

[Satan Hath Desired You] / Gospel of Luke 22:1 – 34

~ Our Spiritual Safari is going to spend an evening in the upper room with the apostles and Lord Jesus Christ in this report. Satan will be there, too. When the devil desires to sift us like wheat, we are in deep trouble. If we aren't very close to Christ, and even if we are - we might receive a thorough sifting, as Job did! Sometimes, it hurts. We learned in the Book of Leviticus that God only accepts very fine flour as an offering; and achieving that just happens to require some beating and sifting. We're moving quickly towards the cross now - and towards the final accounts that tie up the loose ends and complete the earthly ministry of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. The record we are going to consider in this chapter takes place the day before the crucifixion. Jesus has been very busy in this Gospel; and the time has come to fulfill that which He came to do.

We are only afforded a fragmented segment of this event to consider. The foot washing of the apostles by Jesus is completely omitted in Luke's account. We are in a day of crisis in our study, the day before His murder. Well, all things are pointing towards the central fact of the Gospel – the cross; and these transactions conduct us towards Golgotha. In the cross of Christ, we glory! If we can't sing it, we can say it! Luke told us way back that Jesus had set His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem and – here we are! Everything Christ has done or said has pointed towards this time. We saw the so-called Triumphal Entry; in which we didn't see any triumph on safari. The transfiguration, and the awesome sermons Jesus has given to us directly, have all prepared the road to this place in the upper room.

All things are prepared for this moment; and Jesus has been proclaiming His purpose to the apostles the entire time. Dr. Forsyth stated, "... the cross is the center of gravity in a moral world. Heaven, hell and earth are prepared for the cross." The religious rulers plotting against Jesus in the first two verses start the mechanics in motion - that's earth. Then, we see hell is plotting against Him in verses three through six in the diabolical plan of Judas to betray, conspire and facilitate the arrest and murder of Jesus. Verses seven through thirteen shows us Heaven with Jesus and His disciples celebrating the Lord's Supper at the last Passover celebration in Jerusalem; at which the Lord Jesus will die....

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might put him to death; for they feared the people.

~ If they could have arrested Him immediately, they would have; and we see the provincial control of God in Christ as this episode unfolds. At the Passover, there would have been people everywhere throughout the city. Even a criminal mob would not approve of that which they will approve of at the behest of God Almighty, my beloved. If you want to talk about the silent majority – this would be it. The religious rulers said, “.... not on the feast day.” – Jesus said – "on the feast day." The historical record stands confirming Christ as correct, of course....

3 And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

~ Of course, hell must prepare, also! A Christian who has truly been born again cannot be demon possessed; however, a church member that is not saved certainly can be! The meanest people in the world are not in prison and they're not the drunks in the bar; the meanest people in any community sit right down in the front pew of your church every single Sunday morning. Don't sit in their place, by the way! I am confident many people in the church are demon possessed. It would be impossible to explain their conduct on any other basis than Satan being at the center of their lives.

My friends, if you are going to sit on the sidelines and watch others preach the Gospel while doing absolutely nothing about it - besides mixing and mingling with other people - then the day will come that Satan, or his demons, will move into your old vacant house and take possession of you. That's what happened when Judas Iscariot rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. That's also when the religious rulers were glad because they had been wondering how they could take Him! Of course, the plan is: wait until the crowd leaves town so they could take Him alone. They, actually, didn't want

the people to know what they were doing. Well, the events don't unfold according to the plan of the religious rulers; and when the time comes, they will have to move quickly....

4 And he went away, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might deliver him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

7 And the day of unleavened bread came, on which the Passover must be sacrificed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the Passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house whereinto he goeth.

11 And ye shall say unto the master of the house, The Teacher saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?

12 And he will show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.

~ I see no reason to read a miracle into this event. Jesus had been to Jerusalem many times in His life. I think He knew this homeowner and had made arrangements before hand. I'm sure the homeowner likely offered

Jesus to come with His disciples and use the room for the Passover, which was, naturally, in His will to be done....

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:

16 for I say unto you, I shall not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 for I say unto you, I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

~ Of course, this is what we know as the last supper. The cup would have circulated according to custom. I think Jesus participated except for the last cup which was the cup of joy. That is the cup Christ drank on the cross when they gave Him vinegar to drink. He said it was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross. This is the cup that Jesus asked James and John if they were able to drink of. They both mistakenly thought they could....

19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood, [even] that which is poured out for you.

~ Bread and wine are the two frailest food items on the face of the earth; if left overnight, both will perish. The monument that was raised by the Lord to remember Him was not brass or iron – or even gold. No, we have two highly perishable commodities symbolizing Christ. The bread speaks of His broken body because He was made sin for us. I doubt He looked human

when they took Him down from the cross. There is no beauty that we should desire Him is the startling picture we have presented. The purpose and plan for the Passover feast is complete and has been fulfilled at this time that we are studying, the night before the crucifixion. I think we really ought to search our hearts before we go to the Lords Table for communion. Some people bounce down there with little to no understanding of what they're doing. Everything is to be done looking back in remembrance of Him. This is done to show forth the Lord's death until He returns to establish His Kingdom....

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

~ There are those who believe that Judas left the upper room before the institution of the Lord's Supper. I also believe that, but it's not given chronologically - because Luke is telling us how the Lord went through the Passover. John will clear up that this happened during the Passover and that the Lord took the sop and gave it to Judas and told him to do quickly what he was going to do, and Judas left. It's important to understand that Judas did not participate....

22 For the Son of man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined: but woe unto that man through whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to question among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

~ Every single one of the apostles knew they could be the one to betray Him and, if you're honest with yourself, then you know you could, too! Like Simon Peter, perhaps you already have. Well, if God didn't keep a firm grip on me, I would be lost before the sun went down – or came up – whichever happens next! I could deny Christ in the next five minutes if the Holy Spirit didn't indwell me and seal me unto my salvation. I thank Him that He doesn't take His hand off of us once we are saved. I rejoice greatly in that aspect of Biblical truth....

24 And there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest.

~ The same conversation in which they confess their capabilities of stooping to the lowest act of mankind against God, they also include discussing their ambitions and grasping at goals and position! Friends, this is on the eve of the crucifixion! Matthew told us the disciple's mother asked Jesus about the position for her sons in Heaven; Mark told us they asked Jesus about their positions in Heaven themselves and, now – with the shadow of the cross upon them, and betrayal having been announced, they are asking about it again – but this seems to also include their position down here! I think we have reached the lowest of low places.

We are now seeing a fully exposed set of apostles; and the picture isn't pretty: they don't understand what's happening, and they are ONLY concerned with themselves! I'm afraid this is about all Jesus has from His own today, too, sadly. The Lord doesn't get very much from me, that's for sure. How about you, friends? Are you chosen by God for some spectacular purpose that no one else has been chosen for? Are you some completely rare jewel that God just cannot live without? Maybe you are some chosen prophet that only God speaks to? That's all ridiculous and borderline blasphemous, of course - but many people believe those things about themselves. The apostles all want to become the greatest at this time. I don't think that's too difficult to imagine, given the religious climate in contemporary society. The saints have not improved through the years over these apostles, to be sure....

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors.

26 But ye [shall] not [be] so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For which is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.

~ There is no more repulsive and offensive event in history than the day the Lord Jesus took your place and mine on the cross to die for our sins. Imagine a king standing up and seating his servant and serving him! When

Christ came to this earth every man, woman and child should have bowed down as His servant. We should have all been there to serve Him, but He was there to serve us. The feasting table of salvation is set, and we're invited....

28 But ye are they that have continued with me in my temptations;

29 and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me,

~ The apostles will certainly have a special place in the Kingdom of God; and rightly so. The Old Testament and the New Testament gap is bridged by these men. They begin in the Old Testament economy and move into the New Testament. You and I are not in this position today at all. The special position they occupy means the thrones over the tribes are theirs....

30 that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

~ The child of God has great and marvelous things in store for their future. The redeemed will occupy an exalted position. We don't work for salvation, but if we are truly saved then we want to work down here for rewards in Heaven. Do you want a place in Heaven? Do you really care what that place is? The grace of God is the way we will arrive at the doorstep of Heaven, but we will give an account of our works down here so as to receive a reward. The Spirit of God living through us is the only way we can achieve good works to begin with. So, it's something we have to allow to happen. The genuine child of God will want it to happen.

Now, to be perfectly clear; I think the only judgment believers will ever face is an evaluation of the use of whatever gift God has given to you. What is the God-given gift you have been bestowed with? Dorcus was an early church member with a gift, you may recall? She had the gift of sewing. There were many widows around there who needed garments. We're talking about people that would not have clothes otherwise. When Simon Peter saw that, I'm sure he was greatly humbled. I can see Peter down on his knees at this point, honestly; Simon Peter is thanking God for these

people and thanking God for His mercy, friends. Do you know anything about needing the mercy of God? There are all sorts of gifts and you will be rewarded by your faithfulness in exercising those gifts down here. Your Christian life should be pretty important to you and it should mean something before God, my beloved....

31 Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat:

32 but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, with thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, until thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

~ When Jesus said to Simon Peter, "...when once thou hast turned again..." He wasn't talking about 'conversion' as we think of it. Simon Peter will have a complete and total change of heart and mind after the denial; and Simon Peter's faith will be greatly increased. That is the time we will meet a wholly new Simon Peter in Scripture! Jesus prayed that Peter's faith fails not, even though Jesus knew what would happen. You might want to think about that, friends. Is Christ your Intercessor? Jesus knows when you are caught in the net of failure. If you're His child, then He has already prayed for you. Christ is praying that your faith fails not, too! If you honestly do belong to Him, then that faith cannot fail. You will fail; but your faith will not fail, because the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is our Intercessor.

Further, Jesus does not pray for this world; Jesus prays only for those who are the Fathers children who are in the world. The reason Jesus doesn't pray for the world is because He died for the sins of the world. I'm not sure what more they could ask God to do. Maybe you haven't properly prayed for yourself – Christ has! Obviously, we don't pass over this Scripture lightly in our Spiritual Safari; and when we resume on the next leg of our

expedition through the entire Word of God, we will be deep in the shadow of the cross. These next few chapters are super duper important and we're going to spend some time considering them.

Only the man who has been completely tested with experience can properly help the next man correctly who is in need. The tested man returns to the Lord time and time again in one failure after another! It's quite humbling, friends; but Christ is victorious every time. Ultimately, experiencing that testing and witnessing Christ's victories in them strengthens us deeply. The Lord tells Peter that when Peter has been strengthened, then he can strengthen the brethren. Peter thought he was strong; the problem was: Peter didn't know himself! Let's not point too critical of a finger at Simon Peter, though, because most of us do not know ourselves, either. Simon Peter didn't believe there was any way in the world he would deny Christ - it was unthinkable! What a conflict we see in Peter ~

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