A Time for Celebration

Scripture Reading: 2 Chronicles 30:10-27

So the people of Israel who were present in Jerusalem celebrated the Festival of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great joy. Each day the Levites and priests sang to the Lord with all their strength. (2 Chron. 30:21 NLT)

What a difference the Scriptures give of the celebration of the Passover compared to the mood in most churches during the observance of the Lord’s Supper. We sing heartily during the opening ceremonies then dig out our somber masks and put them on when the Lord’s Supper is observed. It’s like we walked from a festival of joy into a funeral.

Strangely enough, the early church celebrated the Lord’s Supper at the end of a “love feast.” It was viewed as a happy, joyful occasion for both the church family and friends. The celebration of the Lord’s Supper in the New Testament was equivalent to the celebration of the Jewish Passover in the Old Testament. After all, both the Passover and the Lord’s Supper are reminders of the salvation and freedom that comes through the shedding of the innocent blood of a lamb.

While it’s true that the people in the Corinthian church went overboard and turned the “love feast” into a shameful orgy thus sinning against the Lord; the Apostle Paul dealt harshly with their sin and set the “house in order.”

The passage in 2 Chronicle 30 describes a party like atmosphere during the celebration of the Passover festival. King Hezekiah sought to honor God with instruments and song. The Scripture says, “The entire assembly of Judah rejoiced, including the priests, the Levites, all who came from the land of Israel, the foreigners who came to the festival, and all those who live in Judah.” (2 Chronicles 30:25 NLT)

Pictures drawn of Jesus while hanging on the cross show him as torn, bleeding, and bedraggled. His human body was marred beyond recognition, and he is shown as a defeated foe at the mercy of the crowd. Nothing could be further from the truth. Never at any time was Jesus not in full control of his destiny and held our destiny in his hands as well. We are assured of this by the words recorded in Hebrews 12:2, “He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward.” (NLT) In addition, the seven words spoken from the cross reveal that he was in charge of the situation.

How do you celebrate the commemoration of the Lord’s Supper? Are you joyful or sad? Do you see it as a celebration or a funeral? I believe we should rejoice knowing that Jesus willingly laid down his life so that we might enjoy eternal life with him in heaven.

Prayer: Dear Lord, you gave up your Son so that I might rejoice in his victory over sin.