



The Gospel of Luke - Chapter Twenty Two

Summary of Chapter Twenty Two

Satan enters Judas who agrees to betray Jesus to the authorities in return for money.

Here we have a brief description of the preparation and events of the Last Supper and the institution of Communion that comes from it. During the supper, a dispute breaks out again between the disciples about who would be greatest between them; and Jesus prophesies Peter's denial of him.

They move out to the Mount of Olives, where Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, before being betrayed by the kiss and then arrested. A disciple cuts off the ear of a servant of the priest and Jesus immediately heals that servant.

Jesus is taken to the house of the High Priest, where Peter, in fear of his own safety, denies even knowing Jesus; this is what Jesus had prophesied during the supper earlier on.

Jesus is mocked and abused by his guards before being taken before the Sanhedrin at day break. He is then questioned about his origin and Jesus confirms he is the Son of God, which the priests hold as proof of his blasphemy.

VII. Luke 22:1-23:56 - The Suffering and Death of Jesus

As the time of Jesus' death draws near Luke's focus shifts from the temple to the broader city of Jerusalem and from the teachings of Jesus to increasingly fast-moving events.

VII.a Luke 22:1-38 - The plot to kill Jesus and the Passover meal

As Jesus has his last meal with his disciples, he once again discusses with them his approaching death. Meanwhile plans are set in motion against him.

VII.a.i Luke 22:1-6 - Judas agrees to betray Jesus

As the people gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, some of their leaders plotted in secret to kill Jesus. In reality, it was Satan who attempted the downfall of Jesus at this time, but he only succeeded in helping to provide the only solution to eternal salvation. That Jesus was betrayed by a supposed friend indicates some of the dangers to his church that may lie

within rather than it only being external attacks that are of consequence. Satan will attempt to gain control of believers in order to attack the church through any means.

¹ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching,

Luke 22:1

The Feast of Unleavened Bread spanned Nisan 15-21, the first month in the Jewish calendar, i.e. March/April, and its observance is a requirement of Jewish Law as stated in Leviticus 23:5-6 <<The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast>>.

Preparations for this Passover were made on Thursday afternoon, Nisan 14. Jesus and the disciples ate the Passover meal after sundown on Thursday evening, now Nisan 15, with Jesus instituting the Lord's Supper during the evening. Jesus was crucified the following day, i.e. Friday, which was still Nisan 15.

The first day of Unleavened Bread could refer either to Nisan 14 or Nisan 15, according to Jewish reckoning in the NT era and Passover lambs were apparently killed on both days, but the Gospels refer to Thursday Nisan 14 for the preparation of the Last Supper. That same evening, which was Nisan 15 as the Jewish day starts at sunset, was the time they ate the Last Supper.

The Passover lamb had to be eaten within the walls of Jerusalem. Preparations for the meal had to be made inconspicuously as Jesus is already a marked target.

There were many feasts of the Lord, appointed by the ceremonial law. In particular, there were three feasts that God had commanded that all men must attend: 'The Feast of Unleavened Bread', which commences with the Passover; 'The Feast of Weeks' or Pentecost; and 'The Feast of Tabernacles' or Booths, which signifies God caring for his people in the desert. But the Passover was considered the most important of them all. It began all the feasts on the night when the Angel of Death passed over the House of Israel but killed all the first born of Egypt and prompted the captives release from enslavement in that land; it concluded all the feasts on the night when the Christ was betrayed.

Passover was the opening day feast, which was then followed by the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, making it an eight day feast in total. It started and finished with a holy convocation and would usually have a further Sabbath congregation as well.

² and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Luke 22:2

As stated on other occasions, the chief priests were not the High Priests but senior members of that extended family group. They were no doubt members of the Sanhedrin and were probably Sadducees.

Teachers of the law were also called scribes as previously discussed.

Were looking for some way shows that their verdict about Jesus is already decided; whether through their own determination to be rid of him or because God had hardened their hearts we cannot tell. The only remaining issue is how to get rid of him. This comes as no surprise to us for

we have already noted: <<Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words>> (Luke 19:47-48).

They were afraid of the people because many had started to believe in Jesus and were starting to question what was being taught to them by their religious leaders.

³ Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.

Luke 22:3

Judas, called Iscariot, had never truly believed in Jesus and Jesus was aware of this, probably since before the creation of the world. Although Peter was referring to Jesus in the following passage, its sentiment can probably be applied to all people in God's divine plan: <<He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake>> (1 Peter 1:20). We see this in: <<Yet there are some of you who do not believe. For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him>> (John 6:64), and: <<Then Jesus replied, Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil! (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him)>> (John 6:70-71).

Although apparently none of his other disciples realised it, as Judas was still part of their group and his outward behaviour apparently did not give him away. Judas' pattern of dishonest behaviour was evidence of his unbelief for, as John 12:6 puts it: <<He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it>>. This is not the action of a true believer.

But here with the consent of his sinful heart Satan entered into him and thereby he exercises much greater influence over his actions, prompting him to go to the chief priests with a plot (v.4). John mentions that Satan entered into Judas again at the time of the Last Supper: <<As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. What you are about to do, do quickly, Jesus told him>> (John 13:27).

⁴ And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. ⁵ They were delighted and agreed to give him money. ⁶ He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

Luke 22:4-6

Officers of the temple guard were leaders of the temple police and were Jews, not Romans. This is confirmed in v.52 <<Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs?>>, in Acts 4:1 <<The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people>>, and in Acts 5:24 <<On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled, wondering what would come of this>>.

How he might betray Jesus. Judas planned that Jesus would be seized apart from the crowd. As confirmed in v.53 <<Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour – when darkness reigns>>.

The Jewish authorities had issued orders seeking the inconspicuous arrest of Jesus: <<But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he should report it so that they might arrest him>> (John 11:57). Judas Iscariot could help them because he was one of the Twelve and would be able to tell them where Jesus could be found, thus fulfilling Psalm 41:9 <<Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me>>, which he would do when there were no crowds present. Judas is to identify Jesus to his opponents by night. Without modern lighting systems finding and identifying someone at night would be a difficult task.

Mark, like Luke, is more general in his report than Matthew and simply says Judas was given money in exchange for betraying Jesus but Matthew records the exact amount: <<thirty silver coins>> (Matthew 26:15b). In the OT, this was the price of a slave accidentally gored to death by an ox, recorded in Exodus 21:32 and was equivalent to about four months' wages. It also fulfilled the prophecy given about 500 years before Jesus' time on earth: <<So they paid me thirty pieces of silver>> (Zechariah 11:12).

VII.a.ii [Luke 22:7-38 - The Last Supper](#)

As with the donkey's colt in Luke 19:30, Jesus' foreknowledge of the man carrying the water and the upper room bear testimony to his divinity; he could just as easily have given directions to Peter and John to the house where he would celebrate the Passover. But by choosing this more obscure option, Jesus helped them to trust and obey his instructions.

VII.a.ii.1 [Luke 22:7-13 - Preparations for us to eat the Passover](#)

As the time for the feast of Passover approaches, Jesus gives precise instructions to two of his disciples as to how they will find the right location for Jesus to share his Last Supper with them.

⁷ Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.⁸ Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.

⁹ Where do you want us to prepare for it? they asked.

¹⁰ He replied, As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters,¹¹ and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'¹² He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there.

¹³ They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

[Luke 22:7-13](#)

As in, the Passover account follows the plot against Jesus: <<On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover? So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.

The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover>>.

Day of Unleavened Bread refers to either Nisan 14 or Nisan 15, but here it is Thursday Nisan 14. The confusion arises over the fact that the preparation is normally undertaken during the day time which is Nisan 14, but can be undertaken after twilight the same day, which is then Nisan 15 on the Jewish calendar: <<The Lord's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast>> (Leviticus 23:5-6).

On which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. It was customary to sacrifice the lamb before sundown usually at the 9th hour (15:00) on Nisan 14, which happened for Jesus' group, but it was legally correct for it to be killed after sundown and therefore on Nisan 15. Speaking of the lambs or the kids that were to be kept for the meal, God instructed Moses that they were to be brought into the house on the 10th of the month and then to: <<Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight>> (Exodus 12:6). Jesus died at approximately the 9th hour as our sacrificial lamb.

The Passover meal had to be eaten within the walls of Jerusalem: <<You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the LORD your God gives you except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt>> (Deuteronomy 16:5-6).

Go and make preparations involved having the lamb sacrificed at the temple, roasting it, preparing the room for the meal and preparing various side dishes.

The disciples would be met by a man recognised by his carrying a jar of water, something one would expect a woman to be doing. The man would be looking for them and would lead them to the place for their Passover meal. The secretive nature of the meeting suggests that Jesus was seeking privacy.

Everything takes place just as Jesus had told them, as we saw with the donkey's colt in Luke 19:32 <<Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them>>, suggesting either a prearrangement or more likely a miraculous work of God.

VII.a.ii.2 Luke 22:14-23 - The Passover meal and the institution of the Lord's Supper

Luke's version of Jesus' final Passover meal with his disciples differs in two ways from Matthew and Mark: he places Jesus' statement about his betrayal after the meal rather than before, probably an arrangement by topic; and refers to two cups (vv.17-18 and v.20), rather than one.

¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table.

Luke 22:14

When the hour came indicates the hour to celebrate the Passover (v.15), and in a broader sense the hour of Jesus' suffering and death. John 13:1 confirms this: <<It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love>>, as does John 17:1 <<After Jesus said this, he looked towards heaven and prayed: Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you>>.

They reclined at the table. The Passover was eaten in a reclining position as were other festive meals. Confirmed in these words: <<When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table>> (Luke 11:37).

As mentioned previously, in formal dining guests reclined on a couch that stretched around three sides of a room. The host took the centre seat at a U-shaped series of low tables surrounded by the most honoured guests on either side, with the guests' heads reclining toward the tables and their feet toward the wall.

¹⁵ And he said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

Luke 22:15

Jesus eagerly desired to eat this meal with his disciples for several reasons:

1. It represented the founding of the nation of Israel. After sunset, with the beginning of Nisan 15, the Passover meal begins. The celebrants remember the beginning of Israel's deliverance from slavery when the Lord brought judgment by killing the firstborn of every Egyptian house but 'passed over' the Israelite houses, where the blood of the Passover lamb had been applied, see Exodus 12:7-28. Those who celebrate the Passover also look forward to the ultimate liberation: <<Because the LORD kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honour the LORD for the generations to come>> (Exodus 12:42). From now on Jesus' blood will protect, from judgment, those who take refuge in him: <<Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast — as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed>> (1 Corinthians 5:7).
2. Jesus himself was now about to become the true Passover Lamb, who would be sacrificed for the sins of the people and thus, this Passover meal was the last in long centuries of celebrating it, while looking forward to the Messiah.
3. Jesus knew the meal would richly symbolise the giving of his body and blood for the disciples to earn salvation for them.
4. The Passover meal itself looked forward to the 'marriage supper of the Lamb' in heaven. Those invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are believers who belong to his beloved bride, the church; those who have been called through the Gospel of grace: <<On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine — the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation>> (Isaiah 25:6-9). See also Luke 14:15-24. The 'marriage supper of the Lamb' was anticipated in the predictions of a messianic banquet in Matthew 22:1-14.

He eagerly desired to share supper and we should eagerly desire to be partakers in the same way and with a thankful heart.

¹⁶ For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfilment in the kingdom of God.

Luke 22:16

I will not eat it implies 'I will not eat it again', and some manuscripts make this more explicit.

Until it finds fulfilment refers to the future messianic banquet in heaven as noted in v.15.

¹⁷ After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among you.

Luke 22:17

Taking the cup is most likely the third of four cups at the Passover, the cup of blessing or the cup of redemption that corresponds to God's third promise in Exodus 6:6b: <<I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment>>.

He gave thanks is the Greek word *eucharisteō* from which comes Eucharist. Jesus always thanks the Father for everything that has been given to him and we should do likewise.

¹⁸ For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.

Luke 22:18-19

He took bread, just as he did when feeding the 5,000: <<Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish>> (John 6:11).

The expression this is my body has been subject to widely varying interpretations throughout the history of the church:

- Roman Catholics understand it literally and claim that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ.
- Lutherans hold that the literal body and blood of Christ are present in, with and under the bread and wine in the same way water is present in a sponge.
- Some Anglicans refer to the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine.
- Most other believers have argued that the body and blood of Christ are not literally, physically or really present but that Christ is present symbolically; most would also add that Christ is present spiritually with and in the believing recipients of the bread and wine, strengthening their faith and fellowship in him and thereby feeding their souls.

Christ's spiritual presence can be supported in Matthew 18:20 <<For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them>>, and Matthew 28:20b <<And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age>>.

Given for you is the same Greek verb *Didōmi* - to give, and is used with respect to sacrifice in Mark 10:45 <<For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many>>, in Luke 2:24 <<and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: a pair of doves or two young pigeons>>, and in Galatians 1:4 <<who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father>>. The Greek construction translated 'for you' often has vicarious sense, where one person does something in place of someone else, in this case, Jesus would be the substitutionary atonement for all mankind. As represented and predicted in this celebration of the Lord's Supper, Jesus' body will be the once-and-for-all

fulfilment of the ceremonies surrounding the Passover lamb as he will become the sacrificial atonement on the basis of which God will pass over the sins of the people.

Do this in remembrance of me. Remembering the significance of Jesus' death is an important component of observing the Lord's Supper and of obedience: 'do this', to Christ's command. Evangelical Protestant Christians have consistently been united on the importance of limiting participation in the Lord's Supper to those who have made a personal commitment to follow Jesus. Jesus' emphasis on remembering the significance of his death when observing the Lord's Supper, and his warnings to those who partake of the bread and the cup in an unworthy manner, both reveal the wisdom of this limitation.

²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

Luke 22:20

This cup foreshadows the shedding of Jesus' blood and the absorbing of God's wrath, which opens the way for the redemption of all peoples through the new covenant relationship with God, which was promised to the people of Israel: <<The time is coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah>> (Jeremiah 31:31), and: <<No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD', because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more>> (Jeremiah 31:34).

This cup is also a metaphor for Jesus' future suffering. Consider this verse: <<You don't know what you are asking, Jesus said to them. Can you drink the cup I am going to drink? We can, they answered. Jesus said to them, You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father>> (Matthew 20:22-23), and virtually repeated in Mark 10:38-39.

It is clear from the OT that the taking of the cup denotes that Jesus took upon himself the wrath of God so that he died for the sake of, and instead of, his people. This is confirmed in Isaiah 51:17 <<Awake, awake! Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of his wrath, you who have drained to its dregs the goblet that makes men stagger>>, in Isaiah 51:22 <<This is what your Sovereign LORD says, your God, who defends his people: See, I have taken out of your hand the cup that made you stagger; from that cup, the goblet of my wrath, you will never drink again>>, in Jeremiah 25:15 <<This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it>>, in Jeremiah 25:17 <<So I took the cup from the LORD's hand and made all the nations to whom he sent me drink it>>, in Jeremiah 25:28 <<But if they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink, tell them, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: You must drink it!>>, in Jeremiah 49:12 <<This is what the LORD says: If those who do not deserve to drink the cup must drink it, why should you go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, but must drink it>>, in Lamentations 4:21 <<Rejoice and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, you who live in the land of Uz. But to you also the cup will be passed; you will be drunk and stripped naked>>, in Ezekiel 23:31-33 <<You have gone the way of your sister; so I will put her cup into your hand. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: You will drink your sister's cup, a cup large and deep; it will bring scorn and derision, for it holds so much. You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, the cup of ruin and desolation, the cup of your sister Samaria>>, in Habakkuk 2:16 <<You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and be exposed! The cup from the LORD's right hand is coming round to you, and disgrace

will cover your glory>>, and in Zechariah 12:2 <<I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem>>.

The cup is a metaphor for the wrath of God, which would pour out on sinners in righteous judgment. Since Jesus satisfies God's wrath by becoming a propitiation for sin, the continued passing of the cup to the disciples: <<You will drink the cup I drink>> (Mark 10:39), turns judgment on Jesus into purification for them. The cup given to Jesus is from the Father and hence, Jesus is prepared to drink it. Some scholars have argued that the word propitiation should be translated expiation, i.e. the wiping away of sin but the word cannot be restricted to wiping away of sin as it also refers to the satisfaction or appeasement of God's wrath, turning it to favour. God's righteous anger needed to be appeased before sin could be forgiven and God, in his mercy and his love for the whole human race, sent his Son who offered himself willingly to satisfy God's holy anger against all our sin.

New covenant in my blood. The 'blood of the covenant' comes originally from Exodus 24:8 <<Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words>>, and Leviticus 17:11 states: <<For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life>>. This indicates that Jesus' blood is sacrificial blood thus sealing a new covenant.

It was poured out in death.

For you is confirmed in v.19, and makes explicit the 'for many' of Mark 14:24 <<This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many, he said to them>>.

Paul appears to have received an account of this meal by divine revelation: <<For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes>> (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

²¹ But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.

Luke 22:21

The hand of him who is going to betray me. The height of disloyalty and betrayal is sharing a meal with a friend before turning on him.

Much of Luke's account of the after supper discourse does not appear in accounts of the Last Supper in Matthew 26:17-30 and Mark 14:12-26, but John Chapters 13-18 expands on it and gives much more insight to the rest of the evening and early morning before the crucifixion.

²² The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him.

Luke 22:22

The coming events for the Son of Man have been decreed by God. However, but woe to that man who betrays him refutes all attempts to justify Judas' action. Despite the fact that the scriptures had predicted the Messiah would suffer a substitutionary death, Judas is still

responsible for his evil deed. It seems all the more deceitful to do so having shared a meal with his master, who had given him such a great opportunity to repent of his sins and to turn to God; thus receiving eternal salvation for his soul.

This is one of many scriptures that simultaneously affirm God's sovereign ordering of events, undertaken with God's foreknowledge and according to his will, but which retain an element of human responsibility. That is, although something will happen, individuals can choose not to participate in a way that will ensure that it is not their actions that has made it happen.

²³ They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

Luke 22:23

Who would do this? Judas is still present and his outward behaviour, like his previous conduct, apparently did not give him away. Judas' outward behaviour conformed so nearly to that of the other disciples that they did not immediately assume that Jesus was talking about Judas.

VII.a.ii.3 Luke 22:24-30 - Who Is the greatest?

The disciples had just gone through a period of humility; questioning whether they were the one to betray their Lord. Now they start to strive, in personal pride, as to which of them would be the greatest. What a self-contradiction is the deceitful heart of man! It is far more honourable to do good in the name of Jesus than to look great. Jesus takes the opportunity raised by a dispute of the disciples to teach them about greatness. Just as membership of the Kingdom of God is the opposite to what humans might imagine; so too greatness in the kingdom is also the opposite (v.26).

²⁴ Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.

Luke 22:24

Greatest. In conjunction with their messianic expectation of a political liberator, the disciples' dream of status, honour and power perhaps recalls the Maccabean revolt of 166-160BC. This is confirmed in Mark 8:34-38. Ironically, by spreading the Gospel and, for all but one, being martyred doing so, their work brought universal greatness to them all and, most important of all, a place in their Father's eternal home.

²⁵ Jesus said to them, The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. ²⁶ But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.

Luke 22:25-26

Instead the greatest among you, that is, church leaders and people in positions of status or power, be like the youngest, i.e. those who possess the least claim to rule others. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? The disciples misunderstand greatness in terms of human endeavour, accomplishment and status. Jesus had demonstrated his own servant-hood by washing their feet, which is recorded in John 13:1-17.

Jesus has previously told them that they should approach the kingdom with the simplistic faith of a small child: <<Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it>> (Mark 10:15). The humility of a child consists of childlike trust, vulnerability and the inability to advance his or her own cause apart from the help, direction and resources of a parent or guardian.

²⁷ For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

Luke 22:27

But I. God's standards are diametrically opposite to the world's, and Jesus is the supreme example of humility: he is the one who serves as confirmed in Luke 12:37 <<It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them>>. See also John 13:3-17.

Leadership among God's people should be characterised by serving the people and acting in their best interests, not by assuming that the people are there to serve the leaders. These principles apply not only to leadership in the church but also to all relationships, e.g. in civil government the civil authority is to be: <<God's servant to do you good>> (Romans 13:4b).

The messianic rule of God is inaugurated by the greatest example of service: Jesus' death as a substitutionary atonement; a ransom for many offered by their future ruler. This quality of humility and love for others flowing from the infinite love of God for his people will also characterise Christ's eternal rule. The ransom of Christ's life was paid to God the Father who accepted it as just payment for the sins of many, i.e. all who would be saved.

²⁸ You are those who have stood by me in my trials. ²⁹ And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me,

Luke 22:28-29

Despite their weaknesses and failing, Jesus praises his disciples, for they were those whose who have stood by me and shown perseverance throughout his trials.

Confer on you a kingdom. The Son of Man upon his throne recalls the prophecy of Daniel 7:13-14, in which the Ancient of Days bestows the kingdom upon: <<one like a son of man>>.

³⁰ so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 22:30

For eat and drink in the Kingdom of God, we have in Luke 13:29 <<People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God>>, and in Luke 14:15 <<When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God>>.

Jesus' claim that the messianic banquet is my table and that the Kingdom of God is my kingdom would be seen as audacious if it were not true.

The 12 disciples would sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes, although Judas was later replaced by Matthias, as recorded in Acts 1:26.

VII.a.ii.4 [Luke 22:31-34 - Jesus foretells Peter's denial](#)

Whereas in v.3, Satan's increased activity centres on Judas' betrayal, now it centres on the denial by Peter and the disciples. Satan will seize any and every opportunity to disrupt the work of the kingdom and the church of Christ. Every disciple must be aware of this at all times.

³¹ Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat.

[Luke 22:31](#)

[Simon, Simon](#). The use of Peter's pre-Christian name forebodes his denial. It was Jesus who had named him Peter: <<And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter)>> (John 1:42).

[Satan has asked or demanded to have you](#), as confirmed in Job Chapters 1 & 2, that he might [sift you as wheat](#). 'You' is plural in these two instances indicating that all the disciples are in view, not just Peter. In other words, 'Satan is seeking to shake you all violently as one does wheat to cause you to fall'; we see this in Amos 9:9 <<For I will give the command, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will reach the ground>>. In Peter's case, the shaking was to be his panic-prompted, thrice-repeated denial that he even knew Jesus.

³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.

[Luke 22:32](#)

[I have prayed that your faith may not fail](#). Your here is singular so Peter alone is addressed. It is interesting that Jesus would pray for this and not simply command it. Again, it shows the total interdependence that exists within the Trinitarian Godhead.

[Not fail](#) must mean not fail completely. Peter's subsequently restored faith was not his own accomplishment, but a result of the Holy Spirit's work in response to Jesus' prayer for him.

The Greek for [turned](#) can mean turn around, go back or return and is often used in contexts of repenting or turning back to God as in Acts 3:19 <<Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord>>, in Acts 9:35 <<All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord>>, and in 2 Corinthians 3:16 <<But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away>>.

[Strengthen your brothers](#). We will soon read of Peter's dramatic and apparent fall from grace as he denies even knowing his lord and master. Jesus does not view it this way but has in mind an opportunity to strengthen Peter in his discipleship. The experience will help him to go on to be a great leader and teacher of his brothers. We see this later confirmed after Jesus' death and resurrection: <<When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you

where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" >> (John 21:15-19). Peter followed Jesus to his own destiny on the Cross in Rome, strengthening brothers and sisters, not just in his own generation, but encouraging the shaping of disciples lives for many generations to come.

³³ But he replied, Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.

³⁴ Jesus answered, I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.

Luke 22:33-34

Cock or rooster crows. Each morning cockerels crow a number of times, separated by a few minutes. In Luke, Jesus simply states 'before the cock crows'. However, in Mark 14:30 he specifies the first two individual crowings, confirmed again in v.72. Matthew and John refer to the entire time of several crowings. The key point is not the cock but Peter's denial.

Deny three times is confirmed in vv.54-62. The number three is often used in the scriptures to indicate completeness or finality.

Although Peter fell, he was not cast down, but with grace, repentance and faith he was restored to become a great teacher and leader in the faith: <<Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you>> (Psalm 51:11-13).

VII.a.ii.5 Luke 22:35-38 - Scripture must be fulfilled in Jesus

Jesus prepares the disciples for their post-resurrection mission. This is similar to the account given to his disciples after his resurrection: <<Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high>> (Luke 24:45-49), and just before the Ascension: <<But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth>> (Acts 1:8).

³⁵ Then Jesus asked them, When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything? Nothing, they answered.

³⁶ He said to them, But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.

Luke 22:35-36

Earlier in his ministry, Jesus sent his disciples out without purse, bag or sandals as we saw in Luke 9:3 and Luke 10:4. Now, however, they will need extra provisions and supplies but we see that Jesus will never send out his disciples without properly equipping them first.

If you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. Many interpreters take this to be a metaphorical statement commanding the disciples to be armed spiritually to fight spiritual foes, which Paul refers to as putting on 'The Armour Of God' in Ephesians 6:10-17.

In favour of this view:

1. In v.38, the disciples misunderstand Jesus' command and produce literal swords. On this view, Jesus' response that 'It is enough' is a rebuke saying essentially: 'Enough of this talk about swords'.
2. Later on Jesus will again prohibit the use of a literal sword (vv.49-51). This is confirmed in Matthew 26:51-52 <<With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Put your sword back in its place, Jesus said to him, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword>>, and in John 18:10-11 <<Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus). Jesus commanded Peter, Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?>>. Others take this as a command to have a literal sword for self-defence and protection from robbers. In support of this view:
 - a. The moneybag, knapsack and cloak in this same verse are literal and so the sword must be taken literally as well.
 - b. Jesus' response that 'It is enough' (v.38), actually approves the swords the disciples have as being enough and Jesus' later rebuke in vv.49-51 only prohibits them from blocking his arrest and suffering as written in John 18:11 above. That is, from seeking to advance the Kingdom of God by force.
 - c. The very fact that the disciples possess swords (v.38), suggests that Jesus has not prohibited them from carrying swords up to this point. Again, this view is supported in John 18:10-11 and Jesus never prohibited self-defence. We have a similar account in Matthew 5:39 <<But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also>>, where Jesus' focus is on individual conduct that shows he is prohibiting the universal human tendency to seek personal revenge. Both views have some merit.

Peter, who gets to use his sword in v.50 and cuts off the ear of the High Priest's servant called Malchus (John 18:10), later sees this as an issue of mindset rather than an actual sword: <<Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin>> (1 Peter 4:1).

Of course, Jesus sword was the Word of God: <<Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations>> (Revelation 19:15).

³⁷ It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfilment.

Luke 22:37

What is written or scripture must be fulfilled. Jesus' impending suffering and death are a divine necessity. God's providential plan *must* be fulfilled.

He was numbered with the transgressors. This is from Isaiah 53:12 and was fulfilled at his crucifixion: <<Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals — one on his right, the other on his left>> (Luke 23:32-33), and: <<One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us! But the other criminal rebuked him. Don't you fear God, he said, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into

your kingdom. Jesus answered him, I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise>> (Luke 23:39-43).

³⁸ The disciples said, See, Lord, here are two swords. That is enough, he replied.

Luke 22:38

For Lord, here are two swords, see vv.35-36 and the associated comments on swords.

VII.b Luke 22:39-23:56 - The arrest and trial

This second part of the passion narrative recounts the events surrounding the trial and execution of Jesus.

VII.b.i Luke 22:39-46 - Jesus prays on the Mount of Olives

The second part of the account of Christ's suffering and death opens with a change of scene.

³⁹ Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him.

Luke 22:39

Went out as usual. This had been Jesus' normal routine for the past week: <<Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives>> (Luke 21:37).

The Passover evening had to be spent in greater Jerusalem, as confirmed earlier from Deuteronomy 16:1-7, which included the Mount of Olives.

As previously noted the Mount of Olives or Olivet, with its spectacular view of the Temple Mount, stands just east of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley. Jesus and his disciples regularly crossed over Olivet on their way from Jerusalem, through Bethphage to Bethany, which lay on the mountain's eastern slope. The traditional site of Gethsemane lies on Olivet's western slope.

⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, Pray that you will not fall into temptation.

Luke 22:40

By writing on reaching the place, Luke is assuming his readers knew that the place was the Garden of Gethsemane.

Gethsemane means oil press, indicating a garden area among the olive groves on the Mount of Olives, where olive oil was prepared. The traditional location of Gethsemane is now marked by the modern Church of All Nations, which was built over a 4th Century Byzantine church.



The Church of All Nations



The Garden of Gethsemane

Pray that you will not fall into temptation. The temptation was to succumb to physical sleep, see vv.45-46; partly due to their emotional experience, and partly due to the wine consumed at the supper, and thus fail in their responsibility to support Jesus. It may point also to the temptation to deny Jesus when he is led away to the Cross, which will be confirmed in vv.54-62.

The sixth and final petition of 'The Lord's Prayer' (Matthew 6:9-13) addresses the disciples' battle with sin and evil. The word translated 'temptation' can indicate either temptation or testing. The meaning there most likely carries the sense 'Allow us to be spared from difficult circumstances that would tempt us to sin'. Although God never directly tempts believers, he does sometimes lead them into situations that test them. In fact, trials and hardships will inevitably come into believers' lives and believers should: <<consider it pure joy>> (James 1:2b), when trials come, for they are strengthened by them. Nevertheless, believers should never pray to be brought into such situations but should pray to be delivered from them, for hardship and temptation make obedience more difficult and will sometimes result in sin. Believers should pray to be delivered from temptation and led in: <<paths of righteousness>>, in accordance with Psalm 23:3b.

⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed,

Luke 22:41

Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw, which was enough to be alone but close enough for the disciples to overhear him praying.

Knelt down. Matthew 26:39 records it as: <<Fell with his face to the ground>>. In this typical posture of abject humility in prayer, Jesus lays his life before his Father in complete honesty and surrender. Jesus is facing the most severe temptation of his earthly life, at the moment when he is ready to accomplish the culmination of that life's mission, that is, to bear the sins of the world, which is what this cup signifies.

⁴² Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.

Luke 22:42

As discussed previously Father was Abba in Aramaic and, although it was used as a term of familiarity towards one's father, it was also a word that shows great respect.

This cup is a metaphor for Jesus' future suffering, as confirmed in Matthew 20:22-23 <<You don't know what you are asking, Jesus said to them. Can you drink the cup I am going to

drink? We can, they answered. Jesus said to them, You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father>>, and the almost identical passage in Mark 10:38-39. It is clear from the OT that the taking of the cup denotes that Jesus took upon himself the wrath of God, as previously discussed, so that he died for the sake of and instead of his people.

Yet not my will but yours be done. Jesus consciously, voluntarily and obediently 'endured the Cross, despising its shame': <<Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God>> (Hebrews 12:2).

In my opinion this is something all followers of Jesus should be continually saying!

Whether on his knees or prostrate on the ground, Jesus was at one with the Father, submitting his human will to that of God, and accepting the task of redeeming mankind.

⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Luke 22:43-44

Due to his human frailties, Jesus needed the assistance of an angel, who strengthened him in this time of extreme testing. At this time he was perhaps: <<a little lower than the angels>> (Hebrews 2:7 & 2:9).

Even though he was not delivered from his sufferings, he was strengthened in them through prayer, something we too can share in, as we read in these words: <<When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stout-hearted>> (Psalm 138:3), <<My hand will sustain him; surely my arm will strengthen him>> (Psalm 89:21), <<This is what the LORD says: In the time of my favour I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances>> (Isaiah 49:8), <<Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame>> (Isaiah 50:7), and: <<During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him>> (Hebrews 5:7-9).

Jesus was in anguish in anticipation of bearing 'our sins in his own body on the tree': <<He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed>> (1 Peter 2:24), therefore he prayed more earnestly.

His sweat was like great drops of blood falling to the ground. Although the word 'like' may indicate that this is to be understood metaphorically, there are both ancient and modern accounts on record of people sweating blood, a condition known as *hematidrosis*, where extreme anguish or physical strain causes one's capillary blood vessels to dilate and burst, mixing sweat and blood. In either case, Luke's main purpose is to highlight the intensity of Jesus' emotional and physical trauma.

Sweat came in with sin: <<By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return>>

(Genesis 3:19), and for the 'sinless and perfect' Jesus, made sin for us, a grievous sweat came upon him, with drops like blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sin.

⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.

Luke 22:45

Asleep, exhausted from sorrow for it had been a long day and the disciples were emotionally and physically exhausted. They would also have consumed no small amount of wine at Passover.

Sleeping for sorrow appears only in Luke, giving further insight to the stress the disciples were experiencing, having learned all that Jesus had told them that evening as recorded in John's Gospel Chapters 13-16.

⁴⁶ Why are you sleeping? he asked them. Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

Luke 22:46

Get up and pray reminds us of what happened to Jonah: <<The captain went to him and said, How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish>> (Jonah 1:6). For this is what we are called to do in times of strife and trouble.

That you will not fall into temptation was commented on in v.40. If disciples remain in constant communion with the Father, it is far less likely that they will be tempted by all the things that the world tries to offer them.

VII.b.ii Luke 22:47-53 - Jesus arrested

This section is closely tied to the preceding narrative by 'While he was still speaking' in v.47. It happens in the early hours so that there will be no witnesses or the usual crowds that surrounded Jesus and who would probably have tried to protect him. This is probably as much ordained by God as it was the Jewish leaders.

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him,
⁴⁸ but Jesus asked him, Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?

Luke 22:47-48

Usually the crowd is positive towards Jesus, but this is not an ordinary crowd, as we will see in v.52. Luke emphasises Judas' treachery by referring to him as one of the twelve. The great crowd possibly consisted of a detachment of Roman soldiers, assigned by Pilate to the temple for security as they were openly carrying swords. They were accompanied by the Levitical temple police, and the personal security guards of the chief priests and Sanhedrin elders, who were carrying clubs.

Judas led them to Jesus and gave him a kiss. This badge of love and friendship had become the instrument of treachery. Whereas it was customary for a disciple to greet his teacher with a kiss, here it serves as the means of betrayal to identify Jesus in the darkness. Mark 14:44 states: <<Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard>>.

⁴⁹ When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, Lord, should we strike with our swords? ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

⁵¹ But Jesus answered, No more of this! And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

Luke 22:49-51

Although, at a word from Jesus, the mob fell to the ground: <<When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground>> (John 18:6), which showed he had the power to overcome this group, yet he removes the heat from the situation and heals the wounded man; submitting quietly to the mob. This was a sign of his love for his enemies and these were, no doubt, included in his prayer on the Cross: <<Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" >> (Luke 23:34a).

What was going to happen - Jesus' arrest! This would be followed by significant physical and psychological abuse, a rigged trial and his crucifixion.

Should we strike with the sword? As already discussed, swords were commonly worn for protection against thieves.

Cutting off his right ear. Peter's sword was likely the Roman short sword called a gladius that could be hidden under a person's garment, as confirmed in v.38. With regard to cutting off his ear: the short sword was for stabbing not slicing, thus it is considered a possibility that Peter intended to kill the man with a lethal blow to the head, but the servant was able to evade the blow, suffering only the loss of his ear. Malchus was the man's name, which is recorded only in John's Gospel. However, the name Malchus is known in Josephus from an earlier period, and in Nabatæan and Palmyrene inscriptions. These occurrences make it likely that it was Arabic, a common race of the servants in Jerusalem at that time.

That Jesus touched and healed him is recorded only in Luke, but is in keeping with the compassion that Jesus had consistently shown throughout his ministry.

⁵² Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple guard, and the elders, who had come for him, Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs?

Luke 22:52

The chief priests. As previously stated several times are not the High Priests but members of the senior priestly family and were probably Sadducees.

For officers of the temple guard, see comments on vv.4-6.

Elders were the local Jewish officials. In Jerusalem they were probably part of the Sanhedrin.

Am I leading a rebellion? Although Jesus would be: <<numbered with the transgressors>>, in accordance with Isaiah 53:12, and was being treated as an insurrectionist, his conduct while in public clearly contradicted their inappropriate treatment of him. He goes on to charge them with this.

Jesus was of course the greatest revolutionary in history!

⁵³ Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour – when darkness reigns.

Luke 22:53

Every day I was with you in the temple courts. The fact that Jesus taught openly in the temple, whereas revolutionaries would have operated clandestinely, shows that he was not a revolutionary in the sense they were meaning.

But this is your hour – when darkness reigns. Such men prefer to work after dark because, as John records: <<This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil>> (John 3:19), and as Jesus had apparently instructed Paul: <<I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me>> (Acts 26:17-18).

Let this quiet us under prevalence of the church's enemies; let it quiet us in the dying hour, for we know that:

1. It is but an hour that is permitted for the triumph of our adversary, a brief time, a limited time only.
2. It is their hour, which is appointed for them by God and in which they are permitted to test their strength, that omnipotence may be glorified all the more in their fall.
3. It is the power of darkness that rides master, and darkness must submit to light; and the power of darkness be made to submit in obedience to: <<the Light of the World>> (John 8:12).

Christ was willing to wait for his victories until all was accomplished and we must be willing to wait too.

VII.b.iii Luke 22:54-62 - Peter disowns Jesus

Luke places Peter's denial of Jesus before Jesus' appearance before the Sanhedrin (vv.66-71), while Matthew and Mark place it afterward. Luke may have wanted to arrange his material in a more topical, orderly way: <<Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus>> (Luke 1:3).

⁵⁴ Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

Luke 22:54

The house of the high priest would have been the home of Caiaphas: <<Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled>> (Matthew 26:57), the ruling high priest's residence was perhaps shared with his father-in-law Annas.

Before Jesus can be brought to the Roman governor, charges must be confirmed by the official high priest Caiaphas, who presided over the Sanhedrin. Caiaphas managed to retain control of the high priesthood for nearly 18 years circa AD18-36, longer than anyone else in

the 1st Century (Josephus, Jewish Antiquities 18.35, 95). He was certainly the high priest during Jesus' ministry although he also consulted frequently with his father-in-law Annas.

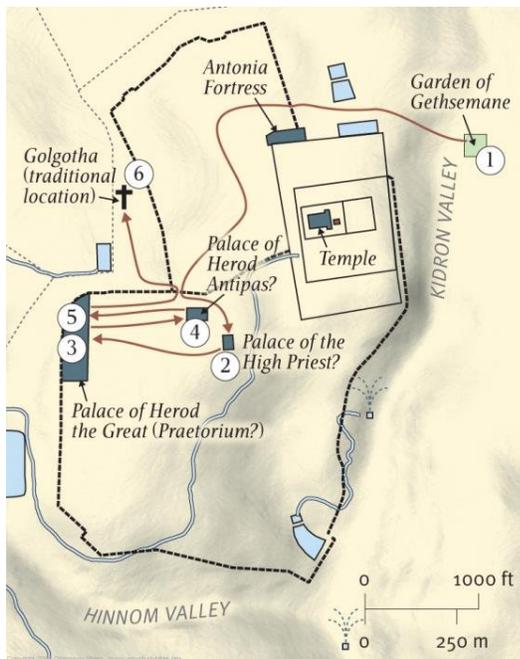


The house of the High Priests



Saint Peter of the Cockcrow Church

Josephus' depiction of a high priestly house in the upper city of Jerusalem, overlooking the temple area (Jewish War 2.426) has suggested to some scholars the possibility of identifying Caiaphas' house with some residence amid the wealthy Roman-era houses excavated atop Mount Zion. Others contend for a traditional site of Caiaphas' house beneath Saint Peter of the Cockcrow Church toward the base of Mount Zion.



The sketch shows the traditional route of Jesus on his last night. Jewish sources report that he was kept in an underground dungeon, probably a dry drain in to which he would be lowered on a rope, for much of the night. It would have been cold and pitch black inside.

An archaeological find in 1990 raised the possibility that an elaborately decorated ossuary or a box for reburial of the bones of the dead, which has the name Joseph Caiaphas crudely etched into its side, once contained Caiaphas' bones. This ossuary was found in a relatively modest tomb complex south of Jerusalem. See the image.

[Peter followed at a distance](#): <<to see the outcome>> according to Matthew 26:58b. John was with him: <<Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the girl on duty there and brought Peter in>> (John 18:15-16).

⁵⁵ But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. ⁵⁶ A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, This man was with him.

⁵⁷ But he denied it. Woman, I don't know him, he said.

[Luke 22:55-57](#)

[Sat down with them](#). Peter demonstrates courage by his presence in a hostile environment but his courage fails him: [I don't know him](#), when his own safety is threatened.

⁵⁸ A little later someone else saw him and said, You also are one of them. Man, I am not! Peter replied.

⁵⁹ About an hour later another asserted, Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilæan.

[Luke 22:58-59](#)

The people in the courtyard know that Peter is a Galilæan by his accent, which is confirmed in Matthew 26:73 <<After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away>>. Jesus' disciples, with the exception of Judas, were from Galilee, and Judæans in Jerusalem looked down on Galilæans, and not just because of their regional pronunciations.

⁶⁰ Peter replied, Man, I don't know what you're talking about! Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed.

[Luke 22:60](#)

Upon Peter's third denial, [the cock crowed](#). See v.34 and comments made there.

⁶¹ The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times. ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly.

[Luke 22:61-62](#)

It is not known whether Jesus and Peter were in the same place, or if Jesus had a room overlooking the courtyard, or more likely, [the Lord turned and looked straight at Peter](#) is a symbolic act. It could mean many things: anger; resentment; disappointment; an 'I told you so' look; pity; or sorrow; but most likely it was done with grace, love and forgiveness. This was probably one of the key turning points in Peter's ministry.

It is easy for us to be critical of this action and many others by Peter. How could he deny his Saviour after three years of faithful service, the teaching he received and the miracles he

witnessed? Let us not forget that Jesus prophesies Peter's martyrdom and yet Peter continues to serve Jesus for his remaining life and subsequent death by crucifixion in Rome! He would have endured many other hardships on his way to his own death as well.

VII.b.iv [Luke 22:63-65 - The guards mock Jesus](#)

Before his trial, Jesus was mocked and beaten just as he had predicted in [Luke 9:22](#) <<And he said, The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life>>, in [Luke 17:25](#) <<But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation>>, and in [Luke 18:32-33](#) <<He will be turned over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again>>.

⁶³ The men who were guarding Jesus began mocking and beating him.

[Luke 22:63](#)

The [men who were guarding Jesus](#) were probably officers, see v.4 and v.52. That is, leaders of the temple police rather than actual members of the Sanhedrin.

⁶⁴ They blindfolded him and demanded, Prophecy! Who hit you?

[Luke 22:64](#)

[Blindfolded him, Prophecy!](#) Jesus is challenged to prove that he is a prophet by identifying who [hit](#) him; a despicable and silly game that Jesus chose to ignore and endure the pain instead.

⁶⁵ And they said many other insulting things to him.

[Luke 22:65](#)

[Insulting things to him.](#) Whereas Jesus is accused of blasphemy, as in [Matthew 26:65](#) <<Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy>>.

It is interesting that, by reacting this way, it was the High Priest who was the one who is guilty of breaking the Law with a capital offence in God's eyes. For it is written: <<Then Moses said to Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, Do not let your hair become unkempt, and do not tear your clothes, or you will die and the LORD will be angry with the whole community>> ([Leviticus 10:6a](#)), and: <<The high priest, the one among his brothers who has had the anointing oil poured on his head and who has been ordained to wear the priestly garments, must not let his hair become unkempt or tear his clothes>> ([Leviticus 21:10](#)).

Continuing with the blasphemy allegations, in [Mark 14:64](#) we read: <<You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? They all condemned him as worthy of death>>, and in [John 10:33](#) <<We are not stoning you for any of these, replied the Jews, but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God>>.

But it is Jesus who is really the object and victim of blasphemous words and acts: <<One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!>> ([Luke 23:39](#)), and: <<The soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head. They clothed him in a purple robe and went up to him again and again, saying, Hail, king of the Jews! And they struck him in the face>> ([John 19:2-3](#)).

VII.b.v [Luke 22:66-71 - Jesus before the council](#)

Luke's account of Jesus' trial is considerably shorter than Matthew's and Mark's. It is likely that it was held in two sessions: one during the night, and one at daybreak.

⁶⁶ At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them.

[Luke 22:66](#)

[At daybreak](#) indicates that Luke combines the first (Mark 14:53-65), and second (Mark 15:1), meetings of the Sanhedrin. This is also interesting because, under Jewish law at the time, it was not legal to hold a trial during the hours of darkness. This had all the hallmarks of a 'kangaroo court'.

[Council of the elders](#) is a synonym for the Sanhedrin, which we will see confirmed by Paul's words in Acts 22:5 <<as also the high priest and all the Council can testify>>.

The whole council or Sanhedrin need not denote all 70 members, but may just indicate those hastily assembled in the middle of the night, as 23 members made a quorum. Sanhedrin could refer either to a local Jewish tribunal, e.g. council, courts or, as here, to the supreme ecclesiastical court or council of the Jews that was centred in Jerusalem. The Romans were ultimately in control of all judicial proceedings but allowed their subjects some freedom to try their own cases.

[The chief priests and teachers of the law](#) describe the makeup of the Sanhedrin.

⁶⁷ If you are the Christ, they said, tell us. Jesus answered, If I tell you, you will not believe me, ⁶⁸ and if I asked you, you would not answer.

[Luke 22:67-68](#)

[If you are the Christ tell us](#). This was the key issue of the trial. Jesus answers with a qualified yes. He had told them before but they would not believe him: <<But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe>> (John 6:36).

[If I tell you, if I asked you](#). Jesus knows that it would be futile to enter into dialogue with those whose minds are already made up.

Mark's Gospel, which almost certainly was highly influenced by Peter, shows that Jesus did, at some point, give an affirmative answer: <<I am, said Jesus. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven>> (Mark 14:62). In acknowledging he was the Messiah, the very one that the others in the room were expecting and hoping would come, Jesus provides them with a clear opportunity of having an impartial hearing to look at all the overwhelming evidence to back up his claims. Again, under Jewish law, this was something Jesus would have been entitled to: <<Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?>> (John 7:50-51).

Instead, their hearts were hardened, their eyes were blind, their ears were deaf and their minds were made up to rid themselves of this: <<thorn in the flesh>> (2 Corinthians 12:7), who threatened their prominent positions and affluent life styles.

⁶⁹ But from now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

Luke 22:69

The Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God. The crucifixion of Jesus is not the end but his exodus or departure as noted on the Mount of Transfiguration: <<They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfilment at Jerusalem>> (Luke 9:31b), leading to glory: <<Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?>> (Luke 24:26), and: <<The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus>> (Acts 3:13a).

Jesus declares that he is not only the human Messiah, anticipated by the Jews, but also the divine Son of Man as described in Daniel 7:13-14a <<In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed>>. It is he who sits at the right hand of God in Psalm 110:1 and who will come in power to reign over the earth.

⁷⁰ They all asked, Are you then the Son of God? He replied, You are right in saying I am.

Luke 22:70

The Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah and Son of Man all refer to Jesus emphasising different aspects of his person and role. Son of God points to Jesus' unique relationship to God, when rightly understood to his equality with God the Father in his very being. The terms Christ indicates that Jesus claimed to be the Son of David, i.e. the Messiah; Son of Man points to the person identified in Daniel 7:13-14, who will rule the Kingdom of God.

You are right in saying I am or You say that I am. A Greek expression that deflects responsibility back upon the one asking the question, as in Matthew 26:25 <<Then Judas, the one who would betray him, said, Surely not I, Rabbi? Jesus answered, Yes, it is you>>, and in Matthew 26:64 <<Yes, it is as you say, Jesus replied. But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven>>.

Saying I am. This would have been a significant statement by Jesus. God had called himself 'I am' - <<Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you'" >> (Exodus 3:13-14). Jesus had aligned himself with this before when speaking to the Jews in the temple courts: <<"You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!" "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds>> (John 8:57-59).

⁷¹ Then they said, Why do we need any more testimony? We have heard it from his own lips.

Luke 22:71

Although they consider this to be proof of his guilt, it was only fulfilling the predetermined mindset they had from the beginning.

Why do we need any more testimony? or 'What further testimony do we need?' The desire to catch Jesus in something he might say, e.g. <<waiting to catch him in something he might say>> (Luke 11:54), has been achieved, or so they believe.

We have heard it from his own lips indicates that the members of the Sanhedrin considered Jesus' Christological claims (vv.68-70) to be sufficient justification for condemning him. But we know that what he says is true: <<Jesus answered, I tell you the truth>> (John 3:5a), and more than that, it was one of his primary purposes for coming to this world in the first place, as he explains to Pilate: <<In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me>> (John 18:37b).