

**Wednesday (Matt. 26:1-5; 14-16; Mk. 14:1-2; 10, 11; Lk. 21:37-22-6)**

**21:37 Now during the day He was teaching in the temple, but at evening He would go out and spend the night on the mount that is called Olivet.**

**21:38 And all the people would get up early in the morning to come to Him in the temple to listen to Him.**

**22:1 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching.**

The Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover were originally separate festivals, but since unleavened bread was used in both, the two blended into one celebration and “the Feast of Unleavened Bread” came to be a Hebraism for Passover (see Exo. 23:15; 34:18; Deut. 16:16; 2 Chr. 8:13, etc.). In preparation for the celebration, the Jews were to remove all the yeast from their houses on 14 Nisan (March/April), the day before Passover, and then not use yeast for a week, from 15 Nisan to 21 Nisan. “In popular parlance, the entire period, including the sacrificial rite, was called the Passover” (Danker, 342). Paul even puts the two festivals together in making a spiritual analogy; in 1 Corinthians 5:7 he says, “Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.”

Both celebrations were related to the Exodus. Passover was to remember how God had spared the firstborn of Israel through the blood of a sacrificial lamb, while the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to commemorate the Jews’ hasty departure from Egypt when there was no time to let the bread dough rise.

**22:2 The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.**

The Sanhedrin was afraid of the influence that Jesus was having over the people and how the people would respond if they tried to dispose of Him (the imperfect tense “were afraid” indicates that it was a standing fear). Furthermore, the presence of Rome was heightened during festivals and any sign of insurrection would be met with an immediate and brutal response.

**22:3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.**

**22:4 And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers<sup>1</sup> how he might betray Him to them.**

**22:5 They were glad and agreed to give him money.**

**22:6 So he consented, and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.**

Jesus knew that the forces of darkness had been set in motion that would lead to His crucifixion. In Luke 18:31-33 Jesus told the disciples, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon, and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him; and the third day He will rise again.” In 22:3, “Luke wants his public to know that the events

which follow are to be seen in cosmic dimensions as a contest between demonic forces and God” (cf. Jn. 13:2; 1 Cor. 2:8; Danker, 342); thus he begins with the words, “and Satan entered into Judas. . .”

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, we were told that Satan left Jesus “until an opportune time” (Lk. 4:13); in Luke 22:3 we see that that opportune time has come; “Satan entered Judas (v.3), and Judas left Jesus (v. 4). A more disastrous exchange cannot be imagined” (Edwards 619, 620).

Judas was one of the twelve apostles that Jesus had personally chosen and who had been with Jesus during His entire public ministry. He, along with the other apostles, was sent out by Jesus to proclaim the gospel, cast out demons, and perform miracles in Jesus’ name (Lk. 9:1,2; compare to Matt. 7:21-23). He had been entrusted with the moneybag for the whole group (Jn. 13:29). He was close enough to Jesus at the Last Supper to be dipping bread with Him in the same bowl (Mark 14:20). Jesus had washed his feet (Jn. 13:5). At the Last Supper when Jesus said, “one of you will betray Me,” the disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking (Jn. 13:21-22). In other words, Judas looked so much like the rest of the disciples they couldn’t imagine who it was that Jesus was talking about. All these things and the fact that Judas could betray Jesus with a kiss show that he was treated as a close companion by the Lord.

Nevertheless, Jesus was aware of what was in his heart. In John 6:70-71 He spoke of Judas as a devil (or, adversary). John 12:6 says that he was a thief. When Judas complained that Mary had wasted money in anointing Jesus, John comments, “He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.” In John 13:10-11 when Jesus was explaining the symbolism of footwashing He said, “you are clean (saved), but not all of you.” Then John explains why he said that: “For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, ‘Not all of you are clean (saved).’” So when we read that “Satan entered into Judas” (Lk. 22:3) we need to realize that Judas was not an innocent bystander, an unwilling victim of Satan. Rather, Judas had already been walking in step with the evil one and was responsible for his own moral guilt. *He* (not Satan) was the one who sought out the hostile party. *He* was the one who didn’t repent after making a deal with the religious leaders even though he had time to do so. *He* was the one who looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus when the crowd wasn’t present. Jesus had repeatedly warned his disciples about the dangers of loving wealth and about the need to be careful lest they fall into temptation. Judas ignored His warnings. Even though Judas was a tool in Satan’s hand, he will be held accountable for *his* compliance with Satan’s desires since he wanted what Satan wanted.

“Judas is free to choose evil, but he cannot determine the consequences of the evil he chooses. We do not know what Judas hoped to accomplish in the betrayal of Jesus, but we do know how the sovereignty of God used his betrayal” (Edwards, 619); the Messiah *must suffer*, be killed, and rise from the dead on the third day (Mk. 8:31), and “repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem” (Lk.24:46-47). Judas’ actions did not thwart the plan of God; they accomplished it. Jesus knew what would happen. In Matthew 26:31, Jesus quoting Zechariah 13:7 said, (God) “will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.” In John 13:18 Jesus cited Psalm 41:9 in referring to Judas’ betrayal: “the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted

his heel against me.” And in Matthew 26:24 Jesus said, “The Son of Man goes as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!” In speaking of the betrayal money Matthew 26:15 says, “they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him.” Even this was part of God’s plan and was predicted in Zechariah 11:12; the price reveals how worthless Judas thought Jesus was – according to Exodus 21:32, thirty pieces of silver was the compensation for the death of a slave gored to death by someone else’s ox: Jesus was worth no more than the price of a slave to Judas.

“This corresponds to something deep in the New Testament conviction, that the betrayal of Jesus was not something accidental, that might easily have been different, but something rooted in the whole history of man’s grudging disobedience of God” (Cunliffe-Jones; A Word for our Time? Zechariah 9-14, the New Testament and Today). As Acts 2:23 says, “this Man, *delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you* nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.”

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> The officers mentioned in 22:4 were the temple guard. Although their duties are not fully known, they stood second to the chief priest in rank and looked over the chief priests when they read the Scripture and offered sacrifices. The captain of the temple guard was in charge of temple security.