

## You See the Grace

Mark 14:1-26

Lent , February 21, 2018

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Broadlands

It is evident that throughout His whole life, but especially in His passion the Lord organizes everything. He even has the details arranged.

It was thoughtful of the disciples to approach the Lord and ask Him where He wanted them to prepare the Passover, but the Lord took care of it Himself. He told them to go into the city. He told them they would find a man carrying a jar of water. He told them to follow him to the house that he enters. He told them to tell the master of the house, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" He told them that the master of the house would show him an upper room spread and ready.

The disciples went into the city and found everything exactly the way that Jesus had said it. In spite of the fact that carrying water was women's work and no man would have been doing it in ancient Jerusalem, they nevertheless did find a man carrying a jar of water. That is how they knew which man Jesus was talking about. If He had told them to follow a woman carrying a water jar they would have been lost wondering which one to follow. Following the man gives them someone specific to follow. When they get to the house everything is furnished and ready for Passover. Mark doesn't bother to tell us how the arrangements were made, just that they were made, highlighting for us the fact that when it comes to His Passion, the Lord makes all of the arrangements.

If that is the case then, the Lord also made the arrangements for His betrayal. When He says that one of you will betray Me, He is making a prophecy that will come to pass. Like all the words of the Lord, they come to pass. They come to pass even as they have come to pass ever since the creation in the beginning. So when Jesus predicts that one of them will betray Me, He is making the necessary arrangements for His death. With His conflict with the Pharisees, chief priests, and scribes, to say nothing of the Sadducees, our Lord has already begun the arrangements for His death.

Therefore Judas handing Jesus over to the chief priests is something that He arranged.

Judas may very well believe that it is his idea. After all he was the one who went to the chief priests and made the offer to hand Jesus over to them. He went immediately after Jesus had corrected him and the other apostles for rebuking the woman who anointed His feet with precious ointment and dried them with her hair. It could be that Judas resented his Lord's correction. Feeling his Lord to be in the wrong, he goes to the chief priests and offers to hand Him over in order to teach Him a lesson. But there is too much prophesy when it comes to our Lord to have it be simply the actions of a disgruntled apostle against His Lord.

The one who ate at my table has lifted up his heel against me, the psalter says. The psalm prophesies about Judas who even though he ate at the table of Jesus (remember it was Jesus who had prepared this table) he rose up against Jesus and handed Him over.

These events were ordered by the word of God. And so Jesus says that the Son of Man goes as it has been written about Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is handed over. It would be better for that man if he had not been born.

Has Jesus just condemned Judas to hell? Was hell inevitable for Judas?

The Son of Man will go just as it has been written of Him. Jesus condemns Himself to death because the Scriptures condemn Him to death. God has called Him through His prophets to die bearing

the sin of the whole world. Furthermore our Lord has predicted His own death several times to the apostles.

In order for the Lord to die He must lose power. But He can't lose power by Himself He is sinless. The wages of sin is death. He has no sin. Therefore He will not die. He will never lose power. But He must die because that is what has been written about Him. In order for Him to die He must lose power. In order for Him to lose power, He must be handed over. The one who has dipped His hand in the dish with me has raised his heel against me. Someone must hand Him over.

So a word on betrayal. The Greek word that all of our translations translate "betray" literally means, "to hand over." When Jesus praises the Father for handing over all things to the Son, Jesus uses this word. Well, obviously Jesus is not praising the Father for betraying all things to the Son. The word does not always mean betray. Sometimes it does. Its base meaning is "to hand over." Since sometimes handing someone over involves betraying them, the word is often translated betray.

Someone must hand Jesus over in order for Him to lose power. Woe to that person who hands Jesus over. In other words even if Judas is not betraying Him, there is still someone who has to hand Jesus over to the authorities so that His death may be implemented. This could be why Jesus points out that Judas is the one who is dipping in the dish with me. Most people take that to mean that Judas is dipping a piece of bread in an ancient condiment like olive oil, but it could be if the Passover liturgies currently in use among the Jews go back to ancient times that Judas is dipping the bitter herbs in the salt water and eating it in accordance with the practice. This would indicate that Judas brings about the bitterness and tears that only the one who turns over the Son of Man may bring. That person has a woe spoken against him.

Even our Lord's woe is oddly put. He does not say woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man. He says, woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Or to put it another way, Woe to that man through whom the Son of Man is handed over.

The Son of Man is handed over to the authorities by God. God wants Jesus to die for the sake of the whole world. God hands Jesus over to them. God could have saved Jesus. God did not. God uses Judas as an instrument for fulfilling His will to put Jesus to death for our salvation. He is the one through whom the Son of Man is betrayed. Jesus pronounces a woe upon this person because he will face temptations unlike any other.

Imagine if you will being Judas Isacriot. No matter what your motive is for handing Jesus over once you see that Jesus is condemned, you are cut to the heart. You are the only person in human history who has taken action against the Son of Man such that He died and you are His disciple! You are one of the twelve. It is understandable that the chief priests should want Him dead, but one of His disciples? Think of the regret that Judas experienced once He realized that He had betrayed innocent blood. Think of the temptation. It is one thing to deny Him. It is quite another thing to hand Him over to those who would kill Him.

Judas plays a part in the death of Jesus unlike any other. What damned Judas was not that He betrayed His Lord and handed Him over to be put to death. Peter was forgiven for denying Him. Judas would have been forgiven for betraying Him. The reason that Judas has gone to his own place is because Judas failed to see the grace of God in everything that Jesus was preparing.

Judas failed to see that the Lord was organizing the whole thing and Judas was an instrument through whom Jesus was handed over. Judas failed to understand that His part to play was necessary and that the Lord would forgive him. Judas failed to understand that the death of Jesus was an atoning

sacrifice that would have taken away his sin of handing over innocent blood. He failed to see the resurrection of Jesus because He did not believe the promise of Jesus that He would rise again from the dead. Not believing that promise Judas hung himself and never did see the resurrected Lord like the other apostles and receive His peace and absolution.

Judas failed to see in the death and resurrection of Jesus his absolution and his salvation. Failing these things, he is condemned. Woe to him.

That means though that in what Jesus organizes is your salvation. Jesus organized His death and resurrection. He did so in accord with His Father's will expressed in the Holy Scriptures. Thus in the death and resurrection of Jesus is your salvation.

The death and resurrection of Jesus are the death and resurrection of an ancient Jew. His resurrection calls attention to these events. They are unlike any other. But once attention is called to them one still cannot see his salvation in them. It must be pointed out by the word of God. And so Jesus calls His death a ransom for many. His apostles say it is an atoning death. They say these things so that we may look upon all that our Lord has organized and see our salvation.

The Sacrament of the Altar is part and parcel of what our Lord organizes. Just as surely as He organized His own betrayal through Judas so also He instituted the Sacrament of the Altar. The Sacrament of the Altar is the inevitable result of His death. Let me say that again. The Sacrament of the Altar is the inevitable result of His death.

There is not Christianity here and then the Sacrament of the Altar is added on. The Sacrament of the Altar is not an add-on. If the Sacrament of the Altar is an add-on then you must eject the book of Leviticus out of the Bible. In the book of Leviticus God spoke to Moses from over the ark of the covenant and instructed him to tell the priests to eat the sin offering.

Once Jesus dies as the sin offering for the whole world, He must be eaten by His priests. If He is not, then the book of Leviticus stands unfulfilled and that is not what the apostles tell us about Jesus.

Therefore the Sacrament of the Altar is the inevitable result of His death. It enables you to eat the sacrifice of Jesus thereby making you His priest. That being the case the Sacrament of the Altar becomes part of the things that Jesus arranges along with His death and resurrection which make our salvation possible. Without the death and resurrection of Jesus the Sacrament of the Altar would be impossible. With His death and resurrection the Sacrament of the Altar forms a unified whole which Jesus has organized in which by the power of His Word we receive our salvation.

It has all been prepared. It has all been prepared for you.

In the Name of Jesus. Amen.