

15. Mark 14:1 – 15:21



BOOK TWO

THE GOSPEL OF JESUS THE SON OF GOD

PART SIX : THE PASSION NARRATIVE

Mark 14:1 - 15:21

Mark 14:1-2

It was two days before the Passover (first full moon after spring equinox)

(Passover ‘on the third day’?)

and the festival of Unleavened Bread. (seven day pilgrimage festival, celebrating the beginning of the grain harvest)

The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him (see 11:18); for they said, “Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people.”

Mark 14:3-5

While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly aromatic oil (μύρον) from the spikenard plant, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head.

(Hospitality, Psalm 23:5; Consecration, Ps 133:2; Ex 30:20-33; Psalm 45:7; 1Sam 9:16)

But some were there who said to one another in anger, “Why was the ointment wasted in this way? This ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and the money given to the poor.” And they scolded her.

Mark 14:6-9

But Jesus said, “Let her alone; why do you trouble her?
She has performed a good service for me.
For you always have the poor with you,
and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish;
but you will not always have me. (compare 2:18-22 – the bridegroom)

She has done what she could;
she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial (see 16:1).

Truly I tell you,
wherever the good news (this Gospel) is proclaimed in the whole world,
what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.”

Mark 14:10-11

Then Judas Iscariot (3:19) who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to hand Jesus over to them. When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

Mark 14:12-16

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples say to him, “Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

So he sends two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.”

So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

Mark 14:17-21

When it was evening, he comes with the twelve.

And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.” (Psalm 41:9)

They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, “Surely, not I?”

He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me.

For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, (8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34; 10:45??)

but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!

It would have been better for that one not to have been born.”

A warning to keep faith when persecuted?

Mark 14:22

(see 1Corinthians 11:23-26)

While they were eating,
taking a loaf of bread, and blessing
he broke it, gave it to them, and said,
“Take; this is my body (σῶμά μου).”

(see 6:41; 8:6)



Mark 14:23-25

(see 1Corinthians 11:23-26)

Then taking a cup, and giving thanks (εὐχαριστήσας)
he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it.

He said to them,

(Mark 10:45)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for **many**.”

(see Exodus 24:3-11)

(New Covenant: Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine
until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

‘Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?’(10:38)

- Experience of the senses: See, touch, taste ——— Surface
- The intelligence asks questions to penetrate ——— **Sub-stance**
to the **underlying reality**. What is it? **Under-standing**
- **Substance**
 - not in the physical sense of ‘matter’
 - but in the metaphysical sense of ‘underlying reality’
 - **Transubstantiation**

Transubstantiation

- We attain **the truth** when we are right in our judgment as to what something is (adaequatio rei et intellectus – Thomas Aquinas).
- Understanding enlightened by what we know-in-faith
- ‘Do not seek to understand so that you may believe. Believe so that you may understand’ (Augustine).
- The change is not physical and not chemical. It is metaphysical. It is a change at the level of being. We know-in-faith that Jesus is offering us himself to assuage our deepest hunger and thirst.

Mark 14:26-31

When they had sung the hymn,
they went out to the Mount of Olives. (13:3)

And Jesus said to them, “You will all become deserters; for it is written,
‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’

(Zechariah 13:7; see Mark 6:34)

After I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” (16:7)

(God’s faithfulness: Romans 3:3; 11:29)

Peter said to him, “Even though all become deserters, I will not.”

Jesus said to him, “Truly I tell you, this day, this very night,
before the cock crows **twice**, you will deny me three times.”

(so Peter ignored even the first crow!)

But he says vehemently, “Even though I must die with you,
I will not deny you.” And all of them said the same.

Jesus faces his bitter struggle alone : Mark 14:32-34

They went to a place called Gethsemane ('oil press');
and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

He took with him Peter and James and John, (1:16-20; 5:37; 9:2; 13:3)
and began to be distressed and agitated. (Hebrews 4:15; 5:17-18)

And said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; (Psalm 6:3-4)
remain here, and keep awake."

Jesus faces his bitter struggle alone : Mark 14:35-37

Going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed (1:35; 6:46) that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

He said, “Abba, Father, (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15) for you all things are possible (9:23; 11:22-24); remove this cup (10:38) from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want.”

He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour?”

“Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, let your will, not mine, be done.”

What is God’s will?



Mark 14:38-42

Keep awake and keep praying
that you may not come into the time of trial;
the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Ps 51:10-12; Romans 8:26-27)

And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words.

And once more he came and found them sleeping,
for their eyes were very heavy;
and they did not know what to say to him.

He came **a third time** and said to them,
“Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough!
The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed
into the hands of sinners.
Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.”

Mark 14:43-46

While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrives; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” So coming, he going up to him at once he says, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. (12:12; 14:1)



Mark 14:47-50

But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

Then Jesus said to them,

“Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit?

Day after day

I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me.

But let the scriptures be fulfilled.”

‘Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered’ (Zechariah 13:7)

All of them deserted him and fled.

Mark 14:51-52

A certain young man (16:5) was following him,
wearing nothing but a linen cloth. (15:46)
They caught hold of him,
but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

1. Symbol of martyr: leave behind the burial cloth
Sharing Jesus' death
and witnessing to the Resurrection (15:46)

2. Dramatic contrast of unfaithful disciples and Jesus, who did not
run away from being arrested, stripped and crucified.

‘They will flee away naked on that Day’ (Amos 2:16).

Mark 14:53-54

They took Jesus to the high priest (Caiaphas, Matthew 26:3);
and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes are assembled.



Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

Mark 14:55-59

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none.

For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying,

“We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.’” (13:2; 15:29)

But even on this point their testimony did not agree.

Mark 14:60-61

Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus,
“Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?”
But he was silent and did not answer. (Isaiah 53:7; 1Peter 2:21-23)



Mark 14:61-64

Again the high priest asked him,

“Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” (2Samuel 7:13-14)

(Mark 1:1; see 12:35-37; 15:39)

Jesus said, “I am (ego eimi: Exodus 3:14).

Jesus asserts that he is the Messiah, for now the term has been redefined by him.

and ‘you will see the Son of Man

seated at the right hand of the Power,’ (Psalm 110:1; Mark 12:36)

and ‘coming with the clouds of heaven.’” (Daniel 7:13; Mark 13:26)

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said,

“Why do we still need witnesses?

You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?”

All of them condemned him as deserving death. (Deuteronomy 13:2-6)

Mark 14:65

Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophecy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

Isaiah 50:5-7

The Lord YHWH has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.

I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

The Lord YHWH helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

Mark 14:66-72

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest comes by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him and says, “You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.” But he denied it, saying, “I do not know or understand what you are talking about.” And he went out into the forecourt. Then the cock crowed.

And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” But again he denied it.

After a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean.” But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know this man you are talking about.”

At that moment the cock crowed for the second time.

Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, “Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times.”(14:30) He broke down and wept.

Mark 15:1

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council.

They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over (10:33) to Pilate.



Mark 15:2-5

Pilate asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

He answered him, “You (emphatic) say so.”

Then the chief priests accused him of many things.

Pilate asked him again, “Have you no answer?”

See how many charges they bring against you.”

But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Mark 15:6-11

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection.

So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom.

Then he answered them, “Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?” For he realised that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over.

But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead.

Mark 15:12-15

Pilate spoke to them again, “Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?”

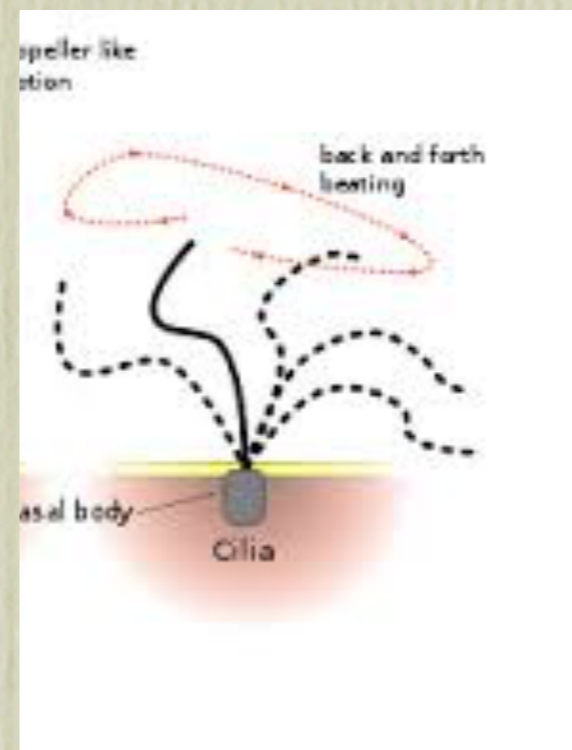
They shouted back, “Crucify him!”

Pilate asked them, “Why, what evil has he done?”

But they shouted all the more, “Crucify (first mention) him!”

So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

(flagellum = several strands of leather, plaited with pieces of bone and metal. There was no restriction as to the number of blows)



Mark 15:16-18

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard (that is, the praetorium).

(either the barracks of Herod's palace
or the Antonia fortress overlooking the temple mount)

They called together the whole
cohort. (500 men!)

And they clothed him in a purple
cloak; and after twisting some
thorns into a crown, they put it on
him.

And they began saluting him,
“Hail, King of the Jews!” (15:2)



Mark 15:19-20

They were striking his head with a reed, and spitting upon him, and kneeling down in homage to him. (Isaiah 50:6)

After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him.

Then they lead him out to crucify him.



One does not take the cross upon oneself. It strikes from behind, catching you off balance, grasping for support that isn't there. So it was with Jesus. He, however, embraced it, and in so doing he embraced those who thrust it upon him. He embraces us, too, in our folly, for his broken heart cannot stop loving us with all the love of the God who wants us to know that suffering need not destroy us. Accepted in love it can purify our heart and open it more fully to grace.

Mark 15:21

They compel a passer-by, who was coming in from the country,
to carry his cross; (8:34)

it was **Simon of Cyrene**, (5th largest city in north Africa; see Acts 2:10; 6:9; 13:1).
the father of **Alexander and Rufus**. (Romans 16:13)

