



Sunday School Lesson
Last Supper
 by Lorin L. Cranford
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Mt. 26:17-30; Mk. 14:12-31;
Lk. 22:7-23; Jn. 13:21-30



A copy of this lesson is posted in Adobe pdf format at <http://cranfordville.com> under Bible Studies in the Bible Study Aids section. A note about the blue, underlined material: These are hyperlinks that allow you to click them on and bring up the specified scripture passage automatically while working inside the pdf file connected to the owner's back arrow or the taskbar to return to the lesson material.

Quick Links to the Study

I. Context

- a. Historical
- b. Literary

II. Message

- a. Preparations, Mt 26:17-19
- b. Betrayal Predicted, Mt. 26:20-25
- c. Lord's Supper Instituted, Mt. 26:26-30

In this study the primary scripture text is Mt. 26:17-30, but gospel parallels exist in the other three gospels describing the same episode and thus they will be included in the study as well. Comparative studies from the multiple sources describing the same event is foundational if one is going to understand what is being described fully.

I. Context

One important aspect here is the contextual setting for this event. From the outline of the [life of Christ](http://209.238.128.31/Christot.htm) [http://209.238.128.31/Christot.htm] posted at Cranfordville.com comes the basic summary. This episode took place on Thursday evening of this final week of Christ's earthly ministry (note section V. G. in the outline below).

	Matthew:	Mark:	Luke:	John:
V. Final Week and Crucifixion	21:1-27:66 (34%)	11:1-15:47 (34%)	19:29-23:56 (20%)	11:55-19:42 (33%)
A. Friday, arrival at Bethany	-	-	-	11:55-12:1
B. Saturday, prophetic anointing	26:6-13	14:3-9	-	12:2-11
C. Sunday, Messianic Manifestation	21:1-11	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
D. Monday, Messianic Authority	21:12-19	11:12-18	19:45-48	12:20-50
E. Tuesday, Controversy and Teaching	21:20-26:16	11:19-14:11	20:1-22:6	-
F. Wednesday, rest (no record)	-	-	-	-
G. Thursday, farewells	26:17-46	14:12-42	22:7-46	13:1-18:1
H. Friday, Redemptive Accomplishment	26:47-27:61	14:43-15:47	22:47-23:56	18:2-19:42
I. Saturday, Guard posted at the Tomb	27:62-66	-	-	-

One helpful observation from the above listing concerns the importance of these seven days in the life of Christ. Out of an approximate two and one-half year public ministry, these final seven days of activity before arrest and crucifixion occur an inordinate amount of space. Some 34% of the total content of Matthew, along with 34% of Mark, 20% of Luke and 33% of John. One other point becomes clear from a study of the large picture in the life of Christ outline: these seven days contain more material common to all

four gospels than any other single segment in the entire story of Jesus in the four gospels. In interpretative history this section of the story of Jesus is known as the Passio Christi (the Passion of Christ). The Latin word Passio means 'suffering' and so the label alludes to the Suffering of Christ, especially climaxed in his death on the cross on Friday of these days.

Notice from this outline that no record of what Jesus did on Wednesday of this week is given. Since he and his disciples returned to Bethany each evening to spend the night, we can assume that the day was spent there with his close friends. The events on Thursday that are described in the four gospels occurred in the evening hours, apart from the alluded to preparation activities of his disciples in getting things ready for the Passover observance during that evening.

a. Historical

On that Thursday a number of events are described by all four gospel writers. A listing of them follows and is taken from the [same source](http://Cranfordville.com) at Cranfordville.com.

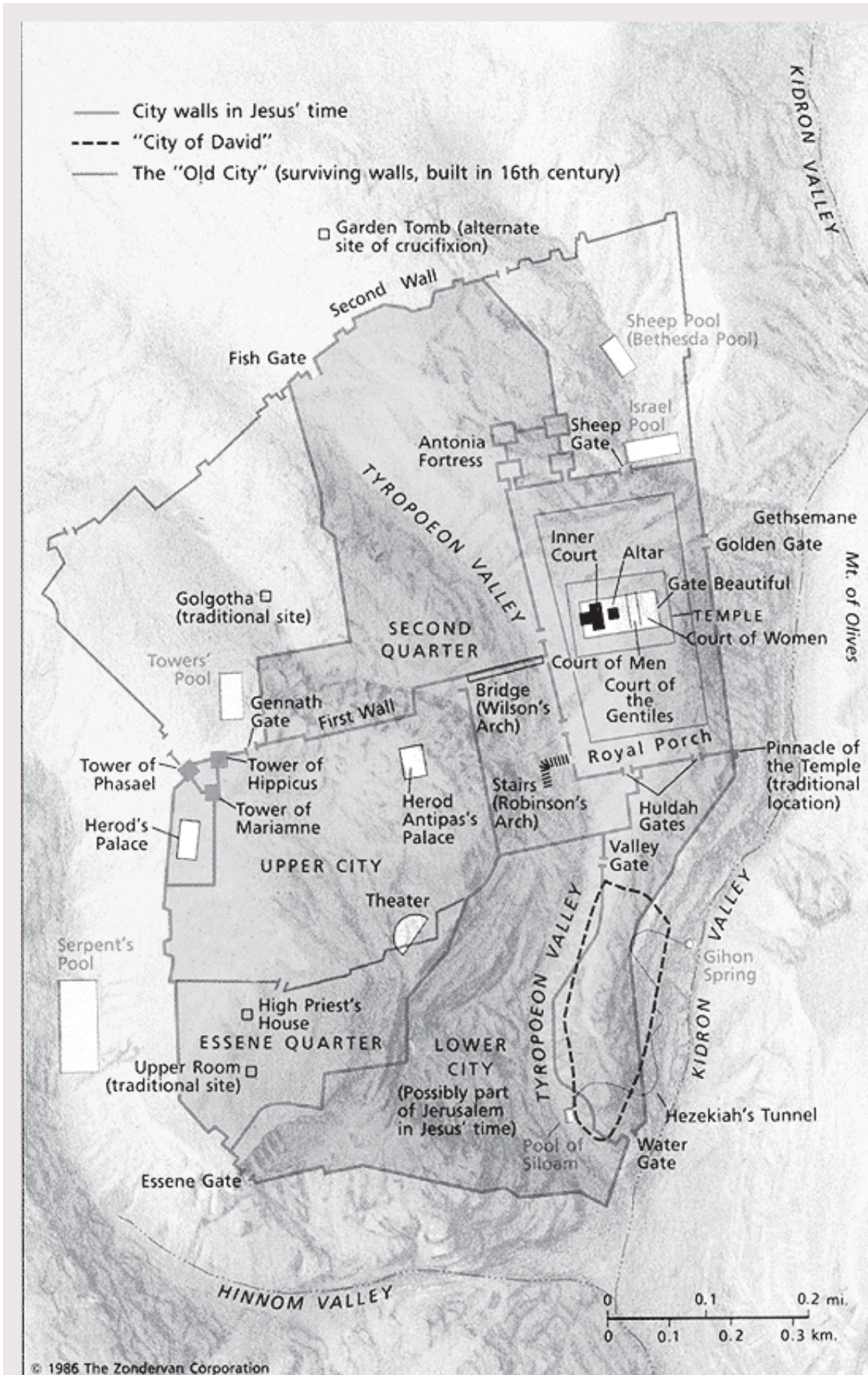
Mt. 26:17-46	Mk. 14:12-42	Lk. 22:7-46	Jn. 13:1-17:26
152. <i>Last Supper Preparations</i> 26:17-19	81. <i>Last Supper Preparations</i> 14:12-16	138. <i>Last Supper Preparations</i> 22:7-13	59. Last Supper: Disciples' feet washed 13:1-20
153. <i>Prediction of betrayal</i> 26:20-25	82. <i>Prediction of betrayal</i> 14:17-21	139. <i>Passover meal</i> 22:14-18	60. Last Supper: <i>Prediction of betrayal</i> 13:21-30
154. <i>Institution of Lord's Supper</i> 26:26-30	83. <i>Institution of Lord's Supper</i> 14:22-26	140. <i>Institution of Lord's Supper</i> 22:19-20	61. The new commandment 13:31-35
155. Prediction of Peter's denial 26:31-35	84. Prediction of Peter's denial 14:27-31	141. <i>Prediction of betrayal</i> 22:21-23	62. Prediction of Peter's denial 13:36-38
156. Gethsemane 26:36-46	85. Gethsemane 14:32-42	142. <i>Dispute about greatness</i> 22:24-27	63. Question of Thomas 14:1-8
		143. <i>Future role in the Kingdom</i> 22:28-30	64. Request of Philip 14:9-14
		144. <i>Prediction of Peter's denial</i> 22:31-34	65. The promise of the Spirit 14:15-21
		145. <i>Two swords</i> 22:35-38	66. Question of Judas 14:22-24
		146. Gethsemane 22:39-46	67. Parting words of comfort 14:25-31
			68. Abiding in love bears fruit 15:1-17
			69. Expecting the hatred of the world 15:18-16:4a
			70. Being encouraged and taught by the Spirit 16:4b-15
			71. Paradoxical discipleship 16:16-24
			72. Overcoming the world 16:25-33
			73. High priestly prayer 17:1-26

A careful reading of the above listing reveals how closely Matthew followed Mark in composing his depiction of these events. Luke, also using Mark as one of his sources, followed Mark with the first and last pericopes (#s 138 and 146), but between these two developed his narrative by inserting additional material and by rearranging the sequence of some other items. Luke reversed pericopes 140 and 141 from his Marcan source. Also, he added new pericopes (#s. 139, 142, 143, 145) that are not found at this point in his Marcan source. The Johannine gospel contains only two out of fourteen pericopes that overlap with the synoptic gospel accounts: pericopes 60 and 62. Thus John's account has a very different tone and orientation to it in comparison to the synoptic gospels. Among the synoptic accounts, Luke is the one with the greatest diversity. Essentially he took the core Marcan structure and added more details. These details mostly highlight the Jewish Passover observance, more than is found in Mark and Matthew.

Since the assigned scripture passage of [Mt. 26:17-30](http://Mt.26:17-30) focuses on three of the five pericopes in this segment of the gospel, we will primarily zero in on these passages and bring in the other gospels only

when they overlap Matthew at one of these places.

One other matter of historical concern has to do with where this event took place. The scripture texts do not directly indicate the location of this dinner with precise reference. [Mark 14:12-16](#) (paralleled by [Mt. 26:17-19](#) and [Lk. 22:8-13](#)) indicates that Jesus instructed his disciples to go into Jerusalem and there they would find a man carrying a water jar (quite unusual for a man to be doing this). He would take them to his home where they would prepare the room for the Passover celebration. According to the scripture narratives it happened as Jesus indicated it would, but the man is never identi-



fied by name. Consequently, we do not know who he was or exactly where in the city he lived.

Traditionally this place is known as the upper room. On the map of the ancient city of Jerusalem on the previous page, this is thought to be located in the southwest quadrant of the old city, not far from the house of Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest. If correct, this would be the place where the disciples would again gather after Jesus ascended into Heaven, as recorded in [Acts 1:12-14](#).

b. Literary

The literary issues for our passage largely relate to the nature of the Passion narrative of the four gospels. As a literary type or form (often called a genre), this section of the four gospels, and especially the synoptic gospels, stands in greater uniformity than anything else in the gospels. Most scholars are convinced this is due in large measure to the religious importance of the depiction of the final seven days of Jesus' earthly life. In the preaching of the gospel by early Christian leaders (especially as described in the book of Acts), the heart of their preaching to non-Christians was the emphasis that Jesus died for the sins of humankind and was raised from the dead on the third day. For a summary of that, see Paul's declaration in [1 Cor. 15:1-11](#). This tradition about Jesus was among the first to be committed to memory and orally transmitted to new Christians who committed it to memory as a foundational part of their understanding of Jesus Christ. Thus when the gospel writers began writing their stories of Jesus, starting some thirty to forty years after Jesus had lived on the earth, this material was already well established in the various Christian communities around the Mediterranean world.

The literary setting for our passage from Matthew 26 can be detected from [the outline](#) on page two. Verses 17-30 cover the first three pericopes (##s 152-154) of the five included in Matthew's gospel describing the events that took place on Thursday of the Passion Week. The first (vv. 17-19) of these took place during the day as the disciples under Jesus' instruction prepared the room for the Passover celebration. The second pericope (vv. 20-25) contains the prediction of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, and the third (vv.26-30) describes the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus. Subsequently, there is the prediction of Peter's denial of Jesus (vv. 31-35). Then Jesus and his disciples left the upper room and walked through the temple outer courts out the Golden Gate, across the Kidron stream and up to the Mount of Olives where the experience of Gethsemane took place (vv. 36-46). A great deal of the teaching material in the Johannine gospel is located in this walk from the upper room to Gethsemane.

II. Message

a. Preparations, Mt. 26:17-19

Mt. 26:17-19

17 On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" **18** He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, "The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" **19** So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

Mark 14:12-16

12 On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" **13** So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, **14** and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" **15** He will show you a large room

Luke 22:7-13

7 Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. **8** So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." **9** They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" **10** "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters **11** and say to the owner of the house, "The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where

17 Τῆ δὲ πρώτη τῶν ἀζύμων
προσηλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ τῷ
Ἰησοῦ λέγοντες Ποῦ θέλεις
ἐτοιμάσωμέν σοι φαγεῖν τὸ
πάσχα; 18 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν, Ὑπάγετε
εἰς τὴν πόλιν πρὸς τὸν δεῖνα
καὶ εἶπατε αὐτῷ, Ὁ
διδάσκαλος λέγει, Ὁ καιρὸς
μου ἐγγύς ἐστιν, πρὸς σὲ ποιῶ
τὸ πάσχα μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν
μου. 19 καὶ ἐποίησαν οἱ
μαθηταὶ ὡς συνέταξεν αὐτοῖς ὁ
Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τὸ
πάσχα.

upstairs, furnished and ready.
Make preparations for us there.”
16 So the disciples set out and
went to the city, and found
everything as he had told them;
and they prepared the Passover
meal.

12 Καὶ τῆ πρώτῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν
ἀζύμων, ὅτε τὸ πάσχα ἔθουον,
λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ
αὐτοῦ, Ποῦ θέλεις
ἀπελθόντες ἐτοιμάσωμεν ἵνα
φάγησθὸ πάσχα; 13 καὶ
ἀποστέλλει δύο τῶν μαθητῶν
αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς?,
Ὑπάγετε εἰς τὴν πόλιν, καὶ
ἀπαντήσῃ ὑμῖν
ἄνθρωπος κεράμιον
ὑδατος βαστάζων·
ἀκολουθήσατε αὐτῷ 14 καὶ
ὅπου ἐὰν εἰσέλθῃ εἶπατε τῷ
οἰκοδεσπότη ὅτι Ὁ
διδάσκαλος λέγει, Ποῦ ἐστιν τὸ
κατάλυμά μου ὅπου τὸ πάσχα
μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω;
15 καὶ αὐτὸς ὑμῖν δείξει
ἀνάγαιον μέγα ἐστρωμένον
ἕτοιμον· καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐτοιμάσατε
ἡμῖν. <14:16> καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ
μαθηταὶ καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὴν
πόλιν καὶ εὔρον καθὼς εἶπεν
αὐτοῖς καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα.

I may eat the Passover with my
disciples?” ‘ 12 He will show you
a large room upstairs, already
furnished. Make preparations for
us there.” 13 So they went and
found everything as he had told
them; and they prepared the
Passover meal.

7 Ἦλθεν δὲ ἡ ἡμέρα
τῶν ἀζύμων, ἐν ἣ ἔδει θύεσθαι
τὸ πάσχα· 8 καὶ ἀπέστειλεν
Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην εἰπών,
Πορευθέντες ἐτοιμάσατε ἡμῖν
τὸ πάσχα ἵνα φάγωμεν. 9 οἱ δὲ
εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ποῦ θέλεις
ἐτοιμάσωμεν; 10 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν
αὐτοῖς, Ἴδου εἰσελθόντων ὑμῶν
εἰς τὴν πόλιν συναντήσῃ ὑμῖν
ἄνθρωπος κεράμιον ὑδατος
βαστάζων· ἀκολουθήσατε
αὐτῷ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἰς ἣν
εἰσπορεύεται 11 καὶ ἐρεῖτε τῷ
οἰκοδεσπότη τῆς οἰκίας, Λέγει
σοι ὁ διδάσκαλος, Ποῦ ἐστιν
τὸ κατάλυμα ὅπου τὸ πάσχα
μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν μου φάγω; 12
κάκεῖνος ὑμῖν δείξει ἀνάγαιον
μέγα ἐστρωμένον· ἐκεῖ
ἐτοιμάσατε. 13 ἀπελθόντες δὲ
εὔρον καθὼς εἰρήκει αὐτοῖς
καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα.

Comments:

The Old Testament code prescribed that the Passover lambs were to be slaughtered on the afternoon of Nisan 14 ([Ex. 12:1-20](#)) and that the seven day festival began with the evening meal. The house where the meal was to be taken had to be thoroughly cleansed of all leaven, since it was forbidden during the seven day festival. By the beginning of the Christian era, Jewish practice had developed so that the Festival of Unleavened Bread had merged with the Passover celebration itself. Mark mentioned that the first day of unleavened bread began on the 14th of Nisan, which was technically incorrect but expressed the dominant pattern of cleansing the house a day early.

Additionally, first century Jewish custom dictated that the only appropriate place for observing the Passover was inside the city walls of Jerusalem. Thus, Jesus and his disciples followed this custom by having the meal inside the city of Jerusalem, rather than at the home of Mary and Martha in Bethany where they stayed at night -- something that would have been much more convenient and safer for Jesus.

In order to adequately prepare for Passover celebration, a devout Jew of that day had to do several things: (1) arrange for a place inside the city to eat the meal with family; (2) carefully search the room where the meal was to be held and remove any tiny piece of leaven (yeast) that might be present; (3) secure a certified lamb and have it ritually sacrificed by the priests at the temple; (4) roast the lamb meat

and prepare any other food items for the meal in the room designated for the Passover meal. The disciples carried out all these rituals in order to have the room appropriately prepared for the evening meal.

Notice that Matthew provides a brief account here in comparison to Mark and Luke. Matthew in writing to a Jewish Christian audience (early 70s) felt no need to provide elaborate detail about the process of preparing a Passover meal. But Mark (mid 60s) and Luke (mid 70s) are writing to non-Jewish Christian readers who had much less understanding of these Jewish customs. Luke followed his Marcan source very closely here.

What can we learn from this part of the scripture text? For the Jewish people the celebration of Passover was one of the central religious events during the year. It commemorated the defining moment of their beginnings as a people: the exodus from bondage in Egypt under Moses' leadership. Thus preparation for its observance was serious business.

What central points in our Christian calendar define us as believers in Christ? Perhaps Christmas and Easter more than any other. The challenge of this passage is the example of serious preparation for a most profound religious celebration. How much time and effort do you put into preparing for a profound spiritual experience in celebration Christmas and Easter?

b. Betrayal Predicted, Mt. 26:20-25

Mt. 26:20-25

20 When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; **21** and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." **22** And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" **23** He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. **24** The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." **25** Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

20 Ὁψίας δὲ γενομένης ἀνέκειτο μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα. **21** καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν εἶπεν, Ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με. **22** καὶ λυπούμενοι σφόδρα ἤρξαντο λέγειν αὐτῷ εἷς ἕκαστος, Μήτι ἐγώ εἰμι, κύριε; **23** ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν, Ὁ ἐμβάψας μετ' ἐμοῦ τὴν χεῖρα ἐν τῷ τρυβλίῳ οὗτός με παραδώσει. **24** ὁ μὲν υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου

Mark 14:17-21

17 When it was evening, he came with the twelve. **18** And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." **19** They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" **20** He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me. **21** For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

17 Καὶ ὀψίας γενομένης ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν δώδεκα. **18** καὶ ἀνακειμένων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐσθιόντων ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με ὁ ἐσθίων μετ' ἐμοῦ. **19** ἤρξαντο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ λέγειν αὐτῷ εἷς κατὰ εἷς, Μήτι ἐγώ; **20** ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Εἷς τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ ἐμβαπτόμενος μετ' ἐμοῦ εἷς τὸ τρυβλίον. **21** ὅτι ὁ μὲν υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑπάγει καθὼς

Luke 22:21-23

21 But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. **22** For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" **23** Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

21 πλὴν ἰδοὺ ἡ χεὶρ τοῦ παραδιδόντος με μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης· **22** ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς μὲν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατὰ τὸ ὀρισμένον πορεύεται πλὴν οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκεῖνῳ δι' οὗ παραδίδοται. **23** καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤρξαντο συζητεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς τὸ τίς ἄρα εἶη ἐξ αὐτῶν ὁ τοῦτο μέλλων πράσσειν.

ὑπάγει καθὼς γέγραπται περὶ
αὐτοῦ, οὐαὶ δὲ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ
ἐκεῖνῳ δι' οὗ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ
ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται· καλὸν
ἦν αὐτῷ εἰ οὐκ ἐγεννήθη ὁ
ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος. 25
ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ Ἰούδας ὁ
παραδιδούς αὐτὸν εἶπεν, Μήτι
ἐγὼ εἶμι, ῥαββί; λέγει αὐτῷ,
Σὺ εἶπας.

γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ, οὐαὶ δὲ
τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκεῖνῳ δι' οὗ ὁ
υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου
παραδίδοται καλὸν αὐτῷ εἰ
οὐκ ἐγεννήθη ὁ ἄνθρωπος
ἐκεῖνος.

Comments:

According to Mark, before the actual celebration of the meal, Jesus unloaded a bombshell on the disciples by predicting that one of them would betray him, and that this would lead to Jesus being executed. Matthew follows the Marcan text closely, but Luke sets up a somewhat different scenario. Luke places a lot more emphasis on the Passover meal celebration than do either Mark or Matthew. Also in Luke the prediction of betrayal comes after the dinner, rather than before it, as is presented in Mark and Matthew. Luke, evidently, follows a topical sequence rather than a chronological one as do Mark and Matthew.

Since in Jewish custom, sundown marked the beginning of a new day, the gathering of the disciples after dark meant they were observing the Passover custom of beginning the celebration with the ritual meal on Nisan 15 as prescribed in the OT code.

During the meal time Jesus unloaded his surprise about betrayal. The disciples' uniform reaction was not a soul-searching, but rather a protest by each that Jesus couldn't possibly be talking about them. Matthew pointedly adds the exchange between Jesus and Judas in verse 25 to highlight the fact that Jesus knew clearly that it would be Judas who would betray him. The reference to dipping the bread in the bowl provided no clear signal since the practice of dipping one's hardened piece of bread into a liquid sauce was a common meal time practice. And all of this would be done from a common bowl that everyone would be using. Quite interestingly, the eleven disciples address Jesus as "Lord" (κύριε) in verse 22, while Judas uses the Jewish term "Rabbi" (ῥαββί) in verse 25, which is more of an outsider address of Jesus.

The challenge of this passage is profound. Our initial response is to raise the question of how could someone who had spent so much time with Jesus and had worked so closely with him turn on him in betrayal? If Jesus already knew what Judas was going to do, why didn't he stop him? At best, why did he allow Judas to participate so intimately right up to the end?

The marvelous dynamic at work in this text is the affirmation that, although humans may act with harmful intent against others, the Divine will and power can work to use even that harm to bring about the Heavenly Father's desire. God has the marvelous ability to fulfill His desire even through the evil deeds of we humans. In spite of whatever may have driven Judas to betray Jesus (The views range all the way from greed to an honest effort to provoke Jesus to messianic action), God worked out His plan of redemption through these actions. That's the good news of these verses.

But one should quickly notice that this didn't relieve Judas of responsibility for his evil actions. Jesus indicated in his declaration that, for the betrayer, he would have been better off to never have been born. This was a powerful allusion to the eternal judgment of God that Judas would face when he stepped into eternity.

Judas stands as a powerful warning to us about the potential for evil that lurks inside of each of us. Even though we walk closely with Jesus, we still have the capability for evil that is mind boggling. If we take our eyes off the spiritual mission of God or attempt to take shortcuts to get spiritual things done, we can unleash this powerful evil force in our lives as well.

Even though the other disciples weren't the target of Jesus' prediction here, Peter would become the bullseye for Jesus' prediction of denial following the supper. With the arrest in Gethsamene later on during that night, the other disciples would turn in cowardly fear fleeing the authorities while Jesus was being taken

into custody. None of them would come away with clean hands.

c. Lord's Supper Instituted, Mt. 26:26-30

Mt. 26:26-30

26 While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." **27** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; **28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. **29** I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." **30** When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

26 Ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἄρτον καὶ εὐλογήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ δούς τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἶπεν, Λάβετε φάγετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. 27 καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων, Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες, 28 τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. 29 λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν, οὐ μὴ πῖω ἀπ' ἄρτι ἐκ τούτου τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ὅταν αὐτὸ πίνω μεθ' ὑμῶν καινὸν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου. 30 Καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸ Ὅρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν.

Mark 14:22-26

22 While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." **23** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. **24** He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. **25** Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." **26** When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

22 Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐλογήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν, Λάβετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. 23 καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. 24 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν. 25 ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐκέτι οὐ μὴ πῖω ἐκ τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ὅταν αὐτὸ πίνω καινὸν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ. 26 Καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸ Ὅρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν.

Luke 22:14-20

14 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. **15** He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; **16** for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." **17** Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; **18** for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **20** And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

14 Καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο ἡ ὥρα, ἀνέπεσεν καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι σὺν αὐτῷ. 15 καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς, Ἐπιθυμία ἐπεθύμησα τοῦτο τὸ πάσχα φαγεῖν μεθ' ὑμῶν πρὸ τοῦ με παθεῖν· 16 λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐ μὴ φάγω αὐτὸ ἕως ὅτου πληρωθῇ ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ. 17 καὶ δεξιόμενος ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας εἶπεν, Λάβετε τοῦτο καὶ διαμερίσατε εἰς ἑαυτούς· 18 λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν, [ὅτι] οὐ μὴ πῖω ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου ἕως οὗ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἔλθῃ.

19 καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων, Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. 20 καὶ τὸ

ποτήριον ὡσαύτως μετὰ τὸ
δειπνῆσαι, λέγων, Τοῦτο τὸ
ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ
αἵματί μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
ἐκχυννόμενον.

Comments:

The Lucan emphasis on the Passover meal helps us understand some of the sequence of events. The first part of the dinner was focused on the Jewish celebration of the Passover. Mark and Matthew largely skip over this part in order to focus in on the institution of the Lord's Supper.

The sequence is the bread, followed by the cup, followed (in Mark and Matthew but not in Luke) by Jesus' declaration that he would not eat and drink this until the end of the age. The unleavened bread represented Jesus' body and the cup of red wine his blood. These two meal items were part of the Passover items but Jesus gives them a new significance by associating them with himself in his impending execution. They were to become indicators of the redemptive accomplishment on Calvary. As Paul indicates, who by the way provides the first written account of this meal in [1 Cor. 11:23-26](#), early Christianity understood Jesus' actions to set up a pattern that was to be followed repeatedly by communities of faith. No set time of repetition is indicated; in fact, Paul expressed an open ended stance at that point with his statement "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup..." (v. 26).

For the disciples in the upper room that night, this must have had some ominous tones to it, since Jesus' words clearly pointed to his impending death. He had repeatedly tried to prepare them for this with predictions of his death in Jerusalem on three previous occasions, and now this dramatic visual aid pointed in the same direction. Yet, they would not grasp this until after the resurrection.

For Jesus, this commemorative meal would become a major teaching and worship point for his followers in future generations, just as the Passover meal and celebration was and continues to be for Jewish people. The Exodus marked the beginning of the nation Israel; Jesus' death and resurrection marks the beginning of the community of faith. Both with dramatic symbols of deliverance from slavery. The shedding of blood in both instances played a key role in that deliverance. Yet, the death of Jesus has deeper and more profound implications. Through his death, we find forgiveness of our sins and sinfulness as well as acceptance into the family of God. This deliverance is available to all humanity, not just the Jewish people.

Every time we gather at the Lord's table, there should be this deep reflexion on the significance of what we celebrate. With each celebration we anticipate a wonderful, grand supper that we will share around the Father's table when our Lord returns. [Rev. 19:1-10](#) has a picture of this great banquet in terms of an ancient Jewish wedding feast.