

## 50. Jesus Observed the Passover

In our last topic, we saw that we want to show our physical and spiritual children our love for Jesus by our actions, not just our words or our songs. True worship comes from the heart in thanksgiving to God for the fact that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins, and the sins of the whole world, by shedding His blood for our sins. In our topic today, we want to help our children understand why Jesus observed the Passover before His death.

Judas was upset that the expensive ointment Mary had poured on Jesus was not sold. He was a thief, and carried the bag of money, so he had probably hoped to steal most of it. As a result, Mark 14:10-11 says, “Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.” Here, we see that Judas took immediate action to gain extra money in another way. He showed, by his choice, that his heart was deceitful and desperately wicked. He is called Judas Iscariot. The name “Iscariot” means a “man of Kerioth” which was the name of a small town about twenty-three miles south of Jerusalem. That meant he was from Judea instead of Galilee like the other disciples. That made it easier for him to hide his true character from the rest of the disciples.

Judas knew that the chief priests wanted to kill Jesus. As a result, Judas went to the chief priests and offered to betray Jesus to them when no one was around. Matthew 26:14-15 says, “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?’ And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.” We see, in Exodus 21:32, that was the price that was paid to a master for a slave that was killed by an ox. That verse says, “If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.” We see Judas showed by his actions that he had no more respect for Jesus than he had for a slave.

The chief priests were glad when they heard the offer of Judas. Luke 22:5-6 says, “And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.” The chief priests wanted to arrest Jesus when there was no one around to see what they were doing. They wanted to get Pilate to put Jesus on a cross before most of the people realized what was happening. This also showed that their hearts were deceitful and desperately wicked.

Jesus knew what Judas had done. As a result, we see that Jesus did not want Judas to know where He and the disciples would eat the Passover. Mark 14:12-16 says, “Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover *lamb*, His disciples said to Him, ‘Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?’ And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, ‘Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?”’ Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared; there make ready for us.’ So His disciples went out, and came into the city, and found it just as He had said to them; and they prepared the Passover.” Here, we see

that Jesus sent the two disciples with instructions which would not allow Judas to know where they were going to eat the Passover, until they arrived at the house to celebrate the Passover. Luke 22:8 says, “And He sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.’” This verse tells us that the disciples were Peter and John.

For more than fourteen hundred years, the Jews had celebrated the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In Exodus 12, we read about the first Passover. The Jews were to kill a lamb and put the blood on the top and sides of the door of their house. Exodus 12:13 says, “Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.” In the time of Jesus, the Jews would kill the Passover lamb between three and five in the afternoon and sprinkle some of the blood on the altar, rather than putting it on the doorposts as had been done in Exodus. Then, the lamb was taken to the place where the meal would be eaten and roasted whole. Exodus 12:8 says, “Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.” The bitter herbs were made into a sauce in which they would dip their bread. It included nuts, dates, pomegranates, and apples.

Jesus told the two disciples how to find the place where they would prepare the Passover. Jesus said that when they went into the city, they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Since the women were normally the ones who carried the water, they would be able to quickly notice a man with a pitcher of water. Jesus told the two disciples to follow the man carrying the pitcher of water until he went into a house. By these instructions, Jesus made certain that Judas had no way of knowing where they would eat the Passover. Then, the two disciples were to talk to the owner of the house and tell him, “The Teacher says, ‘Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?’” Many people in Jerusalem would have a room that people, from Galilee and other places, could rent and use for the Passover and other feasts that were held in Jerusalem.

Jesus said that the owner of the house would show them a large upper room. Such upper rooms were often over a porch, or a room built on a roof. In 2 Kings 4:10, we see that a couple had made a small upper room for Elisha, “Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there.” This provided a place of privacy for Elisha each time he passed through that town. Since our verses, in Mark, mention that this was a large upper room, it may have been the entire second story of the house, so it provided an area where a large group of people could gather for various feasts or other events. This may have been the same upper room where the disciples met before the day of Pentecost, mentioned in Acts 1:13.

This upper room was furnished and prepared. This meant that it had the things that were necessary to prepare such a meal since people coming from other areas would not bring those things with them. Jesus told Peter and John to prepare the Passover meal in that upper room. They did as they were instructed and went into the city. They saw the man carrying a pitcher of water, just as Jesus had predicted, and followed him to the house. There, they prepared the Passover for Jesus and the other disciples.

Mark 14:17-21 says, “In the evening He came with the twelve. Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me.’ And they began to be sorrowful, and to say to Him one by one, ‘Is it I?’ And another *said*, ‘Is it I?’ He answered and said to them, ‘*It is* one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish. The Son of Man indeed goes 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 never been born.’” We see that Jesus, and the rest of the disciples, came at the time for the meal and all ate together.

While they were eating, Jesus said that one of the men there that night would betray Him. The disciples became sad. Each one began to question, “Is it I?” Here, we see that none of the disciples even suspected Judas. Instead, they all questioned whether they could do such a thing. This shows us that Jesus had treated Judas with the same love and respect that He treated the other disciples, even though He had known, throughout the time that Judas was a disciple, that he would betray Jesus. In fact, Jesus had said much earlier, in John 6:70-71, “‘Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?’ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.” This was a real example of the love Jesus demonstrated to each of His disciples, as Peter later wrote in 1 Peter 4:8, “And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’” Peter had taken this verse from Proverbs 10:12, which says, “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins.” Jesus certainly showed His love for Judas.

Jesus did answer the question of the disciples by saying, “*It is* one of the twelve, who dips with Me in the dish.” However, John 13:26-29 explains, “Jesus answered, ‘It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped *it*.’ And having dipped the bread, He gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, ‘What you do, do quickly.’ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, ‘Buy *those things* we need for the feast,’ or that he should give something to the poor.” None of the other disciples had any idea that it was Judas who would betray Jesus until the very moment when it happened.

Jesus also said, in Mark 14:21, “The Son of Man indeed goes 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 never been born.” That statement is explained in more detail in Hebrews 10:29, where we read, “Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?” We want to show our physical and spiritual children, by our example, how to show the same love Jesus showed to Judas. May the Lord richly bless you as you provide an example, by your life, of the love of Christ.