

## Background Information for Luke 22



St Luke's narrative of the Passion frequently emphasizes the innocence of Jesus. Pilate's recognition of Jesus's clean slate is pronounced by Pilate (Lk 23:4), the good thief repents and believes in Jesus because of His palpable purity (Lk 23:41-42), and only Luke mentions that the Centurion who pierced Christ's side had an illumination of faith because of His evident innocence. The scenes of the Last Supper and the Agony of the Garden in Luke 22 should be read with this in mind.

There are numerous passages that are special to Luke in these episodes. For example, only in the Lukan account does Jesus say "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Lk 22:15-16). This unique passage essentially finds Jesus reconfigure the Passover by placing himself as the innocent lamb offered for sin on the Cross to become true food and true drink. Elsewhere, Jesus recites the Isaiah prophecy of the Suffering Servant (see Is 53:3-12) in reference to Himself, "For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me, "And he was **reckoned with transgressors**" (Lk 22:37). The suffering servant was a figure that was numbered among sinners who offered himself as a sacrifice for them.

Moving to the Agony, it is only in Luke's Gospel that an angel, a symbol of innocence throughout Scripture, comes to His aide. Lastly, only does Luke mention Jesus's calling His arrest the hour for the "power of darkness" (Lk 22:53). Jesus is clearly positioning Himself as the Light of the World in the face of a consuming darkness at His crucifixion.

Keep this in focus as you pray through these passages. The unblemished Lamb must step in our place and become sin on account of its reality. Sin has consequences, and Jesus knew that. The majesty of Innocence itself taking on the punishments for sin is beyond imaginable.