

Gospel of Luke
Week 11 Summary
Luke 22:1–23:56

Chapters 22 and 23 are the central chapters of Luke's gospel. Luke's gospel is one of fulfillment (1:1; 24:44). In these two chapters, Luke is presenting the crucifixion within the Passover festival: "it was preparation day" (22:7; 23:54). Luke notes in the opening scene that Satan entered Judas prior to the last supper. Also, the chief priests and teachers of the law were looking for an opportunity to kill Jesus.

The Last Supper: Jesus sends Peter and John ahead to make preparations for the Passover meal. This is similar to 19:29 where two disciples were sent ahead to get a donkey for the triumphal entry. Nothing that is about to happen is taking Jesus by surprise. He is aware of everything that is about to happen.

At their dinner, Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper. We noted that Luke was unique when it came to the cup. In Luke, Jesus says, "this cup is the new covenant in my blood". Luke is echoing Jeremiah 31:23-34. In that passage, God's speaks of a time when He will make a new covenant with the house of Israel in which everyone will know the Lord. See also Joel 2 which Luke will draw upon in Acts.

Mount of Olives: In Gethsemane, Jesus tells his disciples to pray that they not fall into temptation. After going off and praying alone (not my will but yours be done) he returns to the sleeping disciples and tells them again to pray that they not fall into temptation. This passage is drawing on Luke's earlier introduction of the Lord's Prayer in chapter 11. We can see by the way Luke has arranged this scene in Gethsemane as an *inclusio* that Luke is highlighting the need to pray for God's will to be done.

It is at this point that Judas comes with the soldiers to betray him. Jesus describes this as "your hour". We see this as the continuation of the story Luke began in the Devil's temptation of Jesus in the wilderness after his baptism. The Devil challenged Jesus' identity and destiny in his repeated challenge "if you are the son of God". When the Devil could not prevail, Luke says he left Jesus until "the appointed time."

The Trial: Before Jesus is taken to Pilate, the chief priests and teachers of the law settle the charges, which for Luke is the central question of his gospel: (are you the son of God?). Jesus draws on imagery from Daniel 7 where one like the son of man receives a kingdom from God and sits at his right hand to rule. When Jesus says to them "you say that I am" we know from their response that Jesus has answered yes. When Jesus is taken before Pilate, three times Jesus is accused of being an insurrectionist and three times he is declared innocent. After the first acquittal, Jesus is sent to King Herod who is pleased to see him because he eagerly wanted to see a miracle. But Luke has already told us what Jesus thinks of such people. In chapter 11, Jesus declares that this wicked generation seeks signs but the only sign it will get is the sign of Jonah, foreshadowing what is coming. In chapter 13, some Pharisees warn Jesus to leave because this Herod is looking to kill him which makes this meeting even stranger. But in fulfillment of Isaiah 53, Jesus remains silent before his accusers.

The Crucifixion: As Jesus is lead out of the city to be crucified, he addresses the weeping women as "daughters of Jerusalem". This title is an Old Testament prophet's way of saying "inhabitants of Jerusalem." Jesus then repeats his prophetic warning from chapter 21 foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem. His strange beatitude blessing women who are barren contrasts with the earlier beatitude from chapter 11 blessing Jesus' mother helps to emphasize how backwards everything has become. He then quotes from Hosea 10:8. This excerpt comes from an extended passage (Hos 9-10) which is a pronouncement of judgement on Israel.

With Jesus on the cross, Luke continues his series of threes. Again, just as the devil in chapter 4 challenged him with the repeated phrase “if you are the son of God” in the 1st and 3rd temptation, here on the cross he is taunted or challenged 3 times with “if you are the Christ” (by the religious rulers, the soldiers, and one of the thieves). Just like the Pharisees in chapter 13, help for Jesus comes from a strange place: the other crucified thief. Just like Luke’s tax collector in chapter 18 who stood far off praying “God have mercy on me, a sinner” while beating his breast, this thief acknowledges Jesus as a king and simply asks that he be remembered when Jesus comes in his kingdom.

While so much else can and has been said about the crucifixion, I want to note this one last distinctly Lukan feature: forgiveness. Only Luke records Jesus saying, “Father, forgive them.” We noted that Passover is a liberation festival that has nothing to do with forgiveness. The feast of Day of Atonement would be more suited. But Israel is still in exile and needs forgiveness as much as liberation. The prophets of the OT were combining these feast long before the NT. This is in broader fulfillment of Deuteronomy 32 which Pastor Dave can summarize for you this week.

Death and Burial: Jesus is the Servant of Yahweh to the end. He submits to death with the words: “into your hands I commit my spirit.” And it is the Roman centurion who glorifies God and declares that Jesus was a righteous man. In this way we see the beginning of the fulfillment of Simeon’s prophecy in 2:32. It was Preparation Day.....

Tomorrow is First-fruits: Chapter 24!

The King Jesus Gospel
Chapter 11

1. What are your thoughts on McKnight’s suggestions for how we should become a gospeling community?