

## **Sermon 116: Providence and the Cross: Luke 22:1-7**

**Text: Luke 22:1-7** "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed..."

**Summary:** Despite evil schemes, God used every detail to send Christ to the cross at the right time and to secure every blessing purchased by it.

**Proposition:** We must praise Him for His care that brought about redemption.

**Interrogative:** How can we do this?

**Part 1: The basic story: 22:1-7** "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him..."

- **Timing: 22:1** "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover..."
  - **Passover was a multi-week event:**
    - The week leading up to Passover a preparation week.
    - They selected a lamb on the 10<sup>th</sup> and then killed it on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan.
    - That evening, each family would gather to eat the lamb beginning the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.
    - The Sabbath during this festival was called a "High Holy Day" because it took place within the festival season.
    - During the Passover, the family would eat, drink, and narrate the story of the first Passover.
    - They would also sing or recite the Hallel Psalms: **Psalms 113-114** opened the meal and **Psalms 115-118** closed the meal.
  - **This was Christ's fourth Passover during His public ministry:**
    - **First: John 2** "The wedding at Cana"
    - **Second: John 5** "The Lord of the Sabbath"
    - **Third: John 6** "The Bread of Life"
    - **Fourth: John 13** "The Fulfillment of the Passover"

- **Characters: 22:2-3** "And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him...Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve..."
  - **The Chief Priests and Scribes:**
    - This body was a blend of Sadducees and Pharisees who were often very divided due to theological and political differences.
    - At the time of Christ's crucifixion, they had a pragmatic mutually beneficial relationship with the Romans.
  - **Satan:** "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot..."
    - Satan rebelled against God and led a massive rebellion against Him.
    - He is evil, calculating, and deceptive, constantly working behind the scenes to thwart God's purposes.
    - His efforts to thwart unwittingly contribute to God's ultimate purposes.
  - **Judas:** "Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve..."
    - He is the most infamous of the twelve.
    - Though he was entrusted with the disciple's resources, he was a deceiver and a thief: **John 12:6** "He cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein..."
- **Flow: 22:6-7** "And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed..."
  - **Saturday:** The anointing at Bethany and confrontation with Judas.
  - **Sunday:** The triumphal entry and Christ's return to Bethany.
  - **Monday:** The Disruption in the Temple and Christ drives out the moneychangers.
  - **Tuesday:** The Olivet Discourse with an emphasis on the destruction of the Temple and suffering. (It was likely this evening when Judas met with the religious leaders.)
  - **Wednesday:** Nothing recorded because this was likely a preparation day.
  - **Thursday:** The Passover and Upper Room Discourse

## **Part 2: The big picture:**

- **The Prophetic picture:**
  - **Looking back: Exodus 12 Exodus 12:2-14** "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you...I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of

Egypt...against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever..."

- **Passover was a judgment, and a deliverance: 12:12**  
"I will smite and execute judgment..."
- **A substitute was killed and shed its blood: 12:13**  
"When I see the blood..."
- **Deliverance came by grace through faith: 12:13** "I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you..."
- **This celebration provided an annual reminder of God's deliverance: 12:14** "This day shall be unto you for a memorial..."
- **Looking forward: John 1:29** "John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world..."
  - **The cross established a judgment, and a deliverance: Colossians 2:14-15** "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us...took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it..."
  - **Christ was the substitute who was killed and shed His blood: Galatians 3:13** "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..."
  - **Salvation comes by grace through faith: John 5:24** "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life..."
- **The Prophetic timeline: Daniel 9:24-26** "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and

the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself..."

- **The Persian King Artaxerxes commissioned the rebuilding of Jerusalem on March 4, 444BC** "From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince..."
- **Christ entered Jerusalem on the Passover week on March 30, 33 AD**
- **These two events were separated by 483 years to the day:** "Seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks..."
- **The Providential fulfillment: Galatians 4:4-5** "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons..."
  - These events occurred at the exact moment God predicted.
  - This day corresponds perfectly with the Passover instituted to point to the cross.
  - God worked meticulously in the details to bring this moment to pass.

### **Part 3: The believer's perspective:**

- **God's providence illustrated:** Studying history is like peeling apart an onion
  - The first layer is the facts of what happened.
  - The second layer is the human explanation for why things unfolded as they did.
  - The third layer is the spiritual explanation for what was going on under the surface.
  - The final layer is the purpose of God.
- **God's providence explained:**
  - **Proverbs 20:24** "Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?"
  - **Proverbs 16:33** "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD..."
  - **Proverbs 21:1** "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will..."
  - **The human side:** The secular historian can lay out a logical human explanation for what happened and why it happened.
    - **Matthew 26:1-5** "When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called

Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people..."

- **The spiritual side:** There is more going on than what you see on the surface.
  - **Ephesians 6:12** "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places..."
  - **Luke 22:3-6** "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude..."
- **The grand purposes of God:** God is working in history to accomplish His purposes.
  - **Passover 1: John 2:4** "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come..."
  - **Passover 3:**
    - **John 7:30** "Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come..."
    - **John 8:20** "These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come..."
  - **Passover 4:**
    - **Triumphal Entry: John 12:23** "Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified..."
    - **Upper Room: John 16:32** "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come..."
    - **Before the Betrayal: John 17:1** "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee..."
- **Your duties:**
  - **Opportunities:** Each person in the story had legitimate opportunity.
  - **Influences:** Each was influenced by his own self-interests.
  - **Choices:** Each had the freedom to make his own choices, made those choices, experienced the consequences of those choices, and still played a part in God accomplishing His purpose.

- **God's grace: 1 Corinthians 15:9-10** "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain..."
  - **Peter:**
  - **Three thousand converted at Pentecost:**
  - **Saul of Tarsus:**

#### **Part 4: Applying these truths:**

**To the non-Christian:** Turn to Christ and place your faith in His cross.

- Consider God's meticulous care that provided redemption.
- Consider the extent of His patience as He waited for that day.
- Consider the wasted opportunities of those who rejected Him.
- Consider the weight of the tragedy that came on those who rejected Him.
- Consider the miracle of the conversion of Saul and the multitude at Pentecost.

**To the believer:** Praise Him for His care that brought about your redemption.

- Rest in His meticulous care.
- Rest in His patience and love.
- Thank Him for the countless opportunities He has given.
- Thank Him for His grace that has lifted you up when you have fallen.
- Thank Him for the cross and everything it proclaims and accomplished.
- Thank Him for your salvation.