

# THE HOUR OF DARKNESS AND THE KINGDOM

LUKE 22:47-71

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We begin the third movement of Jesus' Passion and suffering this Lord's Day morning as Jesus is betrayed and denied by his disciples. This time Jesus calls the "hour and the power of darkness" (22:53b). This heightened and intensified time of darkness will unfold according to God's sovereign will and Jesus will be arrested and numbered with the transgressors (or criminals) on the cross (22:37).

In our passage today (22:47-71), Dr. Luke writes his Gospel so that we might contrast two disciples: Judas and Peter. One betrayed Jesus and became apostate dying a horrible death; one denied Jesus and was restored by Jesus' grace. Why did one overcome and one did not? God's sovereign will and Jesus' prayer for his own (22:31-32). Thanks be to God for His grace in Jesus!

Today's passage is one where the cosmic powers over this present darkness, and the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places are allowed by our Sovereign God to wreck havoc on His Beloved Son.

We have learned in Luke's Gospel that Jesus has already faced Satan and his temptations in the wilderness (Luke 4:1ff); he has cast out demons (Luke 4:41; 8:2; 8:30-38; 10:17; 11:15-20) showing that by the finger of God that the Kingdom has come in him (11:20); Jesus has delivered many people from sickness, disease, blindness, and death itself (7:22). Jesus has redeemed many people from sin.

In our passage today, Jesus enters darkness itself in order to wage eschatological warfare and battle on our behalf against the forces of darkness.

Satan the Adversary has entered into Judas (Luke 22:3) in order to assist him in his devilish scheme resolved to betray Jesus because He was not the mighty earthly Messiah of Judas' hopes and eschatological expectations. Satan has also asked to sift and shake the disciples like wheat (Luke 22:31-32), and they will be tremendously shaken but because of Jesus' prayer for the other eleven disciples, their faith will not fail them ultimately (though there will be a brief denial of him).

This is spiritual warfare of the most intense kind. Now was the moment of darkness when Satan sought to put an end to God's own Son by using the teachers of Israel as well as the politicians and powers of Rome (Jews and Gentiles would engage diabolically together in unity to achieve this common goal- -the death of Messiah and an attempt to dethrone God Himself!).

Satan will use fleshly sinful men as his instruments, as part of his army dead in trespasses and sins who will follow the course of the Prince of the Power of the Air, the power that is at work in all the sons of disobedience (cf. Eph. 2:1-3).

Satan was not to be satisfied with a mere “bruising” of the Seed of the Woman’s heel, he desperately desires to crush His head in death –although God’s will will prevail!

Jesus was in control of all these events. In fact, he had prayerfully prepared to face just these events because this was the how he must complete his Divine Messianic Mission (Luke 9:21ff; 51). We focused last week on Jesus’ prayer and agony in the garden. Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives with his disciples and he showed them the true pose of a great man: kneeling down and praying for God’s will for Him to be accomplished through suffering (cf. Isaiah 53).

Jesus asked the Father that if possible may the cup of wrath he was to drink on the cross would be removed, but then he said for His own who could not perfectly obey in the way that he had to for them: “...*Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done*” (22:42).

Jesus had to perfectly obey His Father by going to the cross for the sins of His people. Jesus told his disciples to pray so that they may not enter into temptation (22:46). The will of the Father was that His Beloved Son, the Son of Man and Son of God, must go through great suffering, pain, and torment in the time of the hour of the power of darkness.

Dr. Luke reveals four important aspects of our Savior’s revelation of Himself in our passage today: (1) Jesus the Betrayed One; (2) Jesus the Warrior Against the Darkness; (3) Jesus the Forsaken One; (4) Jesus the Glorious Son of Man.

#### ***Jesus the Betrayed One: Betrayed by Judas***

As Jesus was praying to God and in agony because of the cross of wrath He was about to face, Judas came with a crowds to arrest him (22:47).

As Judas drew near, he seeks to kiss our Lord as he betrays him and Jesus asks him pointedly (and poignantly): “*Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?*” Kissing was a common embrace or greeting in the ancient world (cf. 1 Thess. 5:26), but this kiss was most significant. This kiss is to reveals which one of the group is Jesus; which one of the group should be arrested; which one of the group is being betrayed- the Good Shepherd Himself!

It is interesting to note that Psalm 2 speaks of those unbelievers who wage war against the LORD and His Messiah (or “Anointed One”). At the end of the Psalm it says to “Kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in your way” (Psalm 2:12):

*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*

In contrast to the kiss of humility and submission that is spoken of in Psalm 2, this is a kiss of death, a kiss of betrayal, a kiss of a friend handing over friend to be murdered.

Judas' kiss has become throughout history a powerful picture and example of betrayal and rejection of the worst kind: *friend betraying friend*. As one of Jesus' closest confidants, Judas has the audacity to kiss the Lord in his betrayal. But this is a much greater sin than a friend betraying a friend (although that is sinful!). What is happening here is that Judas "one of the twelve" is not merely betraying a friend, but *The Son of Man!*

Judas is not merely betraying a friend, or a man, but the very office of the Messianic Mediator that Jesus holds as God himself. Judas is not a representative merely of others who have betrayed their friends, he is a representative of all of the enemies of God who given the opportunity would betray God himself. Here God is in the flesh, the very Son of Man who is Messiah and Savior of the world, and this particularly is who Judas is betraying!

As Jesus prayed for His disciples in John 17 in His High Priestly prayer in Gethsemane, he did not pray for Judas:

*<sup>ESV</sup> John 17:10-12: All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. <sup>11</sup> And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

We should remember the larger context when at the institution of the Lord's Supper, our Lord Jesus said: *"But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!"* (22:21-22).

Judas was one who because of his blindness to the cross of Christ, because of his love of Mammon and the immediate pleasures of this present age, abandoned the only way of salvation and the forgiveness of sins. In our passage this morning, Dr. Luke reminds us specifically *who Judas was*: He was *"one of the twelve"* (22:47; cf. 6:16; 22:3).

Although the cross is so near to Judas, Satan and his own evil flesh have influenced him in such away (22:3-6) that he has no desire or love for Christ as it were! So little did Judas estimate Christ's worthy that Judas and the teachers of Israel quantitatively estimated Jesus' life and His ministry at a measly thirty pieces of silver- that revealed how much the Son of Man and the Son of God meant to them! *A little money for the Lamb of God!*

And what are the great sins of Judas? He has been cast by history and by the great author Dante in his *Inferno* as the most wicked of men. But is Judas the most wicked of men? Or is he just very similar to many men who find no interest in Christ and His blood? Judas' great sin was not merely being a horribly wicked, Satan-infested traitor as history remembers him.

No, his great sin was self-reliance, greed, and a resolve to assert himself rather than submit to His Lord in obedience (God had told the disciples: "This is my Son, listen to him..."- Luke 9:35).

Judas is like many sinners who would have denied the Lord Jesus to the teachers of Israel for a few bucks; he is like many sinners today who still deny the Lord Jesus and think little of His precious blood!

Judas is not necessarily the most wicked man who ever lived, but he is actually a very common kind of wicked man who still lives among us (and remains within us). Judas was a man from Judea (because of his name 'Iscariot') who was an orthodox Jew, politically an ultra-conservative, and very knowledgeable in the Mosaic Law; but he was unregenerate and his unregenerate heart sought his own will and desired wealth throughout his life rather than Christ.

*Simply put: Judas Iscariot rejected the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ and so he acted consistently sinful in his confession with his rejection of the Person of Jesus Christ.*

But Judas should not be the central focus of this passage; rather, we should focus on Christ as he is revealed as the Glorious Suffering Servant for His people's sins who faces the forces of darkness on behalf of His people. The dominion and authority of darkness appears in the Garden to overcome the Son of Man! Like Adam in the garden before him, this "Second Adam" will accomplish God's will in His time of testing and probation and set the captives free!

At this point, the disciples again reveal their lack of full understanding of Jesus' Kingdom. They seek to defend Jesus, to keep him from being arrested and crucified and they cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant (22:49-51; we learn in the John's Gospel that one of the disciples who defended Christ's Kingdom in this worldly way was Peter).

*ESV John 18:10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)*

Here we see again impetuous Peter desiring to storm the very gates of hell himself (cf. John 18:10), in his own strength, with his own sword- -but this is wrong- -Jesus must do this himself, in isolation and forsakenness as the Son of Man- - this is the reason He has come to this hour, as Jesus says in John's Gospel:

*ESV John 12:27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.*

It is worthy to note here that whenever the Church has tried to bring in Christ's Kingdom through the sword it has always been a miserable failure worthy of our Lord's rebuke! Peter and the disciples try to wage war against this world in the flesh rather than engaging in prayer and word ministry as they had been taught in the Garden by Jesus (10:1-17; 22:39).

Jesus has told them to prepare by praying (22:40, 46)- -not to prepare with the sword! Rather than praying, the disciples had been sleeping and so they react with sword while sleep is still in their eyes.

You've heard of bringing a knife to a gun fight? Well, fighting against the Evil One and His minions is not with sword according to the pattern of this present world, but with Word, prayer, faith, standing firm in Jesus Christ alone!

Coming to an eschatological and cosmic battle against forces of evil with a sword is like bringing a knife to a gun fight- *-you will lose: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood..."* -Eph. 6:12a.

In response to this measly and fleshly attack on the poor slave of the High Priest, knowing that he must fulfill His Divine Messianic Mission, Jesus rebukes his disciples and heals the servant's ear (22:51; This is Jesus' last recorded miracle, and history records that Malchus' healing eventually resulted in saving faith in Christ!). As Jesus will later tell Pontius Pilate his Kingdom is not of this world, and so his disciples should not seek to use swords to defend him:

*ESV John 18:36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."*

Jesus responds sharply to the disciples', their behaviors revealing that they have misunderstood both his message and his mission: *"No more of this!"* (22:51- "Cut it out" or "Enough already!" in our modern vernacular).

And so Jesus shows the humble, more appropriate way for the Kingdom to be manifested: Through the love of enemies. Jesus loves his enemies by healing the slave's ear (22:51b) and calls his disciples to do the same as part of their warfare against those who oppose His Kingdom. As Jesus has taught earlier in Luke's Gospel:

*ESV Luke 6:27-28: "But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.*

On the cross, Jesus prayed:

*ESV Luke 23:34 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."*

There will be a day when Jesus returns when he will punish all evildoers and judge the world according to God's righteous standard. On that day, men will wish that they had merely had their ears cut off, their hands cut off, their eyes poked out to keep them from further sinning against God and His Anointed One.

The Day of Judgment when Jesus returns will a day of darkness and God's powerful wrath against His enemies- -but now there is love; now there is another opportunity to repent and believe, and kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in the way! But do not kiss the Son in order to betray and deceive him; kiss him as the King of kings and Lord of lords that he truly is!

***Jesus the Warrior Against the Darkness: Jesus Enters the Hour and the Power of Darkness for His People***

Jesus declares the hour to be the "your hour, ***and the power of darkness***" (22:53) as the crowds come out with clubs and swords to take the Prince of Peace. This hour is described further by our Lord as ***the power of darkness*** [h` evxousi,a tou/ sko,touj].

The word translated "power" is from the Greek evxousi,a which means "authority" or power. This word is used elsewhere in Luke's Gospel and in Paul's epistles; Satan himself uses it in the passage from Luke that tells of the temptation of Jesus and here it is revealed that God has granted authority or evxousi,a to him:

*ESV Luke 4:6 and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.*

The Apostle Paul describes spiritual warfare in this world as "against the authorities" [ta.j evxousi,aj] or those spiritual forces that are allowed by God in his sovereignty to accomplish his will against sinful mankind.

*ESV Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

The hour of darkness has come and God has willed it by His greater authority. We must also keep in mind that this particular hour of darkness must be subsumed under the hour of God's accomplishing his will through Messiah:

*ESV John 17:1-2: When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.*

Why now? Because God's hour has come and he will allow a time of darkness to accomplish His will in the death of His Son. If you remember, after Jesus' temptation in the wilderness by Satan, we learn that Satan left him until a more opportune time (this time was according to God's sovereign timetable, so that Jesus could accomplish His Divine Messianic Mission):

*ESV Luke 4:13 And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.*

There had been a previous hour that had come when the Jewish leaders tried to oppose Jesus, but this was not the right time according to God's sovereign plan:

*ESV Luke 20:19 The scribes and the chief priests sought to lay hands on him at that very hour, for they perceived that he had told this parable against them, but they feared the people.*

Now that most opportune time has come on God's timetable; now evil is allowed by God to come to full expression (Bock, Vol. II, pg. 1773)! A cosmic confrontation between good and evil takes place at this time.

This is a time of great darkness, literally it is at night, and morally, it is a revelation of men's souls. As we have learned in Dr. Luke's Gospel, Jesus has come to bring light in Israel's darkness, and to those who live in the shadow of death, and peace where there is hatred, animosity and warfare:

*ESV Luke 1:78-79: ...because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high <sup>to</sup> to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

Yet men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil (John 3:19). Jesus even asks them pointedly: *"Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come with swords and clubs? Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me"* (Luke 22:52-53). Jesus has done all of his deeds in the broad daylight for everyone to hear and to see- he is blameless and not guilty (He has always shown clearly His authority in His teaching and healing- -even of Malchus' ear). *Why are they acting at night like creatures of the night?!* (cf. 1 Thess. 5:6-8).

They are the ones revealing their own darkness- -their inner darkness- -for they come to him at dark, in the pitch of night with swords, clubs and torches to arrest the Son of Man- -because of fear of the people (Luke 19:47-48) and because they know that what they do is wrong! This mob of people that Luke describes as chief priests, and officers of the temple and elders (22:52) represents all of Judaism. This religious, military and civil leadership of the Jews has come out in the darkness full force in order to stop Jesus.

The only light in the mob that has come to arrest Jesus is darkness- -and how great is that darkness!

*ESV Luke 11:34-35: Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup> Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness.*

At this point, Jesus does not respond with wrath and judgment against the teachers of Israel as they deserve, for he must go the way of the cross to complete His Divine Messianic Mission- -His Father's will is to allow Satan a time to strike the son as God foretold Adam and Eve in the Garden many years before:

*ESV Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."*

As Matthew says, this hour and power of darkness is according to God's Word:

*ESV Matthew 26:55-56: At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. <sup>56</sup> But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.*

In God's sovereignty, according to His will, this hour and power of darkness (22:53) must be allowed because God had told that part of the Gospel good news of His Kingdom, and the redemption that comes through the Seed of the Woman, is accomplished with the serpent bruising "his heel".

However, through the cross-event, when Jesus will lay down his life for his own, he will "crush the head of the serpent" under foot in destroying the power of death, hell, and the devil. Jesus will undergo not only the great and vengeful wrath of God (22:42ff), but also enter into the hour and power of darkness in order to die and live again!

Jesus will enter into the darkness in order to bring many sons into the light; Jesus will experience death in order to bring about life; Jesus will come under the great power of Satan himself, struggling with him and overcoming and conquering his evil attempts in order to set his people free!

A greater Exodus from slavery has come in Jesus Christ! Angels of death will pass over (so to speak), and Christ will redeem his own with his precious blood and resurrection from the dead!

As the author to the Hebrews wrote:

*ESV Hebrews 2:14-15: Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*



In Jesus' arrest is the very satanic attacking of God himself. God allows all of "hell to break loose" upon his Son and although the Son could call down legions of angels to aid and deliver him, none of the angels may help at this "hour and power of darkness". The angels declared His birth (Luke 2); the angels ministered to him on the Mount of Olives in His suffering (Luke 22:39ff); but the angels cannot intervene now- -Jesus must go into the darkness on behalf of His people!

As Biblical Theologian Klauss Schilder wrote: " Michael must put up his sword; Gabriel may not unsheathe his; neither of these two may move against Satan. Just as there had once been an hour of darkness in Heaven itself when the storms of the evil angels began to blow it, so there is now 'the hour and the night of darkness.' All of the angels are held back in order that all of the devils can move upon Gethsemane and Golgotha freely" (*Christ in His Suffering*, pg. 438).

Yet by God's grace, it will be through this great attack on the Son of Man and the Son of God, that God's people will be redeemed and set free from Satanic bondage (and if the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed! John 8:31).

Jesus entered darkness to deliver us from the darkness of sin and misery; to transfer us into the Kingdom of the Son! Jesus became bound as a common criminal in order to set us free and bring about a full and gracious redemption from slavery. The Apostle Paul teaches in Colossians 1:

*ESV Colossians 1:13-14: He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, "in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

As Dr. Luke writes in Acts 26:18 speaking of the purpose of Jesus' ministry:

*"...To open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."*

### ***Jesus the Forsaken One: Jesus Denied and Forsaken***

As Jesus was taken to the High Priest's home for a short trial under Israel's leadership, Peter followed at a distance (22:54; cf. Psalm 38:11: *My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my nearest kin stand far off*). Outside in the High Priest's courtyard there is a fire, and Peter warms himself next to it. Here is where Peter will betray Jesus as Jesus told him he would (22:31ff). Peter would *not* be so willing to go to prison or be killed for Jesus' name- -rather, he would deny him completely as the Lord had told him he would (22:33ff).

Peter denies the Lord before even a weak servant girl- -Peter is ashamed of Jesus and does not want to be "numbered with the transgressors" (to be thought of by the people as a criminal) as Jesus has told his disciples many times before that they must (22:35-38).

Peter goes so far as to publicly swear on oath that he does not know Jesus Christ: ***“Man, I do not know what you are talking about”*** (22:60). Mark gives more information about Peter’s denial in his Gospel:

***ESV Mark 14:71 But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know this man of whom you speak.”***

Simon Peter, Son of Jonah, the man who confessed “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” earlier is now confessing no such thing! Rather, he doesn’t know anything about the Christ; his confession of Christ has weakened from the confession of a rich and thriving orthodoxy to potential apostasy because Peter does not want to be “numbered with the transgressors”, too!

Notice the progression of Peter’s denial in Dr. Luke’s Gospel. First, Peter denies His Lord (v. 57); Second, he denies his discipleship, his special position as one who was chosen by the Lord to follow him (v. 58); Finally, Peter completely separates himself from any association with the Lord (v. 60). Peter’s entire new identity that he had gained as a disciple, all that Jesus had taught to him about his new identity, and the new expectations for his life- have been rejected at this dark time that Jesus told him would come.

***And the rooster crowed*** (22:60b). Simon Peter “the Rock” (or “Rock Man”) was shaken, and the “rock” would crumble to pieces for a season.

***And the Lord turned and looked at Peter.*** Can you imagine what Peter thought when the Lord of Glory looked at him with love, but also disappointment *knowingly* because the Lord had predicted it (22:61; 31ff)??

Peter remembered the words of Jesus to him (and implicitly remembered his bold claim to go to prison and even death for His name!). Peter learns that the Lord Jesus knew more about him than he did about himself! We should also remember that our hearts deceive us- -our best intentions for Jesus sometimes fail- -but God knows our hearts, motives, and reasons intimately.

Yet there is always forgiveness and mercy from God when there is repentance!

***Peter wept bitterly*** (22:62). What a display of true repentance this was! How Peter regretted deeply what he had done- -but he had done it. Would he be forgiven? Would he be restored? How could God forgive him for what he had done? Many Christians today given the same or similar circumstances would not forgive Peter and would think him unfit for any further service- -especially as a leader in the Church, even after he repented!

But for all of Peter’s sinful acts, *and for all our failures as well*, there is always hope, forgiveness and restoration in Christ when one truly repents! Peter would later realize and experience the forgiveness and refreshing of the Lord Jesus (as recorded in John’s Gospel,

chapter 21); Peter would once again serve as a leader- -although he certainly did not deserve it!

Even though Peter sinned against Christ (and this is to in no way to lessen the consequences that were involved in his sin, only to focus on the restoration aspect), he was nevertheless sent by Christ graciously to be his Under-shepherd (although he certainly did not deserve it, and he could have been tempted to deny the Lord again.). There is hope of restoration for all sinners who repent!

It appears from Peter's behavior in the Book of Acts that although he struggled with other sinful tendencies (cf. Galatians 2), he never again denied the Lord Jesus- -this sifting process had made him stronger, less likely to deny the Lord, and so in Peter's weeping he expressed godly sorrow, and in this repentance Peter began "turning" to strengthen his brothers (as the Lord had told him he would, 22:32).

While these are important facts about Peter, we do not want to lose our focus on the Christ here. Yes, Peter's experience is encouraging to all sinners, because we all deny our Lord in certain ways daily in our words, thoughts and deeds- -and yes, Jesus prays for us by name, and strengthens us, and forgives us when we repent and confess! All these things are true about this passage, but it is most important to gaze upon the glory of our Lord in this passage.

How is Jesus revealed here specifically in Peter's denial? Jesus is revealed here not only as the forgiving and merciful Savior to weak-hearted sinners- -but also as the Forsaken One.

Christ in the passage is being further isolated from his own in order to be judged and experience the wrath of God and death for sinners. Peter's denial is to be understood in this light: Jesus is being isolated or forsaken as Messiah in order to accomplish the redemption-salvation of His own!

Peter's forsaking the Lord Jesus at his time of judgment is a foretaste of God's forsaking him on the cross when he bears the sins of His people, when it was the Lord's will to crush him for our iniquities (cf. Isaiah 53:4-12).

The Lord of Glory who has loved, protected, defended, and served is being forsaken by His own! Jesus has been forsaken by His disciples when he was in agony praying on the Mount of Olives (22:39ff); he is completely forsaken here (and by Simon Peter who was the representative of all the disciples); he will be forsaken ultimately for His own on the cross of Golgotha in just a few hours when he will cry out:

*"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?!"* - Matthew 27:46

And if this were not enough suffering for the Son of Man to be called by His Father to experience- -the denial of his friend and disciple- -if he had not suffered enough in his soul

because of this, God also calls Christ to bodily suffering and pain from sinful men “out for a good time” to abuse and misuse their authority as guards.

Then Jesus was blindfolded by the evil guards and they pushed him around, beating and mocking him telling him to “prophesy” because they had heard that he was a prophet. This reminds us of the fact that Jesus has said Jerusalem is the place where prophets are always treated like this!

The men blasphemed Jesus (22:65).

### *Jesus the Glorious Son of Man*

Jesus stands before sinful men to be judged. The chief priests and scribes gathered together to judge the Lord Jesus Christ. They specifically want to know if he is Messiah (22:67: *“If you are the Christ, tell us.”*).

Jesus said in response: *“If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask you, you will not answer”* (22:67-68). Here Jesus makes an insightful and exposing allegation. He says that if he fully reveals Himself as whom He truly is, then they will not believe (again stressing God’s sovereignty in salvation; cf. John 8:45). If Jesus asks them to answer the question, they will not answer (cf. 20:1-8). Jesus knows that the Jewish Council has made up its mind—they are not seeking truth but the death!

Jesus answers by using the imagery of the power and glory of the Son of Man from the Book of Daniel:

*“But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God”* (22:69).

*<sup>ESV</sup> Daniel 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. “And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*

This saying of Jesus in our passage in Luke 22:64 refers to the “right hand of the power of God” and this is also an allusion to Psalm 110, concerning the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek:

*<sup>ESV</sup> Psalm 110: A PSALM OF DAVID. The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”<sup>2</sup> The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!<sup>3</sup> Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power,<sup>1</sup> in holy garments,<sup>2</sup> from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.<sup>3</sup> “The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. “He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs<sup>1</sup> over the wide earth. <sup>7</sup>He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head.*

Jesus is teaching them all (and us today!) that regardless of the judgment of the Sanhedrin Assembly, Jesus will live again—and although he is presently being judged – he will come in power and glory as the Judge executing God’s wrath and punishment on sin and unbelief! Jesus is Judge and although the Jewish Council sits presently in judgment of Jesus as it were, He will be the one who sentences *them*.

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus *will be* enthroned at God’s right hand: “The Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God (22:69)! In the midst of Jesus’ darkness, in the midst of his experience the hour and power of darkness, there is great confidence and hope in His Father who will not allow Jesus to suffer Sheol and for his body to experience corruption. As Psalm 16 taught (16:9-11):

*Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. <sup>10</sup>For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. <sup>11</sup>You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

In death, the Son of Man will experience life, power, and glory and be seated at God’s right hand! After Peter’s restoration by His Lord, He will declare the fulfillment of this reality that Jesus spoke of here:

*<sup>ESV</sup> Acts 5:29-31: But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup>The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup>God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.*

Then the assembly pushes Jesus to confession: “*Are you the Son of God then?*” (22:70).

Why does the Jewish Council respond to Jesus’ admittance to being the Son of Man seated at God’s right hand as blasphemy that is worthy of a trial and judgment? Because these teachers of Israel rightly understood that the Son of Man described and revealed in Daniel chapter 7 *is the Eternal Son of God*.

The Son of Man spoken of by Daniel is the Messiah who is given an eternal throne at God’s right hand; he is the only glorious figure in all of history after the fall to go directly into the presence and throne room of God himself to take the seat as King.

This one spoken by Daniel is the Divine Son. The Jewish Council understands Jesus to be saying that what the Holy of Holies represented in types in the Temple in Jerusalem, the very throne room of God himself, was where Jesus through his death would have eternal access! The throne room of God is where Jesus would be enthroned at God’s right hand!

The Jews would have found it to be a sinful and blasphemous assertion for anyone who was unauthorized to go into the typological Holy of Holies in the Temple (and they had experienced certain wicked men who had before attempted such a thing and brought

abomination to the holy place!), how much more the claim that one would access by divine right the real thing in heaven!

So Jesus responds to their question about his identity as a bold and unequivocal *“You say that I am”* (v. 70), that means clearly: *“Yes, I am”* (NAS), or *“You are right in saying I am”* (NIV).

In the estimation of the assembly, because of their hatred, darkness and disbelief, they judge Jesus to be a blasphemer who has given false and spurious testimony that he is Messiah (22:71).

This is the hour of the revelation NOT of the true children of Israel receiving their Messiah, but this is the hour of the revelation of the true children of the devil himself who are set on carrying out His wicked desires; as Jesus said earlier to the teachers of Israel, recorded in John’s Gospel:

*ESV John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

The irony is that Jesus has told the truth and for that truth he will be put to death. The minions of the satanic army have made their claim on Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man. Yet Jesus has remained in control; in fact, he is going to partake in His crucifixion (the cup of suffering, 12:51; 22:42) *just because* Jesus told the truth of His identity before the council and this was just as God had planned:

*ESV Acts 2:22-23 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—<sup>23</sup> this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*

The question that is asked here in our passage should be asked again: *“Are you the Son of God then?”* This is the question for all sinful mankind to answer. We are similar in our sinful tendencies to both Judas and Peter.

What makes us different is God’s sovereign grace revealed to us in Jesus Christ- -and how we respond to it. To some is revealed that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and they experience the power and glory of the Kingdom of God in Him.

For others, Jesus is someone to be mocked and mistreated like the soldiers; for others, Jesus is not the Son of God, and even if he tells them, and proves it to them in a historical resurrection, they will still not believe.

See the Son of Man betrayed *for you*.

See the Son of Man in his war against the darkness in the darkness *for you*.

See the Son of Man in his humiliation *for you*.

See the Son of Man in his suffering *for you*.

See the Son of Man in his bondage *for you*.

See the Son of Man in his isolation-forsakenness *for you*.

See the Son of man in his standing under judgment *for you*-the Righteous One for the unrighteous.

*In HIS weakness, we are made strong.*

Look on the Son of Man who in the midst of being forsaken, loves and forgives and shows mercy.

Look on the Son of Man who in the midst of being beaten, reaches out his hand to you offering kindness and love.

Look to the Son of Man who is enthroned in heaven, submit to him as the King of kings and Lord of lords- kiss the Son lest he be angry and you perish in your way!

Because the Son of Man stood on our behalf against the Evil One and all the principalities and powers in heavenly places, we can stand *in Him by faith*. As the Apostle Paul teaches us:

*<sup>ESV</sup> Ephesians 6:12-18: For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup>and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup>In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; <sup>17</sup>and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, <sup>18</sup>praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...*

Thanks be to God for His Word! Thanks be to God for His Christ!

CRB

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