

John 68 – Preparation for the New Covenant

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John 19:31-42

Context of Jewish Festivals (Le 23)

- Spring Festivals: Christ's death-burial-resurrection
 - Pesach: Stauros
 - Matzah: Tomb
 - First Fruit: Resurrection
 - Pentecost: Spirit given
- Matzah: Seven-day festival



No Day of Preparation Festival

- The use and capitalization of the phrase, "Day of Preparation," gives the impression this is a *special* day
 - There was no Day of Preparation recognized in the Law
 - Yes, there were preparations made before every Sabbath since Jews could not *work*, to include cooking
 - Special or high Sabbaths associated with Matzah at its beginning and ending may correlate with the weekly Sabbath as occurred in 33 A.D. [Jesus' execution]

John Makes a *Special* Distinction

- John uses the word preparation in our passage to make distinction may not be obvious in some translations
 - He specifically associates this preparation with the Jews
 - He does this after Christ's death denoting separation between *True* Jews (believers) and *False* Jews
 - There is also another preparation after Jesus' death in contrast to the Jewish preparation during His execution

What Was *Preparation*?

- John uses this precise term three times (Jo 19:14, 31, 42)
 - It could refer to preparing for the coming Sabbath, high or otherwise, as was usual
 - I believe it refers to Matzah (Unleavened bread); people would be removing leaven from their homes early in morning then cleaning home for Pesach
 - This would begin about 0300 according to some sources

This would explain John's chronology with Pilate giving Christ to the Jews at the sixth hour
He was executed at the third hour in the other gospels (Subtract 3 hours from John's time)
John's time may be in relation to leaven removal since he had close relations with priestly elements

Pesach Begins at Sunset

- Judean Jews maintained tradition starting the day at 1800 (Evening and Morning were the day) (Jo 1)
 - Christ died on the stauros before Pesach which would begin at 1800 that evening
 - Galilean Jews followed the Roman methodology beginning their day as is usual today: At Midnight
 - Thus, Jesus died on Pesach (He also celebrated Pesach a day early than Judeans; customary with Galileans)

Friday's Timeline

- Here is the sequence of events and festivals
 - 0300 - Search for and removal of leaven; then cleaning
 - 0600 - Pilate's Inquiry begins (Approximately)
 - 0900 - Jesus taken to Golgotha for execution
 - 1200 - Darkness begins (Paying for New Covenant)
 - 1500 - He dies (It is finished)
 - 1800 - Passover and weeklong Matzah festival begins

The Old Testament specific order of events: Pesach, Matzah then First Fruit offering
However, in Christ's time, as today, the search for leaven comes before Pesach as the First and Seventh day of Matzah are considered High or Special Sabbath in addition to the regular Sabbath (Coincided in 33 A.D.)

Mercy of the Law Revealed

- Stauros executions could last several days which would have ruined the festivities; occurred near the main road
 - Person had to raise up on legs to inhale then sink back down exhaling until too weak to raise up; hypoxia
 - Claiming Jewish sensitivities, Jews asked the Romans to break the prisoner's legs to hasten their deaths
 - No Mercy under the Law (1Pe 10:28)

Two Men Showed Mercy

- Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus asked permission to remove Jesus from stauros (Death confirmed by spear thrust to His side: Blood and water)
 - Met with the requirement to remove a person from stauros before sunset or remain cursed (De 21:23)
 - Though previously afraid of the Sanhedrin, they do this openly even though they will be unclean for seven days

Consider Joseph and Nicodemus

- These men of the Sanhedrin hid their belief fearing they would be put out of the congregation and lose everything; yet, they publicly prepared Jesus for death
 - Touching a dead body made one unclean for seven days (Nu. 19:11-13)
 - Touching a dead body meant they could not participate in Pesach until the next month (Nu. 9:8-12)

Preparation – Two Paths

Annas-Calaphas

- Preparation occurred before sacrifice of lamb
- Ritual search for leaven
- Began meditation for seven days on personal sin (Failed to find their sin)

Joseph-Nicodemus

- Preparation occurred after sacrifice of Lamb
- He satisfied removal of sin
- Began announcement of New Covenant in Sheol (Ep. 4:8-10)

Two Paths: Grace and Law

Jesus the Messiah

- Executed on stauros
- Died publicly
- Taken down – Approved
- Body prepared for burial in a clean tomb

Judas Ish Kerioth

- Killed himself on stauros
- Died alone
- Not taken down – Cursed
- Body decayed, neck split and body burst on impact

Scripture Described His Death

- For those who studied their Bibles under the guidance of the Spirit, the Bible revealed Christ's death in detail
 - He could see his bones while Jew and Gentile jeered at Him, "Let God save him!" (Jn 21:19)
 - They cast lots for his clothes (Jn 22:12-26)
 - Not one of His bones was broken (Jn 22:46; Nu 9:12)
 - They shall mourn when they look on Him who was pierced (Zc 12:10; Re 1:7)

Christ Clean in Death

- Joseph and Nicodemus laid Christ's body in a new tomb meaning it was not contaminated by a dead body
 - Even in death Christ remained clean under the Law
 - Spices and oils anointed His body wrapped in linen
 - These spices similar to those brought to Him by the Magi when He was two years old in Bethlehem (Mt 2:1-12)
 - This ends Jesus' earthly ministry in the flesh - Pesach

Christ Our Pesach

Christianity is not a new faith; it is the end of the process begun before Creation: God's goal

Christianity Not a New Faith

- Erroneous view that Jesus created a new faith from His death, burial and resurrection (He 11)
 - Faith of Adam-Noah always based on God's works (Ge 1:8-11; 6:5-8)
 - The faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob before the Law through the Ascending Offering (Ge 8:20; 15:7-21)
 - This early faith could not find God through vaporous philosophy or fearful religious obeisances (Job; Ro 1:18-25)

Law was Man's Tutor in Sin

- God gave the Ten Words through the Jews to instruct mankind in sinfulness (Word and Example) (Ga 4:1-8)
 - Cultic aspects of the Law separated the Jews from all other ethnicities, drawing attention to God
 - Law was good, proving man's utter sinfulness (Ro 7:13)
 - Also, Law showed Messiah who would keep the Law (1Co 5:6-8; 2Co 5:21; Ga 3:11-14; 1Th 2:22)
 - In the fullness of time Messiah came as Pesach - Sinless (Ga 4:4-5; Ep 1:3-10)

Priests and People Unclean

- Priesthood and people loved the Law that condemned them (Works) (1Co 4:1-11; Hag 2:10-17; Ep 2:1-10)
 - For 1.4 millennia the Law percolated through the Jews into cultures they encountered and into subsequent peripheral cultures (Ripple effect) (1Co 2; 7)
 - God's Law separates True from False - Jews/Gentiles
 - False Jews/Gentiles rejected(s) God's mercy of life (1Th 3:18-19)

Paul Did Not Teach a New Faith

- Christianity [New Covenant] was always God's goal and Paul taught believers to celebrate Pesach as Christ was also our Pesach Lamb (1Co 5:6-8)
 - We are to throw out the *old leaven* - *Fleshly sin* (1Jo 1:6-10)
 - We are to live in the *unleavened bread of truth* in Christ
- All who live by Law (Works) are severed from Christ (Lost) rejecting His sacrifice (Caiaphas) (Ro 11:5-10; Ga 5:4)

Christ is God's First Fruit

- The last ceremony conducted two days after Pesach was **First Fruits: waving a barley sheaf to the Lord** (1Co 15:20-28)
 - Barley was the grain of the poor
 - Waving it to God thanked Him for the coming harvest
 - Represented Christ who came in humility and rose from the dead in His new body showing us the hope that lies before us; His coming harvest beginning on Pentecost (Is 55; Ze 9:9)

Christians are also First Fruits

- Christians are the *First Fruits* of believers of the New Covenant brought in because of Jewish unbelief (Ro 11:11-16)
 - Christians retain old flesh until Rapture (1Co 15:35-57; Ph 3:20-21; 1Th 4:13-18)
 - God will call *True Jews* during the Great Tribulation (Re 7:1-12)
 - Many will be saved during Millennial Kingdom (Re 20:7-10)
- All will be the Bride of Christ in new earth and heaven (Re 21:1-4, 22:27)

The Old Testament specific order of events: Pesach, Matzah then First Fruit offering
Pesach: Sacrifice for sin; Matzah: Burial in cleanness while man was to mourn for his sinfulness
First Fruit of New Covenant (Resurrection); Pentecost: Giving of Spirit to believers, also First Fruits now