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Last Passover of Jesus!

Matthew 26:14-19

Matthew 26:14-19, *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.*

Jesus Celebrates Passover with His Disciples

¹⁷Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

¹⁸And 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 at your house with My disciples." ' "

¹⁹So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

The purpose, the goal, the objective, the climax of the life of Jesus Christ was His sacrificial death. He came into the world for the purpose of dying.

Mark 10:45, *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

This was the plan not an accident.

That was not a bad ending to a good beginning.

That is the reason Jesus came: to die for the sins of the world.

The sacrifice of Christ is the focal point of all of Scripture.

The death of Jesus Christ is not the end of the story, it is the theme of the story, beginning to end.

In the Old Testament there are things help us understand the meaning of the death of Christ, which is yet to come.

In the story of Adam and Eve, we first learn that sacrifice is necessary to cover sin.

In the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, we learn that it is not only sacrifice but a certain sacrifice of death.

As we move on a little further, we come to the story of Abraham. From Abraham, we learn that God Himself will provide that sacrifice, as God provided an animal in the place of Isaac.

So, early on we learn the necessity of sacrifice.

Then, the definition of sacrifice as blood sacrifice.

Then, the idea that the sacrifice will be a substitute given by God in the place of men.

As we come to the Passover, in the Old Testament, we are reminded that the one who is sacrificed will be without spot and without blemish.

All this is preparing us for Jesus Christ, the ultimate sacrifice, the perfect sacrifice, the substitute, the gift of God, the unblemished lamb.

Everything in the New Testament focuses on the cross. In the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the cross is the theme.

In each gospel, it occupies somewhere between 20 and 40 percent of the whole text of the gospel. About that much of the gospel centres around the final week of the Lord's life.

When we study the Book of Acts is the record of the world's reaction to the death and resurrection of Christ.

Then the epistles are written to those who believe in the death and resurrection of Christ to instruct them as to the implications of the death and resurrection of Christ.

When we come to the Book of Revelation, we meet the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world who will return as King of kings and Lord of lords.

So, everything in the Old Testament moves up to the cross,
The gospels focus on the cross, and the rest of the New
Testament deals with the implications and results of the cross.

The death of Jesus Christ, then, is the focal point of the whole
of redemptive history, and is not an accident, but rather the
apex of the plan of God.

From the slain animals of Genesis whose skins were used to
clothe Adam and Eve to the slain lamb of Revelation, who is
worshiped in glory and majesty, the cross is everything.

As we come to **Matthew 26, 27 and 28**, the last three chapters
of Matthew's gospel, we come to the great apex of this book
of the Bible.

Here is the major message of Matthew.

Matthew's attempt all through this gospel and wonderfully
successful he has been by the power of the Spirit in
accomplishing it, is to present Jesus as king, as sovereign, as
majestic, as dignified, and as glorious.

Matthew faces, at this point, something that would be a
human impossibility of how to maintain the majesty, dignity,
glory of Jesus Christ during His betrayal and His execution.

How can He remain the majestic Son of God while being demeaned and degraded in a betrayal and a death such as He died?

It is thrilling to see amid this how there is not any diminishing in the glory of Christ, not any diminishing in His majesty or His dignity but quite the contrary.

Jesus appears here to be more majestic, and more glorious, and more in control, and more the sovereign Lord than He has at any other time in the gospel of Matthew.

The table is fully turned in what men had attempted to degrade Him. Jesus is even more exalted.

Matthew 26 begins to unfold for us this glorious event of the death and resurrection of Christ.

Matthew 26 with a discussion of the elements of preparation. We saw the preparation of God Matthew 26:2.

How that God had set the timetable and everything was moving till two days away from the Monday in which our Lord is speaking in that part of the chapter.

On Wednesday, the plan of God comes to its culmination. The preparation of God was implied in verse 2.

We saw the preparation of the leaders of Israel who hated Jesus Christ, **Matthew 26:3-5**. How they were plotting His death and looking for a way, a time, and a place to eliminate Him. Afraid to do it during the eight days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread because of Jesus' great popularity and the crowds that were attracted to Him. They were afraid of a riot, so they felt they should wait eight days until the feast was over.

But they were already preparing to execute Jesus Christ.

Matthew 26:6-13, we saw the preparation of this wonderful sister, who as a loving, beloved disciple and friend, anointed Jesus with a costly perfume, pouring out profusely on Him her love and affection, and wanting. To prepare Him for the death that was coming. She represents all those who look forward to the cross as a means of their salvation and saw in it something glorious, something wonderful, something blessed.

V 14-16, *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.*

Judas Iscariot from the village of Kerioth or the region of Kerioth, really a little group of villages.

Judas went out that night in Bethany here we are still in Bethany.

When Judas heard what Jesus said, he left, and he went straight to the chief priest that night.

What did he do when he got there?

He said to them, “What will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?”

Money!

That was the whole thing with Judas. He wasn't going to get the three hundred denarii for the perfume, but he was going to get as much as he could.

What will you give me if I turn Him over to you?

He set up the betrayal that night.

Luke 22:6, *So he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude.*

All the time Monday as Jesus is in the city teaching, he is looking for the moment when he can betray.

While Jesus is receiving love from Mary, the plot is beginning in Judas' mind.

His motive?

Money, money, money.

Judas bargained for 30 pieces of silver.

Exodus 21:32, *If the ox gores a male or female servant, he shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.*

30 pieces of silver is the price of a slave.

Psalms 41:9, *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.*

Zechariah 11:12-13, *Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. ¹³And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.*

V 16, *"From that time, he sought opportunity to betray Him."*

The preparation of Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, who for money covenanted with the leaders to betray Jesus Christ at a clandestine moment in a secret place when the crowd wasn't around.

He would inform them where Jesus could be taken prisoner and he would be their betrayer, their traitor hired for the purpose of turning over Jesus to them for execution.

- **The preparation of God,**
- **The preparation of the leaders,**
- **The preparation women offered,**
- **The preparation of Judas.**

All of this moves toward the reality of the cross.

Now, those four elements of preparation involved others other than Christ.

As we come to V 17, you begin the section where Christ Himself prepares for His death. It is His own preparation here.

We see Jesus in several different ways preparing for His death.

First, in experiencing the final Passover through verse 25.

Then, in establishing the Lord's Supper.

Then, in helping the feeble disciples and

Finally, praying to the Father.

All four of those are His own preparation.

We see the initial element of preparation, the Passover, as He prepares to enjoy that meal with His disciples.

V 17, *Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"*

The Lord was committed to keeping the Passover.

Matthew 3:15, *But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness." Then he allowed Him.*

One element of the law of God was to keep the Passover. Christ was wanting to be obedient in keeping the Passover.

Luke 22:15, *Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;*

The Greek word Jesus used here, He had a great and intense desire to keep the Passover with His disciples. It is very important to Him.

The preparation had to be made for the Passover Jesus wanted to keep.

Background.

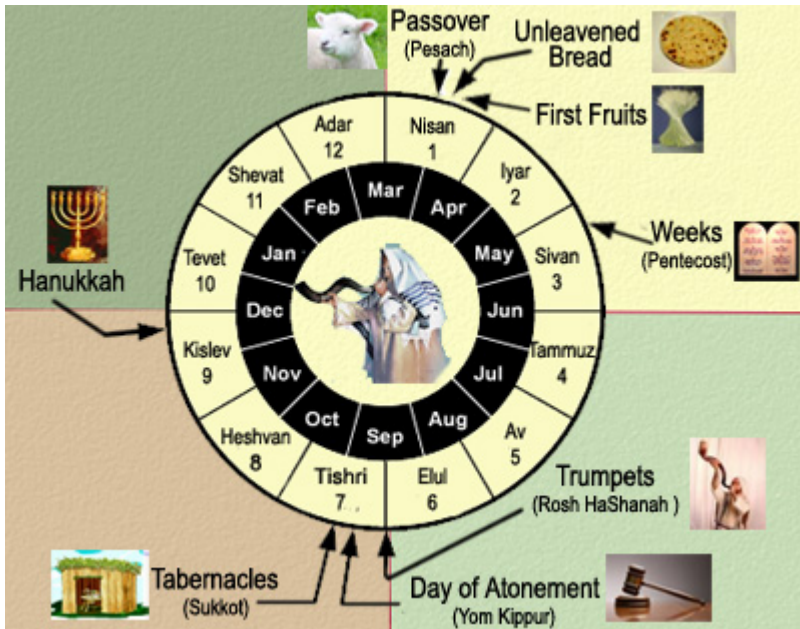
The Jews had a year filled with special feasts, not unlike our own day. We too have customs as Christians. Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter, and some other churches even celebrate other things during the year that are special holidays, special emphasis days through the year.

The Jews were no different. They had their commemorative celebrations, their festivals, their times of remembering the work of God in the past.

Festival Name	Hebrew Name	When celebrated	Significance
Passover	Pesach	14th of Nisan (Spring)	<i>Deliverance from Egypt.</i>
Unleavened Bread	Chag HaMatzot	15th–21st of Nisan	<i>Purity & haste.</i> Symbolizes leaving sin behind.
Firstfruits	Bikkurim	Day after Sabbath during Passover	<i>Offering of early harvest.</i>
Pentecost	Shavuot	50 days after Firstfruits	<i>Giving of the Law at Sinai.</i>
Trumpets	Yom Teruah	1st of Tishri (Fall)	<i>Call to repentance.</i>
Day of Atonement	Yom Kippur	10th of Tishri	<i>National repentance & forgiveness.</i>
Tabernacles	Sukkot	15th–21st of Tishri	<i>God dwelling with His people.</i>
Hanukkah	Chanukah	25th of Kislev	<i>Rededication of</i>

(added later)		(Winter)	<i>the Temple.</i>
Purim	Purim	14th of Adar (Spring)	<i>Deliverance in exile.</i>

But above and beyond all of those, the greatest of all their celebrations in many ways is the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.



These are the major elements of the Jewish commemorative calendar that they were busy celebrating.

V 17, *Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, “Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?”*

First, **the Feast of Unleavened Bread** and at the end of the verse, the word **“Passover.”**

Now, this was an eight-day festival. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were combined.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted one week, from the **15th of Nisan until the 21st**, as prescribed by the Old Testament.

That was a seven-day feast. The day before was the Passover. The combination was an eight-day festival.

They were connected in the minds of the people so much so that the Feast of Unleavened Bread could be a term describing the whole eight days, or the Passover could be a term describing the whole eight days.

They would celebrate the Passover meal on the 14th of Nisan and then for seven days, the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Passover celebrated God’s delivering Israel out of bondage in Egypt where they had been for over 400 years.

God began to send plagues on the Egyptians, and the last plague was the death of all the firstborn in every family in Egypt. God said to them, “If you will kill a lamb and a spotless lamb, and put the blood of that lamb on the doorposts and the crosspiece, when the angel of death comes to slay all the

firstborn of Egypt, if he sees the blood on your door, he will pass over.”

He will pass over your house, pass beyond your house and spare your life. As a result of that, Pharaoh said, “Get out.” Pharaoh sent the Jews out and God ultimately delivered them.

So, the Passover was commemorating the sacrificial lamb whose blood caused them to escape the judgment of God. It was a symbol of God’s ultimate Passover Lamb, whose blood would cause them eternally to escape the judgment of God.

God instituted in **Exodus 12** the continual feast of the Passover. It was a meal, and it was held the night before the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Ancient times, it came in the first month of the year called Abib. But after the exile it was celebrated in the month of Nisan and Passover was the 14th day of Nisan and on the 15th day, they began the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The lamb, according to **Exodus chapter 12**, was to be selected on the tenth of Nisan. Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem on Saturday. His triumphal entry was Saturday. There are several reasons for that.

Christ entering on Saturday was the tenth of Nisan in the year **33 AD** in which our Lord died.

That means that the Saturday on the tenth was the day in which everyone in the city of Jerusalem was selecting their Passover lamb.

The lamb had to be selected on the tenth, taken in and live with the family until it was slaughtered so that when that lamb was slaughtered, it was slaughtered as a friend, almost as a pet. They understood the price of sin.

Very significant because if Jesus entered the city on that Saturday, He entered into the hearts of those people as their Passover lamb on the proper day. Jesus fulfils the symbolism of the Passover lamb in every way.

Arriving into the city on the **10th of Nisan** to offer Himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world, dying on the **14th of Nisan**, as the Passover sacrifice for the sins of the world.

The Jews already had selected their lamb as we approach this text. They had done that on Saturday.

They sacrificed the lamb to commemorate the lamb of old. They sacrificed a lamb to remind them of the price of their sin.

Josephus recorded that there were over **256,000 lambs** slain at one Passover time. Two and a half million people, at least,

in the city of Jerusalem, the massacre of a quarter of a million lambs, lambs which had lived in the home of those people. They had to be in the house so that the people grew to have affection for them so that they saw the price of their sin and the terrible result of it in the death of that lamb.

The slaughter was remarkable as all those lambs were being slaughtered. They were slaughtered within a two-hour period, which makes the massacre almost mind boggling. A river of blood ran out the back of the temple and down the slope of the hill into the Kidron Valley that filled up the brook, and it ran red with blood right down toward Bethlehem.

Very dramatic time of the year for them, a time when they were face to face with sin. Lord had instituted all this in **Exodus 12**, and it was repeated many times in the Pentateuch that they should follow through and keep the Passover.

Glorious time of sacrifice to depict the necessity of death and sacrifice of the innocent for the atoning of sin for the guilty.

None of those lambs could take away sin.

Here were all these thousands upon thousands of lambs being slaughtered for millions of people, and all of them combined couldn't take away one sin. That is the message of Hebrews.

All that the lambs, goats and the bulls could never do, Jesus Christ in one sacrifice of Himself did forever. He did forever.

The reason Jesus and His disciples are even at Jerusalem is because it's Passover.

He wants to celebrate the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is significant.

Unleavened bread is bread that doesn't rise because there is no yeast in it. The Hebrew women would make bread, and they would pull off a piece of the dough before they baked it, and they would let it ferment, or sour, and they would use it as a starter in the next piece of dough that would cause that to rise.

If they didn't bring that starter over, the bread wouldn't rise, and it would be unleavened bread.

When they came out of Egypt, God said, "You don't have any leavened bread," because leavened represented influence.

God is saying that I don't want you taking a piece of your Egyptian life and implanting it into your new life. You are being delivered from that, and I want to start a new people in a new land. You don't need any of that past life.

God didn't want them bringing anything across.

God gave them a symbol of that: unleavened bread.

They must eat only unleavened bread. Not influenced by any of your former life. That became a symbol for cutting themselves off from worldly things.

V 17, *Now on the first day of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"*

It is the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Mark 14:12, *Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"*

This states explicitly that it was on this first of eight days that the Passover was sacrificed.

The unleavened bread began the next day, which was the 15th of Nisan.

Leviticus 23:6, *And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.*

Exodus 12:18-20, *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the*

congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land. ²⁰You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

Every house had to go all through the house and remove all leavened bread. He would start that before anything else happened and get all the leavened bread out. It had to be out for a duration of eight days. Everything commenced then with getting rid of all the leavened bread, and then the first event was the Passover meal. That was the first event.

In the year our Lord died, Passover came on Wednesday. We know that because the text tells us that. Passover was on a date, 14th of Nisan.

From year to year, it would fall on a different day.

There are many things to prepare for Passover.

Do you know what they had to prepare?

They had to prepare by the slaying of the lamb which could only be done in the temple court, nowhere else. It could only be done at a two-hour period of time, from three in the afternoon to five, no other time.

They had to prepare their **unleavened bread**.

They had to get a **bowl of saltwater** because at the Passover they set a bowl of saltwater on the table to remind them of their tears shed in slavery, and to remind them of the Red Sea which parted when the Lord delivered them.

They had to get bitter herbs like horseradish, chicory, horehound, endive, and other things that they put together in **a mix with hyssop** to remind them of the bitterness of Egypt and the hyssop with which they spread blood on their doors.

They had a **gooey paste** made from apples, dates, pomegranates, nuts all crushed and smashed together into a thick sauce called the charoset. It was into that thick sauce that they dipped their unleavened bread as a part of the meal.

That is best seen as a symbol of the brick making in Egypt, the clay and the mud that they used to mix the bricks.

They also would put into the charoset, sticks of cinnamon to remind them of the straw they used in the making of the bricks as well. So, everything had symbolism.

There were four cups of wine. The **four cups of wine** were to remind them of the covenant of God.

Exodus 6:6, *Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.*

1. I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
2. I will rid you of their bondage.
3. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm.
4. I will be your God.

All this was symbolized in the elements of the Passover which they had to collect and have prepared.

Exodus 12:6, *Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

The actual Hebrew says, “between the two evenings,” very precise.

- The Jews had an early evening, 3:00.
- The late evening around 5:00.

The lamb had to be slain, Josephus says then, between the 9th and the **11th hour** which is, **3:00 to 5:00 pm** in the afternoon.

The **12th hour being 6:00 pm**, or sunset.

Between 3:00 and 5:00, the lamb had to be slain. It had to be slain in the temple court by the priests.

All people had to bring all their animals to be slain in a two-hour period. Absolutely mind boggling to imagine what went

on, incredible scene, blood everywhere. People going in with live lambs, coming out with dead ones, making sure they got the right lamb on the altar to take home to eat. Had to be roasted after that.

Following sunset, or later in the evening, it is unprescribed as to what time they do it, they had to eat the Passover meal.

Exodus 12:8, *Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

They had to have ten men at least to eat it is because they had to eat every bit of the lamb and leave none for morning. They ate the meal that night.

Now, the disciples know they must get all this stuff done. They say to Jesus, “**Where we going to hold it?** We have got the things ready, and we will be glad to prepare it if you will just tell us where?”

Why is that a problem?

Why don't they hold it in Bethany right where they are?

You can't.

The law said it had to be in the city of Jerusalem.

Everybody who was staying around the periphery of Jerusalem had to crowd into the city and find a place where they could

have a Passover with a group of at least ten men, and as high as 20.

It shows that every available room in the city was filled up.

Where are we going to do it?

They didn't own any property or building.

V 18, *And 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 at your house with My disciples."'"*

Jesus says, "Go into the city and find a **deina**."

The best way to translate it would be "Mr. So-and-so." It's a non-descript term that is used when you want to be indefinite. Go into the city and find a man, a certain man, such a man, Mr. So-and-so.

The city got two million people milling around this place and you are telling us to go find Mr. So-and-so?

Mr. So-and-so is not a substitute for someone they know!

It is a purposely used word to be indefinite. As if He would say that go into the city and find a man that I am not going to tell you who he is. Precisely that is what he does.

We only have two options:

- Either Jesus said Mr. So-and-so because He didn't know who he was, or
- Because He didn't want them to know who he was.

We can't vote for the first one.

He knew, so He must not have wanted them to know.

How are they going to find Mr. So-and-so?

Mark fills in the gap for us in Matthew here.

Mark 14:13, *And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him.*

They must find a person with a pitcher of water.

How common is that?

The answer is not common at all.

Who carried the water?

The women did.

They will find a man doing an unusual thing: carrying water.

Mark 14:14, *Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'*

We also know from the other accounts that the Lord when He said go into the city He only said go to two people: Peter and John.

Jesus sent only Peter and John, not the rest.
The ten other disciples stayed with Him.

There were several reasons for that. One of the reasons was that only two people were allowed to accompany a lamb to sacrifice.

Why?

If you have got two hours to kill all the lambs and everybody wants to come and see it, you can't get it done. Only two could accompany a lamb.

Peter and John are chosen because they are the intimates of Christ, because they are so trusted, they are His dear friends. Jesus sends Peter and John, tells them go find a man with a pitcher of water, follow him into a house of Mr. So-and-so.

Why the secret approach?

Why doesn't He just say, you remember so-and-so, our friend, and follower and disciple?

Why the secrecy?

V 16, *So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.*

Judas was looking for a quiet place, a secluded place, a private place away from the mob where he could turn Jesus over to

the religious authorities to be executed. Jesus knew that if Judas knew where the meal was going to be, that would be the perfect place, and so He wouldn't say.

Peter and John never came back. They went early in the day, did all of that, and the rest of the disciples never met them again till that night when they came with Jesus to the place.

By that time, Judas was in it, and it was too late to make a deal with the leaders. Jesus closed out the option of Judas betraying Him before the Passover.

Why?

Because it was essential that Jesus celebrate the Passover with His disciples.

Why was it essential?

- Because He wanted to use that as an example of His own death,
- because He wanted to transform that into the last supper of Jesus and the table of Communion which we come to know and love as the memorial to His death,
- because He had so much yet to teach the disciples,
- because He wanted to give them the promise of His Holy Spirit, and
- because it wasn't God's time yet for Him to die.

Jesus would not allow Judas to do what Judas would have done if he had been given the opportunity. The first time Judas had the opportunity was when Jesus was in the garden with the 12.

Judas was there with the soldiers, and they took Jesus. He would have done it here, but Jesus never let him know where it was going to be.

Jesus kept it from all of them so that Judas would not know.

V 18, *'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples." ' ' "*

The landlord must have been one of His disciples.

Maybe Jesus had even prearranged this with him, we don't know.

He was a follower of Christ, a lover of Christ, a believer in Christ. We don't know who he is.

"My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples."

Time here is not **chronos**, not chronological time, not time on the clock but **kairos**, epical time, the moment of My death, My special time in God's plan is here. It is going to happen, and he will understand.

How many times had Jesus said, "Mine hour has not yet come?"

How many times had the Scripture said, "His hour did not come."

But now He Himself says, "My time is at hand."

I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.

I am obligated to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples. He sees Himself on a divine mission with a divine timetable.

This is the moment.

This is the time.

Mark 14:15, *Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us."*

Jesus was obligated to keep the Passover.

V 19, *So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.*

It really is a military term.

Peter and John went into town. Saw the man with the pitcher, followed him into the house, asked the man. We are going to do it here. Got all the preparations.

Conclusion:

V 17, *Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"*

V 19, *"And they made ready the Passover."*

V 21, *And notice verse 21, "And as they did eat."*

What do you assume they were eating?

The Passover, all right.

It is the Passover.

Mark 14:12, *"Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"*

Mark 14:14, *Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"*

Mark 14:16, *they prepared the Passover.*

Luke 22:7, *Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed.*

Luke 22:8, *He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat."*

Luke 22:13, *they prepared the Passover.*

There is no doubt it was the Passover.

But there is a problem.

John 18:28, *Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.*

Here we have again Jesus led from Caiaphas, this is the next day, Tuesday they were getting the meal ready.

Tuesday night, they ate the meal which means Tuesday afternoon that lamb was killed.

We have just looked at the Tuesday when they came to Jesus, "Where do You want to have it?" He says, go do this, get it ready.

Tuesday afternoon they had the lamb killed, Tuesday evening Jesus came with the other ten, they ate the meal. That whole evening transpired on Tuesday evening.

Judas went out into the night, betrayed Him. Jesus left the meal in the middle of the night, went to the garden. The soldiers came to the garden, captured Him in the middle of the night.

Now, it's coming on the dawning of Wednesday morning. They bring Him to trial, and it's Wednesday morning.

Jesus has already sacrificed the lamb Tuesday afternoon. He has already eaten the Passover.

Now, we come to Wednesday morning, and the Jews then have Jesus. They lead him from Caiaphas into the Hall of Judgment. That's Pilate's, that's the Gentile part of His trial.

It is still very early in the morning. The Jews didn't, they didn't go into the Judgment Hall lest they should be defiled.

What does that mean?

It was a Gentile place, and they didn't want to get defiled by Gentiles.

Why?

John 18:28, *But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.*

How is it that Jesus already has a slain lamb and has a Passover meal, night falls, morning dawns, the Jews don't want to get defiled because they haven't yet eaten the Passover?

Some people say, Jesus had a private Passover.

Can't happen, you can't have private Passover, because lambs can only be slain when authorized time for slaying of lambs takes place.

How is it that they haven't eaten the Passover?

John 19:14, *Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"*

Sixth hour!

Here we are on Wednesday, and the Jews haven't yet eaten the Passover. They haven't done what Jesus already did.

How do we resolve this?

How can the Lord eat a Passover on Tuesday night, and the Jews on Wednesday not haven't eaten it?

Christ came to die as a Passover lamb.

Matthew 26:47, *And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.*

Jesus died on Wednesday between 3:00 and 5:00.

The ninth hour would be 3:00. At 3:00, Jesus came to the end of His life. At the very precise moment when the screams of those sheep would come from the temple as the slaughter began.

The Jewish, the leaders, who were mostly Sadducees, the Judeans would be slaughtering all those lambs at the very moment Jesus died.

1 Corinthians 5:7, *as Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us.*

Jesus came into the city on the day the lamb was selected. Jesus died on the traditional day in which the lambs were slaughtered at the hours of 3:00 to 5:00, that He might fulfil every prophecy to the very letter and every picture.

What is Jesus doing with the Passover on Tuesday night?

They keep calling it the Passover.

So, Jesus did not have a meal but a Passover.

Jesus insisted that it be inside the city of Jerusalem. If it was just another meal, they could have had it in Bethany and saved themselves an awful lot of trouble.

The tradition said that all the Passover had to be inside the city of Jerusalem.

Furthermore, it was very unusual for Jewish people to have a meal at night.

Furthermore, to have reclining at tables was very unusual for anything other than a festival or a feasting time, not just a normal meal.

Beyond that, in a normal meal, the breaking of bread was at the beginning of the meal, here it's in the middle of the meal.

Not only that, but the use of red wine was also very unusual. It was unusual that they sang a hymn when they were done with it, which was true of the Passover.

Furthermore, when Judas left later on and the disciples thought that he was going to give money to the poor, because that is what they did at the Passover, not any other time.

So, everything comes together to say it had to be a Passover.

If it was a Passover, why is it on a different day?

It all depends on how you count days.

From what to what?

From midnight to midnight, that's a day.

Monday begins tonight at midnight. We go midnight to midnight. They didn't either.

For the Jews the day went from **sunset to sunset**, or from **sunrise to sunrise**.

The normal routine of days for the Jews was sunrise to sunrise. But festivals, special days and the Sabbath day went from sunset to sunset. It depends on how you look at the day.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread, according to **Exodus 12:18**, had to be celebrated from sunset to sunset for those seven days.

The Day of Atonement was a sunset-to- sunset day.

The weekly Sabbath, sunset to sunset.

Leviticus 11:14, 15, 17, and Leviticus 22:6 where it talks about a special cleansing or special ceremony, any of those days where there was uncleanness for a single day, a cleansing had to be done before sunset. So, those days were sunset to sunset.

When there was a special day, a special Sabbath or certain festival days, they had to go sunset to sunset.

This may be because the order of creation seems to have gone that way.

Genesis God began by starting from evening to evening. But on the other hand, the Jews also reckoned sunrise to sunrise as the normal calendar day.

We say midnight to midnight.

Their day would be morning to morning to morning.

Matthew 28:1, *Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.*

The first day of the week comes at dawn. They are back to their normal way of sort of counting.

There were times when they counted sunset to sunset and times when they refer to a day as sunrise to sunrise.

There are others in the Old Testament where the day is from morning to morning.

Deuteronomy 16:4, *And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning.*

Therefore, this Passover day, since it's not necessarily prescribed specifically in the Old Testament.

This Passover day could be calculated from sunset to sunset or sunrise to sunrise. Depending on when you start it would be when you ended it.

Josephus, the Jewish historian who was a Pharisee, living in Jesus' day, explained the law of the Passover. The Paschal lamb must be eaten during the night and nothing left for morning.

The **Mishnah** says it must be eaten by midnight. They both were committed to the fact that whoever ate it, you had to eat it before the dawn of another day, before the morning time.

- **The Galileans**, the northern people, and the Pharisees, counted the day from **sunrise to sunrise, the day of Passover**.
- Whereas the **Judean and Sadducees** counted the day of **Passover from sunset to sunset**.

The Mishnah, which is the codification of Jewish law, tells us that. It says that the Galileans would not work at all on the day of Passover.

Why?

Because the day began for them at the beginning.

It says that the Judeans would work until the midday, because the day didn't begin for them until the sunset.

Tuesday, **the Galileans and the Pharisees** begin to calculate the beginning of Passover in the morning to the next morning which is Wednesday morning.

The **Judeans and the Sadducees** don't begin until Tuesday evening at sunset, and it runs till Wednesday evening at sunset.

So, the Galileans and the Pharisees, then, begin early in the day, such as Matthew points out in chapter 26, with the disciples saying, “Lord, well how do we get the meal ready for tonight?”

Because their day goes from morning to morning and must be eaten before that day is over, so they must eat it that night.

The other day for the other people doesn't begin until evening, and so they are not prepared to slay their lamb until the next evening, and then eat their meal as Sabbath comes on Wednesday night.

This is supported by the codification of Jewish law which tells us the Galileans work not at all on the day of the Passover, and the others work through half a day because for them it didn't begin until evening.

This harmonizes **John 18:19** because it tells us that Galileans, which would be **Jesus and His disciples and the Pharisees**, could have their **Passover on the evening of Tuesday** because they already began to count the day from morning to morning and it would end on Wednesday morning.

The others who were from **Judea and who were Sadducees**, which made up the rulers, wouldn't start their day festivities

until late on Tuesday and wouldn't kill their lamb until the end of the day on **Wednesday**.

Why is that important?

Jesus had to die on Wednesday. He had to be crucified on Wednesday because that's when the traditional Judean Jerusalem Passover lambs would be killed, from 3:00 to 5:00.

He had to die then.

It says Jesus was crucified "In the ninth hour"

Jesus also had to keep the Passover because He had to transform it into the Lord's Table.

How could Jesus keep the Passover and still be the Passover lamb?

There would be absolutely no way that that could be possible unless God allowed this kind of thing to take place in history so that when it came to the very moment that Jesus was going to die, in that very year, there was no problem in having a **Galilean Passover on Tuesday night and dying in the Judean Passover on Wednesday afternoon** perfectly on schedule, and violating no Jewish law at all.

The Jews were happy to have this occur, the priests were, because there would be almost an impossibility if they had to kill all the lambs in the same two-hour period.

If the Galileans came on Tuesday and the Judeans came on Wednesday, at least it would divide the work into two days, and they would be able to accomplish their goal. So, they were happy with that accommodation.

Furthermore, if it was difficult to find a room in Jerusalem to have your Passover meal, how fitting would it be to double the capacity of Jerusalem by having two separate time periods.

When you come to the Word of God and you think Jesus is a victim of human ingenuity, you have got the wrong approach.

God literally rules history, tradition, customs, and every detail of human existence to bring about the fulfilment of His own perfect plan.

- ✓ Jesus had to keep the Passover to fulfil all righteousness, to instruct His disciples, to show them the new memorial feast that would come out of the Passover.
- ✓ Yet He had to die as the Passover.

Jesus did both because God had so moved in history that both would be possible by His sovereign providence and control.

When we look at the story of Jesus Christ, we see anything but a victim.

Matthew is able to present to us in these three brief verses majesty that's absolutely beyond our ability to understand. It isn't something Jesus could have arranged on the weekend. It had to have been built in for centuries that this could even happen.

Our Lord in perfect harmony with the divine unfolding plan of God controls everything in His own sequence of events leading to the cross.