

Matthew 22-09-18a

This is Sunday, the 18th of September, 2022. We continue our study this morning in the Gospel of Matthew. We're in chapter 26, and we have reached the point where Judas is in negotiations with the chief priests and the forces who want to do away with the Lord Jesus, and then we come to verse 17, which is where we pick up this morning, now on the first of unleavened bread.

Let's ask God's blessing on our fellowship, on our time of study and reflection, and we'll begin. Father, what a wonderful refreshment it is to come to the oasis of Your Word when the situation around us can be challenging, when there are forces within and without that would seek to distract us and to help us to forget who we are and why we're here. We're grateful for the fellowship of believers of like mind and the presence of Your Holy Spirit uniting us, blessing us through the gifts that You've distributed to each one.

We thank You for our fellowship. We thank You for this time and opportunity to be enriched and strengthened through the truth of Your Word, and we pray that as we look at it together this morning, that You will give us insight and understanding through the presence and power of Your Spirit so that we can be more closely conformed to the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are most of all grateful for Him, His ongoing ministry of intercession and intervention on our behalf, and we look forward to the day when He will return and take us to Himself and present us before Your throne.

Bless us as we look at Your Word together. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Beginning in verse 14, we saw that one of the 12 called Judas Iscariot went to the chief priest and said, what are you willing to give me if I deliver him to you? And they counted out to him 30 pieces of silver. So from that time, he sought opportunity to betray him, sought opportunity to betray him. The word that is translated here to betray is a Greek word that is quite fascinating.

It is paradidomi, paradidomi. And I'm not going to go off on examinations of this word, but there are some very interesting and applicational truths associated with this word. If we take a look at it in the lexicon, para, of course, means alongside, and didomi means to give.

So to give into the hands of another, is your first lexical definition. We have it often translated in connection with Judas and in a few other passages as betray. When you see the word betray in the New Testament, it is this word.

The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of men. What will you give me if I will betray him to you? But this masks off the meaning that this word conveys, the central meaning. And by doing so, we excuse ourselves from having to worry about it.

I would never betray my family. I would never betray my parents. I would never betray the Lord Jesus.

That's not at the center of the meaning of this word. Betrayal may be involved. It may include the kind of deceit and nefarious behavior that we associate with the word betray, but that's not what it means.

The first time we have this word in the New Testament, it is in Matthew 4.12. And this is when Jesus and the disciples hear that John the Baptist has been taken into custody, that he had been delivered up. And you remember the circumstances of that where John has been critical of Herod taking his brother's wife and so on. But there's no indication that one of the disciples of John betrayed him.

And this is how he was arrested. He was simply taken into custody. He was delivered over.

And to be given over, given a cross, to be delivered into the power or custody of another is at the heart of this. We saw it again in the following chapter, Matthew 5.25, where Jesus said, settle matters quickly with your adversary while you are still on the way to the court. Otherwise, he may hand you over to the judge, paradidimi.

He may get you arrested. He may tell the authorities where you are so that you can be picked up. But there's no sense of betrayal here in the sense of smiling in someone's face and then stabbing them in the back.

This is a simple handing over to legal authorities. And this is by far the more common use of this word. So in Matthew 10.4, the first mention of Judas as the one who delivered him over, the one who handed him across.

Parah, as you remember with parallel and other words like it, has the idea of there being a line and there is a crossing of a line. If you hand someone across, you hand them alongside, you transfer them from one side of the line to another. And this is often used to being taken into legal custody.

So in Matthew 10.17, Jesus warns the disciples that they will be delivered up to legal authorities. They will be handed over. And Jesus says in verse 19 of Matthew 10, when they hand you over, do not worry.

When they hand you across, when they transfer you. In Matthew 20.21, continuing that prediction, brother will deliver up brother unto death. Matthew 17.22, the son of man is going to be delivered into the hands of men.

And there's no indication there. If it meant betray, the disciples would immediately start saying, which one of us is going to betray him? Which one of us in his inner circle is going to do this nefarious, deceptive action. But being delivered up is like John being

arrested and handed over.

It's like apostles who are preaching being delivered up and standing before Kings and so on. So it doesn't have the insidious two-faced deceit aspect that we so often associate with the word betray. We have seen it again in that same context in Matthew 20.19, that when Jesus says, I will be delivered up to the chief priests, the son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and they will deliver him to the Gentiles.

The chief priests are not going to betray him to the Gentiles, so to speak. They're going to hand him over. In chapter 24 that we've seen recently, 24.9, when the disciples are seeking to preach the gospel, they will be delivered over to tribulation.

They will deliver you over to tribulation and kill you and you will be hated by all nations for my namesake as part of the beginning of sorrows there. And in verse 10, and then many will be offended, will deliver one another over and will hate one another. It may or may not be betrayal.

It could be an enemy that is a longstanding enemy, but then they hand you over and it's hardly a betrayal if they never pretended to be your friend. It's just a matter of being handed across, having the authorities called to come get you. And as you continue, our most recent chapter, Matthew chapter 25 in verse 14, you remember in the parable of the talents, the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.

Our word, paradidomi, he handed across, he handed over, he placed into their custody his possessions. He didn't betray his goods into the hands of his servants. He simply handed them over so that someone else is now in control.

You will be passed into the control. The son of man will be handed into the control of the chief priests and they will hand control of him over to the Gentiles. We'll see the importance of this after we document it a bit further.

But as the parable resolves in Matthew 25, 22, the one who had received two talents came and said, Lord, you paradidomi to me two talents. Look, I have gained two more beside. You handed them over to me and placed them in my control.

Of course, in our chapter 26, we saw this in verse two. We see it again in verse 15. What will you give me to hand him over to your control? And in our context now where we're going to pick up, Jesus is going to say, one of you will hand me over.

And throughout the remainder of this story in chapter 26, verse 23, the one who is dipping his hand in the dish with me will hand me over. The son of man is handed over. It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.

In verse 24, verse 25, Judas, who was in the process of handing him over said, in verse

45 of this chapter, it will be used again. And throughout the story of the arrest of the Lord Jesus and mentions of Judas, this is the word that is used. But it is also used after the gospels.

You find it in Mark and Luke. But when you get to Acts, you find in Acts chapter six, verse 14, we have heard him saying that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that were delivered to us by Moses, that were paradidamied to us. And what's fascinating about this is that the word for traditions that we find in Greek, when you see the word traditions, teaching as doctrines, the traditions of men, traditions is paradosis, a form of didamy turned into a noun.

And it is that which has been passed along, that which has been handed across from generation to generation. One generation hands this over to the next generation, and it becomes a tradition. And so, Jesus condemns the Pharisees for these traditions, which they have handed over.

And you have both the noun and the verb in the same context in Matthew that we recently saw. So, it just means something that is handed over. Why is this important? We assure ourselves that there are certain things we ourselves would never do.

But when you understand that this is simply a bad priority, what will you give me if I hand him a cross? By the way, our word tradition itself is quite interesting. The word tradition comes from the old French tradition that comes directly from the Latin traditionem or traditio as the noun, which is a delivering up, a surrender, a handing down, a giving up. And this is the same route from which you get the Latin derived word treason.

To give over, to give up, to exchange in a nefarious way comes from this root idea of handing over. So, a tradition is something that is passed along. You can pass along someone in a nefarious way, but in both Greek and in Latin, the origin of it is the same.

There are ways that seem right to us. There are traditional ways of doing things, traditional ways of organizing a church, traditional ways of running a family, traditional ways of engaging in commerce. It was traditional in the early days of America to use slave labor, and people didn't find a conflict in their Bible.

They looked in the Old Testament and saw where the Hebrews had slaves and served as slaves. And the traditional understanding was that done properly without incorporating abuse or heinous sorts of activity, that the employment of slaves was acceptable and it was traditional. Later on, people changed their view and began to view it as a treasonous betrayal of the human rights of individuals to enslave them.

But the association of tradition with betrayal is incorporated into this word. And it is possible to betray the Word of God through tradition. It is possible to have a set of

assumptions in which we exchange what is right for what is convenient, or what is desirable, or what is stimulating, or what passes for right in that moment.

And this is something which we are susceptible to. We can look around and say, well, this is common practice. This is a cultural norm.

This is a socially acceptable way to be and way to do. And we exchange the truth of God for a lie. And that handing over, that handing across of truth for error, of tradition for righteousness, this is what Jesus condemns the Pharisees for.

And we have to examine ourselves and ensure that we're not rationalizing, that we are not justifying, that we are not finding confirmation bias in things we do that are paradigmmy. We are handing away our identity as Bible-believing, Christ-following Christians, that we are handing over our opportunity, ultimately handing over future potential for service, for reflecting God's glory, future inheritance, future privileges, such as are described by the Lord Jesus in talking about the blessings to the overcomers in Revelation 2 and 3. It doesn't have to be this kind of nefarious, back-alley, sneaking, smoke-filled room negotiation that we associate with betrayal. It is a handing across.

I think there is no more powerful example of this than the temptation scene of the Lord Jesus with Satan in Luke. You have the devil telling Jesus that the authority and the glory of all of the nations of the world have been paradigmmed to him, and he can give them to whom he wills. He is trying to talk the Lord Jesus into bowing before him, and he says, the authority and the glory of the kingdoms of the world have been handed over to me.

Satan says this. They weren't betrayed to him. They were placed in his control, and he says, I can give them to whom I wish, and I will give them to you if you will bow before me, if you will fall down and worship me.

Paradigmy. So, this is an important idea to reflect on for us. There's been much speculation about how and why Judas chose to go to the chief priests and exchange what he knew in terms of location of the Lord Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

There's been speculation that he actually believed that Jesus was the Messiah, but it was taking too long for the kingdom to come in. He didn't like the idea that Jesus started telling them over and over that he was going to be placed in the hands of men and would be crucified and rise. He wanted the kingdom without the cross, and he thought, I will hurry up this process.

I will force a confrontation so that Jesus has to put down the Jewish authorities. He has to take charge. I will force a confrontation because he will never allow himself to be so humiliated, and that's one speculation.

Other speculation is that he was embarrassed that preceding Saturday night when he was rebuked at talking about the ointment from the alabaster flask, and he was

frustrated and reacted in anger. The Bible doesn't say we don't know, but one thing we do know is he handed a cross something he should not have. We can do the same thing by simply messing up our priorities.

What is first, what is most important, what is central, what is definitional for us can be handed away. One of the first temptations the Lord Jesus faced in his early days of ministry was someone to whom authority and glory had been handed over offered to hand those things over to him, and Jesus refused. That informs our view of verses 14 through 16.

What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you, if I deliver him a cross? They counted out to him 30 pieces of silver. From that time he sought opportunity to deliver him over. We pick up now in verse 17.

Now on the first notice day of the feast is in italics, and a better translation of this in my opinion is now at the beginning of unleavened bread, at the first of unleavened bread. There is so much confusion, and we have noted it in the past. We've done several times a study of the sequence of events of Passion Week.

What day is it when Jesus is in the upper room? This scene that is about to be introduced and is about to unfold in the latter part of this chapter leading up to the arrest, the trials, the crucifixion, the interment in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. What days did these happen on? I thought, wouldn't it be convenient if instead of me trying to draw a chart and fill in the boxes for Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday, somebody somewhere has already made a chart. Let me just find that.

It's scary. If you search the interweb for Passion Week chart, there are people who believe in a Tuesday crucifixion, a Wednesday crucifixion, a Thursday crucifixion, a Friday crucifixion, and will go to the very same Bible, the very same Gospels, and arrive at wildly different conclusions about what happened. A large part of it centers on this statement and its parallel in Mark 14 and Luke 22.

It is a simple misunderstanding. And as much as I love Alfred Edersheim and appeal to him and read him with enthusiasm and appreciation, in my humble opinion, this is one place where even he, with his vast knowledge and research into Jewish customs, gets it wrong. And he stumbles.

This is my opinion. I could be stumbling and he could be right. But to take at face value this statement that on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread formally is Passover.

It is 14 Nisan. However, there are sources, including Josephus and Talmud, that indicate that in the time of Jesus, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was considered an eight-day feast, not a seven-day feast. And the first day of this eight-day feast was the Day of

Preparation, which is 13 Nisan.

The daylight hours on Wednesday, 13 Nisan. This is the first of Unleavened Bread, because it's like talking about Christmas without mentioning Christmas Eve. You could say, I want to spend Christmas with you.

You expect that person is probably going to be there on Christmas Eve, unless they specifically say, I'm not going to come until Christmas Day. It's that kind of thing. The Eve of the Feast of Unleavened Bread became a part of it, and it became an eight-day celebration.

There are two different places in Josephus where he mentions this. I'm not going to take time to read them to you, but suffice it to say, this has been, in my view, a source of great confusion and makes it virtually impossible to harmonize the Synoptic Gospels with John, who is very clear in John 12 and following that it was the Day of Preparation. During the daylight hours, when Jesus sends two disciples to go find the man with the pitcher of water and so on.

So I am just going to present on its own merits the conclusion which harmonizes all scripture. There is no contradiction. There is simply a misunderstanding.

And it is easy to do at this distance with regard to traditional traditional verbiage and language talking about this important feast week. But when Matthew says on the first of unleavened bread, this is day eight. This is day eight of the first of eight days.

So it is Wednesday. And on this day, the disciples came to Jesus saying to him, where do you want us to prepare to eat the Passover? Where do you want us to prepare to eat the Passover? In reality, the word eat isn't here. This is from the beginning when Jesus says to the man, he sends a message and says, I want to make the Passover.

This is a word poieto, which is to make or to do. So the Greek here in verse 17 says now on the first of unleavened came the disciples to Jesus saying, where do you wish that we should prepare for you to eat the Passover? They assume that and this is the word eat. This is phago, which means to eat.

Jesus never states that he is going to eat the Passover. He says, I am going to observe. I'm going to make or to do Passover with my disciples.

And you find the parallel. If you turn to Luke 22, verse seven, and this is important. Again, there is an applicational point here to be made.

Jesus is very careful in what he says and what he does not say. And so in chapter 22 of Luke, the feast of unleavened bread drew near, which is called Passover. You have the promise of Judas in exchange for money through verse six.

And then in verse seven, then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed. Then came the day of unleavened bread. Unleavened bread is not a day.

It is a week. It is at a minimum seven days. And by the time of Jesus, it was eight days.

So this is the time. This is day used in the sense of time when the Passover must be killed, because the feast of unleavened bread starts after Passover, right? But Jesus sent Peter and John in verse eight of Luke 22 saying, go and prepare the Passover for us that we may eat. So they said to him, where do you want us to prepare? These are details in Luke that we do not have in Matthew.

When you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house, which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, so they have followed a servant who is carrying water.

The teacher says to you, where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples? Then he will show you a large furnished upper room there make ready. Now, this is the day of preparation, make ready, prepare. It takes time to gather all of the elements of a Passover meal.

They could not be doing this on the afternoon of 14 Nisan. It has to be the preceding day and subsequent events will bear this out. You have a shortened version of this in Matthew.

Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover? He said, go into the city to a certain man and say to him, the teacher says my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover. Notice keep, not eat.

Jesus says, I will do or make the Passover at your house with my disciples. So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them. We know from Luke that this is Peter and John who go.

Who are the most trustworthy disciples of the 12 in Jesus opinion? It's Peter and James and John, right? Why does Jesus go through this procedure to secure the place where the Passover is going to be observed? He already knows that he is going to be delivered over. He already knows one of his disciples is going to do it. And he already knows which one it is.

By using this circuitous method, the arrangements are made and no one knows where it is. After the arrangements are made, only two disciples know where it is. This master of the house is going to show Peter and John this room furnished and ready.

And one thing Edersheim does a beautiful job of is talking about the Greek word that is used for this room that is furnished and ready. This word is only used twice in the New Testament. The other time is the room where Jesus is born.

And so he begins and he ends in this special type of room. But this is a security measure. The disciples don't know this is a place they evidently have not been before.

Because Peter and John, the most familiar disciples, have to follow a servant to find this man. They have to give him this statement from the Lord Jesus. He then shows them this room.

It's a place they've never been. It's a man they've never met. How did this come about? One thing it does is it ensures.

Jesus will allow himself to be arrested. He will allow himself to be tried, convicted, ultimately crucified. But it is in his time, it is in his way, and it is on his terms.

The things that happen to us in our life come when we are faithful and we are diligent and we keep ourselves qualified for the grace of God. They will happen in God's time, in God's way, and on God's terms. And we have confidence that he will work these things together for good, even when they seem very dismal and dark.

It is entirely within God's control, God's purview. But as we go to the break, let me ask you a question that you can ponder during the break. How is it that the Lord Jesus, who is the Son of God, he is the second member of the Trinity, how is it that he is subject to being delivered over? Why didn't he simply walk down to the Sanhedrin or to the house of the chief priest and turn himself in? Think about that as we go to the break.

Our point of application for this first session is, are there areas in my life, are there circumstances or situations where I am giving over the priority that God should have in my life? That following the Lord Jesus and pursuing fulfillment of the first and second great commandments is not happening because I have handed over that place to something or someone else? It doesn't have to be betrayal, it is simply exchanging something on the order of 30 pieces of silver that seems more immediately gratifying, desirable, useful, persuasive than that which ought to come first. Let's pause here and take our break.