

# MARK

## Chapter 14

### *The Plot to Kill Jesus*

**14** It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. 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.”

**14:1** *two days before.* Wednesday of Holy Week. (TLSB)

*Passover.* The Jewish festival commemorating the time when the angel of the Lord passed over the homes of the Hebrews rather than killing their firstborn sons as he did in the Egyptian homes (see Ex 12:13, 23, 27). The lambs or kids used in the feast were killed on the 14th of Nisan (March-April), and the meal was eaten the same evening between sundown and midnight. Since the Jewish day began at sundown, the Passover Feast took place on the 15th of Nisan. (CSB)

A feast commemorating God’s deliverance of His people from Egypt (cf Ex 12:1–14). (TLSB)

*Feast of Unleavened Bread.* This feast followed Passover and lasted seven days (see Ex 12:15–20; 23:15; 34:18; Dt 16:1–8). (CSB)

The seven days that followed Passover (cf Ex 12:15–20). The whole festival could be called by either name. (TLSB)

*kill Him.* Not a simple assassination but a plan to entrap Him legally. (TLSB)

**14:2** They likely feared that Jesus would publicly declare Himself the Messiah in the temple during Passover and start a revolt against the Romans. (TLSB)

*not during the Feast.* During Passover and the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread the population of Jerusalem increased from about 50,000 to several hundred thousand. It would have been too risky to apprehend Jesus with so large and excitable a crowd present. (CSB)

**14:1–2** The Jewish leaders desperately try to find a way to execute Jesus quickly and quietly before He gains full support for His mission. Yet, God is at work in this, using even the opposition of His enemies for His gracious purposes. The Lord is likewise at work in the events away all our sins. • Sustain us, dearest Jesus, for You are the bread of life we celebrate, our life and hope to come. Amen. (TLSB)

### *Jesus Anointed at Bethany*

**3** And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. **4** There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? **5** For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her. **6** But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. **7** For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. **8** She has done what she could; she has

**anointed my body beforehand for burial. 9 And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”**

**14:3–9** In John’s Gospel this incident occurred before Passion Week began (see Jn 12:1). Matthew and Mark may place it here to contrast the hatred of the religious leaders and the betrayal by Judas with the love and devotion of the woman who anointed Jesus. (CSB)

**14:3** *reclining at the table.* The usual posture for eating a banquet meal. (CSB)

*a woman.* We know from John’s Gospel (12:3) that she was Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus. (CSB)

A man who had been afflicted with a skin disease but was cured, possibly by Jesus. (TLSB)

*alabaster jar.* A sealed flask with a long neck that was broken off when the contents were used and that contained enough ointment for one application. (CSB)

*nard.* A perfume made from the aromatic oil extracted from the root of a plant grown chiefly in India. (CSB)

*poured perfume over his head.* Anointing was a common custom at feasts (see Ps 23:5; Lk 7:46). The woman’s action expressed her deep devotion to Jesus. (CSB)

Long neck of the flask was broken to dispense the contents. (TLSB)

**14:4** *there were some.* Matthew (26:8) identifies them as the disciples, while John (12:4–5) singles out Judas Iscariot. (CSB)

**14:5** *given to the poor.* It was a Jewish custom to give gifts to the poor on the evening of Passover (see Jn 13:29). (CSB)

Jesus’ ministry likely included charity for the poor. (TLSB)

**14:7** *will always have poor with you.* This did not express lack of concern for the poor, for their needs lay close to Jesus’ heart (see Mt 6:2–4; Lk 4:18; 6:20; 14:13, 21; 18:22; Jn 13:29). (CSB)

**14:8** *to prepare for my burial.* It was a normal Jewish custom to anoint a body with aromatic oils in preparing it for burial (see 16:1). Jesus seems to anticipate suffering a criminal’s death, for only in that circumstance was there no anointing of the body. (CSB)

Rather than embalming, Israelites used ointments and spices to prepare a body for burial. (TLSB)

**14:9** A prophecy fulfilled even now as Christians read of this woman’s deep love for Jesus. Luther: “To love Christ, to confess Christ, and to take pleasure in Him—this does not happen without the Holy Spirit. To confess the faith, to bear the hatred of the world, to undergo exile and death—all this is proof of the Spirit” (AE 30:298). (TLSB)

**14:3–9** A woman anoints Jesus for His burial, sacrificing expensive ointment out of love for Him. The woman’s clear focus on Jesus testifies to her devotion toward Him. Her sacrifice reveals her deep love for Him and sets a wonderful example for later Christians. Today, devote yourself to Jesus by prayer and service. He now stands at the Father’s throne, praying for you, serving as

your Savior. • “I’ll think upon Thy mercy without ceasing, That earth’s vain joys to me no more be pleasing; To do Thy will shall be my sole endeavor Henceforth forever.” Amen. (LSB 439:12) (TLSB)

**10 Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. 11 And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.**

**14:10** *chief priests.* This was an unexpected opportunity that they seized, even though they had intended not to apprehend Jesus during the Feast (see v. 2). (CSB)

*in order to betray.* To lead the authorities to Jesus at a time and in a place where they could arrest Him quietly. (TLSB)

**14:11** *money.* Thirty silver coins (Mt 26:15). (CSB)

Greed no doubt played a part (cf Jn 12:6). (TLSB)

**14:10–11** Judas, one of the Twelve whom Jesus appointed, decides to betray Him to the authorities. Even Judas’s betrayal of Jesus plays an important role in the plan of salvation, culminating in the cross and empty tomb. Simple association with Christians or a knowledge of Christ cannot save. Only faith in Jesus as Savior rescues from sin and death. • My sinful heart would betray You, dear Lord, and arrest my faith. Deliver me from evil by Your grace. Amen. (TLSB)

*The Passover with the Disciples*

**12 And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” 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, 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?’ 15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” 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. 17 And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. 18 And as they were reclining at table and eating, 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. 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.”**

The declaration *touto estin* (“**This is**”) would also provide a meaningful message. Many have redefined “is,” but the definition is as simple as it seems. The bread **is** also his body; the wine **is** also his blood. It **is** a mystery. Mystery has not always been a satisfying message, as people have attempted to comprehend, even prove, the things of God. But there remain realities we do not fully understand, mysteries we accept by faith. Those mysteries are a reminder that God is God and we are not. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

**14:12** *the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.* Ordinarily this would mean the 15th of Nisan, the day after Passover (see note on v. 1). However, the added phrase, “when it was

customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb,” makes it clear that the 14th of Nisan is meant because Passover lambs were killed on that day (Ex 12:6). The entire eight-day celebration was sometimes referred to as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and there is evidence that the 14th of Nisan may have been loosely referred to as the “first day of Unleavened Bread.” (CSB)

*sacrificed the Passover lamb.* The Passover festival required the slaughter of a one-year-old male lamb or goat in the temple forecourt in the afternoon. It was eaten as the main course of the evening meal (cf Dt 16:1–8). (TLSB)

**14:13** *two of his disciples.* Peter and John (Lk 22:8). (CSB)

*man carrying a jar.* He would easily have been identified because customarily only women carried water jars. (CSB)

There was also the occupation of water seller, an oddity to us. Josephus is witness to the fact that in years when rain was scanty, water was bought and sold. (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus – Joachim Jeremais – Page 8) (CSB)

**14:14** *master.* Owner.

*Where is my guest room ... ? †* It was a Jewish custom that anyone in Jerusalem who had a room available would give it upon request to a pilgrim to celebrate the Passover. It appears that Jesus had made previous arrangements with the owner of the house. (CSB)

**14:15** *upper room furnished and ready.* A meal for 13 people would require a large room, a table, and dining couches, all set up before dinner could begin. Jesus may have been familiar with this room from previous trips to Jerusalem. (TLSB)

*prepare.* These would include food for the meal: unleavened bread, wine, bitter herbs, sauce and the lamb. (CSB)

**14:17** *When evening came.* Thursday of Passion Week. (CSB)

The Passover celebration began at sundown. (TLSB)

*twelve.* Only the Twelve are mentioned as traveling and partaking of the Lord’s Supper with Jesus. (TLSB)

**14:18** *reclining at the table eating.* Originally the Passover meal was eaten standing (Ex 12:11), but in Jesus’ time it was customary to eat it while reclining. (CSB)

**14:19** Each apostle’s conscience troubled him. (TLSB)

**14:20** *dips bread into a dish with me.* Commonly, pieces of bread would be torn off the loaf, dipped into a bowl of fruit sauce or stew, and then eaten. (TLSB)

**14:21** *as it is written of him.* Jesus no doubt had the “suffering servant” passage of Isa 53 in mind. (CSB)

*better ... not been born.* Jesus foresaw the sad end for the betrayer. (TLSB)

**14:12–21** Jesus arranged for the Passover to be eaten at a secret location in Jerusalem. Opposition to the Gospel comes from Satan, the world, and even from within the ranks of Jesus’ followers. God uses these enemies to accomplish His plan of salvation at the cross. The sacrifice of the Passover lamb would foreshadow the sacrifice of our beloved Redeemer for us. • “A Lamb goes uncomplaining forth, The guilt of sinners bearing And, laden with the sins of earth, None else the burden sharing; Goes patient on, grows weak and faint, To slaughter led without complaint, That spotless life to offer.” Amen. (LSB 438:1) (TLSB)

*Institution of the Lord's Supper*

**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.” 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. 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.”**

**4:22-25** Instituting the Lord’s Supper

You may consider a sermon using a cup. That object appears more than once in the Gospel of Mark, such as when Jesus chastises the Pharisees for attempting to merit God’s favor through ritual and ceremony (7:4–5). People often look within to earn God’s love: stellar worship attendance, tireless volunteerism, generous donations. When it comes to salvation, their good deeds are worth no more than washing some silly cup. We are not saved by a cup that we clean, but we are cleaned in the cup that saves, the cup of Jesus’ blood of the covenant, poured out for many (vv 23–24). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

**14:22** The NT gives four accounts of the Lord’s Supper (Mt 26:26–28; Mk 14:22–24; Lk 22:19–20; 1Co 11:23–25). Matthew’s account is very much like Mark’s, and Luke’s and Paul’s have similarities. All the accounts include the taking of the bread; the thanksgiving or blessing; the breaking of the bread; the saying, “This is my body”; the taking of the cup; and the explanation of the relation of blood to the covenant. Only Paul and Luke record Jesus’ command to continue to celebrate the Supper. (CSB)

*blessing.* Jesus followed a traditional Jewish pattern but used these elements in a new way. (TLSB)

*this is my body.*† “In, with, and under” the bread we receive Christ’s body through a sacramental union. (CSB)

By His word, Christ effects a communion between the bread and His body for all who eat of it. Luther: “For as soon as Christ says: ‘This is my body,’ his body is present through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Word is not there, it is mere bread; but as soon as the words are added they bring with them that of which they speak” (AE 36:341). (TLSB)

**14:23** *a cup.* Wine for the Passover meal. (TLSB)

*gave thanks.* The word “Eucharist” is derived from the Greek term used here. (CSB)

Jesus consecrated the wine before it was distributed. “Christ’s body and blood are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also orally. Yet not in a ‘Capernaite’ way, but in a supernatural, heavenly way, because of the sacramental union” (FC Ep VII 15). (TLSB)

**14:24** *my blood of the covenant.* † “In, with, and under” the cup (wine) we receive Christ’s blood through a sacramental union. Through this sacrament, a means of grace, the Holy Spirit nourishes faith in believers. (CSB)

*covenant.* Gk *diatheke*, “testament.” Jesus sealed His last will and testament with His own precious blood to establish the Lord’s Supper (1Co 11:23–26). He was the sacrificial Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (cf Jn 1:29). (TLSB)

*for many.* Hbr expression for “all people.” (TLSB)

**14:25** *kingdom of God.* Christ will not observe the Passover again with His disciples. However, He refers here to the heavenly banquet (Mt 8:11). (TLSB)

*fruit of the vine.* Wine. (TLSB)

**14:22–25** Jesus establishes the Lord’s Supper, giving communicants His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins under the bread and wine. Because of our sin, we could not have fellowship with God. However, Jesus creates a new relationship between God and sinners through His suffering and death on the cross. By His blood, He seals His testament of peace and forgiveness, which we receive in this Sacrament. • “O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and adore Thee, In thanksgiving bow before Thee. Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish Our weak souls that they may flourish: O Lord, have mercy! May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary, That our sins and sorrows did carry, And Thy blood for us plead In all trial, fear, and need: O Lord, have mercy!” Amen. (*LSB* 617:1) (TLSB)

*Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial*

**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.” 29 Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” 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.**

**14:26** *Mount of Olives.* This hill would scarcely have been so called if its groves had not been outstandingly luxuriant in comparison with the surrounding land and the olives not of economic importance for the city. Oil was probably the only export of Jerusalem. Gethsemane, which was located on the Mt of Olives, means an oil or perfume press. (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus – Joachim Jeremias – page 7)

**14:27-31; 66-72** *Suffering Double-mindedness.* No small measure of irony, hypocrisy, double-mindedness during Holy Week. The disciples are guilty of this as they promise never to abandon Jesus, only to desert him that very night. The Sanhedrin claims to seek the truth, while recruiting false witnesses. The crowds cheer the Christ as he enters Jerusalem on Sunday and jeer him on the way out of the city that Friday. Consider a Palm Sunday sermon about double-mindedness. Use a palm branch and the phrases “We love him. We love him not.” Pick the leaves off each frond, while offering examples of the crowd’s, the disciples’, and our own double-mindedness. (We call on him in prayer at home. We don’t acknowledge him in conversation at the office.) Offer enough examples to pull all of the leaves from the frond, except one on each side partway from the top. Use the remaining shape of the cross and the words “He loves us” (without the not),

giving examples of Jesus' consistent response to our sin. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

**14:27** God accomplished forgiveness of sins when the Good Shepherd was struck for the sheep. Luther: "[Christ] Himself also submitted to smitings without any guilt of His own, and He did this also so that men might not regard the kingdom of Christ as something worldly. For to the world it is to be a very offensive kingdom, as St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 1:23" (AE 20:335). (TLSB)

**14:29** *I will not.* A boast that was eventually fulfilled by his martyrdom. (TLSB)

**14:26–31** Jesus fulfills the Scripture that promises the forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of the Shepherd, even though all His sheep desert Him. Good intentions do not substitute for faith. Only through God's strength can any Christian face trial. Even though Jesus' sheep will run away, He will lay down His life for them. • Faithful Shepherd, keep me close this day and always. Amen. (TLSB)

*Gethsemane*

**32** And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, **"Sit here while I pray."** **33** And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. **34** And he said to them, **"My soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch."** **35** And going a little farther, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. **36** And he said, **"Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."** **37** And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, **"Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."** **39** And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. **40** And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to answer him. **41** And he came the third time and said to them, **"Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand."**

**14:32-42** *Praying at Gethsemane*

Why do we pray for God's will? Why, if God's will never changes, pray at all? Those questions have been posed by more than a few believers. People often don't appreciate the full effect of prayer. Many are content to believe that the total benefit of prayer is the peace that comes from knowing God hears us. Others assert the blessing of prayer is that God works through it to bring our wills in line with his own. But Jesus' prayer seems to imply more. He prays, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Jesus did not want to change the Father's perfect will, but asked if he might change his way. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

A seminary professor of mine once offered his Freeway Theory. He asserted that it was his will to go home. To accomplish his will he could drive the interstate, exit near his house, make two left turns, and arrive home. He could also travel for seven miles on back roads, make a U-turn near a local school, and pull into his driveway. Or he could take the train, and so on. Each method would accomplish his will, because his will was to get home. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

Jesus teaches that the Father's will is "that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life" (Jn 6:40). Everything else is simply a way, a path, God uses to accomplish his will. The effect of prayer is never in changing God's will. (Luther says we should pray his will be done in our lives also.) It is in asking that God would accomplish his will in a different way, that he would take the train instead of the interstate. We're asking that he find another way to get the Gospel to, say, our nephew than through our sister's funeral, requiring her to die. When it came to his own Son, there was no other way for his will to be accomplished than through his death. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

**14:32** *Gethsemane*. A garden or orchard on the lower slopes of the Mount of Olives, one of Jesus' favorite places (see Lk 22:39; Jn 18:2). The name is Hebrew and means "oil press," i.e., a place for squeezing the oil from olives. (CSB)

This hill would scarcely have been so called if its groves had not been outstandingly luxuriant in comparison with the surrounding land and the olives not of economic importance for the city. Oil was probably the only export of Jerusalem. Gethsemane, which was located on the Mt of Olives, means an oil or perfume press. (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus – Joachim Jeremias – page 7)

**14:33** *distressed and troubled*. Jesus anticipated the great suffering that would soon come. (TLSB)

**14:34** *My soul*. Hbr expression. (TLSB)

*even to death*. Supreme sorrow. (TLSB)

*watch*. Gk *gregoreo*, "be alert." Lat translation gives us Eng "vigil." Stay awake and pray against the temptations of Satan. (TLSB)

**14:35** *a little farther*. C 30 yd, private but near His disciples (cf Lk 22:41). (TLSB)

*fell on the ground*. His posture reflected deep grief. (TLSB)

*hour*. Not simply 60 minutes, but the whole ordeal He must face at that time. (TLSB)

*pass from Him*. Jesus fully experienced the agony of soul caused by the burden of sin He was about to bear even unto death. Ambrose: "He has taken upon Him the substance of man, and therewith its affections.... Not as God, then, but as man, speaks He, for could God be ignorant of the possibility or impossibility of aught?" (NPNF 2 10:228). (TLSB)

**14:36** *Abba, Father*. Expressive of an especially close relationship to God. (CSB)

*this cup*.† The chalice of death and of God's wrath that Jesus took from the Father's hand in fulfillment of his mission. What Jesus dreaded was not death as such, but the burden of his death as the one who was taking the sin of mankind upon himself. (CSB)

*Yet not what I will, but what You will*. Jesus always submitted to His Father's will. (TLSB)

**14:37** *Simon*. Perhaps Simon is singled out because of his bold assertion that he would not fail Jesus (see vv. 29–31). (CSB)



**14:38** *fall into temptation.* Be attacked by temptation. Here the temptation is to be unfaithful in face of the threatening circumstances confronting them. (CSB)

Similar to the sixth petition of the Lord's Prayer (Lk 11:4). (TLSB)

*The spirit is willing.* When that part of man that is spirit is under God's control, it strives against human weakness. The expression is taken from Ps 51:12. (CSB)

Refers to the complete depravity of the whole person. Luther: "When our hearts are troubled with sorrow, then truly God Himself sorrows, who died that we might be justified, holy, and full of joy" (AE 13:138). (TLSB)

**14:40** *what to answer.* The disciples had no excuse for their failure to watch and pray. (TLSB)

**14:41** *betrayed.* He, who is God of God, is about to place Himself in the hands of sinners so that He might save all sinners. (TLSB)

**14:32–42** On the eve of His Passion, Jesus prays in agony, yet He concludes by praying that the Father's will be done. The disciples fall asleep while praying, faithless in the critical hour. Spiritual sleepiness steals over us too when we need to watch and pray. But our Savior is ever vigilant and interceding on our behalf, that the Lord might answer our prayers in mercy. • Faithful High Priest, intercede for us at Your Father's throne, that He may pardon and bless us for Your sake. Amen. (TLSB)

#### *Jesus Arrested*

**43** And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. **44** Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man. Seize him and lead him away under guard." **45** And when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" And he kissed him. **46** And they laid hands on him and seized him. **47** But one of those who stood by drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. **48** And Jesus said to them, "**Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. But let the Scriptures be fulfilled.**" **50** And they all left him and fled.

#### **14:43-65** *Enduring the Arrest and Trial*

The Sanhedrin has arranged false witnesses but, humorously, they seem unable to agree. It is Jesus' truthful testimony about himself that brings conviction. In response to the question *ho huios tou eulogētou*, he answers, "I am." He is convicted of blasphemy (insult or irreverence toward God), which, ironically, is the crime of many at the foot of the cross. The NIV renders 15:29 with the words "hurled insults," and the ESV translates the same word as "derided," but the Greek root indicates that Christ was blasphemed, *eblasphēmoun*. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 2)

**14:43** *a crowd armed with swords and clubs.* Auxiliary police or servants of the court assigned to the task of maintaining public order beyond the precincts of the temple. John (18:3) indicates that at least some of the Roman cohort of soldiers were in the arresting group, along with officers of the temple guard. The fact that some carried clubs suggests that they were conscripted at the last moment. (CSB)

*chief priests ... teachers of the law ... elders.* The warrant for Jesus' arrest had been issued by the Sanhedrin. (CSB)

**14:44** *sign.* Necessary in the dark. (TLSB)

**14:45** *Rabbi.* Hebrew word for "(my) teacher." (CSB)

Ironic use of a title of respect. (TLSB)

*kissed him.* A token of respect with which disciples customarily greeted their rabbi. See note on Lk 22:47. (CSB)

**14:46** *laid hands on Him.* Arrested Him. (TLSB)

**14:47** *one of those standing near.* We know from John that it was Peter, and the servant he struck was named Malchus (Jn 18:10). (CSB)

**14:49** *Scriptures be fulfilled.* Perhaps a reference to Isa 53, or more particularly to Zec 13:7, quoted by Jesus in v. 27 and fulfilled (at least in part) at this time. (CSB)

OT promised salvation through the death of the Messiah (cf Lk 24:25, 44–47). Luther: "Such courage must be the work of none other than the Holy Spirit.... The world is not able to have or give this courage; for it places its reliance only in the things it sees, in goods, reputation, and high honor. When what it boasts of comes to an end—as it all must come to an end—its courage also vanishes, and sheer despair remains" (AE 24:118–19). (TLSB)

**14:50** *deserted left him.* In fulfillment of vv. 27–31. (CSB)

**14:43–50** Representatives of the Jewish ruling Council arrest Jesus, apprehending Him at night outside the city to avoid causing a riot among His supporters. God's plan of salvation moves forward, using the "success" of these enemies to move closer to the cross for the sake of our salvation. • "O wondrous Love, what have You done! The Father offers up His Son, Desiring our salvation. O Love, how strong You are to save! You lay the One into the grave Who built the earth's foundation." Amen. (LSB 438:3) (TLSB)

*A Young Man Flees*

**51 And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.**

**14:51** *A young man.* † Not specifically identified, but his anonymity may suggest that this was John Mark, writer of this Gospel. Since all had deserted Jesus (v. 50) and did not witness the incident, it is more than likely that the youth, who was too young to be a disciple, mentioned his experience in his Gospel. (CSB)

Detail unique to Mk; it is thought to be Mark himself. (TLSB)

*a linen garment.* Ordinarily the outer garment was made of wool. The fine linen garment left behind in the hand of a guard indicates that the youth was from a wealthy family. (CSB)

A linen robe worn under a woolen outer garment. (TLSB)

**14:52** *fled cloth* – The absence of an undergarment suggests that he had dressed hastily to follow Jesus. (CSB)

He was in such a desperate hurry that he left behind the garment (cf v 51). (TLSB)

**14:51–52** Jesus is abandoned by His disciples, including a young man (possibly Mark) who has witnessed the arrest. We cannot count on our own courage or strength in the face of Satan and his forces. Jesus accomplishes the plan of salvation without aid from any human ally. • Stand with me, Jesus, and grant me courage to withstand all temptations by which I might depart from Your good way. Amen. (TLSB)

*Before the Sanhedrin*

**53** And they led Jesus to the high priest. And all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes came together. **54** And Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he was sitting with the guards and warming himself at the fire. **55** Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking testimony against Jesus to put him to death, but they found none. **56** For many bore false witness against him, but their testimony did not agree. **57** And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, **58** “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.’” **59** Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. **60** And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” **61** But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” **62** And Jesus said, **“I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”** **63** And the high priest tore his garments and said, “What further witnesses do we need? **64** You have heard his blasphemy. What is your decision?” And they all condemned him as deserving death. **65** And some began to spit on him and to cover his face and to strike him, saying to him, “Prophecy!” And the guards received him with blows.

**14:53–15:15** Jesus’ trial took place in two stages: a Jewish trial and a Roman trial, each of which had three episodes. For the Jewish trial these were: (1) the preliminary hearing before Annas, the former high priest (reported only in Jn 18:12–14, 19–23); (2) the trial before Caiaphas, the ruling high priest, and the Sanhedrin (14:53–65); and (3) the final action of the council, which terminated its all-night session (15:1). The three episodes of the Roman trial were: (1) the trial before Pilate (15:2–5); (2) the trial before Herod Antipas (only in Lk 23:6–12); and (3) the trial before Pilate continued and concluded (15:6–15). Since Mark gives no account of Jesus before Herod Antipas, the trial before Pilate forms a continuous and uninterrupted narrative in this Gospel (15:2–15). (CSB)

**14:53** *high priest.* Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas, the former high priest. (CSB)

*all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law.* The entire Sanhedrin. (CSB)

**14:54** *courtyard of the high priest.* The Sanhedrin may have met at Caiaphas’s house to ensure secrecy. (CSB)

In his residence on the south side of Jerusalem. This group may have met here for privacy. (TLSB)

**14:55** *Sanhedrin*. The high court of the Jews. In NT times it was made up of three kinds of members: chief priests, elders, and teachers of the law. Its total membership numbered 71, including the high priest, who was presiding officer. Under Roman jurisdiction the Sanhedrin was given a great deal of authority, but they could not impose capital punishment. (CSB)

To gain a death sentence, the accusers needed proof that Jesus threatened Roman rule. Although there was no evidence that Jesus was an insurrectionist, they would charge Him as such (15:3). (TLSB)

**14:56** *Many testified falsely against him*. In Jewish judicial procedure, witnesses functioned as the prosecution. (CSB)

OT Law required testimony to be established by two or three witnesses. (TLSB)

*did not agree*. According to Dt 19:15 a person could not be convicted unless two or more witnesses gave testimony, which assumes that their testimonies had to agree. (CSB)

**14:58** There is no statement by Jesus precisely like this in the Gospels. It is probably an allusion to what is reported in Jn 2:19. (CSB)

Jesus had used such words to predict His death and resurrection and was not speaking about Herod's temple. (TLSB)

**14:61** *Son of the Blessed*. "The Blessed One" was a way of referring to God without pronouncing his name. The title was therefore equivalent to "Son of God," though in this context it would seem not to refer to deity but to royal Messiahship, since in popular Jewish belief the Messiah was to be a man, not God. (CSB)

The priest avoided using the name of God as a custom of respect for the divine name. (TLSB)

**14:62** *I am*. Jesus decisively identified Himself as the Son of God. (TLSB)

*Son of Man*. This Son of Man saying brings together Da 7:13 and Ps 110:1. (CSB)

**14:63** *tore his clothes*. A sign of great grief or shock (see Ge 37:29; 2Ki 18:37; 19:1). In the case of the high priest it was a form of judicial act expressing the fact that he regarded Jesus' answer as blasphemous. (CSB)

He believed that Jesus committed blasphemy by claiming to be God. (TLSB)

**14:64** *blasphemy*. The sin of blasphemy not only involved reviling the name of God (see Lev 24:10–16) but also included any affront to his majesty or authority (see Mk 2:7; 3:28–29; Jn 5:18; 10:33). Jesus' claim to be the Messiah and, in fact, to have majesty and authority belonging only to God was therefore regarded by Caiaphas as blasphemy, for which the Mosaic law prescribed death by stoning (Lev 24:16). (CSB)

Capital crime in Judaism. (TLSB)

*all condemned Him*. All present passed unanimous judgment. They reasoned God would not actually let His "Chosen One" suffer such humiliation and defeat. (TLSB)

**14:65** *began to spit at him ... struck him with their fists.* Conventional gestures of rejection and condemnation (Nu 12:14; Dt 25:9; Job 30:10; Isa 50:6). (CSB)

*they blindfolded him.* An old interpretation of Isa 11:2–4 held that the Messiah could judge by smell without the aid of sight. (CSB)

Blindfolding and striking reflected a misunderstanding of Is 11:2–4. (TLSB)

*Prophesy!* Say who it was who struck you! (CSB)

**14:53–65** The Jewish ruling Council convicts Jesus of blasphemy for claiming to be the messianic King. Even though all of Jesus’ supporters have abandoned Him, He stands ready to bear the sins of the world. God uses the plans and plots of His enemies to accomplish our salvation. • “Jesus, I will ponder now On Your holy passion; With Your Spirit me endow For such meditation. Grant that I in love and faith May the image cherish Of Your suff’ring, pain, and death That I may not perish.” Amen. (LSB 440:1) (TLSB)

*Peter Disowns Jesus*

**66** And as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came, **67** and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with the Nazarene, Jesus.” **68** But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you mean.” And he went out into the gateway and the rooster crowed. **69** And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, “This man is one of them.” **70** But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, “Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” **71** But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know this man of whom you speak.” **72** And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, **“Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.”** And he broke down and wept.

**14:66** *below.* While Jesus was being beaten in an upstairs room of Caiaphas’s house, Peter was below in the courtyard. (CSB)

The trial of Jesus took place on an upper floor of the residence. (TLSB)

*one of the servant girls.* The doorkeeper (Jn 18:16). (CSB)

**14:67** *Nazarene.* Jesus was raised in Nazareth. (TLSB)

**14:68** *I neither know nor understand what you mean* Common in Jewish law for a formal, legal denial. (CSB)

**14:70** *Galilean.* Galileans were easily identified by their dialect. Peter’s speech showed him to be a Galilean, and his presence among the Judeans in the courtyard suggested he was a follower of Jesus. (CSB)

**14:70** *you are a Galilean.* This may have been obvious from Peter’s accent (cf Mt 26:73). (TLSB)

**14:71** *invoke a curse.* A desperate means to make the people around him believe his lie. (TLSB)

**14:72** *he broke down and wept.* Peter was deeply sorry for his denial. Luther: “The church of God has great need of these examples. For what would become of us? What hope would be left for us if Peter had not denied Christ and all the apostles had not taken offense at Him, and if Moses, Aaron, and David had not fallen? Therefore God wanted to console sinners with these examples and to say: ‘If you have fallen, return; for the door of mercy is open to you. You, who are conscious of no sin, do not be presumptuous; but both of you should trust in My grace and mercy’ ” (AE 7:11). (TLSB)

**14:66–72** While Jesus stands firm before Caiaphas, on trial for His life, Peter three times denies knowing Jesus. Fear leads us to do things we later regret. Only God can give us the courage to face difficult situations, especially persecution. Not only did Jesus later forgive Peter, but He also even reinstated this apostle to his office (cf Jn 21:15–19). Therefore, be comforted because your Lord will likewise be merciful toward you. • “What punishment so strange is suffered yonder! The Shepherd dies for sheep that loved to wander; The Master pays the debt His servants owe Him, Who would not know Him.” Amen. (LSB 439:4) (TLSB)