



# The Gospel of Mark

A Living Word Independent Bible Study



The Gospel of Mark  
Part 36  
Mark 14:12-31

A Living Word Independent Bible Study

# Mark 14:12-31

(NIV)

## INTRODUCTION

We are now in our second session covering the long 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of Mark's Gospel.

The familiar scenes in this chapter include:

The Anointing of Jesus (lesson 35)

The Lord's Supper (this lesson)

The Prediction of Peter's Denial (this lesson)

The Garden of Gethsemane (next lesson)

The Arrest of Jesus

Jesus' Jewish Trial

Peter's Denial

We will be looking at the Lord's Supper and the Prediction of Peter's Denial in this lesson.

# Mark 14:12-31

(NIV)

## INTRODUCTION

As we begin the story of the Last Supper, we should note the very strong parallel to the story of Jesus' initial entry into Jerusalem back in 11:1-6! As then,

Jesus sends two disciples ahead.

Jesus gives explicit directions to them.

They are to go into a village/city.

They are to speak to those they encounter, with a quote from the Teacher/Master.

They go and find everything just as Jesus has told them.

Through the words in the Institution of the Lord's Supper, we will see that Jesus understood what was about to happen to him as accomplishing atonement for sin – he understood its meaning and its importance.

## Mark 14:12 (NIV)

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

"first day of the Feast"

This means the day of Passover itself.

Mark presents the Last Supper as a Passover meal.

Matthew and Luke agree.

John, though, makes this meal take place the night before. It is important for Jesus to be sacrificed WITH the Passover lambs for John's telling of the gospel.

There are many arguments in Christian scholarship as to which is "correct".

For our purposes in the study of Mark's Gospel, Mark is confident it is a Passover meal.

"sacrifice the Passover lamb"

By convention, Jesus would have gone to the temple, slit the lamb's throat, and the blood would drain into a silver or gold basin held by a priest. The priest would then take the basin to the altar and sprinkle the blood at its base.

Thousands of lambs would be sacrificed in this way in the course of the day.

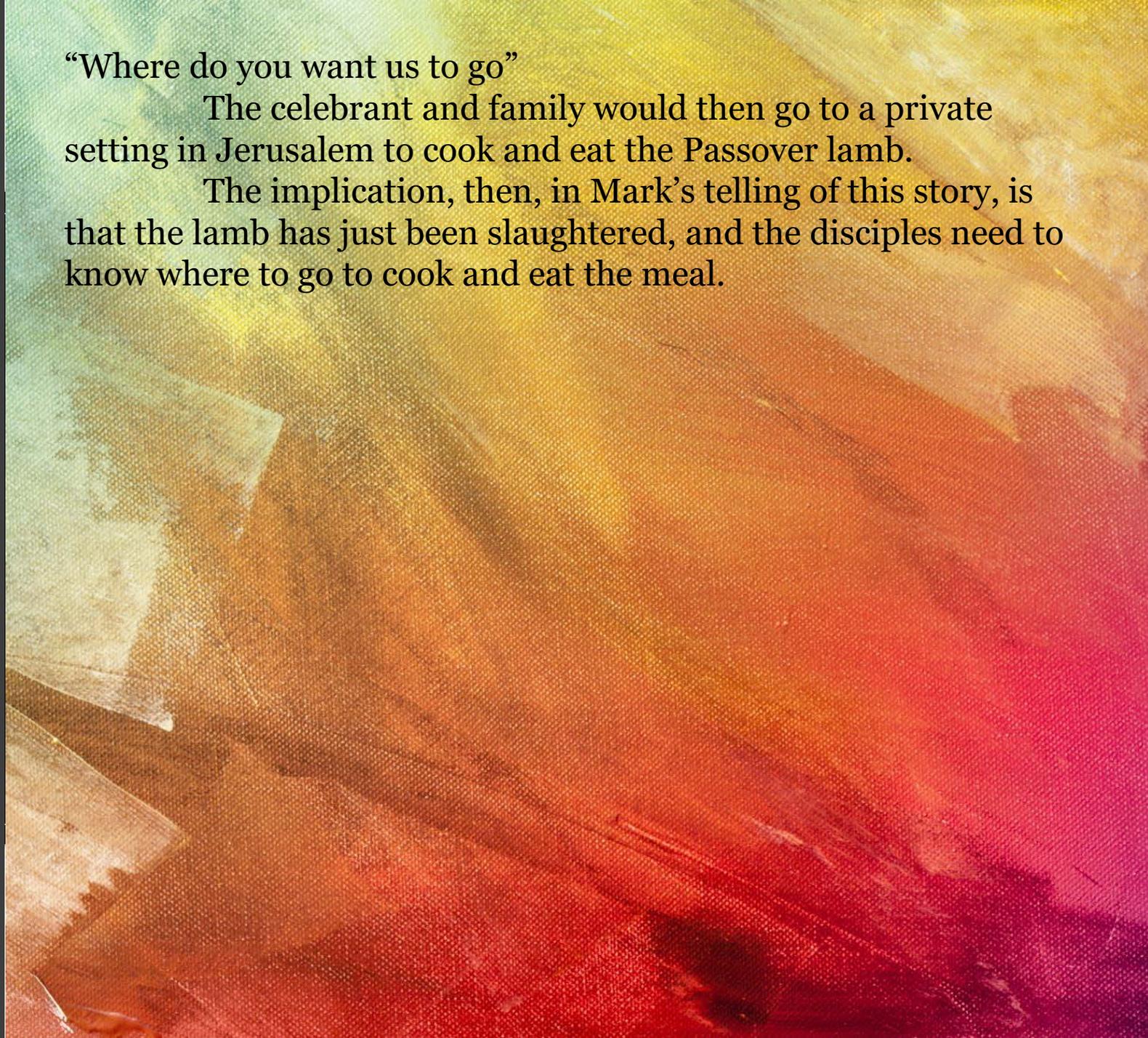
## Mark 14:12 (NIV)

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

"Where do you want us to go"

The celebrant and family would then go to a private setting in Jerusalem to cook and eat the Passover lamb.

The implication, then, in Mark's telling of this story, is that the lamb has just been slaughtered, and the disciples need to know where to go to cook and eat the meal.



## Mark 14:13 (NIV)

So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him.”

“sent two of his disciples”

Two are selected to go ahead and take care of the arrangements.

“go into the city”

Jesus has made prior arrangements to eat in a private room.

Apparently, this is unknown to the disciples being sent.

“a man carrying a jar of water”

This is interesting – we would think they would see **MANY** such men!

But culturally, men typically carried water in skins, and women carried water in jars.

This **MAY** have made the man “stand out” to the disciples.

# Mark 14:14-15

(NIV)

“Say to the owner of the house he enters, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.”

“say to the owner of the house”

The phrase functions as a password, for the disciples to identify themselves to the owner, supporting a “secure” arrangement.

“The Teacher”

The title seems deliberately anonymous.

“a large upper room”

A large number of people will be present: Jesus, the Twelve, and women (who would serve the men), and perhaps even children (since some disciples, at least, were married men).

“furnished and ready”

The words imply carpet and upholstered couches.

“make preparations for us”

They are to set up the room and prepare the food.

## Mark 14:16 (NIV)

The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

“found things just as Jesus had told them”

Everything is as Jesus said it would be.

This demonstrates that, again, Jesus is in complete control of the situation.

“they prepared the Passover”

Roasting the lamb

Providing:

Unleavened biscuits

Bitter herbs

Sauce

Water

Wine

Special furnishings like couches and lamps

# Mark 14:17 (NIV)

When evening came,  
Jesus arrived with the  
Twelve.

“When evening came”

We would expect a fuller account of a Passover meal – the telling of the Exodus story, the meaning of the lamb, the meaning of the bitter herbs.

There is nothing about the supper described here that makes it seem like a Passover meal.

There was a very clear format for how it should be celebrated.

Either Jesus doesn't follow the script, or adds the features that ARE described here to it.

## Mark 14:18 (NIV)

While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me – one who is eating with me.”

“While they were reclining”

This would be on the couches, in the prescribed posture.

“one of you will betray me”

In Mark’s Gospel, Judas is neither named nor rebuked by Jesus at the meal.

The narrator has told us about being Judas, but Jesus himself has not.

In fact, Jesus doesn’t seem to find out who it is in this telling of the story until his arrest, in 14:43.

There is no mention of money or people involved.

His awareness COULD be divine foreknowledge ... OR, it could be evidence of Jesus having friendly sources in Jerusalem who have let him know what they have learned.

“one who is eating with me”

To share a meal, and then betray, was the height of shame, viewed with loathing and outrage.

Psalm 41:9 – “Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.”

In John’s Gospel, Jesus actually quotes this Psalm in the Last Supper scene.

## Mark 14:19 (NIV)

They were saddened,  
and one by one they said  
to him, “Surely not I?”

“They were saddened”

This word is often translated “grieved”.

The only other time the word is used by Mark is in 10:22,  
when the rich man leaves Jesus “in sorrow”:

Mark 10:22 – “At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he  
had great wealth.”

The disciples are horrified to learn that one of their own  
will betray Jesus.

“Surely not I?”

Isn’t it interesting that none of them suspect OTHERS?

They worry that they, themselves, will betray Jesus to  
avoid the danger they know they will face.

# Mark 14:20 (NIV)

“It is one of the Twelve,”  
he replied, “one who  
dips bread into the bowl  
with me.”

“one of the Twelve”

In Mark’s Gospel, it is not even clear that Jesus knows it is JUDAS!

That it IS one of the Twelve is confirmed by Jesus, though.

The words indicate that more than just the Twelve were present at the meal.

Matthew’s and John’s Gospels embellish the story to show that Jesus DID both know and identify Judas immediately.

“dips bread into the bowl”

This is probably the bowl of sauce that the bitter herbs were also dipped into.

## Mark 14:21 (NIV)

“The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born.”

“The Son of Man will go”

Using “Son of Man” language from Daniel here means that prophecy must be in view here.

Perhaps, it is Daniel 9:26, or perhaps, simply the general theme of struggle against evil that is present throughout the book of Daniel.

Daniel 9:26 – “After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.”

“woe to that man”

The betrayer, ultimately, faces a worse fate than Jesus.

The fact that it is foretold in Scripture does NOT excuse the action of the betrayer, though!

It is only in the Gospel of John that Judas explicitly leaves the room at this time.

In Mark’s telling, there is no reason to believe Judas is absent from this point.

## Mark 14:22 (NIV)

While they were eating,  
Jesus took bread, gave  
thanks and broke it,  
and gave it to his  
disciples, saying, “Take  
it; this is my body.”

“While they were eating”

That is, during the course of the meal itself.

“Jesus took bread, gave thanks”

A blessing comes first.

The blessing is probably from the Mishnah, “Blessed are You, O Lord and God, King of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

“and broke it”

The action here is prophetic symbolism, in the mode of Isaiah or Jeremiah:

Isaiah 20:2-4 – “At that time the LORD spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz. He said to him, ‘Take off the sackcloth from your body and the sandals from your feet.’ And he did so, going around stripped and barefoot. Then the LORD said, ‘Just as my servant Isaiah has gone stripped and barefoot for three years, as a sign and portent against Egypt and Cush, so the king of Assyria will lead away stripped and barefoot the Egyptian captives and Cushite exiles, young and old, with buttocks bared – to Egypt’s shame.’”

Jeremiah 19\_10-11 – “Then break the jar while those who go with you are watching, and say to them, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I will smash this nation and this city just as this potter’s jar is smashed and cannot be repaired.’”

In a parallel way, as surely as the bread is broken, Jesus’ body will be also.

Also – the bread must be broken to be shared, and the sharing of himself with others is also being demonstrated here.

## Mark 14:22 (NIV)

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.”

“Take it; this is my body”

Luke adds additional familiar words to the saying:

Luke 22:19 – “And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.’”

Luke phrasing also corresponds to Paul’s letter to the Corinthians – which we should remember is older than ANY Gospel:

1 Corinthians 11:24 – “and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’”

Since the 1 Corinthians text is the most ancient written account of Jesus’ words that we have, it would seem that Mark has omitted the clause about “do this in remembrance of me” for unknown reasons.

## Mark 14:22 (NIV)

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.”

“Take it; this is my body” (continued)

The word “is” here means “signifies” or “represents”.

We should also recognize that the action is a Messianic claim, as well:

At the Passover meal (the Seder), a portion of bread was broken off, at the beginning of the meal, and shared by all at the end of the meal.

That piece is called the “afikoman”, which is translated “he who comes”.

It represents the portion of the meal that the Messiah will eat when he comes to celebrate with Israel.

So, Jesus breaks off the “afikoman”, distributes it, and says “This is me” ... the “he who comes” is ME.

When the disciples accept and eat it, they demonstrate faith that Jesus IS the Messiah, that Jesus IS “he who comes”.

## Mark 14:23 (NIV)

Then he took the cup,  
gave thanks and offered  
it to them, and they all  
drank from it.

“took the cup, gave thanks”

The blessing this time is probably “Blessed are you, O Lord and God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.”

“they all drank from it”

Remember Mark 10:38-39, where Jesus told James and John they would share “his cup”.

The MEANING of “sharing his cup” is what Jesus now explains.

## Mark 14:24 (NIV)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them.

### “my blood of the covenant”

Exodus 24:8 – “Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.’”

Jeremiah 31:31 – “‘The time is coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.’”

Zechariah 9:11 – “As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.”

From Jesus, the language of “covenant” means the promise of the coming Kingdom of God.

### “poured out”

This is language of sacrificial atonement from Leviticus:

Leviticus 4:7 – “The rest of the bull’s blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.”  
(See also 4:18, 25, 30, 34.)

See also Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12.

Jesus viewed his death as atonement – offered to God on behalf of Israel.

It is the death of one to atone for many:

Leviticus 17:11 – “For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.”

## Mark 14:24 (NIV)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them.

“poured out” (continued)

All the Scriptures, together, account for the variety of forms of the “words of institution” in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Matthew 26:28 – “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

Luke 22:20 – “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

1 Corinthians 11:25 – “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

## Mark 14:24 (NIV)

“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them.

“poured out” (continued)

Drinking blood is prohibited in the Old Testament:

Leviticus 7:26-27 – “And wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people.”

Leviticus 17:10-12 – “Any Israelite or any alien living among them who eats any blood – I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from his people. For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life. Therefore I say to the Israelites, ‘None of you may eat blood, nor may an alien living among you eat blood.’”

The reason for this is not what we might think – it is not because it is “gross” or dangerous.

Why the strong prohibition? Why would they be tempted to drink blood?

In their worldview, blood contains LIFE itself!

Therefore, it is VALUABLE, imparting life in some way.

But GOD ALONE owns life – it is not ours to drink!

Yet Jesus INVITES his disciples to partake of HIS life, God’s life – his blood. Partaking of the cup leads to eternal life:

John 6:54 – “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Thus, the cup here is a symbol, linked to the new covenant of atonement just as the blood of Leviticus was linked to the first covenant of atonement.

Jesus’ death will facilitate the coming of the Kingdom and redemption of Israel through the atonement made by his blood.

## Mark 14:25 (NIV)

“I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.”

“I tell you the truth”

Once again, these words always emphasize importance.

“I will not drink again”

A fuller form of this saying is given in Luke’s Gospel, adding words about not eating the Passover meal again, either:

Luke 22:15-16 – “And he said to them, ‘I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.’”

This will indeed be Jesus’ last Passover in the old order of things.

The next time he partakes will be in the Kingdom.

The word “anew” here implies this NEW order.

There is also reference here to the expectation of the Messianic banquet, giving rise to our Communion liturgy.

Isaiah 25:6 – “On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine – the best of meats and the finest of wines.”

Jesus, in sharing the bread and wine, invites his followers to share in this meaning, just as he invited them to carry their crosses.

He asks them, symbolically, to recognize his Messianic mission (in the bread) and the atoning value of his coming death (in the wine).

# Mark 14:26 (NIV)

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

“When they had sung a hymn”

Probably, this would have been the Great Hallel found in Psalms 113-118, which were traditionally sung at the end of the Passover meal.

“out to the Mount of Olives”

As we have seen, this is just outside the city on the east side of the Temple Mount.

We have seen it mentioned in both 11:1 and 13:3.

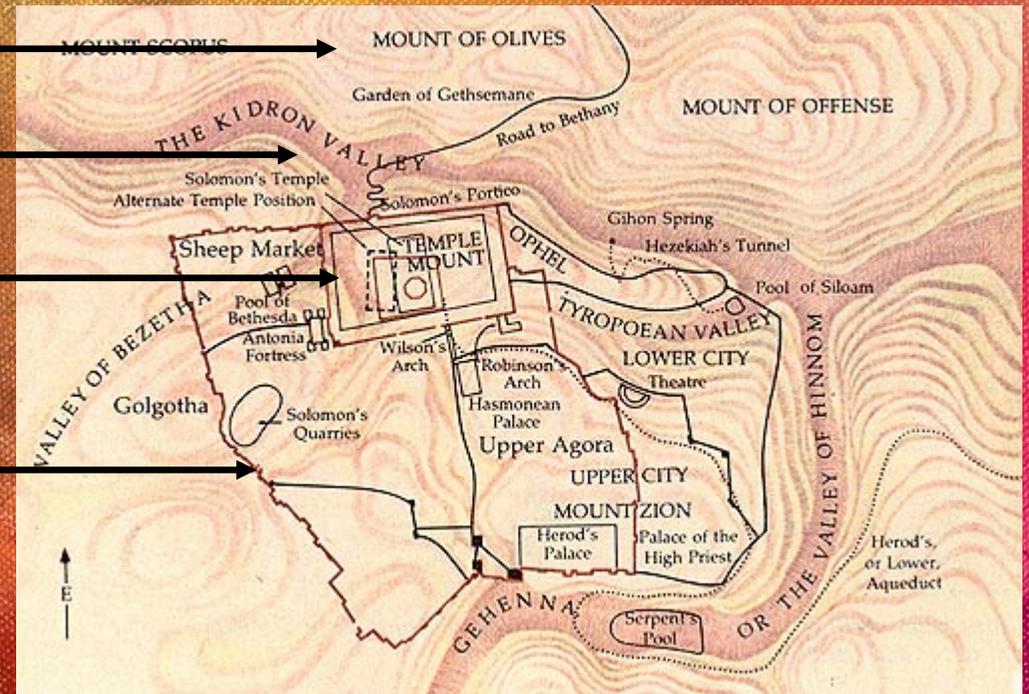
It seems to have been a favorite spot of Jesus’ outside of Jerusalem.

Mount of Olives

Kidron Valley

Temple Mount

Walled City of Jerusalem



## Mark 14:27 (NIV)

“You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’”

“you will all fall away”

Jesus had foretold his betrayal at the Last Supper, in 14:17-21.

Now, he claims that, in fact, ALL the disciples will fall away.

The Greek words translate more literally, “You will all be scandalized”.

Remember also, from Mark 4:17, that “falling away” also implies “shallow roots”, and also recall the disciples’ continuing failure to really seem to “get it”.

“for it is written”

The prediction is based on Zechariah 13:7 – and thus, cannot be avoided.

Zechariah 13:7 – “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is close to me!’ declares the LORD Almighty. ‘Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones.’”

Remember that Zechariah had also been referenced by Jesus when he rode the colt on his entry into Jerusalem.

## Mark 14:28 (NIV)

“But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

“But after I have risen”

Jesus gives another reference to his coming Resurrection! But we see in the next verse that the disciples do not respond to THAT, but to the “fall away” prediction.

“ahead of you into Galilee”

Jesus will lead them again, in Galilee, as before. Normally, after the Passover, the disciples would have returned home to Galilee.

Jesus tells them, he will be waiting for them there.

# Mark 14:29-30

(NIV)

Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.”

“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “today – yes, tonight – before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.”

“Peter declared”

Peter gives a prediction very different from Jesus’.

But Jesus knows Peter better than Peter knows himself.

We have seen similar outbursts from Peter before, in 8:31-33, 9:5-6, and 10:27-28, giving rise to his traditional “impetuous” reputation.

“I tell you the truth”

Jesus counters Peter with an even more specific prediction concerning Peter specifically.

Peter will deny three times before the rooster crows twice (early in the morning, before first light) – implying, VERY SOON.

Matthew and Luke do not contain the reference to the rooster crowing “twice”.

Again, this variance attests to its authenticity.

“disown”

In biblical vocabulary, this is the opposite of “confess”, referring to a refusal to worship God.

Confess faith in God versus disown God (deny God).

“three times”

“Three” probably implies fullness or completion of denial.

# Mark 14:31 (NIV)

But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same.

“Peter insisted emphatically”

Peter is determined in his protests. He is sincere, but he does not know how severe the test will be.

“the others said the same”

They are brave when they are in a group, and unthreatened.

Peter often gets singled out, but Jesus predicted they would ALL abandon him.

And they ALL agreed, here, that they would never forsake Jesus.

In 14:50 just ahead, we will see that they all DO.

We will also see that only Peter showed ANY courage in following Jesus all the way to the courtyard of the high priest.

Before failing there, of course.

# Mark 14:12-31

(NIV)

## SUMMARY

Jesus continues to demonstrate his complete control of his destiny.

The disciples find a room to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, just as Jesus has told them they would.

In Mark, the scene of the Last Supper begins with Jesus' prediction of betrayal – but it is not entirely clear in Mark's Gospel that Jesus knows it is Judas who will be the betrayer.

All the disciples question whether it might be they themselves.

In sharing the bread and the wine, prophetic symbolism of his body and blood, Jesus invites his followers to recognize both his Messianic mission and the atoning value of his coming death.

When Peter extends the prediction of betrayal to say that ALL the disciples will fall away, Peter is most vocal in his rejection of this saying.

Even after Jesus makes the time frame explicit, Peter, and all the disciples, put on a brave front, with Peter even claiming a willingness to die with Jesus.



## Bibliography

The following materials have been used as sources for this Bible study:

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