

## 26:17

**Now the first day of the feast** Remember from the opening of the chapter, we spoke of this feast, as prescribed by Exodus 12, lasting a total of 8 days following the Passover meal. **of unleavened bread** One need only to go through Exodus 12 or Leviticus 23 to see that households needed to remove all leaven from their homes. It seems that this stressing of the removal of the leaven before the killing of a Lamb at the Passover remembrance emphasizes the removal of all impurities from one's home, from one's life before the very sober partaking of the Lamb. Since we find that 1 Corinthians 5 calls Jesus our Passover, then it seems logical to purify our hearts and souls and lives before we partake of Christ. Like it or not, Jesus raised bread at this Lord's Supper and said "this is my body" and "this is my blood." **the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?**

## 26:18

**And he said, Go into the city to such a man,** This sounds an awful lot like 21:1-2, but that is a different town. Probably, this is John-Mark's father and Jesus had previously known him. He identifies him as carrying something in another Gospel's account so this is not as arbitrary as Matthew's account makes it sound. Why John-Mark? In the book of Acts there is another meeting in the upper room (Acts 1) while it is probably later identified as Mark's home (Acts 12:12). **and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand;** What a very sobering reality: "any time now, it will be my time." It really makes a person wonder, "Why now?" What has happened to make this the "right time?" One would wonder if verse 24 sheds a little more light on this. In other words, what do a "time at hand" (26:18) and a prophesied death of the "Son of Man" (26:24) have in common in light of Old Testament backdrop? We do know, after all, that if anything was "written" it is a reference to the Old Testament. So the question is "which Old Testament prophet" discusses the death of the Son of Man and places an element of time with it?

*Daniel 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like **the Son of man** came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given **him** dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve **him**: **his** dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and **his** kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. 15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.*

*Daniel 9:21 Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding...24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that **from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall **Messiah be cut off**, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.***

Some questions are now evident: Is this what Jesus was talking about? If so, did the Jews understand the connection; is it reasonable for Jesus, a Jew, to make the connection between the "Son of Man" of Daniel 7 and "Messiah the Prince" of Daniel 9? You be the judge:

*Matthew 26:63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be **the Christ**, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see **the Son of man** sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 65 Then the high*

*priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.*

It seems like another question should follow: Is it realistic that Jesus would be thinking about Daniel? Is it realistic that Matthew would be thinking of Daniel? You be the judge:

	Daniel	Matthew
<b>Son of Man Coming with Clouds</b>	<b>7:13</b>	<b>24:30</b>
<b>Rumors of War</b>	<b>11:25-27</b>	<b>24:6</b>
<b>Abomination Desolation</b>	<b>11:31</b>	<b>24:15</b>
<b>Great Tribulation</b>	<b>12:1</b>	<b>24:21</b>
<b>“the end”</b>	<b>12:4-6</b>	<b>24:6-14</b>
<b>Death for the Son of Man</b>	<b>7:13-15; 9:21-26</b>	<b>26:18-24</b>

Well, then maybe the next question is did Jesus really do the math? Was Jesus really expecting to die because of a prophecy in the Old Testament? Certainly His Father and the Holy Spirit were already communicating to Him. They did, after all, tell Him about a fish with a coin in it, right? They did, empower Him to do miracles and He did do so within the scope of His Father’s will, correct? So we don’t assume that Jesus was dependent on just the book of Daniel for these statements in Matthew 26, but what if it did inform Him?

What if He really did do the math and found out that 69 weeks of 7 years brought us to 483 years and what if He really did multiply that by a Jewish year of 360 days and found Himself dying on the very week where those 173,880 days would expire? What if He did know when those 62 weeks of Daniel 9:26 began and when those 156,240 days would end?

This becomes even more grave and gravely more sober when we consider that it was quite possibly known at one time by those same Jews that they could do the same math and see that this Son of Man, marked by miracle after miracle, was living among them; that this same Son of Man, riding on the foal of a donkey was the One song of prophetic trumpet blasts from 500 years before.

So, then, why no math, when they saw Jesus heal a man of palsy “that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins... Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house” (Matthew 9:6)? Why no math when just before healing a man with a withered hand, Jesus said “the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day” (Matthew 12:8)? Why no simple math when just after Jesus healed and deaf and dumb man Jesus said “whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matthew 12:32)?

All of these questions, in my opinion, find their quintessential absurdity in a man named Judas who heard Jesus say three times: “The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men” (Matthew 17:22), “the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death” (20:18), and “the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified” (26:22)?

This is what makes the actions of Judas in this passage deplorable and ignorant. You almost wonder if Judas is in His right mind. I get the idea that he isn’t even sure if he’s the guy doing the betraying at this point (see verse 25). It’s almost like he might be trying to accomplish something as described previously in this chapter that would drive Jesus to do something enormous. He knows the power of Jesus.

We see what appears to be almost a shock in his confession in the next chapter when he says “I have betrayed innocent blood” (27:4). It is as if he did not think Jesus would actually die through his actions. Perhaps this is why he settled for such a stupid price of 4-months pay. Perhaps he wasn’t after the money.

I wonder, when did he start to doubt that he was doing the right thing? When did he finally realize that Jesus wasn't going to kill all the Romans? When did He doubt that Jesus, though all powerful as the "God of Angel Armies" described in Matthew 24:31, would not actually use them at the disposal of the Romans in this chapter? Who can blame Him for thinking that Jesus, the Son of Man, would be the conqueror of the Romans? Daniel 7 does make it look like the 4<sup>th</sup> beast would see the dawn of the Son of Man's kingdom? So, when did Judas start to doubt?

It seems reasonable that he began to doubt when, later in this same chapter, Jesus tells another of His disciples in Judas' own presence that He was not going to use His angels, His holy ones, as described in Daniel 7. He had to first die. This, however, should not have been a surprise to Judas. Jesus told Judas and all the others that He was to be a "ransom for sinners" (in Matthew 20:28) long before He would be a conquering King returning from Heaven.

So what is the take-away. Be careful how you hear! This is the whole point of the soils of Matthew 13. Some listen wonderfully and bring forth fruit. Some only hear a little and the wicked one snatches the seed away. Others hear with joy and desire just a little truth before the cares of this world choke out what little faith they had. One wonders whether Judas had considered that He needed to listen a little more closely.

**I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.** Again, one perusal of Exodus 12 and the reader will soon see that the Father presides over the house on this most somber night. Jesus, the head of the Father's Household (Hebrews 3's argument) leads His family (Matthew 12:48 and following) during this Feast.

#### **26:20**

**Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.** The sense of the originals doesn't exactly get represented in most translations. It is more of a "as evening was coming, he was sitting down with the 12." You get a stage sort of being set by Matthew; a sort of drawing the reader to the sobriety of the moment: "as the sun was setting, the Son was setting." A moment dawned on which we would talk about death.

#### **26:21**

**And as they did eat,** This, coupled with verse 26 with the same phrase, help us to see that the episode beginning here and ending at verse 25 occur at least somewhat simultaneously with the episode between verses 26 and 29. If you're not quite sure, look at Luke's account to see where these two little episodes are recorded in reverse order. **he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.**

#### **26:22**

**And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?** Can you hear the heartbreak?

"Surely I am not he, am I, Lord?"<sup>1</sup>

#### **26:24**

**The Son of man goeth as it is written of him:** See comments on verse 18. If we are correct in drawing the connection between Christ and the Son of Man knowing His "time," then we find a very human distinctive here about Jesus: He is learning about Himself from the Scripture too. **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.** Much could be made about whether this is saying that life does or does not begin at conception or rather at birth. It seems natural and easy at this point to leave it simply as "it would have been better for Judas if he had not even begun his life.

#### **26:25**

**Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I?** Maybe he's trying to shroud his involvement; or, maybe there's something else. See comments under 26:18. **He said unto him, Thou hast said.**

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<sup>1</sup> W. Hall Harris III et al., eds., *The Lexham English Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2012), Mt 26:22.

This is a colloquialism from that day of “you said it” or “you couldn’t be more right.”<sup>2</sup> This phrase comes up again later in the chapter with Caiaphas.

**26:26**

**And as they were eating, see comments on verse 21. Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.**

**26:27-28**

**And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.** Once again, in view of Matthew 20:16 and Matthew 22:14 where it says “many are called and few are chosen”, we see that the provision is for myriads more than will take part. We do not minimize that the primary objective of the “ransom” was for the elect hostages, but we do, as we did in Matthew 24 remind ourselves that the blood of Jesus Christ—while not efficacious for the un-elect many—is legitimately offered and potentially effective for those same number who will never experience life. There was one, therefore, at this supper, that appears to have been a part of the “many” and is not, however, a part of the kingdom. Think about it. Judas was a potential recipient for the remission of sins by the blood of Jesus. Before one takes issue with that, you need to be reminded that Judas was promised, upon His continued devotion to Christ, one of the 12 thrones in the New World (Matthew 19:28).

Another observation from this verse tells us there is no saving merit whatsoever in this Lord’s Supper. The fact that He pronounces His blood “shed” while holding the cup should help the most elementary of readers to know that this is indeed a shadow, rather than the substance—as His blood was shed the very next day. Since blood was not actually or literally shed until the next day, it seems logical that the juice was not itself the very blood of Christ.

Still yet another observation: If remission of sins is brought by the shedding of this blood, then the New Covenant is brought by this same shedding of the blood and we find that this same New Testament is brought by Christ through His death as the Ultimate Moses. This, again, is not new to the reader:

Event/Fact	Moses	Jesus
Mass death preceding arrival	Exodus 1	Matt 2
A trip to Egypt	Exodus 3	Matt 2
An Exodus from Egypt	Exodus 12-14	Matt 2
Preceded by a prophet	Exodus 3	Matt 3
Major Opposing Figure	Exodus 4	Matt 2
A baptism	1 Cor. 10:1-2	Matt 3
Both hear from Heaven	Exodus 19:19	Matt 3; 17
40 days/nights	Ex 24:18; 34:28	Matt 4
Miracle Worker	Exodus 3	Matt 4
A mountain for a law	Exodus 19	Matt 5-7
Mediator of a Testament	Exodus 24	Matt 26:28

**26:29**

<sup>2</sup> Jim Bishop, *The Day Christ Died* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 87.

**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.** It's probably impossible to exhaust the full, rich meaning of what the Lord's Supper is and does for the soul of the believer, but one thing it does for the spirit and mind is that it reminds us of the supper in the kingdom—forecasted by Matthew 8:11 and Matthew 22:1ff; or, rather, the “supper that is the kingdom.” The Lord's Supper, then, celebrates the horror of the death of God's Son and the Honor of the Coming of Christ for all God's Sons.

This statement also, albeit on the way, tells us what Jesus did not drink post resurrection (Matthew 28).

**26:30**

**And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.** Wonder of wonders. What does one do who is in God the Father's will in the darkest of nights? What do those do who understand little and feel much for their Master? They sing. Ridiculous...if there is nothing of which to sing.