

## Luke, Didache, and Prayer of Thanksgiving: It Began with Meals

Monday, April 25, 2021

8:00 - 9:00 pm Eastern Time

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

**Presenter:** Dr. Hal Taussig

[Facebook Event Page](#)

Please join us for a study of meal-based gatherings of the first two hundred years of Christ communities. The three very different early texts to be studied are the Gospel of Luke 23:13-32, the Prayer of Thanksgiving from the Nag Hammadi Library, and a set of prayers from The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (Didache). These meals were joyous and very conversational gatherings with wide mixes of religious practices and theological directions. The study of these three texts helps point to the very meal-based practice of the first two centuries of Christ people gatherings and the early lack of the later church-based liturgical and mass-related 'worship services.' This study also examines closely the strong ways that these early meal-centered practices are primary in the making of meaning for the early Christ-people. And it considers practices, performances, rituals, and public demonstrations as key to meaning. This then prompts important building blocks for community and relationships.

### **Texts for the April 25, 2021 Bible and Beyond Discussion:**

*The Gospel of Luke 23:13–32*, New Revised Standard Version

<sup>13</sup> Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, <sup>14</sup> and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. <sup>15</sup> Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. <sup>16</sup> I will therefore have him flogged and release him."<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" <sup>19</sup> (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) <sup>20</sup> Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; <sup>21</sup> but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" <sup>22</sup> A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." <sup>23</sup> But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. <sup>24</sup> So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. <sup>25</sup> He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

<sup>26</sup> As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. <sup>27</sup> A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. <sup>28</sup> But Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For the days are surely coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.’ <sup>30</sup> Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us’; and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ <sup>31</sup> For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”

<sup>32</sup> Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him.

### ***The Prayer of Thanksgiving***, Nag Hammadi Library

We give thanks to you, every life and heart stretches toward you,  
O name untroubled, honored with the name of God, praised with the name of  
Father.

To everyone and everything, comes the kindness of the Father, and love and  
desire.

And if there is sweet and simple teaching, it gives us mind, word, and  
knowledge; mind that we may understand you; word that we may interpret  
you; knowledge that we may know you.

We rejoice and are enlightened by your knowledge.

We rejoice that you have taught us about yourself.

We rejoice that in the body you have made us divine through your knowledge.

The thanksgiving of the human who reaches you is this alone: that we know  
you.

We have known you, O light of mind.

O light of life, we have known you.

O womb of all that grows, we have known you.

O womb pregnant with the nature of the Father, we have known you.

O never-ending endurance of the Father who gives birth, so we worship your  
goodness.

One wish we ask: we wish to be protected in knowledge.

One protection we desire: that we not stumble in this life.

When they said these things in prayer, they welcomed one another and they  
went to eat their holy food, which had no blood in it.

### ***The Teaching of the Twelve Disciples***

#### CHAPTER 9

1 And concerning the Eucharist, hold Eucharist thus: 2 First concerning the Cup, "We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the Holy Vine of David thy child, which, thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy child; to thee be glory for ever."

3 And concerning the broken Bread: "We give thee thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child. To thee be glory for ever."

4 As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into thy Kingdom, for thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever."

5 But let none eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptised in the Lord's Name. For concerning this also did the Lord say, "Give not that which is holy to the dogs."

## CHAPTER 10

But after you are satisfied with food, thus give thanks: 2 "We give thanks to thee, O Holy Father, for thy Holy Name which thou didst make to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child. To thee be glory for ever. 3 Thou, Lord Almighty, didst create all things for thy Name's sake, and didst give food and drink to men for their enjoyment, that they might give thanks to thee, but us hast thou blessed with spiritual food and drink and eternal light through thy Child. 4 Above all we give thanks to thee for that thou art mighty. To thee be glory for ever."

5 Remember, Lord, thy Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in thy love, and gather it together in its holiness from the four winds to thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it. For thine is the power and the glory for ever. 6 Let grace come and let this world pass away. Hosannah to the God of David. If any man be holy, let him come! if any man be not, let him repent: Maran atha, Amen."

7 But suffer the prophets to hold Eucharist as they will.

## CHAPTER 14

### The Sunday worship

1 On the Lord's Day of the Lord come together, break bread and hold Eucharist, after confessing your transgressions that your offering may be pure; 2 but let none who has a quarrel with his fellow join in your meeting until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice be not defiled. 3 For this is that which was spoken by the Lord, "In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king," saith the Lord, "and my name is wonderful among the heathen."

