Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

God's Preparation for the Final Passover
Scripture: Luke 22:7-13
Code: 42-268

Open your Bible, if you will, to Luke chapter 22. Upon entering the twenty-second chapter of Luke a couple of weeks ago, we began our final hours journey with a front row seat to the events leading up to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross was no accident. It was not a bad ending to a noble effort by a good man. In fact, Jesus' death on the cross was not the ending of His story, it was really the beginning of our salvation.

The death of Jesus Christ was not even the end of His life, it was the goal of His life and the beginning of our eternal lives. Jesus' death on the cross was not the triumph of Satan, it was the triumph of God. When the Romans nailed Jesus to the cross and raised it into the Judean sky on that Friday afternoon, Christ had won. He had won the victory over sin and Satan and death and hell. God's Lamb was dying triumphantly over all the forces of evil He had conquered and provided salvation for His people.

Actually, His whole life on earth was lived in anticipation of His cross. He came, He said, to give His life a ransom for many, Mark 10:45. He came to die. The shadow of the cross could be seen over the manger itself. He came to offer Himself as the only sacrifice for sin that could satisfy the wrath of God. In His death is the only payment for sin by which God can forgive sinners. All Scripture points to His death. From Adam and Eve we are taught that sacrificial death of an innocent provides covering for the guilty. From Abel we are taught that death, sacrificial death, is the only way to please God. From Abraham we are taught that the proper sacrifice will be provided by God Himself. From the Passover we are taught that the sacrifice must be an unblemished sacrifice. And from the centrality of all the sacrifices in the entire sacrificial system of the Old Testament, we are taught also that there has never been a final satisfactory sacrifices, that's why they go on year after year after year after year until the sacrifice of God's Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus came to die, to be God's sacrifice. And with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, God is satisfied that a perfect sacrifice has been offered on behalf of all who believe. God pours out His wrath on Christ. His wrath, His justice is satisfied and He grants to those who put their trust in Him forgiveness and salvation. This is the theme of Scripture. And again I say, the death of Jesus was no accident. It was no bad ending to a good and noble life.

The notion of the unbelieving and seemingly relentless critics that Jesus died an unexpected death is ludicrous. All the Old Testament pointed toward His death. All the events of His life pointed toward His death. He repeatedly promised that He would die in Jerusalem at the hands of the leaders of Israel. And that He would rise again the third day. He planned every detail of His life to unfold in perfect accord with the will of His Father.

The Father had designed the plan. The Spirit empowered the plan. And Jesus enacted the plan, doing only what the Father willed Him to do when the Father willed Him to do it. He was on a divine schedule and He controlled every detail.

There are so many elements of the account of Christ in Scripture that show us His deity, His miracle power, His astonishing words, His omniscience. So many things that demonstrate His deity. None is more compelling, more stunning than His ability to control everything in His life down to the minutest detail to accomplish precisely what God designed to happen when and how God designed it to happen. That becomes clear as we watch the unfolding events in the hours before His death. Some might say that the Jewish leaders were in charge of that. Others might say that Satan was in charge of that. Some might say that Judas was in charge of that. Some might conclude that the rabble crowd that cried “Crucify Him, crucify Him” were in charge of that. Others might say the Romans were in charge of that. The fact of the matter is, He was in charge of it. He said, “No man takes My life from Me. I lay it down of Myself.”

And when He came to the end of His suffering on the cross, when He had expended all of God's wrath in His infinite suffering, He died by His own will. It is finished and He yielded up His Spirit. And the soldiers were stunned that He was dead so early. But He had to die on a specific day at a specific time. And He controlled that. He controlled everything else, even though all the players in this drama thought they were acting with a degree of independence. No one really does, everything is under God's sovereign control.

As we came into the twenty-second chapter of Luke, we began to look at the players in the unfolding drama that I call the preparation for the cross. The first and dominant person in this unfolding drama is the deity. And as we looked at the last couple of verses of twenty-one and the first verse of chapter twenty-two, I talked to you about the deity that behind all these events is God. He is the one bringing it all to pass. It is all by His determinant counsel and foreknowledge. It has all been determined by Him and He is in charge of everything.

We then move from considering the deity to the next persons who play a role in the preparation for the cross, the devout we call them, because they perceive themselves as being devout. And they had convinced the populace of Israel that they were devout, mainly the chief priests and scribes and religious leaders mentioned in verse 2. They play a role in what God will accomplish through Christ on the cross.

We then, thirdly, went from the devout to the devil, and we talked about his role in verse 3, entering Judas. And then we came to the defector, Judas himself, one of the Twelve who is the betrayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is orchestrating everything and yet within the providences of God and the purposes of God and completely under His control, the chief priests are acting on their own wretched, wicked will. The devil is acting on his own perverted, depraved and totally corrupt will. Judas is acting on his own perverse rebellious will. All of them controlled by God to achieve God's ends.

There's one other title in our outline. The deity, the devout, the devil, the defector, finally, the disciples...the disciples, they play a very important role in what is going to happen. Let's look at verse 7. “Then came the first day of unleavened bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare a Passover for us that we may eat it.' And they said to Him, ‘Where do You want us to prepare it?' And He said to them, ‘Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water, follow him into the house that he enters and you shall say to the owner of the house, “The teacher says to you, where's the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” And he will show you a large furnished upper room, prepare it there.' And they departed and found everything just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover.”

Many times during His ministry, Jesus said, “My hour has not yet come. My hour is not yet come.” And He didn't allow Himself to be arrested, taken prisoner, and killed, even though the leaders of Israel had long wanted to do that. But now He begins to speak differently. This week, this final week of His life He begins to say, “My hour has come.” And, in fact, in Matthew 26:18 He says, “My time has come,” *kairos*, this is My epoch, not chronological time, epochal time. This is the time for which I was born. God goes into motion. The religious leaders go into motion. The devil goes into motion. Judas goes into action. And the disciples move. And they're all moving in preparation for the cross to accomplish the purposes of God.

On the surface, as you read this chapter, God is hidden. God is invisible. He is behind everything. But He is moving everything. Isaiah 53:10 says, “The Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief as a guilt offering for His good pleasure.” It is the Lord God who is behind the death of Jesus Christ. It is His plan and His purpose with which Christ is in perfect agreement. God is the one who wanted Jesus dead. Jesus voluntarily agreed to do the will of the Father for the joy that was set before Him in providing redemption for sinners with whom He would fellowship forever in glory.

So, as we enter chapter 22, the divine schedule starts to move. Verses 1 through 6 occur on Wednesday night, that long, long Wednesday. Starting in verse 7 we move to Thursday. And Thursday is the day when preparation has to be made for the Passover meal that evening. And Friday will be His crucifixion.

Now, the plan of God is very simple. On Friday afternoon between three and five-thirty or six, whenever sunset occurs, the Passover lambs will be slaughtered, tens of thousands of them are slaughtered in a period of time that Exodus 12 prescribes as between the two evenings...between the two evenings. It is that period of time between three and sunset, that is when He will die. He will die during that time because He will die in perfect accord with the Passover sacrifice because He is, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7, our Passover. His death will be precisely at the very time when the Passover lambs are being slaughtered. And He will be the only one to provide a real final sacrifice.

Now remember, the religious leaders want Him dead. Verse 2, “They were seeking how they might put Him to death.” But not at Passover because they were afraid the people would riot because of His popularity. They overestimated the people's commitment, by the way. So they wanted to take Him secretly, privately, clandestinely, quietly away from the crowd, in the dark, in a private room somewhere where noone would know. And then they would hold Him until the Passover was over. And when the people had all dispersed, then they would have Him executed. That was their plan. They wanted to take Him as soon as they could and hold Him because the next day could allow Him to have another exposure to the people and another opportunity to turn them away from the religion of Judaism and to incense the leadership and perhaps even foment an anti-Roman rebellion in which case they would all lose their positions of power. They didn't want to give Him one more opportunity to speak to the people. They wanted to arrest Him as soon as possible.

Now you remember, they had met in the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, with the Sanhedrin, the rulers of the people. All these leaders coming together trying to figure out how they're going to get Jesus. We've got to get Him out of the public eye. Understand, they have no idea that He's going to die on Friday yet. They want to get Him, hold Him until all the people are gone, ostensibly, and then they can do what they need to do. They just want to capture Him before He does any more damage.

But how? They can't do it during the day because He's surrounded by tens of thousands of people who are all attracted to Him, to some degree. They want Him dead. The devil...the devil wants Him arrested, but the devil doesn't want Him dead. In fact, you remember in Matthew 16, Jesus said to the disciples that He was going to die, and Peter said, “No, no, Lord, You're not going to die.” and Peter said, “Get behind me, Satan.” The devil wanted Him arrested, of course, because the devil wanted a riot, assuming the people had a commitment to Jesus, they would riot against the attempt of the leaders to take His life and He would not die and therefore the devil would deter Him from the cross. And the devil would also ramp up the temptation to a fierce level in the hours to come to try to thwart Him from the cross just by the sheer anticipation of its horrors. But the devil did want Him arrested and the only assumption we could make is that the devil believed what the leaders believed, that if they took Him publicly, there would be a riot. If they took Him openly, there would be a riot. They tried to kill Him, there would be a riot. But as I told you last week, both the devil and the people over...the devil and the leaders overestimated the people because when they did take Him and they

were forced to take Him and make it public and have public trials and bring Him before Pilate, the people screamed, “Crucify Him, crucify Him, crucify Him, crucify Him.” But neither the religious leaders or the devil know the future.

Judas, the defector, what did he want? Money. There's nothing said about whether he cared if Jesus lived or died. But he wanted money and he wanted it as fast as he could get it. He wanted out. He wanted out now. He wanted out sooner rather than later. And his treachery was devil-induced as Satan entered into Judas, verse 3. This plays right into their hands wonderfully. The devil concocts a treachery, enters into Judas to pull it off. All the Jewish leaders are meeting at the house of Caiaphas. They're talking about how do we get rid of this guy? We've got to kill Him for the sake of the nation and our own place in power. What are we going to do?

And guess who shows up at the meeting? Judas. Satan-possessed he comes to the meeting and he says, “What's He worth to you?” And he negotiates thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave, about four months wages, I'll sell Him for that because they could never find Him at night, they could never find Him in private unless they had an informant on the inside. They didn't have to look for one, one showed up.

Judas struck his deal with the leaders in that clandestine meeting and then looked for an opportunity to betray Jesus. A time when Jesus would be isolated, a time when He would be away from the crowd, a time when nobody would be around, a very natural scenario could make that a reality very soon. As Thursday comes around, Judas knows that night they're going to have a Passover meal together because Jesus says so. “Go and prepare the Passover,” He tells Peter and John. “This is perfect,” Judas must have thought, because the Passover would be held in a smaller room in a house, kind of a guest room where 13 people could fit in, the Twelve and Jesus. That would mean it was at the time when the Passover was being celebrated around the city, people would not be in the streets, it was night. They would be indoors either celebrating the Passover or preparing to celebrate the Passover or preparing to celebrate the Passover the next day and I'll say more about that in a moment.

This is perfect. No crowds will be around. We'll get Him then. And Judas probably conceived of this as the best possible option, no crowds, a private room, only the Twelve, fixed specific location, easy to tell the leaders exactly where they're going to be. But our Lord knows that. And He knows what Satan wants. And He knows what Judas is thinking.

So, He thwarts that plan and what you just read in verses 7 to 13 with me is a picture of how the Lord set up a Passover meal at a place that no one knew. No names are given and no locations are given. “Go into the city and follow a man carrying a pitcher. Go to a house of a man whose name is not given. Do not identify who you represent, just say, ‘*Ha didaskalos*, the teacher.' And the unnamed

man, and the unnamed man carrying the pitcher will give you the guest room. And that's where we'll have the Passover."

If our Lord had said, "Go to Mr. So-and-so and So-and so and he will take you to the owner of the house who is a certain man and the house is on such-and-such a street at such-and-such location," Jesus would have heard that and his plan would have been in motion. And Jesus theoretically would have been arrested before He ever instituted the Lord's table and before He was able to teach His disciples all that He taught them that night, which is contained in that massively marvelous passage, John 13 through 16, His great legacy of promises to all of us. The Lord had to celebrate the Passover to fulfill all righteousness. The Lord had to then after celebrated the Passover transition it, transform it into the Lord's table, the new memorial which would be for all the redeemed of all time to come. The Lord had to give them the great legacy of John 13 to 16, all those massive, sweeping, glorious promises, the richest portion of Scripture in the New Testament as far as believers are concerned. And also, the Lord needed to pray that great High Priestly prayer in John 17 which is the most staggering prayer in all the Scriptures where the Lord prays for us. All that needed to happen.

Therefore He could not be arrested until that full evening had unfolded where the Passover was celebrated, the Lord's table was instituted, and all of that was disseminated that's contained in that great section of John. He doesn't want anybody to know where that's going to happen, except two people. And He doesn't tell them where it's going to be for fear that somebody might lobby them before they leave. He identifies Peter and John and tells them to go on a mission of extreme secrecy. Judas can't tell the leaders because he has no idea where he's going. There's nothing in the Scripture to indicate Peter and John ever came back. They went early, Thursday. They acquired everything they needed and they went to the place they were told to go to and spent the day preparing for the meal. And the rest arrived and nobody knew where they were until they got there. And once they got there, obviously Judas had to stay.

The Lord has a secret plan because there are things He has to accomplish. He will only be betrayed and arrested on His schedule. That's not going to happen until very late Thursday night, very late. When He finally finishes everything at the last supper, goes to the Mount of Olives, there He will be arrested and He will be executed that same day before the sun sets. Only in that little window can He be arrested, tried and executed. Not before, so that He will die...He will die at the very hour all Passover lambs were being slaughtered on Friday. It's a stunning thing to see all the details under His control.

Now, let's look at the text. "Then came the first day of unleavened bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed." Remember, unleavened bread was a seven-day feast. The day before was called the Passover. It all was kind of known as the Passover, or the Feast of the Unleavened Bread because they kind of blended together. By the way, Paul blends them beautifully together in 1

Corinthians 5:7 where he says, “Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us.” And then in verse 8 he says, “Let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” So Paul spiritually connects those two. But it is that day. It is the fourteenth of Nissan and they must celebrate the Passover.

A little bit about the Passover, just quickly. It commemorated God delivering them from Egypt, which is recorded back in the book of Exodus. When the people of Israel were taken captive into Egypt, they were made slaves in Egypt, as you well know, for many generations. Eventually Moses came, led them out. The sea parted, drowned Pharaoh's army. They were liberated into the land of Cana. But their liberation preparation came because they were warned by God to cover their doorposts with blood so the angel of death would not kill the firstborn of every house. You know that. They killed a lamb to sprinkle. They ate the lamb. They had unleavened bread. They had a Passover feast. And that became a permanent memorial to God's deliverance of His people from the land of Egypt.

Unleavened bread was used then because it...it's the kind of bread you can make in a hurry. You don't have to wait for it to rise and they had to leave Egypt in a hurry. Also, unleavened bread has a sort of spiritual connotation. Leaven in the Bible is always seen as influence, permeating influence, such as leaven permeates dough. And usually it's bad. Unleavened bread then is a symbol of leaving behind all the permeating evil influence of Egypt.

They were then required, according to Exodus 12, to celebrate this every single year on the fourteenth of Nissan which they had done for generations and generations and Jews today still do it as well. The Lord was going to celebrate this Passover, this is the last legitimate one. This is the last legitimate one because He transforms it into the Lord's table, takes the leavened bread which once spoke of Egypt and it speaks of His body. Takes the wine which once spoke of deliverance from Egypt and it refers to His blood. And the transformation of that commemoration is over. No Passover since then is legitimate. The Lord's table is the new symbol. God does not want us to remember His deliverance in Egypt as the great act. He wants us to remember His deliverance at Calvary as the great act.

And so, the Lord must have this night. Religious leaders not withstanding, Satan not withstanding, Judas not withstanding. And that's exactly what He will have. So verse 8, “And He sent Peter and John...” Why Peter and John? The two most intimate ones? And the two leaders. Clearly in the book of Acts, 1 through 13, Peter and John are the leaders. And there's a flow all through these last days with Jesus in which He gives very special lessons to Peter and John, shaping them, framing them, strengthening them because they will be the leaders in the church when it's inaugurated. Why just Peter and John and not James? Wasn't he part of the inner circle?

Well, tradition said that only two men could bring a lamb to be sacrificed, or a kid. Only two men could bring the animal to be sacrificed because if you've got to do sacrifices for tens of thousands of people, hundreds of thousands of people and you've got a few hours to do them, you don't want all those people showing up to be a part of the big event of sacrificing the animal. And so tradition required no more than two could come, which cut the crowd down significantly. They would bring the animal alive and the priests would kill the animal, pour the blood of the animal on the altar. Keep some of the meat of the animal for themselves and to be offered to God as a sacrifice, and the rest of it would be taken by the offerer back to be prepared and cooked and used as the Passover lamb to be eaten by the rest.

So He says, “Go and prepare the Passover for us that we may eat it.” Take the animal, take the animal to be slaughtered. But before you even get there, during the earlier part of the day there's a whole lot of other things that have to be done. The Passover feast required unleavened bread. They were itinerant. They were staying at night out in the Mount of Olives. They didn't have some kind of stock or staple food somewhere. They had to go find unleavened bread. Then they required wine for this Passover, four different cups of wine were taken symbolic. And I'll mention that in a moment. They needed bitter herbs as well. And they needed a dip, called kereseth(?), it was made out of pomegranate, and apple, and dates and it was all crushed and blended together with nuts. That was something in which they dipped the unleavened bread with their hands.

There were a number of components. Just to go back to the four cups of wine. They seemed to be connected as symbols to God's promise to His ancient people in Exodus 6:6 and 7. God made these promises, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. And I will be your God.” Those four great promises, redemptive, salvific promises symbolized in the four cups of wine. The bitter herbs symbolized the bitterness of their time in Egypt. The kereseth, apples, dates, pomegranates, nuts, all ground up in a brown paste, traditionally is thought to symbolize the bricks that they had to make out of the mud. Cinnamon sticks were included which remind of the sticks of straw that they used in the bricks and eventually were taken away from them, which made the brick making all the more difficult. All of this had to be prepared. And they had to do all of that and make sure they showed up at the right schedule, three o'clock, for that brief period of a couple of hours, and have a priest slaughter their lambs, sprinkle the blood, take some of the meat, bring it back home, roast it, be ready for the evening meal.

By the way, they also had a bowl of salt water at the table to remind them of the tears they shed while they were slaves in Egypt and of the salt waters of the Red Sea through which God wondrously redeemed them. A lot of preparation for two guys.

Verse 9, this is the right question. “They said to Him, ‘Where do You want us to prepare it?’” Now, where do we do this? They knew of no plans. They knew of no room, no house. This is a little out of character for Jesus. He's usually pretty well organized, right? Since He organized the universe. And since He upholds all things by the word of His power, He might have organized this a little bit better. Plus, we're here because of the Passover, that's why we came. That's why we made this trek. We came down here for the Passover, this is a serious oversight, Lord. And with the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who have poured into the city, every available place is surely already taken. Here we are in this last hour and just exactly where do You expect us to do this?

But it's not an oversight. They don't know because Jesus doesn't want them to know. But He knows and is in perfect control of all the plans. So He says to them in verse 10, “Behold,” a little bit of surprise in that. “When you have entered the city, there and now on the west up in the Mount of Olives still, so when you go in in the morning, in the city on Thursday, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water.” Now, this is getting to be like a spy story, isn't it? Follow the guy with the newspaper under his left arm, right? That's essentially what we're dealing with here. This is very clandestine. “A man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water, follow him into the house that he enters.”

Now you go into the eastern gate in the morning, the people in the city are going to be pouring into the place cause they're going to expect who to show up? Jesus, because He's been there every day. That place would be exploding with population early in the morning. How in the world are we going to find a man with a pitcher of water? Matthew calls him “such a man,” or Mr. So-and-so, Mr. No-name. Very indefinite word in the Greek.

Do you think the Lord knew his name? Sure the Lord knew His name. The Lord knew everything about him. Knew what was in his heart. But for the sake of secrecy, the Lord only identifies him as a man with a pitcher of water. That's all they need to know. He'll be there to meet them.

Was that prearranged by Jesus or was He supernaturally arranging it? I don't know. It doesn't really matter, He could have done either, right? Either...it doesn't say. But look for a man carrying a pitcher of water. Universally historians tell us that was not something men did. Hate to say it, ladies. Men were too busy doing important things. Women carried water. The woman at the well, right? That's what women did. Big pot of water on their shoulder. A man carrying a pitcher of water would stand out. Follow that man.

Now why didn't He just say, “Hey, we're going over to John Mark's house, they're getting everything ready for us over there, that's where we'll meet,”? Can't do that. Must maintain secrecy. He must celebrate this evening in complete secret. And Judas sits in that Thursday evening Passover, the Lord's table transformation, listening to all the teaching, up to the point where he can take it no longer, and Jesus finally turns to him and says, “Go do it. Now you can do it.” And sends him out into the

night.

Later they sing a hymn. They go to the Mount of Olives. And they wait for Him to be arrested on His time. But Judas is captive. He can't get out of the group. He doesn't know where they're going that night. And when he gets there, he can't leave. Jesus knew Judas. He knew he was here for the money. He knew he wanted it. He knew if he knew the location he would betray him there. Where He was alone with His disciples isolated in a room, and He didn't want anybody else to know either because Judas might get it out of them because why would they withhold the information from Judas, they didn't expect anything but the best out of him. That's why they gave him the money. He was the treasurer for the Twelve.

So follow the man with the pitcher into the house that he enters. And then you shall say to the owner of the house, still unnamed, we never know who this is to be the owner of the house. Mark 13:14, “To the man of the house, you say this, ‘The teacher says to you...'” The teacher? How many teachers do you think there were hanging around Passover time in Jerusalem? Thousands, upon thousands of teachers. This man when he heard “the teacher,” we can be pretty sure this man was a follower of Christ.

Had Jesus prearranged this? Doesn't say. Was it just something He supernaturally controlled? Well, either way, it wouldn't have been an issue for Him. Enough for us to know the secrecy is the issue here. But surely this man is a follower of Jesus.

I love this, “Say to the owner of the house, ‘The teacher says to you, where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'” Mark says, “Where is My guest room, the guest room for me, in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?” “And he'll show you a large furnished upper room, prepare it there.” Had Jesus been there? I don't know. If He hadn't been there, He knew it was there any way, right?

Now at this point I want to tell you something interesting. This is Thursday night, right? This is Thursday night. Jesus is going to eat the Passover Thursday night, Thursday evening. He's going to be crucified on Friday. The immediate question is, if Jesus is eating the Passover with His disciples on Thursday night, and Passover lambs are slain on Friday, then the Jews couldn't eat Passover till Friday night. So why is He eating it on Thursday night, and how is it a legitimate Passover on Thursday night? He must die when Passover lambs are being slaughtered, that's on Friday. And yet He has to have His lamb slaughtered on Thursday to eat the meal on Thursday. So how are we to understand this?

Matthew, Mark and Luke all agree that the Lord had the Passover and established the Last Supper, the Lord's table, on Thursday evening and was crucified on Friday. John's gospel, on the other hand,

says the Jews didn't enter into the pretorium lest they should be defiled so that they might eat the Passover, John 18:28. In other words, the Jews when Jesus was arrested had not yet eaten their Passover, that means the leaders. So what's going on here? What is...how could you have a Passover on Thursday night and a Passover on Friday?

Well the answer is really pretty simple, and I'll try to explain it to you. If you want a further explanation, read the introduction, Interpretive Challenges," in the Study Bible to the gospel of John and it will lay it all out in detail there. But here's how to understand it.

Study Josephus. Study the Mishnah, the codification of Jewish law and other historical sources. You find that the Jews in the north and the Jewish people in the south, the Galileans say as opposed to the Judeans, had different ways of calculating their days. These chronological aspects have been a wonderful study in anybody's...anybody who makes an effort to studying this in the New Testament is greatly enriched by it. But in the north, they calculated days from sunrise to sunrise...sunrise to sunrise. That was a day. Whereas in the south, they calculated the day from sunset to sunset. So that's a very clear distinction. In Galilee, where Jesus and all the disciples except Judas, had grown up, they calculated days from sunrise to sunrise. So the fourteenth of Nissan was sunrise on Thursday to sunrise on Friday. That puts the Passover Thursday night. For the Jews in the south, it was sunset to sunset, so that puts it in late Friday for the southern Jews. Same day calculated two different ways. And that worked well for the Jews.

By the way, the Pharisees tended to go with the northern approach. The Sadducees who were all around Jerusalem tended to go, of course, with the southern approach. What that did was solve a couple of problems. It split the number of animals to be killed into two different periods, Thursday night and Friday night. It also reduced what were called regional clashes cause the southern people didn't think too highly of the northern people. So it just was easier to have them separated.

So Jesus is celebrating a Galilean Passover Thursday evening, and that is Friday, the beginning of Friday, sunset, for the Jews who celebrate it late the next day. The timetable is perfect. The Lord can celebrate the Passover, fulfill all righteousness with His disciples on Thursday and it's a true Passover, the lambs were slain. And He can still die on the Passover the next night because there are two times when the Passover lamb is slain.

You know, it just continues to be an amazing thing how God orders every single detail. There's a tiny little window really in a sense in all of the history of the whole world, there's this tiny little window from Friday morning when Jesus is arrested in the middle of the night, goes through these trials at night and they go so fast. And even if the Jews don't want to kill Him, what He says so infuriates them, so antagonizes them that they can't prevent themselves from demanding His immediate death. They've got that little tiny window, arrest Him and get Him on the cross. He will literally die at three o'clock the

next afternoon on Friday and be in the grave before that day is over because He has to be in the grave three days, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. He's in control of all of that. And when He died, it was three o'clock Friday afternoon, three o'clock when He yielded up His Spirit. You can just imagine the scene because by that time the whole land has been...what?...dark. God turned out all the lights. It's black. They're stumbling, fumbling, thumbling around in the middle of the day trying to get their sacrifices killed in darkness, the darkness that God brought on the world when His Son was hanging on the cross.

And then He dies. In that moment, the whole city of Jerusalem is hit with a massive earthquake, graves opened, people come out of the grave. They're in the temple area. The greatest part of the temple was the Holy of Holies which was the place in which God dwelt separated from His people, the curtain that divides them from God splits from the top to the bottom and throws the Holy of Holies wide open. You can't even imagine the breathtaking character of that hour when Jesus died, with all that sacrificial system in full force. It was over. The true Lamb had died and God was satisfied.

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