

SESSION 10

This Cup

The Upper Room, the Cross, and the Night Every Thread Converges

TAKE-HOME SHEET

WHAT WE FOUND

We opened our guesses, and then the text opened everything. At a Passover meal, with the lamb, the household, and the *zikkaron* all in the room, Jesus lifted a cup and spoke two texts at once. "This is MY blood of the covenant" took Moses' sentence from Sinai, the one we memorized without knowing why, and made it possessive: the mediator's own blood now binds God and the family. "This cup... is the NEW COVENANT in my blood" signed the only passage in the Old Testament that uses those words, Jeremiah 31, and filled in its famously blank price line: total forgiveness, and now we know the cost and the currency. One sentence, two covenants, the check cashed.

The Passover he began, he finished on the hill. The final cup he vowed to defer was prayed over in Gethsemane, refused on the road, and received at the end on a branch of hyssop, the Passover blood applicator of Exodus 12:22, with the words "It is finished." (The fourth cup reading is a scholarly proposal, honestly labeled, and illuminating; what John states outright is that Jesus died on the Day of Preparation of the Passover (John 19:14, 31) and that Scripture was fulfilled: "Not a bone of him shall be broken" (John 19:36), language drawn from the Passover rubric of Exodus 12:46, with an echo of Psalm 34:20. That his death coincided with the hour the lambs were slain belongs to the same interpretive chronology; the rubrics were always his description.) And the question we have carried since the corridor of blood was answered in covenant language: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13). The God who swore both sides kept both sides. Through the one seed, the blessing of Abraham reached the Gentiles: the third promise, all the families of the earth, went under blood and oath at last.

Our chart is complete: couple, household, tribe, nation, kingdom, world; Sabbath, rainbow, circumcision, Passover, throne, chalice; one family, widened six times, sealed in the blood of the one who swore from the beginning. And we tested the claim that the new covenant ends sacrifice: the institution words themselves are altar words (body given, blood poured out), Paul calls the Eucharist a real participation in that body and blood (1 Corinthians 10:16), and the Church's teaching honors the objection's deepest concern: the Mass adds nothing to Calvary and repeats nothing; it is the one sacrifice, once for all, made present to every generation by the covenant's own memorial mechanics, until he comes.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

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St. Ignatius of Antioch *Letter to the Smyrnaeans (c. AD 107)*

Writing on the road to his martyrdom, within living memory of the apostles, St. Ignatius identified the Eucharist without hedging: it is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which the Father in his goodness raised up. For Ignatius, an early second-century bishop, the words of the Upper Room meant what they said.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Justin Martyr *First Apology, Chapter 66 (c. AD 155)*

Explaining Christian worship to a pagan emperor, St. Justin wrote that the food over which the thanksgiving has been spoken is not received as common bread or common drink, but, as Jesus was made flesh, so this food is the flesh and blood of that same incarnate Jesus, given only to the baptized who believe what the Church teaches. The second century's public explanation of the Supper is already fully covenantal: the meal makes and marks the family.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Jerusalem *Mystagogical Catecheses (c. AD 350)*

Teaching the newly baptized of Jerusalem, in sight of Golgotha itself, St. Cyril reasoned from the wedding at Cana: he who changed water into wine at a word, shall we not believe him when he changes wine into his blood? Since Christ himself declared, This is my body, who shall dare to doubt it? Cyril's confidence is the confidence of this whole study: the covenant words of the God who swore by himself mean what they say.

LIVE IT THIS WEEK

- Go to Mass once this week, Sunday or daily, and at the consecration, silently pray the two source texts as the words are spoken: Exodus 24:8 and Jeremiah 31:31. Receive holy Communion, if you are properly disposed, as what tonight showed it to be: the covenant meal on the mountain.
- Reread Genesis 22:1 to 14 in one sitting, then Romans 8:31 to 32, and thank the Father, in your own words, for not withholding.
- Before next session, read Acts 2:1 to 47. Count the nations, watch what Peter tells the crowd to do, and notice what the first covenant family devotes itself to in the last verses.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

Luke 22:20 (RSV2CE)

Before Next Session: Read Acts 2:1 to 47. Count the nations in the crowd, watch what Peter tells them to do, and notice the four things the first covenant family devotes itself to in the final verses.

Catechism References: CCC 610 to 611, 613, 1339 to 1340, 1365