

Matthew 26:30

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/matt/matt-26/matthew-2630/>

Jesus and His disciples sing a hymn and leave the upper room for the Mount of Olives.

The parallel gospel accounts of this event are found in Mark 14:26, Luke 22:39, and John 14:31.

See [“The Bible Says Timeline of Jesus’s Final 24 Hours”](#) to learn more about the timing and sequencing of this event.

Matthew concludes his summary of Jesus’s final Seder by saying that after *they sang a hymn*, Jesus and the disciples then *went out to the Mount of Olives*.

Matthew’s summary omits the following events from his narrative:

- The dispute among the disciples of who is the greatest (Luke 22:24-29)

Matthew recorded similar debates elsewhere (Matthew 18:1-5; 20:20-28).

- Jesus’s initial telling of Peter that He will deny Him which took place in the so-called Upper Room (Luke 22:31-34; John 13:36-38).

Matthew recorded what appears to be a second instance of this interaction on the way to Gethsemane (Matthew 26:31-34).

- Jesus’s teachings on and command to Love one another (John 13:31-35).
- The informal conversation and Q. & A. between Jesus and His disciples which occurred after the formal Seder “The Upper Room Discourse” (John 13:36-14:31).

At the bottom of this page is a sequence of all the events from *Jesus’s* last Passover. The events in this sequence were taken from all four gospels. It attempts to depict how all the so-called “Upper Room” events that are mentioned in the Bible about *Jesus’s* last Passover meal may have unfolded.

Matthew narrates: *After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

This short verse transitions the setting from the so-called “Upper Room” to “the Garden of Gethsemane” along the slopes of *the Mount of Olives*. The name, “Gethsemane” means “oil press.” The “garden” was most likely an *olive* grove where olives were pressed to produce *olive* oil. The Garden of Gethsemane is believed to have been located at the base of the western slope of *the Mount of Olives* in the [Kidron] valley between the mount and the city of Jerusalem.

It has long been customary to sing *a hymn* or hymns at the conclusion of Passover Seders. This is what Jesus and His disciples did. It is noteworthy that this occasion, recorded by Matthew and Mark, is the only instance in the gospels where they explicitly mention Jesus singing (Mark 14:26). It is likely that Jesus sang often because *singing* was such an integral part of Jewish culture. This likelihood makes it all the more noteworthy that Matthew and Mark mention *singing* at this occasion.

What did Jesus and the disciples sing?

According to the Jewish Mishnah (the oral traditions of the Jews, that was written down around 200 AD) Psalms 113-118 were typically sung after the Seder. The Jews call these psalms the “Hallel.” It is possible that one or more of these psalms was the *hymn* sung by Jesus and His disciples.

The expression that is translated as *singing a hymn* in this verse, is actually a single word in Greek. It is a form of the word “hymneō.” It literally means “hymning” or in this case, “*after* hymning.” Below is a listing of some of the psalms from the “Hallel” that Jesus and His disciples might have sung prior to removing to the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 113 recalls the Passover. It is a rework of the escape across the Red Sea from the clutches of Pharaoh (Exodus 15:1-18). The central verse of this psalm—“Who is like the Lord our God?” (Psalm 113:5)—asks the famous question of the hymn in Exodus: “Who is like You among the gods, O Lord?” (Exodus 15:11). If they sang this song, it would aptly apply to Jesus.

Psalm 114 also recalls the Passover. It marvels at how the physical features of the earth trembled in wonder at how God called and miraculously brought Israel out of Egypt. If they sang this song, it speaks of an even greater marvel, that God became man to redeem all of humanity.

Psalm 115 proclaims how God is the central figure in every story. The first half of its *hymn* mocks the powerlessness of idols and the folly of those who trust in them. The second half calls on Israel to trust the Lord. Considering what Jesus is about to undergo, the psalm ends with a prophetically ironic line: “The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any who go down in silence” (Psalm 115:17). If they sang this, it would apply to Jesus; Jesus will die but He will not remain in the grave.

Psalm 116 is a prophetic *hymn* of praise about the death and resurrection of the Messiah. It describes how “cords of death encompassed me and the terrors of Sheol came upon me” (Psalm 116:3). The psalmist then praises the Lord for salvation: “for you have recused my soul from death” (Psalm 116:8) and “I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalm 116:9). If they sang this, they would have been singing of Jesus’s imminent death and resurrection.

The *hymn*’s line: “All men are liars” (Psalm 116:11) foreshadowed the painful abandonment of the Messiah when all His disciples deserted Him despite their promises that *they* would never do so (Matthew 26:35).

And perhaps most poignant of all is the line that reads: “I shall lift up the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the Lord” (Psalm 116:13).

The word translated as “salvation” in Psalm 116:13 is the Hebrew word, “yesh-oo'-aw”/“Yeshua.” It is the Hebrew name translated into English as “Jesus”—“Yeshua”. This verse literally says, “I shall lift up the cup of Jesus.” Recall how when Jesus took the cup during the Seder, He told the disciples: “This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28).

Christ’s blood was spilled on our behalf which took away the sins (John 1:29; 1 John 2:2). The sacrifice of Jesus is literally our salvation. And salvation is literally Jesus’s name. This verse is an exhortation to lift up Jesus and call upon His name for salvation.

Psalm 117 is a praise and an evangelical command. Between its proclamations of/exhortation to Praise the Lord (Psalm 117:1a, 2b) this shortest chapter in the Bible commands all nations and peoples to proclaim the good news of God’s boundless grace and everlasting truth. If they sang this, they would have presaged Jesus’s Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

Psalm 118 is the final psalm of the Hallel. It is also Messianic. The *hymn* describes the triumphant scene when Jerusalem receives her King. In other words, the psalm describes the occasion when Jesus will drink the cup of wine in the New Jerusalem with His disciples (Matthew 26:29). If they sang this, they would be looking forward to the ultimate fulfillment of Jesus ascending to the throne of Israel.

In Matthew’s gospel alone, Psalm 118 was quoted or alluded to no less than three times during Jesus final week (Matthew 21:9; 21:42; 23:39).

The first was upon His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As the people cried out “Hosana,” they also shouted Psalm 118:26, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 21:9).

The second reference of Psalm 118 during Jesus’s final week was when He rebuked the chief priests and Pharisees by quoting verses 22-23 of the hymn:

“Did you never read in the Scriptures,
‘The stone which the builders rejected,
This became the chief corner stone;
This came about from the Lord,
And it is marvelous in our eyes’?”
(Matthew 21:42)

As the rejected Messiah, Jesus was the rejected corner stone of God’s kingdom.

The third reference was Psalm 118:26 again. It came when Jesus lamented over Jerusalem, “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Matthew 23:39).

Two other Messianic expressions within this Seder psalm are also worth pointing out.

“I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me,
And You have become my salvation.”
(Psalm 118:21)

Again, the word translated as “salvation” in this verse (and throughout Psalm 118) is the Hebrew name translated into English as “Jesus”—“Yeshua.” The verse gives thanks for God becoming Jesus/salvation.

“The Lord is God, and He has given us light;
Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.”
(Psalm 118:27)

As the true Passover lamb, Jesus was the festival sacrifice nailed to the cross at the same time as the ceremonial Passover lambs were bound to the altar and sacrificed (Matthew 27:45-46; John 19:14, 31, 42).

Sometime *after they* were finished singing, they left the so-called Upper Room and *went out* of the city of Jerusalem *to the Mount of Olives*. *The Mount of Olives* is just a few minutes walk from the edge of Jerusalem. The disciples are about to witness Jesus’s arrest.

It is unclear if their *singing* took place before or *after* the informal discourse recorded by Luke and John.

A POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS DURING THE LAST SUPPER

1. Jesus and the Disciples arrive at the Upper Room (Mark 14:17).
2. Jesus washes the Disciples’ feet (John 13:3-17).
3. Jesus announces that one of the disciples will betray Him (John 13:18-20).
4. The Seder officially begins (Matthew 26:20; Luke 22:14).
5. Jesus announces that He has longed to eat this Passover with them (Luke 22:15-16).
6. Jesus blesses the first cup of wine (Luke 22:17-18).
7. Jesus breaks bread and identifies Himself as the Unleavened Bread (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19).
8. Jesus announces a second time that one of the twelve will betray Him. This troubles the disciples. Jesus identifies Judas as His betrayer, but the disciples do not pick up this fact until afterward. Judas then leaves to betray Jesus (Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:17-21; Luke 22:21-23; John 13:21-30).

9. Jesus pours a second (or more) cup of wine and identifies Himself as the Passover Lamb (Matthew 26:27-28; Mark 14:23-24; Luke 22:20).
10. Jesus pours a third (or more) cup of wine and says that He will not drink it until He is with the disciples again in the Kingdom (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25).
11. The Disciples Argue about who is the Greatest (Luke 22:24).
12. Jesus Reminds them about True Greatness (Luke 22:25-29) and Discusses His Kingdom (Luke 22:25-29).
13. Jesus tells them about His command to Love one another (John 13:31-35).
14. Jesus Informs Peter that he will Deny Him (Luke 22:31-34; John 13:36-38).
15. Jesus informs them Disciples that He is going on a Journey. They Question Him and He answers them (John 14, also Luke 22:35-38).
16. Jesus and the Disciples *sing a Hymn* and Depart for *the Mount of Olives* (Matthew 22:30; Mark 14:26; Luke 22:39; John 14:31).

Biblical Text

³⁰ **After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.**