

## *The Church of the Servant King*

### **Mid-Week Bible Study**

#### ***The Gospel of Matthew***

(Mid Week\_Matt 26)

#### ***THE PLOT TO KILL JESUS***

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, <sup>2</sup> "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion." <sup>3</sup> Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; <sup>4</sup> and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill Him. <sup>5</sup> But they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people." (26:1-5)

Crucial to an interpretation of this passage is having an understanding of the events of the week of the Passover leading up to our Lord's crucifixion. During the Passover week, Jewish (and Gentile proselyte) pilgrims made their way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast. Jesus had already presented Himself to Israel as the nation's Messiah and King through His triumphal procession into Jerusalem on what is known as Palm Sunday (Matt 21:1-11). Palm Sunday was the Sunday of Passover week and the Sunday just prior to His crucifixion.

During Passover week, there was a day of preparation for the Passover and then the day of Passover. Since the Passover feast was actually eaten during the evening of the day of preparation, then according to the Jewish method of considering the start of a day to be 6 p.m., the Passover feast was eaten on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was considered a Sabbath day in addition to the normal Saturday Sabbath during that week. So, if the day of the feast of Unleavened Bread (and the eating of the Passover meal) that year fell on any day other than the normal Sabbath, it was possible that there were two Sabbaths during the Passover week the year our Lord was crucified.

#### ***SUMMARY POINTS REGARDING THE DAY OF JESUS' CRUCIFIXION***

1. Jesus had already presented Himself to Israel as the nation's Messiah and King through His triumphal procession into Jerusalem on what is known as Palm Sunday (Matt 21:1-11). This was the Sunday of Passover week and the Sunday just prior to His crucifixion.

<sup>1</sup> When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me. <sup>3</sup> "If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them." <sup>4</sup> This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

<sup>5</sup> "SAY TO THE DAUGHTER OF ZION,  
'BEHOLD YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU,  
GENTLE, AND MOUNTED ON A DONKEY,  
EVEN ON A COLT, THE FOAL OF A BEAST OF BURDEN.'"

<sup>6</sup> The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, <sup>7</sup> and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. <sup>8</sup> Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road.

<sup>9</sup> The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,  
"Hosanna to the Son of David;  
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;  
Hosanna in the highest!"

<sup>10</sup> When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" <sup>11</sup> And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee." (Matt 21:1-11)

2. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, a lamb for every family was to have been set aside (Ex 12:3). This could have corresponded to Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on what is known as Palm Sunday. He was in effect being set aside for the sacrificial death on Palm Sunday.

<sup>3</sup> "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. (Exod 12:3)

3. On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month, the lamb was to be killed (Ex 12:6).

<sup>6</sup> 'You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. (Ex 12:6)

4. The lamb was to be eaten that evening with unleavened bread, i.e. the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month per Jewish reckoning (Ex 12:7-11).

<sup>7</sup> '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. <sup>8</sup> 'They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. <sup>9</sup> 'Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. <sup>10</sup> 'And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. <sup>11</sup> 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste--it is the LORD'S Passover. (Ex 12:7-11)

5. This day constituted the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread during which only unleavened bread was to be eaten (Ex 12:15, 17-20).

<sup>15</sup> 'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

<sup>17</sup> 'You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. <sup>18</sup> 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. <sup>19</sup> 'Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is an alien or a native of the land. <sup>20</sup> 'You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.'"

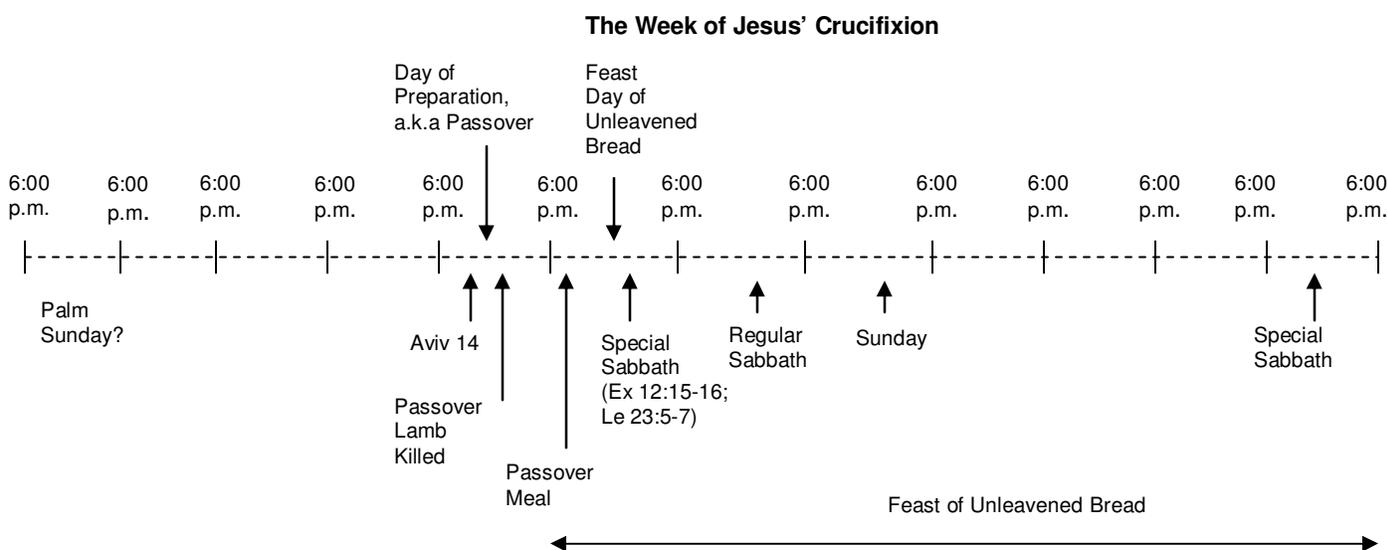
6. The preceding day (i.e. 14 Aviv) was known as the Day of Preparation.
7. The first day and the last day of the Feast were special Sabbaths (Lev 23:5-7; Ex 12:16).

<sup>5</sup> 'In the first month [Aviv], on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover. <sup>6</sup> 'Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the

Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. <sup>7</sup>'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. (Lev 23:5-7)

<sup>15</sup>'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. <sup>16</sup>'On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. (Exod 12:15-16)

8. The events of the week of Passover and Jesus' crucifixion could have transpired as depicted below:



9. There are difficulties associated with any attempt to precisely define the chronology of events that transpired during this last week of Jesus' life. For instance, we have observed that there are difficulties in reconciling the various accounts contained in the gospel narratives, e.g. compare Matthew 26:18 with John 18:28 & 19:31. In the former, Jesus indicates that He will eat the Passover; however, in the latter it is clear that the Passover meal had not been eaten.

And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'" (Matt 26:18)

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled: but that they might eat the PASSOVER." (Jn 18:28)

John 19:31: - The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation [*the day before a Sabbath during which preparation was made for the Sabbath; the specific Sabbath in view is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread*], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day [*specifically, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread*], (for that Sabbath was a high day

[the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread] ), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. (Jn 19:31)

10. The reason that there was no unleavened bread eaten by Jesus and His disciples at the "Last Supper" is possibly due to the fact that the Jews had begun a practice even in Jesus' day that is still common among the orthodox Jews of today. The threat of being cut off from Israel was taken so seriously that it was universal practice to put away leaven a whole day before the prescribed period. This would increase the possibility that there would be no overlooked portion of yeast which had not been put away. Therefore, there would have been no leavened bread for Jesus and His disciples to eat on the evening that began the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the Day of Preparation.

After the Lord had pronounced His judgment on the Pharisees (Matt 23:1-36) the Pharisees were enraged against Jesus. While Jesus was teaching His disciples about His Second Coming and events surrounding it as recorded in chapters 24-25, the chief priests and elders withdrew into a secret session in the house of the high priest.

A side note: Note that the groups of religious leaders that gathered to plot Jesus' death included the "elders of the people." Many theologians and local church leaders believe in a type of church government that involves a plurality of elders or an elder board. Almost everyone acknowledges that the concept of the elder originated with Moses and was perpetuated throughout the Age of Israel.<sup>1</sup> I find it interesting that we see in these verses how even the most spiritual man to have ever lived (i.e. Jesus) was opposed by the "elders of the people." Question: does not the same possibility exist today where a pastor is just one member of a "council of equals?"<sup>2</sup> In other words, if the pastor is to be the spiritual leader, it is very possible that the spiritual pastor could find himself shackled (and opposed) by the non-spiritual elders who do not share the same God-given vision.<sup>3</sup>

Caiaphas was the high priest from A.D. 18 to 37. However, Luke 3:2 indicates that both Annas (the father-in-law of Caiaphas) and Caiaphas were high priests. Acts 4:6 calls Annas the high priest. Although Caiaphas was officially the high priest, Annas still had influence over that office. Annas was so despicable that the Roman government deposed him from office. However, he continued to work behind the scenes through his wicked son-in-law, Caiaphas. Caiaphas is the one who had counseled the Jews that "it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish" (Jn 11:50) because the religious leaders of Israel did not want to loose their positions of influence and power should the Roman Empire have to quash a Jewish "insurrection" that recognized Jesus as its king. These religious leaders were comfortable with the status quo.

Principle: To yield to God and His will takes a person out of their comfort zone. Religion is a comfort zone for most people. The religious leaders in Jesus' day did not want to do anything that might disturb the comfortable situation they enjoyed in Israel and with the Roman authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, consider the following quote taken from Ed Glascock, "The Biblical Concept of Elder," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 144, Number 573, (January 1987), 69 – "Besides the lexical meaning there is a further connection between Paul's word 'elder' and the Old Testament word. The office of elder in Israel was established before the Exodus. After the Exodus, God had Moses select 70 from among all the elders and He gave them His Spirit, even as He had to Moses, so that they might share the burden of leadership with him (Num. 11:16-25). Thus elder in Israel became a spiritual office as well as being the traditional position of honor that it was among most ancient Near Eastern cultures. (Scripture refers to elders in Egypt, Moab, and Edom, as well as in Israel.)"

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Leadership* (Littleton, Colorado: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995), page 39.

<sup>3</sup> There are other problems associated with the concept of elder rule in the local church given the fact that the limited information regarding church administration and leadership contained in the New Testament is set in a period where apostolic authority is present in the form of the Apostles and the early church represented a transition from one age to another. We are no longer in a transition period, nor are there Apostles present with authority over more than one local church.

Corollary: A comfortable position in life doesn't imply that one is a spiritual man or woman. This principle has always been true of the spiritual life of the believer regardless of whether the believer is of the Age of Israel or of the Church Age. The religious leaders of Israel mistook their comfortable and secure status and the approbation they received from Israel with favor from God.

In the days of Jesus, the High Priest was, by virtue of his office, President of the Sanhedrin Council (the body of seventy high priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees who were effectively the rulers over Israel under the oversight of the Roman procurators).<sup>4</sup> Notice in these verses the hypocrisy of religion. These religious leaders had no problem murdering Jesus; however, they just didn't want to do it during the "feast" so as to not cause an uproar among the people. They recognized the wide interest in and acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah. They did not want to cause a riot and God forbid they be defiled and not be able to participate in the feast of unleavened bread.

### ***THE PRECIOUS OINTMENT***

<sup>6</sup> Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, <sup>7</sup> a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. <sup>8</sup> But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste?" <sup>9</sup> "For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." <sup>10</sup> But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. <sup>11</sup> "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me. <sup>12</sup> "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. <sup>13</sup> "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

We know from John 12:1-8 that the woman who anointed Jesus here was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. Apparently, Jesus spent His nights in the village of Bethany, just a few miles outside of Jerusalem. From John's account, we know that it was Judas who asked the question of why this fragrant perfume was not sold and given to the poor. It was customary to anoint the heads of Rabbis and special guests at marriage feasts, but Mary anointed with the most expensive perfume both the head and the feet of Jesus.<sup>5</sup> This was a very expensive and fragrant oil that was sold at a price that put it beyond any but the wealthy. As such, its use reflected Mary's deep love for her Lord and the anointing served as an outward symbol of her understanding just Who He was (the Messiah of Israel) and the spiritual reality of the death He would suffer. As such, her service to Jesus would be memorialized throughout history. In the same manner, our actions that are derived from our personal love for the Lord will be memorialized throughout eternity in the form of eternal rewards.

### ***JUDAS'S BARGAIN***

<sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, "What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?" And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. <sup>16</sup> From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus. <sup>17</sup> Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to

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<sup>4</sup> Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, R. K. Harrison, editor, Revised and Updated Edition – 1988 (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1988), 1126-1128. Unger notes on page 1126 that "the rise of this great council of the Hebrews took place in the time of Greek supremacy, though the rabbis endeavor to trace its origin to the college of *seventy elders* named by Moses." [Emphasis in italics mine]

<sup>5</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ: A Study of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 414-415.

eat the Passover?"<sup>18</sup> And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'" "<sup>19</sup> The disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

After Jesus' stinging rebuke of the disciples (for whom Judas had evidently been the spokesman), the eleven accepted His rebuke quietly while Judas was moved to action. Luke records that it was at this time that "Satan entered Judas" in Luke 22:3. This statement by Luke could very well be an indication that Judas was an unbeliever since only the unbeliever can be indwelt by a demon or Satan. However, we know that it is also possible for the believer to come under the influence of demonic or Satanic thinking and not be personally indwelt by Satan or a demon.

Judas sought an opportunity to betray Christ secretly so as not to start a riot. His unexpected offer to the Sanhedrin changed the timetable that the Sanhedrin was considering, i.e. to execute the plan for the death of Christ after the Passover. If it had not been for Judas' offer, the arrest of Jesus might have been postponed.<sup>6</sup> God in His omniscience knew how the decisions of each person would weave together from eternity past and accomplish His intended result. Jesus' only source of comfort amidst all of this opposition to the point of His death was His intimate knowledge that it was the Father's plan for Him.

**Principle:** Nothing else comforts the believer in the midst of persecution and suffering except an intimate and abiding personal love for the Father and His plan. This principle is just as true for us as it was for Jesus. We will only be able to relax amidst personal and national crises to the extent we have an intimate and abiding personal love for the Lord.

#### ***THE LAST SUPPER***

<sup>20</sup> Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. <sup>21</sup> As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." <sup>22</sup> Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?" <sup>23</sup> And He answered, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me." <sup>24</sup> "The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." <sup>25</sup> And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself."

We have seen some of the difficulties associated with trying to pin down the exact sequence of days leading up to our Lord's crucifixion, so I will not address that issue again here. Suffice it to say however that it is quite probable that the meal that Jesus ate with His disciples as recorded here in Matthew as the Lord's Supper was not the Passover meal. Jesus' instructions are in preparation for the Passover; however, the meal was not necessarily the Passover.<sup>7</sup> If the meal was the Passover which was eaten right after sundown on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv (per Jewish reckoning) after the slaying of the Lamb as the sun began to go down on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Aviv (i.e. the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Aviv), then Jesus would have been killed on the special Sabbath.

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<sup>6</sup> Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus*, 415.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting that the entire Passover season was referred to as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Unleavened bread referred to the Passover as well as the Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed for seven days (Lev 23:4-8). Pentecost notes that "since the days of the Dispersion, the Jews had added an extra day at the beginning of the eight days of this festival season and called it the Day of Preparation." See Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus*, 415-416. Pentecost also provides a good summary of the arguments for and against viewing the Last Supper as the Passover on pages 416–421.

### ***THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED***

<sup>26</sup> While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." <sup>27</sup> And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; <sup>28</sup> for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." <sup>30</sup> After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.' <sup>32</sup> "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." <sup>33</sup> But Peter said to Him, "Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away." <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." <sup>35</sup> Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You." All the disciples said the same thing too.

In verse 28, Jesus states "this is the blood of the new covenant." Jesus was referring to the fact that His death on the Cross was the basis for the fulfillment of such prophecies related to the Messianic Kingdom as found in Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:37-44; Ezekiel 34:25-31; and 37:26-28. These are passages which amplify God's covenant with Abraham and which collectively are referred to as the "New Covenant." Once again, the church is not in view in this passage even though Paul later establishes the Lord's Supper as an ordinance for the Church to keep in 1 Corinthians 11:25-26.

<sup>25</sup> In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (1 Cor 11:25-26)

Jesus' statement in verse 29 supports this view. His Father's kingdom is a reference to the Messianic kingdom and His statements in regard to drinking the fruit of the vine in the Father's kingdom alludes to the wedding supper of the Messianic kingdom (Millennium) in which He is the groom, the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem (resurrected believers of all ages) are the bride, and believers entering the Millennium in their physical bodies on earth are the friends of the bridegroom.

Notice that Jesus indicates that "all of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night" (26:31). All of Jesus' disciples forsook Jesus, not just Peter. The disciples, no doubt, knew that they had not been fulfilling His commission to them in Matthew 10 with as much fervor as they should have. Each knew the doubts that they still had regarding whether Jesus would ever manifest the Messiah-like rule and kingly authority they (and others) expected of the Messiah. They had seen His miracles and witnessed His Person and message, yet they most likely continued to wonder about when and if He would establish the kingdom. Perhaps this understanding sheds some light upon the disciples response in 26:22 to Jesus' announcement at the Last Supper that one of them would betray Him.

Jesus indicates that after His resurrection, He would precede them to Galilee (26:32). Most likely, Jesus chose to minister to His disciples in Galilee for at least a couple of reasons. First, all of them were from Galilee and second, He wanted a place where they could be free of the opposition while He instructed them. However, we know that much of what transpired in the days following Jesus' resurrection occurred in Jerusalem (see such passages as Luke 24:49 where just prior to His ascension, Jesus commands His disciples to remain in Jerusalem). Jesus'

instruction of His disciples during this period after His resurrection is recorded in such passages as Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:17-49; John 20:19-21:25; Acts 1:3-8.

Jesus responds in the manner He did to Peter because evidently Peter made his declaration in front of the rest of the disciples. He had to be corrected in front of the rest of the disciples. Notice that "all the disciples" joined in with Peter and declared their allegiance to the point of death (26:35).

### ***THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE***

<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." <sup>37</sup>And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. <sup>38</sup>Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." <sup>39</sup>And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." <sup>40</sup>And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? <sup>41</sup>"Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." <sup>42</sup>He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." <sup>43</sup>Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. <sup>44</sup>And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. <sup>45</sup>Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. <sup>46</sup>"Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

Gethsemane means an oil press. This garden was full of olive trees and was to the east of Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives. Jesus left eight of His disciples there and took Peter, James and John (26:37). This was the third time that Jesus had singled out the three to accompany Him for a specific purpose (see also the Transfiguration in 17:1-13 and the raising of Jairus' daughter in Matthew 9:18-26 & Luke 8:49-56).

Notice that Jesus indicated to His disciples that "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death" (26:38). We know that Jesus never sinned, therefore this sorrow was not sinful. The Greek word is περιλυπος (perilupos) and means "to be deeply grieved."<sup>8</sup> This passage, perhaps more than any other, reveals Jesus' humanity. As human, Jesus was torn between what He knew He must do and the fact that He didn't deserve to die.

This passage illustrates the temptation Jesus faced to succumb to selfish desires instead of yielding to the Father's plan for His life. The agony is the result of temptation; it is not the evidence of sin. This is different from the believer who agonizes or grieves over a disappointing turn of events in his/her life when self-pity, anger, or some other mental sin is the cause of the grieving.

**Principle:** Be careful not to exaggerate your own sense of importance in God's plan. The Father's Plan can be accomplished without you or me. An exaggerated sense of self-importance is evidence of subjective thinking in one's life (i.e. focusing exclusively upon one's personal

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<sup>8</sup> Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 648.

circumstances to the exclusion of the divine perspective). Total objectivity is a necessity to properly execute God's plan in our lives. As we have seen in our *Review of the Spiritual Life of the Believer* series, such objectivity can only be present where there is an understanding and application of such overarching truths as the Angelic Conflict among others.

While Scripture doesn't reveal how, the Father would have had a way in which to satisfy His righteousness even if Jesus had failed at this point. Jesus knew He had an option and that was the source of temptation. He was the second and last Adam. Had He failed, He would have become just like Adam after the Fall in the Garden of Eden.

I think that there was also another aspect to Jesus' grieving. Jesus grieved that He had to face this spiritual battle alone. None of His disciples whom He had nurtured for more than three years were spiritually in sync with Him. Jesus grieved or had sorrow in His soul for them and their lack of spiritual insight. Jesus faced the crucifixion alone without the solace of His disciples.

Principle: The spiritual leader (any believer – not just the pastor or communicator – who is advancing and serious about his/her relationship with the Lord) will be alone on many occasions even when surrounded by people. This person will not be fully understood by others. However, the comfort such a person receives from the Holy Spirit's ministry in his/her life will sustain the spiritual man/woman in spite of his/her loneliness.

Of course, God is omniscient and knew from eternity past that Jesus would make the right choice; therefore, the Old Testament is full of prophecies beginning in Genesis 3:15 that God's Plan would be accomplished through Him (e.g. Psa 22; Isa 53). Jesus was truly the most humble man Who ever lived. He submitted to the Father's plan without a single sin even to the point of dying for others who didn't deserve to live (see 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pe 2:24). In addition, Jesus did not do the Father's will in a passive manner. Jesus actually pursued the Father's will (compare 26:42 with 26:46). Wow! What a man and what a Savior!

### ***JESUS' BETRAYAL AND ARREST***

<sup>47</sup> While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. <sup>48</sup> Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him." <sup>49</sup> Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. <sup>50</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. <sup>51</sup> And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. <sup>52</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup> "Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" <sup>55</sup> At that time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. <sup>56</sup> "But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets." Then all the disciples left Him and fled.

Judas was accompanied by a large crowd which included both Roman soldiers (Jn 18:3) and Jews from the temple guard (Lu 22:52) who had been dispatched by the chief priests and the elders. They had swords, clubs, torches and lanterns (26:47 cf. Mark 14:43; Jn 18:3) to insure that Jesus did not get away.

We know from John 18:10 that the swordsman was Peter. Peter must have drawn one of the two swords that the disciples carried (perhaps for self defense against animals and maybe robbers as they fulfilled their commission – see Luke 22:38). Peter struck Malchus, the servant of the high priest (John 18:10). Luke mentions that Jesus healed the servant's ear (Luke 22:51). What an impression that would have made upon the servant of the high priest!

A Roman legion numbered about 6,000 men; therefore, Jesus is indicating that He could have summoned about 72,000 angels. However, such was not the Father's plan. Jesus knew the power that was at His disposal; yet He humbly submitted Himself to death on a Cross (Phil 2:5-18).

### ***JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS***

<sup>57</sup>Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. <sup>58</sup>But Peter was following Him at a distance as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and entered in, and sat down with the officers to see the outcome. <sup>59</sup>Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. <sup>60</sup>They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, <sup>61</sup>and said, "This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.'" <sup>62</sup>The high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" <sup>63</sup>But Jesus kept silent And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup>Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." <sup>65</sup>Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; <sup>66</sup>what do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death!" <sup>67</sup>Then they spat in His face and beat Him with their fists; and others slapped Him, <sup>68</sup>and said, "Prophecy to us, You Christ; who is the one who hit You?"

One basic theme that underlies all of Jesus' trials is that the religious leaders were trying to put together a legal case against Him. They sought to find witnesses against Jesus. This was highly unusual. They found it almost impossible to find false witnesses against Jesus who could agree (26:59-60). Finally, they found two who could agree that Jesus at the outset of His ministry had stated that He could destroy the temple and in three days rebuild it (Jn 2:19). Even this was a misquotation and misapplication of Jesus' words (Jn 2:19-21).

<sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

<sup>20</sup>The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But He was speaking of the temple of His body. (Jn 2:19-21)

The religious leaders knew that they really had no case against Him, even for this statement. Since Jesus had not been accused of any real crime, He remained silent in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:7. However, once the high priest put Jesus under an oath by the living God, Jesus responded (26:63-64).

<sup>63</sup>But Jesus kept silent And the high priest said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." <sup>64</sup>Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN." (Matt 26:63-64)

After Jesus' response which referenced His divine nature, the high priest then tore his clothes which He was forbidden to do by the Law (Lev 21:10). Ultimately, the reaction by religious people is one of the flesh.

<sup>10</sup> 'The priest who is the highest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been consecrated to wear the garments, shall not uncover his head nor tear his clothes. (Lev 21:10)

### **Jesus' Six Trials**

Of the six trials that are recorded in the Gospels, two were held before Pontius Pilate. All four gospels record the fourth and sixth trials. The first three trials (before Annas, Caiaphas, and the Sanhedrin) are religious trials and the last three trials (before Pilate, Herod, and Pilate) are civil trials.

#### *The First Trial (John 18:12-14) – Before Annas*

<sup>12</sup> So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him, <sup>13</sup> and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. <sup>14</sup> Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people. (Jn 18:12-14)

- The "officers of the Jews" were a part of the Temple Guard.
- The "band and the captain" were Roman soldiers.
- Annas was the former high priest and the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the sitting high priest (Matt 26:3).
- Because Annas was no longer the high priest, he was not a judge. The fact that Jesus was brought before Annas points to the gang-like mentality that existed in Jewish religious life during Jesus' day. Annas was so despicable that the Roman government deposed him from office. Even bands of robbers in the Negev desert region owed their protection to him.
- This first trial is developed further in John 18:15-24.

#### *The Second Trial (Matt 26:57) – Before Caiaphas*

<sup>57</sup> Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together.

- Caiaphas had inadvertently prophesied the death of Jesus as recorded in John 11:50 when he stated that "it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."
- Caiaphas was a practical man who realized that a scapegoat for the anti-Roman activities that abounded in Israel needed to be found. He knew that Rome would demand that such activities be rectified and if Israel herself cleaned up such matters, then all the better.
- This trial took place in the wee hours of the morning (i.e. at night) which made it contrary to Jewish practice.
- This trial had false witnesses, which made it illegal (Matt 26:59-61).

- There was no defense attorney.
- Matthew 26:62 represents a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:7.
- Jesus knew the principle of Romans 12:19.
- Matthew 26:67 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 52:14 and 53:3.

*The Third Trial (Luke 22:66-71) – Before the Sanhedrin*

<sup>66</sup> When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, <sup>67</sup> "If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; <sup>68</sup> and if I ask a question, you will not answer. <sup>69</sup> "But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE power OF GOD." <sup>70</sup> And they all said, "Are You the Son of God, then?" And He said to them, "Yes, I am." <sup>71</sup> Then they said, "What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth." (Lu 22:66-71)

- This trial was held early the next morning by the Jews just before they passed him off to the Romans.

*The Fourth Trial (John 18:28-38) – Before Pilate*

<sup>28</sup> Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

<sup>29</sup> Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"

<sup>30</sup> They answered and said to him, "If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you."

<sup>31</sup> So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death,"

<sup>32</sup> to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

<sup>33</sup> Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?"

<sup>35</sup> Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?"

<sup>36</sup> Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

<sup>37</sup> Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

<sup>38</sup> Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in Him."

- This trial is covered in all four Gospels.
- The Jews wanted to keep their hands clean so that they might eat the Passover that night.
- Luke 23:2 records the Jews response to the Roman governor, Pilate. The Jews falsely testified that Jesus had refused to give tribute to Caesar.
- This was a lie (see Matt 22:21).

- Jesus could not have a kingdom OF this world (John 18:36) until Satan's strategic defeat at the Cross.
- The Jews really put the pressure on Pilate when he declared Jesus innocent (see Luke 23:5).
- When Pilate realized that Jesus was Galilan (Luke 23:6), Pilate passed Him off to Herod who ruled over Galilee.

*The Fifth Trial (Luke 23:8-12) – Before Herod*

<sup>8</sup> Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him.

<sup>9</sup> And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing.

<sup>10</sup> And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently.

<sup>11</sup> And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

<sup>12</sup> Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day; for before they had been enemies with each other.

- In times past, Pilate and Herod were virtually enemies; however this event brought them together.

*The Sixth Trial (John 18:39-19:12) – Before Pilate*

<sup>39</sup> "But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?"

<sup>40</sup> So they cried out again, saying, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber.

John 19

The Crown of Thorns

<sup>1</sup> Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.

<sup>2</sup> And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him;

<sup>3</sup> and they began to come up to Him and say, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and to give Him slaps in the face.

<sup>4</sup> Pilate came out again and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him."

<sup>5</sup> Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold, the Man!"

<sup>6</sup> So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him."

<sup>7</sup> The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

<sup>8</sup> Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid;

<sup>9</sup> and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

<sup>10</sup> So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

<sup>12</sup> As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, "If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar."

- Pilate declared Jesus' innocence again.
- The Jews wanted the crown and a king, not the Cross and a suffering Messiah.
- The people chose to be led by the religious leaders who no doubt were being used of Satan. Satan didn't want Jesus to go the Cross and it was Satan who was behind the dream of Pilate's wife (see Matt 27:19).
- Pilate did not want to place himself in a position in which he could be accused of opposing Caesar; therefore, he followed the politically expedient route of crucifixion.

### ***PETER'S DENIALS***

<sup>69</sup> Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant-girl came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." <sup>70</sup> But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." <sup>71</sup> When he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." <sup>72</sup> And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." <sup>73</sup> A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away." <sup>74</sup> Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. <sup>75</sup> And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

There is little that I can say about this passage that you have not already heard. However, I think that we should all realize that Peter was a great man in his own right. He realized his failure, He owned up to it, and later became one of the most significant leaders in the early church. It was through Peter also that Israel was given the opportunity after Christ's crucifixion to accept Jesus as the Messiah during the transition period of opportunity prior to the intercalation of the Church Age – see Acts 3:19ff.

<sup>19</sup> "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; <sup>20</sup> and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, <sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

<sup>22</sup> "Moses said,  
'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you.

<sup>23</sup> 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' <sup>24</sup> "And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. <sup>25</sup> "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' <sup>26</sup> "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways." (Acts 3:19-26)

Tradition indicates that because of the events recorded in this passage, Peter opted to be crucified upside down because he did not consider himself worthy to be crucified in the same

manner as the Lord. We should admire Peter and any believer who repents of erroneous thinking so as to be used of the Lord.