



THE GOSPEL OF  
**Luke**

**SESSION OBJECTIVE: LUKE 22:1-6**

To understand how the enemy subtly works behind the scenes to oppose Christ.

## An Opportune Time

Lurking beneath the narrative of Luke's Gospel account is the enemy of God, Satan. He first made his appearance in chapter 4 and tempted the Son of God during a remarkable, supernatural 40-day fast (Lk. 4:1-2). Jesus was tempted three times by the devil (Lk. 4:3, 5-7, 9-11), and three times Jesus responded with a rebuke from Scripture (Lk. 4:4, 8, 12). After the third temptation and Jesus' third rebuke, the temptation of the enemy ended and he departed, but there is one key phrase that Luke included to foreshadow future events in his Gospel account: "he departed from him until an opportune time" (Lk. 4:13). In other words, Luke was signaling to the reader that while this temptation has ended, it will not be the last time we see the devil attempting to attack the Son of God.

In Luke 22, this "opportune time" presents itself quite clearly. The disciples are soon to gather together and just prior to this gathering, "Satan entered Judas called Iscariot" (Lk. 22:3). This throws into motion a sequence of events that will ultimately lead to the arrest, beating, and death of Jesus Christ. From the reader's perspective, it seems like the bad guy is getting the upper hand, but one must remember the words of Jesus in John's Gospel: "No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again" (Jn. 10:18). Luke 22 presents "an opportune time" for the devil, but Jesus has dominion over time; He is the first and the last, who was, and is, and is to come (Rev. 1:8).

## The Passover

Chapter 22 begins as an important feast to the Jewish community was approaching: “Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover” (Lk. 22:1). The Passover was an integral feast that the Jewish community observed every year to commemorate God’s faithfulness to draw His people out of the land of Egypt and into the wilderness and eventually the promised land (Ex. 12:1-14). Bear in mind, this feast anticipates the incoming institution of the Lord’s Supper by Jesus (Lk. 22:14-23), a kind of final fulfillment of the Passover meal, that commemorates the blood of the final sacrificial Lamb (Heb. 9:12-14) and that institutes a new covenant in His blood (Lk. 22:20).

### **A GROWING DISMAY**

As the feast approaches, the efforts to execute Jesus increased as well: “And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people” (Lk. 22:2). Tiede notes, “There is no longer any question whether Jesus should die. Only the question of means to that end is discussed.”<sup>1</sup> Notice, again, that the Pharisees are missing in this description. As Passion week ramps up, the primary antagonists out of the religious leaders are the chief priests and the scribes. However, the ultimate antagonist is not any religious leader or even figure, but “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

## Satan

Verse 3 unveils the ultimate antagonist: “Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve.” We are not given details for how this happened or what necessary conditions allow for this to happen. What we do know, from Luke’s account, is that this is not the first time that Satan has been mentioned. As discussed above, in chapter 4, the temptation of Satan is recorded. Beyond that, Jesus mentions him in Luke 8:12, 10:18, 11:18, and 13:16. While Judas is the first disciple of Jesus that he explicitly attacks, he will not be the last. After some seemingly erratic behavior by Peter, Jesus rebukes him: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat” (Lk. 22:31). Following this, Jesus clearly states that this “opportune time” belongs to the enemy while responding to the religious leaders of His day: “When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness” (Lk. 22:53).

It is interesting to note that while this seems like a possession account, and almost certainly is, it defies what we might expect a demonic or Satanic possession would look like. Typically possessions are thought to look like unrestrained individuals with super-human strength and the ability to know things that the individual should not be able to know a la the *Gerasenes Demoniac* (See: Lk. 8:26-33). However, in this instance, Judas is controlled and almost doesn’t seem to be aware of the Satanic influence he is now under. Verse 4 simply says: “He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them.” Judas seems to be in control of his faculties and able to restrain himself. He does not present the same kind of erratic behavior, supernatural strength, or multiple personalities that the demoniac in Luke 8 presents, nor does he spew vomit or speak with foul language as is often popularized in pop culture. While there are legitimate accounts of demon possession that present these kinds of awful features, they do not seem to be present in Judas.

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<sup>1</sup> D. L. Tiede, *Luke, ACNT* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 376.

It should be noted, then, that demonic possession or influence sometimes simply looks like *active opposition to Christ*. Judas, under the influence of the devil, moves to conspire with Jesus' religious and political enemies to put Him to death. The Bible is replete with warnings against our sin that causes rebellion (Pr. 17:11; Is. 63:10; Ja. 4:17; 1 Jn. 3:4). There are times when our nature moves us in rebellion against God's good plans and designs for humanity; Romans 1 outlines what this looks like. However, there are times when active opposition to Christ might be the result of more than simply our sin nature, but rather some kind of demonic or Satanic influence, the result of a foothold given to the enemy (Eph. 4:27). The result of Judas' betrayal is met with gladness: "And they were glad, and agreed to give him money." He would not only enter into an agreement with the chief priests and the scribes, but they offered to reward him with money, a reward fitting for a man who had already sought other dishonest measures to make personal profit (Jn. 12:6). Thus, "he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd" (Lk. 22:6).

## A Note on Possession

It should also be noted that, at least according to this author's understanding of the Bible, Christians who have been born again cannot be possessed. Ephesians 1:13-14 says, "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory." Paul again speaks of the "seal" of the Spirit in Ephesians 4:30, and in both instances he is using imagery of the seal of a king that conveys ownership. In other words, if you belong to Christ, you belong to no one else. With that said, it is possible to be "demonized," or attacked by demonic forces (Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 10:3-5). It is also possible to be led astray by them (1 Tim. 4:1).

## What About Now?

One primary takeaway is the importance for Christians to protect themselves against the lures of Satan and his minions. We are to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5) rather than be lured and tempted into destruction (1 Cor. 7:5). This also highlights the importance of accountability and speaking truth into the lives of fellow Christians as a preventative measure against being led astray (1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:9).

## Study Questions

### Day One

1. Read Luke 22:1. What feast was approaching? What was it also called? What was the importance of it?

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2. Read Luke 22:2. Who is mentioned in this verse and what were they doing?

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### Day Two

1. Read Luke 22:3. Who entered Judas? Who was Judas?

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2. Read Luke 22:4. What did Judas do after Satan entered him? With whom did he confer?
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### Day Three

1. Read Luke 22:5. How did the chief priests and scribes respond to him? What did they offer him?
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2. Read John 12:6. What did Judas used to do with the moneybag? What does this demonstrate about the character of Judas?
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### Day Four

1. Read Luke 22:6. Did Judas agree with taking the money? What did he begin to do after this?
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2. Read Luke 4:13. Of which opportune time does this passage likely refer, and why?
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## Week 78 Discussion: Unrighteous Gain

In Luke 22:4-6, Judas conspires with the chief priests and scribes to betray Jesus and have Him arrested in exchange for money. Money seems to be the lure on which Judas regularly bites and this time it will end in his destruction, both physically and spiritually (John 17:12). Talk as a group about why material gain can be such a temptation, and what Christians ought to do to avoid being tempted into sin for payment.

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever been paid for something that you later regretted?
2. Why is money such an alluring thing for most people?
3. How has the pursuit of monetary gain gotten you in trouble in the past?
4. Do you know anyone who has “sold out” for monetary gain? Share with the group if you’re willing.
5. How does the Bible warn us concerning money? Share Bible verses in your answers.
6. How can believers practically hold one another accountable against this kind of temptation?

## Takeaways:

1. Satan enters Judas who is called Iscariot.
2. Judas conspires with the chief priests and the scribes to betray Jesus and have Him arrested in exchange for money.