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We continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the
ministry of the word.

Acts 6: 4 ASV

Night of Betrayal of Christ

A Message for Adults

Week of Sunday 23 April, 2017 A.D.
(Anno Domini – In the year of our Lord)

Sunday 27 Nissan, 5777

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- Text: Luke 22: 3 ASV

³ Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

- Text: Luke 22: 31-32 ASV

³¹ Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat: ³² but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren.

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- On the night of Passover, in the conflict between God and Satan the disciples were thrown back and forth as flour in a sifter. They would have succumbed too, if not for the prayers of Christ. Such is complete absence of sin. Past, present, future; individual and society; deepest depth and highest height; God and Satan; Judas and Simon; a plea for a sentence and a plea for acquittal. All simultaneously and each in its place, found room in the soul of the man Jesus Christ. Truly, a High Priest became us, was fit for us.

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- Considering moment of time, that Satan desires all disciples, and for what end; the night in which Christ was betrayed is a particularly irritating goad at the heels of Satan. On this night the holiness of God refuses to be confined. This night the holiness of God extends itself. It aims to become manifest in the justification of sinners. By means of twelve apostles it aims to pour itself out upon the church, an institution whose holiness will appear in the institution and have effect until the

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last day. To that end God puts to work the potency of the coming era.

- On this night storms rage, the wind howls. A whirlwind moves over the universe. This night rankles Satan. Life, eternal life is the sting!
- Just as Christ gave shape and words to His desires in the room of the Passover by expressing them in prayer, so Satan puts his desire into language throughout the universe. His words attack God's work. The language isn't human. Satan doesn't speak an earthly

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tongue. That's impossible, as only God was made flesh. Satan wasn't. Picture two radio stations. As one sends out a signal the other sends out signal against the first. Jesus dispatched a wave of His soul to God; it bears a petition of redemption, it is a fervent plea for those whom the Father has given Him. Meanwhile, Satan dispatches his waves designed to interfere with the transmission of the message of the Son of Man. His passion burns the fringes of the seven stars that are the

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seven churches. The seven stars represent the completeness of the church. The seven stars are in the room of the Passover, for the apostles are there with Jesus. Satan draws up a writ of complaint against the seven churches and turns it in at the Highest Tribunal. He delivers it into God's hands.

- The desire of Jesus, the defendant expressed in word, the desire of Satan, the Plaintiff also expressed in word. There's a battle of words against each other in the universe. This spiritual

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warfare in apocalyptic language is the conflict of spiritual forces in the air. The two forces are two witnesses. One accuses, the other defends. Both appear before the Tribunal of God. Satan makes his wants known to God. Satan wants God to turn the disciples over to him. He's laying claim to all in the Passover room with Jesus.

- Satan can not avail against Christ. For that reason Satan directs his attack upon the disciples, the apostles of the future. If he can

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not sever Christ from the church, can he sever the church from Christ? That is why Satan desires the apostle and all disciples, for these represent the church. By means of their office the church will flourish and live. If these should succumb the one seed of the woman would be destroyed. The fountain of the church would be stopped! Then Jesus side would bleed in vain. Then the twenty and four thrones encircling God's throne would be vacant throughout all eternity, as far as the twelve apostolic chairs

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would be concerned. And if those twelve apostolic chairs were vacant, the twelve patriarchs would have no right to theirs. That is why Satan wants them all !

- God's lightening rends the skies. His thunder roars through the world. It arouses Satan's spirit. He raises a stronger pleading for what he supposes are his rights. He pleads before God. Legal rights are the order of the day, the business of the moment! Right vs. Right, the counsel for heaven rises and the counsel for

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hell jumps to his feet. Christ has been named Mediator for heaven's cause. Has He? Satan will present the case before God. He lays down the claim; cites law and precedent all designed to thwart God's plan.

- Christ comes through the centuries as surety for His own. ³¹ Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. John 12: 31 ASV In this moment of world crisis He experiences in His prayers beforehand the

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fact of His surety which will seal with His blood after a little while. He has prayed for them; in the spiritual world the cross has already been lifted high. He prayed for them as a Man of sorrows. By that act He manifested His faith. An attorney who wants to base his plea for the client's acquittal upon a ransom still to be paid must be very certain that it will be paid.

- In His plea for the defense, Christ's grace is as universal as it is particular. He prays for all

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those who are present, for He wants to enter all as documents attesting the fidelity of God. He's specially sensitive to Peter's case. For Simon, who will speak satanically at the beginning of the history of the passion, will at the feast of Pentecost be the first to allow his spirit to be driven by God, to express itself in words: I have prayed for thee, Simon.

- Christ doesn't ask the sifting stop or be stricken. The High Priest does not ask disciples be taken out of Satan's sieve. Instead He asks that faith

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may not abate. Father help Thou their
unbelief ...

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You are invited to join us!

*We continue stedfastly in the apostles' teaching
and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and
prayers every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.*

*We study doctrine and pray every Wednesday at
6:30 p.m.*