

The Preparation for Passover

Luke 22:7-13

November 10, 2024

You can open your Bibles to Luke 22 as we come to verse 7 of Luke 22, and as we come to this section, Luke 22:7 through 13, we are less than 24 hours away from the crucifixion. With all that's ahead, it's amazing to think about all that can happen in a single 24 hour period. But we're not going to cover it in 24 hours, I can guarantee you that. Last week we studied just the opening 6 verses of this chapter, and Luke reminded us there, about how the Jewish leaders had been conspiring for quite some time to put Jesus to death.

This actually is a murderous sentiment that they had from early on in his ministry, reacting against God and his truth and God and his Messiah. And yet it's come to a head here in Luke 22, conspiring to put their own Messiah to death. They'd been prevented from carrying out their plans. Jesus was just way too popular with the people. And so they were there at Caiaphas's

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

house, the chief priest, and they were at a standstill until Judas knocked at Caiaphas's gate.

Judas came to meet with Caiaphas, the chief priests, meet with their staff, meet with the temple guard there. He came to them with a plan to help them solve the so-called Jesus problem. And by the time he left, they had struck a deal for the betrayal of Jesus. Judas then leaves there and comes back to the Twelve. By the way, he probably wouldn't have been missed by the others this close to the Passover feast and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So many preparations to make and he being the treasurer of the Apostles, they probably wouldn't have missed him.

But Judas returns and he's harboring now a dark secret which none of them except the Lord knew. It says in Luke 22, verse 1, "Now the Feast of the Unleavened Bread called Passover was drawing near," when Judas snuck away from the disciples in verse 3. That was on a Wednesday and now as we come to verse 7, it's Thursday. This is the Day of Unleavened Bread. It's also called the day of Passover. It's the day that the Passover lamb is sacrificed. This day has arrived.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

We, the readers of Luke's Gospel, the readers of all the Gospels, we know what's about to happen. And so as we enter into the scene here, it's really kind of hard for us to get the feel for what was going on in the text. We know what's about to happen, so we kind of come into the scene wary, looking for issues, looking for problems, looking for signs of conflict, concern.

We're somewhat pensive as we enter into these final chapters of the Gospel. Not the Jews, they were not feeling that way at this time. For them, this is a massive season of festival and rejoicing. This is a time to celebrate the birth of their nation and God's faithfulness to Israel. It's Edersheim, who says, in *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*; Big thick volume and you should get a copy on your shelf for your family. It's wonderful to read from, because of his familiarity with all the festivals and all the traditions of the Jews.

But Edersheim writes this. He says, "Everyone in Israel was thinking about the feast. For the previous month it had been the

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

subject in the discussion of the academies, and for the last two Sabbaths, at least, that of the discourse in the synagogues.

Everyone was going to Jerusalem, a gathering of universal Israel, that of the memorial of the birth night of the nation and of its exodus, when friends from afar would meet and when new friends would be made, when offerings long due would be brought and purification long needed be obtained.

“And all worship in that grand and glorious temple with its gorgeous ritual. National and religious feelings were alike stirred in what reached far back to the first and pointed far forward to the final deliverance.” End Quote. It's true. Friends would meet, such as the dark gathering at the house of Caiaphas. Friends would meet, such as the disciples of Jesus in the Upper Room.

Yes, new friends would be made as Judas Iscariot makes the acquaintance of the representatives of the Sanhedrin, as he forms a new allegiance and new alliances. Yeah, new friends would be made. And yes, also it's true, that an offering long due has been brought as Jesus willingly comes, he comes to offer

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

himself as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world. He comes to fulfil the final deliverance for God's people, the once for all sacrifice for sins. Ironically, in this design, his purpose aligns with that of Caiaphas, who unwittingly yet truly prophesied, "It is better that one man should die for the people."

And so, as the betrayer, Judas rejoins Jesus and the rest of the disciples, having sold his soul to the devil, with the disciples none the wiser, though Jesus knew. This is what we read in Luke 22:7 to 13, "Then came the first Day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. And Jesus sent Peter and John saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover for us so that we may eat it.'

"And they said to him, 'Where do you want us to prepare it?' And he said to them, 'Behold, after you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house that he enters. You shall say to the owner of the house. The teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" And he will show you a

large furnished upper room. Prepare it there.' And they left and found everything just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover."

It's interesting that all three synoptic Gospels include this account all about this preparation for Passover, which tells us that this is, though it may seem like incidental; okay, it's a setup for what's coming, but it tells us that this is a very important part of the Passion narrative. Why is that? The bottom line is that though it might seem from all outward appearances, from a believing perspective, from those of us who are in the know, it may seem from all outward appearances that the world is coming to an end, that it is the end of the line for Jesus and his disciples. The party is over. The gig is up. The trap is soon going to be sprung by Judas, who is infiltrated.

For three years he's been with him, and all of a sudden, he emerges as this villain. Oh no! But, however, it may seem, here's Jesus maintaining a perfect calm, total composure. He trusts in God's perfect will. Then came the first Day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

sacrificed. That verb there is a verb of divine necessity. It must be sacrificed. Jesus knows nothing is going to happen apart from his father's sovereign will. He knows what he has been chosen for, he knows what he's been chosen to, he is heading to the cross, and it will not happen a moment too early or a moment too late.

Listen, nothing is beyond or outside of God's sovereign control, including whatever trial you may be going through, whatever affliction you or your family may be under, whatever pressure you may be facing, he is always at work to accomplish his purpose. And his purpose, as we know, is good and perfect. It's always wise, it's never late, always on time. And for those who love God, Romans 8:28, "For those who are called according to His purpose."

We know that his intention and his execution is good and wise and will do exactly as he intends. And He'll accomplish all his good for us, for you. If He did it in the most tense, stressful, monumental, historically significant circumstance of all, the death of his son on the cross for the sins of his people, will

GRACE CHURCH



Grace

he not do it for you? Will he not do it for me? There's nothing, not one molecule that escapes his notice that gets outside of his plan.

We rest in the hands of a sovereign and good God and that's what we need to keep in mind as we move not just through this section of Luke 22, but all the way through Luke 22, Luke 23. And we're going to see it culminate in Luke 24 and beyond, as God is in perfect and complete control. And Christ being the Son of God is in perfect and complete control. And he being fully man, knowing exactly what we struggle with, exactly what we are tempted to, how we're tempted to anxiety and fear, he has total composure and calm. And we can learn to grow in that too by following him.

Want to give you three points for this morning. All of them about preparing the Passover, because both of these words prepare and Passover, both those words are repeated in this text four different times; making preparation for Passover the dominant theme. So if you just write, if you just want to write in your outline, the preparation for Passover three times,

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

you've got the outline, but I'll fill in a word here and there to distinguish them. Okay?

So the preparation for Passover, that is the first point, the preparation for Passover. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed it, commemorated Israel's exodus from Egypt. This is about the birth of the, it's a festival, a feast that commemorated the birth of nation, of the nation Israel, its deliverance from slavery in Egypt, its deliverance from certain death and death even on a particular night by means of a blood atonement, because God had chosen to redeem this people as a nation unto himself.

We recall, or you may remember, some of you may remember if you've been here that long, that we covered in Luke 9:31, The Transfiguration scene. Remember that way back, when it's, it's some, it may be in some recesses of your mind, but it should be marked with bright brilliant glory because that's what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration. That's what was witnessed at his transfiguration. It was when the glorified Jesus Christ

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

spoke, you may remember, with a glorified Moses and a glorified Elijah.

They're all captured in, in this glory cloud, the Shekinah glory of God that had descended on the mountain. Remember what they discussed together, the three of them? Luke says that they were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. The Greek word translated, departure, is the word *exodus, exodus*. Literally, they were speaking of his exodus, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem; he's about to repeat the exodus from Egypt. He's about to repeat that now in Jerusalem.

The deliverance that God performed in Egypt, he's about to perform that now in Jerusalem. So Luke 22:7, rich with meaning as God's purposes for Israel, for Israel's Messiah, all align on this particular day. Then came the first Day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. The annual Feast of Unleavened Bread ran from the month Nissan, 15 through 22.

GRACE CHURCH

On the Jewish calendar, that's the first month of the Jewish calendar, the month of Nissan. It's March/ April time frame on our calendar. It's the first month of the Jewish calendar because it marks the birth of the Jewish nation. Unleavened bread after Passover; Unleavened bread commenced with Passover that happened the day before on Nissan 14. So Nissan 14, Passover, Nissan 15 to 21, the Feast of unleavened bread. And these celebrations were so closely associated and inextricably linked that the name of the one really stood for the other and vice versa. If you said unleavened bread, you meant Passover too. If you said Passover, you meant Unleavened Bread also.

We find instructions, if you'd like to turn there in your Bibles, go back to Exodus chapter 12. Exodus chapter 12, because these are the instructions for the Passover. Basically, for the Passover celebration, ever since they came out of Egypt, each family or small group of Jews shared a single lamb. And that amounted to maybe one lamb per household, one lamb per ten people or maybe even twenty people, at the most.

GRACE CHURCH



Greeley

And if you think about that with the, the, swelling of the population in Jerusalem, you may think to yourself, well, that's hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people in Jerusalem, visiting Jerusalem. That is a lot, a lot of lambs; a lot of bloodshed, a lot of lamb meat eaten that night. And yeah, you're right about that.

One commentator cites Josephus, and Josephus famously writes about this Passover in AD 66. And that's the year that Herod's Temple, the beautification project that it started with Herod the Great, was finally completed. It took a long, long time, but in AD 66, Josephus says there were 255,600 lambs that were slaughtered in the temple. And so from that, he extrapolates and he allows an average of ten diners per lamb; ten, ten worshippers per lamb. And he calculates, Josephus calculates that two and one half million people were present in Jerusalem.

So when you think about all those people crammed into that small of space, I mean it is shoulder to shoulder. There are a lot of lambs passing through that temple, a lot of priests and Levites having to sacrifice a lot of lambs, a lot of blood flowing to

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

take their lamb out to their individual celebration. If that sounds somehow incredible to you, consider that even today a small island nation of New Zealand produces twenty-four million Finnish lambs per year.

Every single year, twenty-four million Finnish lambs, that is a nation by the way, that has more sheep than people, so might stand to reason, but Twenty-four million Finished lambs per year. So, 250 lambs for a Passover is well within the capacity of Judean shepherds and brokers to handle the demand. Now Exodus chapter 12, take a look at God's instructions just prior to him leading Israel out of Egypt, just prior to the actual Exodus itself. "Now Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, this month shall be the beginning of months for you.

"This is month one on your calendar. It is to be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying, on the tenth of this month they're to each one to take a lamb for themselves according to their father's households. A lamb for each household." Tenth of Nissan in our text happened to be the Sunday Jesus entered Jerusalem at the Triumphal Entry.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

So the day that he was presented as king was the same day that the religious leaders rejected him as king, and the same day that God chose to set Jesus aside as his lamb to atone for his people's sins.

Skip down to verse 6 and we'll keep reading Exodus 12. "You shall keep this day," the 14th day of the same month, "until the fourteenth day of the same month, and then the whole assembly," so starting with the Passover, and then the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So you shall keep this, "until the fourteenth day of the same month," keep the lamb, "and then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall slaughter their lamb at twilight. Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.

"And they shall eat the flesh that night, roasted with fire. They shall eat," eat, "it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Don't eat any of that lamb raw or boiled at all with water but rather roasted with fire, *both* its head and its legs, along with its entrails. And you should not leave any of it over

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. Now you shall eat it in this manner: *with* your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, your staff in your hand: and you shall eat it in haste- it is the Passover of the Lord."

So again, going back to Jesus and his disciples, they were going to eat this Passover at night. They're going to eat it in the dark, in the evening, and into the night. They're recalling the night that God delivered Israel from Egypt, Thursday night for Jesus and his disciples. That's when this would happen of Passion Week. The worshippers were not to leave Jerusalem the night of the meal. They were to stay and eat that lamb and their Passover meal within city limits. Roasted lamb was accompanied by unleavened bread. That unleavened bread represented Israeli hasty departure from Egypt.

No time to let bread rise, that the leaven also symbolized sin. And so the day before, all the families in Israel would go through their houses with a, with a light and look for any leaven. Sometimes it was a symbolic thing, but they would look

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

for any leaven in their homes and get that leaven out of their homes. It symbolized sin. They're gonna repent of their sins and perform this ritual of removing the leaven.

Bitter herbs were to be eaten with the Passover meal to remind them of the bitterness of their slavery in Egypt. They ate that meal, as the text says here, dressed for travel. It was a reminder of the haste with which they departed from Egypt, dressed and ready to go on a moment's notice. But now in Jerusalem, having entered into God's promised land and into the rest that he promised.

The reclining in this Passover time in the first century, the reclining on dining couches around a table, they were celebrating divine deliverance. They were no longer under the bitter yoke of slavery. Even though they ate the bitter herbs to remind them about what going back to Egypt looks like, about what they were saved from; they were no longer under that yoke of slavery. They lived as free people and that, freed, freedom was, was commemorated or symbolized by them sitting around the table or laying down around the table on these dining couches.

Well, what is it that made them free? Said divine redemption and that meant someone or something had to die to atone for their sins. Even though "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," nets, Child of Israel and child of Egypt alike; God on this night differentiated between the Israelites, his chosen nation, and the Egyptians. He provided an atonement for Israel to protect all who obeyed in faith by painting this blood of the lamb on the doorposts and on the lintel of their houses, he protected them with this atonement for all who obeyed him in faith, protected them from his judgement, his judgement by the death Angel who was to pass through Egypt, but Passover Israel.

Look at verse 12 of Exodus chapter 12. "And I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and I will strike down all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments- I am Yahweh. And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and I will see the blood, and I will Passover you, and there shall be no plague among you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt."

There it is; that's the meaning. This Passover feast is a perpetual memorial of God's past deliverance. It is also, at the same time, an anticipation of God's present deliverance and future deliverance for Israel. God goes on to say in Exodus 12, verse 14, "this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to Yahweh; throughout your generations you're to celebrate it as a perpetual statute. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but the first day you shall remove the leaven from your house; whoever eats anything leaven, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

Now on the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there should be a holy convocation for you; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be done by you. You shall also keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall keep this day throughout your generations as a perpetual statute."

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

Says in verse 18, "In the first," of the, "month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening you shall eat unleavened bread," and that is the Passover meal which kicks off the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is Nissan 14 until the 21st day of the month, ending the feast then on Nissan 21. Rich, rich imagery, we don't have time to unpack at all, but rich imagery in this deliverance through blood atonement by means of a Passover lamb, a Paschal lamb, *Pasca*, referring to both Passover and the lamb itself, *Pasca*.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7, "Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are *in fact* unleavened. For Christ, our Passover has also been sacrificed." Go back to Luke 22 now, with that in mind, and look at verse 8, Luke 22:8.

"Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover for us that we may eat it.'" Jesus puts together in this verse Peter and John. This is the first time these men are named as partners. They may have been the two disciples in Luke 19 that went and found the colt, but they're not named there. Here they're named.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

This is the first time they're named and named as partners. Alfred Edersheim says, "that the Lord put John, he of deepest feeling, with Peter, him of quickest action. And after this these two men who are complementary to one another, Peter needing a little more of the feeling of John and John maybe needing a little less of the contemplation, a little more the action of Peter. We see these two men come and they're, they're, an inseparable force and formidable as Apostles. We find them together in the temple quite commonly in the Book of Acts.

What was involved in their preparing the Passover? Well, they had to get a suitable lamb, which presumably they had since the tenth. They had to go and slay it at the temple, that's the lawful place for sacrifice. They couldn't just go and go slit its neck, you know, back in Bethany, they had to be at the temple. They had to purchase suitable wine, red wine, of course.

They had to purchase unleavened bread, bitter herbs for dipping the lamb and the bread into. The bitterness would come from perhaps horseradish, which is very common. Or as Alfred Edersheim says, they dipped once in salt water or vinegar and

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

another time in a mixture called charoset. It's a, a compound that was made of, like a paste that was made of nuts or raisins, apples, almonds, things like that to dip the bread into.

So lots to do on this Thursday before they shared the Passover that evening. Lots to do that day. Peter and John, they, along with Galilean Jews, they were very, very busy on this Thursday, this preparation day. Judean Jews, they would be busy, not on Thursday, but then on Friday they would be busy. That is their preparation day. And so you're probably wondering, I hope, why would Galilean Jews and Judean Jews be separate onto two separate days?

Why would preparation day for one be on the Thursday, preparation day for the other be on the Friday? I should probably mention why. The best known system of marking Jewish time, as you may know, is from sunset to sunset. The day for the Jews, start at sunset and lasted throughout the, throughout the night into the next day and up to the next sunset of the next day. That was a day that's the best known system of marking time for the Jews, and that's how Judean Jews mark time. This is how

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

the Sadducees, how the chief priests in the Temple, mark time from sunset to sunset. Galilean Jews, however, marked time from sunrise to sunrise.

Most of the Pharisees followed this system of marking time from sunrise to sunrise, as did Jesus and his disciples, sunrise to sunrise. This is what accounts for what may seem to us to be ambiguous in the Gospel accounts. Some have, found they think, a discrepancy or even a contradiction. Some would strengthen the language and say between the synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and then John's Gospel. And they see the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke typically following the Galilean method of the Pharisees. The Gospel of John, though, follows the Priestly or Judean method of the Sadducees, and when we look closely, we see there's no true discrepancy.

Everything harmonizes perfectly, any perceived ambiguity can be cleared away when we just have a little more information, when we recognize this difference between how Galilean Jews and how Judean Jews mark time. Galileans, as I said, sunrise to sunrise, Judeans from sunset to sunset. This explains how Jesus and his

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

disciples could celebrate Passover on the evening of Nissan 14, Thursday evening, having had their lambs slain between 2:30 and 5:30 PM that afternoon, and then they would celebrate the Passover that evening.

The Judeans though, according to John 18:28, these men, the chief priests, did not want to enter into the palace of the Roman governor on Friday. For them, that would have been still Nissan 14, before sunset. They didn't want to go in there because they didn't want to defile themselves, unable to eat the Passover meal. No, never mind killing Jesus that didn't defile them, but don't want to set foot in Pilate's courtyard. So they didn't want to defile themselves. But that would have been their concern; would be about going into his, his, his courtyard on Nissan 14 for them, which was on the Friday.

Two days, then for Passover lambs to be slaughtered in the Temple, Thursday and Friday. For the Galilean Jews, the Pharisees, Jesus and his disciples, the lamb was slain on Thursday afternoon between about 2:30 and 5:30 PM. And that allowed them to eat the Passover meal that evening on Nissan 14.

They ended that meal before midnight. For the Judean Jews, and the Sadducees, the chief priests, many of the scribes, they sacrificed their lambs on Friday afternoon between 2:30 and 5:30 PM. And just a footnote, Jesus died that day at 3:00 PM on Friday. They ate their Passover meal that evening Nissan 15, ending their meal also before midnight.

So I told you I'd answer the question why? Why did they do that? Why is this difference in marking time between Galilee and Judean Jews? What's the reason for it? Galileans being further north and separated from Jerusalem and Judea and being closer, it's presumed, to Gentiles would have participated in Gentile ways of living and doing trade and marking time. When they came into Jerusalem, as they had to do for the three annual feasts, they had to come early and make sure and get everything set up because they weren't residents, they were traveling, things were more inconvenient for them.

And so a little more latitude was granted to the Galilean Jews to come in and this kind of solved three practical problems for these feast days and especially for Passover and Feast of

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

Unleavened Bread. First of all, this divided the labor for the priests and the Levites in the Temple. This is the busiest season of the year, as think about it, having to sacrifice 250,000 lambs and prepare them; to field dressing them, pouring out the blood at the foot of the altar, packaging that up on a little pallet, and then sending the worshipper away. Next.

There's a huge line. In the bleating of little lambs, and blood, and people wandering out this way; it's a massive, massive operation, very hard to do in one day. So by dividing the labor between the Galilean Jews, Thursday, Judean Jews Friday, this helped a lot. Secondly, this difference in marking time, which made a difference between when the Galilean Jews and Judean Jews came into the temple. This really helped separate the Galileans from the Judeans and these two groups really didn't always like each other.

Galileans were what we've become to understand in our country being called the deplorables. We're fly over country. What are some of the nice names they have for us? Garbage. That's a good one too. So that's us, Galileans. They are the, they're the

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

deplorables. They're the garbage viewed from a Jerusalem Judean standpoint. They are the ones who are furthest from the center and kind of prone to popular uprisings. They're filled with messianic expectation.

Revolutionaries typically come from these outlying places, and they're mixed, as they are with Gentiles many times. So they come in kind of unclean. We want to give them a little bit of room. Judeans on the other hand, are better educated, more sophisticated, less prone to wild messianic enthusiasm. So because these two groups don't mix well, great to keep them separated.

Third thing, as I just mentioned, Galileans being prone to some speculation, uprising filled with messianic fervor, the Temple police, we're always on the lookout every feast time for these anti Roman insurrectionists and they had been in the past almost exclusively Galileans, not Judeans. So keeping these two groups separate was tremendously helpful from a security standpoint. Temple guards very happy for this arrangement.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

So when Peter and John, when they go in to prepare the Passover meal, when they get in their line with their lamb for their band of disciples, it's on the Thursday, it's on Nissan 14 being Galileans and that was the day that they came. Peter and John had time during the day to do their purchases, get the food, get the supplies, go to the temple with the lamb that they purchased for their company, and then have it sacrificed, prepared. Have the priest pour the blood at the foot of the altar for them, for their group, pray, sing the halal, and then go back to make further preparations.

So after they have received this instruction from the Lord, they have just one question. Where? I mean, if we're going to do all this set up, got to know what is the venue. Where's the place? Have you rented something? Is that on us? What do we do? Takes us into point two. I told you the preparation for the Passover. You can just add the word before preparation, add the word secret: The word secret, the secret preparation for Passover.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

In verse 9, they said to him, "where do you want us to prepare it?" There is no hesitancy on their part. The verb tense shows they're ready to go. The verb tense shows they're eager to follow Jesus' instructions. They just, they just need to know where. Is it in Bethany at Lazarus's house? Is that where we're going to go or what? What are we doing? Keep in mind, Jesus knows what they don't. He knows they've got a spy in their midst. None of the disciples know this yet, not even Peter and John.

But Jesus knows Judas has just returned from cutting a deal with the priests. He is going to look for a way, find a way to hand Jesus over, away from the crowds. What better time to do that than when they're celebrating Passover by themselves in their own quarters away from the crowds? So Lazarus house is a no go. That's not going to happen. Judas knew that place well. He could easily have led the authorities to Lazarus's house, to arrest Jesus. And that would put Lazarus in jeopardy, as well, and his two sisters, Mary and Martha.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

Remember John 12, we saw there that the Sanhedrin plan to kill him too. After all, he had the nerve of being risen from the dead. Let's kill him. So Bethany's not going to work. That's out. In fact, Jesus is careful here to send his two most trusted disciples on this most important errand, and he's very careful, we'll notice, to reveal as little as possible. They do not know where they're going. I find it remarkable, don't you? As he, as he, he's trying to tell them where they're going to go, there's no names, no address.

There's no real information that they can really hold on to, nothing they can write down on paper, nothing they can reveal being tortured for information, nothing. He reveals as little as possible, and yet Jesus is sending them off to prepare the Passover for them. And I find this so remarkable. Jesus knows he's going to be hanging on the cross within 24 hours. He's going to die before the afternoon sacrifice, Judean time, before that sacrifice is over. And notice his intent still to keep the Passover feast.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

He's faithful to keep the law, keep the feast, gather with his men. He doesn't say, boy, I've got a, got a big weekend ahead, I better take a little time in the mountains. I got to get to the cabin. I got to get to the lake, just do some fishing, clear my mind. We live in such a profane age, don't we? Which many, even many professing Christians take religion far too lightly, including observing Sabbath rest on Sunday, attending services of worship.

Many, for even professing Christians, miss out on communion and count it as a very small thing that they do so not to partake of the Lord's Supper with their churches. I've talked to some Christians who haven't been to the Lord's Table in years and doesn't seem to make a difference at all. I thought that was one of the most remarkable things about COVID, shutting down churches, to see how many Christians didn't mind not being at the Lord's Table. I know that for many of us here, we felt that acutely not to be able to gather together. And the fellowship meal of the bread and the cup.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

This cannot be; not Jesus, he doesn't want to miss out on the blessing of celebrating the Passover with his men. He loves to be with them. He tells them, verse 15, Look at it in your text. "I've earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." This is meaningful to him. Is it to you? Though, he's going to miss some, some of the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It's not because there's a football game on TV, it's because his body is in the grave. I mean, he's got the permission slip, but he's going to rise from the dead in time for the waving of a sheaf of barley in the temple.

The wave offering, the offering of the first fruits of the grain harvest. The offering of the first fruit was celebrated on Sunday immediately following the Passover, and that Sunday was Resurrection Day. Jesus is truly the first fruits of all those who've fallen asleep in him and of all who will in him rise from the dead. Beloved, may God deliver us all from profane religion. So we give you sincere the lovers of God, worshipping in spirit and truth, rejoicing in the profound meaning of our Lord's salvation. Amen.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

Look at verses 10 to 12. As we see verses 10 to 12, we're going to see how Jesus instructed Peter and John to make secret preparation for this Passover. "He said to them, behold, when you have entered the city, a man's going to meet you carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house that he enters." Now it's not clear just stopping here. It's not clear how much of this is by omniscience in his divine nature, or if it's just prophetic foresight that's granted to him by the Holy Spirit for this particular occasion.

Or maybe he's doing all this by prior arrangement. Not really sure. But if we take the narrative in Luke 19:29 to 32, where Jesus did something similar; he arranged his coronation procession. He sent his disciples to go to secure the donkey's cult. This is pretty similar, isn't it? We've kind of been prepared for this event because of that event. But what we do know is that Jesus gives them no address, no names, nothing identifiable, nothing Judas can identify, nothing he can overhear. He makes sure they have no secrets to spill.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

This is all kept highly confidential. He maintains this operational security. He compartmentalizes the information and they're to know only what's absolutely necessary; from all outward observation, even if they're being followed, spied upon, Peter and John, this is just a meeting of chance. It's an encounter with some unnamed man in the city of Jerusalem in an unknown location on some street. Even if they're being watched, no informant could possibly anticipate such a sign as this was to them. Very covert.

The sign, we'll notice is a man really doing a woman's work. He's carrying water to the home. That's, that's a woman's chore, in that day, to carry water in a vessel like this, a jar. Men carried water in leather flasks. Women, res, retrieved their water in jars, because it was intended for wider home use, for cooking, for washing, ritual purification. They needed more water, thus they carried more.

So for a man to carry a water jar in public, that sign is going to be easy for them to see, impossible for them to miss. But even if they did miss it, even if they it happened to walk by

and not glance to their left, the verb here indicates the man with the water jar, carrying it on his head or on his shoulder, he intends to meet them, not the other way around. It would seem then that he's been instructed to watch out for Peter and John and after encountering them, he's to lead them back to the house.

So met by a water carrying man, a chore almost exclusively carried out by women. This is a confirmatory sign that they have made the right contact. This part of the instruction may well have been prearranged. I think it seems, it seems prearranged to me. And then Jesus continues, he says when the man carrying the pitcher of water meets you not long after you enter the city, you're, you're going to follow him. You're going to enter into the house that he enters.

And then verse 10, "talk with the owner of the house." The word is oikodespotes. It's oikos, which means house, and then despotes, which means master. So house master, owner of the house. They're to distinguish, here, between the owner of the house and then this man who leads them there. And this tells us

GRACE CHURCH



Greeley

that the man with the water jar is a household servant, a household slave. He's not the owner. Jesus doesn't tell them to engage the slave or talk with him, and it's not because they're somehow too good for him, being Apostles after all. No, it's not like that. It's just because this man's role is isolated to one task to lead Peter and John to the right house. Even engaging him in conversation as if there's a familiarity isn't good because of the public eye.

Once they have entered into the house after him, he's performed his role and now he's, he's out; now it's time to speak with the master of the house. And here again, it appears to me that this also is prearranged. Verse 11, "and you shall say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'"

Couple things to note here. First, by referring him to himself as, the teacher, the teacher, definite article there pretty clear that Jesus had sent Peter and John to a known disciple. The owner of this home, He's a believer. He's a believer, who Jesus knows could be trusted. Secondly, Jesus has told Peter and

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

John that they're to ask on behalf of him. They're to ask for a guest room. A word there is interesting. It's Katalyma. Katalyma is a word we have not read since Luke chapter 2 verse 7, where there was no room for Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus in the Katalyma. No room.

So Jesus is not seeking an expensive fancy accommodation, just a room sufficient for the purpose. Edersheim describes the katalyma as the place where the, quote, "the beasts of burden were unloaded. Shoes and staff, dusty garments, and burdens put down. If it's an apartment, it's at least a common one. It's certainly not the best." End Quote. So it's nothing fancy. Jesus actually thinks, I think with fondness back to this Katalyma where there was no room for him and he seeks one of those.

Peter and John meeting this fellow believer, they find a man who is as eager to provide for Jesus and give the, this very best for Jesus, to serve the friends of Jesus, as Peter and John are to make Passover arrangements for their master. Look at verse 12 to see what he provides. He, and he, this, that one that owner Luke is very explicit in the original. He points out

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

that it's not the slave, but it's the owner. He will show you a large furnished upper room. Prepare it there. That's where you're going to prepare the Passover feast for us.

Here's the second confirmatory sign. The owner does not send his slave to show him the space, as would be typical of owners. This, my slave, will take you up to the quarters; this man will take you up there. The owner of the house, he takes personal charge of this task, takes Peter and John up there personally so that they can, all together, see the room that he's prepared for them. And leave this task to his slave? And it's not, again, it's not because he distrusts his slave. This is not disrespect; after all, his slave he's had, he had the task of retrieving the disciples and bringing them back.

That's not something, that's not something the owner could go out and do without being noticed. So this owner here, now, he has his role. He takes personal interest, escorting the disciples to the quarters to show them the large furnished upper room. Why is that? Because he considers this such a great honor to do this for the teacher, for his disciples. He counts it as a

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

privilege to serve the servants of his teacher, of Jesus the Christ.

Alfred Plummer points out that the Katalyma Jesus had requested and the space that the man had provided and prepared for him. This is the word anogeon, the, it's upper room, on a meaning, up, so it's this, upper, room. Alfred Plummer says Jesus had only asked for the large general room on the ground floor, but the man gave him the best room, the one reserved for more private uses above the Katalyma.

So a man doing a woman's chore and a master doing a slave's chore, those are the signs Jesus chose and most fittingly to be confirmatory signs for Peter and John. That's how they're going to know they've found the right house. That's how they're going to know they've met the right man. They've found the right room, they're in the right place to prepare the Passover.

Certainly, there's in my mind, pre arrangement here, prior planning and preparation on Jesus' part, making the arrangements, knowing who he's going to use and who he's chosen.

It's very much like him. At the same time, he sends Peter and John out with confidence that it will happen just like this. So there is omniscience involved as well, or you could say prophetic ability to see that whatever the case, that Jesus is no mere man. He is the Lord, the sovereign of all.

He's chosen the right man with the right place, with the right slave to get this job done. Peter and John are just obedient servants, obedient slaves doing his will. That this room, this upper room is in a house within the Jerusalem city limits, apparently just inside the city. It gives them easy access. Later, it gives him an easy and a very quick escape into the Kidron Valley, into the olive groves out on the other side. This is an upper room. Being an upper room, it points to the secrecy that's afforded by height advantage up above the street and guaranteed their privacy. There's stairs on the outside that allowed ease of access and, and also ease of egress to disappear into the night after the meal, as they did that.

That this upper room is large. The word is *mega*. It means the space is sufficient enough to contain at least these 13 hungry

men, possibly servants who served, that the room is furnished. The word there is, refers to the dining couches that surround a dining table. That's all. They're all spaced out in a U-shape around this table so they can all see one another and converse with one another, which will become important as Jesus reveals Judas, the betrayer at the table, who sits to his left, John sits to his right, Peter across the table.

Anyway, it's furnished with these dining couches and it shows the owner has provided generous hospitality, provided a comfortable space for these men to relax, repose, eat the meal together. Having pointed out here, the owner's eagerness to provide; the servants willingness to be involved in this covert operation; disciples' eagerness to prepare the Passover meal.

We'd be remiss, wouldn't we, if we didn't back up and recognize, again, all this preparation is the Lord's preparation. He's doing this. He has earnestly desired to share this Passover before he suffers. As we'll see, Jesus has a church ordinance to institute for them on this night. He has so much to teach them

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

on this occasion, not only here in Luke's Gospel, but what is known to us as the upper room discourse in John's Gospel.

All those chapters we've been reading in our daily reading last week and into this week of John 13 to 16. All of that is going to be contained; the teaching in this upper room. He has a high priestly prayer to pray for them on this night, John 17. All this he wants to make sure it's done according to schedule, according to plan. This is the most momentous of nights, as Jesus is preparing his men for his crucifixion and for life after. He's not going to have it ruined or rudely interrupted by Judas and his new friends.

He wants his men, he's provided for this evening from start to finish. He's guaranteed for himself and his disciples a distraction free environment. One more night together, this side of the cross, and thus we are prepared as readers of this Gospel to understand our Lord Jesus is sovereign. He's going to see this thing through. If He's sovereign over this night and over all the different players, not only people whose wills were oblivious to his, but also sovereign and in charge of the wills

of those who were opposed to him: Chief priest, scribes, Judas, Satan himself. If He's sovereign over all these things on this night, on this occasion, is he not sovereign over the issues, matters of your life? He cares about these things, these men. Does that not extend to all of his disciples, all of his people? Certainly, it does. He's going to see these things through. He's going to accomplish all of his father's will, not only on this occasion, but even to this very moment.

So we've seen the Passover preparation. We've seen the secret preparation for Passover. Finally, a third point, replace the word secret in the last point with the word successful in the third point: The successful preparation for Passover. Luke provides a postscript for us in this narrative, verse 13. "And they departed." Peter and John departed. They found everything just as he had told them and they prepared the Passover.

Just a little note for us, whenever we do what our Lord commands us, just as Peter and John did, we will, like they, find everything to be just as Jesus tells us it'll be. If it says obey me and I'll bear much fruit out of your life, try it out;

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

obey him, he'll bear much fruit out of your life. He tells you to love one another and you do that and "by that all men will know you're his disciples." Trust that that's true. Try it and prove him to be faithful. This is an encouragement to us.

Just pausing here. It's just an encouragement to us to trust him, to obey him, to believe him, to do what he says. Prove his word, faithful. Church tradition tells us that the house in which Jesus and his disciples shared the Passover meal, in which Jesus gave the ordinance of communion, it's the same house where the church, the early church gathered in Acts chapter 12, verse 12. It's the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was called, also called Mark.

John Mark: it's his house. It's where he grew up. This is his father and mother. It's according to that verse in Acts 12 and verse 13, the next, the house was large enough that one year later many church members were able to gather there. They gathered there on this particular occasion. In Acts 12:12 to 13, they're asking the Lord to intervene so that Peter would be released from King Herod's prison.

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

Acts chapter 12 verse 1 says King Herod thought it was a great idea to kill, behead James, and then threw Peter in prison for good measure. So they're thinking his death is imminent, so they pray. After their prayers are answered; this is a year later, next Passover; after their prayers are answered, we may remember Christ sent in his Angel to spring Peter from prison. Well, Peter's able to, after his jailbreak, after he kind of comes to himself and says, hey, that, that was, that happened, that was real. Angel led him out to the gates, opened up the gates. He says, Okay, great.

So he makes his way back to this house. He knocks at this familiar gate where he had first met John, Mark's father, the owner of the house. He meets him, goes there one year later. One year earlier, in the day of Passover, the first time he'd been into this house, Luke 22:13, they prepared the Passover, mission successful. They ate the Passover meal. Jesus exposed Judas and sent him away during that time. After that, he instituted the Lord's Supper, taught his disciples, prepared them for his death. They leave the upper room, head out to the Garden of

Gethsemane, and Judas arrives with his entourage of soldiers from Caiaphas looking for Jesus.

He doesn't show up first in the Garden of Gethsemane. You know where he shows up first? Mark's house. They're too late. As Judas and the soldiers with him are searching for Jesus. The whole household is awakened. This young man, rather impulsive young man, but a highly curious young man, this John Mark. He leaves his father's house to follow after Judas and the soldiers looking for Jesus and his disciples.

Mark then becomes a firsthand witness of what he records in the Gospel that bears his name, written in Mark 14:43 to 50. He saw it himself with his own eyes. Judas betrayed Jesus. Peter picked up a sword, try to hack off the high priest's slave's ear, guy named Malchus. He saw the, all the disciples scatter. Mark adds his own signature line, so to speak, just two verses, verses 51 and 52 of Mark 14, that let us know he was there on that night. It's kind of humorous, but I'll leave you to read that for yourself this afternoon.

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

There's so many points of connection here, so many interesting things to see, but we're kind of running short on time. Let's just, what are some takeaways for us as we think about this? How can we put a, maybe a finer point on what we've seen here in this narrative? First, I'll just give you three things, here, I was kind of meditating on, first in a chapter that's all about preparation, we note a contrast, don't we, between the preparation of the wicked and the preparation of the godly.

Of the six things that the Lord hates and the seven that are abominable to him. Proverbs 6, one of the things that are abominable to the Lord is a heart that devises wicked plans. Proverbs 6:18. Proverbs 14:22 asks, "Will they not go astray who devise evil? But kindness and truth will be to those who devise good." Wicked plans don't come to fruition. They don't accomplish what the evil design is meant to accomplish.

Even if, as the chief priests and scribes find Jesus put to death on a cross, they find that his death action results in this new movement called the Way that outshines and eclipses Judaism. Judaism is gone, and it's to be judged in AD 70 when

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

the, the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple's gone. Oh, their plans are abominable to the Lord and will not come to fruition, will not be accomplished, will not actually prevent God at all. In fact, their wickedness only serves as tools in the hands of a God, who brings all things to his sovereign ends and his purposes. So as Isaiah 32:8 says, "The noble man devises noble plans, and by noble plans he stands."

Second observation in a chapter about Passover celebration, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We can't help but notice how our Lord earnestly desired to eat this meal with his disciples, even though his death was imminent. He so wanted to do this. If your death was imminent and you knew that, I mean like one day away, how would you spend it? Would you do it like this? Would it be in fellowship with your Lord and with his people, or would you pass the day in some other way?

The stated desire of the Lord Jesus Christ is to engage in close fellowship with us, to share glorious truths with us, to reveal the mind of God to us, to involve us in his own preparation, his thoughts, his plans, his work. Beloved, does that not make your

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

heart burn with love for him? Because he loves you, he wants to draw you into fellowship with him. Does that not make you rejoice? Are you not humbled to the floor to think, Why me?

Let us be eager, beloved, every chance we get, to join with one another in the fellowship of the truth and the partnership of the gospel, to do the Lord's work together because it is glorious. It's deeply rich with meaning and purpose and significance. How else do you want to spend these few years you have remaining on earth, but in his work, in his way.

Let me give you just one third final thought. This, in preparing for this Passover, of all the Passover celebrations that Jesus himself had observed, this is the most meaningful to him since it commemorated not just the deliverance of God in the past, the exodus of Israel from Egypt, but that he would offer up his own life to deliver God's people, past, present, and future.

His blood shed on the cross, forgave us of all of our sins. It purchased a people for God. His resurrection secured our justification and guarantees our life eternal and a glorious

GRACE CHURCH

Grace

future with him and with God's people. His own exodus that he talked about with Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, his own exodus to ascend back to the father, it meant the deploying of the Holy Spirit, take up residence in the heart of his people, you and me.

The Spirit who was with them now would be in them and thus would fulfill all of his promises to us. "I will not leave you as orphans; I'll come to you. I will never leave you nor forsake you." Yes, I was taken away on that night of betrayal, my arrest; you all scattered. It's not going to happen again. I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. End of Matthew's gospel, "lo, I'm with you always, even to the end of the age." He's with us beloved, because his Spirit is in us and he will never let us go. Let's pray.

Our Father, we're so grateful for this glorious gospel. We've only seen the outward parts of the glory of Jesus Christ in this narrative. We have so much more to see, to discover together, to learn. But we pray that even as we have this narrative about what seems to be incidental preparation detail, getting ready

GRACE CHURCH

Greeley

for a Passover meal, lining things up, ordering things that all might be accomplished according to your will, we find even here some rich, deep meaning taking place in the home of, of, the John Mark, who would accompany Peter the Apostle and write down his gospel, so to speak, in the Gospel of Mark.

So many different details to see, so many different connections to make, so much truth we have yet to discover. We pray that our hearts would be filled with anticipation and joy, eager to learn, eager to study, eager to know that we might fellowship with you, O God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. That He would share this fellowship that he has with you, Father, with us, and draw us into all truth. That we be united in the truth and love one another as his disciples. It's in His name we pray. Amen.