

CHRONOLOGY  
OF  
THE PASSION WEEK II  
Luke 23:26-43

INTRO: On Palm Sunday of this year I gave you a message I called the "Chronology of The Passion Week I". This morning I will give the second message, the "Chronology of The Passion Week II". I want to put these two messages plus the next message together as a set. In these three messages I want to give you the chronology of this momentous week as best I can. It is an extremely complex study and there will be variations by others to what I am giving.

In the previous message we traced the steps of Jesus from the Galilee area in northern Israel. We saw that He came to Jerusalem following a route on the far side of the Jordan River, and crossing the Jordan at Jericho where He stayed the night with Zacheus. Then the next day He went 'up' to Jerusalem and stayed with Mary and Martha and Lazarus. As I calculate these days, the next day He stayed with them as well and that day they had a special community Shabbat meal together with Jesus at Simon the leper's house. He then would have rested on Saturday, the Sabbath day.

Sunday morning, the day following the Sabbath, He rode into Jerusalem on the donkey and then went to the temple where He ministered to the needy and dealt with the money changers and those who sold sacrifices at the temple. Let us pick up where we left off on that Sunday evening by reading Matthew 21:12-17 (read). That brings us now to Monday morning.

In this message we will go from Monday morning until Wednesday evening of the Lunar calendar. Today we have what we call 'Good Friday'. It commemorates the day Christ was crucified.

VI. MONDAY - Lunar Nisan 12 - Solar, Sunday Nisan 11

If I am right on the two different calendars, it all gets a little hard to keep track of the days. It is now Monday Nisan 12 on the Lunar calendar. To pick up the story where we left off on Palm Sunday we go to Mark 11:12-14 (read). Only Matthew and Mark include the account of the cursing of the fig tree which takes place on this morning.

If I can get all my studies together enough to be confident I can manage it, I may do a series on the latter parables of Jesus. I believe the cursing of this fig tree is parabolic. Some have taken courage from this fig tree story that Jesus sometimes got upset for something very insignificant, and have thus concluded that their own such actions are acceptable. But there is much more in view here. So if the Lord wills, I will take on a very huge task of preaching through at least a number of Jesus' latter parables. It is no small undertaking.

One can hardly read this without asking, "How could Jesus be justified in cursing this fig tree for not bearing figs, when the time of figs had not yet arrived?" Was He not the Creator of nature? Furthermore, what did He mean when He said, "No man eat fruit of you forever?"

Well, let us go on to another event of this day. Mark 11:15-19 then records a cleansing of the temple (read). In Matthew 21:12-13 we found that Jesus cleansed the temple on Palm Sunday. Now we find Him cleansing the temple in Mark 11, which is the next day. The question is, did either Matthew and Luke or Mark get the order of when the temple was cleansed wrong? Or, did Jesus cleanse the temple twice, for either there are two cleansings, or there is an order problem here. And I view it that He cleansed the temple twice.

As I piece the story together, this is the second cleansing of the temple. The first happened on Palm Sunday, and the second on Monday. Overnight, these business minded people have reestablished themselves and are back in business again in the same way on Monday as they were on Sunday, and Jesus deals with them again. Is it any wonder that they wanted Him crucified? They had been doing business like this for so long, it was an established practice. And because it was an established practice, it was no longer questioned. Like many other things, it probably only slowly developed into this. But now that it was established, who would dare deal with it?

Recently we covered the beatitude, "Blessed are the peacemakers." Now look at what Jesus did here. And this is the second time. He is cutting into some huge profits and I ask you, was he a peacemaker, or a peacekeeper? Well, I need not ask.

Now Mark says, that in the evening He went out of the city again (Mark 11:19). We are not told where He went, but I think there is little doubt that He went back to Bethany. This is about 2 miles away. Now I might add, it appears from the Gospels that this day ends here. If that is so, not much of what happened on Monday day is recorded, and a whole lot is recorded of the next day.

Let me just add here that this day may have ended at the end of the Olivet discourse but it is recorded here to show what happened to the fig tree. If this is the actual close of Monday, very little information is given of this day and a whole lot of the next day. But we will take it that Tuesday begins here.

#### VII. TUESDAY - Lunar Nisan 13 - Solar Tuesdsay Nisan 1

If that is so, we now go to Tuesday and it is a very busy day according to the amount of material recorded in the Gospels of this day. The very first thing, as they are on the way back to Jerusalem, they discover the withered fig tree. So we go to Mark 11:20-26 (read).

Now we will skip a lot of information. Jesus gives a number of parables that I believe are prophetic. The Jews seek to trap Him in His words. Look at Matthew 22:23-32 (read). Now look at verses 33-34 (read). It is also on this day that Jesus gave the most scathing denunciation of the Scribes and Pharisees. Look at verses 29-36 (read). Jesus then gives what is called the Olivet discourse. It is the most extensive section of prophecy in the NT with the exception of the book of Revelation.

Look at Matthew 24:1-3 (read). Chapter 25 ends with the judgment that will take place at the end of the tribulation. Now look at 26:1-5 (read). Following this, Matthew, Mark and Luke record the super that

Jesus had in Bethany at Simon the Leper's house, which, as I have mentioned, I believe took place earlier. It is at this meal Satan found entrance into Judas. I believe that the synoptics give it here because it explains Judas' actions here.

VIII. WEDNESDAY - Lunar Nisan 14/Solar Tuesday Nisan 13

We go now to Mark 14 (read 12-16). I do not know how much of the previous material given in the Gospels happened on this day and at what time of day these verses took place. But this may be all the information we have of this day because after the sun goes down and we enter the 15<sup>th</sup>, they will eat the Passover meal. And so we go to Thursday of the lunar calendar, but it is Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of the solar calendar.

From here, we are going to switch to the solar calendar, and it will now be Wednesday Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> rather than Thursday Nisan 15<sup>th</sup> on the lunar calendar.

XI. THURSDAY - Lunar Nisan 15/Solar Wednesday Nisan 14

Thursday begins, of course, just as the sun goes down. So when we come to this Passover meal which is after sundown, and thus on the 15<sup>th</sup> on the lunar calendar, in the beginning of the day. On the solar calendar we have just entered the 14<sup>th</sup>. This meal is the meal we have come to know as the last supper. So go to Mark 14 (read Mark 14:17-31). I will not spend much time here except to draw your attention to Luke 22:15-18 (read).

Let me explain the cup. In the Jewish Passover service there were 4 cups of wine corresponding to the four "I wills" found in Exodus 6:6-7. These were:

- The cup of sanctification
- The cup of judgement
- The cup of redemption
- The cup of praise

In our passage Jesus said He would no longer eat the Passover with them until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. When the Lord Jesus returns to earth with the Church in Revelation 19, and the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place, I believe it will be here He will once more have this special meal with

them, because here the picture of the fourth cup, the cup of praise, will be fulfilled. And of the four cups, I believe He drank the third cup with them, the cup of redemption when He said they were to all drink of it. And when He drinks it again, in the millennium, He will take the fourth and last cup, not the cup of redemption, but the cup of praise! Glory, hallelujah!

Well, John 13:1-32 gives the details of how Jesus washed the disciple's feet after this Passover supper. After this we go then to Mark 14:26-31 (read).

At this time, I expect about 8 or 9 pm, the Passover meal done, they sing a Psalm and go back towards Bethany as far as the Garden of Gethsemane. And while they make their way down the slopes from Jerusalem, to the Kidron valley Jesus speaks with them the words of John 14-17. This is the most extensive section of teaching on the Holy Spirit found anywhere in the Bible. And God would send this Spirit into the world in a special way a little over 50 days from this time.

With this teaching done, Jesus and His disciples go up the slopes of the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane. For this we go to John 18:1-11 (read). Now what is not recorded by John is that Jesus prayed for three long, agonizing hours here in Gethsemane. Here, after three hours of praying to God His Father, Jesus drank the cup of sin and thus became the sin bearer for the world. From this time on it is a matter of time till He is delivered to death because He has taken the responsibility of the sin of the world.

I should spend time here, but I cannot. Let me just tell you that the place, Gethsemane, is significant. The name comes from two Hebrew words, *Gat* and *shemon*. It is the place of an olive press, where the oil is crushed out of the olives. It is here where Jesus bore such agony of soul, that blood oozed out of His sweat pores. It is here where He endured suffering more intense by far, than that of the cross.

But let us go on. I have covered in five Good Friday messages what I called 'Seven Historical Steps From Gethsemane to Golgotha.' I will give those to you

just briefly here. I would guess that by the time Jesus had prayed 3 hours in Gethsemane, it was between 12 and 1 at night.

1. From Gethsemane He is taken first to Annas (Jn. 18:13). We would now be between 2-3 in the morning.
2. From Annas He is taken to Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57). By the time the Sanhedrin are gathered and their decisions are made we may be at 5-6 in the morning for it is while He is here that the rooster crows and Peter is reminded of the words of Jesus that before the rooster crows, he will deny His Lord three times.
3. From Caiaphas He is then taken to Pontius Pilate (Matt. 27:1-2).
4. From Pilate He is taken to Herod (Lk. 23:4-10). I would guess we are at 6:30 a.m.
5. From Herod He is taken back to Pilate (Lk. 23:11-23; Matt. 27:15-26 Mk. 15:6-15; Jn. 18:39-19:1). Maybe we are at 7:30 or so.
6. From Pilate He is now taken to the Praetorium (Mat. 27:27-31; Mk. 15:16-20; Jn. 19:2-16). It is probably around 8-8:30 a.m.
7. From the Praetorium He is taken to Golgotha (Matt. 27:32-34 Mk. 15:21-23 Lk. 23:26-33a Jn. 19:17). Here He is crucified and we are given the time in Mark 15:25, which says He was crucified at the 3rd hour. This is 9:00 a.m.

Well, the next time we are given in Scripture is three hours later. In Mark 15:33 we read this, "And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." That is from 12 noon until 3 p.m.

Now let me read Luke 23:44-46: "And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." So Jesus died at 3 p.m. Now the Passover Lambs are slain from 3-5 p.m. So just as the lambs begin to be slain, Jesus is died! He died when the lambs die!

Again, let me just make a brief note here. Jesus did not die from the tortures of the cross. Having completed all sufferings, He died by commending His spirit into God's hands. So He could say, as He did in John 10:17-18, "Therefore My Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Now in my calculations, it is Wednesday evening, Nisan the 14th of the solar calendar that Jesus is crucified. I want to give you the reasons for that briefly. First, we have the sign of Jonah. Go with me to Matthew 12 (read 38-40). Now it is held by the Church in general that Jesus was crucified on Friday evening. So we have come to call it "Good Friday". Now there are no clear explanations why this day is known as 'Good Friday' but I understand that the name may have developed from the name, 'God's Friday'. You see, Jesus gave the sign of Jonah, and the sign was that as Jonah was three days AND three nights in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of man would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Now theological mathematicians can juggle the numbers enough to get three days and three nights from Friday evening to Sunday morning. Various explanations are given such as the Jews considered even part of a day as a day. But what of the three nights? So I say there is no mathematical genius that can get three days and three nights from Friday night to Sunday morning. I have a book called the Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties that seeks to explain this difficulty using a Friday crucifixion but it does not do justice to the accuracy of Scripture in my estimation.

The major reason why the Church has held to a Friday crucifixion is found in John 19:31 (read). Here we find that the next day was the Sabbath, so naturally the day before this is Friday, right? Wrong! Notice that it says that this Sabbath was a *high* day. Now what is the difference between the regular Sabbath and a Sabbath that is a high day? Well, go with me to

Leviticus 23 (read 4-8). The feast of unleavened bread followed immediately after the Passover. Now notice that the first day of the feast of unleavened bread is a day in which no work is to be done (7). That is a Sabbath. You see, this Sabbath was not a regular Sabbath, but a high day, or a special Sabbath.

Now I recommend to you that there were possibly several Sabbaths in a row. If the lunar and solar calendar view is correct, then there would have been the special Sabbath of the solar calendar, then the next day the special Sabbath of the lunar calendar. Then next day would then have been the regular Sabbath of the lunar calendar and the day following that, the regular Sabbath of the solar calendar. That would make four Sabbaths in a row! Now turn with me to Matthew 28:1 (read). Notice the words, "Now after the Sabbath..." You may wish to mark this in the margin of your Bible. Let me give you a literal rendering of the Greek NT, "opse de sabbatwn", literally, "After the Sabbaths..." plural. It is not after the Sabbath. It is after the Sabbaths. Why did these women not come earlier? Because there were several Sabbaths in a row.

Now I want to make a few more points on the three days and three nights when we come to Sunday morning in our studies of the chronology of the passion week.

But before we leave this fateful day, let me make a few important points. Go to John 19. Look first at verse 30 (read). This is at 3:00 p.m. Now look at verse 31 (read). It was the preparation day. Now a preparation day preceded each Sabbath, but here it is the preparation day of the first day of Unleavened Bread, which was an high day. The Romans would have left the crucified persons hang until they died, which could, in some cases be days. But the Jews, because of their customs besought the Roman authorities to make sure these crucified men were buried before sunset, which at that time of year was around 7:00 p.m.

Now when they wanted crucified persons to die sooner than would otherwise have happened, they would hit their legs with something hard enough to break the



bones in the legs. As soon as they could not use their legs to push themselves up to breath, they died quickly.

So, let us read 32-42 (read). Now a point I want to make here is this. Just before the sun set on this Wednesday evening, Jesus was buried. He did not die then. He had died between 3 and 4 hours earlier. He did not die because His legs were broken. He died because He gave up His spirit at will. For that reason His legs were not broken, and that is a fulfillment of prophecy. But, He was buried just before sunset. After sunset, the day we know as Thursday on the solar calendar would begin. We will pick up in the next message using the solar calendar rather than the lunar as we have thus far. In my reckoning, He was crucified on Wednesday, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> according to that calendar.

CONCL: And so, this morning we have followed from Monday morning to Wednesday evening, when Christ was crucified. Let me share with you again something that I learned when we ministered with the Horsts from Pennsylvania in the Philippines. J. Mark said that from his studies he had found that the actual crucifixion might have been somewhat different from how we usually picture it. We get our view from pictures we see. In these pictures, a crucified person's feet may be quite high off the ground. But he said that in actual fact, if you had stood before a crucified man, you would be looking them in the eye. They were at the same height as the person would normally stand. Their knees were slightly bent so that they could push themselves up on the nails through the feet so that they could get breath.

They were crucified right beside main roads, so that all passing by might learn a lesson from this crucified person. On the cross was written the reason for the condemnation. This warned others not to do the same. But if you consider what was written over Christ, you see that His crime was being a Jew, and they called Him 'the King of the Jews'. That is the same condemnation that many Jews are coming under today, as they have for thousands of years. Their crime? Being born a Jew. You see, they had no legitimate crime to put on the cross.

On resurrection Sunday, we want to look at the biblical data given of the days from Wednesday after Sundown, which would be the beginning of Thursday until Sunday evening. If you want an assignment, see if you can find any information in the Gospels of either Thursday, Friday or Saturday.

