

Luke 22:1-6
A night of sinister intrigue (Bookman)

Introduction: This takes place on Tuesday, March 30, 33 AD. Passover begins on Thursday evening at sundown.

- 1) The setting—22:1-2
 - a) Two seemingly contradictory, ironic events
 - i) A remembrance of life, God’s grace and mercy—¹ *Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching.*
 - (1) This is a week-long celebration that followed the day of Passover, often combined into one name for both feasts.
 - (2) This shows that Theophilus was not a Jewish man.
 - ii) A rejection of God’s grace and mercy—² *And the chief priests Sadducees and the scholars (Pharisees) were seeking how they might execute Him* (cf. 23:32),
 - (1) This was not the full Sanhedrin at this point in time. This group had met in the courtyard of the High Priest Caiaphas (cf. Matt. 26:3-4). This was not the first time they had done this (cf. 19:47-48). They desire to end His life close in time to the celebration of life. How ironic!
 - (a) This is why Jesus spends the night out at Bethany (cf. 21:37)
 - (2) Why? *because they were afraid of the people.*
 - (a) The fear of people causes us to do some irrational things.
 - (b) Jesus is popular among the people; the leaders are losing their influence.
 - (c) The people in the positions of power are not really in control. (Bock)
 - (3) They were looking for some “respectable” way to eliminate Jesus, or as Matthew records, they wanted to do this by stealth (Matt. 26:4).
 - b) The point:
 - i) Jesus had humiliated them and defeated at every turn. They were not going to put up with this any longer. He had just denounced them in Matthew 23. How dare He!
 - (1) Jewish literature reports that the high priests bullied those who opposed them; they would certainly not tolerate someone who claims that God has directed him to attack their temple cult. (Keener, *Background NT*)
 - ii) They were apparently willing to wait until the Passover season was over. The city of Jerusalem was swelling to hundreds of thousands of people eager to celebrate Passover. They are about to celebrate their nation’s deliverance from a Gentile overlord. Too many things could go wrong.
- 2) The spiritual battle—22:3-6
 - a) Two related, deliberate events—22:3-4

- i) Satanic possession—22:3 ³ *Then Satan entered into Judas, the one called Iscariot, belonging to the number of the Twelve.*
 - (1) Remember that Jesus had rebuked Judas the previous Saturday evening at the feast in Bethany (cf. John 12:2-8). Perhaps his being publicly corrected was part of the reason for this.
 - (2) Satan possesses Judas once again during the Passover Meal (cf. John 13:27).
 - ii) Human responsibility—22:4 ⁴ *And having departed, he discussed with the chief priests and officers (probably of the Temple guard, understood to be Levites) how he might betray Him to them.*
 - b) Two responses to this meeting—22:5-6
 - i) The 2-fold response of the religious leadership—22:5
 - (1) Emotionally—⁵ *And they were delighted*
 - (a) It gave them the opportunity they had been looking for. Judas has solved their dilemma. They can avoid a public spectacle, they think.
 - (2) Financially—*and agreed to give him money* (30 pieces of silver, at the initiation by Judas himself; Matt. 26:15).
 - (a) This is what Jesus denied Judas on Saturday evening. Judas was a lover of money and a thief (cf. John 12:6)
 - ii) The response of Jesus' follower—22:6
 - (1) Deliberately—⁶ *So he consented*
 - (a) Again, note the human responsibility
 - (2) Zealously—*and began seeking a good opportunity to betray Him to them apart from the crowd.*
 - c) The point:
 - i) Even though Judas was possessed by Satan, he was still responsible for his behavior.
 - ii) They wanted to avoid a public uproar (cf. 22:2)
- 3) Things for us to remember
- a) Defection in the ranks of Jesus' followers is a real possibility.
 - b) You can't always tell beforehand who will defect from following Christ.
 - c) While Satan and Judas thought they had figured out a way to defeat Jesus the Christ, they were ultimately fulfilling the Father's eternal purpose.
 - i) The Geneva Bible note on 22:3 says it this way: "God by his wonderful providence, causes him to be the minister of our salvation, who was the author of our destruction."