

Luke 22:1-23

"A Plot Laid, A Payment Made"

For some time now we've been considering the final week in the life of our Lord. Ch 22 will bring us to the final *day*. By the time we reach Vs 7 we will be w/in 24 hrs of His trial, His torture & His execution/crucifixion. For now Luke draws our attention to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the time of Passover.

The occasion? The origin? It's found in Exodus Ch 12. Israel had been in bondage to Egypt for 400 yrs, their cry for deliverance had reached the throne of God Who raised up Moses to deliver them out of bondage & into the Promised Land. Through a series of various & sundry plagues God had been dealing w/Pharaoh concerning his need to let them go that they might serve Him freely rather than being in bondage to Egypt in cruelty. As you know the net effect of the plagues yielded a hardness in the Pharaoh's heart so that rather than release them he grew resolved to abuse them all the more.

In Exodus Ch 12 God speaks to Moses & says, "After I do what I'm preparing to do next Pharaoh *will* set Israel free. This day will be remembered *by you & the succeeding generations after you by a memorial feast.*" He said, "Speak to the congregation of Israel & tell them that on the 10th day of the month they're to take a lamb of the 1st year. Keep it for 4 days, inspecting it to ensure that it's w/out spot & w/out blemish & on the 14th day of the month at twilight they're all to take & kill their lamb. They're then to take some of the blood of the lamb & place it on the doorposts & the lintel of their homes in which they eat. They're to roast the lamb in the fire & eat it w/unleavened bread & bitter herbs." Then He said, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night & will strike all the 1st born in the land of Egypt, both man & beast; & against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord." Vs 13 says this, "Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt." Ex 12:13 Vs 14 Carries on, "So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance." Ex 12:14

For the last 1,500 yrs Israel had observed Passover & now it all begins to crescendo, it all culminates in Christ, the Lamb of God who would be slain so that we who abide under His blood would be (Passed over) spared the judgment of death (eternal separation from God) even as those who had the blood of the lamb over their lintel & doorposts were passed over & spared God's judgment.

Now, technically Passover & the Feast of Unleavened bread are 2 different occasions. But since they were back to back they were often times called & considered one great feast. Passover began on the 14th of Nisan & the Feast of unleavened bread began on the 15th & lasted 7 days. It was a great feast & it was filled w/great Messianic expectations.

Vs 1-2

It blows our minds to ponder the fact that the *chief priests* & the scribes would be guilty of committing history's greatest crime during Israel's holiest festival. Jesus had warned His disciples concerning the "leaven" of the Pharisees, which was hypocrisy & here it is on display. The religious leaders of the nation, prepared to murder the Son of God during this holy festival. Now, it's hypocrisy for them to put Christ to death anyway, it only magnifies it when placed against the backdrop of the Passover.

Initially they'd wanted to wait until Passover had passed, not out of reverence for the occasion but because so many people were in the city & the common people esteemed Jesus & if they were to take Jesus from the midst of the multitudes it could start a riot. But God had ordained that Christ would die on Passover. **In the volume of the book it's written of Him, Passover was only a foreshadow, the fulfillment was in Christ. The spilling of the blood of countless millions of lambs down through the centuries was all leading up to & would be fulfilled in the shedding of the blood of Christ.** We're reminded of the words of J.B. when seeing Jesus approaching him through the crowds he said, **"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29** As God's Lamb He would be slain, He would be sacrificed for the sin of the world on Passover.

The problem was that the religious leaders didn't know how to go about apprehending Him apart from the multitudes... They should've feared God, but instead they feared the people. There seemed to be a problem... the people. But being true to his nature, if you want to sin bad enough Satan will always furnish a solution so that you can do just that, notice.

Vs 3-6

Plot laid, payment made. You see the plot to kill Jesus was already put in motion, the problem was how to apprehend Him. The final piece of the puzzle was put in place when Judas went to them having decided to betray Him. Since Judas was 1 of the 12 he knew where Jesus was, when He was away from the crowds & he could give them their Guy w/out creating a scene. Thus the preparations are put in place to slay the Passover Lamb of God.

Now there are a few things to consider here. It's at this point that Judas really begins to surface as this diabolical/disturbed figure that ran tight, in the inner circle of our Lord's leaders. He stands out as an enigma of sorts & the bible doesn't give us a whole lot of details about him so it's probably not wise to offer a lot of conjecture. People wonder if he was ever saved, did he become disillusioned w/the Lord when he realized He wasn't going to overthrow Rome & be the political Messiah he was looking for.

How often people turn their back on Christ when having been around Him, looking for something from Him He doesn't fit their scheme of things & so they walk away... We know that Judas was used by Christ empowered to preach & perform miracles through Christ. Yet we also know that Jesus referred to him (John 6:70) as a devil (knowing that he would betray Him). In John 17:12 Jesus calls him the "Son of perdition" & in both Matt & Mark we read where Jesus said, *"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 never been born."*¹

Jesus chose him, spent all night in prayer before ordaining His disciples; was he ever saved??? At the very least I would say that He demonstrates how close one can come to Christ, even be involved in *ministry* & yet still never fully surrender & in the end be lost for *eternity*. People can come to church get involved, serve in leadership & still not be truly submitted & surrendered to Jesus. Make your calling & election sure, don't leave room for doubt.

Judas was a thief, he was motivated by money, the bible says that he was the group's treasurer & that he would pilfer from the moneybox.

So why would he betray Jesus? There seems to be motivation financially (we're told elsewhere in the scripture [Zech 11:12, Matt 26:15] that the purchase price for his betrayal was 30 pieces of silver). The purchase price of a common slave; which seems apropos seeing as how Jesus was the "SERVANT" or "SLAVE" of all. Didn't come to be served but to serve & give His life a ransom for many.

So there was motivation financially, there could've been motivation politically as I mentioned he may've grown disillusioned by the fact that Jesus didn't set out to conquer Rome. There was also motivation & persuasion *spiritually*. We read in Vs 3 that Satan entered him & then he went his way & sealed his deceitful/diabolical deal.

¹ The New King James Version. 1982 (Mk 14:21). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

However here's what we need to understand, be it through financial motivation or spiritual persuasion Judas was accountable for his decision. Satan will always seek to persuade you to forsake Christ or somehow come against Christ. But at the end of the day you can't say, "The devil made me do it." **We are all personally accountable for the decisions we make, if it's in your heart to honor Christ, the Holy Spirit will furnish the strength for you to do that. If it's not in your heart to honor Christ, Satan will provide the persuasion & the motivation (even a twisted sense of justification) for you to betray Him. But the choice, & the accountability comes back to you.**

Judas was at this point rejecting Jesus & Satan was right there to fan that & stoke that bitterness or resentment or whatever the case may be. Satan (who was a murderer from the beginning) couldn't wait to jump on the opportunity to murder the Son of God.

Of course it would only be to his own demise... perhaps being the great deceiver he may've actually deceived himself into believing that he could somehow conquer Christ.

But the cross stands as the ultimate example of how God is able to take & turn the things that the enemy has meant for evil & to destroy & use them as an object of His grace & for our good. From the surface we think, "What good could possibly come from the murder of the Son of God?" The truth is (however) that apart from the cross, the shed blood; death & resurrection of Christ we couldn't be saved. God took the single most diabolical deed of human history & turned it in such a way as to bring salvation to humanity. Can He redeem the hurts, the wrongs & the pains of your life? Absolutely. "How can He do that?" I have no idea, but you wait, you watch & you'll see. **If not shortly than in eternity; trust in the Lord w/all your heart & lean not on your own understanding. You love Him, have been called by Him therefore He has promised to work those things together for your eternal good & His eternal glory.**

Vs7-13

Just a couple of things I want to briefly note from this section. #1 Again people wonder if Jesus was exercising miraculous means to instruct His disciples as to the fact that they'd find a man, they were to follow the man, speak to the man etc. Or if it was a prearranged meeting; I suppose either way is possible I suspect the Lord had arranged it prior.

What caught my attention is the fact that Jesus sent only 2 disciples (Peter & John) & He gives them vague & ambiguous details at best, it's almost like a scene from a spy movie.

It's like, "When does the suitcase make the switch?" Now in all fairness a man carrying a pitcher of water would've been distinctive. That was typically a woman's work, if a man had water it would've normally been in an animal skin, generally the women drew the water & did that particular chore. **But it seems to me that the ambiguity is intentional because at this point Judas is looking for an opportunity to find the Lord secluded so as to set up the situation so that the chief priests can apprehend Him. So if Jesus just told them where they would be partaking of the Passover Judas may've set the sting in motion. Peter & John wouldn't even know where it was until the contact took them there personally.**

So don't think that you're the only one that Jesus doesn't reveal every detail to ☺. There are plenty of us in the boat of what seems to be uncertainty or ambiguity, but as things unfold the Lord will make those things increasingly clear.

What we want to highlight is found in Vs 13, "They found it just as He had said to them," When it comes to the word of God, such will always be the case, you will always find it exactly as Jesus said it would be. Heaven & earth will pass away, but the word of God will never by no means pass away, believe it, trust in it, respond affirmatively to it. You will find it just as He has said to you.

Vs 14-20

Here's a detail that you may or may not have noticed as you've read over the account of the Last Supper in times past. None of the gospel records mention a lamb as being present at this Passover meal. Why is that? Perhaps because it was like trying to find a turkey the day before Thanksgiving, it just wasn't going to happen. **But beyond that (more likely) it was because Jesus wanted it this way in order to emphasize the point that He was the fulfillment of Passover, He was the sacrifice who would shed His blood for the remission/forgiveness of our sin.**

Jesus says here, "W/fervent desire I've desired to eat this Passover w/you before I suffer." Why is that? Is it because this is His final farewell (so to speak) "this is goodbye" is that what He's saying? **I don't think so, it seems more to me that He's saying, "Guys this is it, this is the reason I've come, it culminates right here, right now as I institute this new covenant based not on the blood of the lamb but upon the blood of the Son of Man, the Lamb of God, My blood shed for you." This isn't an end so much as it is a beginning.**

Keep in mind that Judas is here for this, he can still repent, Jesus is still reaching out *to* him, loving *on* him.

He tells His disciples, "I won't celebrate this feast again until we're all together in the kingdom of God." Jesus is waiting for us, & when His church is gathered together in the kingdom (Rev 19:9) then we'll all celebrate & feast together in what the bible calls "The marriage supper of the Lamb."

Vs 19-20

We could spend some time on this but allow me to draw your attention to just a couple of things. 3 Things begin to surface as primary points of focus here. #1 Jesus didn't suffer or shed His blood for His sake, or any wrong that was w/in Him, no leaven or corruption in the bread speaks of the sinless body of Christ. His body was broken, His blood was shed (He says on both counts) "for you", for me. So when we partake of the Lord's supper we celebrate the fact that we (like the children of Israel in Ex 12) are exempt from God's judgment & spared from death through the body & the blood of J.C.

But the ironic thing is that in order for us to live, He had to die; what it would do *for* us it would do just the opposite *to* Him. Jesus wasn't spared God's judgment, Jesus wasn't spared God's wrath, Jesus wasn't spared the penalty of death, this supper meant for Him a sentence of death, the weight of God's wrath, being placed under the judgment of God for sins of the world...

So Jesus emphasized that what He did, He did *for you*. "This is my body given for you." The picture is found in the breaking of the bread, none of His bones were broken but His body was most definitely broken. *"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."*²

#1 What He did, He did for us, His broken body, His blood shed. #2 What we do in observing it we're to do in *remembrance of Him*. Both who He is, & what He's done on our behalf. Typically we highlight & celebrate someone's *birthday*, we don't even know when Jesus was born, but what He does call us to remember & celebrate is His death day! Why, because of the unjust cruelties poured out on Him? No, for the undeserved grace & mercy that is poured out upon us through His sacrifice on our behalf.

#3 Jesus is careful implement or institute this act as the ratification of a *new covenant*.

² The New King James Version. 1982 (Is 53:5-6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Think about how radical this is. What mere man would have the audacity to claim the authority to institute a new covenant that would be an agreement between God & all of mankind? But here Jesus says, “The 1st covenant was sealed in blood, the blood of the lamb. Even so the new covenant will be sealed in *My blood as of a Lamb w/out spot & w/out blemish.*” *A covenant not based on law but upon grace, that isn’t predicated in what you do but upon what I have done. No longer are you to look back & remember the lamb that delivered you from Egypt, but the Lamb that delivered you from the chains & the bondage of sin & the snare of death. Do this in remembrance of Me.*

Vs 21-23

You’ve heard me say before that often times we picture Judas as the “sinister” type that if portrayed in a silent film from the 1920’s he’d be the dastardly villain in a top hat & cape w/the handle bar mustache. However the fact of the matter is that he was loved, he was trusted, he was the ministry’s treasurer. When Jesus told him, “What you do, do quickly” the others thought he was being instructed to give something to the poor.

Judas was given every opportunity to repent. Perhaps you recall that before Jesus chose the 12 He spent all night (literally) in prayer. So it was definitely God’s will for him to be apart of the group. But not for the purpose of condemnation, but rather to be given a greater opportunity than nearly all of humanity for salvation, reconciliation & forgiveness; he had an opportunity to watch Jesus personally. He was able to observe Him closely, yet in the end he chose to reject Him, to betray Him & to condemn himself.

So to God gives to you & me the opportunity to repent, to turn to Christ & be saved by Christ but if we reject Him we condemn ourselves. The plot was laid, the payment was made; & we thank God that through Jesus the price was paid. He is the resurrection & the life we who believe in Him, though we may die, we shall live. And we who live and believe in Him shall never die. Do you believe this?”

Prayer Points:

Lord Jesus we believe it... We believe *in* You & we’re so thankful for the work accomplished *through* You that made for our salvation. You are the Lamb of God & You have taken away the sin of the world & we praise Your name. May our lives bring glory & honor *to* Your name. Have Your way in us, fill us, mold us & make us like You.

Jesus has taken away the sin of the world but the only way that truth is imputed to you is in Him. Apart from Christ we are still dead in trespasses & in sins. But in Christ we’re new creations, old things pass away & behold all things are made new. Jesus died that you might live, He bore God’s wrath that you might receive God’s grace. Why resist Him, why reject Him? Receive Him today...