



## **Chapter 26**

# ***Jewish Authorities Plot Jesus' Death***

**By: Michael Fronczak  
Bible Study Resource Center  
564 Schaeffer Dr.  
Coldwater, Michigan 49036**

**Copyright © 2008**

**Theme:** Final events in the life of Jesus immediately before the cross; the plot to arrest Him; the anointing by Mary of Bethany; the selling by Judas Iscariot; the celebration of the first Lord's Supper; the predicted denial by Peter; the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; the betrayal by Judas; the arrest by the chief priests; the trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin; the denial by Peter

### **Jewish Authorities Plot Jesus' Death**

Seven events:

1. The prediction of His suffering and death (v. 1-5),
2. His anointing at Bethany (v. 6-13),
3. Judas' betrayal (v. 14-16),
4. The Passover meal (v. 17-35),
5. The time at Gethsemane (v. 36-46),
6. His arrest and accusations (v. 47-68),
7. The denial of Peter (v. 69-75).

After facing much opposition for his teaching, Jesus is betrayed by Judas, denied by the disciples, crucified, and dies. Three days later he rises from the dead and appears to the disciples, confirming that he is indeed King over life and death. The long-awaited King has brought in his kingdom, but it is different than expected, for he reigns in our hearts until the day he comes again to establish a new and perfect world.

**McGee Introduction:** This is the longest chapter in the Gospel of Matthew. There is a break at the conclusion of verse 30. The events recorded in John 15–17 could be inserted here. Another natural break would be at the beginning of verse 57. A chapter division here would set the trial before the religious rulers in a separate category. Perhaps those who divided the Scriptures included so many events in one chapter to give the reader something of the scope and rapidity of these significant happenings.

Every incident and detail in this chapter points to the cross. There is a trip-hammer precision here that may give the reader the impression that Jesus is caught in the vortex of circumstances over which He has no control. A careful examination and consideration, however, will reveal that He is the master of circumstances, and He is never more kingly than when He draws near the cross.

All things recorded in this chapter and chapter 27 should be studied in the light of His determination at Caesarea Philippi—six months previously—to go to Jerusalem to die: “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt. 16:21).

He is moving according to God's timetable, and He is forcing the issue. He is *not* the helpless victim caught between the upper millstone of religious intrigue and the nether millstone of Roman power. A reverence should pervade our thinking as we consider these things written in this chapter, for they are vitally related to our salvation.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:137). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## **Matthew 26:1**

**And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,**

**[finished all these sayings]** He began these sayings on Mount Olivet, Matthew 24:1, and continued them till he entered into Bethany, whither he was going. This ends Christ's public ministry to Israel and begins the period of His sufferings (Matthew 26:1-27:66).

**Spurgeon:** Our Lord, having finished all these sayings about the destruction of Jerusalem, his own Second Advent, and the great Day of Judgment, brought back the thoughts of his disciples to his own death. He had often foretold what the end of his life would be; he now states definitely when it would be: "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover." In a sense that they probably did not fully comprehend, the Passover, the one great Passover, was about to be observed. After two days, the Paschal Lamb of God, "Christ our Passover", would be slain. His betrayal was so certain and so near, that it might be spoken of as already accomplished: "the Son of man, is betrayed to be crucified." The time for Christ to be delivered up into the hands of sinners had almost arrived; and when once his enemies had him in their power, they would never rest until he was crucified.

## **Matthew 26:2**

**Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.**

**[Betrayed]** We see that happening in this chapter (v. 14-16).

**[passover]** Instituted in Egypt to commemorate the passing over of the houses of the Jews when the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain (Exodus 12). It began on the 14th of Nisan and also started the feast of unleavened bread for 8 days, which commemorated their deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Leviticus 23; Exodus 23:14).

**[crucified]** Greek: stauroo (GSN-4717), to impale on a cross. Used 46 times in the New Testament. The Greeks and Romans borrowed this form of punishment from the Phoenicians and continued it for the worst criminals and slaves until Constantine in the 4th century. Jesus predicted His suffering and death several times. This is the last time.

### **Sixfold Use of "Crucifixion":**

1. Crucifixion of Jesus for the sins of the world (Matthew 26:2; Matthew 27:22-44; 1 Cor. 1:23; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24)
2. Crucifixion of followers of Jesus (Matthew 23:34; John 21:18)
3. Our old man crucified with Christ to destroy sin (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20)
4. Crucifixion of self-life and sin (Galatians 2:20; Galatians 5:24)
5. Crucifixion of the believer to the world and the world to him (Galatians 6:14)
6. Backsliders crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh and putting Him to open shame (Hebrews 6:6)

**Clarke: The Son of man is betrayed, (rather delivered up), to be crucified**—With what amazing calmness and precision does our blessed Lord speak of this awful event! What a proof does he here give of his prescience in so correctly predicting it; and of his love in so cheerfully undergoing it! Having instructed his disciples and the Jews by his discourses, edified them by his example, convinced them by his miracles, he now prepares to redeem them by his blood! These two verses have no proper connection with this chapter, and should be joined to the preceding.

**JNTC: *Pesach*** (“Passover”) is the festival established in Exodus 12:1–13:16 to commemorate the freeing of the Jews from Egyptian slavery and their establishment as a nation and as the people of God. The central event of the original Passover was the slaughter by each Jewish family of a lamb “without blemish or spot,” whereupon God spared the firstborn sons of the Israelites but slew those of the Egyptians. When Yochanan the Immerser speaks of Yeshua as the “lamb of God” (Yn 1:29), he is invoking both Temple and *Pesach* imagery (see also 1C 5:6–8&N).

The Last Supper (vv. 17–30 of this chapter) is understood by most scholars to have been a Passover meal or *Seder* (v. 17N). Many *Pesach* themes are deepened, reinforced and given new levels of meaning by the events in the life of Yeshua the Messiah and by his words on this night. However, Joseph Shulam has suggested that it may have been not the *Seder* but a *se.umat-mitzvah*, the celebratory “banquet accompanying performance of a commandment” such as a wedding or *b.rit-milah*.

Here is the background for his argument. When a rabbi and his students finish studying a tractate of the Talmud, they celebrate with a *se.umat-mitzvah* (also called a *se.umat-siyum*, “banquet of completion,” i.e., graduation). The Fast of the Firstborn, expressing gratitude for the saving of Israel’s firstborn sons from the tenth plague (compare Lk 2:22–24&N), has been prescribed for the day before *Pesach*, Nisan 14, at least since Mishnaic times. When it is necessary to eat a *se.umat-mitzvah*, this takes precedence over a fast. With a modicum of foresight a rabbi can plan to complete a tractate on Nisan 14 and thus avoid having to fast; doing so is not construed as cheating, and in fact it has become the custom.

The tradition of the Fast of the Firstborn dates at least from Mishnaic times. But, Shulam reasons, if it goes back a couple centuries more to the time of Yeshua, and if the *se.umat-siyum* custom applied in the first century to the completing of any course of study, then Yeshua might have arranged to have himself and his *talmidim* finish reading a book of the *Tanakh* on Nisan 14. Or, since Yeshua knew he was to die, he may have regarded it as appropriate to complete his disciples’ earthly “course of study” with a banquet. This solution would also resolve the perceived conflict between Yochanan and the Synoptic Gospels over the timing of the Last Supper (see Yn 13:29&N, 18:28N).

However, most of the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* notes on the Last Supper are based on the assumption that the event was in fact a Passover *Seder*.<sup>2</sup>

**Yasahanet.com: Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.** Note that Yeshua speaks of a connection between Passover and His destiny. All of the feasts of the Lord have some bearing on His

---

<sup>2</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:2). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

cosmic plan. They are a "shadow" of what is to come (Hebrews 8:5, 10:1; Colossians 2:17). The study and observance of these Feasts (and the rest of Torah - Romans 2:13; James 1:22), is fundamental to faith in God.

### **Matthew 26:3**

**Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,**

**[Caiaphas]** A Roman appointee. Annas was actually the Aaronic heir to that role, but Romans had entrenched the politics of that day. Caiaphas is the power figure on the Jewish side.

Son-in-law of Annas (John 18:13). He prophesied of Jesus (John 11:49-51; John 18:14) and was the trial judge of Jesus (Matthew 26:2-3,57,63-65; John 18:24-28), Peter and others (Acts 4:1-22). Two years after the crucifixion both he and Pilate were deposed by Vitellius, then governor of Syria, and afterwards emperor. Caiaphas, unable to bear the disgrace and the stings of his conscience for the murder of Christ, killed himself about 35 A.D. See Josephus, Antiquities, Book 18, chapters 2-4.

**[palace]** Greek: *aule* (GSN-833), court, and should be so translated in Matthew 26:58,69; Mark 14:54,66; Mark 15:16; Luke 11:21; John 18:15. It is rendered court (Rev. 11:2) and hall (Mark 15:16; Luke 22:55). What is a priest doing with a palace?

Passover was one of the feast which was required for every able bodied male to celebrate it in Jerusalem. So Jerusalem at this time would be crowded with strangers, tourists from all over.

**Clarke: The high priest, who was called Caiaphas**—Caiaphas succeeded Simon, son of Camith, about A.D. 16, or, as Calmet thinks, 25. He married the daughter of Annas, who was joined with him in the priesthood. About two years after our Lord's crucifixion, Caiaphas and Pilate were both deposed by VITELLIUS, then governor of Syria, and afterwards emperor. Caiaphas, unable to bear this disgrace, and the stings of his conscience for the murder of Christ, killed himself about A.D. 35. See Joseph. Ant. b. xviii. c. 2-4.

**Barnes: The High Priest.** Holding the office that was first conferred on Aaron, Exodus 28:1 and following. The office was at first hereditary, descending on the eldest son Numbers 3:10. Antiochus Epiphanes, (B. C. 160) when he had possession of Judea, sold the office to the highest bidder. In the year 152 B.C., Alexander, king of Syria, conferred the office on JONATHAN, 1 Maccabees 10:18-20, whose brother Simon was afterwards created by the Jews both prince and high priest, 1 Maccabees 14:35-47. His posterity, who at the same time sustained the office of kings, occupied the station of high priest till the time of Herod, who changed the incumbents of the office at pleasure: a liberty which the Romans ever afterwards exercised without any restraint. The office was never more fluctuating than in the time of our Saviour. Hence it is said that Caiaphas was high priest for *that year*, John 11:51. Persons who had been high priests, and had been removed from

office, still retained the name. Hence more than one high priest is sometimes mentioned, though strictly there was but one who held the office.

Caiaphas was the ruling high priest during Jesus' ministry. He was the son-in-law of Annas, the previous high priest. The Roman government had taken over the process of appointing all political and religious leaders. Caiaphas served for 18 years, longer than most high priests, suggesting that he was gifted at cooperating with the Romans. He was the first to recommend Jesus' death in order to "save" the nation (John 11:49-50).<sup>3</sup>

The wicked **Caiaphas** was **high priest** from A.D. 18 to 37. However, Luke 3:2 says that both Annas (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.<sup>4</sup>

**Yashanet.com: Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people** Although the leadership was clearly instigating matters against Yeshua, He does not miss the people as a whole, as we will see in the next chapter. This generation was given more blessing than any other as they had the Messiah in their midst (Hebrews 11:39-40). Some, like John the Baptist were fortunate in this respect (Luke 7:28), but the generation as a whole failed to respond to what God had given them (Matthew 25:15) and thus their punishment would be great (Luke 12:47).

**Spurgeon:** While Jesus was prophesying, his enemies were plotting. Thus was fulfilled in Ps 2:2, "The rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed." Their aim was that they might kill him; but they consulted how they might take Jesus by subtilty. They decided not to arrest him "during the feast" (R.V.); yet the evil deed was to be postponed, not from any religious regard for the passover, but "lest there be an uproar among the people." Their plan was contrary to Christ's prophecy; but the event proved that he was right and they were wrong, for he was crucified at the time he foretold.

### **Matthew 26:4**

**And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.**

**Clarke: And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty**—The providence of God frustrated their artful machinations; and that event which they wished to conduct with the greatest privacy and silence was transacted with all possible celebrity, amidst the thousands who resorted to Jerusalem, at this season, for the keeping of the passover. It was, doubtless, of the very first importance that the crucifixion of Christ, which was preparatory to the most essential achievement of Christianity, viz. his resurrection from the grave, should be exhibited before many witnesses, and in the most open manner, that

---

<sup>3</sup> Life Application Notes

<sup>4</sup> The Nelson Study Bible

infidelity might not attempt, in future, to invalidate the evidences of the Christian religion, by alleging that these things were done in a corner.

**Barnes: By subtilty.** By guile, deceit, or in some secret manner, so that the people would not know it. Jesus was regarded by the people as a distinguished prophet, and by most of them probably, as the Messiah; and the sanhedrim did not dare to take him away openly, lest the people should rise and rescue him. They were probably aware that he had gone out to Bethany, or to some of the places adjacent to the city; and as he passed his nights there, and not in the city, there was need of guile to ascertain the place where he remained, and to take him.

**ESV: chief priests and the elders of the people.** Representatives of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body in Jerusalem, but not the full assembly. **palace.** The private residence of the high priest. **Caiaphas** (high priest a.d. 18 to 36, and son-in-law of Annas, the previous high priest; see note on John 18:24). Archaeologists discovered in 1991 an elaborate ossuary (a box for reburying the bones of the dead) in a burial cave in Jerusalem with slightly varied inscriptions that read, “Joseph son of Caiaphas.”

### **Matthew 26:5**

**But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.**

**Clarke: Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar**—It was usual for the Jews to punish criminals at the public festivals; but in this case they were afraid of an insurrection, as our Lord had become very popular. The providence of God directed it thus, for the reason given in the preceding note.

He who observes a festival on motives purely human violates it in his heart, and is a hypocrite before God. It is likely they feared the Galileans, as being the countrymen of our Lord, more than they feared the people of Jerusalem.

**Barnes: Not on the feast day.** Not during the feast. The feast lasted seven days. A vast multitude attended from all parts of Judea. Jerusalem is said to have contained at such times *three millions of people*. Amidst such a multitude there were frequent tumults and seditions; and the sanhedrim was justly apprehensive there *would* be now, if in open day, and in the temple, they took away a teacher so popular as Jesus, and put him to death. They therefore sought how they might do it secretly, and by guile.

**McGee:** In verse 2 Jesus tells His disciples that He is going to die. According to the record, this is the sixth time He has told them. Six months before this, beginning at Caesarea Philippi, He announced His impending death. And now He sets the *time* of His death. He tells them that He will die during the Passover. But the religious rulers had other plans—notice verse 5: “But *they* said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.” The very ones who put Him to death said that they would *not* crucify Him during the Passover; *He* said that He would die during the Passover. When did He die? He died during the Passover. You see, Jesus, not His enemies, set the time of His execution. He is in command; He is the King in Matthew’s gospel, and when He seems

more helpless and weak than at any other time, He still is in charge. The bitter hatred of His enemies had led them to plot His murder, and they wanted to do it their way, but they will not be permitted to do that. The closer Jesus gets to the cross, the more kingly He becomes.

We pass from that incident to one of marvelous light.<sup>5</sup>

### **Matthew 26:6**

**Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,**

Bethany had the unique distinction of being within a Sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem. It appears to be Jesus' favorite place to stay.

[leper] Evidently a man that Jesus had healed of leprosy in Bethany.

**Barnes: Leper.** Matthew 8:2. It was unlawful to eat with persons that *had* the leprosy; and it is more than probable, therefore, that this Simon had been healed-perhaps by our Lord himself. Matthew 12:1 says, that this was the house where Lazarus was, who had been raised from the dead. Probably Lazarus was a relative of Simon's, and was living with him. He farther says that they made Jesus a supper, and that Martha served.

**Yashanet.com: Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,** This may be a mistranslation. Lepers were not permitted to live in the city (see Leviticus 13:46). Since ancient Hebrew and Aramaic were written without vowels, there was no distinction between the Aramaic words GAR'BA (leper) and GARABA (jar maker or jar merchant). Since in this story a woman pours oil from a jar it is apparent that Simon was a jar merchant or jar maker and not a leper.<sup>6</sup>

**Spurgeon:** We do not know who Simon the leper was, nor whether this woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, though I believe she was the one who came to Jesus, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. The beauty of this woman's act consisted in this, that it was all for Christ. All who wore in the house could perceive and enjoy the perfume of the precious ointment; but the anointing was for Jesus only.

### **Matthew 26:7**

**There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat*.**

[a woman] This woman is Mary, the sister of Martha (Cf. John 12:3).

---

<sup>5</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:138). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>6</sup>Yashanet.com, Bible Studies

**[Ointment]** This would presumably be myrrh (remember the three gifts that the wise men brought Jesus at His birth. Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh, each speaking of one of His offices (Gold: deity; Frankincense: priesthood; Myrrh: suffering and death). Myrrh was a burial ointment. This particular ointment could have been sold for 300 denari (a denari was a minimum day's wage; therefore basically 300 man -day's of labor), very expensive stuff. Cf. John 12:5.

This gift to Him makes us realize that she understood His prediction. Somehow she assembled this enormous amount of savings to buy this unique and symbolic gift.

Here it notes that she anointed His head, in John it notes His feet; this is not contradictory, she did both. Matthew is emphasizing the Lord's Kingship, so it's His head; while John is emphasizing the Lord's deity, so he emphasizes the fact that she anointed His feet. Complementary insights.

**[alabaster box]** Made of soft white marble of various shapes and sizes, called alabastra (GSN-211).

**[poured it on his head]** Two anointings the last week:

1. In the house of Lazarus six days before the passover (John 12:1-8)
2. In the house of Simon the leper two days before the passover (Matthew 26:7-13; Mark 14:3-9)

There are eight points of difference between them in these passages.

**Barnes: Of very precious ointment.** That is, of ointment *of much value*; that was rare, and difficult to be obtained. Mark (Mark 14:3) and John (John 12:3) say, that it was ointment of spikenard. In the original it is *nard*. It was procured from an herb growing in the Indies, chiefly obtained from the root-though sometimes also from the bark. It was liquid, so as easily to flow when the box or phial was open, and was distinguished particularly for an agreeable smell. See Song 1:12. The ancients were much in the habit of *anointing* or *perfuming* their bodies, and the *nard* was esteemed one of the most precious perfumes. John says there was a *pound* of this, (John 12:3.) The *pound* in use among them was the Roman, of twelve ounces, answering to our Troy weight. That there was a large quantity is farther evident from the fact that Judas says it might have been sold for three hundred pence, (forty dollars,) [or 9,] and that the house was filled with the odour of the ointment, (John.)

**McGee:** Bethany was the place of love, as Jerusalem was the place of hate. He stayed in Bethany during His last hours before His death. This incident took place in the home of Simon the leper. Why did they call him Simon the leper? Did he have leprosy? There was a time when he had this disease, but Jesus had undoubtedly healed him. Now he is able to sit down and have fellowship with the Lord Jesus and others who are having dinner with him at his home.

This is a wonderful scene, my friend. The Lord's enemies today do not know Him. They do not know the Lord who healed, who loved, who wept and judged. In fact, some of His enemies of today recently presented a play in a local college in which Jesus and

His disciples were characterized as sinful men! Our laws have banned prayer and Bible reading in schools, but they permit the dirtiest, filthiest portrayals of our Lord, and outright blasphemy! Of course, those who produce such things are ignorant; they don't know our Lord. In fact, they are spiritual lepers. If they told the truth, they would have to say of themselves, "Unclean, unclean!"

When you have come to the Lord Jesus and have been cleansed by Him, you can sit down and have fellowship with Him. This is the scene we have in this passage. As they were having dinner, a woman (John 12:3 tells us that it was Mary) came to Jesus with an alabaster box of precious ointment and anointed both His head and His feet with fragrant ointment. John also tells us that it was Judas Iscariot who led the agitation against her, although all the disciples agreed with him.<sup>7</sup>

**Yashanet.com: There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment,** This ointment is called "spikenard," as revealed in Mark 14:3. The Hebrew Zohar (a book of very deep and often mystical commentary), relates spikenard to the man who dies before his time because of the good deeds he has done:

**Soncino Zohar, Bereshith, Section 1, Page 56b** - *While the king was still with his company at table, my spikenard sent forth its fragrance (Song of Solomon 1:12). 'This verse', he said, 'can be expounded as referring to the ways of God. When God sees that a man who cleaves to Him and with whom He abides will one day degenerate, He takes him from the world prematurely, culling, as it were, the odour while it is still sweet; hence it is written, "while the King was with his company, my spikenard gave up its scent." The King is God; the company is the good man who cleaves to Him and walks in His ways; the spikenard indicates the good deeds on account of which he is removed from the world before his time.*

### **Matthew 26:8**

**But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?**

From John we learn that it was Judas who was raising such a fuss. Cf. John 12:4.

**Clarke: His disciples**—One of them, viz. Judas. This mode of speaking was common among the Hebrews. So, Matthew 27:44, the thieves also, i.e. one of them. So, Matthew 28:17, some doubted, i.e. one, Thomas. See also Genesis 8:4; Judges 12:7; Nehemiah 6:7, etc. By a figure called among rhetoricians *enallagè*, the plural is put for the singular; it is, however, possible that Judas, who made the objection, was followed in the sentiment by the rest of the disciples.

---

<sup>7</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:138). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**McGee:** I wonder how much they really cared about the poor. They remind me of folk in our contemporary society who are always talking about taking care of the poor but are doing nothing about it themselves. In our government there are quite a few legislators who are millionaires and are always talking about a poverty program and other aid for the poor. Have you ever attempted to find out how much they personally have done for the poor? I don't care for that kind of hypocrisy! The evidence of the sincerity of your concern is always in what you yourself are doing. Are you trying to make an impression, or are you really trying to help folk?<sup>8</sup>

**ESV: 8–12 given to the poor.** What seems like a waste to the disciples, Jesus calls a beautiful thing. If the disciples' real concern was for the poor, there would always be an opportunity to care for the poor because they will always have the poor with them (v. 11). There would not be much opportunity, however, to demonstrate their love for Jesus. Given his impending death, the anointing of Jesus' body becomes a dramatic foreshadowing of the events to come. prepare me for burial. In her act of devotion, Mary unknowingly prepares Jesus' body for being laid to rest in the tomb.

**Spurgeon:** When you do the best you can do, from the purest motives, and your Lord accepts your service, do not expect that your brethren will approve all your actions. If you do, you will be greatly disappointed. There was never a more beautiful proof of love to Christ than this anointing at Bethany; yet the disciples found fault with it: they had indignation, saying, "To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor." According to John's account, it was Judas who asked, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" The same evangelist gives the reason for the traitor's question, "This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." The complaint having been started by Judas, others of the disciples joined in it. If this devoted and enthusiastic woman had waited for the advice of these prudent people, she would neither have sold the ointment, nor poured it out. She did well to take counsel with her own loving heart, and then to pour the precious nard upon that dear head which was so soon to be crowned with thorns. She thus showed that there was, at least, one heart in the world that thought nothing was too good for her Lord! and that the best of the best ought to be given to him. May she have many imitators in every age until Jesus comes again!

### **Matthew 26:9**

**For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.**

**Clarke: And given to the poor** How often does charity serve as a cloak for covetousness! God is sometimes robbed of his right under the pretense of devoting what is withheld to some charitable purpose, to which there was no intention ever to give it.

---

<sup>8</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:138). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**ESV: large sum.** The perfume was valued at “more than three hundred denarii” (Mark 14:5), approximately a year's wages for the average worker. **poor.** Poverty was widespread in Israel.

### **Matthew 26:10**

**When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.**

**[good]** should be beautiful. She is worshiping Her Lord. Her mind is on Him and she lavished all that she had on Him. This is a higher calling.

**McGee:** As far as Christians are concerned, they should not give to anything nor do anything that does not glorify the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Personally, I refuse to participate in any so-called good works in the community unless Christ is glorified in them, unless they are done in His name. And I am amazed at how little they really accomplish. How much do they really give that brings blessing to people? It makes me sick when I hear of the corruption among the politicians in the poverty programs. However, when loving assistance is given in the name of the Lord Jesus, He Himself said that it was a *good* work.<sup>9</sup>

**Spurgeon:** She had been very happy in the act; probably it was the happiest hour in all her life when she gave this costly gift to the Lord she loved so well. But a cloud passed over her bright face as the whispered complaints reached her ear. Jesus perceived that the murmuring of the disciples troubled the woman, so he rebuked them, and commended her: "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me." She did something we cannot do, for Christ is not now here in person, to be anointed by those who love him as this woman did. We can perform good works upon others for his sake; and he will accept them as though they were done unto himself.

### **Matthew 26:11**

**For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.**

**[me ye have not always]** The doctrine of the wafer being the very flesh or body of Christ with us is contradicted by Jesus here. We have such wafers always, but we do not have Christ's body with us because He is in heaven and will not come again until the end of the age (Matthew 24:29-31; Rev. 19:11-21; Jude 1:14; Zech. 14:1-21). Such emblems merely represent His broken body and shed blood. It was declared to be only "bread" in Acts 2:42,46; Acts 20:7,11; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 1 Cor. 11:23-28.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:139). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>10</sup>Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

**Clarke: Ye have the poor always with you**—And, consequently, have the opportunity of doing them good at any time; but me ye have not always; my bodily presence is about to be removed from you for ever. The woman, under a presentiment of my death is preparing me for my burial.

**Spurgeon:** Our Lord always cared for the poor; he was himself poor, he was the poor people's Preacher, he fed the hungry poor, and healed the sick poor. He would always have his people show their love to him by caring for the poor; but he had reached the one occasion in his life when it was seemly that something should be done specially for himself, and this woman, by the intuition of love, did that very thing. Oh, that we might all love Christ as intensely as she did!

### **Matthew 26:12**

**For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.**

Jesus explains to the disciples why Mary anointed Him.

**Clarke: She did it for my burial**—Or, She hath done it to embalm me—ενταφιασαι με. The Septuagint use ενταφιασης for the person whose office it was to embalm, Genesis 50:2, and ενταφιαζω for the Hebrew טַבַּחַת which signifies to prepare with spices, or aromatics, Genesis 50:3. Our Lord took this opportunity to tell them, once more, that he was shortly to die.

**Barnes: She did it for my burial.** It is not to be supposed that Mary understood clearly that he was *then* about to die, for the apostles, it seems, did not fully comprehend it, or that she *intended* it for his burial; but she had done it as an act of kindness and love, to show her regard for her Lord. *He* said that it was a *proper preparation* for his burial. Anciently, bodies were anointed and embalmed for the purpose of the sepulcher. Jesus said that this was *really* a preparation for that burial, as fitting him in a proper manner for the tomb.

**Spurgeon:** She probably did not know all that her action meant when she anointed her Lord for his burial. The consequences of the simplest action done for Christ may be much greater than we think. Go thou, my sister, and do what God bids thee; and it shall be seen that thou hast done far more than thou knowest. Obey the holy impulse within thy spirit, my brother; and thou mayest do ten thousand I times more than thou hast ever I imagined to be possible. This woman's outburst of affection, this simple-hearted act of love to Christ himself, is one of those things which are to live as long as the gospel lives. The aroma of this loving deed is to abide as long as the world itself endures.

### **Matthew 26:13**

**Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.**

Song of Sol 1:3.

**Clarke: Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached**—Another remarkable proof of the prescience of Christ. Such a matter as this, humanly speaking, depended on mere fortuitous circumstances, yet so has God disposed matters, that the thing has continued, hitherto, as firm and regular as the ordinances of heaven.

**Clarke: For a memorial of her**—As embalming preserves the body from corruption, and she has done this good work to embalm and preserve this body, so will I order every thing concerning this transaction to be carefully recorded, to preserve her memory to the latest ages. The actions which the world blames, through the spirit of envy, covetousness, or malice, God takes delight to distinguish and record.

**McGee:** That home of Simon the leper in Bethany was a place of light and friendship for the Lord Jesus. In contrast, Jerusalem was the place of hatred. He did not spend a night in the city of Jerusalem during that final week, but He went out to Bethany and stayed with these folk who loved Him. Those who want Him, who love Him, are the ones He fellowships with in our day. My friend, you can have Him if you want Him.

The beautiful story of the broken alabaster box has filled the world with its fragrance. Our Lord said, “Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” And we are telling it right now. I hear folk speak about being in the apostolic succession, but I would like to be in the succession of Mary. Mary alone, of all Christ’s followers, understood and entered into His death, while the apostles missed the point completely. Although she stood on the fringe of things, she understood, and to let Him know, she anointed Him. Did she waste her ointment? In the gospel records I read that on the morning of that first day of the week other women came to the tomb of Jesus to anoint His body for burial. I have a question to ask you: Did they put their ointment on the body of Jesus? No, He wasn’t in that tomb—He was risen. Mary alone had the privilege of anointing Him. My friend, you and I need to break our alabaster box of ointment in the name of the Lord Jesus. The world outside doesn’t know Him; so we ought to be very careful that what we do brings glory, not to ourselves, but to Him.

Now we turn from that beautiful scene of light to another dark scene.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:139). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## **Matthew 26:14**

**Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,**

[Iscariot] means “ish” (man) “carioth” (city in Judea). The only one of the twelve that was not a Galilean, he was a Judean.

**Clarke: Then—Judas**—After this supper at Bethany, Judas returned to Jerusalem, and made his contract with the chief priests.

**Spurgeon:** What a contrast to the incident we have just been considering! The anointing of Jesus is to be the theme of admiration wherever the gospel is preached; but his betrayal by Judas will be a subject for execration to all eternity. It was one of the twelve, who went unto the chief priests, to bargain for the price of his Lord's betrayal. He did not even mention Christ's name in his infamous question, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?", "The amount agreed upon, thirty pieces of silver, was the price of a slave; and showed how little value the chief priests set upon Jesus, and also revealed the greed of Judas in selling his master for so small a sum. Yet many have sold Jesus for a less price than Judas received; a smile or a sneer has been sufficient to induce them to betray their Lord. Let us, who have been redeemed with Christ's precious blood, set high store by him, think much of him, and praise him much. As we remember, with shame and sorrow, these thirty pieces of silver, let us never undervalue him, or forget the priceless preciousness of him who was reckoned as worth no more than a slave.

## **Matthew 26:15**

**And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.**

Ex 3: The price of a servant was 30 pieces of silver. See also Matt 27:3-4. Zech 11:12-13. Silver symbolizes blood. Cf. The tabernacle, the redemption shekel,...

**Clarke: He sought opportunity**—Ευκαιριαν, a convenient or fit opportunity. Men seldom leave a crime imperfect: when once sin is conceived, it meets, in general, with few obstacles, till it brings forth death. How deceitful, how deeply damning, is the love of money! Well might a heathen exclaim, while contemplating the grave of a person who was murdered for the sake of his wealth:—

“O! cursed lust of gold! what wilt thou not compel the human heart to perpetrate?”

Judas is deservedly considered as one of the most infamous of men, his conduct base beyond description, and his motives vile. But how many, since his time, have walked in the same way! How many, for the sake of worldly wealth, have renounced the religion of their Lord and Master, and sold Jesus, and their interest in heaven, for a short-lived portion of secular good! From John 12:6, we learn that Judas, who was treasurer to our Lord and his disciples, (for he carried the bag), was a thief, and frequently purloined a portion of what was given for the support of this holy family. Being disappointed of the

prey he hoped to have from the sale of the precious ointment, Matthew 26:9, he sold his Master to make up the sum. A thorough Jew!

**Barnes: Thirty pieces of silver.** Mark and Luke do not mention the sum. They say that they promised him *money*-in the original, *silver*. In Matthew, in the original, it is thirty *silvers*, or *silverlings*. This was the price of a slave. See Exodus 21:32. And it is not unlikely that this sum was fixed on by them to show their contempt of Jesus, and that they regarded him as of little value. There is no doubt, also, that they understood that such was the anxiety of Judas to obtain money, that he would betray his Lord for any sum. The money usually denoted by pieces of silver, when the precise sum is not mentioned, is a shekel -a silver Jewish coin, amounting to about fifty cents, [or 2s. 3d.] The whole sum, therefore, for which Judas committed this crime, was fifteen dollars, [or 3l 7s. 6d.]

**Thirty pieces of silver** was the price of a slave (see Ex. 21:32). Zechariah had foreshadowed this sum in his prophetic actions (in Zech. 11:12, 13). Note the contrast between the costly devotion of the woman (vv. 7–13) and the small price of Judas’s betrayal.<sup>12</sup>

### **Matthew 26:16**

**And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.**

The leaders are trying to find a way to take Jesus quietly so there is not a big public uproar.

Why would Judas want to betray Jesus? Judas, like the other disciples, expected Jesus to start a political rebellion and overthrow Rome. As treasurer, Judas certainly assumed (as did the other disciples—see Mark 10:35-37) that he would be given an important position in Jesus’ new government. But when Jesus praised Mary for pouring out perfume worth a year’s salary, Judas may have realized that Jesus’ kingdom was not physical or political, but spiritual. Judas’s greedy desire for money and status could not be realized if he followed Jesus, so he betrayed Jesus in exchange for money and favor from the religious leaders.<sup>13</sup>

Matthew alone records the exact amount of money Judas accepted to betray Jesus—30 silver coins, the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32). The religious leaders had planned to wait until after the Passover to take Jesus, but with Judas’s unexpected offer, they accelerated their plans.

**McGee:** This deed of Judas Iscariot is dark and dastardly in contrast to Mary’s act of spiritual perception. Dante gave Judas and Brutus the lowest place in *The Inferno*, and no one since then has said he was wrong. These men did the lowest and basest thing men could do when they betrayed one to whom they should have been loyal.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Nelson Study Bible

<sup>13</sup> Life Application Notes

“He sought opportunity to betray him.” You see, the arrest had to take place when Jesus was alone—that is, when the crowds were gone. Judas waited for such a time.<sup>14</sup>

**Judas Iscariot** must have been viewed by the religious leaders as an answer to their prayers. Judas’ offer **to the chief priests** to betray Jesus Christ was more than agreeing to point out Jesus to arresting officers. Judas was offering his services as a witness against Jesus when He would be brought to trial. He would do anything to gain more money (cf. John 12:6). The offer was made in exchange for funds, probably paid out immediately to Judas. **Thirty silver coins** were the redemption price paid for a slave (Ex. 21:32). This same amount was also prophesied as the price for the services of the rejected Shepherd (Zech. 11:12). The exact value of the agreed price cannot be determined because the coinage was not identified; it was simply called “silver” (*argyria*; cf. Matt. 25:18). But it could have been a substantial amount. The bargain had been struck and **Judas** was now being looked to by the religious leaders as their deliverer from their biggest problem, Jesus of Nazareth. Judas knew he had to follow through, for his word had been given and money had been exchanged.<sup>15</sup>

**ESV: thirty pieces of silver.** In the OT, this was the penalty paid by the owner of an ox that gored a slave to death (Ex. 21:32). Equivalent to about four months' wages for a laborer (about \$7,500 in modern terms), this meager sum suggests the low esteem in which Jesus was held by both Judas and the chief priests. opportunity to betray him. Judas's treachery reveals that he was not a true believer (cf. Luke 22:3–4)

### **Matthew 26:17**

**Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?**

**Clarke: Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread**—As the feast of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the passover, the fifteenth day of the month, Leviticus 23:5, 6; Numbers 28:16, 17, this could not have been, properly, the first day of that feast; but as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth, Exodus 12:18, this day was often termed the first of unleavened bread. The evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name. See Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7.

**Clarke: Where wilt thou that we prepare**—How astonishing is this, that HE who created all things, whether visible or invisible, and by whom all things were upheld, should so empty himself as not to be proprietor of a single house in his whole creation, to eat the last passover with his disciples! This is certainly a mystery, and so, less or more is every thing that God does. But how inveterate and destructive must the nature of sin be, when such emptying and humiliation were necessary to its destruction! It is worthy of

---

<sup>14</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:139). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

cf. *confer*, compare

<sup>15</sup>Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:82). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

note what the Talmudists say, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not let out their houses to those who came to the annual feasts; but afforded all accommodations of this kind gratis. A man might therefore go and request the use of any room, on such an occasion, which was as yet unoccupied. The earthen jug, and the skin of the sacrifice, were left with the host. See Lightfoot, vol. ii. p. 21.

See Exodus 12:43, Numbers 9:11, John 18:28, 1 Corinthians 5:7, where Christ *our Passover*, is said to be slain for us; i.e. our Paschal Lamb, so called on account of his innocence, and his being offered as a victim, or *sacrifice*, for our sins.

**JNTC: The first day for *matzah*** (“unleavened bread”). *Pesach* is also known as the Festival of *Matzah* because an essential element in it is eating only unleavened bread throughout its seven days (Exodus 12:15–20). Furthermore, during that period, “no *chametz* [“yeast, leaven”] must be found in your houses” (Exodus 12:19). Traditionally, the day before the Festival begins is the day when the last *chametz* must be removed from the house and burned, and from that moment on the only bread found in the house will be *matzah*. Thus “the first day for *matzah*” is the day before the start of *Pesach*. Since according to the Jewish calendar a day begins at sundown, what this means is that the *chametz* is burned around midmorning, and *Pesach* commences with the *Seder* service after the sun has set.

***Seder***, literally, “order,” but referring here to the ordered ceremony and meal that usher in the week of *Pesach*. Today the sequence of events, prayers, recitals and foods to be eaten is set forth in the *Haggadah* (literally, “telling”), which recounts the biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt with rabbinical embellishments. Many features of today’s *Seder* were already present in Yeshua’s day, as this passage and Lk 22:14–20&NN reveal.<sup>16</sup>

**Yashanet.com:** Again, the Lord's Feasts play an important role and still should for anyone following Yeshua and the ways of God. The modern religious holidays of Christmas and Easter are pagan in origin and are alien and contrary to what God has established. (The King James version of the Bible even has the audacity to replace Passover with "Easter" in Acts 12:4 -- a clear case of tampering with the Word of God.)

God commanded His people to keep the Feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread in Exodus 12:14-20; 13:6-10; 23:15; 34:18, Leviticus 23:5-8; Numbers 28:17-18, Deuteronomy 16:8,16).

In addition, all males who were able, were required to appear at the Temple in Jerusalem for three feasts: Pesakh (Passover), Shavout (Pentecost), Succot (Tabernacles), as found in Deuteronomy 16:16.

**Spurgeon:** How truly royal was Jesus of Nazareth even in his humiliation! He had no home of his own wherein he could "Keep the passover "with his disciples; he was soon to be put to a public and shameful death; yet he had only to send two of his disciples "into the city to such a man", and the guest -chamber, furnished and prepared, was at once

---

<sup>16</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:17). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

placed at his disposal. He did not take the room by arbitrary force, as an earthly monarch might have done; but he obtained it by the diviner compulsion of almighty love. Even in his lowest estate, our Lord Jesus had the hearts of all men beneath his control. What power he has now that he reigns in glory!

### **Matthew 26:18**

**And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.**

The undertones seem to imply a password, a prearranged setting.

14th of Nisan is when Passover is celebrated. The day starts at sundown. When is Jesus crucified? “Between the two evenings” (Ex 12:6), meaning the next afternoon before sundown.

Passover commemorates the passing over of the angel of death during the last plague in Egypt. In Ex 12 it lays out the Passover commitments, also noting the change of the Hebrew calendar. Noah leaves the ark on the 17th day of the 7th month. When the 7th month becomes the first month, which means that Noah exited the ark on the same month that is now called “Nisan.” Jesus was crucified on the 14th of Nisan, He was resurrected 3 days later on the 17th of Nisan, the anniversary of Noah’s exit from the ark!<sup>17</sup>

**Clarke: Go—to such a man**—Τὸν δεῖναι It is probable that this means some person with whom Christ was well acquainted, and who was known to the disciples. Grotius observes that the Greeks use this form when they mean some particular person who is so well known that there is no need to specify him by name. The circumstances are more particularly marked in Luke 22:8, etc.

**Clarke: My time is at hand**—That is, the time of my crucifixion. Kypke has largely shown that *καρπος* is often used among the Greeks for affliction and calamity. It might be rendered here, the time of my crucifixion is at hand.

**Barnes: Go into the city to such a man.** That is, Jerusalem, called the city, by way of eminence. Luke says that the disciples whom he sent were Peter and John. The man to whom they were to go, it seems, he did not mention by name, but he told them that when they came into the city, a man would meet them bearing a pitcher of water. See Mark and Luke. Him they were to follow, and in the house which he entered they would find a room prepared. The name of the man was not mentioned. The *house* in which they were to keep the passover was not mentioned. The reason of this probably was, that Christ was desirous of concealing from *Judas* the place where they would keep the passover. He was acquainted with the design of Judas to betray him. He knew that if Judas was acquainted with the place *beforehand*, he could easily give information to the chief priests, and it would give them a favourable opportunity to surprise them, and apprehend *him* without

---

<sup>17</sup> Chuck Missler, Notes on Matthew, khouse.org

making a tumult. Though it was certain that he would not be delivered up before the time appointed by the Father, yet it was proper *to use the means* to prevent it. There can be but little doubt that Jesus was acquainted with this man, and that he was a disciple. The direction which he gave his disciples most clearly proves that he was omniscient. Amidst so great a multitude going at that time into the city, it was impossible to know that *a particular man would be met* a man bearing a pitcher of water—unless Jesus had all knowledge, and was therefore Divine.

### **Matthew 26:19**

**And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.**

**Clarke: Go—to such a man**—Τὸν δεῖναι It is probable that this means some person with whom Christ was well acquainted, and who was known to the disciples. Grotius observes that the Greeks use this form when they mean some particular person who is so well known that there is no need to specify him by name. The circumstances are more particularly marked in Luke 22:8, etc.

**Clarke: My time is at hand**—That is, the time of my crucifixion. Kypke has largely shown that καῖρος is often used among the Greeks for affliction and calamity. It might be rendered here, the time of my crucifixion is at hand.

**Barnes: They made ready the Passover.** That is, they procured a *paschal lamb*, multitudes of which were kept for sale in the temple; they procured it to be killed and flayed by the priests, and the blood to be poured at the altar; they roasted the lamb, and prepared the bitter herbs, the sauce, and the unleavened bread. This was done, it seems, while our Lord was absent, by the two disciples.

### **Matthew 26:20**

**Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.**

**[sat down with the twelve]** There was no law that it had to be eaten standing, for that would be without purpose after entering Canaan. Jews now reclined on couches to eat the passover to show that they were no longer slaves, but free and at rest.

**Clarke: Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.**—It is a common opinion that our Lord ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate it; for the Jews, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the fourteenth day, but Christ ate his the preceding even, which was the beginning of the same sixth day, or Friday; the Jews begin their day at sunsetting, we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the passover on the same day with the Jews, but not on the same hour. Christ kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day and hour in which the Jews had eaten their first passover in Egypt. See Exodus 12:6-12. And in the same part of the same day in which the Jews had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. between the two evenings, about the ninth

hour, or 3 o'clock, Jesus Christ our passover was sacrificed for us: for it was at this hour that he yielded up his last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice being completed, Jesus said, IT IS FINISHED. See Exodus 12:6, etc., and Deuteronomy 16:6, etc. See on John 18:28 (note), and the Treatise on the Eucharist, referred to Matthew 26:19; and see the notes on Matthew 26:26 and following verses.

**JNTC: Reclined.** The last of the “Four Questions” recited in the modern *Seder* service by the youngest person present is, “On all other nights we eat our meals either sitting or reclining; why on this night do we all recline?” The answer is that at the time the questions were fixed in the *Seder* liturgy, slaves ate sitting or standing, while only free Roman citizens reclined. Thus in Roman cultural language reclining represents freedom from Egyptian slavery.<sup>18</sup>

**Spurgeon:** Our Lord remained in seclusion until the evening, and then went to the appointed place, and sat down, or rather, reclined at the paschal table, with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." This was a most unpleasant thought to bring to a feast, yet it was most appropriate to the passover, for God's commandment to Moses concerning the first paschal lamb was, "With bitter herbs they shall eat it." This was a painful reflection for our Lord, and also for his twelve chosen companions: "One of you", and his eyes would glance round the table as he said it, "One of you shall betray me."

### **Matthew 26:21**

**And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.**

[eat] The usual custom was that a cup was filled with wine for every one. A blessing was pronounced, after which the wine was drunk. Then unleavened bread, bitter herbs, and the lamb were brought in. Thanksgiving was offered for the many blessings of life and the food handed around to each guest. A second cup of wine was drunk after which an explanation of the feast was given with Exodus 12:26-27. The company then sang Psalm 113 and Psalm 114, followed by another blessing. Then the food was eaten. After this a third cup of wine was drunk and Psalm 115 and Psalm 118 were sung. This is what is referred to in Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26.

**One of you shall betray me**—Or, will deliver me up. Judas had already betrayed him, Matthew 26:15, and he was now about to deliver him into the hands of the chief priests, according to the agreement he had made with them.

---

<sup>18</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:20). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

### **Matthew 26:22**

**And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?**

**Spurgeon:** That short sentence fell like a bombshell among the Savior's body-guard. It startled them; they had all made great professions of affection for him, and, for the most part, those professions were true. And they were exceeding sorrowful: and well they might be. Such a revelation was enough to produce the deepest emotions of sorrow and sadness. It is a beautiful trait in the character of the disciples that they did not suspect one another, but every one of them enquired, almost incredulously, as the form of the question implies, "Lord, is it I?" "No one said, "Lord, is it Judas?" "Perhaps no one of the eleven thought that Judas was base enough to betray the Lord who had given him an honorable place among his apostles. We cannot do any good by suspecting our brethren; but we may do great service by suspecting, ourselves. Self-suspicion is near akin to humility.

### **Matthew 26:23**

**And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.**

The way that it was set up was relaxed. They all share the dip together.

**Clarke: He that dippeth his hand**—As the Jews ate the passover a whole family together, it was not convenient for them all to dip their bread in the same dish; they therefore had several little dishes or plates, in which was the juice of the bitter herbs, mentioned Exodus 12:8, on different parts of the table; and those who were nigh one of these, dipped their bread in it. As Judas is represented as dipping in the same dish with Christ, it shows that he was either near or opposite to him. If this man's heart had not been hardened, and his conscience seared beyond all precedent, by the deceitfulness of his sin, would he have showed his face in this sacred assembly, or have thus put the seal to his own perdition, by eating of this sacrificial lamb? Is it possible that he could feel no compunction? Alas! having delivered himself up into the hands of the devil, he was capable of delivering up his Master into the hands of the chief priests; and thus, when men are completely hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, they can outwardly perform the most solemn acts of devotion, without feeling any sort of inward concern about the matter.

**JNTC: Dips his *matzah* in the dish.** The dish may well have contained *charoset* and/or *maror*, both used in *Seder* services today. *Charoset* is a sweet paste made of fruit, nuts, spices and wine; numerous recipes are in use today in the various Jewish ethnic communities. Its function in the *Seder* is to recall by its appearance the mortar which the Israelite slaves made in Egypt, and it is referred to by the mid-second-century rabbis Me'ir and Eli'ezer bar-Tzadok in the Mishna (Pesachim 2:8, 10:3). *Maror* means "bitter herbs," calling to mind the bitterness of Israelite slavery to Pharaoh; today horseradish root or lettuce is used as *maror*. Rabbi Hillel, in the generation before Yeshua,

inaugurated the custom of eating a “sandwich” consisting of a piece of the Passover lamb, together with *matzah* and *maror*, in literal fulfillment of the command, “On (Hebrew *al*) *matzah* and *maror* shall they eat it” (Exodus 12:8). (Today Ashkenazi Jews do not eat lamb at Passover because it cannot be slaughtered at the Temple; however, the *Sfaradim* do.)<sup>19</sup>

**Yashanet.com:** This would indicate that Judas was sitting on one side of Yeshua (with John on the other). As dipping in the bowl (at Pesakh/Passover) is done to the left, this places Judas to His right, in the seat of honor at the seder table.

This alludes to one of the Psalms:

**Psalm 41:9** - *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*

**ESV: he who has dipped his hand in the dish with me.** The custom was to take a piece of bread or a piece of meat in bread and dip it into a common bowl of sauce on the table. Each of those around the room had done so, therefore at this point the betrayer could have been any of the Twelve. The height of disloyalty and betrayal is sharing a meal with a friend before turning on him.

**Spurgeon:** A man may get very near to Christ, ay, may dip his hand in the same dish with the Savior, and yet betray him. We may be high in office, and may apparently be very useful, as Judas was; yet we may betray Christ. We learn from our Lord's words that divine decrees do not deprive a sinful action of its guilt: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed." His criminality is just as great as though there had been no "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." "It had, been good for that man if he had not been borne." The doom of Judas is worse than non-existence. To have consorted with Christ as he had done, and then to deliver him into the hands of his enemies, sealed the traitor's eternal destiny.

### **Matthew 26:24**

**The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.**

Jesus notes that His death and betrayal were prophesied. Yet that does not release Judas from his sin (Ps 49; Ps 41; Ps 69). Complicated issue, couldn't Judas argue that it was his destiny to betray Jesus? Was Judas accountable? Yes.

**[goeth as it is written of him]** Referring to His death which He had predicted several times (Matthew 16:21).

**[it had been good for that man if he had not been born]** This shows that Judas was lost. John 17:12; Psalm 69:22-28; Psalm 109:6-20.

---

<sup>19</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:23). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

**Clarke: The Son of man goeth**—That is, is about to die. Going, going away, departing, etc., are frequently used in the best Greek and Latin writers, for death, or dying. The same words are often used in the Scriptures in the same sense.

**Clarke: It had been good for that man**—Can this be said of any sinner, in the common sense in which it is understood, if there be any redemption from hell’s torments? If a sinner should suffer millions of millions of years in them, and get out at last to the enjoyment of heaven, then it was well for him that he had been born, for still he has an eternity of blessedness before him. Can the doctrine of the non-eternity of hell’s torments stand in the presence of this saying? Or can the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked consist with this declaration? It would have been well for that man if he had never been born! Then he must be in some state of conscious existence, as non-existence is said to be better than that state in which he is now found. It was common for the Jews to say of any flagrant transgressor, It would have been better for him had he never been born. See several examples in Schoettgen. See the case of Judas argued at the end of Acts 1.

**JNTC: The Son of Man will die just as the *Tanakh* says he will.** The *Tanakh* includes the following prophecies of the circumstances and manner of the Messiah’s death at his first coming. The New Testament citations or allusions (considered by many to be fulfillments of these prophecies) are given for reference. For a fuller listing of Messianic prophecies see Section VII of the Introduction to the *JNT*.<sup>20</sup>

<b>Prophecy: The Messiah would be</b>	<b>Location in <i>Tanakh</i></b>	<b>Fulfillment in New Testament</b>
Hated without a cause	Isaiah 49:7	Yn 15:24–25
Rejected by the rulers	Psalms 118:22	Mt 21:42, Yn 7:48
Betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9, 15(12–14)	Mt 26:21–25, 47–50; Yn 13:18–19; Ac 1:16–18
Sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zechariah 11:12	Mt 26:15
Subject to having his price given for a potter’s field	Zechariah 11:13	Mt 27:7
Forsaken by his <i>talmidim</i>	Zechariah 13:7	Mt 26:31–56
Struck on the	Micah 4:14(5:1)	Mt 27:30

<sup>20</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:24). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

cheek		
Spat on	Isaiah 50:6	Mt 26:67, 27:30
Mocked	Psalms 22:8–9 (7–8)	Mt 26:67–68; 27:31, 39–44
Beaten	Isaiah 50:6	Mt 26:67; 27:26, 30
Executed by crucifixion (i.e., having hands and feet pierced; Masoretic text: having a lion at hands and feet)	Psalms 22:17 (16)	Mt 27:35; Yn 19:18, 37; 20:35
Executed without having a bone broken	Exodus 12:46, Psalms 34:21(20)	Yn 19:33–36
Thirsty during his execution	Psalms 22:16(15)	Yn 19:28
Given vinegar to quench that thirst	Psalms 69:22(21)	Mt 27:34
Considered a transgressor	Isaiah 53:12	Mt 27:38
Buried with the rich when dead	Isaiah 53:9	Mt 27:57–60
The one whose death would atone for sins of mankind	Isaiah 53:5–7, 12	Mk 10:45; Yn 1:29, 3:16; Ac 8:30–35
Raised from the dead	Isaiah 53:9–10; Psalms 2:7, 16:10	Mt 28:1–20; Ac 13:33; 1C 11:4–6
Ascended to the right hand of God	Psalms 16:11, 68:19(18), 110:1	Lk 24:51; Ac 1:9–11, 7:55; MJ 1:3
“Cut off, but not for himself,” 69 x 7 years after rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem	Daniel 9:24–26	Ro 5:6, 1 Ke 3:18

### **Matthew 26:25**

**Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.**

Notice that Judas does not call Him Lord, both here and in the garden later. At this point we infer that Judas leaves (Cf. John 13:30).

**Clarke: Judas—said, Master, is it I?—**What excessive impudence! He knew, in his conscience, that he had already betrayed his Master, and was waiting now for the servants of the chief priests, that he might deliver him into their hands; and yet he says, (hoping that he had transacted his business so privately that it had not yet transpired), Master, is it I? It is worthy of remark, that each of the other disciples said κυριε, LORD, is it I? But Judas dares not, or will not, use this august title, but simply says ραββι, TEACHER, is it I?

**Clarke: Thou hast said—**Συ ειπας, or אַתָּה אָמַרְתָּן atun amaritun, “Ye have said,” was a common form of expression for YES. IT IS so. “When the Zipporenses inquired whether Rabbi Judas was dead? the son of Kaphra answered, Ye have said,” i.e. He is dead. See Schoettgen. Hor. Hebr. p.

*Thou hast said.* That is, thou hast said the truth. It is so. Thou art the man. Compare Matthew 26:64, with Mark 14:62.

**ESV: Rabbi.** The larger group around the table address Jesus as “Lord” (v. 22), but Judas addresses him as “Rabbi,” or “Teacher.” There is no record of Judas ever calling Jesus “Lord.” You have said so. A Greek expression that deflects responsibility back upon the one asking a question (cf. v. 64).

**Spurgeon:** Judas appears to have been the last of the twelve to ask the question, "Is it I?" Those who are the last to suspect themselves are usually those who ought to be the first to exercise self-suspicion. Judas did not address Christ as "Lord", as the other disciples had done; but called him Rabbi, "Master". Otherwise, his question was like that of his eleven companions; but he received from Christ an answer that was given to no one else: He said unto him thou hast said." Probably the reply reached his ear alone, and if he had not been a hopeless reprobate, this unmasking of his traitorous design might have driven him to repentance; but there was nothing in his heart to respond to Christ's voice. He had sold himself to Satan before he sold his Lord.

### **Matthew 26:26**

**And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.**

They are used to saying “the body,” referring to the Passover Lamb, but Jesus is saying this is “my” body.

**[this is my body]** This represents My body. The bread was broken, indicating His broken body which was so marred by stripes and beatings that it did not look like a son of man (Isaiah 52:14). The bread was unleavened. No leaven was to be found in all the dwellings, signifying no evil or sin in the Son of God (Matthew 13:33).

**Clark: Jesus took bread**—Of what kind? Unleavened bread, certainly, because there was no other kind to be had in all Judea at this time; for this was the first day of unleavened bread, (Matthew 26:17), i.e. the 14th of the month Nisan, when the Jews, according to the command of God, (Exodus 12:15-20; 23:15; 34:25), were to purge away all leaven from their houses; for he who sacrificed the passover, having leaven in his dwelling, was considered to be such a transgressor of the Divine law as could no longer be tolerated among the people of God; and therefore was to be cut off from the congregation of Israel. Leo of Modena, who has written a very sensible treatise on the customs of the Jews, observes, “That so strictly do some of the Jews observe the precept concerning the removal of all leaven from their houses, during the celebration of the paschal solemnity, that they either provide vessels entirely new for baking, or else have a set for the purpose, which are dedicated solely to the service of the passover, and never brought out on any other occasion.”

To this divinely instituted custom of removing all leaven previously to the paschal solemnity, St. Paul evidently alludes, 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the UNLEAVENED bread of sincerity and truth.

Now, if any respect should be paid to the primitive institution, in the celebration of this Divine ordinance, then, unleavened, unyeasted bread should be used. In every sign, or type, the thing signifying or pointing out that which is beyond itself should either have certain properties, or be accompanied with certain circumstances, as expressive as possible of the thing signified. Bread, simply considered in itself, may be an emblem apt enough of the body of our Lord Jesus, which was given for us; but the design of God was evidently that it should not only point out this, but also the disposition required in those who should celebrate both the antetype and the type; and this the apostle explains to be sincerity and truth, the reverse of malice and wickedness. The very taste of the bread was instructive: it pointed out to every communicant, that he who came to the table of God with malice or ill-will against any soul of man, or with wickedness, a profligate or sinful life, might expect to eat and drink judgment to himself, as not discerning that the Lord’s body was sacrificed for this very purpose, that all sin might be destroyed; and that sincerity, *ελικρινεια*, such purity as the clearest light can discern no stain in, might be diffused through the whole soul; and that truth, the law of righteousness and true holiness, might regulate and guide all the actions of life. Had the bread used on these occasions been of the common kind, it would have been perfectly unfit, or improper, to have communicated these uncommon significations; and, as it was seldom used, its rare occurrence would make the emblematical representation more deeply impressive; and the sign, and the thing signified, have their due correspondence and influence.

These circumstances considered, will it not appear that the use of common bread in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is highly improper? He who can say, "This is a matter of no importance," may say with equal propriety, the bread itself is of no importance; and another may say, the wine is of no importance; and a third may say, "neither the bread nor wine is any thing, but as they lead to spiritual references; and, the spiritual reference being once understood, the signs are useless." Thus we may, through affected spirituality, refine away the whole ordinance of God; and, with the letter and form of religion, abolish religion itself. Many have already acted in this way, not only to their loss, but to their ruin, by showing how profoundly wise they are above what is written. Let those, therefore, who consider that man shall live by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God, and who are conscientiously solicitous that each Divine institution be not only preserved, but observed in all its original integrity, attend to this circumstance. The Lutheran Church makes use of unleavened bread to the present day.

**And brake it.** This *breaking* of the bread represented the sufferings of Jesus about to take place—his body *broken* or wounded for sin. Hence Paul 1 Corinthians 11:24 adds, "This is my body, which is *broken* for you." That is, which is *about* to be broken for you by death, or wounded, pierced, bruised, to make atonement for your sins.

**JNTC:** The **piece of *matzah*** here may have been that eaten immediately prior to the meal. If so, Yeshua said the normal blessing over bread (see 14:19N), followed by, "Praised are you, *Adonai* our God, King of the universe, who has made us holy through his commandments and has commanded us concerning the eating of *matzah*" (see Exodus 12:15–20).

In the modern *Seder* three pieces of *matzah* are placed in a three-part cloth bag called a *matzah tash*. Early in the service the middle piece of *matzah* is broken. Half is divided into enough pieces for everyone at the table and eaten. The other half, called the *afikoman*, is hidden, to be found by children later and eaten by everyone as the last food of the meal (Hebrew *afikoman* may come from a Greek word meaning "dessert"). While in modern Judaism the three *matzot* are taken as representing *cohanim* (priests), *Levi'im* (Levites) and *Israel* (everyone in Israel not in the first two categories), many scholars believe this ritual was added to the *Seder* service by Messianic Jews, for whom the three *matzot* represent Father, Son and *Ruach HaKodesh*. The second *matzah*—representing the Son, who called himself the "bread of life" (Yn 6:41, 48) and who in the present verse says of the *matzah*, "**This is my body**"—is broken for all and given to all (symbolically representing his death for all mankind). Yet there is a mystery, a hidden part, similar to the hidden *afikoman*: like the middle *matzah* at the Pesach meal, the Messiah appears twice in history, in a first and a second coming. All of these symbolisms are hidden from non-Messianic Judaism, which has suppressed them and substituted others. But, like the *afikoman*, these truths about the Messiah will eventually be found and taken in.<sup>21</sup>

**Yashanet.com:** Another incorrect translation that has led to erroneous doctrine. Yeshua does not bless the bread. "Blessing things" as such is foreign to Judaism. Rather, Yeshua blessed God, the maker of the bread, as is still done today at Passover seders.

---

<sup>21</sup> Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:26). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

This the blessing He would be reciting at this point of the meal:

*Baruch atah Adonai Elohenu Melech haOlam, hamotzi lehem, min ha'aretz.*

*Blessed are you Lord God, King of the Universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.*

### **Matthew 26:27**

**And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;**

Grape juice or wine? Too early in the season for unfermented grapes.

The Passover meal has four cups: the cup of the bringing out; the cup of the delivery; the cup of blessing or redeeming; the cup of the taking. It is the third cup, the cup of blessing, that Jesus does this with. This Passover is unfinished.

**JNTC: A cup of wine.** See Lk 22:17–20&NN. The *b.rakhah* over wine is: “*Barukh attah, Adonai Eloheynu, Melekh-ha·olam, Borey p·ri hagefen* (Praised are you, Adonai our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine).” We can be sure Yeshua used the traditional Jewish blessing because in v. 29 he quotes from it the phrase “**fruit of the vine.**”<sup>22</sup>

**ESV: cup.** Most likely the third of four cups at the Passover—the cup of blessing, or the cup of redemption—corresponding to God's third promise in Ex. 6:6: “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.”

### **Matthew 26:28**

**For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

**[new testament]** new covenant. *diatheke*, Gr 1242, *dee-ath-ay'-kay*; from Greek 1303 (*diatithemai*); properly a *disposition*, i.e. (special) a *contract* (especially a *devisory will*) :- covenant, testament.

**[For this is my blood of the new testament]** This represents My blood. The wine was "the fruit of the vine" (Matthew 26:29). No covenant was made without blood (Exodus 24:8; Hebrews 9:20), and there can be no remission of sins without it (Hebrews 9:22; Leviticus 17:11). Christ's own blood atoned for sin and it alone can redeem if accepted for personal atonement and proper terms are met (Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; John 6:53-56; John 19:34; Acts 20:28; Romans 3:24-25; Romans 5:9; 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 11:25; Ephes. 1:7; Ephes. 2:13-16; Col. 1:14-20; Hebrews 9:12-15; Hebrews 10:19-29; Hebrews

---

<sup>22</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:27). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

12:24; Hebrews 13:12,20; 1 Peter 1:2,18-23; 1 John 1:7; 1 John 5:6; Rev. 1:5-6; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 7:14; Rev. 12:11).<sup>23</sup>

**[testament]** Greek: *diatheke* (GSN-1242), translated "covenant" 20 times (Luke 1:72; Acts 3:25; Acts 7:8; Romans 9:4; Romans 11:27; Galatians 3:15,17; Galatians 4:24; Ephes. 2:12; Hebrews 8:6-10; Hebrews 9:4; Hebrews 10:16,29; Hebrews 12:24; Hebrews 13:20) and "testament" 13 times (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6,14; Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 9:15,17,20; Rev. 11:19). It should always be rendered "covenant."

**[for]** Greek: *eis* (GSN-1519), for, because of, or on account of the remission of sins.

**JNTC:** The word “**new**” is not found in all the manuscripts of this text and may have been copied from Luke (see Lk 22:20&N). In any case, the Messiah is here establishing the New Covenant promised to the Jewish people in Jeremiah 31:30–33(31–34). This New Covenant does not revoke God’s previous covenants. Rather, all five of God’s major covenants—made through Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Yeshua—remain in force today.

(1) God’s covenant with mankind through Noah (Genesis 9) is, in Jewish tradition, the basis for the “Noachide Laws” under which Gentiles receive salvation. Although the New Testament asserts that salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike is only through Yeshua, the minimal conditions for acceptance of Gentiles into the Body of the Messiah, as set forth by Jerusalem Conference (Acts 15), parallel the Noachide Laws. For further discussion see Ac 15:20N.

(2) God’s covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12, 13, 15, 17) created the Jewish people. Except for the requirement of circumcision it is an unconditional covenant promising that the Jews are to be a blessing to all mankind. This has proved true especially through Yeshua the Messiah, the “seed of Abraham” (Ga 3:16&N), who came forth within the Jewish people and whose just rulership over all nations will extend from Jerusalem the Jewish capital. The covenant now applies to both Jews and Gentiles who follow Yeshua, as explained in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. The Jewish people will one day bless the world in unprecedented ways (Zechariah 8:23; Ro 11:15&N; Revelation 7, 14).

(3) God’s covenant with the Jewish people through Moses provided the *Torah* to exhort and guide them into righteous living, to increase their awareness of sin and of their need to repent, and to teach them to accept God’s provision for healing the separation from God caused by sin—at first the animal sacrifices, and in the fullness of time Yeshua’s sacrifice.

In relation to its blessings and curses the Mosaic covenant is conditional from the Jewish side—but not from God’s side, for God is faithful even when his people are not (Ro 3:2–3). According to Scripture, the Jewish people, having broken that covenant (Jeremiah 31:31–32), are currently recipients of its curses and not its blessings (Deuteronomy 28). When Jewish individuals become obedient and cease to break the covenant, God blesses them individually. When the Jewish people as a nation become obedient and cease to break the covenant, God will fulfill his promise to bless them as a nation.

---

<sup>23</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

As Judaism correctly holds and most Christian theology incorrectly denies, the *Torah* supplied under this covenant was given forever, has never been abolished, and is still in force. But Yeshua's interpretations of it and other New Testament understandings of it are authoritative, not those of traditional Judaism. For more on this see Ga 6:2&N and Chapter V of *Messianic Jewish Manifesto*.

(4) God's covenant with David (2 Samuel 7) established the throne of his kingdom forever. For this reason the expected Messiah was and is called the Son of David (1:1&N). Messiah Yeshua, a descendant of David, will ascend the throne in God's good time (Ac 1:6–7, Rv 20:2–6).

(5) God's New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:30–33(31–34) through Yeshua the Messiah blesses all mankind by providing the final and permanent atonement for sin and by promising that the Holy Spirit of God will write the *Torah* on the heart of anyone with faith. It thus complements the earlier covenants without annulling them (Galatians 3). It was promised in the *Tanakh*, and the books of the New Testament elaborate on it.<sup>24</sup>

### **Matthew 26:29**

**But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.**

Note that for Jesus this leaves this Passover unfinished as He stops with the third cup. The fourth cup will occur at the Marriage supper of the Lamb. The Lord's supper links Jesus' two comings: 1 Cor 11:26.

Again Jesus assured his disciples of victory over death and of their future with him. The next few hours would bring apparent defeat, but soon they would experience the power of the Holy Spirit and witness the great spread of the gospel message. And one day, they would all be together again in God's new kingdom.

**Yashanet.com:** Blood was sprinkled on the people at the initiation of the Covenant in Exodus 24.

"New Testament" is a term that takes away from a correct understanding. Yeshua is referring to what is also called the "New Covenant" in English, but according to the Tenakh, is more correctly considered a "*renewed Covenant*." This Covenant renewal is found in the book of Jeremiah and also referred to in other places in the Tenakh. Unfortunately, the English word "new" in either case, falsely implies that the "old" covenant, with Torah as its foundation, is done away with. We know from Yeshua's own words that this is not the case. See Matthew chapter 5. None of God's covenants have been disposed of.

It would seem in verse 29, that Yeshua Himself does not drink of this cup. This is because the "New Covenant" is not fully established by Him at this time. The Hebraic understanding is that of a "Renewed Covenant" that God will make when Judah and

---

<sup>24</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:28). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Ephraim are reunited one day at the time of Messiah's coming -- hence He will drink of the cup only, "... *in my Father's kingdom.*"

There are specific conditions for the New Covenant, and these were not in place at the time of Yeshua, nor are they yet in place today. They will come to fruition only upon His return.

### **Matthew 26:30**

**And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.**

Right at the base of the Mount of Olives today there are Olive groves. It is believed that these trees are from the same root system that very likely was Gethsemane.

[**Hymn**] Some scholars believe that they sang Psalm 135, more widely held view suggests that they sang the Hallel Psalms, Psalm 115-118. On the way to the Mount of Olives, they get there about verse 36.

**Barnes:** **And when they had sung an hymn.** The passover was observed by the Jews by singing, or *chanting*, the 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, and 118th psalms. These they divided into two parts. The 118th and 114th psalms they sung during the observance of the passover, and the others at the close. There can be no doubt that our Saviour, and the apostles also, used the same psalms in their observance of the passover. The word rendered *sung a hymn*, is a participle, literally meaning *hymning*, not confined to a single hymn, but admitting many.

**JNTC: Singing the Hallel.** This translates one Greek word which means, literally, "hymning." But since this was the *Seder*, we can know the hymn being sung must have been one of the *Hallel* ("praise") Psalms recited at festivals, Psalms 113–118 or 136.<sup>25</sup>

**Spurgeon:** Was it not truly brave of our dear Lord to sing under such circumstances? He was going forth to his last dread conflict, to Gethsemane, and Gabbatha, and Golgotha; yet he went with a song on his lips. He must have led the singing, for the disciples were too sad to start the Hallel with which the paschal feast closed: And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then came that desperate struggle in which the great Captain of our salvation wrestled even to a bloody sweat, and prevailed.

---

<sup>25</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:30). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

### **Matthew 26:31**

**Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.**

Quoting from Zech 13:7.

*(Zech. 13:7) Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.*

**Yashanet.com:** Not long after this came a series of altercations between the Jews and Rome, including major wars around 70 and 132 AD. The result of these actions was not only the further dispersion of Jews across the empire, but also the suppression of the faith of the original Messianic (Nazarene) community. This led to the development of a "faith" that was decidedly "anti-Torah," and incorporated many pagan elements, that eventually organized itself into the Catholic/Christian religion and its "spinoff" Protestant children.

**You will all fall away.** Not just Peter, but all the disciples will forsake Jesus and run (v. 56). They will not cease being his disciples, but they will fail to stand with him in the face of persecution.

**Spurgeon:** Observe our Lord's habit of quoting Scripture. He was able to speak words of infallible truth, yet he fell back upon the Inspired Record in the Old Testament. His quotation from Zechariah does not seem to have been really necessary, but it was most appropriate to his prophecy to his disciples: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered! abroad." Jesus was the Shepherd who was about to be smitten, and he foretold the scattering of the sheep. Even those leaders of the flock that had been first chosen by Christ, and kind been most with him, would stumble and fall away from him on that dread night; but the Shepherd would not lose them, there would be a reunion between him and his sheep: "After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." Once again he would resume, for a little while, the character of their Shepherd-King, and with them he would revisit some of their old haunts in Galilee, ere he ascended to his heavenly home. "I will go before you," suggests the idea of the Good Shepherd leading his flock after the Eastern manner. Happy are his sheep in having such a Leader, and blessed are they in following him whithersoever he goeth.

### **Matthew 26:32**

**But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.**

The disciples must be confused. They don't even realize that He is going to die, now He talks of being raised up. Mary is the only one that we have any evidence of that she understood that He was to die.

**Clarke: But after I am risen again**—Don't lose your confidence; for though I shall appear for a time to be wholly left to wicked men, and be brought under the power of death, yet I will rise again, and triumph over all your enemies and mine.

**Clarke: I will go before you**—Still alluding to the case of the shepherd and his sheep. Though the shepherd has been smitten and the sheep scattered, the shepherd shall revive again, collect the scattered flock, and go before them, and lead them to peace, security, and happiness.

**I will go before you to Galilee.** Jesus will graciously restore the disciples back to fellowship with himself following their failure to stand.

### **Matthew 26:33**

**Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.**

Peter's answer suggested that he did not trust the other disciples either but that the Lord could sure depend upon him! Peter's problem was that he didn't know himself, and that is the problem many of us have today. Failure in our strong suit!

**Spurgeon:** This was a very presumptuous speech, not only because of the self confidence it betrayed, but also because it was a flat contradiction of the Master's declaration. Jesus said, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night; "but Peter thought he knew better than Christ, so he answered, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." No doubt these words were spoken from his heart; but "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Peter must have been amazed, the next morning, as he discovered the deceitfulness and wickedness of his own heart, as manifested in his triple denial of his Lord.

He who thinks himself so much stronger than his brethren, is the very man who will prove to be weaker than any of them, as did Peter, not many hours after his boast was uttered.

### **Matthew 26:34**

**Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.**

[**That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice**] This prophecy seems to have been uttered more than once: in the upper room (John 13:38; Luke 22:34) and once after leaving it (Matthew 26:30-35; Mark 14:26-32).

### **Matthew 26:35**

**Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.**

It is interesting to note the change in Peter before and after the giving of the Ruach haKodesh (Holy Spirit). He goes from being impetuous and rebuked by Yeshua (Matthew 16:23), even denying the Messiah to save his own skin (at the end of this chapter), to being a chief spokesperson for the Lord among his Jewish brethren (as seen in the book of Acts).

### **Matthew 26:36**

**Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.**

Olive trees are grown for their oil. They would put the olives into a press, something that would crush the olives to squeeze the oil out of them. The press was called a "Gethsemane." Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

**[Gethsemane]** A garden just across the Kidron (a valley) from Jerusalem, about 200 yards from the city wall (John 18:1). Gethsemane means "the oil press." It was a favorite place of retirement when Christ was at Jerusalem (Luke 22:39; John 18:2). It perhaps belonged to Joseph, Nicodemus or another follower living in Jerusalem (John 19:38-39).

**JNTC:** *Gat-Sh. manim.* The name means "oil press"; it is usually brought over into English as "Gethsemane." In the place today called the Garden of Gethsemane are very old, gnarled olive trees; they may have been alive when Yeshua was on earth.<sup>26</sup>

**Gethsemane** means "oil press," indicating a garden area among the olive groves on the Mount of Olives where olive oil was prepared. The traditional location of Gethsemane is now marked by the modern Church of All Nations, which was built over a fourth-century Byzantine church.

### **Matthew 26:37**

**And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.**

Peter, James and John. Left eight behind. It is hard for us to see Jesus depressed, we see Him as victorious. Why is He depressed? He understands what His mission is, what is coming, being separated from His Father. He was *made sin* for us, and sin can have no fellowship with the Father!

---

<sup>26</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:36). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

[with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee] They had witnessed His transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8) and now they witnessed His agony in the garden (Luke 22:44,53).

**Clarke:** And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee—That is, James and John; the same persons who had beheld his transfiguration on the mount—that they might contemplate this agony in the light of that glory which they had there seen; and so be kept from being stumbled by a view of his present humiliation.

**And very heavy**—Overwhelmed with anguish—*αδημονειν*. This word is used by the Greeks to denote the most extreme anguish which the soul can feel—excruciating anxiety and torture of spirit.

**Very heavy.** The word in the original is much stronger than the one translated *sorrowful*. It means, to be pressed down, or overwhelmed with great anguish. This was produced, doubtless, by a foresight of his great sufferings on the cross in making an atonement for the sins of men.<sup>27</sup>

**Spurgeon:** The three disciples who had been with him on the Mount of Transfiguration were privileged to be nearer to him than the rest of their brethren; but even they must not be actually with him. His sorrow was so great that he must bear it alone; and there was also that Scripture to be fulfilled, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." Yet would he have his three choicest companions near him, that he might derive such slight solace from their presence as they could convey to him. They had never before seen their Lord overwhelmed with Atlantic billows of sorrow like those that rolled in upon him as he began to be sorrowful and very heavenly. He was bowed down as if an enormous weight rested on his soul, as indeed it did. "This was the soul travail, the soul-offering for sin, which was completed on the cross; and well might he say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The sorrow of his soul was the very soul of his sorrow; his soul was full of sorrow, until he seemed to reach the utmost limit of endurance, and to be at the very date of death. In such dire distress he needed faithful friends at hand, so he said to Peter, James, and John, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me." He must bear alone the awful burden of his people's sin; but his disciples might show their sympathy with him by watching at a respectful distance, and adding their poor prayers to his mighty wrestlings. Alas! they did not prize the privilege Christ gave them: have not we been too much like them when our Savior has bidden us watch with him?

### **Matthew 26:38**

**Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.**

Jesus was in great anguish over his approaching physical pain, separation from the Father, and death for the sins of the world. The divine course was set, but he, in his

---

<sup>27</sup> Barnes' Notes

human nature, still struggled (Hebrews 5:7-9). Because of the anguish Jesus experienced, he can relate to our suffering. Jesus' strength to obey came from his relationship with God the Father, who is also the source of our strength (John 17:11, 15-16, 21, 26).

### **Matthew 26:39**

**And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.**

[cup] What cup? The cup of God's indignation against sin.

[cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt] The idea here seems to be that the devil tried to kill Christ before He could get to the cross, but God heard His prayer and saved Him from death (Hebrews 5:7; Luke 22:43-44). If Satan could have succeeded in killing Christ anytime from infancy to the cross he could have defeated God's plan of redemption. Christ had to get to the cross where He spoiled satanic powers and triumphed over them (Col. 2:14-17; 1 Peter 2:24). Matthew 26:42 could also refer to His cup of death on the cross.<sup>28</sup>

**Clarke: This cup**—The word cup is frequently used in the Sacred Writings to point out sorrow, anguish, terror, death. It seems to be an allusion to a very ancient method of punishing criminals. A cup of poison was put into their hands, and they were obliged to drink it. Socrates was killed thus, being obliged by the magistrates of Athens to drink a cup of the juice of hemlock. To death, by the poisoned cup, there seems an allusion in Hebrews 2:9, Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, TASTED death for every man. The whole world are here represented as standing guilty and condemned before the tribunal of God; into every man's hand the deadly cup is put, and he is required to drink off the poison—Jesus enters, takes every man's cup out of his hand, and drinks off the poison, and thus tastes or suffers the death which every man otherwise must have undergone.

**McGee:** We need to pay attention to the prayer that our Lord is praying here. "This cup" evidently represents His cross, and the contents are the sins of the whole world. More than the death itself and the terrible suffering of crucifixion is something else that we do not seem to realize. It is this: Jesus, holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, was made *sin* for us. There on the cross the sin of humanity was put on Him—not in some forensic or academic manner, but in reality. We cannot even imagine the *horror* He felt when that sin was placed upon Him. It was a horrendous experience for this One who was holy. Notice that He was not asking to escape the cross, but He was praying that God's will be done. It is impossible for you and me to enter into the full significance of Gethsemane, but I think it was there that He won the victory of Calvary. Undoubtedly, He was tempted by Satan in Gethsemane as truly as He was in the wilderness. Notice verse 42: "He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." He was accepting it. To say that our Lord was trying to avoid going to the cross is not exactly true. In His humanity He felt a

---

<sup>28</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

repugnance and the awful horror of having the sins of the world placed upon Himself, and He recoiled for a moment from it. But He committed Himself to the Father. He came to do the Father's will.<sup>29</sup>

### **Matthew 26:40**

**And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?**

**Barnes: And findeth them asleep.** It may seem remarkable that, in such circumstances, with a suffering, pleading Redeemer near, surrounded by danger, and having received a special charge to watch, i.e., not to sleep, they should so soon have fallen asleep. It is frequently supposed that this was proof of wonderful stupidity, and indifference to their Lord's sufferings. The truth is, however, that it was just the reverse; *it was proof of their great attachment, and their deep sympathy in his sorrows.* Luke has added, *that he found them sleeping FOR SORROW.* That is, on account of their sorrow: their grief was so great that they naturally fell asleep. Multitudes of facts might be brought to show that is in accordance with the regular effects of grief: Dr. Bush says, "There is another symptom of grief, which is not often noticed, and that is profound sleep. I have often witnessed it even in mothers, immediately after the death of a child. Criminals; we are told by Mr. Akerman, the keeper of Newgate in London, often sleep soundly the night before their execution. The son of General Custine slept nine hours the night before he was led to the guillotine in Paris." *Diseases of the Mind*, p. 319.

**Barnes: Saith unto Peter,** This reproof was administered to Peter particularly, in account of his warm professions, his rash zeal, and his self-confidence. If he could not keep awake and watch with the Saviour for one hour, how little probability was there that he would adhere to him in all the trials through which he was soon to pass!

### **Matthew 26:41**

**Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

You have to wonder if perhaps if Peter had been praying, his flesh would not have stumbled later that evening.

**[the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak]** The spirit is always ready but the flesh must be mortified and whipped into line with the will of God and kept in subjection (1 Cor. 9:27; Col. 3:5; Romans 8:12-13).

Jesus used Peter's drowsiness to warn him about the kinds of temptation he would soon face. The way to overcome temptation is to keep watch and pray. Watching means being

---

<sup>29</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:141). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

aware of the possibilities of temptation, sensitive to the subtleties, and spiritually equipped to fight it. Because temptation strikes where we are most vulnerable, we can't resist it alone. Prayer is essential because God's strength can shore up our defenses and defeat Satan's power.<sup>30</sup>

**McGee:** "Watch"—stay awake, be alert—"and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." What was the temptation? Who was going to tempt them? Satan was there. Jesus wrestled with an unseen foe—that is obvious. He overcame the enemy there in Gethsemane. The victory of Calvary was won in Gethsemane.<sup>31</sup>

The disciples needed to stay awake **and pray** because they were about to be tested themselves. Here the word **flesh** emphasizes human weakness. The contrast between the weakness of the disciples and the strength of the Lord is startling. Because the flesh is **weak**, every child of God needs supernatural empowerment (see Rom. 8:3, 4).<sup>32</sup>

**Spurgeon:** It was truly kind on Christ's part to find an excuse for his weak and weary disciples; it was just like him to say anything that he could in their praise even though they had slept when they ought to have watched. Yet he repeated the command, "Watch" for that was the special duty of the hour; and he added, "and pray," for prayer would help them to watch, and watching would aid them in praying. Watching and praying were enjoined for a special purpose: "that ye enter not into temptation." He knew what sore temptations were about to assail them, so he would have them doubly armed by—"Watching unto prayer."

### **Matthew 26:42**

**He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.**

**Spurgeon:** These calm, simple words scarcely convey to our minds a full idea of the intense agony under which they were uttered. Luke mentions that our Savior, in his second supplication, "prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." The tension upon his whole frame became so great that his life seemed oozing away through every pore of his body; and he was so weak and faint, through the terrible strain, that he might well fear that his human nature would sink under the awful trial, and that he would die before his time. Yet even then he recognized his sonship: "O my Father!" and he absolutely surrendered himself to his Father's will: "Thy will be done."

---

<sup>30</sup> Life Application Notes

<sup>31</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:141). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>32</sup> The Nelson Study Bible

### **Matthew 26:43**

**And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.**

**Spurgeon:** Great sorrow produces different results in different persons. In the Savior's case, it aroused him to an awful agony of earnestness in prayer; in the disciples' case, it sent them to sleep. Luke says that they were "sleeping for sorrow." Their Master might find an excuse for their neglect; but oh! how they would blame themselves afterwards for missing that last opportunity of watching with their wrestling Lord! As he could get no comfort from them, he left them, and went away again, and prayed: the third time, saying the same words. Those who teach that we should pray but once, and not repeat the petition that we present to the Lord, cannot quote our Savior's example in support of their theory, for thrice on that dread night he offered the same supplication, and even used the same language. Paul, also, like his Master, "besought the Lord thrice" that the "thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan," might depart from him.

### **Matthew 26:44**

**And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.**

Three times the Lord Jesus Christ begged the Father, if there is any other way for man to be saved, anything but the cross. *This proves that there is no other way for man to be saved except by the Lord Jesus Christ.* Because if there was some other way for a man to get access to the throne of God in Heaven, then Jesus Christ's prayer was not answered and His death was in vain!

Acts 4:12; 13:38, 39.

His anxiety was so intense that He sweated drops of blood. Luke 22:44.

**[third time, saying the same words]** The only instance of repeated prayers in the life of Jesus. This was because of the conflict between God and Satan over the life of Christ (Hebrews 5:7).

**Prayer, Petition**—No prayer in Jesus' life shows the perfection of His humanity better than the Gethsemane prayer. He would not have been human if He had not shrunk from the impending cross. He made no attempt to argue His case. He did not suggest another way. Rather, He simply prayed for God's direction and will, noting His desire for another path if possible. He searched the great cosmic mind of God for some other possibility. There was no other way, so He committed Himself to the Father's will. Prayer voices our human desires but seeks God's perfect will and guidance above all.

The fact that Jesus **prayed the same words** indicates that there is nothing wrong with repetition from a devout heart. In the first prayer, Jesus made a positive request: "Let this cup pass from Me." In the second and third prayers, His request was negative. In obedience to His Father, Jesus committed Himself to drink the cup, whatever the cost.

### **Matthew 26:45**

**Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.**

[**Sleep on now**] “sleeping still.” Not an instruction but rather an observation.

[**hour is at hand**] The hour Christ came into the world to accomplish redemption (Mark 14:41; Luke 22:14; John 2:4; John 7:30; John 8:20; John 12:23,27; John 13:1; John 17:1).

**Barnes:** **Sleep on now, and take your rest.** Most interpreters have supposed that this should be translated as a *question*, rather than a command. "Do you sleep now, and take your rest? Is this a time, amidst so much danger, and so many enemies, to give yourselves to sleep?" This construction is strongly countenanced by Luke, Luke 22:46,) where the expression, "Why sleep ye?" evidently refers to the same point of time. There is no doubt that the Greek will bear this construction; and in this way the apparent inconsistency will be removed between this command, *to sleep*, and that in the next verse, *to rise* and be going. Others suppose that, his agony being over, and the necessity of watching with him being now passed, he kindly *permitted* them to seek repose till they should be roused by the coming of the traitor; that, while they slept, Jesus continued still awake; that some considerable time elapsed between what was spoken here and in the next verse; and that Jesus suffered them to sleep until he saw Judas coming, and then aroused them. Others have supposed that he spoke this in irony: "Sleep on now, if you can; take rest, if possible, in such dangers, and at such a time." But this supposition is unworthy of the Saviour and the occasion. Mark adds, "It is enough." That is, sufficient time has been given to sleep. It is time to arise and be going.

**McGee:** “Sleep on now, and take your rest.” Obviously, there is an interval of time between this and the next verse. He didn’t tell them to go to sleep and in the next breath tell them to get up. There was time for their nap, and they needed this rest. Notice how our Lord pays attention to the needs of their bodies. After they had slept awhile, He said—

### **Matthew 26:46**

**Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.**

**Clarke:** **Rise, let us be going**—That is, to meet them, giving thereby the fullest proof that I know all their designs, and might have, by flight or otherwise, provided for my own safety; but I go willingly to meet that death which their malice designs me, and, through it, provide for the life of the world.

## **Matthew 26:47**

**And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.**

Judas came in first to identify Jesus.

[staves] Clubs, and should have been so translated in Matthew 26:55; Mark 14:43,48; Luke 22:52.

**Clarke:** A great multitude with swords and staves—They did not come as officers of justice, but as a desperate mob. Justice had nothing to do in this business. He who a little before had been one of the leaders of the flock of Christ is now become the leader of ruffians and murderers! What a terrible fall!

(BCK [NT] p. 84)

<b>Jesus' Six Trials</b>	
<b>Religious Trials</b>	
Before Annas	John 18:12-14
Before Caiaphas	Matthew 26:57-68
Before the Sanhedrin	Matthew 27:1-2
<b>Civil Trials</b>	
Before Pilate	John 18:28-38
Before Herod	Luke 23:6-12
Before Pilate	John 18:39-19:6

The Lord Jesus was subjected to six trials—three Jewish trials and three Gentile trials. The first Jewish trial was before Annas, who was not the actual high priest, but was a powerful influence on the high priest's office. This trial is mentioned only by John (see John 18:12–23). The second trial was before **Caiaphas** and the Jewish council. Clearly the council had been hastily called together in anticipation of passing judgment on Jesus. Matthew does not mention Jesus' trial before Herod Antipas (see Luke 23:6–12); he also combines the two trials before Pilate into one (27:2, 11–26). Jesus' opponents were trying desperately to find some legal basis for condemning Him to death.

**Spurgeon:** It is a remarkable fact that we do not read, in the New Testament, that any one of the twelve, except Judas ever kissed Jesus. It seems as if the most impudent familiarity was very near akin to dastardly treachery. This sign of Judas was typical of the way in which Jesus is generally betrayed!. When men intend to undermine the inspiration of the Scriptures, how do they begin their books? Why, always with a declaration that they wish to promote the truth of Christ! Christ's name is often slandered by those who make a loud profession of attachment to him, and then sin foully as the chief of transgressors. There is the Judas-kiss first, and the betrayal afterwards. Thus Judas said, "Hail, master" and kissed him much (R.V. margin); betraying him by the act that ought to have been the token of firmest friendship.

### **Matthew 26:48**

**Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.**

**Barnes: Gave them a sign.** That is, told them of a way by which they might know whom to apprehend, i.e., by his kissing him. It was night. Jesus was, besides, probably personally unknown to the *Romans*, perhaps to the others also. Judas, therefore, being well acquainted with him, to prevent the possibility of mistake, agreed to designate him by one of the tokens of friendship.

Judas had told the crowd to arrest the man he kissed. This was not an arrest by Roman soldiers under Roman law, but an arrest by the religious leaders. Judas pointed Jesus out not because Jesus was hard to recognize, but because Judas had agreed to be the formal accuser in case a trial was called. Judas was able to lead the group to one of Jesus' retreats where no onlookers would interfere with the arrest.

### **Matthew 26:49**

**And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.**

**[master]** Note that he calls Him, Rabbi, not Lord. *rhabbi*, Gr 4461, *hrab-bee'*; of Hebrew origin [Hebrew 7227 (rab) with pronoun suffix]; *my master*, i.e. *Rabbi*, as an official title of honor :- Master, Rabbi.

**[Hail]** A salutation like "Peace." Occurs only here and in Matthew 27:29; Matthew 28:9; Mark 15:18; Luke 1:28; John 19:3; 2 John 1:10-11.

**[kissed him]** Acts of treachery are many times referred to as a "Judas kiss." This shows to what extent a preacher and a healer of men by God's Spirit can fall (Acts 1:25; Matthew 10:1-20; Mark 6:7-13).

### **Matthew 26:50**

**And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.**

**[friend]** is actually companion. Not the same word as calling the disciples "friends" in the Upper Room discourse.

**[Friend]** Comrade or companion. Occurs only here and in Matthew 11:16; Matthew 20:13; Matthew 22:12. This is one of the most touching incidents of Scripture. The Lord did not disown Judas. He could have been forgiven if he had not committed suicide in despair and if he had come back to God in repentance like Peter and the others (cp. Psalm 41:9; Psalm 55:12-14).

**Barnes: And Jesus said unto him, Friend.** It seems strange to us that Jesus should give the endeared name *friend* to a man that he knew was his enemy, and that was about to betray him. It should be remarked, however, that this is the fault of our language, not of the original. In the Greek there are two words which our translators have rendered *friend*: one implying affection and regard, the other not. One is properly rendered friend, the other expresses more nearly what we mean by *companion*. It is this latter word which is given to the disaffected labourer in the vineyard: "*Friend*, I do thee no wrong," (Matthew 20:13) to the guest which had not on the wedding garment, in the parable of the marriage feast, (Matthew 22:12) and to Judas in this place.

**Barnes: Wherefore art thou come?** This was said, not because he was ignorant why he had come, but probably to fill the mind of Judas with the consciousness of his crime, and by a striking question to compel him to think of what he was doing.

**McGee:** A kiss can either be a sign of acceptance or rejection (see Ps. 2:12.) In this instance Judas bestowed a kiss of betrayal upon the Lord Jesus, and it was one of the most despicable acts of man. Some theologians contend that Judas was predestined to betray Jesus and could do nothing else. If this were true, Judas was nothing more than a robot. I believe Judas made up his own mind to betray our Lord and had every opportunity to change his plans. You may say, "Yes, but it was prophesied that he would betray Jesus." I have to agree with you. It was prophesied, and our Lord marked him out as the man. However, after Judas had fulfilled the prophecy, after Jesus was betrayed, Judas could have repented. Jesus gave Judas one final opportunity to repent and accept Him. Even after he gave Jesus that hot kiss of betrayal, Jesus called him, "Friend." Later, when Judas went to the temple and threw down the silver given to him to betray the Lord, he could have changed his mind. As the priests were taking Jesus to Pilate, Judas could have fallen down before Him and said, "Forgive me, Lord, I did not know what I was doing." The Lord would have forgiven him.<sup>33</sup>

**Friend** represents Greek *hetairos*, implying not the closeness and affection of the usual word for friend (*philos*) but only acquaintance and association. It was used previously by Jesus in parables concerning someone who has taken advantage of a privileged relationship

### **Matthew 26:51**

**And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.**

[one of those with Jesus] We know this to be Peter from John 18:10.

**Barnes: And drew his sword.** The apostles were not commonly armed. On this occasion they had provided two swords, Luke 22:38. In seasons of danger, when travelling through

---

<sup>33</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:142). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

the country, they were under the necessity of providing means of defending themselves against the robbers that infested the country. This will account for their having any swords in their possession. Luke 10:30. These swords, Josephus informs us, the people were accustomed to carry under their garments, as they went up to Jerusalem.

**McGee:** We know who that was; it was Simon Peter. I think that he was trying to prove something. Earlier Peter had boasted that he would die protecting Jesus, but Jesus told him that he would deny Him that very night. Well, Peter got a sword somewhere, and he intended to protect his Lord. But Peter was a fisherman, not a swordsman. He sliced off the man's ear: but he wasn't after ears, he was after his head. He intended to lop off the man's head, but he almost missed him!

### **Matthew 26:52**

**Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.**

### **Matthew 26:53**

**Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?**

**[legion]** Around 1000, a Roman legion was between 3000-5000. (Remember that one angel slaughtered 185,000 Assyrians one evening)

**[twelve legions of angels]** A legion was 6,000 so 12 legions would be 72,000 for Himself and the eleven apostles, or 6,000 for each of them. Each angel could slay 185,000 in a night, as one did in Isaiah 37:36. On this basis, over 13 billion men could easily have been killed.<sup>34</sup>

**Clarke: More than twelve legions of angels?**—As if he had said, Instead of you twelve, one of whom is a traitor, my Father can give me more than twelve legions of angels to defend me. A legion, at different times, contained different numbers; 4,200, 5,000, and frequently 6,000 men; and from this saying, taking the latter number, which is the common rate, may we not safely believe that the angels of God amount to more than 72,000?

### **Matthew 26:54**

**But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?**

**Clarke: But how then**—Had I such a defense—shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say, that thus it must be? That is, that I am to suffer and die for the sin of the world. Probably the Scriptures to which our Lord principally refers are Psalm 22, 69, and

---

<sup>34</sup> Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

especially Isaiah 53, and Daniel 9:24-27. Christ shows that they had no power against him but what he permitted; and that he willingly gave up himself into their hands.

**Matthew 26:55**

**In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.**

**Clarke: I sat daily with you**—Why come in this hostile manner? Every day, for four days past, ye might have met with me in the temple, whither I went to teach you the way of salvation. See on Matthew 21:17

Previously, His hour had not yet come. But now His hour *has* come—

<b>The Meaning of Messiah</b>	
Matthew wrote his Gospel to demonstrate to his Jewish audience that Jesus is indeed the long-awaited Messiah. Who is the Messiah and why were the Jews waiting for such a person?	
<b>The Term</b>	In Hebrew or Aramaic, the word Messiah means “anointed.” The Greek equivalent of the word is the title Christ.
<b>Old Testament Background</b>	In the Old Testament, prophets, priests and kings were literally anointed with oil to consecrate them for special service or to signify the endowment of the Spirit of God (Lev. 4:3; 8:12; 1 Sam. 10:1, 6; Ps. 105:15; Isa. 61:1). These practices pointed to the promised arrival of God’s Anointed One, who would fulfill all three offices as the Prophet, the Priest, and the King.
<b>Titles for the Messiah</b>	Seed of Abraham (Ps. 105:6); Son of David (Matt. 1:1); Son of Man (Dan. 7:13); My Son (Ps. 2:7); My Servant (Matt. 12:18); My Elect One (Isa. 42:1); The Branch (Zech. 3:8; 6:12); Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6)
<b>Major Old Testament Prophecies of the Messiah</b>	Gen. 3:15; 9:27; 12:3; 22:18; 49:8, 10; Deut. 18:18; 2 Sam. 7:11-16; 23:5; Ps. 2; 16; 22; 40; 110; Isa. 2; 7; 9; 11; 40; 42; 49; 52; 53; Jer. 23:5, 6; Dan. 7:27; Hag. 2:9; Zech. 12:10-14; Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6
<b>Jewish Expectations for the Messiah</b>	In the first century, the Jews looked for a Messiah who would deliver the nation from Roman domination, become their King, and rebuild the nation of Israel to its former glory. By looking for a military deliverer and a political Messiah, the Jews minimized the

	messianic roles of prophet and priest. Thus many Jews rejected Jesus as the Messiah because He came as a humble spiritual Savior and not a conquering political ruler.
<b>The Messiah's Rule</b>	Jesus indicated that He was the King for whom the Jews were looking. However, His kingdom was not an earthly kingdom but a heavenly kingdom. In Matthew there are 32 references to the "kingdom of heaven." This phrase, found in the New Testament only in Matthew's Gospel, is probably derived from the description of the kingdom of the Son of Man in Dan. 7:13-18. The phrase indicates the rule of heaven over all of the earth (Matt. 6:10).
<b>Jesus' Claim</b>	When asked specifically if He was the Christ, Jesus answered in the affirmative, incurring the wrath of the Jews (Matt. 26:63-65). In addition, Jesus praised Peter for recognizing Him as the Anointed One of God (Matt. 16:15-20).
<b>Significance</b>	The title Messiah implies the idea of deity. The great prophet Moses, the priest Melchizedek, and even the glorious King David pale in comparison to the messianic Prophet-Priest-King. In the words of Heb. 1, Jesus Christ is the "brightness of (God's) glory and the express image of His person" (v. 3). In short He is God (v. 8).

### **Matthew 26:56**

**But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.**

**Barnes:** Then all the disciples, Overcome with fear, when they saw their Master actually taken; alarmed with the terrific appearance of armed men, and torches in a dark night; and forgetting their promises not to forsake him, they all left their Saviour to go *alone*. Alas! how many, when attachment to Christ would lead them to danger, leave him, and also flee! Mark adds, that after the disciples had fled, a young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body, attempted to follow him. Probably he was the *owner* of the garden, and a friend of Jesus. Aroused by the noise from his repose, he came to defend the Saviour. He cast, in his hurry, a garment at hand round his body, and came to him. The young men among the Romans and Jews attempted to secure him also; but he escaped from them, and fled. Mark 14:50,51.

**Spurgeon:** Jesus was not surprised that all the disciples forsook him, and fled; for he

had foretold that they would do so. He knew them better than they knew themselves, so he prophesied that the flock would be scattered when the Shepherd should be smitten. So it was; for when the fierce wolves came and seized him, the sheep all fled.

It would have been to the eternal honor of any one of the disciples to have kept close to Christ right up to the last; but neither the loving John nor the boastful Peter stood the test of that solemn time. Human nature is such poor stuff, even at the best, that we cannot hope that any of us would have been braver or more faithful than the apostles were.

### **Matthew 26:57**

**And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.**

Caiphas is the Jewish leader appointed by Rome. Basically a Jewish issue, but Gentiles brought Him into Caiaphas' hands. Almost every detail of this trial is illegal according to Jewish laws. They were never to be handled at night, yet this whole thing is over before morning.

**[assembled]** They were waiting for the soldiers and officers of the Jews to bring Him so He could be condemned by a mock trial and be killed.

**Clarke:** They—led him away to Caiaphas—John says, John 18:13, that they led him first to Annas; but this appears to have been done merely to do him honor as the father-in-law of Caiaphas, and his colleague in the high priesthood. But as the Sanhedrin was assembled at the house of Caiaphas, it was there he must be brought to undergo his mock trial: but see on John 18:13

Earlier in the evening, Jesus had been questioned by Annas (the former high priest and father-in-law of Caiaphas). Annas then sent Jesus to Caiaphas's home to be questioned (John 18:12-24). Because of their haste to complete the trial and see Jesus die before the Sabbath, less than 24 hours away, the religious leaders met in Caiaphas's home at night instead of waiting for daylight and meeting in the temple.

### **Matthew 26:58**

**But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.**

Peter is curious, keeping his distance yet watching what happens.

**Spurgeon:** Peter was not to be blamed because he followed afar off, for at first he and John were the only two disciples who followed their captive Master. John went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, and by his influence Peter was also admitted. Attracted by the fire, Peter sat with the servants; a dangerous place for him, as it soon proved. When a servant of Christ by his own choice sits with the servants of the wicked, sin and sorrow speedily follow.

### **Matthew 26:59**

**Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;**

**[chief priests]** The heads of the 24 courses of the priests (1 Chron. 24:1-19; 2 Chron. 8:14; 2 Chron. 26:20; 2 Chron. 35:4; Isaiah 43:28).

**[elders]** These were the heads of families and the oldest of the tribes (Exodus 3:16-18; Exodus 4:29; Exodus 12:21; Numbers 11:11,25). In the Sanhedrin they were the representatives of the people, as the chief priests were of the priesthood.

**[council]** The Sanhedrin was made up of all the chief priests, the elders. It was the supreme court of the nation which heard appeals from lower courts and tried cases of greater importance than the lower courts. It consisted of 71 members headed by the president, vice president and a sage or referee whose duty was to put into proper shape the subjects for discussion. The vice president led and controlled the discussions. The president represented the nation before the Romans.

**[false witness against Jesus]** Because they could not get true witnesses to testify of any wrong in Jesus. This shows how corrupt the high court of Israel was. They sought to break God's law to further their own selfish interests contrary to law (Exodus 20:16).

The Sanhedrin was the most powerful religious and political body of the Jewish people. Although the Romans controlled Israel's government, they gave the people power to handle religious disputes and some civil disputes, so the Sanhedrin made many of the local decisions affecting daily life. But a death sentence had to be approved by the Romans (John 18:31).

### **Matthew 26:60**

**But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,**

Many false witnesses, yet they found none. How? They could never agree.

**[found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none]** There is no truth or harmony in crime. How many of them would like another chance to testify of Jesus!

**McGee:** You see, because the religious rulers had no charge against the Lord Jesus, they had to find *false* witnesses. And the trouble with getting false witnesses was in finding one that could stand up under investigation. Pilate might be a little inquisitive (which he was) and ask a few annoying questions. Finally, they found two witnesses—

## **Matthew 26:61**

**And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.**

**Clarke:** A misquote. **I am able to destroy the temple of God—**

- 1st. These words were not fairly quoted. Jesus had said, John 2:19, Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days.
- 2dly. The inuendo which they produce, applying these words to a pretended design to destroy the temple at Jerusalem, was utterly unfair; for these words he spoke of the temple of his body.

It is very easy, by means of a few small alterations, to render the most holy things and innocent persons odious to the world, and even to take away the life of the innocent.

The Sanhedrin tried to find witnesses who would distort some of Jesus' teachings. Finally they found two witnesses who distorted Jesus' words about the temple (see John 2:19). They claimed that Jesus had said he could destroy the temple—a blasphemous boast. Actually Jesus had said, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." Jesus, of course, was talking about his body, not the building. Ironically, the religious leaders were about to destroy Jesus' body just as he had said, and three days later he would rise from the dead.<sup>35</sup>

**JNTC:** Yeshua had said earlier (Yn 2:19–22), "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." But Yochanan explains, "The 'temple' he had spoken of was his body," and the fulfillment was in his resurrection.<sup>36</sup>

According to John 2:19–22, even the disciples misunderstood Jesus when He made the statement: "... Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They didn't understand it until after Jesus' resurrection. Evidently the false witness was a man who had been present at the time Jesus made the statement, but notice that he doesn't quote Him accurately.

## **Matthew 26:62**

**And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?**

**Spurgeon:** What was the use of answering? There really was nothing to answer except palpable and willful misrepresentation. Our Lord also knew that the council had determined to put him to death; and beside that, there was another prophecy to be fulfilled: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

---

<sup>35</sup> Life Application Notes

<sup>36</sup> Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:61). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

Christ could say nothing to defend Himself. He was in our shoes, taking our place, and we are guilty.

### **Matthew 26:63**

**But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.**

Fulfilling Isa 53:7. The only time He speaks is when He is legally required to under oath. "I adjure thee by the living God..." this puts Jesus under oath.

*(Isaiah 53:7) He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

**[held his peace]** A wise thing to do under the circumstances. He also did it to fulfill prophecy (Isaiah 53:7).

**[adjure]** Greek: *exorkizo* (GSN-1844), to put on oath.

**[the Son of God]** Proving they admitted that it was understood that the Messiah was to be the son of God (John 8:40).

**Clarke: I adjure thee by the living God**—I put thee to thy oath. To this solemn adjuration Christ immediately replies, because he is now called on, in the name of God, to bear another testimony to the truth. The authority of God in the most worthless magistrate should be properly respected. However necessary our Lord saw it to be silent, when the accusations were frivolous, and the evidence contradictory, he felt no disposition to continue this silence, when questioned concerning a truth, for which he came into the world to shed his blood.

**JNTC: Remained silent.** Yeshua's silence here and at 27:12–14 fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he does not open his mouth."<sup>37</sup>

**Spurgeon:** The time for Christ to speak had come. First he answered the high priest's solemn adjuration, and declared that he was "The Christ the Son of God." There was no longer any reason for concealing that fact Then he uttered a prophecy that must have startled his accusers. He stood there bound, apparently alone and helpless before his powerful enemies, who expected soon to put him to death; yet the Prophet-King declared that they should be witnesses of his future glory, and see him "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." His hearers rightly understood him to claim to be divine, and gladly do we acknowledge the justice of his claim.

---

<sup>37</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 26:63). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

## **Matthew 26:64**

**Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**

**[sitting on the right hand of power]** Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 12:2.

**[coming in the clouds of heaven]** Matthew 24:29-30; Daniel 7:13; Rev. 1:7.

“Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said”—this is tantamount to saying, “Yes, you have said who I am.” Jesus claims for Himself the title “Son of man.” Dr. Warfield said that this is the highest title the Lord had. This is a title the prophets used (see Daniel and Ezekiel). It was an epithet of deity. He could have claimed no greater position than to have said He was “the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

### **Yashanet.com:**

**Daniel 7:13** - *I was seeing in the visions of the night, and lo, with the clouds of the heavens as a son of man was [one] coming, and unto the Ancient of Days he hath come, and before Him they have brought him near.*

One of the "puzzles" that concerned the Jewish sages was that some parts of the Tenakh seemed to indicate that the Messiah would arrive triumphantly on the clouds, while others said he would come on a donkey. The conclusion they reached was that if Israel merited it, he would come on the clouds, but if they failed, he would come on a donkey:

**Talmud - Mas. Sanhedrin 98a** - *R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua b. Levi pointed out a contradiction. it is written, in its time [will the Messiah come], whilst it is also written, I [the Lord] will hasten it! — if they are worthy, I will hasten it: if not, [he will come] at the due time. R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua opposed two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven whilst [elsewhere] it is written, [behold, thy king cometh unto thee . . .] lowly, and riding upon an ass! — if they are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass.*

Yeshua, as we know, first came to his people on the back of a donkey (Matthew 21:5), and is destined to return in the clouds.

### **Matthew 26:65**

**Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.**

High Priest violated Lev 21:10, which states that the High Priest must never tear his clothes. The High Priest understood that Jesus was claiming to be God. The problem with this logic is that it is self-incrimination, which is also in Jewish law that your testimony could not be used against you.

**Clarke: The high priest rent his clothes**—This rending of the high priest’s garments was expressly contrary to the law, Leviticus 10:6; 21:10. But it was a common method of expressing violent grief, Genesis 37:29, 34; Job 1:20, and horror at what was deemed blasphemous or impious. 2 Kings 18:37; 19:1; Acts 14:14. All that heard a blasphemous speech were obliged to rend their clothes, and never to sew them up again. See Lightfoot.

**Clarke: He hath spoken blasphemy**—Quesnel’s note on this is worthy of notice. “See here a false zeal, a mask of religion, and a passionate and seditious way of proceeding, tending only to incense and stir up others, all which are common to those who would oppress truth by cabal, and without proof. By crying out, ‘heresy, blasphemy, and faction,’ though contrary to all appearance, men fail not to stir up those in power, to gain the simple, to give some shadow of authority to the ill-disposed, to cast devout but ignorant people into scruples, and thereby to advance the mystery of iniquity, which is the mystery of all ages.” This was the very plan his Catholic brethren adopted in this country, in the reign of Queen Mary, called the bloody queen, because of the many murders of righteous men which she sanctioned at the mouth of her Catholic priesthood.

**tore his robes.** Normally prohibited for the high priest (Lev. 10:6; 21:10), but this astounding claim by Jesus evokes a vehement response. **blasphemy.** Jesus’ assertion of his divine status as the Son of Man.

### **Matthew 26:66**

**What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.**

**Clarke: He is guilty of death**—Ενοχος θανάτου εστι, he is liable to death. All the forms of justice are here violated. The judge becomes a party and accuser, and proceeds to the verdict without examining whether all the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the innumerable miracles which he wrought, did not justify him. Examination and proof are the ruin of all calumnies, and of the authors of them, and therefore they take care to keep off from these two things. See Quesnel.

The high priest accused Jesus of blasphemy—calling himself God. To the Jews, this was a great crime, punishable by death (Leviticus 24:16). The religious leaders refused even to consider that Jesus’ words might be true. They had decided against Jesus, and in so doing, they sealed their own fate as well as his. Like the members of the Sanhedrin, you

must decide whether Jesus' words are blasphemy or truth. Your decision has eternal implications.

### **Matthew 26:67**

**Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,**

**[spit in his face]** Spitting in the face was considered the greatest insult to a person (Numbers 12:14; Deut. 25:9; Job 30:10). See Matthew 27:30; Mark 15:19; John 19:3.

**Spurgeon:** Put together these two texts: Then did they spit in his face,— "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." In the day of his humiliation, they struck him, and mocked him, saying, "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?" Unless they repented of their wickedness, the day will come when the Divine Judge will point out each one of them who then abused him, and he will say, "Thou art the man!"

Oh, what shameful indignities and cruelties were heaped upon our precious Savior!

"See how the patient Jesus stands  
Insulted in his lowest case!  
Sinners have bound the Almighty hands,  
And spit in their Creator's face."

### **Matthew 26:68**

**Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?**

### **Matthew 26:69**

**Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.**

**[sat without in the palace]** For two reasons: a guilty conscience and to avoid further questioning.

There were three stages to Peter's denial. First he acted confused and tried to divert attention from himself by changing the subject. Second, using an oath he denied that he knew Jesus. Third, he began to curse and swear. Believers who deny Christ often begin doing so subtly by pretending not to know him. When opportunities to discuss religious issues come up, they walk away or pretend they don't know the answers. With only a little more pressure, they can be induced to deny flatly their relationship with Christ. If you find yourself subtly diverting conversation so you don't have to talk about Christ, watch out. You may be on the road to disowning him.

**Matthew 26:70**

But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

**Matthew 26:71**

And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

[porch] The passageway from the street to the court (Mark 14:68).

**Matthew 26:72**

And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

[I do not know the man] Not even His name.

**Matthew 26:73**

And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee.

[betrayeth thee] Your speech betrays you. The Galileans had a particular dialect.

**Matthew 26:74**

Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

That Peter denied that he knew Jesus, using an oath and calling down curses, does not mean he used foul language. This was the kind of swearing that a person does in a court of law. Peter was swearing that he did not know Jesus and was invoking a curse on himself if his words were untrue. In effect he was saying, “May God strike me dead if I am lying.”

**swear:** Peter swore under oath that he did not know Jesus. **immediately a rooster crowed:** Some have detected a contradiction between this passage, where the rooster is said to crow (presumably once) after Peter denies Jesus three times, and the statement in Mark’s Gospel that the rooster would crow two times (see Mark 14:72). Others believe that to see a contradiction is simply a forced reading of the text. Matthew, Luke, and John make the simple statement that a rooster would crow (Luke 22:61; John 18:27) whereas Mark, which was based on Peter’s memories, emphasizes the exact number of times the rooster would crow. The number of times would be sharp in Peter’s memory and interest. The other Gospel writers were concerned only with the sign in general.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> The Nelson Study Bible

### **Matthew 26:75**

**And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, *Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.* And he went out, and wept bitterly.**

**Clarke: Peter remembered the word of Jesus**—St. Luke says, Luke 22:61, The Lord turned and looked upon Peter. So it appears he was nigh to our Lord, either at the time when the cock crew, or shortly after. The delicacy of this reproof was great—he must be reprov'd and alarmed, otherwise he will proceed yet farther in his iniquity; Christ is in bonds, and cannot go and speak to him; if he call aloud, the disciple is discovered, and falls a victim to Jewish malice and Roman jealousy; he therefore does the whole by a look. In the hand of Omnipotence every thing is easy, and he can save by a few, as well as by many.

**McGee:** Simon Peter was in the wrong place. For him, it was the place of temptation. No alibi can be offered for his base denial. He was guilty of an heinous act. However, Peter did repent and come back into fellowship with the Lord he loved. In fact, Peter was the one to whom He gave the privilege of preaching the first sermon after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and *three thousand* people were saved!<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:144). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.