

## All Saints Bible Study – November 7, 2008

We acted out some elements of a modern **Jewish Passover**. We noted there were 15 steps which are linked to the story of Passover when the people prepared for their escape from Egypt and were protected from the effects of the tenth plague by the blood of a lamb. The steps include washing and drinking wine and breaking bread and reflection on humility and bitterness. We noted too that people are seated at table in a certain order reflecting their age.

We read the story from **Exodus 12:1-30**. We noted the reasons for the unleavened bread, the lamb and the bitter herbs, the instruction to do this as a remembrance, and the end of this part of the story where the first born in Egypt are all killed. And we noted the key place of this story in Jewish history as the people are released from slavery.

We read **Luke 22:7-53** and saw how Jesus **transformed the Passover** festival. We noted the elements of the festival in the story: the man carrying a jug of water, the wine, the bread which is broken, the discussion about position, the command to do this as a commemoration. Ending where we did in verse 53 we heard the echo of 'this is your hour – when darkness reigns' and the midnight hour in Exodus 12:30 when the Lord struck down the first born. We noted that Jesus is both victim, the first born who is struck down, and one who will usher in the kingdom of God. The Passover now becomes a commemoration of Jesus' death and an anticipation of the reign of the kingdom of God.

We saw the emphasis of Luke on Jesus' **identification with humanity** as he quotes from Isaiah 53 'he was numbered with the transgressors' and as he suffered in anticipation of what awaited him. Jesus' words here echo the stanza in the prayer he taught his disciples in Luke 11:4.

We noted how the Christian faith is dependent on the Jewish background and how an appreciation of Jewish traditions enhances our understanding of the accounts in the New Testament.