Community Group Discussion Guide

November 8, 2026

Mark 14:12-26 | Betrayal to Blessing

MOTIVATE

⇒ *Starter Question: What is one of the most special meals you have shared with someone? What made it so special?*

DISCUSS

Jesus triumphantly entered Jerusalem on a Sunday, humbly riding on a donkey. Over the next week, He cleansed the temple of thieves, denounced the Jewish authorities, and taught about the future destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. In Mark 14:12-26, near the end of the week, Jesus celebrated and transformed the Passover meal and gave His disciples messages that startled them and gave them hope. This was Jesus' last night with His disciples before He would be arrested, tried, and crucified. As He neared the day of His death, nothing that was about to occur was a surprise to Jesus.

1. MARK 14:12-21: Jesus endured the suffering of betrayal.

Mark 14:12: *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?"*

Mark mentioned that it was "the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb."

Passover was one of the most important feasts of all the holy days in the Old Testament. The Passover commemorated God's deliverance of His people from Egypt. In Exodus 12, God sent the final plague against the Egyptians, the death of the firstborn. But God provided atonement and rescue for the Israelites. God told Moses that the people should sacrifice a perfect lamb and spread its blood over their doorposts (Exodus 12:7-8).

The people obeyed, and the households with the blood on their doorposts were "passed over" by God. God commanded Israel to celebrate the Passover meal every year in remembrance of their deliverance (Exodus 12:17). In order to celebrate the Passover, the people traveled to Jerusalem, where the sacrificial lambs would be offered at the temple (Deuteronomy 12:11; 16:2).

⇒ *What does it say about the disciples that they still observed Passover and wanted to share it with Jesus?*

⇒ *Why are "acts of remembrance" good for our faith even today?*

Mark 14:13-16: *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.*

On the Thursday before Good Friday, Jesus sent Peter and John (Luke 22:8) to make preparations for the Passover meal. They would meet a man carrying a water jar—a task usually done by women, not men. They were to follow the man into the house and say to the master of the house, "The Teacher says, 'Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" According to Jewish custom, if a person in Jerusalem had a room available, he was to lend it to any pilgrims who needed a place to celebrate the feast.
Jesus indicated that the master of the house would show them an upper room furnished and ready where they could prepare the Passover meal. The disciples found things just as Jesus told them.

⇒ *Why is it important to remember that all the events of Jesus' Passion Week were under His control—even down to where He would eat His final meal?*

Mark 14:17-21: *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."*

On this very night, Jesus would be betrayed by Judas, one of His original twelve disciples. In Mark 14:10-11, Judas had already made prior arrangements with the chief priests to betray Jesus. Mark set up the scene for Judas' betrayal in verse 17 by describing how Jesus and His disciples were together, reclining at the same table, observing the Passover feast as commanded in the law of Moses. The image evokes a sense of intimacy and fellowship. To break bread with someone was to enter into a pact of friendship and mutual trust.

What should have been a joyous remembrance of God's deliverance, suddenly became somber as Jesus declared, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." Two times already in Mark's Gospel, Jesus had mentioned His betrayal (Mark 9:31-32; 10:33-34), yet His disciples did not understand what He was talking about. Jesus, on the other hand, knew full well what awaited Him, but until this point, He had not let it be known that it would be one of His closest friends who would betray Him.

⇒ *While Mark did not describe Judas' motivations for betraying Jesus, how did Judas' preemptive actions make it clear that he fit in among the disciples with the access needed to betray Jesus, but he wasn't really one of them in his heart?*

Jesus' prediction of betrayal deeply troubled His disciples and would have seemed unbelievable to them. It would be an act of treachery to break bread and then to betray your host. Their question, "Is it I?" expected a negative response from Jesus. He did have enemies but it was hard to believe one was in this room and one of Jesus' inner circle of disciples. It was reasonable for them to be distressed and to ask for clarification. In Mark's account, there is no specific focus on Judas, as compared to John 13:23-30. Jesus said later in John 17:12, "I guarded them and not one of them is lost, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture may be fulfilled."

⇒ *Why was it always Jesus' mission to fulfill Scripture? What are some of the ways He had already done this as He made His way toward the cross?*

Jesus responded to the disciples' question by more specifically indicating that His betrayer was "one who is dipping bread into the dish with me"—something they all would have done. Dipping bread in a bowl was a typical feature of the meals in their day and was part of the Passover feast. This meant the betrayer sat close to Jesus and enjoyed a close relationship with Him. Being betrayed by a close friend, one who ate at the table, was one of the worst kinds of betrayal. While the other eleven disciples did not know who would do it, Judas had already set his plan in motion.

⇒ *What are some ways you might have the potential to betray Jesus?*

While the disciples were distressed, Jesus assured them "for the Son of Man goes as it is written of him." What Judas' did was not a random act of betrayal. It was prophesied in the Scriptures concerning the Messiah and was part of God's divine plan to save and redeem His people. Various Scriptures foretold facets of this betrayal. In John 13:18, Jesus quoted Psalm 41:9, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me." In this act of Judas, the Scriptures were fulfilled.

⇒ *How does Judas' fulfillment of prophecy challenge your understanding of the nature and authority of Scripture?*

Jesus pronounced a woe upon His betrayer. It was God's sovereign will that Jesus be betrayed, 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 betrayer would face God's judgment for his sin.

⇒ *Even though Jesus' betrayal and death were part of God's plan, why was Judas was personally responsible for His sinful actions?*

2. Mark 14:22-26: Jesus endured to the cross because of His faithfulness to the new covenant.
Mark 14:22: *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."*

After speaking of His coming death, Jesus took His disciples through the Passover meal. The disciples would have been expecting a normal Passover meal, but this one would be different. During a typical Passover meal, the would host would have served the bread of affliction which was meant to be a reminder of the suffering Israel faced in slavery in Egypt (Deuteronomy 16:3).

Jesus picked up the bread and blessed it, as Jews had done for centuries. But instead of calling His disciples to remember the affliction of the Israelites, Jesus took the bread and said, "This is my body." What had happened to the bread would happen to Jesus. The broken bread was an acted-out parable of Jesus offering up His life for many. He was saying that the bread was meant to be a reminder of the affliction His body would go through for salvation from our sins. In our place, our perfectly sinless Savior took the punishment for our sins upon Himself so we could receive eternal life. His body bore our affliction so that we might be spared.

⇒ *Why would this have been a shocking statement for the disciples? What "messianic reinterpretation" was Jesus presenting to them?*

⇒ *Discuss this quote: What is significant is that Jesus used an article of food so simple and so universal that the disciples could never again recline at a meal, take bread, bless it, and break it without thinking of the last night they were together with Jesus and what He did for them on the cross.* --Unknown

Mark 14:23-24: *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.*

After giving the bread a new meaning, Jesus took the cup and gave it new meaning as well. Jesus said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." Wine was considered to be the "blood" of the grape, plucked from the vine and crushed. Blood sealed a covenant. Jesus' sacrificial death marks a new act of redemption and a new relationship between God and the people—one that supersedes the old. Jesus' blood shed on the cross is the seal of the new covenant. The blood of animals offered over and over again year after year was no longer needed. Jesus' perfect blood, shed once for the forgiveness of sins, fully and finally accomplished salvation for all time (Hebrews 9:12, 25-26).

⇒ *By using the imagery of broken bread and blood poured out, how did Jesus imply that His death will be violent?*
⇒ *Verse 23 indicates they all drank of the cup Jesus offered. Drinking the cup of someone else meant entering into a communion relationship with that person, to the point of sharing his destiny. How would the disciples go on to share in Jesus' destiny (Mark 10:35-39)? How do we?*

The old covenant was inaugurated with blood, but the people could not hold up their end. Though they promised to do all that God commanded them (Exodus 19:8), they failed to keep God's laws (Jeremiah 31:32). Their sacrifices could cleanse them temporarily from their sin but could not change their hearts. Jesus' new covenant provided the internal change that the old covenant could not.

⇒ *Read Jeremiah 31:33-34: What promises did the prophet Jeremiah foretell about the new covenant?*

The Passover meal was meant to be a perpetual reminder of how God delivered His people from slavery in Egypt and drew them to Himself. Jesus now proclaimed a new memorial to remind us of the redemption He paid to rescue us from sin and death. Jesus was saying that all the sacrifices, all the blood of animals spilled out since the first Passover, pointed to Him. The Lord's Supper is meant to look back on what Jesus has done and also point us to what He will do in the future.

⇒ *As you look at Jesus' words of coming suffering, how does this shape your understanding of the cross and your salvation?*
⇒ *How should Jesus' sacrifice of His own body and blood shape the way we come to the Lord's Supper?*

Mark 14:25-26: *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."* 26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

In a traditional Passover meal, there are four cups of wine that symbolize the redemption of God's people. Many scholars believe Jesus did not drink the fourth cup since His vow to abstain from wine

was made before it was consumed along with the words, “I will take you as my people, and I will be your God (Exodus 6:7). Jesus reserved the drinking of this cup for the future restoration when He would drink it anew in the Kingdom of God, when He returns to redeem and restores this world finally and fully.

⇒ *How does the Lord’s Supper both point back to the cross and point forward to our resurrection in the Kingdom of God?*

On that day, the Bible tells us, there will be a great feast like that at a wedding, where Jesus will drink of the wine again with His people (Revelation 19:1-10). Jesus once again will be our host, and all the Lord’s Suppers we have tasted throughout our lives will be consummated in that meal with Him forever. Jesus spoke with certainty that no matter what was about to happen through the dark hours ahead, God’s kingdom would come.

A Passover meal customarily ended with the singing of traditional Passover hymns of praise from Psalm 113-118. Once Jesus and His disciples had done this, they then headed out to the Mount of Olives.

⇒ *When we focus on Jesus at the Last Supper, we see obedience, foreknowledge, and commitment. Jesus had a clear view of the cross, and He was not surprised at His betrayal, suffering, or death. As we walk through the heartbreak of our own lives, why can we have confidence that Jesus understands our griefs and sorrows?*

TRANSFORM

On the night before Jesus died, He gave His disciples the explanation and the meaning of His death, showing them how the Passover meal pointed to Him. Jesus took our sins upon Himself; He received the punishment we deserved. Jesus did this so that we might receive what we do not deserve—salvation and eternal life. The Lord’s Supper is a reminder of this sacrifice and the blessing of spiritual nourishment that is life in Christ. It is meant to be a reminder of deliverance from sin and death. Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper is to remind us of the price He paid to save us. He never wants us to forget that sacrifice. Not for His sake but for ours.

1. HEAD: Jesus’ declaration of the new covenant was not something that occurred in the heat of the moment. Rather, the new covenant pointed back to the covenant God promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34, culminating with the promise to forgive their iniquity and never remember their sin. When we observe the Lord’s Supper, we celebrate Jesus redeeming us and remembering it no longer.

⇒ *Why was it important for Jesus to institute the Lord’s Supper as a remembrance of both His death and the new covenant?*

2. HEART: Self-reflection and evaluation are appropriate, even necessary, and the Lord’s Supper provides an opportunity to participate in such reflection. As we contemplate our sin, consider our need for forgiveness, and then approach the table, our hearts are prepared to receive the grace Jesus offers.

⇒ *How does Jesus’ sacrifice for your sins encourage you to repent and come to Him for grace and forgiveness?*

3. HANDS: When we come to the Lord's table, we come with nothing in our hands. We need nothing in our hands. Jesus isn't asking for anything from us; He's giving everything to us. All we need for communion with Him is a recognition of our need and faith that Jesus supplies what we need. We come as we really are to who Jesus really is—our complete Savior.

⇒ *What would you say to a fellow believer who thinks they need to skip the Lord's Supper until they are "worthy?"*

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