

## Maundy Thursday

**Reading** Luke 22:1-6

### The Plot against Jesus

**22** The time was near for the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover. <sup>2</sup> The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were afraid of the people, and so they were trying to find a way of putting Jesus to death secretly.

### Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

<sup>3</sup> Then Satan entered into Judas, called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve disciples. <sup>4</sup> So Judas went off and spoke with the chief priests and the officers of the Temple guard about how he could betray Jesus to them. <sup>5</sup> They were pleased and offered to pay him money. <sup>6</sup> Judas agreed to it and started looking for a good chance to hand Jesus over to them without the people knowing about it.

## Talk

*Party time was near; the celebration of the festival of unleavened bread was fast approaching. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the preparations, Jesus' name was on everyone's tongue.*

*Is he the Messiah?*

*Will he chase off the Romans?*

*Will he sort out the Jewish leaders?*

*The folk in the streets desire that he will be, whereas their leaders hope he will not and they intend to make sure that he isn't. Amidst this turmoil the devil grasps his opportunity to be rid of this Jesus. Ever since Jesus had been baptised by John, Satan had failed to at every turn to tempt Jesus. Now it was time to tempt his inner circle of friends.*

*Why did Judas succumb? Who can tell, for Judas had always been a helpful and reliable kind of guy, they even trusted him with their money.*

*Was it the lure of the money?*

*Was he in debt?*

*Or was it simply all this talk of death, that pushed Judas over the edge?*

*We really don't know enough about Judas to say what caused him to betray his friend. But we do know he did exactly that: "betrayed his friend".*

### **Reading** Luke 22:7-13

Jesus Prepares to Eat the Passover Meal

<sup>7</sup> The day came during the Festival of Unleavened Bread when the lambs for the Passover meal were to be killed. <sup>8</sup> Jesus sent Peter and John with these instructions: "Go and get the Passover meal ready for us to eat."

<sup>9</sup> "Where do you want us to get it ready?" they asked him.

<sup>10</sup> He answered, "As you go into the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters, <sup>11</sup> and say to the owner of the house: 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the room where my disciples and I will eat the Passover meal?' <sup>12</sup> He will show you a large furnished room upstairs, where you will get everything ready."

<sup>13</sup> They went off and found everything just as Jesus had told them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

### **Talk.**

*The trap is closing.*

*Jesus is calm and in control.*

*The authorities do not know the place,*

*They overlook a simple sign,*

*a man carrying water.*

A man doing woman's work, leads them to a special house, a house with an upper room. They cannot miss him; men do not fetch water. Jesus sent his top men to follow the man to a place where they could prepare the fellowship meal a celebration of the Passover, remembering how their forebearers were rescued from slavery by God. The feast usually included: -

**Roast lamb**, remembering that last night in Egypt when the blood of the lamb was daubed on the doors of their ancestor's homes so the angel of death would know to pass over them.

**Unleavened bread**, all yeast is thrown out as a sign that evil is banished from that place, reminding them that their people had left Egypt in such a hurry that there was no time for their bread to prove.

**Bitter herbs**, a small but sharp reminder that of the bitter time spent in slavery in Egypt.

**Mixed fruit**, such as figs, dates, raisins, and apples which were mixed together into a muddy brown mixture resembling the brown mud they had been forced to make bricks with for their Egyptian slave masters.

**A flagon of wine**, red wine which was mixed with water that would be poured into four cups and shared around.

**Reading** Luke 22:14—20

### The Lord's Supper

<sup>14</sup>When the hour came, Jesus took his place at the table with the apostles. <sup>15</sup>He said to them, "I have wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer! <sup>16</sup>For I tell you, I will never eat it until it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God."

<sup>17</sup> Then Jesus took a cup, gave thanks to God, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. <sup>18</sup> I tell you that from now on I will not drink this wine until the Kingdom of God comes."

<sup>19</sup> Then he took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me." <sup>20</sup> In the same way, he gave them the cup after the supper, saying, "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, which is poured out for you."

## **Talk**

*This meal has been on Jesus' mind a great deal. He has thought about it and planned it meticulously. It will be the last meal he will share with his disciples. Here he will remind them of everything he has been, everything he has done and everything that is to come.*

*He takes wine, pours it.*

*He thanks God.*

*For Jesus there will be no more tasting of wine until they meet again at the Lord's table.*

*He takes bread.*

*He thanks God.*

*He breaks it.*

*The bread is a reminder. Just as the bread is broken and shared amongst them so will his body be broken for all.*

*He turns back to the cup and says,*

***"Take, drink this amongst yourselves, remember me."***

Once again, he takes the bread and says.

***"Take, eat, share this amongst yourselves, remember me."***

The bread is but a visual aid to remind us of the body of Christ and how it was broken for us. The wine is a symbol that reminds us, just as it was poured out, so his blood is shed for all. It tells us that God's promise has been fulfilled.

The disciples will never look on the Passover meal in the same way again. Jesus has completely changed their thoughts. The bread will forever be his broken body, the wine his poured-out life.