

**LESSONS ON PREDESTINATION #49**  
**"The Battle of the Cross" (Part Three)**  
(Scriptures from NKJV)

Luke 22:21, 22:

***"But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"***

John 13:18, 19:

***"I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He."***

**INTRODUCTION:** We are in the midst of the battle of the ages. It is between the Seed of the woman (Christ) and the seed of the serpent (Satan and his host). We are calling it "The Battle of the Cross." It is the central event involving the purpose as to why God created the world. The Bible makes no sense if we remove "Christ and Him crucified" from its contents. We are now entering the last week of Christ's earthly life as a man prior to His death on the cross. All of the participants are now arrayed in their battle armor and ready to do battle. This time-frame is known as the "Passion Week of our Lord." Jesus fully knows what is about to happen to Him and the order of events which will lead Him to His death on the cross. It is there He will die on the cross and endure the curse of God. He will suffer an equivalence of suffering equal to the suffering of the wicked in eternity.

At the same time, it has become apparent to Satan that he cannot succeed in getting Jesus to sin against the will of His Father, and come under the curse of the law. Thus, he devises a plot to bring about the death of Jesus upon the cross, thereby bringing about the curse of God upon Christ due to His being hanged upon a tree. Satan did not understand that God's purpose was to have Jesus cursed in order to bear the curse which was resting upon His elect or chosen seed. So Satan had one purpose for the cross, and God had another. Satan would put it in the minds of Judas, along with the Jewish and Roman rulers to carry out his plan. These were unknowingly carrying out Satan's will, and Satan and men were unknowingly carrying out God's will. The outcome of the battle will result in Satan's ultimate defeat. Also the outcome of the battle has in advance been rendered certain by the predestinating purpose of God. But while the outcome of the battle is certain, it is yet necessary for the battle to occur. Certainty does not rule out necessity!

We left off in the last lesson with the plot of Judas to betray Jesus, along with the Jewish leaders. I have provided a pictorial map (see attachment #2) taken from *The Thompson Chain Reference Bible* for those of you who are the immediate members of this class. We will follow the path of Jesus which will lead up to the cross.

## A. EVENTS OCCURRING IN THE PASSION WEEK

1. In Matthew 26:1-5, Jesus informs His disciples of His impending death. In verses 1 and 2 we read, ***"Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, 'You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.'"***

In verses 3-5, the Jewish plot is being formed. ***"Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. But they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.'"***

2. In verses 6-13, Jesus is anointed with oil by Mary of Bethany. This offends Judas, and he goes to the priest and agrees to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Cf. Verses 14-16 - ***"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?' And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him."*** It is here that we read of Satan putting it into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus. Cf. Luke 22:3,4 - ***"Then Satan entered Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who was numbered among the twelve. So he went his way and conferred with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him to them."*** Also, cf. John 13:2 - ***"And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him."*** NOTE: We are not told what Judas' motive was for betraying Jesus. We only note that when Judas saw that Jesus had been condemned to die, he was remorseful and went out and hanged himself. We can only speculate that he was trying to force the hand of Jesus to use His miraculous powers and set up the type of kingdom which Judas was expecting.

3. In verses 17-19, Jesus sends His disciples into the city of Jerusalem to prepare a place in which they may celebrate the Passover Feast. Follow the steps on your map marked number 1. They arrive in a building which has an upper banquet room and begin to partake of the Passover Feast. It is a point of note to see there is a point of distinction between the Passover meal and what will become the Lord's Supper. While they occur on the same night, they become two separate meals.

4. The order of events during the evening of the Passover.

a. Jesus partakes of the Passover with the Apostles, and rebukes their contention over wanting to be the greatest in the kingdom. (Luke 22:14-16; 24-30; Mark

14:17; Matthew 26:20) NOTE: While Jesus is engaging in the battle, the Apostles are engaging in the desires of the flesh.

b. Next, Jesus washes their feet (John 13:1-20). This is to display that the leading principle of greatness in the kingdom of heaven is humility and servanthood.

c. Next, Jesus identifies Judas as the traitor (Matthew 26:21-25 - ***"Now as they were eating, He said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.' And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, 'Lord, is it I?' He answered and said, 'He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.' Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, 'Rabbi, is it I?' He said to him, 'You have said it.'"*** Cf. Also Mark 14:18-21; Luke 22:21-23; John 13:21-29)

A brief explanation of Satan entering Judas is necessary at this point. **First**, in the Luke account, we read in verse 3, ***"Then Satan entered Judas."*** This time period occurs before they arrive at the upper room. **Second**, in John 13:2, we read, ***"And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him."*** This is referring to the time period before the upper room. **Third**, in John 13:26, 27, we are told, ***"Jesus answered, 'It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.' And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, 'What you do, do quickly.'"*** Here we clearly have a second time in which Satan entered Judas, or else the gospel accounts are in conflict. How is this to be reconciled? John MacArthur explains it this way:

The devil evidently gained direct control over Judas on two occasions: just before the betrayal was arranged (Luke 22:3), and now as it was about to be carried out." (MacArthur, *Commentary on John 12-31*, p. 80).

d. Next, Judas leaves, and Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20). It is here He explains the differences between the Passover feast and the Lord's Supper. The first was a memorial of when Israel, as a nation, was delivered from Egyptian bondage. The second was a New Covenant in which His new people would be delivered from the penalty of their sins. The bread would represent His body, or humanity. The cup would represent His shed blood, or death for the remission of sins. It is in the New Covenant that the way in which God could remain just, and yet show mercy to guilty sinners, is made clear, though neither Satan, nor the Apostles understood this until after the resurrection.

e. NOTE: John chapters 13 and 14 contain various discourses in the upper room.

f. Next, after the events in the upper room are over, they sing a hymn and make their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. On your map, follow the steps of the number 2 to the Garden. This is the same evening as the Passover feast. While on the way, Jesus reveals how they would all soon forsake Him. Peter denies that this would be true of him. Jesus replied that he would deny Him three times before the rooster crows (Matthew 26:34).

As they pass by the temple, Jesus gives His discourse on the vine and the branches. We are told that overhead of the temple's entrance was a huge stone emblem of a vine with a large cluster of grapes. This represented the land flowing with milk and honey which God had given to His people. Jesus could point to that and say, **"I am the Vine, you are the branches,"** meaning, "I am the fulfillment of the temple and all its purpose." This is recorded in John 15. In John 16, He warns of the impending persecution that is soon to fall upon them. (John 16:1-6). He informs them that He is going away from them, but will send another Helper or Comforter to be with them. This would be the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-32). In this discourse, He declares that what is about to happen to Him will bring about the judgment of Satan. John 16:11 - **"of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."** He also predicts His death and resurrection.

Somewhere along this path, Jesus prays what has become known as His High Priestly Intercessory Prayer for His people, composed of His immediate disciples, and future generations of believers. This is recorded in John 17. We are not told if this occurred in an audible way so as to be heard by His disciples or not. It is a marvelous prayer full of instruction about God and His eternal purpose to save His chosen people from their sins.

NOTE: How Jesus is predicting the events in advance of their occurrence. He knows them in advance, because He, as God, foreordained them in advance. These events are not occurring at random, but according to the foreordained purpose of God. The world is but a giant stage, and we are but actors carrying out our parts on that stage.

g. They now arrive at the Garden of Gethsemane. This is recorded in Matthew 26:30-56; Mark 14:26-52; Luke 22:39-53; and John 18:1,2. In John 18:1,2 we are told, **"When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with**

***His disciples.*** Upon entering the Garden, Jesus separates Himself from the disciples as a group, and takes Peter, James and John aside, and begins to enter into great agony and sorrow. He then separates Himself from the three and begins to pray.

Before we look at His prayers, let us review the elements which have put Him in this present position. Back in John 14:30 Jesus had said, ***"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me."*** What is meant by this statement? Jesus saw Satan coming in the persons of Judas, the Jewish leaders, and the Roman soldiers, who would shortly arrest Him in the Garden. Jesus has had a lifelong conflict with the Devil, and in a few hours this conflict would reach its climax. Satan has worked through the lives of wicked men to destroy Jesus by various means. Jesus now knows that the end is near.

It is now that the reality of the final battle is settling in on the humanity of Christ. As a man, He must do battle for His brethren of Adam's race. We read in Matthew 26:36-38 these words, ***"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, 'Sit here while I go and pray over there.' And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.'"*** Fear began to enter the soul and body of Jesus. This fear could better be described as horror. This is the man who had no fear of the winds or waves; -- no fear as to how to feed the multitudes; -- no fear in debating the Jewish scholars; -- no fear in casting out demons; -- and no fear of starving to death in the wilderness. What is it that can now be causing such agony in His entire Being?

The answer is given in the cup in which He must drink. He prays three times to have the cup removed if possible. In Matthew 26:39 we read, ***"He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.'"*** He would then break and visit His disciples, and return again to pray. He repeated this three times. The cup must be interpreted by our Lord's own use of the symbol as that of His approaching sacrificial death. (Matthew 20:22, 23). Also in John 18:11 we read, ***"So Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?'"*** His fear could not be due to His being unwilling to die, for we read in John 10:17, 18, ***"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*** The value of the Biblical account of His agony is in the evidence that it explains that He knew fully what the agony of the cross would mean when His soul would be made an

offering for sin. In Isaiah 53:10, it states of Christ that **"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand."** What is occurring in the Garden is but a preview of what would be occurring on the cross. It is probably about midnight at this time, and the disciples are weary and sleepy, and they eventually fall asleep.

Let us take this incident a step further. What was there about the cross that so overwhelmed Jesus. There were two things which were to occur there which would occur to no other man in dying by means of crucifixion. They were:

One: Jesus would become sin, not by having sin infused into His Being, but by having sin imputed to Him. In His death, God **"made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."** (II Corinthians 5:21). Hebrews 7:26 says, He **"is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."** We cannot begin to imagine how Jesus would feel when His holiness would become sinful, but let us give a crude comparison. Let us suppose there are two women; one a pure virgin and the other a prostitute, who has had sexual relations with hundreds of men. Let us suppose that both of these women were gang raped by a large number of men. While the same action occurred to both women, which woman would feel the most shame and defilement? Obviously, it would be the virgin. We may feel shame for our sins, but not like that of Christ when He became sin. Why? We have a nature that has dulled our sense of sin. Jesus possessed a sinless nature, which would be super-sensitive to sin. Let us not forget that it is our sins that caused Jesus to sense the shame and horror of becoming sin!

Two: Jesus would experience the Father hiding His face from the Son and forsaking Him because God cannot look on that which is sinful and unholy. In Habakkuk 1:13 we read, **"You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness."** Our Lord has never experienced such torment of soul ever before. Jesus prays three times for the cup to be removed, but each time He resigns Himself to the Father's will. Cf. Matthew 26:39, 42, 44.

h. Jesus prays for the possibility of the cup being removed in Matthew 26:39. In doing so, He is exhibiting the nature of what a true man would do in the face of sufferings. We are seeing here that Jesus was truly human. Matthew Henry best describes the issue before us:

He begs that this cup might **pass from him**, that is, that he might avoid the suffering now at hand; or, at least, that they might be shortened. This intimates no more than that he was really and truly Man, and as a Man he could not but be averse to pain and suffering. This is the first and simple act

of man's will--to start back from that which is sensibly grievous to us, and to desire the prevention and removal of it. The law of self-preservation is impressed upon the innocent nature of man, and rules there till overruled by some other law; therefore, Christ admitted and expressed a reluctance to suffer, to show that He was **"taken from among men,"** (Heb. 5:1), was touched with **"the feelings of our infirmities,"** (Heb. 4:15), and **"tempted as we are; yet without sin."** (Henry, *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 397).

If God can be glorified, man saved, and the ends of His purpose be achieved without His drinking of His bitter cup, He desires to be excused, otherwise He desires not to be set free from His assigned task. **"If this cup cannot pass away from me unless I drink it, Your will be done."** (Matthew 26:42). Christ's will and the Father's will are not adverse, but one.

After His first session in prayer, we read in the account in Luke 22:43, **"Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him."** This tells us that all the forces of hell are now present and involved in "hand to hand" combat. The Father sees best to send in reinforcements from the realm of the holy angels. He will not have this occur when He will soon be on the cross. There He will be suspended between heaven and earth and no one to comfort Him.

In Luke 22:44 we are given the intensity of His struggles. **"And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground."** Luke is a physician and records how the small capillaries burst from the strain occurring on His body. This would flow forth from His sweat glands. Our medical doctors call the process "he-ma-ti-dro-sis." It can be caused by fever, anger, or fear. William Hendriksen describes the scene in this way:

In connection with Christ's sweat becoming like thick drops of blood, it is natural that Luke as a physician would inquire into and record this occurrence of *hematidrosis*. It took place while Jesus, suffering intensely, was engaged in fervent prayer. It must be borne in mind that the human nature of Jesus was sinless, and therefore very sensitive. When these factors--extreme anguish, earnest supplication, unparalleled sensitivity--are combined, the resulting strain can easily cause subcutaneous capillaries to dilate to such an extent that they will burst. And when this happens, as it is almost bound to do, in the vicinity of sweat glands, blood and sweat will be exuded together. This can happen over a large part of the body. The thick drops or clots of blood, imparting a reddish color to the beads of perspiration, will then trickle down to the ground. (Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary of Luke*, p. 983).

This experience is what the writer of Hebrews, perhaps Paul, was referring to when he wrote in Hebrews 5:7,8 - **"Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him**

***from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."***

Notice that Jesus prayed aloud and lost His composure with tears. Have you ever seen a man cry aloud with uncontrollable tears? The disciples could have observed all of this had they remained awake. Jesus is taking blow after blow from His Satanic onslaughts. He falls to His knees, then onto the ground with His face, only to rise again and again as He is strengthened through His prayers. May the words of Philip Bliss' famous hymn impress upon the work of our Savior on our behalf.

*"Man of Sorrows!" What a name  
For the Son of God, who came  
Ruined sinners to reclaim!  
Hallelujah, what a Savior!*  
(Phillip P. Bliss)

In the prayers of Jesus, we learn the true motive of persevering prayer. It is not to get God to bend to our will, but to have our will bent to the submission of His will.

Well, time has expired, and we will not be able to cover the lessons which the disciples missed by failing to watch and pray.

Jesus now stands strong and faces the next work in the battle of the ages. He says to His disciples, ***"Are you still sleeping and resting? The hour has come: behold the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."*** (Matthew 29:45, 46). And immediately while He was still speaking, Judas appears with the Jewish leaders to arrest Him.

It has been a long eventful packed day and night in the life of Jesus, and a lot more must yet occur before the night is over.