

Matthew 26:1 – 29

^{26:1} When Jesus had finished all these words, he said to his disciples, ² ‘You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion.’ ³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; ⁴ and they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him. ⁵ But they were saying, ‘Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people.’ ⁶ Now when Jesus was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at the table. ⁸ But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, ‘Why this waste?’ ⁹ For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor.’ ¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, ‘Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to me. ¹¹ For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have me. ¹² For when she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. ¹³ Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her.’ ¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, ‘What are you willing to give me to betray him to you?’ And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. ¹⁶ From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus. ¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked, ‘Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?’ ¹⁸ And he said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’’ ¹⁹ The disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. ²⁰ Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. ²¹ As they were eating, he said, ‘Truly I say to you that one of you will betray me.’ ²² Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to him, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’ ²³ And he answered, ‘He who dipped his hand with me in the bowl is the one who will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.’ ²⁵ And Judas, who was betraying him, said, ‘Surely it is not I, Rabbi?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said it yourself.’ ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, he broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ ²⁷ And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.’

Questions

1. If you were producing this as a movie, describe the scene shifts.
2. The time and place
 - a. What Jewish holiday is it? Passover
 - b. What does that symbolize? Independence day.
 - c. So what sentiment is in the air? Resistance and/or revolution against Rome.
 - d. How did Rome punish traitors? Crucifixion.
3. So how do you think the disciples hear Jesus when he says in v.2, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion'? They must be puzzled, baffled, confused, upset.
4. What is Jesus already telling his disciples to remember as they tell the whole world about him?
 - a. The woman who anointed him for burial
 - b. The bread and wine are in remembrance of him
 - c. His death is for the forgiveness of sins
 - d. BUT his disciples don't want to think about this. They are wondering if Jesus will lead a revolution on 'Independence Day.'
5. What is the motivation of the chief priests and elders? Why do they want Jesus dead?
 - a. They want to avoid a riot. Jesus' presence could cause a riot, if he were a Messiah-figure who was going to rally the Jews against the Romans. Or, killing Jesus could cause a riot, because the people might believe in him. Any disturbance like that will cause the Romans to come in. The chief priests and elders are afraid that the Romans will take away their place of power in Jerusalem.
6. What is Judas' motivation?
 - a. Perhaps he was upset about the 'crucifixion' prediction? Perhaps it's to force Jesus' to move more quickly? He thought Jesus should be leading a revolt and still can?
 - b. Perhaps he's upset by the perfume incident? Was that the last straw? (Actually, John's Gospel tells us that Judas was pilfering from the purse and wasn't truly concerned with the poor, Jn.12:4 – 6)
 - c. Perhaps it's to just make a quick \$. Maybe he's already been disappointed by Jesus?
7. Sometimes we want to stop Jesus from suffering because he also leads us into suffering for others. What are the biggest temptations to betraying Jesus in this way? Is it possible for us to repeat the actions of Judas?
8. What is Jesus' motivation?
 - a. How much does Jesus know about his upcoming death? Why is it worth it for Jesus?
 - b. The Exodus Passover deliverance was awesome, but Israel kept sinning and being exiled, all the way up to this point. It was God's lesson to Israel that they needed a deeper deliverance, one from sin, not just from foreign powers like the one before. Jesus wanted to deliver Israel and all humanity from sin itself.
 - c. Do you think Jesus had you and me in mind as he pressed onward to his death?