



Jesus has come to Jerusalem and confronted all of the religious leaders there.

- They have rejected Him
- He has pronounced judgment on them and the nation of Israel by describing the events that will take place when Jerusalem will be destroyed some forty years into the future.
- The last scene sees Judas plotting with the Jewish leadership to betray Jesus into their hands.

We've divided these final events into the different days of that last week.

- So far we have looked at the events that took place from Sunday to Wednesday.
- In this chapter we pick up the story on Thursday morning as Jesus prepares for the Passover meal.

Thursday – April 6th

129. Disciples sent to prepare Passover meal

Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13

The Passover meal was coming on the following day (which would begin that evening).

- Jesus sends Peter and John to go ahead and prepare the meal.
- He tells them that they are to go into the city and they will find a man carrying water (easy to spot since women usually did this work)
- This person would lead them to the room where they were to prepare the feast.
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Preparing meant to provide the lamb sacrificed at the temple and meat cooked, unleavened bread, bitter herbs (cucumber, lettuce in bitter dressing), wine, as well as cushions, cups, plates, water and towels for the foot washing courtesy.

Jesus knew they would find the man. Some say He had prepared in advance but the text suggests that the Lord used His divine knowledge to prepare all of this.



Friday – April 7th

130. Jesus eats the Passover with Apostles

Matthew 26:20-25; Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:17-21; Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:14; Luke 22:21-38

Each gospel writer describes this key event and each places some details in different order. Matthew and John were there so in combining their accounts this seems to be the way it took place on that night.

1. Jesus gathers the twelve in the upper room in order to celebrate the Passover.

2. Peter and John had set up the dinner and had taken their places nearest to Jesus. As a result a dispute breaks out as to who is the greatest.
 - Jesus tells them that the greatest are those who serve and He promises them that they will be in the kingdom.
3. After this teaching He takes the water and towel set up for foot washing and washes all of their feet, including Judas'.
 - The water and the towel were used by a slave to wash guests' feet.
 - None of the Apostles wanted to lower themselves to render this courtesy to one another.
 - Jesus does so in order to demonstrate His point about servanthood.
4. After taking His place at the table, He indicates that there is a betrayer among them.
 - He shows Peter and John who this is by offering Judas a piece of bread dipped into the bitter herbs.
 - After this, Judas leaves the room.
5. After Judas leaves, Jesus prays for the Apostles and what they will do after His death.
 - He prays for Peter to be safe from Satan's attacks.
 - He foretells their abandonment of Him and how He will restore them.
 - He tells them that He will meet them again in Galilee.
 - All of these things take place as they are sharing the traditional Passover meal.

131. Jesus initiates the Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:15-20

During the time of Jesus the Jews would eat the Passover in the following way:

- The meat represented the sacrifice slain on their behalf.
- The bitter herbs represented their bitter experience in Egypt.
- The unleavened bread represented the haste in which they left.
- The wine represented two things: the blood shed in Egypt and the good life in the Promised Land.

- The leader of the household would offer prayers, eat and drink the 4 cups of wine and others would follow his lead.
- At some point a child would ask why they did this and the leader would retell the story of the Jewish exodus from Egypt.

Jesus served as leader and led them through the meal. Once the food was gone and there remained only one piece of unleavened bread and the final cup of wine to drink, He changed the significance of the meal.

- From now on the bread would represent His body offered up for sin.
- From now on the wine would represent His blood shed to obtain life for sinners.

This memorial meal would no longer remember the Jews' freedom from Egyptian bondage, it would now commemorate their own personal freedom from the bondage of sin, because of His body and blood.

132. Farewell address and prayer

John 14:1-17:26

This is the longest uninterrupted passage where Jesus speaks that is contained in the New Testament.

This long prayer and exhortation was given while they were standing (John 14:31) in the upper room. In it He covers many things:

- An assurance that He is the way to heaven and He will prepare a place for them.
- A guarantee that their requests to God in His name will be answered.
- A promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit to comfort and teach them.
- An exhortation to remain faithful and fruitful and draw strength from Him as a branch draws from the vine.
- A warning of future persecutions.
- An explanation of what the Holy Spirit will do for and in them when He comes (convict, comfort, inspire).

- An encouragement not to quit when they are rejected by the world, that He will be with them and give them peace (at this point they all confess their faith in Him).
- A prayer to God on their behalf so that God will unite, protect and glorify Himself through them.

Once He finishes this long discourse they sing the Hallel (Psalms 115-118) and depart from the upper room.

133. The agony and betrayal in the garden

Matthew 26:30; Matthew 26:36-56; Mark 14:26; Mark 14:32-52; Luke 22:39-53; John 18:1-12



The Mount of Olives on the east side of Jerusalem was covered with olive trees and had an olive press where the oil was made (Gethsemane=olive press).

Jesus takes His Apostles there to pray with Him during His final hours.

- He brings Peter, James and John more deeply into the garden and then finds Himself a secluded spot to pray.
- Three times He returns to find the Apostles sleeping while He agonized in prayer concerning what was to take place.

His prayer is so intense He sweats blood and eventually accepts (His human nature does) the will of the Lord for His crucifixion.

- In the meantime Judas has rendezvoused with the Jewish leadership and they have made their way from the city to the garden to come and seize Him
- Judas kisses Jesus to indicate which of the men they were to arrest.
- Peter lops off the ear of one of the men there (Malchus) and Luke says Jesus healed Him (His last miracle).
- The mob takes Him away while the Apostles scatter to their safety.
- Peter and John follow the mob to see what will happen.

134. Jesus before the High Priest

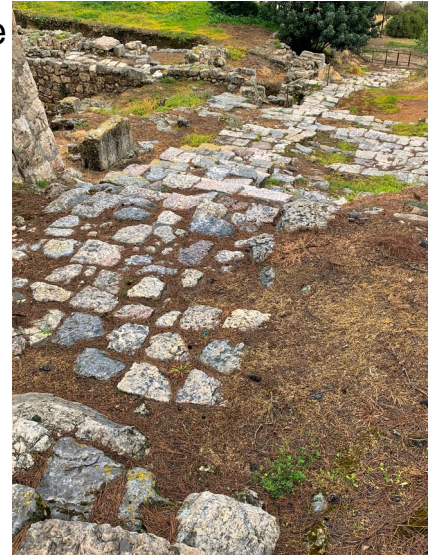
Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-72; Luke 22:54-71; John 18:13-27

At first Jesus is brought before Annas, Caiaphas the High Priest's father.

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- Eventually a council is convened in the middle of the night with the High Priest presiding. In the meantime, Peter (and some think John) have worked their way into the courtyard and is challenged there as a disciple of the prisoner Jesus
- Peter denies vehemently three times (just as Jesus told him).

During this "trial" (illegal because it was at night) witnesses are brought forward to accuse Jesus but their testimony is contradictory.

- Finally the High Priest asks Jesus directly and the Lord acknowledges His divine identity.
- Based on this confession the High Priest condemns Jesus to death for blasphemy and they begin to slap and taunt Him.



135. Jesus before Pilate and Herod

Matthew 27:1-2; Matthew 27:11-30; Mark 15:1-19; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16

The Jews were not allowed to execute anyone so they had to convince the Roman officials that a prisoner was worthy of death.



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- Pilate was the Roman Proconsul and he controlled the province with Roman soldiers. He appointed the High Priest,
- controlled the treasury
- And even maintained the vestments of the High Priest (releasing them for festivals).



Jesus' appearances before Pilate occurred in the following way:

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- The Jews bring Jesus accusing Him and demanding His death. Pilate questions Him and then sends Him to Herod. Herod tries to get Jesus to do a miracle for him and when this fails he sends Him back to Pilate.
- Pilate questions Jesus again not finding any basis for execution and tries to free Jesus under the tradition of freeing a prisoner at the Passover, but the crowd chooses to free Barabbas instead of Jesus.
- Pilate's wife warns him against condemning Jesus, but he gives in to the pressure of the crowd and turns Jesus over to the soldiers for

execution.

- Once sentenced, the soldiers begin to torture Jesus, humiliate Him and prepare Him for His execution.

136. Judas' suicide

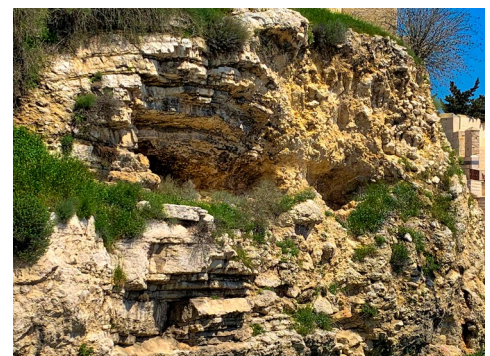
Matthew 27:3-10

After seeing what has happened, Judas is stricken with guilt because he has betrayed an innocent man.

- He still doesn't believe in Jesus as Messiah, only that Jesus is innocent.
- He returns the money and hangs himself in despair.
- The Hardness of his heart (hardened by years of dishonestly) would not allow him to approach Jesus for forgiveness as Peter does.

137. Jesus is crucified

Matthew 27:31-44; Mark 15:20-32; Luke 23:26-38;
John 19:16-22



Jesus carries His own cross (with help from Simon of Cyrene) to the place of execution, Golgotha (the skull).



- He is offered drugged wine to enable them to crucify Him without resistance, but He refuses. He is crucified between two thieves as they and the crowd mock and challenge Him to save Himself.
- Once He is secured with nails and hoisted in an upright position, He asks the Father to forgive His tormentors.
- The Romans have placed a sign above His head that says "king of the Jews" which the Jewish leaders object to.

138. Jesus dies on the cross

Matthew 27:45-61; Mark 15:33-47; Luke 23:39-56; John 19:23-42

It's amazing how each writer provides an enormous amount of detail as to what happened during the few hours Jesus was on the cross:

- One of the thieves repents of what he has said and asks Jesus to save him, which the Lord does by promising that he will be in paradise.
- The soldiers gamble for and divide His clothes.
- Jesus gives to John the charge to keep His mother.
- Jesus was crucified at 9 AM and from noon to 3 PM the sky was darkened.
- Jesus cries out to God not to forsake Him.
- He said that He was thirsty.
- He declares that His mission is complete by saying, "It is finished."
- He dies by offering up His life in the words, "Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit."
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- At this point the veil in the temple at the entrance of the Holy of Holies was torn in two and many who were dead came out of their tombs (but only after His resurrection). There was an earthquake and because of these signs, even the centurion at the foot of the cross believed.



Once He died, the soldiers pierced His side to make sure and the process of burial began.



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- Joseph of Arimathea comes to claim the body from Pilate and along with Nicodemus they wrap Jesus' body and place it into a new tomb belonging to Joseph. Mary Magdalene and Mary (mother of Jesus), who was Jesus' mother's sister (the Lord's aunt), remained by the tomb until sunset and the beginning of the Sabbath.

Their goal was to properly prepare the body for burial, but with the sunset and Sabbath beginning they couldn't do this and so planned to return on the Sunday to finish their task.

Saturday – April 7th

The Lord is buried, the crowds are disbursed, but the Jews are still trying to make sure that His influence is extinguished.

139. Pilate sets a seal on the tomb

Matthew 27:62-66

- The Jewish leaders were afraid that Jesus' followers would steal the body and claim resurrection to keep their movement alive.
- Pilate not only puts a seal on the entrance to the tomb to avoid tampering, but also permits the Jews to add guards to foil any attempt to try to remove the body.

Lessons

For this chapter I make one important observation rather than practical lessons from the material we have covered.

1. The value of keeping the main thing the main thing

Writers spent more time writing about the events that covered a few hours of Jesus' death and resurrection than all of the three years of ministry. The Holy

Spirit points this the central event in our faith. If this is so then we need to remember to:

- Understand and teach this as our central doctrine (death and resurrection of Christ to save mankind) and not get sidetracked by issues.
- Give greater importance to sharing the communion each week because it represents the central issue of our spiritual lives.

We must not only speak where the Bible speaks, it is also important to emphasize what the Bible emphasizes.

READING ASSIGNMENT FOR CHAPTER 13

- 140. Matthew 28:2-4
- 141. Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-4; Luke 24:1-3; John 20:1-2
- 142. Matthew 28:5-7; Mark 16:5-8; Luke 24:4-8
- 143. Mark 16:11; Luke 24:12; John 20:3-10
- 144. Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18
- 145. Matthew 28:8-10
- 146. Matthew 28:11-15
- 147. Luke 24:34
- 148. Mark 16:12-13; Luke 24:13-35
- 149. Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-23
- 150. Mark 16:14; John 20:24-31
- 151. Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18
- 152. John 21:1-25
- 153. I Corinthians 15:6-8
- 154. Mark 16:19-20; Luke 24:50-53

Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the following actions by Jesus:

- Disciples sent to prepare the Passover meal (Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-13)
- Jesus eats the Passover with the Apostles (Matthew 26:20-25; 31-35; Mark 14:17-21; 27-31; Luke 22:14, 21-38; John 13:1-38)
- Jesus initiates the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:15-20)
- Farewell address and prayer (John 14:1-17:26)
- The agony and betrayal in the garden (Matthew 26:30, 36-56; Mark 14:26; 32-52; Luke 22:39-53; John 18:1-12)
- Jesus before the High Priest (Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-72; Luke 22:54-71; John 18:13-27)
- Jesus before Pilate and Herod (Matthew 27:1-2; 11-30; Mark 15:1-19; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16)
- Judas' suicide (Matthew 27:3-10)
- Jesus is crucified (Matthew 27:31-44; Mark 15:20-32; Luke 23:26-38; John 19:16-22)
- Jesus dies on the cross (Matthew 27:45-61; Mark 15:33-47; Luke 23:39-56; John 19:23-42)
- Pilate sets a seal on the tomb (Matthew 27:62-66)

2. Of all that Jesus endured during His betrayal, arrest, trial, and cross, what was the most severe and what does it signify?
3. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?