



## ***St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)***

**Worship Address** : Cerritos High School Auditorium  
12500 E. 183<sup>rd</sup> St., Cerritos, CA 90703  
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

**Mailing Address** : 11428 E. Artesia Blvd. # 4 ; Artesia, CA 90701  
562-924-5051

**Website** : [www.sp-ecc.org](http://www.sp-ecc.org)

April 5, 2009

**Theme: The Lord's Supper, The Last Supper**

**Text: Matthew 26:14-25**

Judas' act of betrayal is like a theological piece of bread which makes Mary's act of anointing Jesus into a sandwich. Mary's act is an act of supreme devotion. Judas' act is an act of sinister betrayal. The story of Judas' betrayal begins with the word "then." It links this passage with Mary's expression of love for Christ. It is almost as though Mary's act of anointing Jesus with perfume triggers Judas' act of betrayal. From this point to the point of Jesus death we will see the best and the worst that humanity has to offer. We will see the worst in the betrayal, denial, desertion, and crucifixion of Jesus. We will see the best in the person of Christ who remains obedient to His Father unto the very point of death.

Matthew tells us that Judas was one of the Twelve. This increases his responsibility and guilt for his evil deed. He had heard and seen Jesus in person. He had been groomed for leadership in the church. What makes matters even worse is that it was Judas himself who sought out the Jewish authorities—they did not seek him out. But his offer to betray Jesus plays right in to their secret and sinister planning. They agree to the price of thirty pieces of silver. We don't know exactly how much those coins were worth. Nor do we know exactly what Judas' motive was. However, scholars think it was a relatively small amount, which shows that Judas' motive was not money. We can only guess at what his real motive was. From that time on, Judas looks for an opportunity to betray Jesus.

It is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This feast was a seven-day feast that followed the Passover celebration. During this feast, God had commanded the Hebrews under Moses not to eat any bread that had yeast in it. Jesus commands the disciples to prepare for the feast so that they can celebrate it together. Jesus tells them to tell the owner of a certain house that the "Teacher" has said, "My time is near..." and so they will celebrate the Passover at his house. Jesus has said that this time was His time. The time of the cross does not belong to Judas and His allies; it belongs to Jesus. He is in command until that end.

The next event which occurs is Jesus' prediction of Judas' act of betrayal. Jesus has supernatural knowledge of the events that are about to occur. Matthew says this to show to add to our awareness that Jesus is in control of the events that will lead up to the cross. As we might expect, the disciples are shocked and saddened by Jesus' words. They begin to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord!" Jesus explains that it will be the one who dips his bread into the bowl of herbs with him. This indicates that Judas was not only one of the Twelve, but he also sat in a position of honor at the Passover. As the host Jesus would



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have sat at the head of the table. In order to dip his bread into the bowl with Jesus, Judas must have been sitting next to him. This makes his plot even more sinister.

The death of Jesus is no accident of history. Jesus knows that he will be crucified. In fact his crucifixion was God's plan from before time began. Peter will preach to a Jewish crowd on the day of Pentecost, "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death." At the human level, Jesus is crucified by wicked, weak, and brutal men. At the divine level, Jesus' death is an act of God. Matthew communicates this in his account of the last Supper. Judas will be the human agent who hands Jesus over to the Roman authorities. He will be held fully responsible for his act of treason. At the same time, Jesus' death is in the very plan of God. In this situation, the will of God is carried out through the agency of wicked and evil men. We cannot understand how God's will can be carried out by human beings who do not even know that they are carrying out God's plan. Still, the Scripture says that it is true so we believe it. Not only do we believe it, we are eternally thankful that God is sovereign over the acts of human beings. Although it seems strange to say it, Judas' action set in motion the events that we bring us salvation.