



# WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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## Matthew 27

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



**Learn the Bible at Home**

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Matthew 27.

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### Topics.

- Blood money (thirty pieces of silver).
- Chief priests and elders accuse Jesus before Pilate.
- Jesus is taken to Golgotha.
- Jesus the King of the Jews.
- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- Will Elijah come to save Jesus?
- The curtain of the temple is torn from top to bottom.
- Tombs are opened and many saints are raised.
- Roman soldiers guard the tomb of Jesus.

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### The previous chapter

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The following is a list of the events that took place one to two days before the Passover Feast began as recorded in the previous chapter:

- The chief priest scribes and elders plotted to kill Jesus.
- A woman with an alabaster box poured oil over Jesus.
- Judas agreed with the chief priest, scribes and elders to betray Jesus.
- At the end of these two days Passover day began (Matt. 26:2-16).
- Jesus and the disciples ate the Passover Feast.
- Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane.
- Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss.
- Peter denied Jesus three times.

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The following is the order of events prior to this chapter: two days prior to Passover day the chief priest and elders desiring to murder Jesus gathered together to plan how they could take him into their custody to stand trial before their counsel without causing uproar amongst the people. Being aware that all the Jewish people would be fully occupied eating their own Passover meal to notice what is going on during the night they planned to take Jesus during Passover evening, so they went with Judas and Roman soldiers and took him into their custody to the house of Caiaphas the High Priest to stand trial.

This chapter now begins very early in the morning on Passover day with the chief priest and elders again meeting to work out when and how they can kill Jesus. Passover Day began on the 14<sup>th</sup> Nisan (also called Abib) at sunset, and ended at sunset.

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu

**The Chief Priests and Elders Deliver Jesus over to Pilate the Governor.**

- **Matthew 27:1-2:** When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. <sup>2</sup>And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

Prior to this time Jesus had previously been brought before Pilate, but when Pilate learned that Jesus belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod because Herod happened to be in Jerusalem at that time (Luke 23:7). Then Herod after listening to Jesus and his accusers sent Jesus back to Pilate which is where Matthew is now picking up the story of Christ's final days.

**Pontius Pilate:** (1st century AD) was the Roman military governor, or procurator, of the imperial province of Judaea from 26 to 36 AD. As the governor of Judaea, he had complete judicial authority over all who were not Roman citizens, but many cases, particularly those relating to religious matters, were decided by the Sanhedrin, the Jewish supreme council and tribunal.

**Jesus is delivered over to Pilate:** after the chief priests, elders and scribes had declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy they took him to the Pilate and the Roman court very early in the morning of Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>) (Mark 15:1) (Luke 23:1) (John 18:28-29), because they had no power to pronounce the death sentence.

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**MATTHEW 27:3-5**

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**Judas Attempts to Return the Thirty Pieces of Silver.**

- **Matthew 27:3-5:** Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, <sup>4</sup>saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." <sup>5</sup>And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself.

**NOTE:** it is still very early in the morning of Passover Day (14<sup>th</sup>).

It appears Judas when he agreed to betray Jesus did not fully understand that the chief priests and the elders' motives were to murder Jesus and have him put to death. Obviously when Judas saw the brutal cruelty that the priests and Romans inflicted on Jesus he was in extreme sorrow and so emotionally distraught he preferred death rather than living with the mental pain that no-doubt tormented his mind. This is most likely what Jesus was referring to at the Passover meal when he said to the twelve disciples, "The Son of man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born" (Mark 14:21).

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**MATTHEW 27:6-10**

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**Blood Money.**

- **Matthew 27:6-10:** But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money." <sup>7</sup>So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. <sup>8</sup>Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. <sup>9</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the

prophet Jeremiah (Jeremy in KJV), saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel,<sup>10</sup> and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord directed me.”

The chief priests picked up Judas thirty pieces of silver and buy a field that belonged to a potter to be used for a graveyard and it became called the field of blood fulfilling what the prophet Jeremiah spoke.

**Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah** the prophet: (v9), these words cited by Matthew are not found in Jeremiah, but in the following verse recorded in the book of Zechariah.

- Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD, to the potter. (Zechariah 11:13).

Throughout history scholars and theologians have struggled over this discrepancy and explained in many various ways of which the following are but just a few.

- In ancient times, according to the Jewish writers; Jeremiah was reckoned the first of the prophets, and was placed first in the book of the prophets, thus: Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the twelve minor-prophets. Some have thought that Matthew, quoting this place, quoted the book of the prophets under the name of the prophet who had the first place in the book, that is, Jeremiah; and though the words are those of Zechariah, yet they are quoted correctly as the words of the book of the prophets, the first of which was Jeremiah.
- Others have thought that there was a mistake made by ancient transcribers, writing the name Jeremiah instead of Zechariah; and it is observed that this might be done by the change of only a single letter. It was often the custom to abridge words in writing them. Thus, instead of writing the name of Jeremiah in full, it would be written in Greek, “Iriou.” So, Zechariah would be written “Zion.” By the mere change of Z into I, therefore, the mistake might easily be made.
- Matthew was quoting from memory, and upon recollecting the two noticeable and striking chapters of Jeremiah eighteen and nineteen in which Jeremiah had spoken of the potter and his work and was led to think that this Scripture also belonged to the same group of prophecies.
- Jeremiah originally spoke the words and Zechariah repeated them and the Jewish scribes kept Zechariah’s citing of them in writing and not Jeremiah’s.
- Matthew in an earlier chapter quotes one of the most remarkable prophecies of Christ (Matt 21:4-5) from the book of Jeremiah which shows that he was clearly familiar, with Jeremiah writings and since these two amazing prophetic verses are linked and speak of two major events concerning Christ, he references them both to Jeremiah.
- The Syriac and Persic versions of the Bible make no mention of any prophet’s name, but read, “Which was spoken by the prophet”; and so the words could be ascribed to Zechariah or to Jeremiah. Though this would certainly explain such a discrepancy it must be acknowledged that in all the Greek copies, in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in Munster’s Hebrew Gospel the prophets name Jeremiah is used.
- Zechariah had two names and was therefore referred to as Zechariah and Jeremiah, but there is no proof of this.
- The words were originally spoken by Jeremiah and Zechariah recorded them and Matthew quoted them as the words of Jeremiah since they were originally spoken by him.

There are many more things that have been said for reconciling this difficulty, but who originally cited the words is of little importance since they perfectly predicted Judas betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver hundreds of years later.

### **The Prophet Zechariah Echoes Jesus.**

- Then I said to them, “if it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.” And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. <sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said to me “throw it to the potter”— the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the lord, to the potter <sup>14</sup>Then I broke my second staff union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel (Zechariah 11:12-14).

**Interpretation of Zechariah’s prophecy:** that the prophecy in Zechariah belongs to the Messiah, and was fulfilled in Jesus, clearly appears from the context (i.e., the person spoken of is called to “feed the flock of slaughter” which means they are in a very poor condition, thus it is a very apt depiction the state of the Jews at the time of Christ. The shepherd agrees to feed the flock and accordingly furnishes himself for it. But the shepherds (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) esteemed him not valuing him at the lowly sum of thirty pieces of silver thus he is despised, abhorred and rejected (Zech. 11:4-12).

**The first section of Zechariah’s words:** in (Zech. 11:4) the LORD says, “Become the shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter and the shepherd replies by saying that he became the shepherd of the flock doomed to be slaughtered by the sheep traders (Zech. 11:7). Thus, the prophet Zechariah is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ and the religious leaders of his era saying that they would value the Lord at the lowly and pathetic price of thirty pieces of silver.

**The second section of Zechariah’s words:** added to Zechariah’s amazing foresight he talks about two staffs named Favour and Union (Zech. 11:7). The first staff called “Favour” refers to the LORD’S favour and the blessing of the LORD’S covenant with Israel while the second staff named “Union” symbolizes the brotherhood and union between Israel and Judah thus Zechariah in this prophecy is saying that the union and brotherhood between Judah and Israel will be broken, meaning the Jewish Covenant will be annulled, because the religious leaders considered the shepherd of such little worth.

**This is amazing:** when Judas threw the thirty pieces of silver into the LORD’S House the blessings of the LORD’S Old Testament covenant were annulled (Zech. 11:12-17).

**Thirty pieces of silver:** to give some idea of the value of thirty pieces of silver, the denarii were a silver coin and the value of oil from alabaster box that the woman poured over the Lord just prior to his death was worth three-hundred silver coins. So, thirty silver coins taken from the priest’s treasury would be something like taking one hundred dollars from the Vatican vault. A humble peasant woman placed far more value on Christ than did the head priests of God’s temple and the religious leaders of Israel. (Mark 14:5) (John 12:5). For further information see:

- Zechariah chapter 11 in, Commentary OT (ON WEBSITE MENU).

**NOTE:** it is interesting to notice that the chapters following Zechariah chapter eleven all focus on Jesus and the lead up to the final climax of him returning and standing on the Mount of Olives.

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### **MATTHEW 27:11-14**

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### **Chief Priests and Elders accuse Jesus before Pilate.**

- **Matthew 27:11-14:** Now Jesus stood before the governor (Pilate) and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." <sup>12</sup>But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" <sup>14</sup>But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

**NOTE:** it is still very early in the morning of Passover Day (14<sup>th</sup>).

Pilate refused to approve the chief priest, Pharisees and scribe's judgment of Christ without investigation so Pilate had a private interview with him. Pilate appears to have been impressed with Jesus' dignity and seems to have tried to save him (see John 18:38-39, 19:12-15). Nevertheless, fear of an uprising in Jerusalem forced Pilate to comply to the demand of the very powerful and influential religious leaders.

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## MATTHEW 27:15-23

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### Barabbas a Notorious Prisoner.

- **Matthew 27:15-23:** Now at the feast the governor (Pilate) was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup>And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. <sup>17</sup>So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" <sup>18</sup>For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. <sup>19</sup>Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream." <sup>20</sup>Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup>The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" <sup>23</sup>And he said, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

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It was a Jewish custom that at the Passover the governor would release one man from prison (John 18:39).

**Pilate and the judgment seat:** Pilate while on the judgment seat tells the crowd they can release Jesus or a well-known prisoner and bandit named Barabbas who was a famous revolutionary amongst the people and a notorious murderer. The crowd's response is a perfect example of how religious leaders who appear holy and who have enormous power, authority and fame can influence the general public to evil. The religious leaders (the chief priests and the elders) desiring to have Jesus killed persuaded and succeeded in convincing the crowd to ask for Barabbas to be set free (Luke 23:25).

**The lesson for today:** just because someone is a famous head of a religious organisation and has great knowledge authority and power does not guarantee they are right. The chief priests, scribes and the elders had enormous knowledge of the Old Testament scrolls they were the heads of the nation's religion. The common people trusted them, but they were motivated by their own selfish gain so their heart was a million miles away from God's and because their motivation was for selfish ambition and power instead of leading the people of Israel toward God they not only led the nation away from God, but to ruin and destruction.

**Let him be crucified!:** this is almost unbelievable, the Messiah who all the Old Testament prophets proclaimed was to come and who all Israel was looking forward to seeing finally arrives and instead of the head priests of God's nation being exited they not only deliberately set about planning how they can kill him they actually turn their followers against him and even worse they convince them to have the Romans kill him. This is deception at its best an entire nation is led astray by a small but very powerful group of religious leaders.

How true is the ancient proverb in this scenario that says, "If you find you are on a path with a lot of company perhaps you are on the wrong path."

**Pilate's wife:** it is most likely Pilate shared everything about Jesus and his conversations with him with his wife, she may have had some contact with Jesus herself because God reveals to her in a dream that he is a righteous man and she warns her husband not to have anything to do with Jesus death.

**What evil has he done:** by asking the crowd, "What evil has Jesus done?" Pilate appears to be trying to defend Jesus, but the entire crowd influenced by the religious leaders don't even attempt to answer Pilate's question, but scream to have him crucified!

**NOTICE:** Pilate knew that it was out of envy (meaning they wanted Jesus success, popularity and fame) that the religious leaders had delivered Jesus up (v18).

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## MATTHEW 27:24-32

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### Barabbas is released and a Crown of Thorns is put on Jesus Head.

- **Matthew 27:24-32:** So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves." <sup>25</sup>And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" <sup>26</sup>Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. <sup>27</sup>Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's (Pilate's) headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup>And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup>and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup>And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup>And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. <sup>32</sup>As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

Luke and John when writing about this same event record that the day Pilate sat on the Judgement seat with Jesus and said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" was also called the Day of Preparation (i.e. Passover Day) and following it was a Sabbath High Day. They also give us the added information that the moment Jesus gave up his Spirit and said, "It is finished" the curtain of the Temple was torn in two (Luke 23:44-45) (John 19:14, 30-31).

**The Jewish Passover Day and High Sabbath:** The Sabbath days that are mentioned regarding the Passover had nothing to do with the Jewish weekly Sabbath that the Jews kept every Saturday. God delivered Israel from Egypt (the house of bondage) on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Abib (also called Nisan) and it was on this day that God commanded the Jews to keep the Passover Feast, regardless of what day of the week it fell on, it had to be kept on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Abib. The day after Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>) was a Sabbath day regardless of what day it fell on because it was the first day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (15<sup>th</sup>), so Passover day and the Sabbath day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread could have fallen on any day of the week. Obviously over their four-thousand years of keeping this feast there were times when it did fall on Saturday (the Jewish weekly Sabbath) when this happened it was called a high Sabbath (meaning double Sabbath). In regards to Jesus death and resurrection, the first Sabbath day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15<sup>th</sup>) did fall on Saturday, (the Jewish weekly Sabbath day). We know this because all four Gospels records that the two Mary's went to the tomb after the Sabbath day near the dawn of the first day of the week (Sunday) so it was a double Sabbath, called a high Sabbath (Matt. 28:1) (Mark 16:1-2) (Luke 24:1-5) (John 20:1-2).



**NOTE:** it is still early in the morning of Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>).

**How amazing and horrific is this:** Pilate a secular governor of Judea attempts to defend Israel's Messiah, Christ and King and influence the crowd to release him, but the Jewish people riot. Pilate then tells the crowd if they want Jesus killed, they will have to do it themselves and not only do they gladly take up the offer to murderer Jesus they willing accept the guilt of it. So, Pilate (no-doubt reluctantly) releases for the Jews a guilty man named Barabbas who was in prison for insurrection, robbery and murder. Added to this extreme injustice Jesus who was guilty of no crime is stripped and brutally whipped. He then has a twisted crown of thorns put on his head and is clothed in a scarlet robe, spat upon, slapped and mocked by multitudes of soldiers kneeling and crying "Hail, King of the Jews!" After all this horror the soldiers force Jesus in his beaten and weak condition to carry his own cross. Jesus obviously struggled to carry such a heavy load of timber on his bloody and bleeding back so the soldiers forced a man named Simon from Cyrene to carry it for him.

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## MATTHEW 27:33-35

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### Jesus is taken to Golgotha.

- **Matthew 27:33-35:** And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means place of a skull), <sup>34</sup>they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. <sup>35</sup>And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots.

**NOTE:** it is still early in the morning of Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>).

Prior to Jesus being nailed to the cross he was offered a drink mixed with gall (bitterness) (v34). This would certainly be in accordance with Solomon's instruction to give a cup of spiced wine or strong drink to those who were perishing (Prov. 31:6-7), perhaps to help with their emotional and physical pain and as their last enjoyment of life, but it appears the cruelty and mocking of the soldiers had not ended as they deliberately mixed vinegar in with the wine making it bitter and sour for Jesus to drink. The second time this drink was offered to him was while he was on the cross and just before he died (v48). The drink mixed with vinegar they offered him, was literally foretold in (Psalm 69:21) showing that all the events that are taking place were a fulfilment of the determinate counsel and eternal foreknowledge of God.

**The dividing of Jesus garments:** (v35) when they nailed Jesus to the cross, they stripped him of his garments (at least his upper garments) obviously if the garment was torn and divided it would be of no use to any one therefore, they agreed to cast lots for it. The following is a list of common reasons the men may have contented for Jesus garment:

- Because it was so fine and rich, that it was worth a considerable amount of money, but this idea does not flow in harmony with the poverty Christ appeared in.
- Perhaps they had heard of those that had been cured by touching the hem of his garment and they thought it might have some healing power in it.
- They hoped to get money of his friends for such a sacred relic.
- Because, in contempt, mockery and scorn they would seem to put a value upon it, as royal clothing.
- They were simply playing a game of dice for the clothes as a diversion to pass away the time while they waited for Jesus to die.

Whatever the reason they cast lots for the Lords garment the word of God was accomplished as recorded in the first words of the famous Psalm in which it states "They parted my garments among them, and cast lots



upon my vesture" (Psalm. 22:18). This was never true of David, but certainly echoes Christ, of whom David (a prophet) in spirit, spoke.

**NOTE:** the fact that David by the Spirit was so accurate in speaking these words thousands of years before the event actually took place shows us that all the horrific events that took place leading up to the Lord's crucifixion was the fulfilment of the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God

**Hours of the day:** 6am sunrise is the 1<sup>st</sup> hour of the day and then the 3<sup>rd</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> hours are counted from it. The 1<sup>st</sup> hour cannot be counted from sunset (6pm) because, if sunset is taken as the 1<sup>st</sup> hour and the 3<sup>rd</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> hours are counted from it, then the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour would be 9pm, the 6<sup>th</sup> hour would be midnight and the 9<sup>th</sup> hour would be 3am and it would be already dark, therefore when the Scriptures say, "it went dark" it would have no meaning, added to this, if Jesus died at 3am he would have been on the cross on the Jewish Sabbath Day. Therefore, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour (9am) Jesus was given over to be crucified, then at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour (12 noon) Jesus was crucified at Golgotha and darkness fell over all the land. Then at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour (3pm) Jesus breathed his last and gave up his life and the curtain of the temple was torn from top to bottom.

- For further detail see the notes following Matthew 27:45-46 (further down).

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## MATTHEW 27:36-44

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### Jesus King of the Jews Hour.

- **Matthew 27:36-44:** Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. <sup>37</sup>And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." <sup>38</sup>Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. <sup>39</sup>And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup>and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." <sup>41</sup>So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, <sup>42</sup>"He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup>He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" <sup>44</sup>And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

Not only was Jesus mocked, derided, ridiculed and shown contempt by the chief priests, scribes and elders and those who walked by he was crucified as a common criminal.

**Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him:** (v41) the chief priests, with the scribes and elders said if Jesus comes down from the cross, they would believe in him, but they clearly wouldn't have, since even when he was resurrected they aggressively set out to destroy all those who testified to his name and his resurrection. David in the following verses of the well-known and famous Psalm echoes Christ:

- I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads; "He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!" (Psalm 22:6-8).
- I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death. For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircle me; they have pierced my hands and feet (Psalm 22:14-16).
- They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots (Psalm 22:18).

**Sceptics and the inscription on the cross:** sceptics say that the Bible is in error, because the title placed over Jesus head reads differently in the book of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This is foolishness and a vain attempt to support their arguments that the Bible is full of contradictions. Of course, it is not going to be word for word exact simply because each book is written by four different authors. Common sense will see that though they may use different words they all say the same thing (i.e., Jesus is the King of the Jews). Many people have been taught that the Bible is the inspired word of God and therefore every single word is inspired, but this is a mistaken idea, certainly the Bible contains the inspired word of God, but it is the messages the individual words teach that is inspired not the individual words themselves.

Individual words form sentence and a paragraph etc., it is the messages that are taught by these sentences and paragraphs when individual words are put together that is the inspired word of God. There are many Bibles that use different words, but all teach the same message, it is these messages that are inspired by God. If it was the individual words that were inspired the Bible could never be translated into other languages (i.e., Chinese, Mexican, Russian etc.), and remain inspired because these languages do not have the same individual words that the English language does. Added to this the original Manuscripts are written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, so none of us would be reading the inspired word of God but the good news is that every language on planet earth can use their own language and individual words to translate the messages that God has spoken.

**The inscription on the cross:** Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record different inscriptions on the Cross:

**Matthew says:** this is Jesus the King of the Jews (Matt 27:37) (KJV).

**Mark says:** The King of the Jews (Mark 15:26) (KJV).

**Luke says:** this is the King of the Jews (Luke 23:38) (KJV).

**John says:** Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews (John 19:19) (KJV).

**It probably read:** this is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews. Though all inscriptions are slightly different the message they proclaim is very clear.

**You who would destroy the temple:** (v40) Jesus is accused of saying he would destroy the temple, but he never said this rather he implied that others would, but he did say he would rebuild it. It was the religious leaders, the chief priest, Pharisees and scribes who destroyed it by their hypocrisy and selfish ambition for power and control. We know this because Jesus says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Thus, Jesus desire was to save the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but because they were so corrupt, he could not (Luke 13:34). The Romans literally destroyed the temple in 70 AD. For further information on the temple Jesus is building see the title:

- The Commonwealth of Israel (at the end of this chapter).

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## **MATTHEW 27:45-46**

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### **My God, my God, why have you Forsaken Me?**

- **Matthew 27:45-46:** Now from sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour <sup>46</sup>And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

This verse cited from Psalm twenty-two contains a beautiful example of an Old Testament Bible echo: Jesus cries out, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" meaning, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" this immediately takes the mind of the ardent Bible student to the following Psalm of King David:

- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? (Psalm 22:1).

The entire Psalm is full of echoes of Christ. The words: "My God, my God," is an expression denoting intense suffering, throughout history it has been difficult to understand in what sense Jesus was "forsaken by God," especially when one considers that God on three occasions in the New Testament said He was well pleased with his Son, and it is clear that Jesus was innocent and had done nothing to forfeit the favour of God and as God's own Son Jesus remained holy, harmless, undefiled, and obedient thus God still loved him and as such could not have forsaken him. The expression "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Was most likely used in reference to any of the following three circumstances:

1. Any innocent human man suffering the intense bodily agony and the severe emotional and mental distress of being cruelly nailed to a cross and whose extreme pain would be enormously magnified by whippings and beatings brutally and violently inflicted on them by their enemies would naturally feel they were forsaken by God and address Him as if they were forsaken and given up to extreme anguish. Thus, some reason that Jesus in his extreme suffering and misery is crying out as a natural part of humanity which, even though he was void of sin and the Son of God still felt the intense physical pain and emotional and mental anguish inflicted on his bloody and bleeding body.
2. The words "Why have you forsaken me?" Expresses the idea that as Christ hung on the cross, made sin for us he was treading the wine-press alone as expressed by the psalmist in the words, "My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my nearest kin stand far off (Psalm 38:11) thus he is left to struggle without the comfort of his friends and without a sense of his Father's presence, nevertheless the cry shows that he was still clinging to the Father as his own (2 Cor. 5:21).
3. The Jews speaking against Christ quoted the eighth verse of Psalm twenty-two which says: "He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him; let him rescue him, for he delights in him!" (Matt 27:43) and Jesus immediately answered, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Therefore, some think that because the Jews "believed Psalm twenty-two speaks of Israel's Messiah Jesus consciously and very deliberately spoke these words to take their unbelieving minds to the Psalm and prove to them that he was the Messiah the Psalm speaks of.

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## MATTHEW 27:47-50

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### Will Elijah come to Save Jesus.

- **Matthew 27:47-50:** And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." <sup>48</sup>And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. <sup>49</sup>But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." <sup>50</sup>And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit (Mark 15:33-37 is a parallel passage).

### The following are two possible reasons the Jews thought Jesus was calling for Elijah:

1. When the Jews heard the words, "Eli, Eli", spoken by Christ (v46), it is possible they mistook them because of the nearness of the sound to the name of Elias (Elijah) or because they were not near enough to

hear and distinguish "Eli, from Elias and thought Jesus was calling for Elijah. This idea is supported by the fact the Jews expected Elijah to appear under the character of a mighty prince as the forerunner of the Messiah (See Malachi 4:5) (Matthew 2:2-4) (Matthew 17:10-12).

2. In line with all their previous scorn and mocking they allude to Elias name not because they did not understand what he said, but because of a profane impudence and disrespect with a deliberate intent to mock and ridicule him.

**Jesus is given sour wine to drink:** (v48) this is the second time Jesus was given bitter wine to drink the first time was prior to his crucifixion (v34) which was also spoken of in the following verse thousands of years before the event.

- They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink (Psalm 69:21).

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## MATTHEW 27:51

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### **The Curtain of the Temple is Torn from Top to Bottom.**

- **Matthew 27:51:** And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

The curtain of the temple was torn in two from the top down to the bottom at 3pm in the afternoon (the 9<sup>th</sup> Hour of the day) which was the same moment Jesus breathed his last breath and gave up his life (Mark 15:38) (Luke 23:44-45). The curtain of the temple being torn was an important sign signifying the entire end of the Levitical priest hood, under the Old Testament law only the high priest could enter behind the curtain and into the Most Holy Place in which the Ark of the Covenant sat symbolising the presence of God. The common people could never come before the very presence of God they had to rely on a human high priest to stand before God and intercede as mediator for them.

Thus, the curtain of the temple being torn from top to bottom was God's way of very clearly signifying that the entire Levitical priesthood with all its human high priests, the priesthood and all the temple services, the holy days and sacrifices is now done away with. Since Christ's resurrection everyone even the lowliest can now enter into God's presence through grace and faith in God's eternal High Priest the Lord Jesus Christ and be fully confident that he will never reject any who come to him in humbleness and honest heartfelt repentance.

**The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent:** the death and resurrection are the fulfilment of (Gen. 3:15) in which the LORD God said into:

- The serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: <sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel (Gen. 3:14-15).

In these verses the LORD is saying that He will put enmity between the serpent and the woman and between the serpent seed and the woman's seed and that the woman's seed will bruise the serpent's head and that the serpent will bruise the heel of the woman's seed. The seed of the woman is the Lord Jesus Christ and the words, "The serpent will bruise his heel," apply to Jesus being crucified. It is called bruised on the heel because Jesus wound (death) was only temporary, a bruise on the heel does not kill a person it only delays what they are doing until it is healed; Jesus bruise was healed when God resurrected him to His right-hand side in glory. Whereas the words, "Jesus Christ will bruise the head of the serpent's head (many translations have will crush the head of the serpent)

applies firstly to Jesus destroying the powerful, prideful, hypocritical religious leaders of his generation (the chief priests, the Pharisees and the scribes) and secondly to Christ's return in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to destroy everything that is against God and against his will and establish God Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

After Jesus had washed the disciples' feet he said to the disciples:

- I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me' (John 13:18).

The he in this verse refers to Judas who betrayed Jesus. Judas Iscariot is the one who has lifted his heel against the seed of the woman. The following verses shine a spotlight on the truth that both John the Baptist and Jesus considered the religious leaders (the Pharisees and the Sadducees) of their era to be serpents.

- When he (John the Baptist) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of *vipers* (Matt. 3:7).
- Jesus speaking to the Pharisees said, O generation of *vipers*, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? (Matt. 12:24, 34).
- Jesus speaking to the Pharisees said, Ye *serpents*, ye generation of *vipers*, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (Matt. 23:29, 33).
- Then said he (John the Baptist) to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of *vipers*, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? (Luke 3:7).

**Viper:** comes from the Greek word (echidna) and means an adder or some other poisonous snake (literal or figurative). Judas and the Pharisees (the religious rulers of the entire Jewish nation) and by extension anyone who is opposed to God's will, is the serpents seed. Jesus and his mother Mary came through the bloodline of Israel. The woman of (Genesis 3:15) refers to Mary the woman who gave birth to Jesus and figuratively to the nation of Israel (in the sense that he came from their bloodline) while the seed of the serpent refers to the religious leaders of Jesus generation.

**Here is the wonder, the beauty and the glory of the Bible:** evidence of Jesus Christ goes right back to the beginning of time to this promise of God contained in one verse. It then majestically flows through the prophets, the Old Testament Scriptures and prophecy and is partially fulfilled when Mary gave birth to the promised seed the Lord Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection and will be ultimately fulfilled when he returns in glory and crushes the head of the seed of the serpent (i.e., everyone that is offensive to God and against his will).

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## MATTHEW 27:52-54

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### The Tombs are opened and many of the Faithful are Raised.

- **Matthew 27:52-54:** The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, <sup>53</sup>and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup>When the centurion and those with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

**NOTE:** it is still 3pm (9<sup>th</sup> hour) of Passover Day (14<sup>th</sup>).

When Jesus breathed his last there was a great earthquake and many tombs (a solid stone enclosure built as a monument for the dead) (v60) near Jerusalem were broken open, then after Jesus resurrection (v53) many of the faithful which slept arose from them and went to the city of Jerusalem. We do not know who these raised believers were, but from

what is written we can conclude that they rose in the same bodies in which they had lived otherwise they would not have been known by those who they appeared to. Some have thought them to be the ancient patriarchs, as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob etc., but it would seem more likely that they were some later disciples or followers of Christ who the people of that time would have recognised. This is a very small glimpse of the ultimate resurrection to come when the Lord Jesus Christ descends from heaven and the dead in Christ are raised and those who are alive at that time are caught up together with them in the air to be with the Lord forever (1 Thess. 4:10-18).

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## MATTHEW 27:55-56

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### Women who followed Jesus.

- **Matthew 27:55-56:** There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him, <sup>56</sup>among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

**NOTE:** it is still 3pm (9<sup>th</sup> hour) of Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>).

The following are the names of woman who followed Jesus: -

**Mary Magdalene:** who Jesus had cast out seven demons (Mark 16:9) (Luke 8:2).

**Mary:** the mother of Jesus, James and Joseph (Joses) (Matt. 13:55) (Mark 6:3) (the Greek name is Joseph).

**Salome:** the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John (Matt. 27:56) with (Matt. 4:21-22) (Mark 15:40) (Mark 16:1).

**The other Mary:** it is uncertain who this Mary is.

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## MATTHEW 27:57-61

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### Joseph from Arimathea.

- **Matthew 27:57-61:** When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. <sup>58</sup>He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. <sup>59</sup>And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud <sup>60</sup>Joseph laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. <sup>61</sup>Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there (when Joseph was laying Jesus in the tomb) sitting opposite the tomb.

Joseph of Arimathea who believed in the Kingdom of God and was a respected member of the Council, late in the afternoon of Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>) raised up the courage and went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission and Joseph took Jesus' body down and wrapped him in a linen shroud, then laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock and rolled a stone against the entrance of it. Then Joseph, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary returned and prepared spices and ointments and rested on the Jewish weekly Saturday Sabbath (15<sup>th</sup>) which began at sunset in the evening (6pm). This weekly Sabbath was also a Jewish high Sabbath as it was the first day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

(Matt. 27:57) (Matt. 28:1) (Mark 15:42-43, 46) (Mark 16:1-2)  
(Luke 23:53) (John 19:38, 42)



**Soldiers Guard the Tomb.**

- **Matthew 27:62-66:** Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate <sup>63</sup>and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' <sup>64</sup>Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." <sup>65</sup>Pilate said to them "You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can." <sup>66</sup>So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

Jesus has been laid in the tomb and it is now Saturday the Jewish weekly Sabbath day (15<sup>th</sup>) the day after preparation day (Passover day) (14<sup>th</sup>). The religious leaders the chief priests and the Pharisees feared Jesus disciples would steal the body of Jesus and then tell everyone that he had risen from the dead as he said he would so they ask Pilate for soldiers to guard the tomb. Pilate no-doubt wanting to maintain peace in the region grants them soldiers to make the tomb secure and guard it until the third day (Matt. 27:62) (John 19:30-33) (Luke 23:53-54).

**Ponder for a moment:** The chief priests and the Pharisees believed it would be disastrous for them even if Jesus disciples stole the body and lied to the people telling them that Jesus had risen from the dead, imagine their shock horror when they began to see and hear multitudes of excited people rejoicing and proclaiming Jesus had risen.

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**OVERVIEW OF EVENTS THAT HAPPENED  
ON PASSOVER DAY**

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14

Passover day began at sunset and ended at sunset. Two days prior to Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>) the Jewish counsel had been meeting and made the decision to kill Jesus. On Passover day at sunset very early in the evening the disciples prepared the upper room, they eat the Last Supper with Jesus and he prays in the garden of Gethsemane. Judas betrays Jesus and taken to stand trial before Caiaphas where he is condemned to death. Very early on the morning of Passover day the Jewish counsel are working out when and how they can kill Jesus so they take him to Pilate, then Herod, then back to Pilate.

**9 am** (the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour) Jesus was given over to be crucified.

**12 noon** (the 6<sup>th</sup> hour) Jesus is crucified and darkness covers the land.

**3 pm** (the 9<sup>th</sup> hour) Jesus breathed his last breath and the curtain is torn.

It is interesting to notice that the chapter ends on the sixty-sixth verse the number of man.

**The Bible teaches that Jesus death by his death and resurrection:**

- Bore our griefs and carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4).
- Was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5).
- Suffered our punishment so we could have peace with God (Isaiah 53:5).
- Eternally healed us (from sin and for eternal salvation) through his suffering (Isaiah 53:5).
- Redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us. (Galatians 3:13)

- Died as a sin offering in our place and on our account that in him, we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

If anyone is in any doubt as to God's love simply look at the bloodstained cross and see what it cost God to save us and the suffering Christ endured to redeem those who would accept his invitation to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and eternal life.

**The glory Christ achieved on the cross:** the glory and salvation Christ achieved on the cross for all who trust in him will be spectacularly manifested in awesome power and glory when he returns, not as the Lamb to be slain, but as the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy city Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

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15

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Revelation 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

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To understand God's eternal promises made thousands of years ago it is important to know that the promised seed of the woman in (Genesis 3:14-15), the promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David is Christ and that all the eternal promises God made to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ and are therefore no longer limited to Israel only, but

extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew).

### **Jews and Gentiles become One New Nation in Christ.**

The Apostle Paul said:

- Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands— <sup>12</sup>remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup>But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup>For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility <sup>15</sup>by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, <sup>16</sup>and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). <sup>17</sup>And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). <sup>18</sup>For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. <sup>19</sup>So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, <sup>20</sup>built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone <sup>21</sup>in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup>In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit. (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God because in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

16

**The practical application of what this means to you:** if you belong to Christ, all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to you. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

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### **EXTRA NOTES**

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**Preparation Day:** there is no particular day in the Bible which was called: "The Day of Preparation," or "The Preparation of the Passover." Under the law in (Exodus 12:3) the lamb for the Passover was to be separated from the rest of the flock on the tenth day of the month, and to be kept up to the fourteenth day, but this period of time is never called the preparation

of the Passover and it cannot be referring to the disciples preparing and making ready the Passover meal for Christ as his Passover was killed, prepared and eaten the same day (Matt. 26:17).

### **The title Preparation Day is sometimes called:**

- After the *day of Preparation*, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate. (Matthew 27:62).
- The *day of Preparation*, that is, the day before the Sabbath. (Mark 15:42).
- It was the *day of Preparation*, and the Sabbath was beginning. (Luke 23:54).
- Now it was the *day of Preparation* of the Passover about the sixth hour Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" (John 19:14).
- Since it was the *day of Preparation*, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. (John 19:31).
- Because of the *Jewish day of Preparation*, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there. (John 19:42).

The above verses show that the Preparation day was the day before the Sabbath day which at this time was a Jewish high Sabbath as it fell on the Saturday (the Jewish weekly Sabbath) and was also a Sabbath day because it was the first day of the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread (15<sup>th</sup>). Therefore, the day of Preparation was also Passover day (14<sup>th</sup>). As there is no particular day which was called, "The Preparation of the Passover" it is most likely that the title "Preparation day" is simply a title that refers to the preparation needed for any special occasion especially the Jewish Sabbaths as they could not work on these days.

The title "Preparation day" is not limited to Passover day only, but could be applied to any day that falls prior to a Sabbath day. On this occasion it is most likely identified with the Passover and called the Passover preparation day to distinguish this preparation day from any other preparation day prior to any other Sabbath day.

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### **THE THIRD HOUR THE CRUCIFIXION AND JESUS DEATH**

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In the following verses Mark states, it was the "third hour" Jesus was crucified, but that it was the "sixth hour" when darkness fell over the land:

- It was the *third hour* when they crucified him (this is the only mention of the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour) (Mark 15:25).
- When the *sixth hour* had come, there was *darkness* over the whole land until the *ninth hour*. <sup>34</sup>And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" -- NOW GO TO VERSE -- <sup>37</sup>and Jesus uttered a loud cry and *breathed his last* (Mark 15:33-37).

In the following verses Matthew Luke and John state it was the "sixth hour" Jesus was crucified and darkness fell on the land:

- From the *sixth hour* there was *darkness* over all the land until the *ninth hour*. <sup>46</sup>And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" -- NOW GO TO VERSE -- <sup>50</sup>And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and *yielded up his spirit* (Matt. 27:45-50).
- It was now about the *sixth hour*, and there was *darkness* over the whole land until the *ninth hour* -- NOW GO TO VERSE -- <sup>46</sup>then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last (Luke 23:44).

- Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the *sixth hour*. Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" <sup>15</sup>They cried out, "crucify him!" <sup>16</sup>So he delivered him over to them to be crucified (John 19:14-16).

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## SUMMARY OF JESUS, THE CRUCIFIXION AND HIS DEATH

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- The 1<sup>st</sup> hour was 6am (Sunrise).
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> hour was 9am (Jesus was given over to be crucified).
- The 6<sup>th</sup> hour was 12 noon (Jesus was crucified and darkness fell over the land).
- The 9<sup>th</sup> hour was 3pm (Jesus breathed his last and gave up his life).

From the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour (9am) Jesus was given over to be crucified and the soldiers began to torture and mock him. Then at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour (12 noon) Jesus was crucified and there was darkness over all the land for three hours and then at the 9<sup>th</sup> hour (3pm) the Lord breathed his last breath and yielded up his life. Reconciling Mark with Matthew Luke and John: over the years there has been difficulty in reconciling (Mark 15:25) which records that it was the third hour they crucified Jesus with Matthew Luke and John who all state Jesus was crucified at the sixth hour. To reconcile this difficulty the following two scenarios may make the matter clearer:

1. It is not necessary to understand Mark as saying that it was precisely nine o'clock, because in regards to time the Jews considered that it was six o'clock until it was seven o'clock and seven o'clock until it was 8 o'clock etc., thus it was the third hour until the fourth hour commenced; it was the ninth hour until it was the tenth, they "included" in the "third" hour the whole time from the third to the fourth. Likewise, the Jews adopted this same principal to their day, each day was divided into four equal parts of three hours each as follows:

- The first began at sunrise (6am).
- The second three hours after began at (9am).
- The third began at mid-day (12 noon).
- The fourth three hours after, and continued till sunset (3pm to 6pm).

Christ having been nailed to the cross a little after mid-day, (John 19:14-16) (John 19:17), and having breathed his last breath about three o'clock, (Mark 15:33), the whole horror of the crucifixion was finished within the space of this third division of the day, which Mark refers to as the third hour.

2. Calvary was outside the walls of Jerusalem and a considerable distance from the place where Jesus was tried and condemned. For a man who had been cruelly whipped, tortured beaten and bloody to walk from Jerusalem to Mount Calvary some considerable time would have elapsed. Thus, Mark may well have been speaking of the time when the process for crucifixion commenced (the beginning of the crucifixion) from the time Jesus was condemned to be murdered and they began the process and preparation of the crucifixion. Whereas John was referring to the time when Jesus was actually nailed to the cross and hanging on it. This idea can be supported by the fact that Mark later states that darkness covered the land in the sixth hour (Mark 15:33) which is in total agreement with Matthew and Luke (Matt 27:45) (Luke 23:44). Thus, it appears, one man is speaking of the time when the process for the execution commenced while the other man is referring to the very act of the execution. Both men are speaking of it in general terms, by saying that a man was executed at such and such

a time; thus, the circumstantial variation simply proves that there was no collusion or conspiring together in collaborating their stories. Mark may simply have been meaning, "And it was the third hour when they began to crucify him. This harmonises with Matthew, Luke and John and his statement darkness fell over the land in the sixth hour.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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