

Life-Giving Love Suffering of Jesus Matthew 26

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The Angelus

P: The Angel of the Lord
declared unto Mary

R: And she conceived of the
Holy Spirit.

P: Behold the handmaid of the
Lord

R: Be it done unto me
according to Thy word.

P: And the Word was made Flesh

R: And dwelt among us.

P: Pray for us, O Holy Mother
of God

R: That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Together: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord.

Passion Narrative

- All four gospels give more attention to the final days of Jesus than to the rest of His ministry.
- The final days comprise one-third of Matthew's gospel thereby reflecting the centrality of Jesus' death and Resurrection (Hahn & Mitch, 64).
- What Jesus has predicted on three different occasions (16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19) will now come to fulfillment.



Finished **All** These Words

- ♦ Jesus' Five Discourses in Matthew's Gospel
 - The Sermon on the Mount (5-7)
 - The Missionary Discourse (10)
 - The Parable Discourse (13)
 - The Discourse on Church Life (18)
 - Discourse about the end of the ages (23-25)
- ♦ The events that will follow will substantiate Jesus' teachings throughout the gospel.

Passover

- **Passover:** Feast that commemorates God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Ex. 12).
- Celebrated on the 15th of Nisan (first month of the liturgical year), it is one of the three feasts that required Israelites to travel to Jerusalem (Ex. 23:14; Lev. 23:4-8; Deut. 16:16) (Hahn & Mitch, 64).
 - **Passover** (unleavened bread) – freedom from slavery
 - **Weeks** (Pentecost) – 50 days after Passover (Law)
 - **Tabernacles** (Booths) – commemorates time in wilderness – celebrated in the autumn

Irony

- Pay attention to the irony throughout the narrative.
- For example, Passover is a celebration of freedom from slavery. Yet, the religious leaders conspire together to kill the one who can give true freedom (Harrington, 364).
- An unnamed woman gives lavishly by anointing Jesus with expensive perfume, while Judas (a disciple!) betrays Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.
- The reader knows that Jesus is in full control, while the characters in the narrative believe they are in control.

Conspired Against Him

- The following groups are mentioned:
 - Chief priests – most influential priests
 - Elders of the people – lay leadership/aristocracy
 - High Priest Caiaphas – from 18 to 36 AD
- “Not during the festival...may not be a riot”
 - Can be translated: “in the midst of the festival crowd.”
- The authorities will arrest Him away from the volatile crowds (Mitch & Sri, 330).

Anointing at Bethany

- Bethany: Small village about two miles from Jerusalem – hometown of Jesus’ friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus
- Simon the Leper: An otherwise unknown figure
- Unnamed Woman: Pours alabaster flask of perfumed oil
 - Old Testament: High priests were anointed (Lev. 8:12) and kings were anointed in the time of the monarchy (1 Sam. 10:1) (Mitch & Sri, 331).
 - Act suggests Jesus is the “anointed one.”
 - His “throne” will be the Cross (Allison, 879).



Anointing at Bethany

- “Why this waste?” Disciples do not understand the action.
 - Right Jesus? Don’t you agree with us?
 - Jesus offers a different perspective.
 - Extravagance points to immeasurable worth of Jesus’ presence – generous act of reverence and worship
 - Points forward to His Passion and death as His own priceless gift for man’s salvation (Hahn & Mitch, 64).
- Woman unknowingly played a part in the fulfillment of the divine plan (Mitch & Sri, 332).

Betrayal by Judas

- | <u>Unnamed Woman</u> | <u>Judas Iscariot</u> |
|--|---|
| Gospel of John identifies her as Mary, the sister of Lazarus (John 11:2, 12:3) | Betrays Jesus for a paltry sum of 30 pieces of silver |
| Lavishes an entire expensive jar on Jesus | Price of a slave (Ex. 21:32) |
| Model of generosity and one who loves lavishly | Fulfills prophecy (Zech. 11:12) |
| Found “opportune time” to anoint Jesus | Model for blindness of greed and personal gain |
| | Looks for “opportunity” to hand Jesus over |

Done a Good Thing

- Done a good thing: The word good could be translated “beautiful” (Martin, 570).
- Throughout the gospel, Jesus has done many beautiful things for others. Now, this woman does something beautiful for Him!
- Mother Teresa: Let’s do something beautiful for God.
- Key: Whenever strive to do what is right, there will always be those who complain.
- Poor Always with You: Jesus reminds His disciples that they will always have opportunities to help those in need.

For US

- Sometimes we identify more with the unnamed woman – we give lavishly or love generously for Jesus.
- Sometimes we identify more with Judas – we betray the Lord for such little things (e.g., money, fame, acceptance, pleasure, comfort, advancement, personal glory, etc.).
- Like the unnamed woman, how often do we play a part in God’s plan of salvation and not know it!
- Nothing is too extravagant for Jesus!



Hand Him Over

- The betrayal of Judas, as foretold by the Scriptures, is in accord with God's providence.
- The apparent triumph of evil is mysteriously also the work of God.
 - [Gen 50:20](#): "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good."
 - Like the guards at the tomb of Jesus, Judas takes the silver from the authorities (Matt. 28:11-15).
- [Went to Chief Priests](#): While God knows what he will do, Judas acts on his own accord (Martin, 572).

Preparations for Passover

- [First day of unleavened bread](#): Begins with the day of Passover. During this feast, Jews ate only unleavened bread for seven days (Ex. 12:14-20) (Hahn & Mitch, 64).
- While Judas seeks an opportune time to hand Jesus over, Jesus takes charge of the situation and willingly meets His fate (Harrington, 366).
- Jesus carefully orchestrates the events of the passion even though they lead to His death.
- The disciples do as Jesus ordered. They serve as model disciples (Martin, 577).



Cenacle - Jerusalem



The Betrayer

- Jesus predicted on three different occasions that He would be "handed over" to the authorities and put to death (17:22, 20:18, 26:2).
- However, He never indicates *who* would do this. Now the disciples learn that it is one of His disciples.
- In asking, "Surely it is not I, Lord?" the disciples display a mixture of uncertainty and desperate hope (Mitch & Sri, 335). They need reassurance!
- While human beings are capable of some extraordinary heroic things, we are also capable of terrible things as well!

The Betrayer

- With Judas' betrayal, we bump against the mystery of God's providence and free will.
- On the one hand, Jesus' fate is announced in the writings of the Old Testament. Judas thus participates in the betrayal of the Son of Man as foretold by the prophets.
- Key: While God knows what we will do, He gives us freedom!
- On the other hand, Judas chooses to misuse his free will and follow through with the treachery.
- [You have said so](#): An idiomatic way of saying affirming that the statement is true.



Last Supper

- Setting here is Passover, which derived from Ex. 12:13: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."
- The festival celebrates Israel's liberation under Moses' leadership from slavery in Egypt (Harrington, 369).
- Before Passover, the population of Jerusalem swelled with pilgrims. Lambs were slaughtered in the Temple and brought to households to be eaten.



Last Supper

- **Take, eat, this is my body:** The Church understands the verb "is" literally rather than "represents" or "symbolizes."
- The lamb is not the center of the celebration, but rather Jesus – His body and blood which the disciples are encouraged to eat (Mitch & Sri, 337).
- Early Church understood Jesus as the Paschal Lamb
 - **John 1:29:** "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."
 - **1 Cor. 5:7:** "For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed."

Last Supper

- **My Blood of the Covenant:** A Covenant is an exchange of person that establishes family bonds. It is made some type of oath and accompanied by a sign (e.g., Noah and rainbow).
- **Sinai:** Moses mediated a covenant between God and the Israelites at Mount Sinai. He offered bulls and sprinkled blood on the altar (symbolizing God) and the people.
- **Shed on behalf:** Jesus will offer His life for the forgiveness of sins to establish a new covenant. That is, He will form a family into a covenant relationship with God.
- **Key:** He invites us to offer our lives to Him in gratitude.

Last Supper

- Rich theological significance in the language:
 - **Blood of the covenant:** Moses ratified the Sinai covenant by sprinkling blood on altar and the people (Ex. 24:8)
 - **Forgiveness of sins:** Jeremiah prophesied that the new covenant would eradicate sin from people (Jer. 31:31-34)
 - **For many:** Isaiah prophesied that a suffering servant would pour out his life to "take away the sins of many" (Is. 53:12).



Last Supper

- **Key:** Jesus is in control throughout the narrative. In other words, Jesus was not "caught off guard." Jesus' sacrifice must be free, or it would not be love!
- The new translation of the Roman Missal in 2011 changed from "for all" to "for many."
- The latter more accurately reflects the Greek, as well as the truth that while Jesus died for all, but not all accept Christ's gift of salvation.
- The Hebrew sense is "all," as opposed to a "few" (Martin, 581).



For Us

- Every time we celebrate Mass, we "do" what Jesus commanded. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus says, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk 22:19; cf. 1 Cor. 11:24).
- It is beautiful to think that our celebration of the Mass today is what Jesus did 2,000 years ago.
- In the celebration of the Mass, we come into "contact" with the Cross. In other words, the Mass "re-presents" (makes present) the sacrifice of the Cross (CCC 1366).
- In the Mass, we "plug in" to the Cross!



River of Life

Lake Itasca:
Paschal Mystery

Mass:
Mississippi River

Anabranches:
sacraments

Some live close
to the stream;
others live far
from the stream



Jesus' Predictions

(1). Your faith in me shaken: Another translation says, "scandalized at me." Jesus predicts a crisis of faith.

- Thérèse of Lisieux: Jesus permitted my soul to be invaded by thick darkness, and the thought of heaven, up until then so sweet to me, be no longer anything but the cause of struggle and torment (Manuscript C, 211).

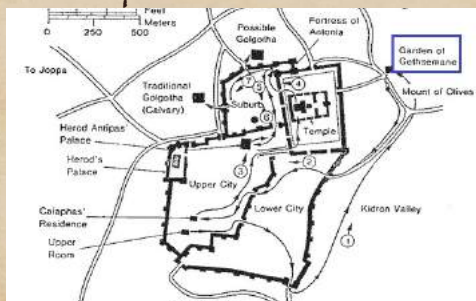
(2). Go before you to Galilee: After the Resurrection, the scattered disciples will re-gather (Matt. 28:16-20)

(3). Deny my three times: Peter's pride becomes His downfall. The lesson is dependency, dependency, dependency. Transform "I" to "help me."

Gethsemane

- Jesus leaves Jerusalem and comes to an orchard on the western slope of Mount Olivet.
- Gethsemane: "Oil press." Jesus' spirit will be "pressed."
- Peter, James, and John: Witnessed their Master's glory in the Transfiguration, but now see Him in His mortal agony. There, they prostrated before Him. But now, He falls prostrate in fear of what is to come (Mitch & Sri, 340).
- My Soul is Sorrowful: Jesus' experiences intense sorrow – prospect of suffering and torture, as well as bearing the curse of death for human rebellion (Mitch & Sri, 340).

Map of Gethsemane



Gethsemane

- Let this Cup Pass from Me: "Cup" is used figuratively in texts about suffering, especially suffering God's wrath or judgment (e.g., Ps. 11:6; 116:13) (Allison, 880)
- Thérèse of Lisieux: "I reserve crosses and trials for you... if you desire to have a place by His side, then drink the chalice He has drunk! (Manuscript A, 133).
- Not as I will, but as you will: This echoes the Lord's Prayer, "thy will be done." Jesus lives what He teaches!
- Key: When God is silent, we must stay the course that God previously set you on (Martin, 590).



Gethsemane

Jesus' Prayer

- "My Father" (vs. 39)
- "Your will be done" (vs. 39)
- "not undergo the test" (vs. 41)

Our Father

- "Our Father" (6:9)
- Your will be done (6:10)
- Do not subject us to the final test (6:13)



Martin, 591



Gethsemane

- Drifting away from Jesus
- (1). Found them asleep: Peter neither watched nor prayed – neglect of prayer;
- (2). Drew Sword, cutting off ear: Peter substitutes action for prayer;
- (3). Peter followed Him at a distance: Peter's promise of everything turns to giving up everything – giving up mortification (Luke warmth);
- (4). Makes Himself comfortable by fire: Relationship with Jesus is cold, find warmth in other places – satisfaction of creaturely wants, emotions, and comforts.

Gethsemane

- Drifting away from Jesus
- **The fall of a priest is completed by these steps:**
 - Neglect of prayer
 - Withdrawal to a distance from Eucharistic Lord
 - Dedication to a comfortable existence
 - Negligence concerning occasions of sin
 - Substitution of a creature for Christ.

~ *The Priest is Not His Own*, Fulton Sheen, 184.

Gethsemane

Garden of Eden

- Man commanded to "till and keep" the garden
- Allowed the serpent to creep in
- Serpent speaks to the woman
- Where is the man when the serpent approached the woman?

Garden of Gethsemane

- "Keep watch with me" – returns to protect disciples
- "My betrayer is at hand" – Luke says "Satan entered Judas" (Lk 22:3)
- "Let these men go" (Jn 18:8)
- Jesus, the New Man, protects His disciples when the evil one approaches

Betrayal & Arrest

- **The man I shall kiss:** Normally a sign of affection or peace, it amounts to a monstrous act of betrayal (Mitch & Sri, 343).
- **Liturgically:** The priest reverences the altar with a "kiss" at the beginning and end of Mass. Is it authentic?
- **Cutting off His ear:** According to John 18:10, this is Peter.
- **Twelve legions:** In the Roman army, a "legion" consisted of nearly 6,000 soldiers (Hahn & Mitch, 66).
- **Scriptures be fulfilled:** Reference to Zech. 13:7 – "Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered."

Betrayal and Arrest

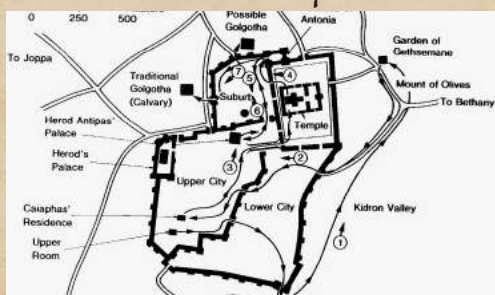
Life of Prayer

- Jesus prays in the Garden:
 - Not as I will, but as you will
 - Deliver from "final test"
- Appear calm and in control
- Access to armies, but does not use them
- Fulfills Scriptures

Disciples lack of Prayer

- Disciples sleep in Garden
 - Blind to the Father's will
 - Delivered into "final test"
- Appear confused
- Peter uses sword, while Judas uses robbers
- Fulfills Scriptures

Led to Caiaphas



Before the Sanhedrin

- **Sanhedrin:** Jewish high court normally assembled during daylight hours within the Temple complex. It was responsible for administering justice in Israel – governed internal affairs of the Jewish people (Mitch & Sri, 344).
- **Obtain false testimony:** Shows the extreme measures by Jerusalem's leaders to condemn Jesus (Hahn & Mitch, 66).
- **Two witnesses:** Deut. 17:6 required that two or three witnesses were needed to put someone to death.
- **Destroy the Temple:** Jesus previously cleansed the Temple in Matt. 21:12-13 (cf. destroy this Temple) and in Jn. 2:19.

Before the Sanhedrin

- **Jesus was silent:** A fulfillment of Is. 53:7 – “Like a lamb led to slaughter...he did not open his mouth.”
- **You have said so:** Affirmation implies the answer is already contained in the question (Mitch & Sri, 345).
- **Son of Man seated:** Jesus references Ps. 110:1 & Dan. 7:13-14.5
 - **Ps. 110:1:** The Lord says to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, while I make your enemies your footstool.’
 - **Dan. 7:13-14:** I saw coming with clouds of heaven, One like a son of man...He received dominion, splendor, kingship; all nations, peoples, and tongues serve him.

Before the Sanhedrin

- **High Priest tore his robes:** Forbidden in the Law – “Do not dishevel your hair or tear your garments, lest you die and bring God’s wrath also on the whole community” (Lev. 10:6).
- **He has blasphemed:** The misuse of God’s name, and the punishment for it is death by stoning (Lev. 24:16) (Harrington, 380). Thus, they believe Jesus deserves to die.
- **Spat in His face:** The humiliation of Jesus begins.
 - **Is. 50:6:** I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who tore out my beard; My face I did not hide from insults and spitting.

Irony

Authorities

- Pass judgment on Jesus
- Seek to obey the Law (obtain two witnesses), disobey it (tears robe)
- Witnesses accuse Jesus of saying He will destroy the Temple
- Accuse Jesus of blasphemy
- Mock Jesus as Messiah

Reality

- Pass judgment on Sanhedrin
- Obeys the law – refuses to take oath and avoided using name of God (rather Power)
- Contribute to destruction of Temple (Jesus’ body), which is raised in three days
- Blaspheme the Son of God
- Fulfills OT prophecy (Isaiah)

Allison, 881

For Us

- It is possible to see ourselves in each of the characters in the plot against Jesus:
 - **Scribes and Elders Assembled:** Gossiping about the weaknesses and faults of others; twisting the truth
 - **Peter followed at a distance:** Lord, I want to serve you! However, I can take care of these areas by myself.
 - **Have you no answer?:** I have a right to all the answers. Tell me! Why don’t you answer my prayers!
 - **Spat in His face:** Jesus does not understand or care about my suffering. Woe is me.

Peter’s Denial

- **You too were with Jesus:** The maid recognizes that Peter has been with Jesus. Would that others could say that about any Christian. “You have spent time with Jesus. I can tell.”
- **In front of everyone:** Peter denies it by making sure everyone can hear him.
- **I do not know:** Peter lies with an oath despite Jesus’ prohibition of taking oaths (5:33-37) (Martin, 609).
- **Key:** The first to be called is the last to fall away (Allison, 882). The “rock” is crumbling.



Peter’s Denial

- With each accusation, Peter’s denial becomes more public:
 - (1). **First accusation:** Spoken by a maid privately
 - (2). **Second accusation:** Another girl said to those who were there.
 - (3). **Third accusation:** Bystanders came over and said to Peter (Allison, 882).
- **Principle:** Sin, while oftentimes starts quietly and in dark places, eventually becomes more and more public.

Peter's Denial

- With each accusation, Peter's denial becomes more intense:
 - (1). [Denial](#): "I do not know what you are talking about" – Denies he knows what is being said
 - (2). [Oath](#): "I do not know the man!" –denies with an oath that he knows Jesus
 - (3). [Oath and a curse](#): "I do not know the man" –denies Jesus with both an oath and a curse (Allison, 882).
- [Principle](#): Peter becomes more hardened in his sin of denial with each accusation against him.

Peter's Denial

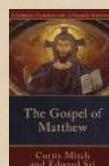
- With each accusation, Peter moves further away from Jesus:
 - Begins in the courtyard (Matt. 26:69).
 - Then he went out to the gate (Matt. 27:71)
 - Then he "went out" and wept bitterly (Matt. 27:75) (Allison, 882)
- [Principle](#): Un-repentant sin moves us further and further away from Jesus.



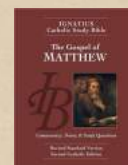
Model of Hope

- While Peter has denied the Lord and is quite far from Him, the cock crows reminding Peter that his failure was prophesied earlier by the Lord (cf. Matt. 26:34).
- [St. Laurence Giustiniani](#): Peter typifies man's proneness to sin. The cock crowing is the informed conscience that accuses us of sins, reminding us of God's commandments and stirring the soul to contrition. As with Peter, the informed conscience directs sinners away from despair and toward genuine repentance (Hahn & Mitch, 67).
- [Luke 22:61](#): The Lord looked at Peter – each of us can imagine this look of love from the Lord in calling us back.

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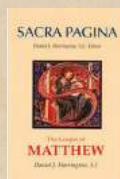


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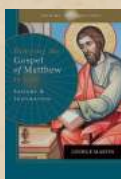


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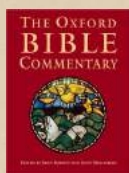
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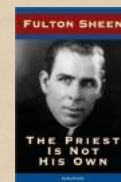


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