



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

## New Testament Survey

### Lesson 14 – Jesus on Maundy Thursday

#### Wednesday and Thursday of Holy Week

On Wednesday of Holy Week Jesus apparently did not make His usual trip to Jerusalem from Bethany. He no doubt stayed in Bethany and rested in preparation for the events of the next two days. The disciples had heard Jesus say He would be crucified on Friday. It must have been a rather sad group gathered in Bethany on that day.

The Thursday of Holy Week is called Maundy Thursday. This strange name probably comes from the Latin word *mandare* which means “to command.” It was on Maundy Thursday that Jesus gave a new commandment to His disciples: “**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another**” (John 13:34).

This Thursday was the day for the eating of the Passover lamb. Jesus sent Peter and John to Jerusalem to prepare for this meal. Jesus and His disciples then ate the Passover in a large upper room, concerning which Judas had no advance information. As Jesus for the last time celebrated the Passover with His disciples, He warned Judas for the last time and then instituted a new meal, which we call the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion. Judas had no doubt by this time already gone out to carry out his horrible plan, although there are some Bible students who believe he was still present at the Lord’s Supper, partaking of it to his own harm.

After the meal Jesus talked to His disciples at length, warning them of what was to come, encouraging them to continue to follow Him and His teachings, and promising the coming of the Holy Spirit. These are very wonderful words of comfort coming from the mouth of Jesus, recorded for us in the Gospel of John (chapters 14-16). Jesus then prayed what has been called His High Priestly Prayer (John 17).

Later that same night Jesus and His disciples left the upper room and walked on the road to the Mount of Olives. They crossed the Kidron Creek and entered the Garden of Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed in great sorrow: “**O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will**” (Matthew 26:39). From this prayer we can begin to understand what it meant for Jesus as the Lamb of God to be burdened with the sin of the world and to be punished for it by God.

Then came Judas and the soldiers and servants. We see the betrayer’s kiss. We see our Lord and Savior arrested and tied up like a common criminal and led away to face the Jewish authorities. Remember that Jesus was put into this situation by our sin, and that He was willing to drink this bitter cup of suffering because of His love for us sinners.

Read the listed passages as you study each of the events below:

***The plot*** (Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16; Mark 14:1-2, 10-11; Luke 22:1-6; John 13:1)

Notice how the devil, man's worst enemy, uses one of Jesus' own disciples together with the leaders of the people and the high priest in order to put Jesus to death. But Jesus knew what was going on. All that Satan accomplished by his murderous plans was his own defeat, for the suffering and death of Jesus destroyed Satan's power:

**"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage"** (Hebrews 2:14-15).

***The Passover*** (Matthew 26:17-20; Mark 14:12-17; Luke 22:7-17)

The first Passover lambs were killed in connection with the tenth plague in Egypt, the killing of the firstborn in Egypt. The blood of the Passover lambs saved the Israelites from death. Jesus is our Passover Lamb, whom we "eat" by trusting in His saving blood. **"For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us"** (1 Corinthians 5:7). Martin Luther's hymn says: "Here the true Paschal Lamb we see, Whom God so freely gave us; He died on the accursed tree – So strong His love! – to save us. See, His blood doth mark our door; Faith points to it, Death passes o'er, And Satan cannot harm us. Hallelujah!"

***Jesus washes the disciples' feet*** (Luke 22:24-30; John 13:2-20)

There was a quarrel among the disciples as to who was best, possibly in connection with the seating arrangement at the Passover feast. Jesus gave them a lesson in humility: He washed their feet as their servant. Jesus said they should serve one another in the same way.

Jesus hints that one of His own disciples will betray Him when He said that not all of them were clean (John 13:10-11). He wants His disciples to know that He knows all the evils that are going to happen to Him ahead of time.

***"Is it I?"*** (Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21; Luke 22:21-23; John 13:21-32)

According to a Bible scholar named Alfred Edersheim, the seating arrangement was probably around a U-shaped table, with Jesus on one side of the table, John at His right, Judas at His left, with Peter sitting opposite from them.

Jesus said plainly that one of them would betray Him, and that the one who betrays Him should never have been born! Jesus told both John and Judas who it was, but Judas went out into the night without anyone suspecting it was him.

After Judas left the room, Jesus said: **"Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately"** (John 13:31-32). This showed that Jesus was looking beyond His coming suffering to the glorious result that would follow: His own resurrection, the

forgiveness of sins He won for the whole world, and the fruit of Christians throughout the world trusting in His sacrifice and living Christian lives to the glory of God.

***The Lord's Supper*** (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

Jesus gave His disciples some unleavened bread to eat and some grape wine to drink. As He gave them the bread, He said: **"Take, eat; this is My body"** (Matthew 26:26). As He gave them the wine, He said: **"This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins"** (Matthew 26:28). Jesus told His disciples to repeat this meal over and over again in memory of Him. Thus, Jesus still gives us His body and His blood for the forgiveness of our sins in this Sacrament. And this He can do because of His death in our place on the very next day.

***Jesus warns Peter*** (Luke 22:31-38; John 13:33-38)

Jesus warns all His disciples about the troubles that lie ahead. Even though they will face troubles, Jesus gives tell them: Love each other!

Jesus gives a special warning to Peter, who boasted that he loved the Lord more than the others. Satan wants you, Peter, to disown your Lord, and you will, this very night!

***"I am going away."*** (John 14:1-31)

Among Jesus' comforting words: **"I go to prepare a place for you ... that where I am, there you may be also"** (vv. 2-3). **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"** (v. 6). **"Because I live, you will live also"** (v. 19).

**"The Holy Spirit ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"** (vv. 26-27).

***The vine and the branch*** (John 15:1-27)

Jesus' comforting words continue: **"I am the vine, you are the branches. ... Without Me you can do nothing"** (v. 5). **"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit"** (v. 16). **"The Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father ... will testify of Me"** (v. 26).

***Sorrow will turn into joy*** (John 16:1-33)

Jesus' comforting words continue: **"The Spirit of truth ... will guide you into all truth"** (v. 13). **"You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy"** (v. 20). **"Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you"** (v. 23). **"In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world"** (v. 33).

***Jesus prays the High Priestly Prayer*** (John 17:1-26)

Jesus prays for Himself, then for His disciples, and then for all believers of all time.

Excerpts: **“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”** (v. 3). **“O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was”** (v. 5). **“The world has hated them because they are not of the world”** (v. 14). **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth”** (v. 17). **“I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me”** (v. 24).

**“You will deny Me”** (Matthew 26:30-35; Mark 14:26-31; John 18:1)

Jesus told His disciples that all of them would turn against Him on that night. But Jesus reminded His disciples more than once that He would rise again. Peter boasted of his loyalty to the Lord, and so did His other disciples. But later they all forsook Him and fled.

**Gethsemane** (Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46; John 18:1)

Jesus took His disciples across the Kidron Creek to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He often went with His disciples. Leaving eight of His disciples behind, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him to watch and pray with Him. But as He prayed, they fell asleep. Three times Jesus asked His Father to remove the horrible cup of suffering from Him, but only if it was His Father’s will. Do you think it was easy for Jesus to be our Savior and to be punished for all human sin? God was able to remove this cup, but He was not willing to do so, for it was God’s eternal plan to save the human race from sin and death through the suffering and death of His Son Jesus, and so there was no other way. Hebrews 5:7 tell us that Jesus **“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.”** Jesus’ prayer was heard, but the Father’s answer was not to take the cup from Him, but only to strengthen Him through a visit from an angel.

In our own struggles we should pray as Jesus prayed: **“Not My will, but Yours, be done”** (Luke 22:42).

**Judas betrays Jesus** (Matthew 26:47-50; Mark 14:43-45; Luke 22:46-48; John 18:2-9)

**The arrest** (Matthew 26:50-57; Mark 14:46-53; Luke 22:49-54; John 18:10-14)

Jesus showed His power one last time when they all fell backward to the ground at His voice. Because He chose not to use His power, we see that Jesus willingly gave Himself into their hands. Remember that Jesus did all of this for us.

## Questions

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1. How did the devil contribute to his own defeat?
2. Why was it important for Jesus to suffer and die during Passover time?
3. In what ways is it true that Jesus is our Passover?
4. What did Jesus teach His disciples by washing their feet?
5. How can we be sure that Jesus did all that He could to save Judas Iscariot?
6. How do we know Jesus wants us to observe the Lord’s Supper today?
7. Summarize what Jesus told His disciples about the Holy Spirit (John chapters 14-16).

8. When was the sorrow of the disciples turned into joy?
9. What does the scene in Gethsemane reveal to us about Jesus?
10. What evidence shows that Jesus willingly gave Himself up?