

Mark 14:1-26

As we begin tonight I just wanted to remind us all that really at this point in the narrative we are looking at the last night of the life of Jesus.

The setting of the last few chapters has been mostly in Jerusalem and it is the time of the Passover. When Jesus came into Jerusalem He did so riding on a colt the foal of a donkey and the people had celebrated Him saying “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.”

Jesus had then proceeded to come into the temple and threw over some tables and had loudly rebuked those who were there saying they had made the house of God into a den of thieves.

The Lord then had multiple conversations with the religious leaders and His disciples. The religious leaders tried to trap Jesus in His words and of course Jesus had put them in their place.

The disciples if you remember were really confused about the Messiah and what His mission would be. Jesus had repeatedly told them that He would die and that He would rise again and then last week Jesus spent time teaching the disciples about His return and the kingdom that He would one day usher in.

The Lord told them about how the temple would be destroyed and how there would be wars and rumors of wars and all kinds of natural disasters that would take place before the kingdom was established.

He even told them about something called the abomination of desolation that would take place in Jerusalem in the future.

The Lord even taught the disciples that they needed to be ready for His return for it would come at a day and an hour that no one even He Himself knew.

Today as we continue on in our study it's the night of the Passover meal and Jesus will be preparing to enter into the roughest most difficult day that any human has ever experienced.

It is amazing to think that Jesus knew what was going to take place in His life. I can't imagine knowing that you were about to be betrayed by one of your own disciples. I can't imagine knowing that you were about to be beaten beyond human recognition.

I think if you had committed a crime worthy of punishment that yeah sure you could in some way accept that you deserved what was coming your way...But Jesus had done no wrong, He had committed zero crimes, He had never sinned in His life and yet He would be crucified, flogged and His beard would be plucked out.

We should be reminded that Jesus did all of this on our behalf dying for us and taking our sin upon Himself.

So let's see how this unfolds here as we study this today if you look with me at verses 1-2 which say this **After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put Him to death. ² But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar of the people."**

I wanted to just refresh us here today about what the Passover celebration and the Feast of Unleavened bread were. And really the

Jewish people celebrated these two feasts as one celebration as the Feast of Unleavened Bread began the day after the Passover.

The Passover was instituted all the way back in the days of Moses in the book of Exodus and it took place when God worked mightily on behalf of His people delivering them from the Egyptians. If you remember they had been slaves for a very long time in Egypt and they were being taken advantage of.

The Lord raised up a man by the name of Moses and this Moses was used by God to speak to Pharaoh and God speaking through Moses demanded that this man would let His people go...If you remember there were 10 plagues or judgments that came on the Egyptians and the last of these was the death of the first born sons.

The people of Israel though were told to take the blood of a lamb and to smear it on the outside of their doors and when an angel came through any home that was covered in blood by faith and obedience would then be passed over.

As this took place and the first born in the land were killed we learn that the Egyptians actually ran the people of Israel out of the land...they had seen enough to know that they had to let the people of Israel go.

After this God commanded the people to celebrate the Passover each year and of course Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover feast...It's interesting that the feasts in the old testament were all a picture or symbolic in nature in that each one of them pointed to Jesus.

Right after the Passover the feast of Unleavened Bread would take place and this was a week long celebration where all the yeast was taken out of the people's houses and they would eat bread that had no leaven in it. Again this was done in remembrance of how the Lord delivered the people of Israel from Egypt and how they had to leave with great haste. Again this points to Jesus and how the leaven which represents sin in the scriptures has been removed from our life as we simply apply the blood of Jesus to our lives by faith.

This was supposed to be a time of reflection and celebration of what God had done for His people but notice that the religious leaders, the ones that were supposed to set the example had something else in mind. They were plotting the death of Jesus and notice that they were desperate to do so as it says they looked to do this by trickery. I suppose at this point they had realized they would have to somehow trick Jesus or do something sneaky in order to catch Him for they had examined Him previously and found no reason to press charges against Him.

It is interesting to me that we are told in verse 2 that as they discussed this that they came to the conclusion that they would not seek to kill him during the feast and notice it says that they feared an uproar of the people.

For all the power and authority these men had they still had a problem in that they feared man over fearing God. That's something you and I must be aware of as well. In life we must not fear what man may do to us but instead we should be concerned about what God thinks about us.

I also want to mention that while these men made their plans that the Father had a very different plan for Jesus. Jesus did die during the time of the Passover feast. Over in Acts 2:22-23 the Word says this ²² **“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;**

The Father had a specific time that Jesus would die. People can make plans but we should always know the sovereign hand of God dictates the affairs of man.

I want us to know tonight that Jesus is our Passover sacrifice...He fulfills the feast of Passover in that He died as a Lamb and as you and I come to Him by faith and place our trust in Him the blood of Jesus is applied to our hearts...as such we are then passed over when it comes to the judgment of God.

The Bible has this to say about Jesus being our Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7 when it says ⁷ **Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**

John the Baptist also referred to Jesus as a lamb if you listen to John 1:29 which says this ²⁹ **The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!**

And over in Revelation 5:11-12 we see a celebration of Jesus in heaven and the Word says this ¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

We should understand that all that transpires here in the next few chapters was all ordained of the Father and accomplished by Jesus as He was empowered by the Spirit to walk out the Father's will.

Now this next section in the Gospel of Mark that we will look at is a section that is debated amongst scholars as far as the timeline of the life of Jesus goes. We are going to be looking at Jesus being anointed by a woman and here in Mark's gospel it is presented to us as taking place right after what we had in verses 1-2.

If you were to read the Gospel of John chapter 12 you will find a very similar narrative to what we have here but the timeline seems to be presented differently...Listen to what John 12:1 says Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. The text then goes on to speak of an anointing that took place and words that were said that are almost identical to this narrative in Mark.

My personal opinion and I want to highlight this because there are different thoughts about it, but I believe that Mark as he is giving us this information in his gospel is not giving it to us chronologically but

is instead using this to illustrate something beautiful for the reader to think about.

I do believe it's the same narrative that is seen in both Mark 14 and John 12...I believe Mark puts this account here almost like a parenthetical statement and what we will see here is that before these verses there were those against Jesus...then we'll have this account given in Mark 14 that shows a woman that is absolutely dedicated to the Lord Jesus and then right after this we'll move into Judas betraying the Lord.

It's almost like a sandwich that we are seeing here in Mark and really what happens next in the text is just a beautiful lesson for you and I in how our heart should be towards the Lord Jesus.

Let's look at what happens here if you look at verse 3 which says this **³And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.** Again Jesus is seen in Bethany and he is at the home of Simon the leper and I suppose I would say that this was more than likely the house of Simon who was formerly a leper. I say that because if you were a leper the law said you were to be ostracized from society and your life would be spent outside the city limits. So at this point this was probably a man that had been healed by the Lord Jesus.

They are at the table and we are told a woman came who had an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. In a few verses we will learn this was something that could be sold for 300 denarii which was almost 1 year's wages for the common worker. Commentators believe that this flask of oil could have been a family heirloom passed

along from one generation to the next or perhaps it was a dowery payment for this woman's hand in marriage. In any case it was extremely valuable and it was in a sealed bottle.

To be able to use the oil one would actually have to break the neck of the bottle and then pour it out. When this woman chose to do this she poured out all she had upon Jesus.

Look at verses 4-5 which say this ⁴**But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor."** And they criticized her sharply.

Over in John's gospel we learn that Judas Iscariot was actually the one that began to grumble against this woman's use of what she had...In John we get the detail that Judas did this not because he cared for the poor but instead because he was in charge of the money bags and would often help himself to what was in it. In other words he was a thief.

If you can insert yourself into the picture here, I want you to put yourself in the shoes of this woman. Here she is seeing Jesus in the room and loving Jesus and desiring to bless the Lord and she had one thing that was probably more valuable than everything else she had...and you can imagine she takes the flask and she breaks it and I imagine her with thankful tears in her eyes as she pours it out on the head of Jesus...I believe this was an act of worship on her part.

And there she is honoring Jesus and giving her all to Him and then suddenly there are those who are in the room that begin to speak

against her and they begin to say that she shouldn't have done what she did but instead she should have used what she had for those who were less fortunate.

Can you imagine how the woman may have felt when the disciples, those who had some spiritual authority and clout began to rebuked her?

I want you to know today that there will be times that the world and even other Christians may misunderstand your worship and service of Jesus. There will be those that may look at what you do and consider it to be a waste. I want you to have this in your mind as you go through life...That your worship or service of Jesus is never ultimately going to be judged by your fellow man.

The Lord looks at the heart of a person while man looks on the outside. If you remember not long ago Jesus was in the temple watching people give offerings and there was a widow who gave just two small coins and most people looked at that as if it was nothing...Jesus though saw her worship for what it was knowing she had given her all.

This woman believed Jesus was worth it, she worshipped Him in this act of love...at the same time those who should have appreciated what she did came against her.

At the end of the day you and I shouldn't be as concerned with what people think about our worship and service of Jesus but instead we should simply honor the Lord to the best of our personal ability. One day God will judge each one of us...and we'll see shortly that this woman would have great reward for what she did unto the Lord.

I do love what happens next though if you look at verses 6-9 which say

⁶ But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷ For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

Jesus stands up for her...Jesus wouldn't let the disciples or anyone else in the room speak poorly to her and dissuade her from giving her all.

You know at the end of the day I am thankful again that Jesus goes to bat for His kids. There may be those that look at us as we give our all unto Jesus and we choose to leave our homes and our jobs and the comforts of our lives and we choose to head out to serve the Lord and they will think we have lost our minds and that what we are doing doesn't make sense...and yet the Lord stands up for us, He defends us, He sees us through and that is just what Jesus does on behalf of this woman.

We ought never underestimate the simple fact that the king of the universe is on our side, that He goes to bat for us, that He knows how to stand up for those that proclaim and honor His name.

We can also see here that Jesus considered what this woman had done for Him as a preparation for his burial...There is debate about whether the woman knew what she was doing or not...If she did know she was doing this to prepare Him for burial then we should

understand that this woman was further along than the disciples were in her understanding of what Jesus was about to pass through.

If this is the same account as what we have over in John 12 we know that this woman was Mary the sister of Martha and brother of Lazarus and we might remember that this woman was seen at the feet of Jesus...She was a worshipper of the Lord dedicated to hearing from Him and knowing Him as closely as she could.

Often times those that live in this manner will have a closeness to the heart of Jesus and it certainly seems that this is the case in the narrative before us.

Notice that Jesus even said of this woman that what she had done for Him would be remembered wherever the gospel was preached...And so it is 2,000 years later. Don't ever think for a minute that your service unto the Lord Jesus goes unnoticed.

So we have seen the religious authorities and their hatred towards Jesus and then we saw this woman's love and adoration of the Lord and then we come back now to a man that goes the wrong way in life and his name is Judas Iscariot.

Look with me at verses 10-11 which say ¹⁰**Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.**

It's my opinion that as Judas watched this woman give her all unto Jesus and he had his mind on how much money it was and that she

was in his opinion wasting what she had that it was the last straw for Judas.

You know I don't know what happened to this man. Judas was with the Lord Jesus in all that He did for at least 3 years. He had seen the miracles, He had heard the teachings, He had personally ministered on behalf of the kingdom of God and yet tragically this man turned His back on the Lord.

It's amazing to me that we are told the following in John 6:70-71 early in the ministry of Jesus it says this ⁷⁰ **Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?”** ⁷¹ **He spoke of Judas Iscariot, *the son of Simon*, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.** Jesus knew all along that Judas would be the one to betray Him...and yet the Lord worked with Him and surely ministered to Him as often as He could.

As you read the Gospels you will learn that the devil put it into Judas' heart to betray Jesus and we also learn that Satan actually entered him.

Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver the price that had to be paid if an animal somehow killed a slave, while the woman had given up a valuable item in her life worth a years wages to honor the Lord.

At this point Judas is actively looking for an opportunity to betray the Lord Jesus.

Look with me at verses 12-15 which say this ¹² **Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover *lamb*, His disciples said to Him, “Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?”**

¹³ And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. ¹⁴ Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” ’ ¹⁵ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared; there make ready for us.”

The Passover meal has now come and two of the disciples came to Jesus asking where it should be prepared...and the Lord told the two that they were to go into the city and they would see a man carrying a pitcher of water and they were to follow him and he would show them a large upper room that was prepared for them.

A question that is asked is did Jesus know this supernaturally or did He prepare things ahead of time or have an arrangement made with the man? We can't be sure.

You and I might be sitting here saying weren't there many people out carrying water? The answer to that is probably yes but what was unusual was that a man would not typically carry water that was a job that women would commonly do...And so when these two disciples went out in obedience and saw a man they would have thought to themselves that this was the one.

One thought when it comes to where the meal was celebrated was that Jesus may have wanted to do this as privately as possible. In only sending two of the disciples out the others would have been surprised as far as where the location was thus making it hard for Judas at this time to betray the Lord...I mean if Judas knew ahead of time where it would be at then He could just let the authorities know and they could arrange for the arrest of Jesus.

Look at verse 16 which says ¹⁶So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover. The disciples learned this lesson multiple times in the scriptures...and the lesson was when Jesus said to do something and you chose to listen and be obedient that you would find it just as Jesus had said it would be.

That's pretty glorious really and it holds true today in that when you choose to be obedient to the call of God on your life you will find that He has already gone before you and prepared the way. These disciples discovered that everything that was needed was already in place.

I've said this multiple times from the pulpit, but I want to just remind you that serving Jesus should be the adventure of a lifetime. You and I get to see the incredible works of God as we simply remain obedient to Him and fulfill His calling on our lives.

I can think of no greater adventure than living a life that is being obedient to the calling of God. Whether that call is to be a stay at home mom or an accountant or even a missionary whatever it is that God has called you to is a venture of faith.

I can't encourage you enough today to just ask Jesus what it is that He has called you to and what is it that He would have for you as you go through life. And then be obedient to that calling.

Look at verses 17-19 which say ¹⁷In the evening He came with the twelve. ¹⁸Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me."

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, “Is it I?” And another said, “Is it I?”

You can imagine the disciples and Jesus are enjoying the meal together, they are thinking of God’s deliverance of the people of Israel from the Egyptians, **they are remembering how God commanded the Israelites to slaughter the lambs** and put the blood on the doors **and then Jesus speaks up and suddenly says “one of you who eats with Me is going to betray me.”** Can you imagine the shock in the room at hearing this?

I wonder how Jesus said this? With emotion in His voice, tears in His eyes or was it a simple declaration as He looked at each of them.

To the disciples this was impossible to believe... I think they knew that there were those that wanted the Lord dead, they had an inkling in their minds that things were hostile around them but never would one of their own turn on the Lord.

I think its kind of amazing that they all didn’t just look at Judas and know that of course it was him... instead they each said to the Lord “is it I?”

I would submit to you that while the heart of Judas was far from God that he lived his life much like everyone else did. Judas was the ultimate hypocrite... looking like a follower of Jesus on the outside and yet on the inside his heart was full of murder and betrayal.

I think you and I know that it is very easy to play the part of the hypocrite in life. There are many that name the name of Jesus and yet their actions and their lifestyles deny Jesus... There are even those that

may look moral on the outside but on the inside they are full of dead men's bones just like the Pharisees were.

This might even actually be a good response from the disciples as they had probably come to realize that they didn't even know their own hearts. It's very true that often times we don't know ourselves the way we think we do and so the disciples even asking if it was them indicates they at least had some measure of humility in their lives.

Verses 20-21 say ²⁰He answered and said to them, **"It is one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. ²¹ The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had never been born."** Can you imagine being Jesus and dipping the bread in the dish and handing it to Judas? It says in John's account that as soon as Judas took the bread that Satan entered him.

What a horrible thing to have happen that one of those closest to Jesus would betray him...Jesus even says here that he would go just as it is written of Him...You and I know the scriptures indicate in Zechariah 11 that the Messiah would be sold for 30 pieces of silver...We also know that it is prophesied of Jesus in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 that the Lord would die a brutal death on the cross. How difficult it must have been for our Lord to experience this.

Jesus even says here that it would be better for the man who betrayed him if he had not been born.

I have little hope that Judas will be seen in heaven. If you look at his response to being wrong and Peter's response to denying Jesus three times you see that they responded very differently...Judas ended up

taking his life dying a bitter death having in my opinion never repented from the wrong he had done.

So Judas is the one that will betray the Lord and as the meal continued let's see what happened next in verses 22-25 which say this

22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. 25 Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Here we have the institution of the Lord's supper as Jesus shared this with the disciples. You and I who believe should regularly partake of the Lord's supper and as we do so we should remember that the broken bread we partake of represents the body of the Lord Jesus...It is a constant reminder for us that Jesus was brutally beaten and His body was so terribly abused that you could not even recognize that Jesus was a man.

I don't think you and I can really comprehend how nasty the unfolding of His death was. We can get a picture in our minds but in reality I don't think we understand.

And then the Lord took the cup and had them drink from it and stated that the cup represented the new covenant that was found in His blood. We might be reminded that the old testament spoke often of a new agreement that God would make with humanity...An agreement

that was in the heart of a human by faith rather than through the works and efforts of a man.

The Bible speaks of this in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36:26-27 which says this ²⁶**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.** ²⁷**I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*.**

Simply said when a person comes to Jesus and places their faith in His sacrifice on their behalf just as the Israelites placed their faith in the Passover lamb and the blood that was placed on the doorposts they will find that the judgment of God passes over them and they will enter into a new spiritual life.

The Lord also let the disciples know that He would not drink of the vine again until it was drunk anew in the kingdom of God...Can you imagine taking communion with Jesus during the marriage supper of the Lamb in the future? How amazing will it be to celebrate the Lord's work on our behalf in His kingdom.

And then we have verse 26 which says this ²⁶**And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.**

Probably they sang some of the Psalms that are found in chapters 113-118 which were sung each Passover. Scholars believe it was probably the final Psalm which is 118 that was specifically sung. If so, the Psalm itself contains the following which states "the stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone" how amazing if this was what they sang for Jesus was the fulfillment of it...you can imagine the scene is changing as the disciples and Jesus

have partaken of the last supper and they now are seen heading to the Mount of Olives to a place known as the Garden of Gethsemane.

The death of Jesus is on the horizon but first He must pass through one of the most difficult trials of His life and we'll look at that next week.

Tonight if you don't know Jesus I want you to just understand that all these things we are studying that are happening to Jesus were prophesied of by the prophets hundreds and even thousands of years before Jesus came on the scene. Jesus fulfilled every prophecy. He chose to die on the cross for the sins of humanity and tonight if you need to come to Jesus and seek Him out for His love and forgiveness I would encourage you to do so.

Let me pray for us.

Mark 14:1-26 “When Worship Is Despised”

Cross References

Verses 1-2

Acts 2:22-23

1 Corinthians 5:7

John 1:29

Revelation 5:11-12

John 12:1

Verses 10-11

John 6:70-71

Verses 22-25

Ezekiel 36:26-27