

None of these attempts at harmonization therefore is convincing; the situation still is quite simply that the synoptic and Johannine datings of the Last Supper sharply contradict one another, and that means that the question remains an open one: Was the Last Supper of Jesus a passover meal or not?

THE LAST SUPPER—*ḲIDDUŠ* MEAL? *ḤABURAH* MEAL?
ESSENE MEAL?

(a) *Ḳidduš* Meal?

At the end of the last century a wholly new element was introduced into the discussion: the *ḳidduš* meal. It was thought that the question—passover meal or not?—could be solved by saying that the Last Supper was neither a passover meal nor an ordinary meal but a *ḳidduš* meal.

In the realm of exegesis there is scarcely a matter about which so much has been written in error—this must be said quite openly—as about the *ḳidduš*; so it is necessary next to say something about it.¹

1. *What is a ḳidduš?*² *ḳidduš* means sanctification. The *ḳidduš* is a blessing which was pronounced at the beginning of each Sabbath or feast day. It was quite simple: 'R. Eleazar b. Zadoq (born between AD 35 and 40 in Jerusalem)³ said: My father . . . used to say over the cup, "(blessed be) he who has sanctified the Sabbath day". He did not add a closing benediction.'⁴ This blessing marks the separation of the sacred period from the profane at its beginning, just as the *ḥabdalah* ('separation blessing' at the close of Sabbaths and feast days) does at the end. A separation of the *ḳidduš* or *ḥabdalah* from the sacred day is absolutely unthinkable and without example.

¹ I. Elbogen, 'Kiddush', *Jewish Encyclopedia* VII, 483f.; A. Berliner, *Randbemerkungen zum täglichen Gebetbuch* I, 1909, 43, 73ff.; I. Elbogen, 'Eingang und Ausgang des Sabbats nach talmudischen Quellen', in *Festschrift zu Israel Lewy's 70. Geburtstag*, Breslau, 1911, 173–87; *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*³, Frankfurt a. M., 1924 [= *Gottesdienst*], 107–12; G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* II, Cambridge (Mass.), 1927 [= *Judaism*], 36; J. Jarecki, 'Kiddusch', *Jüdisches Lexikon* III (1929), cols. 685f.; J. Singer, 'Kiddush', *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* VI (1942 = 1948), 379f.

² Or *ḳeduššah* (fem.).

³ Cf. A. Schlatter, *Die Tage Trajans und Hadrians* (BFChTh 1.3), Gütersloh, 1897, 80f.

⁴ Tos. Ber. 3.7 (6.22). Another, somewhat longer wording of the Sabbath *ḳidduš* is to be found in b. Ber. 49a, which also gives the feast-day *ḳidduš*.

2. *How is the ḳidduš performed?* When the first stars appear after sunset¹ the head of the household (on the Sabbath: after lighting the Sabbath candle) says the blessing² at table over a cup of wine,³ in the midst of his family and guests. Then he himself drinks and after him the other people present. In the case that the Friday afternoon meal lasted until the beginning of the Sabbath, or on into the Sabbath itself, the meal was ended⁴ and then the ḳidduš was inserted into the grace after the meal.⁵ In the case of the passover meal, which was the only meal of the year which began after sunset,⁶ the sanctification of the feast took place at the beginning of the meal. *The ḳidduš is therefore neither a meal,⁷ nor a sacrifice,⁸ nor does it have sacrificial significance,⁹ but it is just a simple blessing. 'Ḳidduš meals' (the term is a modern inven-*

¹ Cf. above, p. 15 n. 2.

² The taking of the wine calls for a further blessing of the wine. The sequence of two blessings (*ḳidduš* and the blessing of the wine) was a matter of dispute between the schools of Shammai and Hillel, i.e. in the first century AD, which shows that the rite was not stereotyped at that time: Ber. 8.1; Pes. 10.2; in more detail Tos. Ber. 6.1 (13.6); Tos. Pes. 10.2 (172.14); cf. b. Pes. 114a; Mek. Ex. 20.8.

³ The cup is first mentioned c. AD 50 (R. Zadoḳ), Tos. Ber. 3.7 (6.24f.); cf. the passage quoted above, p. 26.

⁴ So R. Jose (c. 150) who certainly in this matter, as often, represents the older tradition: Tos. Ber. 5.2 (11.23) par. b. Pes. 100a (Bar.); 102a, b (Bar.); j. Pes. 10.37b. 37; further Tos. Ber. 5.3f. (11.29).

⁵ For the evidence see below, p. 45 n. 4. So R. Eliezer (c. 90), the consistent representative of the early tradition, b. Ber. 48b (Bar.). As later (according to Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, 107, 263, in the time of the Amoraim) the custom arose, first in Babylon and then also in Palestine, of holding a service at the beginning of Sabbaths and feast days, then the meal was interrupted in order to attend the service (Tos. Ber. 5.6 [11.28], said to be the opinion of R. Judah [c. 150]), and at a still later period it was postponed until after sunset (Tos. Ber. 5.1 [11.22], also said to be the view of R. Judah), so that the ḳidduš was now said at the beginning of the meal. This is still the practice today.

⁶ See below, p. 46.

⁷ M. Dibelius, *Jesus*, Philadelphia, 1949 = London, 1963 (ET of *Jesus*, Berlin, 1939), 123. M. D. Maxwell, *An Outline of Christian Worship*, London, 1936, 5f., even says that the ḳidduš was a custom particularly followed in Messianic circles (!) and actually describes the ritual of a ḳidduš meal: first there were religious discussions and then followed a simple meal 'of common bread and wine mixed with water' (!)—all without any kind of support in the sources!

⁸ K. G. Goetz, 'Abendmahl und Messopfer' in *Schweizerische Theologische Zeitschrift* 35 (1918), 15–24: the Lord's Supper is a ḳidduš and therefore a sacrifice, 'because ḳidduš means nothing other than sanctification, dedication: that is to say, sacrifice' (p. 16)!!

⁹ I. M. Nielsen, *Gebet und Gottesdienst im Neuen Testament*, Freiburg i. Br., 1937, 264: 'In view of the uncertainty not only of the sacrificial significance of the ḳidduš as such (!), but also of its equation (!) with the Last Supper, this alone (!) cannot be regarded as sufficient proof for the sacrificial character of the δεῖπνον κυριακόν of primitive Christianity.'