

Luke 21:37-22:23

Chapter 21

Verses 37-38: *And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple, but at night He went out and stayed on the mountain called Olivet. Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear Him.*

--Jesus continues His teaching ministry in the temple day by day, knowing that His work and Word will go beyond the cross and the very end of the world. *No matter what is happening, His Word is essential.*

***Luke 13:33:** *Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.**

Chapter 22

Verses 1-6: *Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people.*

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. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.

--(1-2) In the beginning of this chapter, we are presented with two different preparations for the Passover. Satan's and Christ's.

--The religious leaders get together to brainstorm how to kill Jesus without the crowds knowing. Their desire to kill Him was longstanding: **Mk. 3:6; 11:18; 12:7, 12; Lk. 19:47-48; 20:19; Jn. 5:18; 7:1, 19, 25; 8:37, 40; 11:53.**

--(3-4) Judas is possessed by Satan himself, not only here, but also at the Passover meal after he accepts a piece of bread from Christ (**Jn. 13:27**).

--Judas' false religion forms a bond between himself and the enemies of Christ. Which is what all apostasy still does!

--(5) The agreement is for thirty pieces of silver (**Mt. 26:15**). Many commentators note how Judas sold his salvation and the religious leaders bought their damnation. *So many today are just as foolish in trading their eternal salvation for a few bucks!*

--(6) Judas is now looking for opportunities to betray Christ, but not publicly. Jesus still holds a measure of favor with the common people.

--How many so-called Christians today are decided on their sin, not convicted at all about it, but only worried that others might "see them" as the traitor they are? Beware! You are on Judas' path!

Verses 7-13: Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."

So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?"

And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready."

So they went and found it just as He said to them, and they prepared the Passover.

--They day has come for them to prepare and eat the Passover. Jesus sends Peter and John to make everything ready. *Was this all so that Judas wouldn't know where they were going?*

--Again, we see growth in the disciples. They go and find things just as Jesus had told them.

--It is also wonderful to see that Jesus knows where His disciples are in the world, what they are doing at any moment, and all the homes in which He is welcome. *Wouldn't you want Jesus to invite Himself to your house?!*

Verses 14-20: When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. The He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

--(14) **the hour**. . . Was that of the feast, and likely that of the killing of the lamb. There is much debate on whether Jesus or the religious leaders, who seem to have eaten the next day, ate on the correct day. I will not get into those details, and only say, I believe Jesus ate exactly when He was supposed to.

--There is also some debate as to what the Passover meal looked like culturally then. A basic breakdown looked something like this:

- 1) A prayer of thanks by the head of the household. The first cup of wine.
- 2) The bitter herbs are eaten as a reminder of slavery in Egypt.
- 3) A question is asked by a son: *Why is this night different from all other nights?* Followed by the father's reply.
- 4) The singing of Psalms 113-114. The second cup of wine.
- 5) The eating of the lamb and unleavened bread.
- 6) Continuation of the meal, finishing with lamb last. The third cup of wine.

7) Singing of Psalms 115-118. The fourth cup of wine.

--(15) Jesus expresses His deep desire to eat this particular Passover meal with them. He is thinking of them, and thinking of His suffering.

Luke 12:49-50: *I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!*

--This would be His last Passover, and first Communion.

--(16) Jesus speaks of no longer eating this meal—Passover. He also knows that He is changing the feast into the churches current Communion, a memorial of remembrance concerning His work on the cross.

1 Corinthians 5:7: *For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

--What will it mean for this feast to be ***fulfilled in the kingdom of God?***

--The Jew celebrated the Passover looking forward to the Messiah. The Church celebrated communion looking back at the Lamb of God, and forward to His coming. What will all faithful Jews and Christians celebrate in the kingdom of God at the return of Christ? This meal ***fulfilled***—changed once more into something new, properly fitting for the age of glory in the millennial kingdom of God on earth.

--(17-18) Jesus is beginning the meal by passing around this first cup of thanksgiving. The disciples either each take a sip, or pour some into each of their cups.

--Each time Jesus takes, explains, and dispenses. He is the Giver, they are the receivers.

--Again, Jesus promises that He will drink with us in the future version of the fulfilled celebration of this feast.

1 Corinthians 11:26: *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

--(19-20) Sadly, this wonderful memorial of remembrance given to Jesus' disciples has become such a divisive force in the body of Christ! *Of course it would be something Satan would attack!*

--Note, in **1 Corinthians 10-11**, Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for taking communion wrong, and it has nothing to do with the "process": wrong type of bread, wrong type of liquid, wrong usage of people/priest, etc.

--It was their personal character in contrast with their remembrance—their idolatry, drunkenness, selfishness, and unjudged and unrepentant personal hearts.

--Satan is good at making us focus on the wrong thing—particularly the externals that the Bible has nothing to say about.

--Even so, since this meal, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, there has been some group of Christians, somewhere in the world, remembering the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

--What do we see?

--Jesus takes, breaks, gives, explains, and then commands. . . and then does likewise with the cup.

--1) Jesus takes, breaks, and gives:

--The bread and cup are *given* by Jesus Christ and *received* by His disciples. The reception becomes an act of faith. It is an acceptance of what Christ has done on our behalf. *Similarly, we don't baptize ourselves; we are passive and get baptized.*

--The disciples simply needed to *believe* what He said. *This was the most ignorant of all communion services! They had no idea what was going on, and still it pleased Jesus.*

--2) Jesus explains:

--The bread and the cup are distinct. ***This is my body which is given for you. . . This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.*** In each case, something was given for them.

--(Side note: The cup was likely the third cup of blessing as is referenced in **1 Cor. 10:16**. We see it was given ***after supper***, as is also referenced in **1 Cor. 11:25**.)

--Jesus is establishing the new covenant, and every covenant has some symbolic act attached to it. Here, Jesus extends bread, and a cup.

1 Corinthians 10:16: *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

--Notice they touch both the bread and the cup without getting their hands slapped!

--How do we commune with the body and blood of Christ? We remember His explanation—we receive the elements as if Jesus put them into our hands and looks us each in the face and says:

This is my body which is given for you. . . My blood, which is shed for you. Do this in remembrance of Me. *This is why it is sometimes called “Holy Communion.”*

--We are to believe that Jesus' blood has established the new covenant spoken of by the prophets (**Jer. 31:33-34**) to which you and I are now grafted into as Gentiles (**Rom. 11**).

--3) Jesus commands:

--***Do this in remembrance of Me!*** The language gives us the sense of an ongoing practice: *Keep on doing this.*

--The key is our celebration of this memorial feast, just as the Jews kept on celebrating and remembering Passover. There was only one real Passover, as there was only one real death of Christ on the cross, and the rest are memorial celebrations of remembrance.

Exodus 12:14: *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.*

--Clearly, Jesus did not expect the disciples to literally eat His body and drink His blood. Jesus used figurative language regularly: **Mk. 8:15**: leaven of Pharisees and Herod; **Jn. 2:19**: Destroy this temple (speaking of His body); **Jn. 3:3**: born again; **Jn. 11:11**: Lazarus sleeps; He calls Himself the vine; door; cornerstone; Lamp; fountain; rock; etc.

--The Catholic doctrine concerning communion is unbiblical and has done much harm!

*Stott (The Cross of Christ): *“There are three particularly obnoxious elements in these statements of the Council of Trent and subsequent papal encyclicals, which need to be clarified. The implications are that the sacrifice of the mass, being a daily though unbloody immolation of Christ, (1) is distinct from his “bloody” sacrifice on the cross, and supplementary to it, (2) is made by human priests and (3) is “truly propitiatory.” By contrast, the Reformers insisted, as we must, that the sacrifice of Christ (1) took place once for all on the cross (so that human beings cannot be reenacted or supplemented in any way), (2) was made by himself (so that human beings cannot make it or share in making it), and (3) was a perfect satisfaction for sin (so that any mention of additional propitiatory sacrifices is gravely derogatory to it).”**

Verses 21-23: “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!”

Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

--(21) In the middle of this pivotal moment, Jesus publicly acknowledges a traitor in their midst. He has allowed Judas’ deception to go on for some time, but now the time has come to unmask the evil by a direct confrontation.

--Many commentators outright deny Jesus’ toleration of a traitor at the first communion! It is hard for them to imagine. Still, the Scriptures clearly place Judas at **the table** with the rest, taking bread from Jesus’ hand (**Jn. 13:26**), and after accepting, being possessed by Satan once again and leaving the meal (**Jn. 13:27-30**).

--Where he left the meal is a matter of debate, but clearly, he was there eating the Passover with Jesus and the rest of the disciples. Isn’t there a Judas still present at most communions? It was important for us to see this Judas at Jesus’ table so that you and I are not shocked when we find Judas at our communion tables!

--Even so, nothing of Jesus’ purpose was stopped, and none of the other disciples missed out on God’s purpose for them.

--(22) Who was worse off? Only Judas himself!

***Acts 2:23: Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. . . ***

*Lewis (The Problem of Pain, pg. 111): *“For you will certainly carry out God’s purpose, however you act, but it makes a difference to you whether you serve like Judas or like John.”**

--Will we serve God like tools or like sons and daughters? For God has determined to use all who work against Him as tools for His own glory, and then to judge them for their stubbornness, evil, and rebellion.

--**But woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!** Jesus never exaggerates or lies. His warnings are acts of love. Judas rejected the Word of God in the flesh.

--(23) It is important for us to see their sincerity and ignorance.

--First, their sincerity, because they knew they were fallible and imperfect men capable of failing their Lord. These were regular men just like us! *They were flesh and bone with dirty feet, making the sounds men make while eating, and likely having something stuck in their beards!*

--Second, it is important for us to see their ignorance. The work of the enemy will not always be visible or discoverable to us, no matter how many precautions we take. Even so, Christ knows, and He is in control. *What is not clear to us is still controlled by Him!*