

THE LAST SUPPER by Rick Sarre

We can rely safely on the gospels to give us some indication of what Jesus offered as a meal to the disciples in the upper room at what has become known as the Last Supper. The words attributed to him vary from gospel to gospel. There was, of course, no shorthand at the time, or recording devices. Hence the actual words, offered by the writers of the gospels decades after the event, must therefore be taken on faith alone. Here is my take on what could have been said (based upon all four gospel narratives).

Greetings friends. I am so very glad you are here. I gave instructions for others to locate this upper room for us to share this meal together. I am pleased that we can all be together. These last few days have brought much satisfaction. The reuniting with Lazarus brought joy to me and his family. Arriving in Jerusalem and having that wonderful welcome, with palms laid before the feet of the donkey that I rode, was warm and gratifying.

But the road to Jerusalem was long. So it is time for me to stop and rest and eat. It is Passover after all. I have not been able to prepare a feast, but I have been able to arrange some bread and some wine.

These are troubled times; there are too many poor, lame, anxious, alienated, disenfranchised, and homeless people. We have tried to offer strength and words of encouragement to them all, reminding them of the power of the God of Abraham to ease their burdens and offer comfort. As you know, everyone is welcome at this table; especially the outcast, the lonely, the bereaved, and the troubled. To them and to you, here is my message, and it is a simple one: If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and in return, I promise that a new spirit will enter your lives; a spirit of truth, and grace and peace.

Be cautious. The Sanhedrin are worried by us, because they think we are not acting in accordance with their rules. The Romans are wary of anything that might cause unrest. And in the midst of this, we have our own personal trials, bereavements and challenges.

I know that my message has not always been easy for you. It has not been a relationship without difficulty. One of you will betray me, even tonight. One of you will later deny that you even know me, not once but three times. You are free to make those decisions. I am not going to stop you.

We have now completed our sacramental washing with water. It is time to eat. I ask you to take this bread and when you eat it, remember my body. I ask you to take this cup and when you drink from it remember it is my blood, the blood of the covenant that you have made with me. And when you have partaken of these things, sit and reflect on this moment that we have shared together.

Now that we have eaten, let us depart. As it happens, I won't be with you much longer. My peace is my parting gift to you; this peace is of a kind the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest and banish your fears, for I am the vine and you are the branches, and those who live with my spirit will bear much fruit.

Go now, and dwell in love.

Matthew 26: 17-30; Mark 14: 12-26, Luke 22: 7-39 and John 13: 1-17
Mark 70-80 CE, Matthew 80-90 CE, Luke and John 90-100 CE



