

Mark 14:1 ¶ After two days was *the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.*

Mark 14:2 But they said, Not on the feast *day, lest there be an uproar of the people.*

I will honestly note up front that I encounter some difficulties trying to synthesize the gospel accounts of these events. I am sure that it is a problem with my understanding and not being able to read it in the original language from a 1st century perspective. The problems all have to do with minor details. The major details are very much in sync and relate eyewitness testimonies that support the primary truth being conveyed.

The wording in Matthew helps clarify the time reference.

Matthew 26:1–2 “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

After the teaching on the Mount of Olives, Jesus reminded the disciples that Passover was in a couple of days. He also reminded them that He would be betrayed and crucified.

Mark affirms that the chief priests and scribes were plotting how to kill Jesus at the palace of the high priest, Caiphaz (according to Matthew). They realized that they could not do it on the Passover without a severe backlash from the people. There would be many there who held Jesus in great esteem as a worker of miracles.

Guzik notes: “Every male Jew who lived within 15 miles of Jerusalem *had* to come to Jerusalem for Passover, but many more came from great distances - including Galilee.”

Mark 14:3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head.

Mark 14:4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

Mark 14:5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

It seems that they had returned to Bethany to the house of Simon the leper, probably in whose house they were staying. Mary, Martha and Lazarus were among those having dinner with them there that evening. As you read the different accounts, it seems likely that Simon was the father of these special friends of Jesus. Maybe Jesus had developed His friendship with the family after healing Simon of his leprosy.

John 12:1–6 “Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus

was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein...."

As they were having dinner, Mary brought an alabaster *vase* (from the Greek) of spikenard, a very expensive perfume, and broke it open and poured the oil on the head of Jesus.

Mary's actions displeased some of those present because they thought it was wasteful. They knew that the perfume could have been sold for more than 300 pence (about a year's wages) and the money given to the poor, so they began to complain. John tells us that Judas was one of the chief complainers. He emphasizes that Judas was their treasurer, but he was also a thief; he was not at all concerned about the poor.

I loved Spurgeon's quote concerning this scripture: "Is anything wasted which is all for Jesus? It might rather seem as if all would be wasted which was not given to him."

Judas is a prime example of those who profess faith in Jesus for the purpose of profit. It provides a perfect platform to prey on people's emotions to raise money for charitable service, the bulk of which is used to their own personal benefit.

Mark 14:6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

Mark 14:7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

Mark 14:8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

Mark 14:9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

Jesus intervened on Mary's behalf. He told the complainers to leave her alone because she had done a good thing for Him. He told them that they would always have the poor around to whom they could show kindness; however, He would not always be around. Jesus declared that Mary had actually anointed His body for burial. He then said that wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, her actions would also be shared as a testimony to her love for Him.

I liked this comment by Ironside on the phrase "She hath done what she could" in verse 8: "There can be no higher commendation than this. All cannot do great

things for Christ, but it is well if each one does what he can as unto the Lord Himself.”

Mark 14:10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

Mark 14:11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

Luke provides one more important bit of information at this point.

Luke 22:2–3 “And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people. Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.”

Satan took possession of one of the disciples, Judas Iscariot. He then went and met with the chief priests and captains as to how to betray Jesus. They were more than happy to have his help and promised to pay him.

Matthew tells us that the promised payment was 30 pieces of silver (the cost of a slave).

Matthew 26:14–15 “Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.”

From that moment on Judas was on the lookout for the opportune time to make good on his deal. That Judas would accept a bribe for his services should not surprise us since we know that he was the treasurer for the group and a thief.

It should be noted that Satan could only enter Judas because he was a willing vessel. How anyone could spend all that close time of teaching and opportunity for fellowship with the Savior and not have his heart impacted by the love of Jesus is beyond understanding. Anyone that does not look to Jesus in faith is subject to possession by evil spirits. Christians are blessed to know that we are sealed and secure in Jesus with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit; this protects us from such demonic possession. The disciples did not benefit from the indwelling Spirit until after the resurrection.

Ephesians 1:12–14 “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

Mark 14:12 ¶ And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

Matthew 26:17 “Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to

Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?"

Luke 22:7–8 "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat."

John 13:1 "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

These verses represent the discrepancy in the gospel accounts that are most puzzling regarding the last supper Jesus ate with His disciples.

John carefully notes that this meal was not the Passover meal.

*John 13:1 "Now **before the feast of the passover**, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."*

John further declares that Pilate delivered Jesus over to the people for crucifixion on the Preparation Day for Passover.

John 19:14 "Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!""

According to Josephus, the priests began slaying the paschal lambs at the temple at 3:00pm—the same time that Jesus, our Passover lamb, died on the cross. I have read many commentaries regarding whether the last supper was a Passover meal and regarding Jesus' being in the tomb three days and three nights. I am not a scholar, but I do believe the Spirit is consistent in presenting the types of Christ in scripture. Christ was definitely our Passover lamb as declared by Paul.

1 Corinthians 5:7 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"

I believe He was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover meal that would be held that evening (the Jews reckon a day from evening to evening). Beyond that I am not willing to argue. I also know that God doesn't contradict Himself, and that He will make everything clear by and by.

Mark 14:13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

Mark 14:14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

Mark 14:15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

Mark 14:16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

Jesus sent two of the disciples ahead to the city to make ready for their last meal together. He told them that they would meet a man carrying a pitcher of water; they were to follow him; the house that he entered was the place. They were to tell the master of the house that “The Teacher” wanted to know where the guestroom was in which He could eat the Passover with His disciples. The man would show them to a room that was furnished and ready, and they were to get the meal ready.

Had Jesus made prior plans with the master of the house? Was it a man that He knew would readily receive and accommodate Him? I don’t know. The directions He gave the disciples certainly involved a prophetic revelation concerning the man they would encounter that would lead them to the right house.

Mark 14:17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

Mark 14:18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

Mark 14:19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?

Mark 14:20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

Mark 14:21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

That evening Jesus and His twelve disciples gathered in the room for their meal. Jesus suddenly told them that one of them would betray Him. This made the disciples sad. They all began to ask Him, “Is it I?” I guess they were thinking that the betrayal would be unwitting, something not planned. He answered that it was the one that dipped with Him in the dish.

John’s narrative indicates that this thought must have been especially troubling to John and Peter because they asked Jesus more privately who it was. To them He gave a more specific answer.

*John 13:23–27 “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus’ breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, **He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.**”*

Jesus identified Judas Iscariot as the betrayer by giving him the sop. After he had received the sop from Jesus, Satan once again took possession of him. Jesus made sure that Judas knew that He knew what he was going to do and told him to go.

Jesus then made a very sobering statement (my paraphrase): “All will happen as

I have told you and as foretold in scripture. How horrible it will be for the man that betrays Me. It would have been better for him had he never been born."

John also makes the point that it was night. It was dark in more ways than one and would seem to get darker still as time went on. They were about to lose the light of the Savior's presence. Men often choose to do their evil in the dark of night. They don't want others to know them for who they truly are. They think that they can hide their actions from God.

John 3:19 "...men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Mark 14:22 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.

Mark 14:23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

Mark 14:24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

While they were eating, Jesus took the bread and gave thanks for it. He broke it into pieces and gave to each one, telling them to eat it and declaring it to represent His body. He then took the cup and gave thanks, then passed it around for each one to drink from. He declared it to represent His blood that would be shed for many.

This is the event that provides the basis for our observance of the Lord's Supper, also called Communion. It stood out to me as I read the different accounts that Jesus did not command this observance to be continued. The instruction that this was to be observed on a regular basis in the church came through Paul.

*1 Corinthians 11:23–30 "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. **For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.** Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."*

It's quite clear that the Savior used the bread and wine to picture the sacrifice that He was going to make to provide for our salvation. It obviously was not His actual flesh and blood. Jesus often made similar types of statements to picture spiritual truths.

John 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for

the life of the world.”

*John 10:7–9 “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **I am the door of the sheep**....I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”*

*John 15:1–2 “**I am the true vine**, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”*

The purpose for continuing this observance is to remind us of the sacrificial provision Jesus made for the remission of sins, the suffering He endured to provide for our salvation as we look forward to His return.

Jesus also revealed to the disciples that He was instituting a new covenant—a covenant that was foretold by Jeremiah.

*Matthew 26:28 “For this is my blood **of the new testament**, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”*

*Jeremiah 31:31–33 “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

This covenant would supersede the old covenant as established through Moses. Sadly, Israel will not embrace this new covenant as a whole until Jesus returns to set up His kingdom on earth.

The fact that the instruction for this observance was given to the church through Paul shows that it was intended for all people that choose to follow Jesus in faith.

Mark 14:25 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.

Mark 14:26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Jesus declared that He would no more drink of the fruit of the vine until He is able to drink it again *with them* (according to Matthew) in the kingdom of God.

After this, they ended the supper by singing a hymn before heading to the Mount of Olives.

Mark 14:27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be

scattered.

Mark 14:28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

Jesus talked to the disciples as they walked. John tells us much more detail about their conversation (see my journal for John 14-17).

Mark tells us that Jesus warned the disciples that they would all be caused to stumble in their faith because of what was going to happen to Him that night. The scripture actually foretold this.

Zechariah 13:7 "...smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Jesus tried again to encourage them by telling them that He would be raised to life again and go ahead of them to Galilee.

Mark 14:29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

Mark 14:30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Mark 14:31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

Good old Peter, ever quick with an answer from his heart, immediately declared that he would never stumble in his faith. Jesus told him that before the night was over, he would deny Him three times. Peter insisted that even to the point of death, he would never deny Jesus. The rest of the disciples declared that they would do the same.

Luke tells us a bit more about this event.

Luke 22:31–32 "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Satan had singled Peter out for testing and had been given permission (is implied), similar to what had happened to Job. Jesus assures Peter that He has prayed for his faith to stay strong. What a truth to cling to!

The Savior then encourages Peter to strengthen others in their faith once he emerged from the testing a changed man—much stronger in faith.

That thought reminded me of something Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 1:3–6 "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your

consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation."

I believe that is one of the Lord's intended purposes for any trial He allows in our lives—for our faith to be strengthened, and that we in turn strengthen others through what we have learned by experience.

I am also reminded of truth from the book of Hebrews; Jesus prays for us just as surely as He prayed for Peter.

Hebrews 7:25 "Wherefore He [Jesus] is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Because of the signs of the times that surround us and the general moral decay of world culture, I am already praying for God's empowerment to be able to stand strong in the face of persecution—no matter how terrifying it may become. I am also praying the same for my precious family. If Peter could deny the Lord so readily after spending intimate time with Him in person for three years, how vulnerable are we! I would never have believed as we started our family that this would ever have to be a prayer on my lips as a citizen of the United States of America. Oh how I wish that the person who completes the bride of Christ would accept Jesus as Savior so we can go home! I take great comfort in knowing that we have the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit indwelling us—something Peter was not yet privileged to possess during his time of temptation.

Mark 14:32 ¶ And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

Mark 14:33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

Mark 14:34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

Eventually, they came to a place called Gethsemane, a garden across the brook Cedron according to John; it was on the lower part of the Mount of Olives. Jesus asked the disciples to sit awhile as He went apart to pray. He took Peter, James and John with him a bit further and told them that His soul was in great sorrow in expectation of His death. He asked them to wait there and watch for Him.

Mark 14:35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

Mark 14:36 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.

Jesus went a bit further and fell on the ground, praying to His Father and asking that this hour of suffering might pass if possible (without affecting the purpose of His death is implied). This is the man Jesus dreading the suffering to come. Even worse than the physical suffering was the fact that the fellowship between Him and His Father will be broken for the first time ever as He takes on the sins

of the world. He recognizes, however, that with His Father all things are possible. He expresses His desire for the cup of suffering to be removed, but yields Himself to the Father's will.

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

That is the constant caveat to my prayers—if it be according to Your will, Father.

Mark 14:37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

Mark 14:38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

Mark 14:39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

Mark 14:40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him.

Jesus returned to the three and found them sleeping. He awakened Peter and questioned why he was asleep. He asked him if he couldn't watch with him just one hour. He encouraged Peter to watch and pray that he would not fall into sin. He told Peter that though he was strong in the spirit, he was weak in the flesh.

I liked the following comment by David Guzik: "Jesus found victory at the cross by succeeding in the struggle in Gethsemane. Peter - just like us - failed in later temptation because he failed to watch and pray. The spiritual battle is often *won* or *lost* before the crisis comes."

The Savior returned once again to repeat His prayer to the Father. Once again when He returned, the disciples were sleeping because they were so tired. They were at a loss for words that He found them so again.

Mark 14:41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

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

Jesus went back to pray for yet a third time. I think it is at this point that Luke provides further information.

Luke 22:43–44 "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

I think Jesus is so disturbed at the thought of being separated from His Father for any amount of time as He bore our sins, that it caused Him to sweat "great drops of blood." Though the Father's will required that Jesus drink the cup before Him, it was the Father's heart to send an angel from heaven to strengthen His Son.

I think it is important to notice that Jesus was sincerely persistent with His

prayers. Though He is repeating the prayer, it is not with “vain repetition” that was warned against in chapter 6.

Matthew 6:7 “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”

Jesus is praying with heartfelt intensity for deliverance from suffering, but His overriding desire is to do the Father’s will. He is the perfect model for us to follow in our own prayer lives.

After the third session of prayer, Jesus returned and told them to go ahead and sleep a little while they could because the time was upon them that He would be betrayed. After a while, He awakened them and told them that the betrayer was coming.

Mark 14:43 ¶ And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Mark 14:44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

Mark 14:45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

John tells us that Judas knew where they would be because it was a place that they often went.

John 18:2 “And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.”

While Jesus was yet speaking, Judas showed up leading a group of soldiers that were under the authority of the temple leaders and were carrying swords and clubs. Judas had told the soldiers that the one they wanted would be the one he greeted with a kiss. They were to take Him away safely. As soon as he saw Jesus, he greeted the Savior with a kiss.

Guzik provides more insight with this quote from Lane: “In addition to the Temple police, who were Levites, the Sanhedrin had at its disposal auxiliary police or servants of the court who were assigned the task of maintaining public order beyond the Temple precincts. They were authorized to make arrests, lead accused persons to the court, guard prisoners, and carry out sentences imposed by the court. The arresting army in Gethsemane must have consisted of armed court attendants of this kind.”

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

Mark 14:47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

The soldiers took hold of Jesus to take Him away. One of the disciples standing near Him drew his sword and cut off the ear of a servant to the high priest.

This event is recorded in all four gospels, but only John identifies Peter as the perpetrator and the servant as a man named Malchus.

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

Only Luke, the beloved physician, tells us that Jesus healed the man's ear.

Luke 22:51 "And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him."

Matthew tells us a bit more.

Matthew 26:52-54 "Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Jesus immediately told Peter to put away his sword unless he wanted to die by the sword. He reminded Peter that He could pray to His Father, and He would send twelve legions of angels to fight on His behalf. If he did that, however, the scriptures that foretold His death would not be fulfilled. From Jesus' perspective, that could never be. This was necessary to accomplishing the whole purpose for which He came to earth.

Mark 14:48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me?

Mark 14:49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.

Mark 14:50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

Jesus addresses the group by asking why they were armed like they were out to capture a thief, a dangerous criminal. He pointed out that He had been teaching in the temple every day, and they had not tried to arrest Him. Then He goes on to answer His own question; I liked the way Luke expresses it.

Luke 22:53 "When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

The NLT phrased it a bit more clearly, "*But this is your moment, the time when the power of darkness reigns.*" (I would say, "is allowed to reign.")

Mark 14:51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body*; and the young men laid hold on him:

Mark 14:52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

I've often heard it taught that this is Mark's one mention of himself in this gospel. If so, one can't help but wonder when he appeared on the scene. Some

commentators suggest that the last supper was in Mark's home, a future meeting place of the believers, so he may have just followed Jesus and the disciples when they left. Not provable, but plausible.

Acts 12:12 "And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying."

This young man wasn't the only one that fled the scene; so did the disciples.

Matthew 26:56 "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."

This fulfills a prophecy of Zechariah as well as the words of Jesus.

Zechariah 13:7 "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Matthew 26:31 "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."

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 14:54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

They took Jesus to the high priest who was in the company of the chief priests, elders and scribes, and Peter followed at a distance.

John tells us a bit more.

John 18: 15-16 "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter."

John was from a prominent family and was *known* by the high priest; some commentators suggest that he was related. It was through his intervention that Peter was able to enter the palace grounds. Once inside, he began to mingle among the temple servants who were getting warm by the fire.

Mark 14:55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

Mark 14:56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

Mark 14:57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

Mark 14:58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with

hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.
Mark 14:59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

Though the chief priests, elders and all the council sought witnesses that would provide accusations to justify putting Jesus to death, they could find none. Many false witnesses stepped forward, but evidently their testimony wasn't even acceptable to those intent on killing Jesus. Finally, two false witnesses came forward declaring that Jesus had stated that He could destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days; even so, their testimony did not fully agree.

Technically, the witnesses were testifying correctly—but out of context—as explained by John.

John 2:19–21 “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.”

David Guzik notes the following concerning the illegalities associated with the judicial treatment of Jesus:

- According to Jewish law, criminal cases could not be tried during the Passover season.
- According to Jewish law, only an acquittal could be issued on the day of the trial. Guilty verdicts had to wait one night to allow for feelings of mercy to rise.
- According to Jewish law, all evidence had to be guaranteed by two witnesses, who were separately examined and could not have contact with each other.
- According to Jewish law, false witness was punishable by death. Nothing was done to the many false witnesses in Jesus' trial.
- According to Jewish law, a trial always began by bringing forth evidence for the innocence of the accused, before the evidence of guilt was offered. This was not the practice here.

Mark 14:60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

Mark 14:61 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?

Mark 14:62 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.

Finally, Caiphas decided to take control. He stood up and asked Jesus why He did not answer His accusers. Jesus maintained His silence. The high priest then asked Him point blank if He was the “Christ, the Son of the Blessed.”

Jesus answered, “I am.” This not only answered their question, but also declared Him as the great “I AM,” the name that God gave Moses to call Him. He added that they would see the Son of man (referencing Himself) sitting on the right hand of power (of God the Father is implied) and coming in the clouds of heaven.

This seems to be a reference to the words recorded by Daniel.

*Daniel 7:13–14 “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. 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.”*

Mark 14:63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

Mark 14:64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

Mark 14:65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

Caiphas tore his clothes at the words of Jesus because he judged them as blasphemous and basically declared that they needed no further witnesses. He accused Jesus of blasphemy and asked the council if they did not agree. They all agreed with the high priest and pronounced Jesus guilty of death. Some began to spit on Him. Others covered His face proceeding to hit and slap Him, then mocking Him by telling Him to prove Himself and prophesy. I assume they wanted Him to identify His tormentors.

Mark 14:66 ¶ And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

Mark 14:67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

Mark 14:68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

Mark 14:69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

Mark 14:70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

Mark 14:71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

Mark 14:72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

Meanwhile, back to Peter...

One girl began to look at Peter more closely and asked Peter if he was one of the companions of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter denied that he was, even acting like he didn't understand why she would think so (1st denial and first crowing of the cock). A little later another maid identified him as one of Jesus' followers; again, Peter denied it (denial #2). A little later another person confidently identified Peter as one of Jesus' followers and even noted that his speech identified him as a

Galilaeen. This time, Peter cursed and swore in denial of this last accusation (denial #3).

While Peter was yet speaking, the rooster crowed. According to Luke, at that moment Jesus turned and looked at Peter, and he immediately remembered what Jesus had told him. I think that look was full of love and compassion—not condemnation. Peter was ashamed and heartbroken once he realized the awful truth of what he'd done, and he wept bitterly.

Peter's response in a situation in which he felt his life might be in danger certainly gives one food for thought. Could I stand firm in my faith at such a time; I pray often that if that time ever comes, the Lord would strengthen me as well as those I love who love Jesus to do just that to His honor and glory.

Chuck Smith made a valid observation (in my words). Peter chose to follow at a distance. Any time we try to follow Jesus at a distance without total commitment, we are asking for trouble. Peter wasn't just at a distance; he was warming himself at the enemy's fire.

I liked Ironside's thoughts comparing the actions of Judas and Peter: "The difference between apostasy and backsliding is illustrated clearly in the records concerning Judas and Simon Peter. Apostasy is a complete rejection of the truth and hence of Him who came to proclaim it and who is Himself the way, the truth, and the life. One may profess faith in Christ and give outward adherence to His teaching without ever being born again. In the hour of severe temptation such a one may apostatize, completely repudiating all he once professed to believe. For the apostate there is no promise of restoration. Backsliding, on the other hand, is a lowering of one's spiritual experience until in the hour of testing there is no strength to stand and so failure may come in to mar one's testimony....Peter was a backslider. Though he fell into grievous sin, he soon realized his wretched plight and returned in deep penitence to the Lord he had denied."