

The Hour Has Come

The period immediately leading up to the suffering of our Lord on the cross has been called, “The Passion.” The depiction of this in Western culture is popularized in art which portrays events such as the Last Supper, the Via Dolorosa, and the Crucifixion. Independent from this context, our use of the word “passion” normally invokes romance, infatuation, hatred, and lust. The word itself is derived from Latin *passiō*, which is derived from the Greek *πάθος* (pathos, pronounce *path-oss*). *πάθος* means “suffering, affection, or passion.” This is where the English word “passion” has come from. This does not mean that *πάθος* is used by Scripture to describe the sufferings of Christ. It is a more generic term. In fact, it is used in Romans 1:26 to describe intense sinful desires. To simplify this, our Lord’s sufferings described as the “Passion” has more to do with the development our English word than the Greek *πάθος*. However, here we will prefer to use biblically oriented terminology. We have come to the point where the Lord enters Jerusalem for the final week prior to his crucifixion. John 17:1 says: “Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee...” The hour has come for the Christ to die. But here, Jesus sees this as the time when the Son of God will receive glory. As you will see, the following events surround the one time. We will begin on Sunday, and follow the Lord through the week up to the crucifixion. The crucifixion will be covered in the next lesson.

Sunday

It is most traditionally understood that the Triumphal Entry was on Sunday. John 12:1 tells us that Jesus entered Bethany six days before the Passover, which would have been Saturday. This means that on Sunday Jesus was anointed for burial by Mary. Harold Hoener points out that John 12:12 indicates that the Triumphal Entry was “on the next day,” arguing that Monday was the day of the Triumphal Entry. That position will be assumed here.



Tradition also maintains that Mary Magdalene anointed Christ, but there is no reason for concluding this. The passage emphasizes the expensive cost of the perfume. It was so expensive, that it would have taken a year’s wages to pay for it. The disciples saw this as wasteful. But Jesus was less concerned with efficiency and more concerned with doing something good for him.

Monday

The Lord’s formal entry is a climactic point in each Gospel. Two specific details demonstrate this. First, this is the first event since the feeding of the 5,000 that is recorded by all four Gospels. Second, the fulfillment of Scripture is made clear in each of the Gospels. When the Pharisees angrily reacted to this, Jesus made it clear that nothing could stop the king from being praised: “I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!” (Matthew 21:39). If you look up the Old Testament texts that the crowd was citing, you ought to be aware that these passages have a highly messianic character. However, the crowd may not have realized what they were saying. Hosanna means “Lord save us.” But the salvation they were looking for was not what the Lord was about to accomplish.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

When Jesus cursed the fig tree, he was about to enter the temple. The fig tree was a symbol of Israel which prided itself for the temple. As we find, Jesus cleansed the temple a second time for the abuse taking place. The cursing of the fig tree is a picture of the Lord's rejection of Israel. Fittingly, we find Gentiles looking for Jesus, and the Jews rejecting him. "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed." (Isaiah 52:1; John 12:38).

Tuesday

When the fig tree was revisited, it was withered. Peter was stunned at this, to which Jesus replied, "Have faith in God..." (Mark 11:22). The fig tree showed Israel's unbelief. Jesus told Peter to believe.

While in the temple, Jesus was confronted by the chief priest and scribes, who demanded that he answer the question of who is the source of his authority (Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 20). But Jesus put them to silence. The parables that were given by Christ earlier in his ministry were given to keep the hearers from understanding (Matthew 13:13, see Lesson 10, page 5). Those parables were given as a judgment. Likewise, the parables in Matthew 21 are given as a judgment on its hearers. However, those listening knew exactly what was going on. There was no question that they were the ones cast out of the king's kingdom in the parable!

Shortly after Jesus' encounter with the chief priests and scribes, the Pharisees and Herodians came up to Jesus with questions. The Synoptic Gospels tell us that they were trying to trap Jesus. But the fact that the Pharisees were working with Herodians should be enough of an indicator to show that things are awry. The Pharisees knew that if Jesus advised not paying taxes, then the Herodians would have an opportunity to snag him. Yet, in his wisdom, Jesus smothered their trickery.

Once more Jesus finds opposition. The Sadducees make an apparently clever attempt to stump the Lord on the issue of resurrection. As you are aware, the Sadducees did not believe in the bodily resurrection. The Lord's use of Scripture showed their error, confounding them.

Confrontations continue throughout the day, and Christ defeats the adversary every time. Notice that Jesus used Scriptures that are often neglected by Christians, such as Deuteronomy and Leviticus (Matthew 22:37-38). Each time Jesus Christ spoke from the Scriptures in his rebuke, no one could answer. They would not ask him more questions, because they knew they would only become more embarrassed. This launched a formal condemnation on the Pharisees and scribes (Matthew 23, Mark 12, Luke 20). Seven "woes" are pronounced. As you may know, the number seven in the Bible often indicates "completeness." When something is done seven times, it is all the way full, and then some (see Matthew 18:21-22). Remember that when Jesus pronounced "woes," he was unleashing complete, unbridled damnation. You must understand the extent of what the Lord is doing here.



THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

The Lord who had every right to bring judgment yet weeps over Jerusalem (Matthew 28:37-39). The “great city,” the “glory of Israel,” the home of David’s throne, and Solomon’s temple is guilty of murdering God’s prophets. As you have learned, the true temple, David’s son, and the glory of Israel (cf. Luke 2:32) was rejected. But Christ laments, ready to receive the city. But up to this point, it is clear that Israel will not believe because they cannot believe.

In the latter half of the day on Tuesday, the Lord withdrew from his enemies, and the observing public. At the request of the disciples, Christ delivered what is known as the Olivet Discourse. On the Mount of Olives, Jesus taught his disciples about his return. You will soon learn that this is the same location that the Lord ascended from. There are multiple interpretations of this passage. There are some who teach that the events described have to do only with the time immediately prior to the return of Christ. Others teach that some of these things find their fulfillment throughout the period of the church. It would exceed our purpose to explain and evaluate these ideas here. However, you are encouraged to explore this on your own. You may also write to me if you would like some help exploring the passage. All Bible-believing Christians do agree that Christ will come to judge the living and dead, and come at a time that is least expected. What we all can gain from this is that we ought to have a readiness for the Lord’s return at any time!



On Tuesday evening Jesus foretold his crucifixion, and a formal plot was made to seize him. While the priests were planning to kill Jesus, the Lord told his disciples that this must take place. Take note that the Jews were sensitive to avoiding a riot, but not killing the Christ (Matthew 26:5).

Matthew and Mark seem to place Mary’s anointing of Jesus at this time in the narrative. However, John placed it so that it seems to have been on Saturday night. It makes more sense to understand it to have taken place on Saturday, because we are told that it took place in Bethany. Jesus had been around the temple and Mount of Olives during this time. Matthew and Mark are not as chronologically sensitive as John. This does not mean that they made a historical error.

Wednesday

The only activity that we are aware of on Wednesday is Judas’ betrayal. However, it could have taken place on Tuesday evening, which would make Wednesday silent.

The Sanhedrin, represented by two of its three groups and presided over by Caiaphas, met to lay plans as to how it could implement the decision already reached (cf. John 11:53...). Because of Jesus’ great popularity (Luke 21:38; 22:2), particularly among the visitors from Galilee and Perea, they decided to wait until after the feast (Matt. 26:5; Mark 14:2) when these pilgrims would have gone home. Their schedule of action was accelerated, however, when they received an unexpected offer of cooperation from one of the twelve... This enabled them to arrest Jesus privately (Luke 22:6...). In this way God’s predetermined schedule for the Lamb of God to be slain on the Passover, and not after, (Matt. 26:2) was kept.

Footnote g, from *A Harmony of the Gospels*, Robert L. Thomas and Stanley N. Gundry (Harper Collins, 1978), 205.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

Thursday

During most of the day on Thursday we are given little activity. We know that Peter and John were sent to make preparations for the Passover in the upper room. Thursday was the first day of Unleavened Bread, which would be followed by the Passover. Lambs were being killed in the temple from noon to 6pm on Thursday and Friday. There could have been up to half of a million Jews in the city at that time. Jesus and the disciples participated on Thursday, because, as you know, Friday would be the crucifixion.



This room built in the time of the crusaders is the traditional location of the upper room

During the course of time in the upper room, the Lord washed the disciples' feet (John 13), Judas is identified as the betrayer (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 13), the Lord rebukes the pride of the disciples (Luke 22), and Jesus tells Peter that he will deny him three times (Luke 22, John 13). After the Passover meal, the Lord instituted the sacrament (aka ordinance) of Christian communion, which would be practiced in the church. First the bread was broken, then the cup was shared.

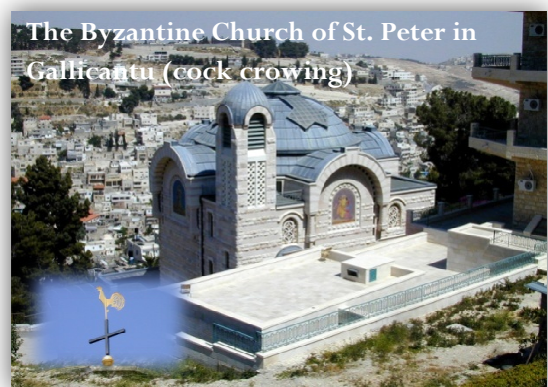
And while they were eating, he took some bread, and after a blessing he broke it; and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." And when he had taken a cup, and given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank from it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."

Mark 14:22-24

During the remaining time in the upper room, Jesus taught the disciples about the Trinity, abiding in Christ, persecution, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection, and prayer (John 14-16). Before departing to Gethsemane, Jesus prayed one of the most detailed prayers in the Bible. John 17 is often referred to as the "High Priestly Prayer." Others have suggested that this is the real Lord's Prayer. From it we learn much about the relationship of the Father and the Son, as well as God's eternal plan of redemption. It is not to be overlooked.

During the meal, John was "reclining close to Jesus." (John 13:23). When people gathered for a meal, they were not sitting at a table in chairs. Reclining was lying on one's front side, with their upper-body propped up with some kind of cushion. This gives you a better picture of how John was in relation to Jesus, and of why Jesus washed their feet.

When Jesus and the disciples arrived at the Mount of Olives, Peter is reminded that he will deny Christ. As the night continued, Jesus prayed with his face on the ground. We must remember the humanity of Christ. He did not come into this world and suffer as if it were meaningless. Every aspect of physical pain, emotional strain, and spiritual exhaustion was experienced by the Lord. This is why he prays that there might be a way for him to pass from his suffering (Mark 14:35-36), but the Son does the will of the Father. People in the ancient world were not accustomed to staying up



The Byzantine Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu (cock crowing)

THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

late. When it became dark, they went to bed. The disciples struggle to stay awake tells us that it was late at night. The final rebuke of their failure to stay alert ushered in the time when Judas would arrive. The New American Standard Bible says that Judas received the “Roman cohort.” (John 18:3) The Greek does not provide such specific clarity. This is relevant because we are not certain that Gentiles were involved at this time. A Roman cohort was 600 men, which would have been excessive. John tells us that when Christ identified himself, that the men fell to the ground (18:6), which puts Christ’s mighty power on display in the hour of his suffering.

Late Thursday through Early Friday

Upon his arrest, Jesus was brought before Annas, Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin for examination. It is critical that you understand that the goal of these “trials” was to find Jesus guilty of blasphemy by claiming to be God. This was the only thing that they could do to find a reason for execution. The hypocrisy of these men is amplified by this event, because the manner of how they carried out the trial broke a variety of laws. In addition to the extra-biblical laws of the Sanhedrin, a number of Scriptural prohibitions were violated. Two or three witness had to be give consistent testimony (Deuteronomy 19:15). The High Priest was prohibited from tearing his clothes (Leviticus 21:10). However we are told of Caiaphas, “And tearing his clothes, the high priest said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses?’”

(Mark 14:63). Before the condemnation by the Sanhedrin, Peter had denied the Lord three times, which brought him bitter sorrow. The fact that the cock crowed tells us that it was early Friday morning by this time. Jesus had been “on trial” all night. Unlike Peter’s sorrow, Judas had such great regret that he killed himself in a field. As Jesus had said, “It would have been good for that man if he had not been born.” (Matthew 26:24).

You now see that the history between the Romans and Jews bears specific Scriptural relevance. The Romans did not allow the Jews to perform any kind of execution. The Lord had said that he would be delivered up to the Gentiles for crucifixion (Matthew 20:19). The history that had taken place decades before this event was necessary for the fulfillment of Jesus’ words.

For this reason, the Jews brought Jesus to Pilate. Their goal in this was to have him charged of sedition. This is why they said, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a King.” (Luke 23:2). Jesus had agreed that he was the Christ, but accusation of Jesus forbidding taxes was a blatant lie. When we discuss the “King of the Jews,” we have three different concepts to consider. First, Matthew had already established that Jesus is the king of Israel, which is reinforced by all the Gospels in the



What was formerly thought to be the prison in which Christ was held during the Jewish “Trial” has been discovered to be only ritual bathing pool in the first century.



A traditional location of Jesus’ condemnation

THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

Triumphal Entry. Second, the Jews were looking for a king, but one who would deliver them from Roman rule. Third, the term, “King of the Jews” would only invoke one thought in the mind of a Roman official: revolt. This is why the Jews said such to Pilate, and why he questioned Jesus about it. However, there was no clear evidence of revolt, which is why Pilate found no guilt in him. Furthermore, Jesus had told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36), and indicated that his servants were not fighting for that reason. Whatever Pilate thought of this, he did not seem to find a reason to worry about a revolt. Having learned that Jesus was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod, who was in Jerusalem. However, Herod did nothing to discern the truth of the matter, but only mocked the Lord. Jesus was sent back to Pilate, at which time, the request for the release of Barabbas was made. Barabbas had been guilty of insurrection, robbery, and murder. So the Jews hypocritically accused Jesus of a revolt, but requested the release of one who was guilty of it. Pilate’s effort to diffuse the situation was accomplishing nothing. The tension was heightened by the Jews’ continual roaring to crucify Christ. Perhaps Pilate was afraid that a revolt would rise up. Remember that the goal of the Romans was to keep the Jews under control. When Pilate heard the Jews say, “...he made himself out to be the Son of God.” (John 19:7), his fear increased. He had already been warned by his wife to have nothing to do with Jesus (Matthew 27:19). The Romans believed that Caesar was a god. Jesus told Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world. When Pilate asks where Jesus was from (John 19:9), he is not asking about what town Jesus is from. He already knows Jesus came from Galilee. Pilate began to realize that he was dealing with something outside of his control, which is why he attempts to draw an answer from Christ by invoking his authority (John 19:10). The fear in Pilate’s heart drove him to try to release Jesus. However, the Jews warned that releasing someone claiming to be king, would jeopardize his relationship with Caesar. To that end, Pilate frantically sought to absolve himself of guilt for condemning Jesus (Matthew 27:24). The crowd voluntarily accepted the guilt. Little did they know that they were condemning themselves. Pilate’s final words were, “Shall I crucify your King?” (John 19:15). There would have been no other circumstance that would illicit their answer to the question. “We have no king but Caesar.” Stop what you are doing. Think about everything you know about the history of the Romans and Jews. This was the last thing a Jew would ever say. The most committed Jews despised all things Gentile, and particularly Hellenism and Roman rule. Remember the numerous occasions that Jesus was confronted for not keeping Jewish traditions, and for associating with societal outcasts. These things were used against Christ. But now, the hatred of the people for Jesus had become so severe, that the value of their identity was forsaken. For a first century Jew to call Caesar king was to renounce one’s Judaism. Caesar claimed to be a god. For a Roman to acknowledge Caesar was to bow to a pagan idol. The Jews had consigned themselves over to paganism. Their hatred for God’s Son had blazed with so much heat, that their sin is now seen in full form.

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.

John 8:44-47

THE LIFE OF CHRIST: LESSON 13

Reading Assignment

Romans 13-16

Acts 19-28

Philemon

Most Bibles with maps include one of New Testament Jerusalem. Locate as many of these maps as is necessary to find the following locations. See how many of them you can match with the photo below as well as the photos on page 6 of Lesson 5

Gordon's Calvary

Tomb

Golgotha (traditional Calvary)

Praetorium

Herod's Palace

Upper Room

Siloam Pool

Upper City

Lower City

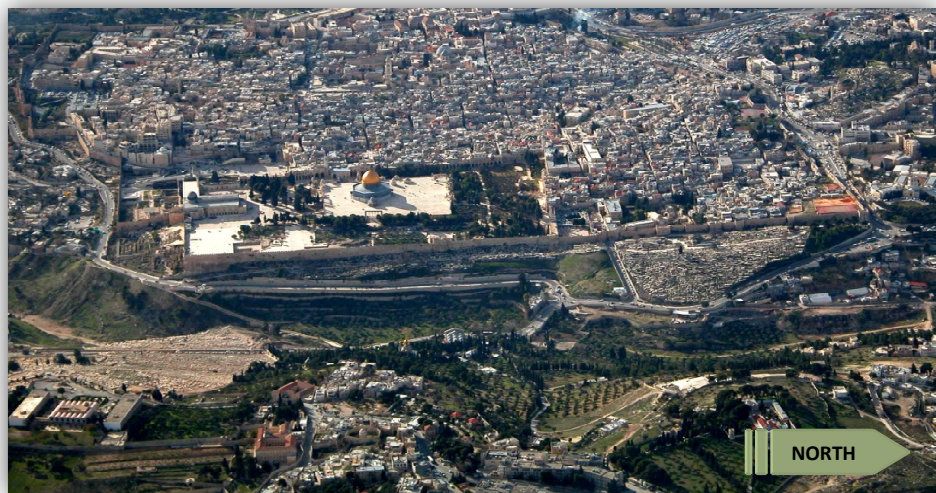
Hinnom Valley

Kidron Valley

Mount of Olives

Gethsemane

House of Caiaphas (?)



Greek	Pronunciation	English	Part of Speech
peri	<i>pair-ee</i>	concerning, about, around	<i>preposition</i>
hmera	<i>haim-era</i>	a day	<i>noun</i>
uib~	<i>hwee-oss</i>	son	<i>noun</i>
iplou	<i>iii-doo</i>	see, behold	<i>verb</i>
doka	<i>dawx-aa</i>	glory	<i>noun</i>
oçl o~	<i>ox-loss</i>	crowd, multitude	<i>noun</i>