



The Last Supper Luke 22:1-38

Introduction

The last days of Jesus' life on earth were filled with resolute activity and teaching, fulfilling prophetic scripture and unfolding God's preordained redemptive plan. As Savior of the world (1 John 4:14), Jesus would sacrifice His perfect life on the cross and triumphantly shout, "*It is finished!*"

Outline of Luke 22:1-30

- I. The Passover and Preceding Events- Luke 22:1-13
- II. The Last Supper - Luke 22:14-16, 21-38
- III. The Lord's Supper Instituted - Luke 22:17-30

I. The Passover and Preceding Events- Luke 22:1-13

- A. The Feast, the Plot, and the Anointing - Luke 22:1-6; Matthew 26:1-5
 1. Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread - Luke 22:1; Exodus 12:1-20

Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover. The Passover was observed with a sacrifice and memorial meal, followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread which lasted seven days. Together they constituted the most important of the three great annual festivals of Israel when the nation gathered in Jerusalem. It began the cycle of seven annual feasts (Leviticus 23).

- a. Remembering the Exodus - Exodus 12:2

The Passover commemorated God's miraculous deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt. The angel of death passed over the land and every home that did not have the blood of the lamb on the doorpost suffered the death of the firstborn. God's striking the firstborn of every Egyptian family led to Israel's exodus (Exodus 12).

- b. The sacrificial lamb - Exodus 12:5

To be delivered from the death of the firstborn, God required each family to sacrifice a young male lamb without defect. It was to be slain and eaten totally. None of it was to remain until morning, for in the morning they would be gone.

- c. The meal - Exodus 12:8

The lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The unleavened bread would remind them of their quick exit from Egypt after four hundred years. The bitter herbs were a reminder of the bitterness of slavery. They were to eat it fully clothed and prepared to leave.

- d. Blood applied - Exodus 12:7

The blood of the sacrificed lamb was to be applied on the two doorposts and the lintel. It was the sign which would avert the death angel's visit.

- e. No leaven - Exodus 12:15

All leaven was to be removed from the homes and for seven days following Passover, no leaven was to be eaten. The penalty for disobedience was exclusion from the community.

2. Plot to kill Jesus - Luke 22:2; Matthew 26:4; Mark 14:1-2

The chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill Him, for they feared the people. The plot to kill Jesus was conceived early in His ministry.

- a. The problem - Luke 22:2

The problem was how and when. The powerful priests and scribes knew it must be soon or Jesus would be unstoppable. But, they said, "*not during the feast*" (Matthew 26:5). *They were afraid of the people* (Mark 14:2).

- b. Reason to kill Him - John 11:47-50

The apostle John gives insight into their reason. They were envious. "*This man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.*" Even Caiaphas, the high priest, said more prophetically than he knew, that it was expedient "*that one man should die for the people, and not the whole nation perish.*"

3. Anointing by Mary - Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:2-8

Meanwhile, quite a different scene was taking place in Bethany. A few days before Passover, there was a

gathering in the house of Simon the leper (Matthew 26:6). Actually, he was a former leper. (How would you describe yourself in terms of what you were delivered from?)

Mary of Bethany broke an alabaster container of expensive perfume called spikenard and poured it over Jesus' head and feet. Then she proceeded to wipe them with her hair. (This is a separate occasion from the one in Luke 7.) Such devotion would undoubtedly arouse strong emotions of either agreement or antipathy.

- a. Judas' complaint - Mark 14:4-5; John 12:4-6

Judas took exception and asked, "*Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denari, and given to the poor?*" He had quickly calculated the cost but he cared nothing for the poor. Judas was the treasurer for the disciples and John reveals that he was stealing from the money bag (John 12:6).

- b. Jesus' defense of Mary - John 12:7

Jesus quickly defended her. First, there would always be opportunity to take care of the poor. The issue was not about Mary or the poor. Secondly, her act of devotion was preparation for His burial whether or not she fully understood it (Matthew 26:12). Thirdly, it was an action worthy of remembrance throughout the ages, along with the gospel of His life and death.

Acts of devotion to Jesus are always memorable and inspirational. How many of your actions might touch the heart of Jesus or be worthy of remembrance?

- 4. Judas possessed by Satan - Luke 22:3-6

- a. He went his way to the chief priests - verse 4

A person's downfall never occurs suddenly. There are always predisposing causes and a history of smaller failures. Judas had been pilfering from the money bag and he had a critical spirit. Was he disappointed in Jesus because He never seemed to take advantage of the popular movement to make Him king or recognize Him as Messiah? Had Judas grown impatient? Did he think he could force Jesus to make a move toward political power? Whatever his thoughts, they gave an opening to Satan who entered into him. "There is therefore discernible in Judas an amazing fusion of divine sovereignty and human free will...Jesus must suffer; but Judas need not have been the traitor; he opened the door to Satan (John 13:27)" (The New Bible Commentary, Davidson and Stibbs, editors).

- b. Money for His betrayal - Luke 22:5-6; Matthew 26:15

The religious leaders gladly agreed to give Judas money. The price they agreed upon was the price of a slave, thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15). It is said that everyone has his price. For thirty pieces of silver Judas sold his soul. Thirty pieces of silver was also the price prophesied in Zechariah 11:12. "*Then I said to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not refrain.' So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver.*" Money was Judas' god. Is it yours?

- B. Preparation for the Last Supper - Luke 22:7-13

Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed.

- 1. Peter and John sent - 22:8-9

Jesus sent two of the apostles to prepare for the Passover meal. They asked, "*Where do You want us to prepare?*" Jesus gave them instructions.

- 2. The man with the pitcher of water - 22:10

The last few hours Jesus would have with His disciples had arrived. It was to be a time of uninterrupted fellowship. He knew that even then Judas was conferring with the leaders. He knew His hour had come but He was in full control. He sent Peter and John on an important errand. They were to go into the city, find a man carrying a water pitcher, and follow him into the house Jesus had chosen.

- 3. The right words - 22:11-13

Jesus gave them the exact words to say, and when they said them the man showed them an upper room, perhaps a safeguard against a surprise intrusion. They prepared the Passover meal.

II. The Last Supper - Luke 22:14-16, 21-38

When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

Every moment was precious, yet the Lord was unhurried. "*With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.*"

- A. Jesus' Last Meal with the Twelve - Luke 22:16

"For I say to you I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." The first feast given to Israel by God was the last feast Jesus ate with His disciples. It

is hard to believe that His poignant statement triggered another round of dispute as to who would be greatest in the kingdom.

B. Settling Dispute over the Greatest - Luke 22:24-30

Contention arose and Jesus moved quickly to settle it with two main points.

1. Kings of the Gentiles - 22:25

"*The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors'.*" The kind of dominance they wanted was found in the ungodly world and was misunderstood even there.

2. "Not so among you" - 22:26-28

The disciples were supposed to be different, just as Jesus' kingdom is different. They were already different by continuing with Him in testing and trials. In Jesus' kingdom, the greater becomes as the younger and the chief as the server. Jesus verified His statement, "*I am among you as the One who serves.*"

3. Coming kingdom - 22:29-30

Furthermore, Jesus had appointed them a kingdom and they would eat and drink with Him in His kingdom. They would sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. To help them understand, He gave them a powerful example.

C. Jesus' Servant Role - John 13:1-20

John's gospel gives an intimate look at the heart of Jesus. Jesus loved His disciples and He served them. Normally there would have been a servant present at the meal, but perhaps to preserve the privacy of the occasion, no servant was present to wash their feet. They all sat uncomfortably with dusty feet, perhaps wondering who would do it. Jesus did.

After all were served, Jesus took a towel and a basin of water and proceeded around the table to wash His disciples' feet.

1. Peter's protest and submission - John 13:7-10

When Jesus came to Peter, he drew back and said, "*Lord, are You washing my feet?...You shall never wash my feet!*" Jesus explained that unless he submitted to the humbling act, he could have no part with Him. That convinced the impulsive Peter who said, "*Lord, not my*

feet only but also my hands and my head" Jesus told him that was unnecessary.

2. Christ's example - John 13:15

Jesus explained that He had set the example. They were to do likewise and serve one another in love. Some groups and churches observe literal footwashing. Whether or not this is what is meant, the example of servanthood is surely meant. Do you understand how to be a servant? What can you do to be a servant to another? It has been said that a servant's heart is one that desires to make someone else successful.

D. Betrayer's Dismissal - Luke 22:21-23; Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21; John 13:21-22.

Jesus needed to dismiss the betrayer so only His faithful ones would be in the room for the institution of a new festival known as communion, the Lord's Supper, or the Lord's Table. He drew Judas out by mentioning there was a betrayer among them. Prophecy must be fulfilled. "*Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me*" (Psalm 41:9). Still, it did not have to be Judas.

1. Disciples' application to themselves - Luke 22:23; Matthew 26:22

It is noteworthy that not one of the disciples suspected Judas. Each was more concerned that he not be the one. They all asked, "*Lord, is it I?*" When Judas too asked, "*Rabbi, is it I?*" Jesus answered, "*You have said it*" (Matthew 26:25).

2. Judas' departure - John 13:27-30

Jesus said it would be one who dipped his bread in the dish with Him. They all did this, but when Judas dipped, Jesus spoke to him, "*What you do, do quickly.*" When Judas left the room, the others thought Jesus had given him an errand to do. In John's words, he *went out immediately. And it was night.* Judas who had walked with the Light of the World, would never see light again. He is the only one of whom Jesus said it would be better if he had not been born.

E. Peter's Warning - Luke 22:31-34; Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31

1. Satan's plan - 22:31

Satan was not finished with the disciples. Jesus warned Peter, using his old name, "*Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.*"

2. Jesus' prayer - 22:32

"But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." That is what Jesus is doing constantly now for us as our High Priest. He is praying for you and for every believer just as He did for Peter (Hebrews 4:14-16).

3. Peter's self-confidence - 22:33

Peter was the spokesman for the disciples, and often for us too. He was confident of his own abilities, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." He thought he could do whatever was required. How soon he would crumble.

4. Cock's crow - 22:34

Jesus' next words would haunt him. "I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me."

F. Resources - Luke 22:35-38

Jesus asked if they had lacked anything when He had sent them out to minister without Him.

1. Lacking nothing - 22:35-36

They remembered they had lacked nothing. He let them know that it would be all right now to take provisions and include a weapon. This was a warning to put them on guard to dangerous situations looming ahead. Christians today should always remember that we are engaged in spiritual warfare. But we should never forget that God has provided weapons for warfare as well (Ephesians 6:10-18). Those weapons are not carnal or fleshly. They are spiritual and powerful enough to tear down Satan's strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4).

2. Prophecy concerning His arrest - 22:37

"For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me, 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.'" Jesus quoted Isaiah 53:12.

3. Two swords - 22:38

They produced two swords and Jesus knew they had heard Him even though they did not understand. In what way will you obey the Lord Jesus today even though you may not understand all that He is doing?

III. The Lord's Supper Instituted - Luke 22:17-30; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25

A. Complicated Chronology

1. Complexity of events

It seems that many events coincide at this time in the Savior's life. Part of the confusion concerning these last hours is that so much happened in such a short time, all of it very dramatic and highly intense. All four gospel writers give their accounts, and like any four witnesses to an event today, each one is somewhat different from the others. Does this mean they contradict each other? No, but each reports from his own perspective. This is a great example of the doctrine of inspiration. The Holy Spirit inspired them and guided them into all truth without violating their own memories or personalities (John 16:13).

2. Jewish reckoning of time

I. Howard Marshall comments, "The chronology of these days is highly complicated, and some brief clarification must be given. The two feasts of the Passover and Unleavened Bread were closely linked. The former was celebrated on Nisan 15 with a solemn supper at the beginning of the day, i.e. in the evening, for the Jews regarded the new day as beginning at sunset rather than at midnight. The preparations for this feast, including the slaughter of the lambs, took place earlier in the afternoon of the same day by our reckoning; but this was in fact the end of Nisan 14 by Jewish reckoning. The feast of Unleavened Bread ran from Nisan 15 to 21 inclusive, both of these days being reckoned as special festival sabbaths (Leviticus 23:4-8). According to Mark, Jesus held His Passover supper at the normal time on Nisan 15 and died later on that same Jewish day (which was of course the following day, Friday, by our reckoning)" (Daily Devotional Bible Commentary).

3. Harmonizing the events

To grasp the order of events, two books are very helpful. One is A Harmony of the Gospels by A.T. Robertson. The other is The Life of Christ in Stereo by Johnston M. Cheney. These lessons rely frequently on those two works for harmonization of the Scriptures.

B. Institution of the Lord's Supper - Luke 22:17-18

1. After Judas' exit

Only Luke tells of Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper as a separate part of the Last Supper. This took place after Judas had left.

2. Passing the cup - 22:17-18

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." They were all to drink as it went around the table where they were reclining in mid-eastern fashion. They may have thought their next meal with Him would be after He set up His kingdom in a day or two.

Traditionally, four cups of wine were taken in the course of the Passover meal. This was either the last one or an additional one. Jews diluted their wine with water. Wine naturally ferments at eleven percent alcohol. However, wine today is often processed for a higher alcohol content. But Jesus called it *the fruit of the vine*, which could mean simply grape juice.

C. Meaning of the Bread and Cup - Luke 22:19-20

1. Symbol or mysticism

And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you." At this point, Christians divide into at least three, if not four, views about communion.

a. Symbolic

Evangelicals for the most part take a symbolical view of the elements, bread and wine, at communion. This means they are meant to remind us of the cost of our redemption, the body and blood of our Lord. Nothing mystical happens to the bread and wine. They are not changed in any way. The faith of the person partaking of them is the vital element.

b. Transubstantiation

The position of the Roman Catholic Church is that the elements actually change into the real body and blood of Jesus, although this cannot be scientifically confirmed. This doctrine was enacted by the Council of Trent in 1551. "Through the consecration of the bread and wine there comes about a conversion of the whole substance of the bread (and the wine) into the substance of the body (and blood) of our Lord" (Historical Theology, An Introduction, Geoffrey Bromiley). This view was most recently affirmed for Catholics in 1965 in the encyclical Mysterium Fidei following the Second Vatican Council.

c. Consubstantiation

Simply put, the Lutheran Church and some others believe that something mystical happens and the glorified human nature of Jesus is spiritually present

"in, with, and under" the bread and wine (See Eerdmans Handbook to Christian Belief, Robin Keeley, editor).

2. The common applications

While there may be differences in belief concerning the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, there are applications common to all who believe.

a. The new covenant

"This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." With these words Jesus instituted the new covenant and an ongoing memorial which, together with baptism, unites believers in the universal Church of Jesus Christ. Paul describes it in detail to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 where he says that the Lord Himself revealed this to him.

b. Christ, our Passover Lamb

The New Testament reveals that the Passover lamb is a picture, or foreshadowing, of the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist called Him, *"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"* (John 1:29) and the apostle Peter referred to Him as *the lamb without blemish and without spot* (1 Peter 1:19). The apostle Paul wrote that *all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, but...all who believe...are justified freely...through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood* (Romans 3:22-26). It is through Christ's blood, shed on the cross, that we are saved and counted as righteous in God's sight. *For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us* (1 Corinthians 5:7). Christ is our Passover Lamb. Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul calls believers to observe the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner, for as often as we eat the bread and drink of the cup we do two things. We *proclaim the Lord's death*, and we look forward to His return, *till He comes* (1 Corinthians 11:26).

Applications

1. Is the blood of Jesus Christ applied to your heart by faith so that you have nothing to fear from death (John 5:24)? If so, what is it that gives you this confidence? If not, will you confess your sin to Him today and trust in Him by faith for forgiveness and eternal life?
2. Do you trust in your own strength to remain true to Christ or do you rely on the Holy Spirit and His power within you? What needs to change in your life in this regard? How will you invite and initiate the changes?
3. Is the Lord's Supper a time of recommitment for you, when you remember His death and look forward to His return? How has the Lord's Supper taken on new meaning since studying about it through these lessons? Who will you share that with today?

QUESTIONS

Questions are based on the New King James Version of the Bible.

DAY ONE: Read lesson notes and references.

1. a. What is meant by "*Christ, our Passover*"? (Remember 1 Corinthians 5:7.)

b. What does it mean to you that Christ is your Passover?

2. a. What Jewish person do you know who might be interested to learn that Christ is the Passover lamb? What can you share with that person?

b. Will you pray for an opportunity to share this fact soon?

3. ? (Thought Question) As you understand it, distinguish between the Passover meal, the Last Supper and the Lord's Supper.
The Passover meal is -

The Last Supper was -

The Lord's Supper is -

4. Do all believers celebrate the Lord's Supper in the same way? If not, name some differences.

DAY TWO: Read John 14. (John 14 recalls Jesus' teaching in the Upper Room.)

5. a. What did Thomas ask Jesus?

b. What was Jesus' answer? Give verse.

6. a. What did Philip want Jesus to do?

b. In answering Philip, what did Jesus reveal?

7. a. What promises for believers do you find in John 14? Give verses.

b. Which promise is especially meaningful to you today? Why?

8. Comparing John 14:31 with Matthew 26:30, what was the last thing they did in the Upper Room?

DAY THREE: Read John 15. (Jesus may have spoken this as He was walking along with His disciples.)

9. a. How was Israel replaced as the vine?

b. Who are the branches?

10. a. What do branches do?

b. ♥(Heart Question) Are you a branch? Describe yourself as a branch.

11. a. What is Jesus' commandment?

b. How do you think He means for us to do this?

12. a. What is a believer's relationship to the world?

b. As a Christian, what can you expect from the world? Why?

DAY FOUR: Read John 16.

13. a. According to Jesus, why was it better that He go away?

b. Where was He going? Give verse.

c. Do you think the disciples knew what He meant? Give reasons for your answer.

14. a. What was confusing to the disciples? Give verses.

b. What did Jesus promise them in 16:22?

c. What does Jesus promise us in 16:24?

d. ♥(Heart Question) How can you "cash" this promise like a check today?

15. What is the bad news and the good news in John 16:33?

DAY FIVE: Read Luke 22:39-46; Matthew 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42.

16. a. Why did Jesus go to the Mount of Olives?

b. What did He ask His disciples to do?

c. What did the disciples do (or not do)?

d. Do you ever do this?

17. a. ? (Thought Question) By comparing the three gospels, how many times did Jesus go back to the disciples and then return to prayer?

b. What did He ask Peter?

c. Do you think He wanted the disciples to pray for themselves or for Him? Explain your answer.

18. a. What did Jesus need to pray about so earnestly?

b. What does Luke (who was a doctor) tell us about the deep intensity and physical strain of Jesus' prayer that the others gospels omit?

c. What help did Jesus receive?

d. What decision did He make through prayer?

DAY SIX: Read Luke 22:47-53; Matthew 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52; John 18:2-12.

19. Who approached as Jesus and the disciples were leaving?

20. What act of mercy did Jesus perform even as He was being betrayed?