

Luke 22A

- Our study of Luke is beginning to wind to a close
 - And yet it is reaching its climax in terms of power and significance
 - In the remaining three chapters of Luke's unique gospel,
 - Jesus will celebrate His final meal with the disciples, and in doing so create an indelible symbol for the Church
 - He will be betrayed by one of the twelve
 - He will experience one of the most unjust trials in all of history
 - He will see virtually every friend He ever had abandon Him at His hour of need
 - He will suffer some of the most extreme and inhumane torture imaginable
 - He will endure the most famous and most significant death in all of history
 - Finally, He will reappear in the same body having been resurrected and present Himself to all to see
 - And all of this in exactly 180 verses
- As we dive in, I need to let you know that there are a number of areas of background, context and historical fact that we must understand if we intend to grasp all the details in this account
 - So tonight and at other points along the way, I'm going to take opportunities to provide that background
- Tonight we find Jesus still on the Mount of Olives, probably as evening approaches
 - Wednesday night of the week of His crucifixion
 - At the end of Chapter 21, Luke reminded us that it had been Jesus' pattern to leave the city every night
 - He spend the evening somewhere outside the city

- Probably in Bethany
- But tonight Jesus didn't walk all the way to Bethany
 - He stayed close to the city on the Mount of Olives
 - Because He's planning to return to the city tonight
- He had finished His discourse on the end times
 - And then as we begin Chapter 21, Luke tells us this:

[Luke 22:1](#) ¶ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching.

- As Luke introduces Chapter 21, he begins by drawing our attention to the coming festival of Passover and Unleavened Bread
 - Before we go any further into this seminal chapter, we want to be sure we have a complete understanding of the festival events of this week
 - Many of us have been taught in the past that Jesus dies on a Friday and was resurrected on Sunday
 - There are two fundamental problems with this viewpoint
 - First, there isn't enough time between Friday and Sunday to fit the teaching of scripture
 - Scripture tells that Jesus was in the ground three days after He died

[Mark 9:31](#) For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise **three days** later."

- Matt gives us an even clearer picture in his gospel

[Matt. 12:40](#) for just as JONAH WAS **THREE DAYS** AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be **three days** and three nights in the heart of the earth.

- So if Jesus must be in the grave three days and three nights, it means that He was in the grave Friday, Friday night, Saturday, Sat night, Sun, Sun night
- Then He would have risen Monday morning
 - But Luke tells us in Chapter 14 that the tomb is found empty on the first day of the week
 - Just like it is today, the first day of the week in Israel in Jesus' day was Sunday
- So if Jesus rises on Sunday morning, we need to count backward three nights and three days
 - Which leaves us with a Thursday death
- The second reason why we know Jesus died on Thursday is because of the Jewish festival calendar for the week Jesus died
 - The week of Passover was actually a combination of two festivals
 - In fact, look at how Luke introduced the chapter
 - He says the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is called the Passover was approaching
 - The word for approaching in Greek is eggizo
 - This word means near, as in drawing near, or about to happen
 - In other words, this was the night for the Passover
 - But in truth, the Jewish calendar for festivals had become slightly askew in Jesus day, as it continues today
 - In the Torah, God established two separate festivals
 - And He placed them back to back
 - First, there was the festival of Passover
 - This is a one day festival God commanded in remembrance of the night that the angel of death passed over Israel

- It was to be observed on the 14th day of Nisan, the first month of the Jewish religious calendar
- Like all Jewish days, this day ended at sundown and a new day began
 - So the 14th of Nisan turned into the 15th of Nisan at sundown and the Passover began and the Passover meal was held
- Then there was a second festival called the Feast of Unleavened Bread
 - It was established by God as a seven day festival that began the day following the Passover, at the end of the 15th of Nisan
- This is why the two festivals were commonly referred to as a single 8 day festival
 - So even though the Feast of Unleavened Bread technically began on the day after Passover, by Jesus time, the two had become almost synonymous
 - John 19 tells that Jesus body needed to be buried before the Sabbath
 - This has led many to believe mistakenly that they were rushing to avoid the normal weekly Sabbath on Friday evening
 - But in fact they weren't rushing to avoid the weekly Sabbath
 - They were rushing to avoid the Sabbath of Unleavened Bread
 - We know this because Mark 15 tells us that Jesus was buried on the day of preparation
 - The day of preparation was a term for the day before the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- So here's what the puzzle looks like
 - Luke says the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread was upon them

- So as we open Chapter 21, the 14th of Nisan is drawing to a close on a late Wednesday afternoon
 - The Passover is about to begin on sundown Wed
 - Wed night after sundown Jesus celebrates the Passover Meal
 - Passover continues into Thursday
 - On that day, Jesus was killed as the Passover sacrifice
 - But He must be buried before sundown Thursday
 - Because Thursday night began the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which was a Sabbath Day
 - That means Jesus was in the grave on Thur afternoon
 - So the first day Jesus spent in the grave began the moment He died on Thursday
 - His first day in the grave was followed by His first night
 - He then spent two more days and nights in the grave – both Sabbaths – Jesus truly at rest
 - Then He rose on Sunday morning
- With the scene having been set, we move to verse 2

[Luke 22:2](#) The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; for they were afraid of the people.

[Luke 22:3](#) ¶ And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the twelve.

[Luke 22:4](#) And he went away and discussed with the chief priests and officers how he might betray Him to them.

[Luke 22:5](#) They were glad and agreed to give him money.

[Luke 22:6](#) So he consented, and *began* seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.

- Luke announces that there is a conspiracy afoot to murder Jesus
 - This isn't merely a continuation of the hatred and fear that these men have displayed for many months prior

- This is an entirely new moment
- This is a moment when the leadership of Israel jointly conspired to bring Jesus down
 - And they plotted ways to accomplish it
- Matt gives a more detail about this plotting took place

[Matt. 26:3](#) ¶ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas;

[Matt. 26:4](#) and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill Him.

[Matt. 26:5](#) But they were saying, “Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people.”

- The high priest actually convened a gathering of the leaders of Israel
 - They talked about when and where to seize Jesus
 - They recognized that they couldn’t do it while the crowds were with him
 - They probably discussed how to kill him and who would do it
 - This was a well-organized conspiracy
 - If we are to be accurate, both historically and intellectually
 - Then we must acknowledge that a group of Jewish leaders were the principle instigators responsible for the death of Jesus
 - The Romans were the instruments as were the crowds
 - But the leadership of Israel in Jesus’ day conspired against Jesus and put Him to death
 - Having said that, should that be excuse for any Christian to harbor hatred or prejudice against Jews today?
 - Of course not
 - First, it was the Father who purposed to use those men to put His son to death
 - But secondly, if we are to hold present day Jews “responsible” for Jesus death

- Then you had better hold present day Germans responsible for the deaths of Jews
- And you should also hold present day Africans responsible for the death of Christian missionaries
- And present day Caucasians responsible for the deaths of African slaves
- And present day Americans responsible for the death of frontier Indians, and on and on
- Eventually, everyone is responsible for the death of every ancestor
- In verse 3, we see the real power behind the conspiracy, Satan
 - Both John and Luke record that it was Satan behind Judas' act of betrayal
 - But this doesn't lessen Judas' own culpability
 - He was available for Satan's use in this way because Judas was not a true believer in Christ
 - He was a wolf in sheep's clothing
 - And he was there by God's design

[John 6:70](#) Jesus answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?"

[John 6:71](#) Now He meant Judas *the son* of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

- Jesus identified 12 men early in His ministry
 - But when He did, He consciously chose one who would never believe in Him nor follow after Him
 - Rather, He chose one who God reserved for the betrayal of Jesus
 - For no true follower would have ever considered betraying Jesus
- And by this plan, God opened the door for Paul to become the 12th disciple of Jesus

- Judas sought compensation for his willingness to betray Jesus, and the leadership agrees to price
 - This adds insult to injury, in a way, since it tells us that his motivation for the betrayal wasn't a misplaced loyalty to the leadership
 - It was merely a mercenary act
- Matt tells us that Judas was paid 30 pieces of silver
 - This is significant for a couple of reasons
 - The only way the priests could have come by so much money so easily is if they were willing to rob the Temple treasury
 - It was this same treasury that the priests used routinely to purchase the sacrifices used in Temple ceremonies
 - How fitting that Jesus, the Passover sacrifice, would be purchased with Temple funds
 - This price was a fulfillment of scripture, when Zech 11:12 foretold that Israel would reject their shepherd for thirty pieces of silver and be judged for it
- Why was it even necessary for the Jewish leaders to have a man on the inside like Judas?
 - Why not just go arrest Jesus on their own?
 - First the leaders needed to know where Jesus was at night
 - Remember, in the day the crowds were imposing and enthusiastic
 - This is why we hear over and over how the leaders were fearful of the crowds
 - They didn't dare act when Jesus had the crowds around
 - But at night, He was generally surrounded only by His disciples
 - Yet the leadership didn't as yet have anyone close enough to Jesus who was also willing to help them find Jesus

- The second reason relates to the rules of both Jewish and Roman law
 - The Jewish leaders anticipated that they couldn't kill Jesus on their own without risking their own lives
 - They needed to use the Roman authorities to accomplish the feat for them
 - But Roman society followed a strict rule of law, and the Jews knew they would have to pass a couple of tests
 - First, before a Roman soldiers arrest someone, there must be a formal indictment
 - The Roman governor could issue the indictment, but a witness would be required
 - Finally, Judas would have been needed at the Roman trial to testify against the accused
 - So as I said, this was a very developed and complex conspiracy centered around Judas' wiliness to betray Jesus
- So having agreed to the leadership's plan, Judas now returns to Jesus and looks for an opportunity to betray Jesus

[Luke 22:7](#) ¶ Then came the *first* day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover *lamb* had to be sacrificed.

[Luke 22:8](#) And Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it."

[Luke 22:9](#) They said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare it?"

[Luke 22:10](#) And He said to them, "When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house that he enters.

[Luke 22:11](#) "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?"'"

[Luke 22:12](#) "And he will show you a large, furnished upper room; prepare it there."

[Luke 22:13](#) And they left and found *everything* just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

- Now we move to the first day of Unleavened Bread, which as I mentioned earlier, is actually the start of Passover – Wed night
 - Earlier that day (the day before the Passover begins), the families in Jerusalem were taking their lamb to the Temple courts

- This is a different lamb than the Passover Lamb that the priests sacrificed on Passover morning
 - There were two Passover lambs
 - There was the family lambs killed the day before Passover and eaten on the first night of Passover
 - Then there was the sacrificial lamb offered on the day of Passover by the Temple priests
- The family lambs were brought to the Temple after they had cared for the lamb and inspected it the previous 4 days
 - This families would line up and kill the lamb, the blood was drained into bowls held by priests, who would place the blood on the altar
 - The animals were then skinned, gutted and a portion cut away as a burnt offering
- The rest of the animal went home with the family to become the Passover meal that night when Passover began
- Throughout the process, great care was taken to ensure that no one broke any of the lamb's bones
- So this is the meal that Jesus and the disciples are about the celebrate together
 - The Passover meal held on Wed night
 - But they didn't have a lamb to take to the Temple
 - And they certainly didn't have time to prepare an entire meal at this late hour
 - But just as Abraham told Isaac as they walked up the mountain to sacrifice, the Lord will provide for Himself a lamb
 - So Jesus tells two of the Apostles to go prepare the Passover meal
 - And they ask Him where to prepare it
- Jesus gives a very curious answer
 - He tells a couple of the disciples to look for a man carrying a pitcher of water and follow him

- Talk to the man and he will show you an upper room prepared for the feast
- This was a clever sign because in Jesus day, it would have been very unusual to see a man carry a water pot
 - In that day, men never did domestic chores of this kind
 - Actually I guess things haven't really changed that much
 - But women would always have the job of carrying water
 - So it would have been an effective sign for the disciples to look for a man carrying a water pot
- But its all very cloak and dagger isn't it?
 - Why not just say go to such and such address?
 - Well, the first thing to understand is that that's exactly what this is – cloak and dagger
 - Jesus has a traitor in His midst
 - This man is looking for the first opportunity to betray Jesus
 - So Jesus is making sure that Judas can't learn where the meal will be held and arrange for Pharisees to arrest Jesus in the middle of the meal
 - The instructions give no clue where the final destination will be
 - Judas will be in the dark until Jesus final leads him to the upper room along with the rest of the apostles
- The second thing to consider, though, is how this scene played out from the perspective of the man with the water pot
 - What made him think to prepare a Passover meal for 13 people?
 - And why did he willingly give it up for the use of others under such strange circumstances
- What was going through his mind?

- Did he have another meal prepared downstairs and this was merely a second preparation he had felt compelled to make without knowing who would sit there?
 - Perhaps, and if so, what a testimony to God's power to drive the behavior of men according to His will
- But more likely the man prepared the meal for himself and his family and then graciously gave it over to the needs of another
 - Isn't that how God works?
 - He grants His children the opportunity to serve the needs of others
 - But so often that opportunity brings with it the necessity of personal sacrifice
 - It's not enough that we are prepare to serve God and others, it's at what cost?
 - I sometimes think that God is inclined to test our limits of obedience so we ourselves can discover where in our life we have reserved something as off limits to God
 - Some possession, some activity, some person, some goal
 - For if anything stands in our way to obedience, then He doesn't have a whole heart
- You know in the feast of unleavened bread there was a requirement that no leaven be eaten during the entire week
 - On Passover, we have an atonement sacrifice
 - And then for seven days, we remember that sacrifice and the flight from Egypt by our own personal sacrifice of abstaining from leaven
 - So in understanding that Jesus was our Passover sacrifice, then we are now called to respond with a time of sacrifice,
 - Of removing the leaven in our lives, of fleeing from the sinful world, represented by Egypt
 - Paul puts it this way

[1Cor. 5:6](#) ¶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump *of dough*?

[1Cor. 5:7](#) Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are *in fact* unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

[1Cor. 5:8](#) Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

- The festival Paul is talking about here is the festival of unleavened bread
 - He's teaching that spiritually speaking, we now live as if observing this festival
 - Having been saved by Christ's Passover sacrifice, we are to live our new life by purging the leaven from our lives
 - Having been justified by Christ, we now seek to sanctified unto Him
 - And what better example in a way than to think about that man who perhaps sacrificed his own Passover meal for the sake of Christ
 - What are we willing to give up?
 - Or what are we clinging to?
 - Does anything stand in your way to obeying Christ?