

## ***Luke's Gospel: Luke 22 v 1 to 34***

### ***The Lord's Supper***

#### ***The plot to kill Jesus and Judas to betray Jesus (Luke 22 v 1 to 6)***

- As events move towards their climax, what interested parties are mentioned here, and what is the attitude of each to Jesus?
- What can we learn from the part played by Judas, “who was of the number of the twelve” (v 3)?

The chief priests and elders did not want to put Jesus to death during the Passover feast (Matthew 26 v 3 to 5), yet that is exactly what happened. This is an indication that Jesus was in control of events. The leaders were right to fear the people: Jerusalem's population swelled to a million during this 'compulsory' feast; and with religious fervour and national 'Messianism' at a high pitch, a spark might set off an explosion...

“And agreed to give him money” (v 5) – Matthew tells us the amount: “thirty pieces of silver” (Matthew 26 v 14, 15). “Thirty shekels of silver” was the redemption price paid for a slave (Exodus 21 v 32). See also Zechariah 11 v 12, 13 and Matthew 27 v 3, 4.

“So he... sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd” (v 6) – the leaders were trying to find a way to take Jesus quietly, to avoid a public uproar.

#### ***The Passover with the disciples and the institution of the Lord's supper (Luke 22 v 7 to 23)***

“A man carrying a jar of water” (v 10) – this was an unusual sight, because carrying a water jar was typically a woman's task, and generally men carried water in animal's skin containers. This would be a distinctive sign to the disciples. “The Teacher says to you” (v 11) – the scene here implies secrecy, and Jesus had good reason to quietly make arrangements for Passover. He did not want Judas to betray him before he could give a final talk with the disciples.

- Luke includes the idea of a 'new covenant' in verse 20. How does this link with Jeremiah 31 v 31 to 34? How does verse 22 illustrate the paradox of God's fore-ordained purpose and man's responsibility?

When the bread was lifted up at Passover, the head of the family would say: *“This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let everyone who hungers come and eat; let everyone who is needy come and eat the Passover meal.”* Everything had a symbolic meaning: the bitter herbs recalled slavery; salt water symbolized tears shed under Egypt's oppression; the lamb represented the sacrifice that allowed God's judgment to 'pass over' the believers' household.

The Passover created a nation; the Lord's Supper also creates a people – those united in Jesus, trusting his sin-bearing sacrifice for us.

“Do this in remembrance of me” (v 19) – as we eat the bread, we should remember how Jesus was broken, pierced, and beaten with stripes for our redemption. As we drink the cup, we should remember that his blood, his life, was poured out at Golgotha for us.

***[MORE OVER...]***

Traditionally there were four cups of Passover, based on Exodus 6 v 6, 7:

1. the cup of *bringing out*
2. the cup of *deliverance*
3. the cup of *redemption* or *blessing*
4. the cup of *taking out*.

Jesus stops at the third cup, the cup of blessing (1 Corinthians 10 v 16). This Passover is unfinished (see verse 16), but the feast will be consummated at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (1 Corinthians 11 v 26, Revelation 19 v 9).

### ***Who is the greatest? (Luke 22 v 24 to 30)***

“A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest” (v 24) – it is amazing to realise that after Jesus had poured three years of his life into these men, after they had seen the character of Jesus on display in almost every conceivable circumstance, that now, in the final hours before his betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion, the disciples argued about which of them was the greatest! This seems to have been a common topic of conversation among the disciples (see Matthew 18 v 1; Matthew 20 v 20 to 23; Mark 9 v 33, 34; Luke 9 v 46).

- How did Jesus’ teaching reverse the world’s standards? How did Jesus’ own life and work exemplify this teaching?

We might think that Jesus should have settled the issue by pointing out that *he* was the greatest. Instead, Jesus answered the disciples’ question by reference to what he *did*. John 13 v 3 to 5 tells us that Jesus washed their feet after supper, and he may have spoken these words about true greatness as he washed their feet.

“I assign to you... a kingdom” (v 29) – the disciples would receive a unique reward, because they were the ones who had continued with Jesus in his trials. Jesus appreciated and valued the support he received from his disciples. The apostles would have special status in the Kingdom of God. They will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and their names will be on the twelve foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21 v 14).

### ***Jesus foretells Peter's denial (Luke 22 v 31 to 34)***

- Peter evidently found it much easier to apply Jesus’ words of warning to the other disciples than to himself. What was wrong with his attitude? What lessons can we learn from Peter’s failure?

“But I have prayed for you” (v 32) – Satan did not completely crush Peter, but that had nothing to do with Peter himself. It was because Jesus prayed for him! It is wonderful to remember that Jesus prays for us, protecting us from Satan (Hebrews 7 v 25; Revelation 12 v 10). There are certainly many times that we would have perished, but Jesus prayed for us and protected us. “That your faith may not fail” – Peter’s faith would falter, but not *fail*. Jesus did not see Peter’s temporary lapse as a failure of faith, because he knew that Peter would return to him. “When you have turned again, strengthen your brothers” – having returned to Jesus, our focus must be towards helping others.

“I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me” (v 34) – Jesus told Peter the truth about himself and the situation, not to discourage him, but to remind him there was a spiritual reality and battle that he was unaware of, but that Jesus knew well.