

Lesson 12 October 23, 2011

Jesus' Arrest and Trial

Lesson Scope: *Mark 14:1-15:15*

Lesson Focus

The events of Passion Week held great significance for the entire human race. Jesus' public ministry had ended when He left the temple. Tension and hatred toward Jesus had intensified to its height among the scribes and elders. Although the story focuses on man's actions, this conflict was the result of Satan's battle against God.

The Jewish leaders schemed to eliminate Jesus secretly (14:1). While Jesus was at Bethany, Mary publicly anointed His body for burial (14:8). Judas gladdened the chief priests by his offer of betrayal (14:11). In spite of Judas's nighttime betrayal, Jesus' death became a public affair at the time of the Passover. Many people saw and heard as the Scriptures were fulfilled.

This lesson shows us the Lamb of God betrayed by a close friend and abused by His countrymen. His crime was unnamable. He was condemned to death because Pilate wanted to please the Jews. We too may face suffering for unnamable crimes. Jesus shows us how we can bear the injustice that our identity with Him may bring.

Though this lesson deals with the worst of treachery, let us too be inspired by Jesus' example of fulfilling the Father's will for Him in spite of the enemies.

Jesus knew that the cross lay beyond His arrest and trial. Yet He allowed Himself to be "brought as a lamb to the slaughter" so that we might live.

Lesson Aim: To glean truths from how Jesus faced His arrest and trial.

Theme Verse: *Isaiah 53:7*. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

Lesson Text

In the Upper Room

Mark 14:22-26: And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. ²³. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. ²⁴. And he said unto them, this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. ²⁵. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. ²⁶. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

In the Garden

Mark 14:33-38 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; ³⁴. And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. ³⁵. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. ³⁶. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. ³⁷. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, deepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? ³⁸. Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak....

Mark 14:42: Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand....

Mark 14:46: And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

In the Palace

Mark 14:53. And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes

Mark 14:60-65: And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? ⁶¹. But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? ⁶². And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. ⁶³. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? ⁶⁴. Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. ⁶⁵. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

In the Judgment Hall

Mark 15:2-5: And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And

he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. ³ And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. ⁴ And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. ⁵ But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled....

Mark 15:14-15: Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. ¹⁵ And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Questions for Study

In the Upper Room

1. Explain the symbolism of the bread and cup.
2. Why was this an appropriate time to introduce the ordinance of Communion?

In the Garden

3. For what reason was Jesus "exceeding sorrowful"?
4. What do we learn about Jesus' relationship with the Father?
5. What did Jesus mean by the second sentence in Mark 14:38?

In the Palace

6. Why did Jesus respond as He did to His accusers?

In the Judgment Hall

7. How was Pilate affected by Jesus' response to accusation?
8. Explain the people's desire to have Barabbas released rather than Jesus.

Analyzing the Passage

The Lord brought the annual Passover supper to an end when He instituted the ordinance of Communion. The "new testament" is the delivery of forgiveness of sin and the privilege to become sons of God. The cup commemorates the price that Jesus paid to deliver the New Testament. Christ apparently anticipated a time when relationships would be even more complete (Mark 14:25).

The agony Jesus felt in the Garden was mental, emotional, and physical. He lived with great awareness and loathing (Mark 14:33) of what He was about to endure. The sorrow He felt was nearly more than He could take (Mark 14:34). He enlisted the support of the disciples. Abba conveys a close, childlike, and trusting relationship with His Father (Mark 14:36).

Jesus' quietness in the face of accusation was a marvel to His persecutors. When He spoke, it was to confirm truth, not to defend Himself against lies.

Jesus was finally condemned because Pilate wished to please the mob (Mark 15:15).

Principles and Applications

In the Upper Room

1. Jesus prepared His disciples for what was about to take place (Mark 14:22-26). He had foretold His death before, and now that His time had come, He carefully explained further. He would be betrayed and forsaken by His own, and brutally killed by His enemies.

Jesus warned His followers that they too should expect persecution. This prepares us to respond rightly to ridicule and injustice.

2. Jesus taught His disciples the meaning of His suffering and death (Mark 14:22-26). His death marked the beginning of the New Covenant. The provisions to which the Old Covenant pointed forward were now nearly complete. Jesus' sacrifice of Himself, "once for all," was sufficient to wash away the sins of all people throughout time.

3. Jesus was able to see beyond the cross (Mark 14:25). The Book of Hebrews tells us that He despised the shame. Although His suffering was indescribable, He focused on the results of that sacrifice—salvation and glory for believers.

In the Garden

4. Jesus reached out for companionship as the cross loomed before Him (Mark 14:33, 37). He was the Son of God, but He experienced His suffering as a man. How much it would have meant to Him to have the disciples understand, at least in part, what deep sorrow lay ahead for Him. How much it would have meant to have them praying and watching with Him. But they slept while He prayed alone.

5. Jesus continued in surrender to the Father's will (Mark 14:36). As Jesus looked ahead, the cross appeared so difficult that He sought an alternative. Could not man be saved in some other way? But He submitted fully to the will of His Father, drinking deeply of the cup of suffering.

6. Jesus understood the weakness of the flesh (Mark 14:37-38). He did not have the fallen human nature as we do, yet He felt similar emotional and physical strain. His words "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak" could apply not only to the disciples but also to Himself.

7. Jesus gave Himself to His captors (Mark 14:46). This was not their first attempt to take Him, but heretofore they had not been able, "because his hour was not yet come." Now Jesus gave Himself, even though He could have called twelve legions of angels to deliver Him.

In the Palace

8. Jesus refrained from defending Himself (Mark 14:60-61). This is just as the Scriptures had prophesied (Isaiah 53:7). The natural reaction is anger and resistance to false accusation. Jesus knew that those assembled against Him cared nothing for truth, justice, or mercy. They sought His death, by whatever means it could be accomplished. Jesus' earlier teaching had been thorough and with authority; now He remained silent.

9. Jesus faced humiliation and cruelty (Mark 14:65). His tormentors may have believed that their mistreatment proved Jesus to be weak. Though He could have called for deliverance, yet He took it defenselessly. The only perfect Man, the Creator, suffered at the hands of those He created.

In the Judgment Hall

10. Jesus was rejected as "King of the Jews" (Mark 15:15). The Messiah, the King they had waited for, was here. He verified it by His many miracles and in answer to Pilate's direct questioning. The rationale for rejection was the envy of the leaders and the desire of Pilate to please the people.

1. Jesus was condemned for crimes that could not be verified (Mark 15:14-15). He was accused as a liar (Matthew 26:61), a malefactor (John 18:30), a blasphemer (Matthew 26:65), and a seditious rebel (Luke 23:2-5). Jesus was innocent, but His accusers were themselves guilty on each of these counts.

Important Teachings

1. Jesus prepared His disciples for what was about to take place (Mark 14:22-26).

2. Jesus taught His disciples the meaning of His suffering and death (Mark 14:22-26).

3. Jesus was able to see beyond the cross (Mark 14:25).

4. Jesus reached out for companionship as the cross loomed before Him (Mark 14:33, 37).

5. Jesus continued in surrender to the Father's will (Mark 14:36).

6. Jesus understood the weakness of the flesh (Mark 14:37-38).

7. Jesus gave Himself to His captors (Mark 14:46).

8. Jesus refrained from defending Himself (Mark 14:60-61).

9. Jesus faced humiliation and cruelty (Mark 14:65).

10. Jesus was rejected as "King of the Jews" (Mark 15:15).

11. Jesus was condemned for crimes that could not be verified (Mark 15:14-15).

Answers to Questions

1. Explain the symbolism of the bread and cup.

The bread was a symbol of Jesus' body, broken in suffering to impart life to the sinful human race. The contents of the cup symbolized Jesus' blood, shed for us as the price of our redemption.

Together they represent the ordinance of Communion, which Christians observe to maintain a fresh vision of the price of their salvation and to stir anticipation for the time when we can fellowship perfectly in the kingdom of God.

2. Why was this an appropriate time to introduce the ordinance of Communion?

The Old Covenant, with all its symbolic ceremonies was nearing conclusion. It would be nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14) and replaced by the New Covenant, memorialized in the Communion service that remembers Christ's sacrifice and points forward to His Second Coming.

3. For what reason was Jesus "exceeding sorrowful"?

Jesus did not sorrow for His own sins; He had none. No other human could experience what Jesus did. We cannot comprehend what it was like to bear the sins of the world in His body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). It was such a gloomy experience that even the sun was darkened, and Jesus felt forsaken by the Father.

4. What do we learn about Jesus' relationship with the Father? He had a close, trusting, and confident relationship. He honored the Father's wishes.

5. What did Jesus mean by the second sentence in 14:38?

Peter had earlier boasted of his unfailing loyalty. Jesus knew that Peter was sincere although immature. Jesus also knew that, in his weakness, Peter would deny Him. Perhaps Jesus identified with Peter by being willing to endure the cross but feeling keenly His human weakness.

6. Why did Jesus respond as He did to His accusers?

Jesus knew that His accusers had already decided to kill Him, regardless how Jesus answered or how unjust their actions might be. Jesus humbly submitted to shame and persecution for the sake of providing salvation for all.

7. How was Pilate affected by Jesus' response to accusation?

Apparently Jesus responded unlike others who appeared before Pilate for judgment. Pilate expected Jesus to protest, argue, and resist. Instead, He either answered simply and honestly or remained silent. Pilate marveled, convinced that Jesus was innocent of the charges against Him.

8. Explain the people's desire to have Barabbas released rather than Jesus.

Barabbas was in prison for sedition and murder (Luke 23:25). Pilate's practice was to release at the Passover a prisoner of the people's choice. Pilate knew that the Jewish leaders' opposition to Jesus was rooted in envy. It appears that Pilate limited the choice to either Jesus or Barabbas (Matthew 27:16-18), no doubt expecting that Jesus' popularity among the people would lead them to choose Jesus for release. The chief priests and elders, however, persuaded them to choose Barabbas instead.

Summarizing the Lesson

"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled" (1 Peter 3:14).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23).

Research Guide

1. Read the accounts of Jesus' trial in the other Gospels.
2. Study Old Testament prophecies—Psalms 22 and 35, and Isaiah 53