

Sunday School Lesson

Mark 14: The Last Supper & The Traitor (July 26, 2026)

Dr. Spangler gave a marvelous sermon last Sunday that dealt heavily on the time and participants at the Last Supper, and its relevance to today.

Set the Stage

We are still in Jesus' last and busy week. It is Tuesday and the Feast of Passover will be at the end of this week. Jesus is in Bethany (about 2 miles from Jerusalem), but must go to Jerusalem for Passover.

⁵ You may not offer the passover sacrifice within any of your towns which the Lord your God gives you; ⁶ but at the place which the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the passover sacrifice, in the evening at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. – Deuteronomy 16:5-6

- Passover (*Pesach*) was probably second only to The Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), which commemorated the wilderness wanderings and the autumn harvest.
- All Jews aspire to eat at least one pascal feast in their lifetime in Jerusalem.
- There will be a huge crowd in Jerusalem.
- Because of the crowd and opportunity for riots, the Romans will be out in force.
- This influenced the plans of the chief priests and scribes. Read **Mark 14:1-2**

The Anointing at Bethany

Jesus knows He is in His last hours. So, what does He do? He goes to a dinner party! **(A diplomat was imprisoned in South America for a considerable time. When released, he was asked what he wanted most to do. He said, “Have a good meal, read a good book, and talk to good friends.)** Since lepers were not allowed inside a city, much less to have guests to dinner, Simon must have been one of Jesus' healing miracles. Read **Mark 14: 3-9**.

Who was the woman? _____

Who do you think was stirring the controversy? _____

Jesus counters their criticism and calls the act “beautiful,” and that there will be more opportunities to help the poor, but now is a good time for this act of love.

Judas Iscariot's

Plan:

- Motivation¹
 - Money (Matthew)
 - Embezzlement (Judas minded the Disciples' purse for the poor)
 - Demon-possession (Luke & John report the Devil in his heart)
 - Nationalism (force Jesus to action for Jews, against Rome)
- Provide chief priests and scribes with Jesus' plans and whereabouts
- No indication that Judas thought of what would follow.

Results:

- Judas met secretly with the chief priests
- He got paid for his information
- He led the temple officers to Jesus
- Jesus did NOT resist arrest
- Judas despaired of his treachery
- He tried to return the payment
- He hung himself

The Last Supper

Seder Menu

- Karpas: A green vegetable, typically parsley, symbolizing the initial flourishing of the Israelites in Egypt.
- Haroset: A sweet mixture of fruits, nuts, and wine, representing the mortar used by the Israelite slaves to build structures for Pharaoh.
- Maror: A bitter herb, often horseradish, symbolizing the bitterness of slavery.
- Hazeret: A second bitter herb, usually Romaine lettuce, used in the Hillel sandwich during the meal.
- Zeroa: A roasted shank bone, symbolizing the Passover sacrifice. This is usually lamb, but contemporary meals may use roasted chicken or beef.



¹ McKenna, p. 283

- Beitzah: A roasted egg, representing mourning and the cycle of life.

The pascal lamb was sacrificed on the 14th day of Nissan (Thursday). Feast on the meat on the 15th day (Friday – before the Sabbath).

Why was Jesus eating Passover a day early?

Passover: redemption from Egypt, symbolized by the lamb's blood that protected the Israelites from the final plague

Feast of Unleavened Bread: signifies purity and the haste of the Israelites' departure from Egypt, as they did not have time to let their bread rise

Preparations:

Read **Mark 14:12-16**

Like His entry on Palm Sunday, Jesus gives His disciples prophetic instructions and then lets them take care of the details.

Supper is described in Mark 14:17-21.

The Book of John goes into additional details. Read **John 16:12-14**.



Institution of the Lord's Supper:

The incantation you have heard so many times before:

²² And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." ²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

– Mark 14:22-24

Peter's Denial Foretold:

Read **Mark 14:26-31**

Despite his ardor, Peter will deny Jesus 3 times before the rooster crows twice

At Gethsemane

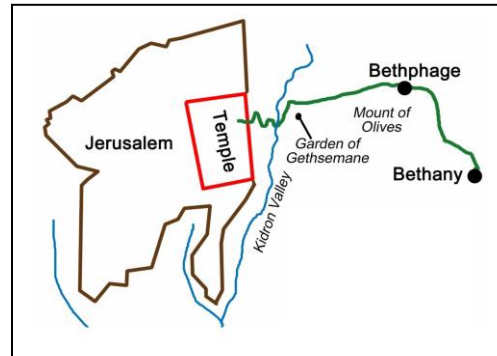
Jesus Prays

Jesus prays and the disciples sleep

Betrayal and Arrest:

Read **Mark 14:43-52**

- Judas came
 - Chief priests & scribes
 - Crowd with swords and clubs
 - Greeted Jesus with a kiss
- Additions:
 - Matthew – “one of Jesus’ companions”
 - Luke – the right ear
 - John – Peter struck Malchus, servant of the high priest



Trial Before the Council:

- Arrest was not legal because no charges were listed
- Sanhedrin cannot consider a capital case on a feast day.
- Trial at night
- Trial at Caiaphas’ house, not the usual Chamber of Hewn Stone, near the Temple
- False witnesses
- Jesus’ only crime was that he claimed to be God’s Son.
- Taunted Jesus
- Beat Jesus and spit on him
- Sanhedrin was supposed to wait 24 hours after the hearing to pronounce sentence
- But, could NOT impose a death sentence; that required Roman approval

Peter Denys Jesus:

Unfortunately, Jesus’ foretelling came true. Read **Mark 14:66-72**.

Summary:

Jesus' last week is rushing on:

- 10th day of Nissan (Sunday)
 - Triumphal entry into Jerusalem
- 11th day of Nissan (Monday)
 - Cursing the fig tree
 - Cleansing the Temple
- 12th day of Nissan (Tuesday)
 - Jesus was anointed by an unknown woman while at supper in home of Simon the leper
- 14th day of Nissan (Thursday)
 - Passover with Disciples
 - Nighttime capture on Mount of Olives
 - Overnight trials
- 15th day of Nissan (Friday)
 - Crucifixion
 - Jesus' body was taken down so that it was not on the cross for Sabbath
- 17th day of Nissan (Sunday)
 - Risen Lord

Not just Peter, but ALL of the disciples denied/abandoned Jesus. Are we stronger?

Jesus did not give up on Peter, and He will not give up on you.

References:

1. Asbury Bible Commentary (on line), <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search>
2. Ask Gemini, the Chrome web browser's AI.
3. Harper Study Bible, Revised Standard Version, Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, MI, 1985.
4. McKenna, David L., Mastering The New Testament: Mark, Lloyd Ogilvie, General Editor, Word Publishing, Dallas, TX, 1982, pp. 189-260.
5. RSV Bible on-line: <http://www.devotions.net/bible/00bible.htm>
6. Rudolph, Rev. Kevin, The Bible Tour Guide, Rich Publishing Co, Houston, TX, Day 297-298.
7. Sitler, Grant's HPC Trinity SS class handout: Mark 13 – 14, June 4, 2023.
8. Free on-line commentaries:
http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/old_testament_studies/old_testament_studies.htm
<http://www.gospelway.com/commentary/index.php>
<http://abiblecommentary.com/>
<http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/>