

The title of this morning's sermon is, "Why Even the Rocks Will Cry Out."<sup>i</sup>

On Sunday mornings we are working our way verse-by-verse through Luke's Gospel, and we find ourselves at **Luke 19:39**.

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When I was in Army ROTC at Florida Tech there was an ITT course. ITT stands for "individual tactical training." You've probably seen courses like this in movies that depict basic training, or if you've been in the military you've probably been on courses like this multiple times.

Unlike other obstacle courses, which teams typically go through together to build teamwork – think of soldiers helping each other over walls – ITT courses are performed individually. Hence the word individual in the acronym.

ITT courses include numerous obstacles that involve running, climbing, swinging, balancing, high crawling, low crawling, jumping, dropping, and sometimes swimming. You move from one obstacle to the next as quickly as possible with soldiers yelling that you are moving too slowly and need to pick it up...regardless of how fast you are going.

The entire course is laid out for you. You don't get to decide whether to go left or right. You can't skip any obstacles or do them out of order. You move from one to the next in the order laid out for you.<sup>ii</sup>

A you read the gospels, you might notice that Jesus' ministry seemed like this: he moved from one event – or we could even say obstacle – to the next in the order laid out for him by God the Father.

Listen to Jesus describe his ministry this way:

- **John 5:30** "I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.
- **John 6:38** "I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.
- **Matthew 26:39** "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Jesus was describing the course that was before him. At least once he even described his earthly ministry as a course...

**Luke 13:32** "Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course."

Jesus didn't get to decide whether to go left or right. He didn't get to skip obstacles or do them out of order. He moved from one obstacle to the next.

And this brings us to lesson one...

**Lesson One: Jesus was following a divine timeline.**

To fully appreciate the triumphal entry, it is important to understand Jesus was following a divine timeline. And I think the best way to understand this is to look at different events during his earthly ministry that reveal this. So we will be jumping around in the Gospels.

I don't like to spend much time flipping around. So, just so you know, I have tried to arrange the sermon so that you move between chapters that are near each other, but if they are not near each other, I will read the verses.

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We can tell Jesus was following the course his Father laid out for Him. Let me show you just in Luke 19.

**Luke 19:5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.”**

Notice it says, “when Jesus came to the place.” It doesn’t mean when Jesus reached the tree Zacchaeus was in. It means when Jesus reached the place he was divinely appointed to meet Zacchaeus.

That is why Jesus used the word “must.” This wasn’t random, chance, or coincidental. Robert H Stein wrote, “The ‘must’ implies a divine necessity to do so.”<sup>iii</sup> He was following the Father’s will and it meant that he had to go to Zacchaeus’s house. And this is also why Jesus used the word, “today.” It had to be today. There was no putting it off. This was the next obstacle on the course.

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Think about last Sunday’s sermon and Jesus laying out with such precise detail how they were to get the donkey for him...

**Luke 19:30 saying, “Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here.**

Notice the certainty with which Jesus says this. He didn’t tell them what they might find. He told them what they would find.

He even told them what to say when the owners objected...

**Luke 19:31 If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ you shall say this: ‘The Lord has need of it.’”**

And it happened just as Jesus said...

**Luke 19:32 So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. 33 And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” 34 And they said, “The Lord has need of it.”**

Jesus could see exactly what God the Father wanted to happen.

Let me show you some other examples from Jesus’s life.

Turn to Mark 1. In verses 40 to 42 Jesus cleanses the man of leprosy. Look at verse 43...

**Mark 1:43 And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once, 44 and said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.”**

**Lesson Two: There was a time (Part One) to be silent.**

This is surprising, isn’t it? Jesus told this man not to tell anyone about the miracle. Why would he do that?

One reason is it wasn’t time for the people to recognize Jesus was the Messiah. That might sound odd, but he was following the divine timeline set by His Father.

Another reason is large amounts of publicity would hinder Jesus’s mission and divert public attention from his message to his miracles. He wanted to continue teaching ministry in an uninhibited way. He needed to be able to move around easily. If people knew about his miracles, he would be swarmed by so many people he would be unable to enter towns where he could preach...which is exactly what happened because this man disobeyed him...

**Mark 1:45 But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him from every quarter.**

Unfortunately, this man did the exact opposite of what Jesus asked: he talked to everyone but the priests. You can see the problems it caused. Before Jesus cleansed the man he was able to minister in the town. But after the man told everyone, Jesus was forced “out in desolate places” where there were fewer people for him to reach.

You could ask, why did Jesus perform miracles if it was going to hinder his ministry? First, because he loved people and he wanted to help them. But more importantly, they served as signs that he was the Messiah.

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Look one chapter to the right at Mark 5 to see another example. Beginning at verse 21 Jesus raises Jairus’s daughter from the dead. Look at verse 43 to see what he said...

**Mark 5:43 And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.**

Jesus raised her from the dead and said to feed her, but not tell anyone.

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Turn to the right to Mark 7. In verse 31 Jesus heals the deaf man. Look at verse 36...

**Mark 7:36 And Jesus charged them to tell no one. But the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it.**

Turn one chapter to the right to Mark 8:22.

**Mark 8:22 And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?”**

Jesus healed him, but not in the middle of the village because of the commotion it would cause. Jesus entered the village, but then brought the blind man out of the village to heal him. Then...

**Mark 8:26 And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”**

Jesus told him not to return, because more than likely everyone knew the blind man, and when they learned Jesus healed him, Jesus would be mobbed by the crowds.

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Turn to Luke 9:18.

**Luke 9:18 Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 And they answered, “John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen.” 20 Then he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”**

Lots of people were getting this wrong. Seems like people thought Jesus was everyone except the Christ: John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the other prophets raised from the dead. But Peter got it right. This is one of those times he opened his mouth and hit a home run.

Of course, Jesus is going to say, “Great, now go tell everyone the truth. Straighten them out because they have no idea who I am.”

Nope...

**Luke 9:21 And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”**

Jesus told them not to tell anyone he was the Christ!

Something similar happened right after the Transfiguration. You don't have to turn there...

**Matthew 17:9 Jesus commanded them, “Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.”**

Jesus told them not to tell anyone about seeing Jesus in his glory, for the same reason he said not to tell everyone he's the Christ.

Why?

Because of the problems it would cause. Remember, most people, including even the disciples, didn't know what Jesus was going to do as the Messiah:

- They thought he would be a conquering king who would sit on a throne...and the transfiguration would further this view.
- They didn't know he was a suffering Servant who would hang on a cross.

In other words, as long as they didn't understand Jesus's first coming, they couldn't talk to people about Jesus, because it would increase the confusion about who he was...they would almost be unintentional false teachers!

Imagine if they said, *“We saw the Coming King transfigured. He'll be on the throne of David any day now!”* How confused would people feel when he was crucified instead? So, Jesus says, “Be quiet for now. After my resurrection, when it's clear I would die, then you can preach about me!”

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Now we are finally ready to look at Luke 19. Let's start at verse 38 for context.

**Luke 19:38 saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”**

This is the last verse we covered in our previous sermon.

The religious leaders completely resented this outpouring of praise.

**Luke 19:39 And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”**

This is the last reference to the Pharisees in Luke. Sadly, it is them commanding Jesus to rebuke his disciples for worshiping God.

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When we read the word “disciples” we typically think of the 12 disciples. But it is important to know that disciple means student or follower, which is why we also read that John the Baptist and the Pharisees had disciples.

When the Pharisees said this they weren't referring to only the 12 disciples. They were referring to all the people who were recognizing Jesus as the King coming in the name of the Lord.

There are two possible reasons the Pharisees told Jesus to silence the crowd versus trying to silence the crowd themselves. One possibility is Jesus was so popular the Pharisees didn't dare trying to silence the crowd themselves.

The other possibility is they knew they could not silence the crowd, because it was too large and enthusiastic. So they went directly to Jesus and told him to silence them.

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Now listen to this...After Jesus fed the 5,000 he became incredibly popular. So popular that...

**John 6:15 Perceiving that they were about to...take [Jesus] by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.**

Jesus came to become king. That's what he wanted. Why would he not let them make him king?

He was following the timeline. This wasn't his coronation. But the triumphal entry was, so look how Jesus responds...

**Luke 19:40 He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."**

This was the one and only time that Jesus permitted a public demonstration on his behalf.

And this brings us to lesson three...

**Lesson: Two: There was a time (Part Two) even rocks couldn't be silent.**

This is the exact opposite of every situation we read about earlier. Instead of hiding, escaping, or silencing there is no hiding or escaping, and there is even a declaration there can't be silence. If there was silence the rocks would get loud.

On this day there would be no silencing the welcoming of the Son of David, Israel's king. The time has finally arrived for everyone to be talking about it. Nothing is going to take away from this day.

Here's what else I think is going on...

Earlier Jesus didn't want the news to spread because it would prevent him from entering towns. But there are no more towns to enter. He has entered the last one: Jerusalem. He's approaching the very end of the course.

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Let me show you something else related to the triumphal entry, but it will take a moment to see it. Turn to the left to Luke 4.

Here's the context. Jesus returned to Nazareth. The people expected him to perform the same miracles in his hometown that they heard about him performing elsewhere. Look at verse 23...

**Luke 4:23 And he said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, "Physician, heal yourself." What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well."**

When Jesus told the people he wouldn't be performing miracles in Nazareth, because of their unbelief, they were not happy about it. Look at verse 28...

**Luke 4:28 When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. 29 And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, he went away.**

For a moment, picture what this looked like. They brought Jesus to the top of a hill so they could throw him down. He has a cliff on one side and the crowd on the other. But somehow he was able to maneuver through the people to avoid a premature death.

## Lesson Two: There was a time (Part Three) to die.

Here are two other examples...

**John 8:59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.**

I can't imagine how angry you must be to want to throw people off a cliff or stone them, but that's how angry people were with Jesus.

They were in the temple. I can't imagine there were many places to hide. But Jesus was able to escape.

**John 10:31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone him...39 Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands.**

Jesus escaped each time for two reasons. First, his time had not yet come to die. He hadn't reached that obstacle on the course yet.

Second, this is not how the Father determined he would die. He would die on a cross, not falling off a cliff or stoned in the temple.

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Turn to the right to Luke 13:31. Jesus was busy with his ministry when he was warned of a death threat...

**Luke 13:31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you."**

There are lots of Herods in the Gospels. This is Herod Antipas, the king of Judea, who killed Jesus's cousin, John the Baptist. In other words, Jesus knew he was more than capable of murder. But look how Jesus responds...

**Luke 13:32 And he said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course.**

Not the response you'd expect from someone who's afraid of dying.

That's because Jesus was going to continue his course, and he knew nobody could stop him, not even Herod.

And apparently Jesus wanted Herod to know that. He could have simply disregarded the counsel and quietly continued on his way, but he wanted Herod to know that he wasn't afraid of him. So, Jesus told the messengers to go back and deliver that message to Herod.

It is as though Jesus said...

*"I am going to continue doing what I'm doing until the third day when I'm resurrected and that's when my course is complete. Nobody is going to stop me from going to the cross, dying, being buried, and resurrected."*<sup>iv</sup>

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Turn to John 2.

I want you to notice the repetition of Jesus saying his hour had not come...

This is the wedding at Cana. They ran out of wine. Look at verse 3...

**John 2:3 When the wine ran out, [Mary said], "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."**

Mary wanted Jesus to perform a miracle. Jesus was going to perform miracles, so why not now?

Because this meant getting the events out of order. This had him performing a miracle before it was time.

Turn a few chapters to the right to John 7:30...

**John 7:30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.**

This means his hour to be arrested and crucified. We see the same thing in John 8:20...

**John 8:20 These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.**

Now turn to John 12. The triumphal entry is in verses 12-19. We looked at these verses last week. Look at what Jesus says right after it in verse 23...

**John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”**

It is a fascinating analogy: just as a seed is buried in the ground to bear fruit and bring forth life, so too will Jesus be buried in the ground to bear fruit and bring forth our eternal life.

Jesus repeatedly said his hour had not come, but now, after the triumphal entry he says it has. He’s in Jerusalem and he knows it is time for him to die.

Now follow me for a moment...

When we talk about Jesus being the Lamb, or the Lamb of God, we are specifically talking about him being the Passover Lamb.

**1 Corinthians 5:7 Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.**

So, listen to this...

For Jesus to follow the divine timeline and be our Passover Lamb he had to be crucified on Passover.

But there’s a problem. Turn to Matthew 26 to see it.

**Matthew 26:3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, 4 and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. 5 But they said, “Not during the feast (referring to Passover), lest there be an uproar among the people.”**

Do you see the problem?

Jesus needs to be crucified on Passover, but they wouldn’t arrest him until it was over.

**Lesson Three: The triumphal entry ensured Jesus would die on time.**

We saw Jesus repeatedly avoiding death, but when his time came he made sure the timeline was followed. One of the reasons for the triumphal entry – or one of the reasons Jesus said, “There can’t be silence now,” – is because he actually had to actually speed up the religious leaders’ desire to murder him.

You heard that correctly. To follow the divine timeline Jesus had to prevent being killed too early, and he had to prevent being killed too late.

Warren Wiersbe said, “[The praise Jesus received at the triumphal entry] was to force the Jewish religious leaders to act. They had hoped to arrest him after Passover, but God had ordained that His Son be slain on Passover. When they saw this great public celebration, the leaders knew they had to [arrest him].”<sup>vi</sup>

The triumphal entry deliberately evoked a demonstration. Jesus fully realized the enthusiasm of the masses would enrage the religious leaders so they would have even more reason to carry out their plot against him. It forced them to change their timetable so that it would harmonize with God the Father’s timetable for the crucifixion.

And I do want to conclude with one lesson for us...

#### Lesson Four: God has a course for our lives.

The longer I’m a Christian the easier it is to see that God directs our steps and writes our story. We can’t always see it at the time, but we look back and it comes into focus:

- We see that God opened some doors and closed others.
- We see that we wanted things that God didn’t give us.
- We see that we didn’t want things that God did give us.

Often we can also see that it wouldn’t have been good for us if we got what we wanted, or we can see how it’s been good for us to get what we didn’t want..

Let me say it like this...

Just as the God Father had a plan for Christ, He has a plan for us.

Consider these verses so you recognize just how much of a theme this is in Scripture:

- **Proverbs 16:9 The heart of man plans his way, but THE LORD ESTABLISHES HIS STEPS.**
- **Proverbs 20:24 A MAN’S STEPS ARE FROM THE LORD; how then can man understand his way?**
- **Jeremiah 10:23 I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that IT IS NOT IN MAN WHO WALKS TO DIRECT HIS STEPS.** If man isn’t directing his steps then who is?
- **Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which GOD PREPARED BEFOREHAND, THAT WE SHOULD WALK IN THEM.**

But there is a balance to this. We can’t blame God for sins we commit, or bad decisions we make:

- The man who walks out on his family can’t say the Lord directed his steps.
- The woman who walks into a bar can’t say the Lord directed her steps.

Listen to this verse that strikes the balance...

**Psalm 37:23 The steps of a man are established by the lord, when [the man] delights in [the Lord’s] way.**

The Lord establishes our steps...when we delight in him.

We must be like Jesus. He said, “Not my will, but let your will be done:”

- These people walk in the steps of the Lord.

- They fulfill the course God has for them.
- They recognize they are on divine timelines.

They will be submitted to God and prayerfully seek how they can walk in the good works he has prepared beforehand.

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If you have any questions or I can pray for you in any way, I'll be up front after service, and it would be a privilege to speak with you.

Let's pray.

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<sup>i</sup> Done on Luke 19:28-40:

- Wiersbe
- Gospel transformation Bible
- Stein
- Hendriksen

Done on Luke 19:41-44:

- EW
- FT
- HCC
- JM
- Nelson
- Wiersbe
- Hendrickson
- Stein

Done on Zech 9:9:

- EW
- Moody
- Nelson
- JM
- ESV Study Bible

<sup>ii</sup> God's providence is his supernatural, sovereign control over all natural events so that his plan and purposes are achieved. T.H.L. Parker wrote, "Providence tells us that the world and our lives are not ruled by chance or fate but by God."

Because of God's providence, we like to think about divine appointments. We mean those meetings, events, or engagements, that we believe were orchestrated by God himself:

- Maybe you found yourself in the right place at the right time to run into someone.
- Maybe you prayed God would meet a financial need and the mail arrives with a check on precisely the day the money is needed? Pastor Nathan has shared this exact testimony.
- If you're a parent, maybe you sensed something wrong in a nearby room and investigated just in time to stop your child from putting a paper clip in the electrical outlet.
- Maybe you felt prompted to contact someone a friend, and the person tells you that you called at just the right time.

God's providence directs our lives.

In my life I can look back on the different ways God's providence brought me to, and prepared me for, the pastorate:

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- Going to Florida Tech where I had Lieutenant Colonel Brewer investing in me for four years. Much of his influence prepared me to be a schoolteacher and then pastor.
  - My injury in college that later led to me being honorably medically discharged from the military to become a teacher. I believe it was those years as a schoolteacher that helped me learn how to communicate, which helped prepare me to become a pastor.
  - When I was a schoolteacher I was surrounded by Christians, such as Elwyn Ordway, who were inviting me to church, so that I was willing to accept their invitation when my brother died. Not long after that I heard the gospel and became a Christian.
  - Because I had left the Catholic Church I was estranged from my family at the time. But I became close to my first pastor and his family.
  - Before I ever thought about becoming a pastor the pastor's wife started telling me that her and her husband could see me behind a pulpit someday.
  - A few years later a woman from Grace Baptist called my house looking for one of my roommates. She was given one of their names, and apparently my home number, because she wanted to see if he was interested in the part-time youth pastor position at the church. When I said that neither of them lived with me anymore she asked if I might be interested. I was and that's how I received the position at Grace Baptist: a woman from the church called looking for one of my roommates.

I could give you other examples from my life, and I suspect as you look back on your life you can see God's fingerprints as well. We can't often see what God is doing at the time, but when we look back we can often see how he was directing us and the events surrounding us.

Because Jesus was God in the flesh, he didn't have to look back and see what God was doing. Instead, it was the opposite for him. He could look forward and see what he was supposed to do.

<sup>iii</sup> Robert H Stein, Luke: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (The New American Commentary), p. 467.

<sup>iv</sup> Jesus was not afraid of any danger, because He followed a divine timeline and nothing could harm him until he reached the cross. Not even Herod Antipas, one of the most powerful men in the world, posed any threat to Jesus.

Let me ask you a question that should be very easy...

Who crucified Christ?

- Jews?
- Romans?
- Us because of our sins?

**Isaiah 53:10 It pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin,**

This verse goes to great lengths to make sure we see who was in charge. The Father is shown to be completely responsible for what happened to His Son:

- **The LORD bruised Him**
- **He put Him to grief**
- **He made His soul an offering for sin**

The verse says the exact opposite of what we'd expect. We'd expect it to say:

- **It GRIEVED the LORD to bruise Him**
- **It PAINED the LORD to bruise Him**

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- **It BROKE the Father's heart to bruise His Son**

So how could it please Him?

It pleased God because it accomplished our redemption

- If the Father punished His Son, He wouldn't have to punish us.
- If the Father punished His Son, we could become the Father's sons and daughters.

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Our sins made us God's enemies:

- **Romans 5:10 We were enemies of God**
- **Colossians 1:21 You, who once were alienated and enemies...by wicked works.**
- **Ephesians 2:3 [We] were by nature children of wrath**

The only way Jesus could save us, is:

- He had to become God's enemy.
- He had to become the object of God's wrath.
- God had to treat His Son like His enemy, so He could treat us as His sons and daughters.

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So not only did men like Herod not pose any threat to Jesus. They helped fulfill God's will.

**Acts 4:27** is an interesting verse describing everyone involved with Jesus' crucifixion...

**“Truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together.**

You've got Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the Jews gathered together to see Christ crucified. But then it says something wonderful...

**[They] were gathered together 28 to do whatever YOUR HAND AND YOUR PURPOSE determined before to be done.**

No matter how things looked, it all unfolded according to God's plan:

- **Luke 22:22 Truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined.**
- **Acts 2:23 [Jesus was] delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God.**

**Revelation 13:8** even calls Jesus **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

This is what's known as *Prophetic Perfect*. The idea is when God has determined something, it is so certain it's as if it's already happened. From before time began God set in motion a plan to see His Son take the punishment we deserve, and it was so certain it could be spoken of as though it had already happened.

**ⁱ John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.**

Again, his hour had come.

Also, notice it says Passover had come.

**John 17:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,**

<sup>vi</sup> Wiersbe page 254.