

THE LAST SUPPER AND GETHSEMANE

BIBLE TEXT : Matthew 26:17-46; John 13:1-17; I Corinthians 11:23-30

LESSON 62 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Matthew 26:17-46

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?

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.

¹⁹ And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

²⁰ Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

²¹ And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

²² And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

²³ And he answered and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

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.

²⁵ Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

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.

²⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

²⁸ For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

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.

³⁰ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

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.

³² But after I am risen again, I will go

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

The Passover

The first day of the feast of unleavened bread was the Passover, the day the Jews celebrated in memory of the deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage about 1500 years before. We remember the lamb had been slain and the blood applied to their doorposts to save their firstborn from death the night the death angel passed through Egypt. That lamb was called the paschal lamb, and became the type of Jesus Who was to come and shed His Blood for our redemption. The same night the paschal lamb had been killed, the Children of Israel had started their march to the Promised Land. Through all the years the Israelites had observed this ceremony; but from now on it was not going to be necessary, because now the true Paschal Lamb, Jesus Himself, was to die. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Corinthians 5:7). After His Blood was shed it was no more necessary to shed the blood of lambs year after year.

Jesus was always careful to observe all the laws and ceremonies that God had commanded His chosen people to keep; and so now we see Him making preparation for the Passover. There were other preparations besides those concerning the lamb. We notice that it was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. That meant that during this period none of their bread would have yeast in it to make it rise, but it would be flat, more like crackers or wafers.

Leaven

Leaven is a type of sin because it is a form of mold or decay, and increases or grows very rapidly. Jesus spoke of it in this way when He said, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6). For this reason the Jews left leaven out of their bread on these holy days, and also were careful that there should be none in their homes. Every corner was carefully swept; their pockets were turned inside out to make sure none was hiding there; special dishes were used for this feast that would be sure to be clean from leaven. (The Pharisees were very particular about these outward ceremonies, but not nearly as careful about the actual sin in their hearts.)

The Passover was usually a time of rejoicing because it commemorated the triumph over their enemies; but this night was sad because Jesus had warned, "My time is at hand." As they ate He told His disciples that one of the twelve would betray Him. It was a terrible shock to the eleven who were innocent: could it be possible that anyone who had had such close communion with the Savior as these twelve had had, would do such a thing? They had felt His love and compassion, had seen His deeds of kindness and mercy. The sick had been healed, the dead raised, the sinner set at liberty. And now Jesus said one of them was going to betray Him — one had sold Him for thirty pieces of silver.

Selling the Savior

We condemn Judas as a traitor, as a terrible coward. But people today are betraying Jesus for even less. Perhaps a young person will turn from the Lord because of the sneers of his classmates. He is selling his Savior for a pittance. The worldly

before you into Galilee.

³³ Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

³⁴ Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

³⁵ Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

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.

³⁷ And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

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*.

⁴⁰ And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

⁴¹ Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

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.

⁴³ And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

⁴⁴ And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

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.

⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

John 13:1-17

¹ Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him;

³ Jesus knowing that the Father had given

fashions may cause another to forsake Jesus. How cheaply she sells her Lord! There is none so strong among us but that we should watch and pray lest we be tempted to betray our God.

The Lord's Supper

At the close of the Passover feast Jesus gave His disciples another feast to keep — the Lord's Supper. Just as the Jews were to keep the Passover looking forward to Christ's first coming, so the Christians are to look to His second coming as they partake of this service. We are to remember His death "till he come" (I Corinthians 11:26).

Paul gives us some important instructions about keeping the Lord's Supper. He tells us that each one of us must examine himself, his spiritual condition, to *see* that he is worthy to partake of the emblems of the Lord's table. Jesus said when He broke the bread and gave it to His disciples, "This is my body"; and when He gave them the cup, He said, "This is my blood." His body was going to die, His Blood was going to be shed for the remission of our sins, before another night came; and at this supper He was giving Himself, in type, to His disciples. When we come to the Lord's Supper we must remember that the bread we eat is a symbol of Christ's broken body, and the grape juice we drink represents His Blood. Can we partake of those holy emblems with sin in our lives? "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (I Corinthians 11:29). We should come humbly before Christ and ask Him to cover us afresh with His Blood, just in case we might have harbored some ill thoughts toward our brother, or we might, have neglected our service to God, or complained about our lot in life. We should renew our vows and consecrations; and if there be any misunderstanding between us and our fellow man, that should be straightened out before we eat of the Lord's Supper.

When we come in such a condition, with faith in Jesus, we receive spiritual courage from God, new strength for service, healing for our bodies if we are ill; and we enjoy a perfect fellowship with God's people. We enjoy a holy communion entirely shut away from the world. Heaven draws near, and our hearts beat fast in the hope that *Jesus* will literally appear to catch away His loved ones to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This do "till he come."

Foot Washing

There are still more joys in store for the Christian who is obeying all the commandments of God. After their supper, Jesus wrapped a towel around His waist and began to wash His disciples' feet. When He had finished, He said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.... If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:14-17). Jesus also said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15), and surely this is a command. Many religious people today do not believe this ordinance is necessary, but it is a commandment of God, and "happy are ye if ye do them." Some give the excuse that it was the custom to wash feet in those days because people wore open sandals and the roads were dusty; but such cleansing would have taken place when they entered the house, and not after the supper was ended.

No Part with Jesus

Peter did not feel worthy to have his Lord wash his feet; but when he heard the words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," he quickly answered, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Peter thought he was wholly given up to God; he had zeal and enthusiasm for Christ, but he did not know his own weakness. This very night he was to deny his Master! "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12). Peter boldly declared that even though

all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

⁶ Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

⁷ Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

⁸ Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

⁹ Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

¹⁰ Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

¹¹ For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

¹² So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

¹³ Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

¹⁶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

¹⁷ If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

1 Corinthians 11:23-30

²³ For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

²⁴ And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

²⁵ After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and

all the other disciples forsook Jesus, he would be faithful. Why, he would be willing to die for Christ! He undoubtedly meant it, but he did not watch and pray, and temptation overcame him. Jesus warned Peter that before morning he would not only have denied his Lord once, but three times.

Asleep

After their time of sweet fellowship, Jesus took His disciples and went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He asked eight of them to remain in one place, and took Peter, James, and John, those of His inner circle, with Him farther into the garden. He had told the disciples that this night their Shepherd would be smitten, and they would be scattered as sheep; and He had implied that He would die, for He *said* He would *meet* them in Galilee after He had risen from the dead. But it seems they did not understand at all what He was talking about.

Peter, James, and John had enjoyed an intimacy with Christ that no one else had. They had been with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration and had seen Him glorified before them. Now the betrayer was drawing near, and Jesus asked them to watch with Him. Did they? He went a little way from them to pray and they went to sleep! They who had said they would die for Jesus, Peter especially, were asleep when their Master was in vital danger! And think of the soul- and mental-struggle that Jesus went through that night — and His disciples did not seem to be aware of His agony.

The Agony in the Garden

Here in the garden was the scene of Christ's great conflict; here the Divine in Him that had come from Heaven to fulfill the price of redemption struggled with His human side which would draw back from the suffering. God had sent His Son in the form of man to shed His Blood that we might be saved; and in fulfilling His mission here He suffered as a man so He would know how to bear with us in our suffering. But this night He suffered more than we shall ever know. Think how bad we felt when we committed one sin! Christ had to feel that bad for all the sins of the world. We deserved to suffer for our sins, but Jesus paid our price and suffered in our stead.

When Christ realized the tremendous weight of the sins of the world, He threw Himself on the ground and cried to the Father, "Let this cup pass from me," but He quickly added, "Not my will, but thine, be done." He must drink the cup, He must suffer death on the Cross, to fulfill the plan of redemption. That night He yielded His will completely to God; here He conquered the terror of the cross which He knew was before Him. When He had finished His prayer He could go with confidence to meet the betrayer. He had already overcome the grave that was soon to be His. But He had prayed alone!

Watch and Pray

The disciples who had promised so much a few hours earlier — they thought they were all willing to die for Him — had gone to sleep! After Jesus prayed the first time, and came and found them sleeping, He said: "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Was that asking very much? He warned them to watch and pray, not only for His sake, but lest they enter into temptation. Do you suppose that if they had watched and had prayed with Jesus, and helped Him with their faith to bear the burden, they would have been able to stand against the temptations that came soon after? Do you see how much it means to watch and pray? We want to, but it takes more than a desire to be of service to God. We must put forth an effort. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Christ's disciples slept while His enemies were approaching. What are they doing today? We fear that many who claim to be

drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

²⁷ Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

²⁹ For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

³⁰ For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

followers of Jesus are spiritually asleep while sin is crowding in, dooming many souls as the day of perdition draws nigh. The only way we can get power to fight evil is through prayer, prevailing prayer. Can we not watch and pray with Jesus for "one hour"?

**"Oh! ye who sigh and languish, and mourn your lack of power,
Heed ye this gentle whisper, 'Could ye not watch one hour?'
To fruitfulness and blessing, there is no 'royal road';
The power for holy service is intercourse with God."**

QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the Passover? How did Jesus fulfill it?
- 2 Where did Jesus tell His disciples to prepare for it?
- 3 Who ate the Passover with Him?
- 4 Who betrayed Jesus, and for how much?
- 5 Do we need to observe the ordinance of foot washing? Why?
- 6 Were Jesus' disciples a help to Him in the garden? What did they do?