So Luke simply thought that Judas stayed around a while longer than he actually did stay around. Is that really such a big deal ... that Luke thought that Judas stayed 10 or 20 or 30 minutes longer than he actually did stay? It is only a big deal for those who wish to build a case on Luke's comments about Judas ... even though Luke himself very clearly places the bread and wine AFTER THE MEAL!

Next, notice also that Luke is the only one who records "THE STRIFE AMONGST THE APOSTLES" as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom. That also took place AFTER SUPPER ... it is recorded AFTER Luke 22:20. And that is to be expected, that such arguments only start after people have finished eating. But the footwashing had taken place DURING the meal, therefore also BEFORE this strife.

Now think about Luke's comments regarding this "strife". Luke himself was not personally involved in that strife one way or the other ... he had heard about it from SOME source and then no doubt verified it by asking some of the original apostles. When he had this report confirmed, Luke decided to include this information in his account. On the other hand, those who had actually been there that evening (i.e. Matthew and John and Peter, the one who dictated Mark's account) could very well have been involved personally in that argument, and none of them felt that its inclusion would really add anything to the account ... so they left it out. That also avoided them any unnecessary embarrassment. Can you understand why the non-participant Luke is the only one to record this strife?

Now let's notice a few examples where Luke is slightly at odds with the other accounts of the last Passover, as far as the sequence in which he presents certain statements is concerned.

EXAMPLES FROM LUKE'S ACCOUNT

Here are some examples where Luke presents statements in connection with that Passover in a sequence that differs from the sequence in which the other writers present those same statements.

1) Jesus Christ's references to "not drinking wine again until ...".

MATTHEW and MARK record this statement AFTER Christ had introduced the wine to represent His shed blood.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For THIS IS MY BLOOD of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I WILL NOT DRINK HENCEFORTH of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. (Matthew 26:27-29 AV)

And he said unto them, THIS IS MY BLOOD of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I WILL DRINK NO MORE of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. (Mark 14:24-25 AV)

But LUKE places this identical statement BEFORE Christ introduced the wine to represent His shed blood.

For I say unto you, I WILL NOT DRINK OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. LIKEWISE also the cup after supper, saying, THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:18-20 AV)

IT CANNOT BE DENIED THAT LUKE PRESENTS THIS STATEMENT ABOUT "NOT DRINKING AGAIN UNTIL ..." IN AN EARLIER CONTEXT THAN MATTHEW AND MARK PRESENT THIS STATEMENT!

So who has it correct ... Matthew and Mark, or Luke? Now does this make a difference to the message that is conveyed? No, it doesn't.

2) Christ's references to Peter denying Him.

MATTHEW and MARK present Jesus Christ saying this AFTER they had left the room where they had observed the Passover.

And when they had sung an hymn, THEY WENT OUT INTO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, THOU SHALT DENY ME THRICE. (Matthew 26:30-34 AV)

And when they had sung an hymn, THEY WENT OUT INTO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I. And Jesus

saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, THOU SHALT DENY ME THRICE. (Mark 14:26-30 AV)

But LUKE presents Christ saying this to Peter BEFORE they left the room where they had observed the Passover.

And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that THOU SHALT THRICE DENY THAT THOU KNOWEST ME. AND HE CAME OUT, AND WENT, AS HE WAS WONT, TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES; and his disciples also followed him. (Luke 22:33-34, 39 AV)

IT CANNOT BE DENIED THAT LUKE PRESENTS THIS STATEMENT ABOUT PETER DENYING CHRIST IN AN EARLIER CONTEXT THAN MATTHEW AND MARK PRESENT THIS STATEMENT!

So who has it correct ... Matthew and Mark, or Luke? And again: does this make a difference to the message that is conveyed? No, it doesn't.

3) We have already seen that Luke presents Christ's comments about Judas in a LATER context than Matthew and Mark present those same comments.

So who has it correct ... Matthew and Mark, or Luke? And again: does this make a difference to the message that is conveyed? No, it doesn't, UNLESS you are going to use Luke's different sequence to try to establish a sequence for what we are to do at the Passover.

Realize that there is no problem at all with Luke presenting either some slightly different statements, or else placing the same statements into a slightly different context. THESE THINGS DON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE MESSAGE THAT IS CONVEYED! When God approved of Luke's gospel account, it was not God's intention that we would use those places where Luke differs from the other accounts to somehow establish a sequence of events at our observances of the Passover, AT THE EXPENSE OF IGNORING THE ACCOUNTS RECORDED BY THE EYEWITNESSES!

The above three references, where Luke CLEARLY presents Christ's statements in a slightly different sequence from the other writers, must be faced squarely. They don't make a difference to the meaning. And there are dozens of similar minor discrepancies between the different gospel accounts, which likewise don't amount to a hill of beans. BUT such minor discrepancies can never be used to establish supposed chronological sequences of events. A sequence of events can only be based on accounts that AGREE with one another.

All that these minor discrepancies in Luke's account tell us that we cannot look to Luke for a correct chronology for the Passover! That correct chronology must be established from the accounts written or dictated by the participants at that Passover!

Luke's account can SUPPORT a sequence that is established from the other accounts. But Luke's account cannot establish a sequence that is at odds with the other accounts.

Let's keep in mind that it is not WHAT Luke says that is incorrect ... he records the correct information. It is only THE SEQUENCE in which he presents these statements, and for which sequence Luke was dependent on other people's reports, that is not in agreement with the sequence presented by the other writers.

Luke has recorded the correct "things" in a very slightly wrong sequence. In the case of Christ's last

Passover he simply should have written verses 21-23 BEFORE verse 19, rather than after verse 19. That's all! Is that such a big deal? Placing verses 21-23 after verses 19-20 doesn't change anything!! John shows the footwashing to be DURING the meal, and Luke shows the bread and wine to be AFTER the meal. So what is the big deal about "comments regarding Judas" being recorded TWO VERSES TOO LATE? Aren't the accounts by Matthew and Mark and John good enough to give us a clear picture?

That type of minor chronological inconsistency is readily compatible with someone who was totally dependent on the reports given to him by other people.

Keep in mind that neither Matthew nor Mark nor Luke make any mention of THE FOOTWASHING, which took place DURING the meal, as well as the very lengthy final teachings that Jesus Christ then presented after the meal. They all died before John ever recorded the exact details about the footwashing and the lengthy discourse that followed at some point after the footwashing and after Jesus Christ had dealt with Judas. Now without any knowledge of, or at least references to, the footwashing there is really NOTHING at all wrong with Luke's account. What difference does it make that Luke only refers to Judas two verses later than he should have referred to Judas? It makes no difference at all IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FOOTWASHING!

It is only when you realize that the chronologically CORRECT references to Judas assist us in correctly pinpointing where the footwashing fits into the whole picture, that THEN it could make a difference as to whether Matthew and Mark are accurate, or whether Luke is accurate. In actual practice it still doesn't make a difference, because Luke himself also places the bread and wine AFTER THE MEAL had been completed.

There was no way that Luke could have realized the significance his mentioning of the bread and the wine before Christ's references to Judas might perhaps have had ... because that significance affects something that he does not even mention (i.e. the footwashing), and which he very likely was not even aware of. Luke does not even use the name of Judas in his account, and he is unlikely to have realized the significance we today might want to attach to his indirect references to Judas.

And so Matthew and Peter (the one who dictated Mark's gospel account), who were both present at that last Passover, are quite careful to refer to Judas BEFORE mentioning the bread and the wine, because they KNEW that Judas had not been present for the changed Passover symbols. Judas had left IMMEDIATELY after Jesus Christ had spoken about him towards the end of the meal, or even once the meal had finished, but before Christ introduced the bread and wine. Luke, who had no personal knowledge of the events at that Passover, did not discern that it would make any difference whether he referred to Judas earlier or later.

Let's now look at Matthew 26:26.

MATTHEW 26:26 EXAMINED

It has been mentioned that Matthew 26:26 shows that Jesus Christ introduced the bread and the wine DURING the meal. So let's examine this Scripture more closely. Here is the context.

Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. (Matthew 26:25 AV)

Right, so from John 13:30 we know that Judas went out IMMEDIATELY after Christ had said this to him. So it follows that Judas was NOT present for what happened from verse 26 onwards. As we saw earlier, Matthew simply does not record Judas actually leaving at any time, but John's comment shows that

Judas must have left immediately.

Now it seems fairly clear that Judas did in fact eat the Passover meal with Christ that evening. So his departure very likely signalled the actual eating of the meal coming to an end, though that does not mean that various people may not perhaps still have been eating their last few bites. The food and also the wine were very likely still standing on the table, though Luke is definite that the meal had ended.

Now we come to the next verse.

AND AS THEY WERE EATING, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. (Matthew 26:26 AV)

The key clause people have focussed on here is "and as they were eating". There, they say, that proves that this took place DURING the meal. Let's look at this verse more closely.

The transliterated Greek text reads as follows: "esthionton de auton labon ho Iesous ton arton ...". First let's examine every word here.

"esthionton" = the present active participle of the verb "to eat"; i.e. eating;

"de" = conjunction typically translated into English as: but, and, now, then, also, moreover;

"auton" = genitive plural of the third person pronoun; i.e. "of them";

"labon" = 2nd aorist active participle of the verb "lambano", meaning "to take"; i.e. "taking";

"ho" = definite article; i.e. "the";

"Iesous" = Jesus;

"ton" = definite article; i.e. "the";

"arton" = bread

So first of all, there is no word in the Greek text for "AS" in the expression "AS they were eating". Next, let's translate this section of verse 26 literally word for word in the same order as it appears in the Greek text, before we make any adjustments for our English language grammatical constructions.

The text reads literally:

"Eating THEN (or but or also or moreover) of them taking the Jesus the bread ...".

Adjusting for our grammar, but without adding any polish, this would read: "They were eating, THEN Jesus taking the bread ...".

Now keep in mind that the meal had already been in progress since verse 21 and that they had been eating before and after the footwashing, which had also already taken place. Matthew 26:21 reads:

And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. (Matthew 26:21 AV)

By the time of verse 26 the meal had clearly been going on for some time. The footwashing had already taken place during that meal. The whole episode with Judas took place during the meal or towards the very end of the meal. Judas himself had finished his meal and left after Christ had identified him. So with the meal having been in progress since verse 21, the statement here in verse 26 has to be referring to very close to the end of the meal. As already stated, Luke places this after the eating had been concluded.

Realize that when a meal has been in progress for some considerable time and is approaching its end, then it is a rather subjective assessment as to whether the meal has COMPLETELY ended or whether some part of the meal is still in progress. Some people would say that a meal has been concluded at the very same point in time as someone else might say: "no, it hasn't ended yet BECAUSE WE ARE STILL SITTING HERE AT THE TABLE". Towards the end of a long meal such statements are always somewhat subjective. That would certainly not be the case near the start of the meal or even at any point in the first half of the meal. But when the meal is clearly winding down and coming to an end, then different people might describe this in slightly different terms.

I would take Matthew's statement in Matthew 26:26 to mean that they had been eating and THEN, after that, Jesus took the bread. That would agree fully with Luke's statement. Alternatively, Matthew may have felt that the whole meal had not yet come to a proper end, even if most of them had finished eating, simply because they were still sitting around the table.

Now since the word "AS" is not really found in the text of Matthew 26:26, it takes a lot of the force out of this having to be "AS they were eating". The incorrect statement "and AS they were eating, Jesus took bread ..." is far more dogmatic than the more correct statement of "they were eating, THEN Jesus taking the bread ...". The meal had certainly still been in progress when Christ gave Judas "the sop". But that "sop" was the conclusion of the meal for Judas.

While I personally am convinced that Christ instituted the bread and the wine after the actual eating of the meal had been concluded, I do not believe that it really makes a difference to the sequence we observe at the Passover whether Matthew 26:26 took place in the latter part of the meal or whether it took place as soon as the meal had finished and Judas had left. We have already established from John 13 that the footwashing must have occurred earlier.

Let's look at another Scripture.

MARK 14:22 EXAMINED

The Greek text for this verse reads almost the same as for Matthew 26:26. Here is the text:

"kai esthionton auton labon ho lesous arton ..."

In this verse the conjunction "de" has been replaced by the conjunction "kai", which is typically translated into English as: and, also, even, then. It is very similar to the conjunction "de". And then the noun "bread" does not have the definite article "the" in Mark's account. Otherwise the two verses are the same. So the same comments apply to Mark 14:22 as they do to Matthew 26:26.

Notice the context of Mark's account.

In verse 18 they are already eating the meal. In verses 20-21 Jesus Christ speaks about Judas, although Mark does not mention Judas' name or Christ's direct comment of "you've said it" to Judas. But once again, John 13:30 makes quite clear that Judas must have left by the end of Mark 14:21! The word "IMMEDIATELY" leaves no other option.

It follows that from Mark 14:22 onwards Judas could not possibly have been present. It makes no difference whether the meal was completely finished or not. When Judas left "immediately", the only possibility is that he left IMMEDIATELY! Are there any other meanings to the word "immediately"?

Now let's consider another matter.

SEEKING GOD'S MIND ON THE PASSOVER

The Passover is a serious and sober occasion. And God certainly does not play games or do things lightly. So let's see if we can understand how God would view these things and the sequence of events that God would be most likely to establish for the Passover.

Here are the facts that pertain to any person's relationship with God.

- 1) We have all sinned and were all cut off from God.
- 2) According to His own will God opens the minds of SOME people in this age to help them understand His truth. Note! When God opens a person's mind to understanding His truth, that by itself does not yet establish any relationship with God. The only purpose for God opening a person's mind is to enable that person to do something.
- 3) BEFORE any human being can establish A RELATIONSHIP with God, WE MUST DO SOMETHING FIRST! We must come to repentance, a change in the way we think and behave towards God and His whole way of life.
- 4) When we have done that, THEN that opens the doors for God to do something for us ... to convert us by giving us His Holy Spirit.

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, God has always expected us human beings to DO SOMETHING FIRST, before God will respond and then do something for us.

Let's move on to the Passover.

The Passover pictures us having access to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to have our sins forgiven and blotted out. But before we can CLAIM that sacrifice, before we can PARTAKE of that Passover, God requires us to do something FIRST!

THE FOOTWASHING pictures an attitude we are supposed to have BEFORE we can claim Christ's sacrifice for our sins. It pictures us having an attitude of humility.

THE BREAD pictures something that JESUS CHRIST was willing to do for us ... have His body broken by stripes to enable us to be supernaturally healed by God of our sicknesses and injuries and diseases.

THE WINE also pictures something that JESUS CHRIST was willing to do for us ... give His life so that we can have our sins forgiven.

Now think about this very carefully!

IF we do not FIRST have an attitude of genuine humility (pictured by the footwashing) then we are TOTALLY UNFIT to claim the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our healing and for the forgiveness of our sins (pictured by the bread and wine).

It is totally inappropriate to expect Jesus Christ to make His sacrifice available to us (the bread and the wine) BEFORE we are willing to show God an attitude of genuine humility (the footwashing). We have to make the commitment to God (footwashing) BEFORE we can have access to Christ's sacrifice.

If anyone was actually able to take the bread and the wine at the Passover BEFORE doing the footwashing, it would mean that AFTER accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the person still had A CHOICE ... to wash feet or not to wash feet. He would only be required to make a commitment AFTER he had already fully partaken of Christ's sacrifice. But that is CONTRARY to the way God does things. Unless we FIRST make a commitment to God, we simply cannot obtain access to Christ's sacrifice.

The footwashing is an expression of humility. Now that humility, while it is EXPRESSED in conduct towards another human being, is actually DIRECTED AT GOD! In all our conduct our actions must always be directed at God. It is GOD we are seeking to please, not fellow man. And when we express humility towards other people, then God views this as an expression of humility towards Him. That is the principle of Matthew 25:40 ...

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE *IT* UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE *IT* UNTO ME. (Matthew 25:40 AV)

And unless we are willing to humble ourselves FIRST (i.e. wash feet), there is no way that God will give us access to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (i.e. the bread and wine). Real humility towards God is a prerequisite for taking the Passover.

Think this through very carefully. If you really understand how God's mind works in matters like this, then you should realize that the footwashing must ABSOLUTELY come BEFORE anyone is eligible to partake of the bread and the wine.

Now here is another thought we should consider:

ANOTHER PROOF FOR THE CORRECT SEQUENCE

What does partaking of the bread and the wine picture?

It pictures having access to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our healing and for the forgiveness of our sins, does it not? So if someone has partaken of the bread and the wine at the Passover, then it pictures that he has contact with God, right? It pictures us having "a part with Christ" because we partake of Christ's broken body and His shed blood.

Now what does the footwashing picture?

It pictures that we have an attitude of humility, right? Yes, that is correct. But it also pictures MUCH MORE than that. Notice what Jesus Christ said to Peter.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, IF I WASH THEE NOT, THOU HAST NO PART WITH ME. (John 13:8 AV)

There are two things to note from this verse. FIRST OF ALL, it is the footwashing that enables us to have "a part with Christ"; i.e. it enables us to approach God and seek God's help and intervention in our lives. Another way to state this would be to say: if we knowingly don't take part in the footwashing, then

we can't be on Christ's team.

But another point to consider is this:

IF the footwashing was placed AFTER the bread and the wine, THEN Jesus Christ's statement in John 13:8 would not make sense. Can you see that?

Look, if we have very shortly before partaken of the bread and the wine, then that partaking has ALREADY given us "a part with Christ" ... by partaking of the symbols of His broken body and His shed blood. Therefore taking part in the footwashing would not be the thing that would determine whether or not we have "a part with Christ".

What Jesus Christ has said here in John 13:8 must lay THE FOUNDATION for having a relationship with God. Jesus Christ's statement of "if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" only makes sense if it is placed BEFORE the bread and the wine; it makes no sense after the bread and the wine.

Let's see this from Jesus Christ's perspective.

Christ already knew that an hour or so later He was going to introduce the bread and the wine to represent "having a part with Him" ... the bread represented "a part" of His body which would be broken, and the wine represented "a part" of His blood that would be shed. So here at the footwashing Jesus Christ in effect said to Peter: "If I wash you not, then you cannot partake of the bread and the wine which I will introduce later. You first have to be 'washed' before you can be eligible for taking the bread and the wine." To have Jesus Christ saying these words to Peter AFTER they had all taken the bread and the wine really does not make any sense.

Carefully think about what Jesus Christ said here in John 13:8 and its clear implications.

Furthermore, this verse makes very clear that the footwashing is for the purpose of establishing a relationship with God, and not with fellow-man.

Now let's look at another question about the footwashing.

WHY DID CHRIST ADD THE FOOTWASHING TO THE PASSOVER?

I have heard it stated that Jesus Christ added the footwashing ceremony to the Passover "BECAUSE OF TRANSGRESSIONS". Is that really correct?

NO, THAT IS NOT CORRECT!

The whole Passover service came into being "because of transgressions". It is our human transgressions that created THE NEED for the Passover in the first place. But Jesus Christ adding the footwashing to the Passover has nothing to do with "transgressions".

The footwashing is supposed to demonstrate that we have an attitude of humility, that we are willing to serve other people by performing even the most menial tasks. It follows that any ceremony intended to demonstrate humility and a willingness to serve other people has nothing to do with "transgressions". Otherwise that would imply that TRANSGRESSIONS are the reason why God wants us to have an attitude of humility and a willingness to serve people. Can you see this?

Christ was willing to humble Himself to the point of giving His life for us sinful human beings. In John 13:13-14 Jesus Christ made quite clear that the intent of the footwashing is to express humility, totally

apart from any "transgressions". Notice ...

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. (John 13:13-14 AV)

There is nothing about "transgressions" in the reason for the footwashing which Jesus Christ stated right here. Humility is simply the right sort of attitude that God wants to see in us. But humility is never intended as some sort of penalty for wrong conduct.

And most certainly, Jesus Christ did NOT institute the footwashing on the spur of the moment as some kind of response to "the strife amongst the apostles". The footwashing is only recorded by John, and John places it during supper. The strife is only recorded by Luke in Luke 22:24-27, and that is clearly after the meal had ended some time before verse 20. The footwashing preceded the strife amongst the apostles by some time.

Let's now examine another question about the footwashing.

DID THE EARLY NT CHURCH HAVE THE FOOTWASHING AT THE PASSOVER?

Is the footwashing component of the Passover service perhaps something that was ignored in the first half century that the Church existed, and which the Apostle John then sought to rectify before his death?

Consider the following things:

1) WHY did neither Matthew nor Mark nor Luke say anything at all about the footwashing and about the lengthy discourse Jesus Christ gave at that Passover?

2) WHY did the Apostle Paul, who had received his Passover teachings DIRECTLY from Jesus Christ (see again 1.Cor. 11:23), also not say anything about the footwashing in his instructions for conducting the Passover correctly? Had Paul ALSO received the instructions for the footwashing "of the Lord", could he possibly, with good conscience, have avoided mentioning this ordinance in his Passover instructions to the Corinthians? If he had, it would have meant that Paul had to make A VALUE JUDGMENT, deciding that one component of the Passover service was not as important to mention as the other two. Such a value judgment seems very unlikely.

3) If even ONE of the "many" accounts of Christ's ministry that Luke refers to (Luke 1:1) had made reference to the footwashing at Christ's last Passover, could Luke possibly have avoided including an account of the footwashing in his gospel account? Luke had interviewed many of the eyewitnesses, and he could surely have verified any references to the footwashing, had he been aware of it, by asking some of the original twelve apostles about this matter. But he is silent about the footwashing.

4) Consider that Luke's reference to "strife amongst them" at that last Passover is of FAR LESS SIGNIFICANCE than the footwashing! When Luke bothered to include a reference to such squabbling amongst the apostles, how could he POSSIBLY have omitted any reference to the footwashing, had he been aware of it? Had Luke actually had a knowledge of the footwashing, but deliberately decided to not say anything about it, and instead decided to mention what could be considered "gossip" or "telling tales" about the squabbling amongst the apostles ... he could surely have been accused of being frivolous. I doubt that Matthew and Peter and John were very impressed with Luke for including in his account a reference to the squabbles amongst them that night? Their reasoning could very easily have been: "What has THAT got to do with telling believers about how Christ instructed us to observe the Passover in the future?" The point is this: THE FOOTWASHING is without question more important and more

significant than some of the other details that Luke chose to include. I can only conclude that Luke was simply not aware of the footwashing.

5) IF all the congregations of the early NT Church were in the habit of including the footwashing in their annual Passover observances, and if Matthew and Mark and Luke had for the past 20 years or so washed feet every year at the Passover ... how could they POSSIBLY have avoided explaining in their gospel accounts the very circumstances this custom was based on?

6) And conversely, HOW could the local pastors POSSIBLY have explained to new converts the reasons for washing feet at the Passover, when there was NO WRITTEN RECORD anywhere to support this practice (with John only writing his gospel account in the 90's AD)?

7) This was the FOURTH Passover that the 12 apostles observed with Jesus Christ. At each of the previous three occasions Jesus Christ undoubtedly had things to say to them. Yet NONE of the conversations or the teachings at any of those three previous Passover observances were deemed important enough by any gospel writer to record. While in each case it was a highly important ceremony for them all to partake of, nothing that was said or done at these events was ever recorded for us.

SO LET ME GIVE YOU A SPECULATION ON MY PART.

MATTHEW and Mark (assuming that PETER basically dictated the text that Mark wrote) say nothing about the footwashing BECAUSE IT TOOK PLACE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MEAL! This may have been an hour or more before the meal ended, after which Jesus Christ THEN introduced the symbols of the bread and the wine. At the time Jesus Christ washed their feet, they didn't know yet that later that evening He would also change the way the Passover would be observed in the future.

No doubt Jesus Christ washing their feet made a very deep and profound impression on them. When Christ then said: "I have given you an example", they took this to mean that they too were to have a totally committed and dedicated attitude of service to all those that God would call into the Church. And they PRACTISED this attitude for the rest of their lives, to the point that most of them died as martyrs, even as Jesus Christ Himself had proved possessing this attitude by dying for all of us.

[Comment: Think also of other situations where they at first misunderstood the real intent of what Jesus Christ said to them. When Christ had said: "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees ..." (see Matt. 16:6-12), they at first misunderstood what He really meant. When Christ had said: "not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man, but ..." (see Matt. 15:11-17), they also misunderstood what Christ really meant. When Christ had said: "I am the bread of life ..." (see John 6:48-52), people also misunderstood what He really meant. When Christ had said to His disciples: "I have meat to eat that you know not of ..." (see John 4:31-33), the disciples also needed further explanations to know what Jesus Christ was actually talking about. When Christ said about John: "If I will that he tarry till I come ..." (see John 21:21-23), the church membership at that time again misunderstood what Christ really meant. For many years the ministers misunderstood when the second coming of Christ would be. They initially misunderstood Jesus Christ in many different situations.]

But they did NOT understand the footwashing to be A CEREMONY that they were to repeat every year at the Passover service. The reason why they, and that would have included the Apostle John at that point in time, did not understand this is because after the footwashing THE OLD TESTAMENT OBSERVANCE OF THE PASSOVER CONTINUED ... they continued eating the meal that constituted the Passover. They understood the lesson and its REAL application in the life of a Christian, but they didn't understand that it was to be the first part of a ceremony, the other parts of which ceremony Jesus Christ would only reveal and explain an hour or so later.

No doubt Jesus Christ had mentioned instructions regarding humility and an attitude of service to the 12 apostles on many previous occasions. Very possibly Christ had spoken about the same basic subject at some or all of the previous Passover services they had observed with Him ... it is reasonable to assume that this subject may very well have been on Christ's mind at EVERY Passover during His ministry ... every Passover would have forcefully reminded Him of the sacrifice He had committed Himself to bring on behalf of all mankind. So while the details were different this time (i.e. with Jesus Christ washing their feet), it was only reinforcing a lesson that they had heard on previous occasions. And so they focussed on the real intent of this example, without understanding that they should also put it into practice literally at the Passover each year.

So when it came to recording things for inclusion in the text of the gospels, EVERY WRITER before 70 AD skipped over the details concerning the entire meal that had taken place. ALL OF THEM understood very clearly that Jesus Christ was CHANGING THE EMBLEMS OF THE PASSOVER, when He commanded them to partake of the bread and the wine. And they made sure to record this clearly, to the point of totally ignoring the details of the Old Testament Passover that the apostles partook of that evening, because Church members did not need those details for how THE CHURCH in future was to observe the Passover.

When Jesus Christ was instructing the Apostle Paul, Christ also very clearly explained "the bread and the wine" (see again 1.Cor. 11:23-26). Apparently Christ chose NOT to tell Paul something like: "at the last Passover I observed, I also washed the feet of all 12 of My apostles, because I want the footwashing to be an integral part of the Passover observance every year"? After all, if those who were EYEWITNESSES to that last Passover hadn't yet figured this out, then it wouldn't have looked very good to introduce this through an outsider, through someone who had not even been present at that last Passover.

So Paul apparently didn't know about the footwashing, and God apparently wasn't very concerned that the footwashing wasn't included in the Passover observances of the Church for the Church's first 50 or 60 years of existence. It is always a matter of God "winking" at the times of ignorance, and of "to him that KNOWS to do good, and does it not, TO HIM it is sin" (James 4:17).

Also, unless they had chosen to tell others these things (Jesus Christ washing their feet), nobody else would have known about this event. It may not have been something that they would have WANTED to tell other people, like they didn't really want to tell people about the arguing amongst themselves at that Passover? And if they didn't grasp that this ordinance SHOULD be incorporated into the Passover service, then it might not have occurred to them to even talk about it to other people, like no doubt HUNDREDS of other conversations with Jesus Christ also went totally unrecorded.

Let's realize that in the whole footwashing episode (i.e. John 13:2-17) the most vitally important statements to record are verses 15-17! Without a clear understanding of THESE STATEMENTS it would never occur to anyone that the footwashing was to become an integral part of the annual Passover observance. So while THE ACTION of Jesus Christ washing their feet had made a very profound impact on those original apostles, it was His subsequent statements about having set an example and about "doing" that had never sunk in.

We can also see that, for example, Peter's frame of mind at that time made it VERY EASY TO MISS THE POINT that they too were to do this literally every year. When Peter answered Jesus Christ with: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head" (verse 9), Peter clearly did not grasp that what he was witnessing and experiencing was something that he too should be doing every year. Giving another person a washing of the head and the hands and the feet was not something that would have occurred to any of them as being something of an annually repeated ritual. Now Jesus Christ clearly explained that the washing was limited to the feet, but the apostles in their minds were thinking along

different lines from what Jesus Christ was thinking. Further, Jesus Christ's original reply to Peter of "IF I WASH YOU NOT, YOU HAVE NO PART WITH ME" could very easily have been interpreted by those apostles to mean that this act of washing was something that applied strictly to THIS INNER CIRCLE OF TWELVE! So was there ever A NEED to tell anyone outside of this group of twelve about this footwashing episode?

Then we come to the 90's AD. The Apostle John is the last survivor of the original twelve. He is the only surviving eyewitness of Jesus Christ's whole ministry. He has also seen how the Church first grew after the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, to be followed by a period of stagnation and scattering from the late 60's AD onwards. By the early 90's AD heresies were making their appearance in various congregations, and many of the original Jewish members of the Church had "left their first love" (Paul's whole message in his epistle to the Hebrews almost 30 years earlier can be summed up in the statement "don't leave Jesus Christ, your first love"). That is, by the 90's AD most of those early members were already dead, but many had left the Church in the late 50's and in the 60's AD.

As the last survivor of the original twelve, John no doubt felt a responsibility to set the record straight and to correct whatever he understood was in need of correction by that point in time. In mentally reliving the years of Jesus Christ's entire ministry, John recalled many things that Jesus Christ had said and done that were not recorded in the three gospel accounts that already existed (i.e. Matthew, Mark and Luke). And because of the way in which things had developed with the Church over the previous 60 years, John came to a clearer and deeper understanding of many things, which he himself had not understood as clearly 30 and 40 and 50 years earlier. So he realized that there was a need for another account of Christ's ministry, which would approach the subject from a totally different perspective. Amongst other things, he rethought the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. And then the words Jesus Christ had spoken at that last Passover suddenly hit him like a thunderbolt.

For the first time he realized that Christ's words "I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE THAT YOU SHOULD DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU" and the following statement of "IF YOU KNOW THESE THINGS HAPPY ARE YOU IF YOU DO THEM" were intended by Jesus Christ to be applied to the changed Passover ceremony. For the first time it dawned on John that Jesus Christ wanted the Church to include this act of footwashing LITERALLY in the annual observance of the Passover. For the first time it dawned on John that this whole episode was NOT intended by Jesus Christ as something that applied only to that inner circle of twelve, but that Jesus Christ had really intended this episode as something to be applied BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH.

From his perspective of the 90's AD, and as the last survivor who knew anything about the footwashing, John realized that he had to clearly spell out what had happened at that last Passover observed by Jesus Christ. It wasn't enough to simply present "the bare bones" of the footwashing ceremony, because there were people who had been members of the Church for 20 or 30 or 40 years, who had never at any time heard anything about a "footwashing". So even from a credibility point of view John had to present a great many OTHER details relating to that last Passover. This substantiated that he wasn't just "slipping in" a subtle statement about washing feet, a statement that critics might later question. By presenting a very lengthy and detailed account of what happened that evening (i.e. chapters 13-17), John ensured that his remarks about the footwashing would not be able to be dismissed as "a spurious addition by some scribe in later years". And the teachings John records in this context are certainly also very important in their own right.

So John saw it as his personal responsibility to present the footwashing in such a way that the Church would understand that we too are to do this at the Passover every year. Jesus Christ's statements "THAT YOU SHOULD DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU" and "HAPPY ARE YOU IF YOU DO THEM" were the most important statements for John to include in the footwashing account. I see in John's account of the last Passover a desire to correct an earlier lack of understanding on the part of the entire

leadership of the early NT Church. Earlier, at the end of the Apostle Peter's life we see a very similar desire to correct an earlier universally held misunderstanding regarding when Jesus Christ would return. So in 2.Peter 3 he addresses the "scoffers" who questioned that Jesus Christ would return at all. John's account of Christ's last Passover stems from a very similar motivation, to correct something that had previously not been correctly done or understood.

So consider:

Had all three things (footwashing, bread and wine) taken place IN ONE UNINTERRUPTED CONTEXT, be it during the meal or be it after the Passover meal had been concluded, then there is no way that the footwashing would have escaped being mentioned in the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke. And had the footwashing taken place AFTER Christ had instituted the bread and wine, then it would likewise have been TOTALLY IMPOSSIBLE for the footwashing not to be recorded in the first three gospels. None of the gospel writers intentionally left out anything that is important for us to know. And ANY ceremony introduced after the bread and wine had been introduced by Jesus Christ would have been impossible to not record.

It is precisely because there was A TIME LAPSE, between the footwashing on the one hand, and the bread and wine on the other hand, that the original apostles did not immediately associate the footwashing with the changed Passover ceremony. Because Jesus Christ only introduced the bread and wine AFTER the whole Old Testament Passover observance had been concluded, the meal having come to an end, therefore THE SIGNIFICANCE of this change stood out. It stood out to the point that Matthew, Mark and Luke only give very few details about what preceded the introduction of the bread and the wine. But the footwashing, because it had taken place earlier DURING the meal, they somehow didn't associate with this change Christ was introducing. It was only in the 90's AD that the Apostle John made this connection ... connecting the footwashing to the New Testament observance of the Passover.

So for these reasons I suspect that the early NT Church of God did not include the footwashing in its annual observance of the Passover prior to the Apostle John writing his gospel account of this event.

Now whether my speculation in this regard is right or wrong does not really change anything, as far as what we DO at the Passover is concerned. FOR US it is immaterial whether the Church from its very inception onwards included the footwashing in its Passover observance, or whether the Church only started to include the footwashing after John had revealed this information in his gospel account. What is clear is that we are to include the footwashing in the way we today observe the Passover. What others may or may not have done is of no consequence to what God expects from us. God expects those who KNOW what He requires of us to put into practice and to live by those things we have come to understand. And it should be very clear to us that the footwashing must come before the bread and the wine at the Passover ceremony.

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