

## **Matthew 26:17-35** **The Passover Meal**

Alright today our focus is on verses 17 through 35 of Matthew chapter 26. Just spending time in review from the last time we opened up the chapter. We are in the fourth part of Matthew's Gospel, Matthew chapter 26 and 27, The Crucifixion of Christ. In Chapter 26 it is focused on The Preparation of the Crucifixion.

We saw last time in verses 1 through 5, The Plan of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin is the Council of the Jews, both religious and political. People hold office on this Council, seventy-one of them, and they are like our Supreme Court.

Jesus mentioned in verses 1 and 2, **After two days the Passover takes place, and the Son of Man is being given over for to be crucified.** This is fourth time He has told them that He is going to be crucified. Now He is more pointed. He says, **After two days.**

And the Sanhedrin gets together in verses 3 to 5, **They took counsel in order that they might seize Jesus by deceit and kill Him.** Remember that this is the Passover week. And there are approximately two million Jews in Jerusalem that are pilgrims coming from different countries, different parts of the world, to keep the Passover. The Sanhedrin wants to kill Jesus, they want to Jesus out of the way; but they are hard pressed to take Him because the crowd loves Him, so they have to be careful. They said - **taking counsels in order to seize Jesus by deceit and kill Him - but not in the feast in order that there should not be rioting among the people.**

**So while Jesus was in Bethany,** that is a town or village just outside of Jerusalem, He spent His nights there. **A woman came near to Him with an alabaster flask of ointment, very precious. And poured it upon His head, while He was reclining. And when the disciples saw it, they said, This could have been sold and given to the poor.** We know from the Gospel of John - we studied how it was about one year's wages, about 300 days wages poured out upon Jesus. And the disciples said, "What a waste. It could have been given to the poor."

Again, we saw from the Gospel of John, that the disciples were not concerned about the poor. In fact, Judas Iscariot - who was the one who was going to betray Jesus; Judas Iscariot was the treasurer of the group of the disciples. **And Judas Iscariot was a thief,** John says, and he had the box or the bag with the money in it. And all he cared about was putting money inside that bag so he can pilfer it. Instead he put up this big front saying, "It could have been sold and given to the poor. What a waste."

**But Jesus said, Why do you trouble this woman? For she has done a good work toward Me. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me. For having poured this ointment upon My body, she did it for to bury Me. Truly I say to you, Wherever this gospel should be proclaimed in the whole world, also what she did will be spoken of for a memorial of her.** So she sees by the influence of the Holy Spirit that Jesus is about to die. And so she comes and she pours oil on Him as a memorial to Him for His death.

And for her to pour out 300 denarii worth of ointment is nothing compared to her love for the Lord. With her great love for Him she poured it out upon Him.

**Then Judas, being frustrated with all of this, he went to the chief priests, and said, What are you willing to give to me, and I will deliver Him over to you? And they appointed to him thirty pieces of silver, which was the amount given for a slave. And from then he was seeking opportunity in order that he might deliver Him over.** He knew where Jesus would be alone, and he was seeking for opportunity to go report to the Sanhedrin where to find Jesus.

For today at verse 17, verses 17 through 19, The Preparation of the Passover.

Verses 17 to 19, The Commandment for the Preparation. **And the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came near to Jesus, saying to Him, Where do You desire we should prepare for You to eat the Passover?** Now the Passover feasts are described in Exodus chapter 12, that is where we get our instructions concerning the feast. Passover was one day. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was seven days. The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed the Passover, so eight days you had two feasts right in a row. Passover one day, Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days. And so, the Jews they would combine, since they are both right together, they would combine it as an eight-day feast, Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. So the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is actually Passover. And so they are asking Jesus, **Where You desire us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?** Interesting they ask Him, they do not take charge. And they do not say, "We will do it for You." They ask Him directions, how would He want it done?

Verse 18, **And He said, Go to the city to the certain one** (definite article in the Greek text) **to the certain one and say to him.** Now the other Gospel writers say, "There will be a man carrying a pitcher," a pitcher of water. You might say out of two million people in Jerusalem it would be kind of hard to pick out one man with a pitcher of water and know that he is the one. Except that men did not carry pictures of water, the women did. Here is a man carrying a pitcher of water. And He says, **Say to him, the Teacher says, My time is near; and with you I am making the Passover with My disciples.** So He was telling them, it is as if it is a situation that has already been set up. This man obviously is a disciple of Jesus. So they went into town, verse 19, **And the disciples did as Jesus directed them, and prepared the Passover,** in this man's home.

Now the instruction in Exodus chapter 12 was that the lamb should be taken and killed. There are over two hundred thousand lambs killed during this Passover week in Jerusalem. The instruction was to take a lamb and kill it. And take the blood of the lamb and put it over the doorpost. That is back in Exodus. Spread the blood over the doorposts, then cook the lamb and eat it, all of it. There can be as much as one lamb per 10 people. They were to do this so that the angel of death would pass over. That is where the Passover comes from, the angel of death would pass over the houses with the blood on the door posts but kill the firstborn of the Egyptians. So if a house did not have the blood over the doorpost the angel of death would kill the firstborn as a judgment against the Egyptians for not letting Israel go.

So The Passover Meal itself now in verses 20 through 30. The Condemnation of Judas in verses 20 to 25. **When it became evening, He was reclining with the Twelve.** Not sitting, reclining. They reclined at the table. They laid out at the table, and put one elbow on the table and that is how they sat around the table and ate their meal. **When it became evening, He was reclining with the Twelve. And while they were eating, He said, Truly I say to you that one of you will deliver Me over. And being grieved exceedingly, they began to say to Him, each of them, not I am he, am I Lord?**

So one after the other each of them said, "It is not me, is it Lord?" No one knew that there was anything wrong with Judas. They had been with Judas for three years traveling with Jesus. And Judas has already contracted for thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus and they did not know it was Judas. In fact, each of them in succession said, "It is not I? I am not he, am I Lord?" In the Greek text - the reason why it is worded the way it is in your text is because in the Greek text it is expecting the answer no. "Not I am he, am I Lord?" I am not the one, am I? Looking for the Lord to affirm that indeed they were not the ones.

Jesus chose Judas because he was evil. He was a demon. We saw that in John chapter 6 verse 69 through 71. **Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a demon?** He was of the devil to begin with when Jesus chose him, because he needed someone evil to carry out the prophecy and to fulfill the purpose at hand. He was of the devil from the beginning. So they went down the row, except for Judas. Judas was not in the group who said, "Is it me Lord?"

Verse 23, **But having answered, He said, The one having dipped the hand with Me in the dish, this one will deliver Me over.** This is a dish of bitter herbs that were shared around the Passover meal. Each person would - they did not have silverware at the time, but each person would take a piece of bread and dip into the bitter herbs and eat and then pass the dish along.

What is interesting is that in John chapter 13 verses 23 to 27 Peter asks John, "Ask the Lord who it is." And Jesus gave the piece of bread, dipped it, and gave it to Judas. So Peter and John were privy to who it was. The others at table still apparently were not. All of this about dipping the hand with Me in the dish this one will deliver Me over is a fulfillment of Psalm 41:9.

Jesus goes on to say verse 24, **Indeed, the Son of Man goes, according as it is written concerning Him. But woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is being delivered over. It was good for him if that man was not born.** Whoever does this will be fulfilling prophecy, because the Son of Man goes according as it is written of Him. But on the other hand, the person who does it is still responsible. Jesus did not force Judas to betray him. Verse 25, **And having answered, Judas, the one delivering Him over, said, "Not I am he, am I Rabbi?"** Interesting that he finally asked the same question the others asked. Except the others said, "It is not me, is it Lord?" He answered with *Rabbi*. **Not I am he, am I Rabbi?** Again, looking for the negative answer but he did not call him *Lord*, he called Him *Rabbi*. And Jesus says to him, "You yourself has said." In John chapter 13 verse 27 it tells us that Satan entered Judas at this time. Satan actually entered Judas at this time, and the Lord told him to go immediately, go quickly whatever you are going to do, do it quickly. And it was at this time the Judas got up and left the Passover meal.

The Commandments for the Passover Meal. **And while they were eating, having taking the bread, and having blessed it, Jesus broke and was giving to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body.** So He is taking the matzah bread from the Passover meal. As Paul said in I Corinthians chapter 5 verse 7 that Jesus is our Passover lamb. So He says, "Take this matzah bread and eat it, this is My body." **And having taken the cup, and having giving thanks, He gave to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you. For this is my this is My blood of the New Covenant which concerning many is being shed for the remission of sins.**

*This My blood of the New Covenant* - this is all according to Jeremiah chapter 31 verse 31. **Behold, the days come, says the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.** So Jeremiah 31 God proclaimed a new covenant would be coming. The word *new* - **My blood of the New Covenant** - does not mean brand-new, it means *revised* or *restored*. So here it means to fulfill the old. This is a New Covenant that God promised and is now being fulfilled.

Then He says, **For this is My blood of the New Covenant which concerning many is being shed or poured out for the remission of sins.** That is parallel to Isaiah chapter 53 verse 12 where God says, **Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he has poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.** So both Jeremiah chapter 31 verse 31 and Isaiah chapter 53 verse 12 are all fulfilled in parallel to verse 28.

Jesus said, **But I say unto you, in verse 29, I will never drink of this fruit of the vine after this, until that day whenever I drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father.** So this would be at His second coming. He says, This is the last time I will drink this cup with you, but I will drink it again new, at His second coming. **And after having sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.**

The Jews sang the Hallel Psalms during Passover week, and especially during the Passover meal. The Hallel Psalms are Psalms 113-118. And so they sang it during the Passover meal. And at the close they sang Psalm 118, the last Psalm of this group. So this verse tells us that after having sung a hymn they went out into the Mount of Olives.

Then we come to verses 31 to 35, The Pride of Peter beginning with The Conduct of the Disciples. **Then Jesus says to them, You will all be offended Me in this night. For it has been written, "I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."** That is a quote from Zechariah chapter 13 verse 7. Jesus did not say this in a condemning way. He says it has already been prophesied that when the Shepherd is struck the sheep will scatter. It is a natural response, a natural reaction. It is a matter-of-fact comment, not a condemnation of the disciples.

**But after My resurrection, I will go before you into Galilee. And having answered, Peter said to Him, Even if all will be offended in You, I myself will never be offended.** So basically, what he is saying is that prophecy is wrong. "Jesus You are wrong in your matter-of-

fact presentation because I will never be offended in You." Interesting he uses the double negative, I will never, I myself will never be offended. **Jesus says to him, Truly I say to you, in this night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. Peter says to Him, Even if it is necessary for me to die with You, I will never deny You! Also, all the disciples said likewise.** So all the disciples chimed in and said, "Well Peter is not the only one. We will not deny you either, Lord." There is a difference between denial and betrayal.

Judas was of the devil. He was demonic, yet he participated, and looked, and acted, and talked just like all the rest of the disciples for three years to the point that they could not tell the difference. When Jesus said, "One of you is going to betray Me, one of you is against Me," the disciples did not know who it was. And it was not that Judas was a disciple that went bad or did wrong, he was he was of the devil to begin with. He was chosen by the Lord to perform this purpose according to prophecy.

But Peter is another example of the denial of Jesus. He did not betray Jesus, he is just full of pride. "The Lord can always count on me. I will never be offended in Him." And yet Jesus said, "Before the rooster crows you are going to deny Me three times." Again, Peter repeats, "Not me!" And the disciples said, "Not us either." And we will see that Peter will deny Him. The other gospel writers tell us that Jesus says to him, "Satan desires to sift you like wheat, but I will pray that your faith will not fail you." Faith did not fail Peter, Jesus kept him the whole time. He let Peter fail, let Peter see who he is really made of, and then Peter was later restored. There is a difference between betrayal and denial.

Alright, we will continue next week. Let's close with prayer.