**Jesus’ Farewell Address**

*At The Last Supper*

**Luke 22:21**  But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table.

**22**  For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

**23**  And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

**24**  A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

**25**  And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors.

**26**  But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.

**27**  For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

**28**  “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials,

**29**  and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom,

**30**  that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**31**  “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat,

**32**  but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

**33**  Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.”

**34**  Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”

**35**  And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.”

**36**  He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.

**37**  For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.”

**38**  And they said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” And he said to them, “It is enough.”

**Luke 22:21-38**

**Testaments and Covenants:**

**The Genre or the Last Supper in Luke**

What is a “testament?” And I’m not talking about those mints you used to be able to buy near the cash register of your local Christian bookstore. This seems like a pretty important question, given that the two main divisions of our Bibles are called the Old and New *Testaments*. So what is a testament?

Strictly speaking, a testament in the sense of these two divisions is equivalent to “covenant.” So we could call them the Old and New *Covenants* and be saying essentially the same thing. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary gave its first definition as “a solemn authentic instrument in writing, by which a person declares his will as to the disposal of his estate and effects after his death. This is otherwise called a will.” In this sense, we could speak of the entire NT as being a legal written will.

There is a very interesting passage in Hebrews that seems directly related to this:

For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Therefore he is the mediator of *a new covenant*, so that those who are called may receive *the promised eternal inheritance*, since *a death* has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. For where *a will* is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For *a will* takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive.

(Heb 9:13-17)

We notice in all this a few things. Wills are written legal documents that go into effect when the testator has died. Here, they involve covenant promise. These promises specify eternal inheritances. So, these are all involved in new “testament.”

Now, in the ancient Greek world, there was a very specific genre of writing called a “Farewell Address.” In these addresses, the speaker’s last words highlight his impending death, care of those remaining, regulation of discipleship, thanks to the gods, an accounting for his life, consolation to an inner circle of followers, didactic (teaching) speeches, and political and philosophical testaments.[[1]](#footnote-1) This is the Greek equivalent to what we’ve just seen. The best known of these, which sparked many imitations, is Plato’s *Phaedo*, which recounts the last moments of Socrates’ life before he drinks the hemlock and dies. It is the last section (115-118) that really contains what will become the standard elements of a farewell speech. They include his giving commands and naming successors, exhortations to his disciples to remember his teachings, curses to his enemies, his proclamation of his innocence, defense of why he will drink the hemlock, reflections on his life, showing courage facing death, sorrow, and turning his soul over to the gods.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The Jewish world had their own versions of these speeches. These include the end of the book of Tobit (14:3-11), the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 1Macc 2:49-70, passages in Josephus (such as Mattathias’ Address in *Ant* 4.8.45-49 §§309-31), and so on. The Bible also has them. Genesis 49 is Jacob’s farewell to his sons. Deut 31-34 is Moses’s farewell speech to Israel. Josh 23-24 is Joshua’s farewell to Israel. 1Sam 12:1-25 is Samuel’s farewell. 2Kgs 2:1-10 is David’s last words to Solomon, while 1Chr 28-29 are his farewell to Israel. Acts 20:17-38 gives us Paul’s to the Ephesian elders.

Of these, a very special grouping of them adds a vital element—that of renewing *the covenant*. These include Moses and Joshua to Israel, and David to Solomon and Israel. Now, none of those explicitly describe anyone eating a meal, but the idea of a covenant meal sealing a covenant bond is old and is found throughout the OT, from Abraham and Melchizedek (Gen 14:18), to Jacob and Laban (Gen 31:22-55), to the Passover (Ex 16), to Moses and the elders of Israel (Ex 24:11); to the sacrificial “fellowship” offerings being a central part of covenant renewal at Mt. Ebal (Deut 27:1-8; Josh 8:30-35), coronations (1Sam 11:15; 2Kgs 11:14), the Ark moving to David’s tent (1Chr 16:6, 42), the dedication of the altar (2Sam 24:25; 1Chr 21:27-22:1), and Solomon’s temple (2Chr 5:12-13), to kings like Asa (2Chr 15:8-15) and Hezekiah (2Chr 28:27-31; 30:22-27) renewing the covenant, to the consecration of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh 12:35-43).[[3]](#footnote-3)

These ideas, that of a Farewell Address, a covenant, a will and testament, and a covenant meal all play major parts in coming to understand what is happening in the Luke’s Last Supper story. For in a very special way, our passage is the most distilled treatment of this in the NT. We call it the testament within the New Testament.

**Luke 22:21-38 Context**

Last time, we looked at Luke 22:1-20. This took us from the plot of the scribes and priests to kill Jesus and the convenient Satanic treason of Judas to betray his Lord, to the finding of a house to have the Passover, to the eating of the meal and the institution of the Lord’s Supper. Today, we will look at what takes place after these things, but still in that general time-frame, prior to our Lord going up to the Mt. of Olives to pray on that fateful night of when all the world became dark.

On the surface, what takes place after the meal is over seems straight forward enough. As they are finishing up, Jesus tells his disciples present at the Supper that one of them will betray him and they all begin to question one another (Luke 22:21-23). Then there is a dispute about which one of them is the greatest (24-30). Suddenly, Jesus tells them that Satan is not finished, that he has demanded to sift them like wheat (31-34). Finally, Jesus predicts one last time that he is going to die (35-38). Read by itself, Luke seems to simply be giving events in the order in which they occurred that night. And the temptation is simply to begin preaching about them.

However, when you do a harmony of this passage with Matthew and Mark, you suddenly see some very big differences. Let’s start at the beginning of the chapter (see the *Harmony* at the end of the sermon). They all begin the same way, with the Feast of Unleavened Bread drawing near and the priest and scribes plotting against Jesus. But after this, Matthew and Mark both tell us that Jesus is anointed at Bethany, a story that Luke put way back in Luke 7:36-50! Why would Luke do that? This is the first clue that he’s up to something different.

Next, the three Synoptics all tell us in slightly different ways the story of Judas going to the chief priests to betray Jesus. Though Luke (also John!) is the only one that tells us it was at the instigation of Satan.

Next, the Synoptics all move to the amazing prediction of Jesus telling Peter and John how they will find the house where they will eat the Passover. They each take us then to that evening when they begin to eat. It’s just here that Luke alone tells us about the First Cup and Jesus’ earnest desire to eat the Passover with his disciples. As Luke continues, we discover that he has taken material found in the *final* cup in Matthew and Mark and moved it to this *first* cup. All that talk about drinking it new in the Father’s kingdom—Matthew and Mark have that when Jesus institutes the meaning of the wine *after* the food. Other than this, the institution of the Bread and Wine remains mostly the same.

After the wine, we discover something else very interesting. Luke has Jesus now talking about how one of those at the table is going to betray him. But this discussion takes place *before* the meal in Matthew and Mark. Luke has clearly moved it to later in the evening.

Then, at the place the disciples begin disputing amongst themselves over who is the greatest? Well, this isn’t even found at all in the Last Supper in Matthew. Rather, it takes place six chapters before it (Matthew 20:24-27; Mark does not have it at all). As this concludes in Luke, Jesus tells them that they will eat and drink at his table in the kingdom and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. But this is even one chapter earlier in Matthew (19:28).

At this point in the Supper, Matthew and Mark both explicitly say that the meal is over. They sing their last hymns and go out to the Mt. of Olives. Luke, however, says nothing about this. In reading it, we still think of them at the Supper. Satan demands to sift them all like wheat, but Matthew and Mark don’t talk about this (John 13:36-38, however, does). All three converge again at the end of that discussion when Peter swears he will never fall away. Finally, Luke adds four verses at the end that aren’t found in any other Gospel at all. It is this idea of essentially overturning what Jesus told them way back in Luke 10 when he sent them out to the villages. These are instructions of what they are to do beginning now, as Jesus is about to die.

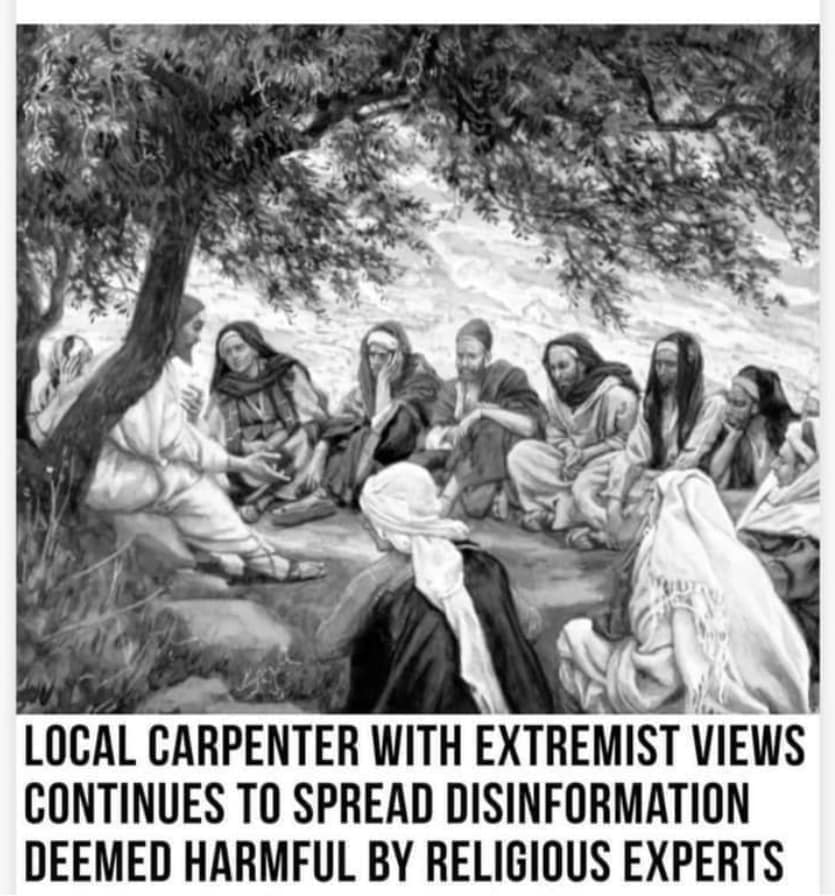
Skeptics make much ado here about these differences, and as always, conclude that the Gospels are hopelessly contradictory and therefore the story of Jesus is a fairy-tale, made up by crazy men hell-bent on creating a new religion for some nefarious purpose, such as keeping humanity in the chains of legalistic religion. The thing is, they aren’t contradicting at all. Luke knows full-well what he is doing. He is moving material around quite consciously and deliberately. Why?

It's because Luke is framing for us how very special this last moment with his friends truly was. Jesus is giving them his Farewell Speech, but more, a farewell speech in the context of covenant renewal and a will. If you understand that, then all of Luke’s changes suddenly make perfect sense. And we, the readers all these centuries later, understand that Luke, knowing Jesus was going to die, is giving us our Lord’s Last Will and Testament, it is a legal document in the court of heaven, sealed by the covenant meal, that the new covenant is now being enacted, and heaven itself is making preparations for the inheritors to continue the mission with all the benefits and blessings that the testament now gives to them. Remember, Luke’s writings aren’t even half done at this point. He still has another book to write, and that book will see the carrying out of this transfer of power from Master to disciples.

**Luke 22:21-23—The Betrayal Predicted**

Technically, we would probably put the beginning of the Farewell Address in Luke 22:14. In it, Jesus refers to his imminent death (15-18), and instructs the disciples on the institution of the Supper (19-20). This is the covenant meal aspect of this rather unique take from Luke which combines Farewell Addresses with Covenant Renewal Ceremonies and the Covenant Meal.

But in farewell addresses, the approaching death is a major theme and so Luke returns to it in the prediction of the betrayal of the disciples. It begins with Jesus telling them, “But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table” (22:21). How would a modern Evangelical react to this news? Probably something like this, “Jesus, things like that don’t happen. There’s no such thing as seditions and schemes. I mean, you were just inaugurated King when you came into the city. You really need to stop acting so paranoid. Stop being a conspiracy theorist! That’s dangerous to our democrac--, I mean our mission to Jerusalem.”



I’ve actually heard some people deny that Judas was even at the meal (its own conspiracy theory), as they read their modern theology of the Supper that unbelievers are not permitted to partake back into the Scripture. But two things are important for this. First, while Judas clearly is an unbeliever, *at this moment* in time he is a *professing* believer and he was so much so that the disciples themselves all wondered who the betrayer could be. The reality is, they didn’t act like a Modern Evangelical, but rather, “And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this” (23). They believed Jesus knew about the conspiracy. But there were no outward signs to them that Judas was any kind of traitor. They honestly had no idea. But Jesus did. Second, and more important, Jesus says he is right there with them all. In fact, Matthew and Mark say he has dipped bread into the dish with Jesus (Matt 26:23; Mark 14:20). Yes, Judas was there and he ate the Passover meal with them.

But at just this point, we get a vital piece of theology. For what Judas is doing, and what we know Satan is doing behind him, is no accident. God is not caught off guard by this. “For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” (22). The other Gospels add, “It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

There is a lot going on here that people must come to grips with. First, Jesus says that this was all predestined to take place before hand. Some want to say it wasn’t predetermined, only foreknown.[[4]](#footnote-4) Usually, these kinds of arguments completely confuse the human will with predestination, as if they are incompatible. Judas did act of his own accord through the instigation of Satan, and he was clearly responsible for his actions. He did it because he wanted to, because he was wicked. Yet, the text says this was all determined beforehand, and Jesus places a woe upon Judas through whom it comes.

John makes clear that Jesus knew this long ago. “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil. He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him” (John 6:70-71). But Jesus also calls him the “son of destruction” (John 17:12), or as the NIV has it, the man “doomed to destruction.” Why? Because long ago it was ordained.

Second, it was so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. John is clear about this. Several passages come to mind, like Psalm 41:9, “Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.” This prophecy was going to be fulfilled, even if Satan and Judas had no idea that they were carrying out God’s plan.

Third, this was *evil* that was predestined. And that raises the question of the problem of evil. Is God predestining evil? Yes. Is God *doing* evil? No. Judas and Satan are. How can these two things work together? Because God has a very different intention than the instrumental causes of Judas and Satan. They mean it for harm. God means it for salvation (see Gen 50:20). If this does not happen, no one can be given eternal life.

Fourth, all of this corresponds in Farewell Addresses to a coming crisis, something found throughout the genre. But it’s more, because in this case, that crisis has very supernatural causes, Satan’s instigation and God’s decree. And this is important, because it is through this that the new covenant will actually come about. So many people fail to understand that at the root of the problem of evil is a God who overcomes it *by going through it himself*. God does not withhold himself from evil. Rather, in undergoing it, he conquers it.

**Luke 22:24-30—The Disciples Dispute**

At this moment, Luke inserts something found six chapters earlier in Matthew. It is a dispute among the disciples. “A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest” (24). Matthew tells us that it was John and James’ mother who instigated it. She wanted Jesus to let them sit at his side in his kingdom. Importantly, the Lord’s Supper is in view even here (see Matt 20:23), and Hendriksen thinks what Luke writes took place before the meal actually got started.

The occasion may have stemmed from a confusion over what Jesus was about to do. If he is about to usher in the *political* Kingdom at this meal, then who gets to sit where around the table? We’ve all seen Leonardo’s *Last Supper* painting. It was commissioned in 1494 by the Duke of Milan and Leonardo began painting the next year, taking three years to finish. The dimensions are 181in. x 346in. or 15ft. x 29ft.

A painting of a group of people at the last supper

Description automatically generated

The scene depicts the moment when all the disciples are beside themselves, wondering who will betray Jesus. Bartholomew, James son of Alpheus, and Andrew are in the far left grouping of three, and they are genuinely surprised by the news. Next is Judas, Peter, and John (NOT Mary Magdalene!). Judas is tipping over the salt, symbolizing betrayal, while Peter seems angry and holds a knife, foreshadowing his reaction to Jesus’ arrest. John seems to be fainting. Jesus is in the middle. To the right, Thomas has a raised index finger, which symbolizes the shock of the resurrection. But though his head is closest to Jesus, it is James the Greater (John’s brother) who sits next to him. Along with Philip, he is stunned. Matthew, Jude, and Simon the Zealot make up the final triad and are bewildered at the news. How curious that Leonardo puts John and James at the right and left hand of Jesus.

Luke uses this as a moment of teaching, and this is something found throughout Farewell Addresses. “And [Jesus] said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors…’” (Luke 22:25). It’s just here that things start to get very interesting in terms of the worldview being presupposed and presented. I think you’ll find this fascinating. Jesus points directly to the kings of the Gentiles. It is important at this moment, I believe, to understand that the kings all traced their lineage to the gods. In this sense, we could call kings “son of the gods.” You’ll see why I say this as we continue.

They loved the title of benefactor, which refers to one who bestowed gifts on his subjects to gain loyalty and praise.[[5]](#footnote-5) This in turn would conceal their tyranny under extravagant spending. Relatable to anything happening in our day in the political arena? On a copper coin Tiberius is described as “one who deserved to be adored.” Augustus is called “god.”[[6]](#footnote-6) To put this another way, this is a subtle way of saying that they are acting like the Prince of the world—Satan. This was not only a worldly way of thinking, but a demonic one as well.

So Jesus continues, “But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:26-27). Here, Jesus reiterates his classic teaching that he came as the Servant of God, the one who serves and gives his life as a ransom for many. If they would be his disciples, they must follow after this.

At this point, the idea of a testament begins to shine forth. “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and *I assign to you*, as *my Father* *assigned to me*, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*” (28-30). Knowing what they are about to do (we’ll see this in the very next verses), Jesus nevertheless assigns to them a kingdom. Notice the Johanine-esque language, “I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me.” This is Father-Son language. Jesus is the Son of the Father. Jesus only does what the Father sends him to do. And it reminds us of both the baptism and the transfiguration where Jesus is called the Beloved Son (Luke 3:22; 9:33).

But if he is assigning to his disciples, then he becomes a kind of Father now entrusting to his sons.[[7]](#footnote-7) This is the definition of a will. What he entrusts to them is a kingdom. Kingdom appears in vs. 16, 18, 29, and 30. It is perhaps the major motif of the entire chapter. Jesus has taught much on this kingdom, especially that it is from heaven and cannot be observed with the eyes or located on a map, not that any of them understood any of that yet. The kingdom has already come upon them, and yet now, the keys to the kingdom are being transferred, formally, through this testament, to the disciples.

In this kingdom, they will sit on thrones and judges the twelve tribes of Israel. Now, sonship is nearby this statement, as we have just seen. So also is the covenant. So also is the Prince of the world—Satan. And so also are thrones. These are a lot of ideas that are also associated with *the divine council*. The divine council is that group of heavenly beings called sons of God that rule and judge the affairs of the cosmos. You see this in Daniel 4 for example when the watchers come to Nebuchadnezzar and tell him that they have issued a decree about him that he might know that God rules heaven and earth (Dan 4:17).

Symbolically, there were seventy of them (Deut 32:8 TargJon). But in a very long story made very short, those beings ruled badly and wickedly (Ps 82:1-4), and so God disinherits those evil sons, replacing them with his human sons, to whom he originally gave this authority, at least on the earth, in the first place. For in Eden, Adam was giving dominion, not them.

In the OT, it was Israel who was God’s son (Ex 4:22; etc.). Israel was also depicted several times by the number seventy (Ex 1:5 Masoretic; 15:27; 24:1; etc.). This includes one-time where the covenant meal is being eaten with God and the elders (Ex 24:1-10). In this way, Israel becomes the new divine council, taking over judgment that was earlier given to the heavenly sons of God.

Later, this seventy becomes the ruling Sanhedrin, who will be greatly responsible for Jesus’ death. This meant that Israel would be no more fit to rule than the heavenly divine council. Thus, earlier in Luke 10:1ff., Jesus sent out seventy disciples as a kind of restoration and new Israel, because he knew all that was about to take place. By the time we get to the Last Supper, Jesus has now cursed Israel and predicted its temple’s destruction—the final blow to the old covenant. And now, Jesus is making a new covenant with his disciples, and this all plays into what’s going on.

Essentially, beginning with these twelve, Jesus will transfer this power of the divine council to his disciples and then, to his churches and all Christians—the NT sons of God (Rom 8:14; Gal 3:26; etc.). This is why they will judge the twelve tribes, because they ruled as wickedly as the angels, and their covenant was not good enough to do all that was needed to bring forgiveness and eternal restoration. But the new covenant is. This is why Paul says to the Corinthians, don’t you know you will judge angels (1Cor 6:3)? This is all part of the same worldview of God’s redeemed human sons regaining what Adam, the son of God (Luke 3:38) abdicated in his sin. Jesus has won it back and now, in his last will and testament, he is transferring this power to his disciples, for he is about to die. What a glorious otherworldly teaching that has application to each Christian today here and now on earth, and also into the future. We will see more of how this is in Luke’s mind as we turn to the last two piece of this Farewell Address.

**Luke 22:31-34—Satan the Sifter**

The first is Luke’s additions, echoed to some degree in John 13:36-38, that returns us to Satan. Not found in Matthew or Mark, Jesus says, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat…” (Luke 22:31). Importantly, Satan is not only seeking to sift Simon. The “you” here is plural, something you can only see in the older English which differentiates “you” (plural) from “thee/thou” (singular). Satan is not only seeking to sift Simon, but *all twelve of them*.

We need to say a few things here. First, Jesus returns to Peter’s old name—Simon. He does not call him Peter. Why? It seems to me because this is the last nail in the old man’s coffin. Simon is about to die and Peter will truly be reborn like a Phoenix in the ashes of Simon’s sin and betrayal.

Second, they have just argued over who is the greatest and now Jesus is predicting that they will all fall. Some greatness! Truly, this should wreck whatever pride we possess. As Cyril wrote, “Christ shows that even he who seemed to be great is nothing and infirm. He therefore passes by the other disciples and turns to him who is the foremost and sat at the head of the company” (Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on Luke*, Homily 144).[[8]](#footnote-8)

Third, while I do think that Satan is a personal name here for the Prince of Darkness, just as he was back in vs. 3, it is interesting that he is literally called “*the satan*” here, just as he always is in the OT (and, frankly, throughout most of the NT). “The *satan*,” was a functional description for a very particular office in the divine council—the prosecuting attorney. Here, we really need to think about the first time he shows up, in Job. This, too, is a sons of God passage. Satan goes with the sons of God to carry out their business judging the affairs of men.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and *Satan* (the *satan*) also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, “From where have you come?” Satan (the *satan*) answered the Lord and said, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” And the Lord said to Satan (the *satan*), “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” Then Satan (the *satan*) answered the Lord and said, “Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.” And the Lord said to Satan (the *satan*), “Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.” So Satan (the *satan*) went out from the presence of the Lord.

(Job 1:6-12)

God sets before him Job, his “servant” (Job 1:8). How interesting, given what Jesus has just told the disciples they must be. The two have a discussion about Job. Satan says he only serves you because you are good to him and have protected him. Take that away and see what happens. So, God gives Satan permission to do whatever he wants, except he can’t touch the man. Of course, the very next chapters see the very same scene and this time God gives him permission to do anything short of killing Job. We see nearly the exact same thing happening now with the twelve, so this link to Job is extremely sharp.[[9]](#footnote-9)

Notice that Satan has to ask permission of God to sift the disciples. This is what you do with wheat when you put it into a sieve. It separates the grain from the chaff and other foreign matter. Same thing happened in Job. Satan sifting to test someone’s faith is the same in both places. Some people, seeing all this, conclude that the *satan* (there are many *satans* in the OT, including even the Angel of the LORD; Num 22:22) here must be either neutral or even good, God’s executioner, someone on God’s side.[[10]](#footnote-10) But though he must get permission, it is perfectly consistent with our normal way of thinking about Satan that this Accuser only has evil in mind for the disciples, just as he did with Job. He wanted them all to fail, to curse God and die.

This should be clear by the next verse, “But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail” (Luke 22:32). Clearly, their faith is on the line. But suddenly, the “you” becomes singular. Jesus is looking directly at Simon. Why? It’s foreshadowing and necessary encouraging. Peter is going to become vitally important in the establishment of the early church. He will preach the first sermon. So Jesus says, “And when you have turned again (that is repented and come back), strengthen your brothers.” Why? Because they will all have deserted Jesus. It won’t only be Peter who sins at Jesus’ greatest moment of need. It will in fact be all of them. And Jesus knows it. And yet he still has Supper with them, in fact he earnest longed to do so, and he will give to them a kingdom. What kind of love is this?

Beloved, Jesus knows you just as he knows them. He knows they would abandon him. He knows their weaknesses. He knows their sins. He knows them thoroughly. He knows you too, better than you know yourself. You can’t get away from this knowledge. Pretending it doesn’t exist doesn’t make it go away. God knows you. He knows everything about you. But this Jesus is the God of love. And there is no need to worry or fret of anything in your life that you’ve done, so long as you turn to him and believe the Gospel is for you. This is the entire point of this. There is forgiveness and reconciliation and peace in this good news. It’s why Jesus came. Today is not the day of judgment, and thank God. He extends to you all his goodwill and love. Oh, won’t you believe it today and all your remining days?

If you think yourself too bad to receive this news, then consider Peter. The foreshadowing for Simon is seen in vs. 33. “Peter said to him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.’” Ah, the spirit is so willing, but the flesh is so weak. In Matthew it is even more emphatic. “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.”

Oh, what the Lord must have thought at that moment, knowing all future things? “Jesus said, ‘I tell you, Peter (note the change back to Peter from Jesus’ mouth), the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me” (34). Matthew and Mark both add Peter’s last comeback. “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you! And all the disciples said the same thing.” But Luke doesn’t need the emphasis. His purposes are different. We already get the point. For Luke this is more about Jesus than them. This is his Farewell Address to them. It is his last will and testament to those God has given him. He will forgive them. He will restore them. He will do that for you.

**Luke 22:31-34—Satan the Sifter**

Thus we come to our last section. Like the previous passage, it too is directly related to all this divine council theology. It is unique to Luke, showing that indeed, Luke has something else in mind as he frames this story. Jesus begins, “And he said to them, ‘When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?’ They said, ‘Nothing’” (Luke 22:35). This refers directly back to Luke 10:4 and the sending of the seventy.[[11]](#footnote-11) “Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road.” And Jesus reminds them that God took care of them.

Just now, Jesus does something very important. “He said to them, ‘But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one’” (36). It is so common to hear people take a statement of Jesus about something like pacifism or not carrying the sword or not taking provisions and turn this into some kind of rule for all Christians at all times. This verse shows that we must read each statement contextually. Jesus had certain circumstances in mind when he told them not to carry the knapsack or sandals. Now he has very different ones in mind that tells them to do *the opposite*. We must not make specific commands to the disciples the norm and rule for all Christians at all times, lest we make the Scripture contradict itself.

Why does Jesus do this? Because he is making a new covenant with them. He is giving them a kingdom. And he is preparing them for what they will need as they go forth conquering in this kingdom. Previously, Jesus had yet to suffer and die. It was a different circumstance with different rules and goals. Jesus had to suffer, so their actions needed to reflect that. But when the circumstances change, so also do the rules.

How do we know things are changing? Jesus says so. “For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment” (37). The old covenant is about to be fulfilled. Jesus is about to die, bring about the fulfillment of all types and shadows to which it pointed. The new covenant is now being inaugurated, even at this very meal. The last will and testament is being legally enacted right here. The rules are changing. Because Jesus is about to change everything.

This fulfillment speaks of being “numbered with the transgressors.” This comes from Isaiah’s greatest *Servant* Song, Isaiah 53. “Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and *was numbered with the transgressors*; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors” (Isa 53:12). This deserves an entire sermon, as it gets at the heart of the most obvious, explicit prophecy of the Messiah’s death as a substitutionary atonement in the OT.

God is putting the Messiah to death. Meanwhile, the Messiah willingly pours out his soul to death. How? By being numbered with the transgressors. What does that mean? It means Jesus will be considered a criminal and, therefore, a sinner. It’s not that Jesus *is* a criminal or a sinner. For he knew no sin. But he is *considered* or *reckoned* a criminal and a sinner. He is counted as one. This is a legal term, which also fits with divine council imagery—for the council is all about legal ruling in heavenly places. It’s the flip side of justification, where we are considered or reckoned sinless, even though we are not. He legally takes our sin. We legally take his righteousness.

But why would Messiah do this? Because in doing so, he bears the sins of many. That is, in being counted as a criminal, he is able, legally, to take sin upon his person and in dying, put it to death as a sacrifice. This is God’s love! The key here is “intercession.” Jesus does this as an intercessor, a mediator. He stands between God and man. Because he is God and he is man, only he can do this. He takes the punishment we deserve as sinners and God counts that punishment as satisfying divine wrath. If divine wrath is satisfied as far as punishment goes, then no more punishment is needed. If the sinner will by faith believe the offer of salvation, then eternal life in the kingdom can be rewarded. And it all takes place through the Death of God’s only begotten Son. This is a last will and testament!

There’s one more verse, however. “And they said, ‘Look, Lord, here are two swords’” (Luke 22:38a). It’s natural, given what he has just said, for them to do this, especially since Jesus is reversing the instructions from Luke 10. But it also shows they still clearly have no idea what is happening. For Jesus has not yet died. In fact, in picking up swords, they show that they think Jesus can and will want to stop it from happening.

He simply responds, “It is enough” (38b). I think Jesus means that he’s had enough of their constant misunderstanding. In order for people to understand, sometimes you must show them. You can’t tell them. They won’t be able to see until the terrible events take place before their very eyes and affect them deeply on a personal and intimate and painful level. That will happen soon enough. The time for swords is not now upon them. Now is the time for the Son of Man to be betrayed by his friend(s). Now is the time for Jesus to commit his final will and testament to his disciples. Now is the time for him to die, so that all these things might come to pass.

If you can understand the genre before you, then you can understand what Luke is doing as he tells his version of this story. If you understand the story, then you can see that what is before your eyes is the very beginning of the church in seedling form. You can see why Jesus needed to go through with his suffering. You can see why Jesus needed to speak as he did at this moment.

If you can truly see, see to the point of Jesus doing this not only for the disciples, but for you, then beloved, these very promises given to them will be given to you. For the new covenant is for all who turn to Christ in faith. The promised eternal inheritance stands for any who will side with Jesus Christ and enter into his death for their sins, coming out the other side alive and born again.

Jesus left a will, and he left it for you, if you are a Christian. You get to inherit these amazing eternal promises. See what the Lord Supper is all about. It is Jesus body broken for you as a sacrifice for your sin. It is Jesus blood poured out for you so that you might have once-for-all forgiveness for the things you’ve done. And in knowing these things, you are free to partake of all the divine blessings God has for you both now and in the life to come.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Luke** | **Matt** | **Mark** | **John** |
| **22:1**  Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. | **26:1** When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples,  **2** “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” | **14:1** It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. | **John 11:47-53** |
| **2** And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people. | **3** Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas,  **4** and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him.  **5** But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.” | And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him,  **2** for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.” |  |
| **LUKE 7:36-50** | **Jesus Anointed at Bethany Story** | **Jesus Anointed at Bethany Story** |  |
| **3** Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. | **14** Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests | **10** Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. | **13:2** During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him, |
| **4** He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. | **15** and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?” | **11** And when they heard it, | **27** Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” |
| **5** And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. | And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. | they were glad and promised to give him money. |  |
| **6** So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd. | **16** And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him. | And he sought an opportunity to betray him. |  |
| **7** Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. | **17** Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread | **12** And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, | **13:1** Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. |
| **8** So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.” |  |  |  |
| **9** They said to him, “Where will you have us prepare it?” | the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?” | his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” |  |
| **10** He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters | **18** He said, “Go into the city to a certain man | **13** And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, |  |
| **11** and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ | and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’ ” | **14** and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ |  |
| **12** And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.” |  | **15** And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” |  |
| **13** And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. | **19** And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover. | **16** And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. |  |
| **14** And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. | **20** When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. | **17** And when it was evening, he came with the twelve.  **18** And as they were reclining at table and eating, |  |
| **15** And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. |  |  |  |
| **16** For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” |  |  |  |
| **17** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. |  |  |  |
| **18** For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” | **29** I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” | **25** Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” |  |
| **19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” | **26** Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” | **22** And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” |  |
| **20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. | **27** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you,  **28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. | **23** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.  **24** And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. |  |
| **21** But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. | **21** And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”  **22** And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?”  **23** He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. | **18b** Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.”  **19** They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?”  **20** He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. | **6:70**  Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.”  **71** He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.  **John 13:21-30** |
| **22** For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” | **24** The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” | **21** For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” |  |
| **23** And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this. | **25**  Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.” |  |  |
| **24** A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. | **20:24**  And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. |  | **John 13:4-5, 12-17** |
| **25** And he said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. | **25**  But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. |  |  |
| **26** But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. | **26** It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, |  |  |
| **27** For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves. | **27** and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, **28** even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” |  |  |
| **28** “You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, |  |  |  |
| **29** and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, |  |  |  |
| **30** that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. | **19:28** Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. |  |  |
|  | **30** And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.  **31** Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’  **32** But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” | **26** And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.  **27** And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’  **28**  But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” |  |
| **31** “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, |  |  | **John 13:36-38** |
| **32** but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” |  |  |  |
| **33** Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” | **33** Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.” | **29** Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” |  |
| **34** Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.” | **34** Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.”  **35** Peter said to him, “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!” And all the disciples said the same. | **30** And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.”  **31** But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all said the same. |  |
| **35** And he said to them, “When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?” They said, “Nothing.” |  |  |  |
| **36** He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. |  |  |  |
| **37** For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.” |  |  |  |
| **38**  And they said, “Look, Lord, here are two swords.” And he said to them, “It is enough.” |  |  |  |

1. William Kurz, “[Luke 22:14-38 and Greco-Roman and Biblical Farewell Addresses](https://core.ac.uk/reader/213058900),” *JBL* 104.2 (1985): 254. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See John Mark Hicks, “[The Lord’s Table: A Covenant Meal](https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1976&context=leaven),” Leaven 3.3 (1995): 4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For example, Wayne Jackson, “[Was Judas ‘Predestined’ to Betray Christ?](https://christiancourier.com/articles/was-judas-predestined-to-betray-christ)” *Christian Courier*. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Clinton E. Arnold, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 483. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Luke*, vol. 11, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953–2001), 971. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Recall the puzzling title the Messiah is given in Isaiah 9:6, “Everlasting Father.” Also think about how Jesus refers to his disciples as his children (Luke 10:21; John 13:33; 21:5; etc.). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Arthur A. Just, *Luke*, vol. 3, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture NT 3. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 336. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Tom de Bruin, “[In Defence of New Testament Satanologies: A Response to Farrar and Williams](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0142064X211045311),” *JSNT* 44.3 (2022): 446. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. E.g. ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Recall that the sending of the twelve in 9:1ff. was the literary parallel, so it can be spoken to them here as if they were among those seventy. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)