

## Lesson 43

# Up to Jerusalem

### Introduction:

Jesus knows that His time is short and begins to prepare the disciples for the days ahead. They will be going to Jerusalem where He will suffer, die and be raised from the dead as the Scriptures have foretold. He commands His disciples to “**Behold**”. The word “behold” means “to see with understanding”. In other words, Jesus is telling them that they should gain full understanding of the events that they are about to observe in Jerusalem. Like the disciples we will take a closer look at the events as they transpired before studying the specific instructions that Jesus gave His disciples during this period of time.

### Reading the Scripture:

#### Up to Jerusalem

#### Jesus Prepares to Go to Passover

**Matthew 20:17-19, Mark 10:32-34, Luke 18:31-34, John 11:55-57**

*Scripture excerpts from “Follow Me: A Message from God”*

#### **31 AD, April 17<sup>th</sup>, Thursday Morning (Abib/Nisan 8)<sup>1</sup> [5<sup>th</sup> day of the week]**

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves. Therefore, they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another, as they stood in the temple, “What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?” Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him. And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking on ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were fearful. And again He took the twelve aside and began to tell them what was going to happen to Him, saying, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, and will deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up.” And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, and they did not comprehend the things that were said.

### The Command:

- ❖ Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.

### The Lesson:

In this lesson we will focus on the timing and historical significance of the events leading to and surrounding Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. The first issue we need to deal with is time.

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<sup>1</sup> **Abib/Nisan 8.** The Biblical name of this month is Abib, which means “green ears.” The Jewish people now call this month “Nisan” It is the first month of God’s sacred calendar which includes the seven “appointed times of the Lord.” The primary reference for this sacred calendar is Leviticus 23.

Abib/Nisan 8 is the Jewish calendar date which corresponded to our Gregorian calendar date of April 17, AD 31. The Jewish dates have been included from this point forward in order to give the reader a better understanding of when, according to the way we reckon time, the rapidly occurring events of Jesus’ last days took place.

**NOTE:** In understanding the dating used in this book you must be aware that every Jewish day begins with the evening first: at about 6:00 PM. Therefore, Abib/Nisan 8, actually started at 6:00 PM Wednesday night.



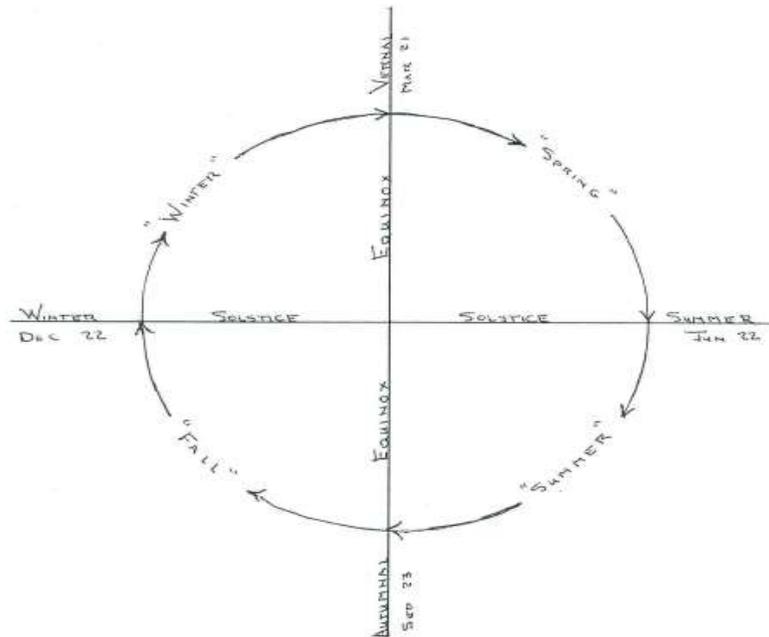
### According to God:

1. Why were the sun, moon and stars created? (They were created for man's benefit. There are three specific reasons: 1) to provide light to live by 2) to be able to tell time and 3) to serve as signs from God.)
2. How do you know the difference between the night and the day? (The greater light, the sun, governs the day and the night is governed by the lesser light, the moon.)
3. What is a day? (One day consists of one period of relative darkness and one period of relative daylight.)
4. When does a day start? (The day starts at the beginning of nighttime.)
5. Is there one special day? (Yes, the seventh day.)
6. What is a week? (One week consists of seven days.)
7. What is a month? (One month consists of a period of days from one new moon to the next.)
8. What is a year? (One year is how long it takes for the earth to orbit around the sun.)
9. How are the seasons determined? (See the following page for the division of the solar year.)

### Divisions of a Solar Year:

Solar Year 365<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Days

Lunar Year 354<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Days



Equinox – day and night are of equal length.

Solstice - (winter) - the shortest day of the year.

Vernal – “spring”  
Autumnal – “fall”

Solstice - (summer) - the longest day of the year.

### Signs in the Heavens:

There are four distinct types of signs that occur in the heavens.

1. The Zodiac - tells the story of Christ as the sun traces its path through the constellations beginning with Virgo - the Virgin and ending with Leo - the Lion of the Tribe of Judah.<sup>3</sup>
2. The seven heavenly warning signs in the book of Revelation.<sup>4</sup>
3. The heavenly signs that immediately precede Christ's second coming.

*There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26) But immediately after the tribulation of those days **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL** from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:29-30)*

4. The signs that declare the **appointed times** of Jesus Christ, the Lord. You might think of these as the times when God is going to do something significant in the earth. It is to these signs or times that we will take a more in depth view.

### The Appointed Times:

*The LORD spoke again to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD'S appointed times which you shall proclaim as holy convocations – My appointed times are these:*

### The Sabbath:

*'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation. You shall not do any work ; it is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.'* (Leviticus 23:1-3)

### The Beginning of the Year:

In order to determine exactly the appointed times of the Lord, Christians need to know God's starting point for the calculation. This is found in Exodus 12:1-7 and is as follows. *Now the LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month<sup>5</sup> shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers ' households, a lamb for each household. 'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 'You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.<sup>6</sup> 'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood*

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<sup>3</sup> A good book that explains this in detail is "The Witness Of The Stars" by E.W. Bullinger, Kregel Publications 1967.

<sup>4</sup> The seven heavenly signs of the book of Revelation are located in these places: 2:1, 12:3, 12:6, 12:8, 12:9, 12:14 and 15:1.

<sup>5</sup> The name **Abib** means "green ears" and was used to indicate the time of year when the corn of grain first appears in the head of wheat and barley. The Jewish people currently call this month **Nisan** and it corresponds to our March/April time frame.

<sup>6</sup> Twilight simply means "between the evening" . . . in other words during the daylight hours.

and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.” From the starting point of the new moon of Abib all the other appointed times can be determined.

#### **The Lord’s Passover:**

*These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight 4 is the LORD’S Passover.* (Leviticus 23:4-5)

#### **Feast of Unleavened Bread:**

*Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.* (Leviticus 23:6-8)

#### **Feast of First Fruits:<sup>7</sup>**

*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. ‘He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ‘Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the LORD. ‘Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine. ‘Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places.”* (Leviticus 23:9-14)

#### **Feast of Weeks:<sup>8</sup>**

*You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete Sabbaths. ‘You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD. ‘You shall bring in from your dwelling places two loaves of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD. ‘Along with the bread you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD. ‘You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings. ‘The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the LORD for the priest. ‘On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.* (Leviticus 23:15-21)

*‘When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.’* (Leviticus 23:22)

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<sup>7</sup> First Fruits. Christians call this *Easter Sunday*.

<sup>8</sup> Fest of Weeks. Christians call this *Pentecost*.

### **Day of Blowing:**

Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘In the **seventh month<sup>9</sup> on the first of the month** you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. **‘You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD.’**” (Leviticus 23:23-25)

### **Day of Atonement:**

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “**On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls (fast) and present an offering by fire to the LORD. ‘You shall not do any work on this same day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God. ‘If there is any person who will not humble himself on this same day, he shall be cut off from his people. ‘As for any person who does any work on this same day, that person I will destroy from among his people. ‘You shall do no work at all. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. ‘It is to be a Sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall humble your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening you shall keep your Sabbath.’**” (Leviticus 23:26-32)

### **Feast of Tabernacles:**

Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘**On the fifteenth of this seventh month is the Feast of Booths for seven days to the LORD. ‘On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. ‘For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. ‘These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD – burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day’s matter on its own day – besides those of the Sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. ‘On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. ‘Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. ‘You shall thus celebrate it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. ‘You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.’**” So Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD. (Leviticus 23:33-44)

### **The Roman or Gregorian Calendar:**

The Roman calendar’s development is generally accredited as being started by Romulus, the founder of Rome. It began in what we now call 753 BC and was based on the founding date of the city of Rome by Romulus. The Roman calendar has undergone extensive changes throughout the years but remains the basis for telling time throughout much of the world.

One major change in the Roman calendar occurred in 46 BC under Julius Caesar. In his reformation of the existing calendar he added 455 days to it. At that time the calendar was also

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<sup>9</sup> The seventh month is named **Ethanim**, which means “permanent”. The Jewish people currently call this month **Tishri** and it corresponds to our September/October time frame.

renamed the Julian calendar. According to this calendar Jesus was crucified in the year 784 AUC.<sup>10</sup> A second major change in the calendar occurred in 1582 AD under Pope Gregory XIII. In his reformation of the Julian calendar he subtracted 10 days from it. At that time it was renamed the Gregorian calendar and exists in this final format as the calendar we use throughout much of the world.

The Roman calendar also named the months of the year, the days of the week and was credited with the new day starting at midnight. New Year’s Day was established in 153 BC in observance of when the new Roman Council took office. Up to that time the calendar re-started each year in the month of **March**.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comes From</u>	<u>Who or What</u>	<u>Why</u>
January	Janus	God of Doors	This month open the year
February	ebruo	purify	This was the month of sacrifices and purification
March	Mars	God of War	Start of the year for soldiers No fighting during the winter
April	aperire	open	This is the month when trees open their leaves
May	Maia	Goddess of	This is the month when plants Growth really start to grow
June	Juno	Queen of the Gods	
July	Julius Caesar	Roman Emperor	He reorganized the calendar
August	Augustus Caesar	Roman Emperor	He thought he was at least as important as Julius Caesar
September	septem	seven	Seventh month (from March)
October	octo	eight	Eighth month (from March)
November	novem	nine	Ninth month (from March)
December	decem	ten	Tenth month (from March)

The days of the week on the Roman calendar were named after the sun, the moon and the five visible planets: Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn. The planets themselves were named after Roman gods and goddesses. The English language incorporated this naming process but substituted the names of two Scandinavian gods and two Anglo-Saxon gods.

1. Sunday – Sun

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<sup>10</sup> AUC stands for Anno Urbis Conditae (“From the founding of the city”), it is in reference to the founding of the city of Rome in 754 BC.

2. Monday – Moon
3. Tuesday – Tiwaz, the Anglo-Saxon god of war corresponding to Mars
4. Wednesday – Woden, an Anglo-Saxon god corresponding to Mercury
5. Thursday – Thor, a Scandinavian god corresponding to Jupiter
6. Friday – Freyia, a Scandinavian goddess corresponding to Venus
7. Saturday – Saturn

Over the years many problems have arisen for Christians in the establishment of church holidays (holy days) and properly understanding the times in the Bible because they constantly try to impose the Gregorian calendar upon a biblical one. Consequently many Biblical truths are hidden and the church tends to follow the traditions of men rather than the precepts of God.

**Group Discussion:**

1. Why would men want to venerate (sanctify) the 1<sup>st</sup> day of week instead of the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week as Christians do or the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the week as Muslims do?

**Other Observations About God’s Time:**

In Western cultures our day begins at 12:00 am or midnight. In Hebrew or Jewish culture the day begins with the appearance of three stars in the evening (about 6:00 pm), which is six hours **earlier** than ours.

The days of the week on the Gregorian calendar are named after various gods. The Hebrews simply numbered their days . . . 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc. The 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week is the Sabbath (“Rest”); it begins at approximately 6:00 pm on Friday night and ends at approximately 6:00 pm on Saturday night.

In addition to the weekly Sabbath (“Rest”) there are seven other **annual** Sabbath (“Rest”) days located in the seven Feasts of the Lord (“appointed times of Jesus Christ”).

1. First day of Unleavened Bread – Passover (*Abib 15*)
2. Seventh day of Unleavened Bread (*Abib 21*)
3. Feast of the Seven Sevens (Weeks) – Pentecost (*50th day*)
4. Day of Blowing – Yom Teruah (*Ethanim 1*)
5. Day of Atonement – Yom Kippur (*Ethanim 10*)
6. First day of Tabernacles (*Ethanim 15*)
7. The Eighth day (*Ethanim 22*)

**Timeline of Events:**

The following timeline of events was developed from **1)** Biblical chronology, **2)** the Jewish calendar with its nineteen-year recurring cycles, **3)** astronomical considerations, and **4)** a detailed comparative study of possible dates.<sup>11</sup> The timeline is based on the Hebrew dates of each event but I have included the Gregorian day of the week to help the reader understand when the events transpired.

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<sup>11</sup> “Chronology of the Crucifixion and the Last Week” by James L. Boyer, Professor of Greek and New Testament, Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana (1975).

## **The King Is Coming**

*“And it shall come about when your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up one of your descendants after you, who shall be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build for Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son; and I will not take My loving kindness away from him, as I took it from him who was before you.  
But I will settle him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.” 1 Chronicles 17:11-14*

### **Thursday, Abib/Nisan 8** *daytime* (5<sup>th</sup> day of the week) [April 17, 31 AD]

- Jesus tells His disciples they are going to Jerusalem.
- James and John ask to sit at Jesus’ right and left hand in the kingdom.
- Jesus heals a blind man on the way to Jericho.

### **Thursday, Abib/Nisan 9** *nighttime* (6<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus spends the night at Zaccheus’ house.

### **Friday, Abib/Nisan 9** *daytime* (6<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus leaves Zaccheus’ house in Jericho, after spending the night.
- Jesus heals blind Bartamaeus on His way out of Jericho.
- Jesus walks approximately 17 miles from Jericho to Bethany.<sup>12</sup>
- Jesus arrives at the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha in Bethany before sundown.<sup>13</sup>

### **Friday, Abib/Nisan 10** *nighttime* (7<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The weekly Sabbath (Rest) begins.
- Mary anoints Jesus’ feet with perfume.<sup>14</sup>
- Jesus spends the night at Lazarus’s house.

### **Saturday, Abib/Nisan 10** *daytime* (7<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- Shabbat Hagadol<sup>15</sup>
- Jesus leaves Bethany, which is about 2 miles from Jerusalem.<sup>16</sup>
- At Bethphage (House of Figs) Jesus mounts a donkey<sup>17</sup> and rides the rest of the way into Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Jesus went up to Jerusalem with a large group of people who were also making the pilgrimage to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They walked uphill from the Jordan River valley to the heights of Jerusalem and sang the “Songs of Assent (Psalms 120 –134) as they went.

<sup>13</sup> According to John 12:1, Jesus arrived six days before the Passover of the Jews, which began on Abib 15.

<sup>14</sup> Anointing someone indicated that they were being dedicated to God and being set apart for a special work. By pouring perfume upon His feet Mary was behaving prophetically when we consider the passage in Isaiah 52 which says, *“How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”*

<sup>15</sup> Shabbat Hagadol means “the great Sabbath” or “Sabbath of greatness”. It is the Sabbath, which immediately precedes Passover and is so named because it was historically the day when the King of Israel entered Jerusalem for the Feast. The last king of Israel, Zedekiah had died more than 600 years before.

<sup>16</sup> A Sabbath’s day’s journey was considered to be about one mile however the Rabbinic ruling states that Bethany is within the environs of Jerusalem, therefore it was permissible for someone to travel from Bethany to Jerusalem for the purpose of going to Temple and not break the prohibition against traveling on the Sabbath.

- The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.<sup>19</sup>
- Each family chooses a Passover lamb<sup>20</sup>
- Palm branches.<sup>21</sup>
- Hosannas.<sup>22</sup>
- Stones crying out.<sup>23</sup>
- Jesus spends the entire day in Jerusalem.

### **Spotless Lamb of God**

*“They shall be without defect.” Numbers 28:31*

**Saturday, Abib/Nisan 11** *nighttime* (1<sup>st</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus returns to Bethany for the night.

**Sunday, Abib/Nisan 11** *daytime* (1<sup>st</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus returns to Jerusalem the second time and curses the fig tree.<sup>24</sup>
- He drives the moneychangers out of the Temple for the second time.

**Sunday, Abib/Nisan 12** *nighttime* (2<sup>nd</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus spends the night in Bethany.

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<sup>17</sup> Zechariah 9:9 says, *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; he is just and endowed with salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey, even a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

<sup>18</sup> Even though by rabbinic ruling Jesus was permitted to walk to Jerusalem, as if to fulfill the Law of Moses completely, He walked only one mile to Bethphage where He mounted a donkey and rode the rest of the way.

<sup>19</sup> If Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem were on Palm Sunday according to “Christian” tradition, it would mean that He made His journey from Jericho to Bethany (17 miles) on the Sabbath (Rest), definitely a violation of Mosaic Law. Jesus did not break the Law but fulfilled it completely.

<sup>20</sup> According to Exodus 12:3, each family was to select its Passover lamb on the Abib 10, then it was subjected to inspection for blemishes by the priests for four days. If the lamb were without defect it would be killed on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, the Lord’s Passover. Jesus, the true Lamb of God was continuously examined by different groups of people from the time of His entry into Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib until His crucifixion four days later on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, the Lord’s Passover. These groups included priests, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Sanhedrim, the current and previous High Priests, the Jewish governor, the Roman governor and the multitudes themselves.

<sup>21</sup> Palm branches were a symbol of triumph and victory in pre-Christian days. For Jewish people they are connected to the concept of salvation and represent peace and plenty. Compare this to Revelation 7:9-10. *“After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”*

<sup>22</sup> The word Hosanna means, “Save, please” or “Please, deliver us”.

<sup>23</sup> As Jesus began His descent of the Mount of Olives some Pharisees approached Him demanding that He silence the multitudes that were praising Him. Jesus replied, *“I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out.”* Jesus was not talking about the rocks lying on the ground being able to speak but something entirely different. The more than a mile-long Mount of Olives is covered with the tombstones of Israelites who believed that when the Messiah came, He would descend on the Mount of Olives and they would be the first to be resurrected from the dead. In essence Jesus was telling the Pharisees that if His disciples didn’t praise Him that those who were buried on the Mount of Olives would rise up out of their graves and give Him praise.

<sup>24</sup> The season for figs is the beginning of summer yet springtime had just arrived. Jesus used the illustration of the fig tree in His Olivet discourse on the following day concerning the future. Therefore, He cursed the fig tree because it was giving a false and misleading sign. It was prematurely putting forth leaves, which would indicate that it was about to bear fruit. This issue will be covered in a future lesson.

**Monday, Abib/Nisan 12** *daytime* (2<sup>nd</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus returns to Jerusalem the third time.
- The fig tree has withered.
- The Pharisees examine Jesus.
- The widow's mites.
- Jesus answers two of the disciple's questions about the future as they leave the Temple Mount area.
- Jesus answers three more of the disciple's questions about the future while seated on the Mount of Olives (Olivet Discourse)<sup>25</sup>
- The high priest, Caiaphas and the leaders plot together to seize Jesus before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which began at evening on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib.

**Monday, Abib/Nisan 13** *nighttime* (3<sup>rd</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus returns to Bethany and spends the night at Simon, the Leper's home.
- A woman anoints Jesus' head with perfume and Judas become indignant.

**Tuesday, Abib/Nisan 13** *daytime* (3<sup>rd</sup> day of the week)

- Judas consorts with the Jewish leaders and is paid thirty pieces of silver.<sup>26</sup>
- Jesus spends the day with His disciples but does not return to Jerusalem.

### **Our Passover Lamb**

*“Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, ‘Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. And you shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning.’” Exodus 12:21-22*

**Tuesday, Abib/Nisan 14** *nighttime* (4<sup>th</sup> day of the week) - **The Lord's Passover**<sup>27</sup>

- The Lord's Passover is also known as the Day of Preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread,<sup>28</sup> which begins the following evening. At the start of 14<sup>th</sup> (6:00 pm) Jewish people remove all the leaven from their homes. A search is conducted with a candle to check all the nooks and crannies where leaven might exist so that it can be removed. The day concludes the following afternoon when the Passover lambs are slain. The people then commence the celebration of the Feast<sup>29</sup> by eating their Passover lamb and unleavened bread after sundown (6:00 pm) at the start of Abib 15.

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<sup>25</sup> Jesus' predictions of future events are discussed in future lessons.

<sup>26</sup> Thirty shekels. This amount is equivalent to 120 day's wages. The prophecy concerning this payment and its use is found at Zechariah 11:12-13. *I said to them, “If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!” So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages. Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.*

<sup>27</sup> According to Leviticus 23:5 the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Abib is the Lord's Passover (*Peh-sakh*). It should not be confused with the Passover of the Jews, which commences immediately following the Lord's Passover.

<sup>28</sup> The Feast (“appointed time”) of Unleavened Bread (*Mats-tsaw Lekn-em*) commences on Abib 15 and lasts for seven days during which time Jewish people eat nothing that contains leaven. The first and seventh days of the feast are Sabbath days. The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called Passover.

<sup>29</sup> The use of the term Passover confuses many Christians since there are **two** Passovers, so I'll try to explain it here.

- **Go and prepare the Passover.** Peter and John did not go and prepare the Passover meal as many think, as the Passover lambs had not yet been slain. Instead, they went to make arrangements to secure the place where the Passover meal would be eaten. They made sure that all the leaven was removed from the house and brought in a provision of unleavened bread for the meal.
- The Last supper.<sup>30</sup>
- In the Garden of Gethsemane.<sup>31</sup>
- Judas betrays Jesus.
- Jesus tried before Annas.
- Peter begins his denials of Christ.
- The cock crows the first time.<sup>32</sup>
- Jesus is tried before Caiaphas.
- Peter denies the Lord the third time.
- The cock crows the second time.<sup>33</sup>
- Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin.

**Wednesday, Abib/Nisan 14** *daytime* (4<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- Judas hangs himself.
- Jesus is tried before Pilate.
- Jesus is tried before Herod Antipas.
- Pilate sentences Jesus.
- Jesus is crucified at 9:00 am.<sup>34</sup>
- Darkness comes over the land at noon.
- Being the true Lamb of God, Jesus dies at 3:00 pm on Golgotha<sup>35</sup> just as the Passover lambs are being slain.
- Women prepare the spices **before** the Sabbath (Luke 23:50-56).

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1. The Lord's Passover is on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib. It is also called the "day of preparation" as Jewish people remove all leaven from their houses (hence the term "the first day of unleavened bread") and it is the day on which Passover lambs are slain (Exodus 12:3-11). It is not a Sabbath day.

2. The 1<sup>st</sup> day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasts for seven days, is on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Abib. It is referred to as Passover or the Passover of the Jews. On this day Jewish people eat the Passover lamb and unleavened bread in commemoration of the death angel passing over their houses and their deliverance from Egypt. It is a Sabbath day.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus eats the Lord's Passover with His disciples. The events surrounding the meal indicate that it follows the pattern of a typical Passover Seder, although it needn't have. The implications of the events concerning this meal will be discussed in future lessons.

<sup>31</sup> Gethsemane means, "Oil press". The garden itself lies at the foot of the Mount of Olives directly across the Kidron Valley from the Eastern (Golden) Gate of the Temple.

<sup>32</sup> The third of the Roman night watches known as "cockcrowning" ended at 3:00 am.

<sup>33</sup> This was generally reckoned to be around 4:30 am.

<sup>34</sup> The image of Jesus hanging on the cross should evoke memories of the first Passover. God through Moses commanded the Israelites to smear the blood of the Passover lamb on the lintel and doorposts of their homes. After this the Israelites were to enter through that doorway into their homes were, they would be spared by the death angel that went through the land of Egypt that night killing all the first-born. As Christ hung on the cross, we can clearly see the blood caused from the crown of thorns as the blood on the lintel. The blood flowing from his outstretched nail-pierced hands would have marked the doorposts. Jesus referred to this image in John 10:9 when He said, "*I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.*"

<sup>35</sup> The term Golgotha means the "Place of the Skull". The place is also called Calvary from the Latin word "calvaria" which also means "bare skull". It was so named for the shape of the hill, which resembles a skull.

## He is Alive

*“Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, ‘When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.’”* **Leviticus 23:10-11**

### Wednesday, Abib/Nisan 15 nighttime (5<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The first day of Feast of Unleavened Bread begins (Passover of the Jews).
- The Passover lambs are eaten.
- The Sabbath day begins.
- Jesus spends His **first night** in the grave.

### Thursday, Abib/Nisan 15 daytime (5<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread continues.
- It is still the Sabbath day.
- Jesus spends His **first day** in the grave.

### Thursday, Abib/Nisan 16 nighttime (6<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- Jesus spends His **second night** in the grave.

### Friday, Abib/Nisan 16 daytime (6<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The women prepare the spices **after** the Sabbath. (Mark 16:1)
- Jesus spends His **second day** in the grave.

### Friday, Abib/Nisan 17 nighttime (7<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The weekly Sabbath begins.
- Jesus spends His **third night** in the grave.

### Saturday, Abib/Nisan 17 daytime (7<sup>th</sup> day of the week)

- The weekly Sabbath continues.
- Jesus spends His **third day**<sup>36</sup> in the grave.

### Saturday, Abib/Nisan 18 nighttime (1<sup>st</sup> day of the week)

- The first day of the week begins.
- The Feast of First Fruits begins.<sup>37</sup>
- The priests cut down the first sheaves of grain harvested from the fields and make a wave offering of it before God.
- During the night the sheaves of the grain offering are ground into fine flour for the wave offering of “the Omer” the next morning.

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<sup>36</sup> This is to fulfill Jesus prophecies. *“For just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”* (Matthew 12:40) *“Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again’”* (Matthew 27:63) If Jesus had been crucified on Friday as tradition holds, He could not have fulfilled the prophecies accurately. Even the best-case scenario which counts Jesus being in the grave during the day on Friday and raised from the dead just after 6:00 am on Sunday morning would only be three days and two nights.

<sup>37</sup> It is the Feast of First Fruits, the day on which Christ was raised from the dead that Christians celebrate and call Easter Sunday. According to Leviticus 23:11 this feast day always fell on the first day of the week following Passover.

- An earthquake occurs during the night, when the angel rolls away the stone from Jesus' tomb.<sup>38</sup> Jesus rises from the dead.

**Sunday, Abib/Nisan 18** *daytime* (1<sup>st</sup> day of the week)

- The women arrive at the tomb to anoint Jesus' body with the spices they had purchased after the Sabbath, but He is not there . . . the tomb is empty.
- Peter and John go to the empty tomb.
- Mary encounters Jesus at the tomb but thinks he is the gardener until He speaks to her.
- At about 9:00 am in the Temple the priests are making the wave offering of "the Omer" of flour to God. This is the offering of the First Fruits. Up to this point in time no one in Israel is allowed to eat anything made out of grains.
- Wave offering of the unleavened bread.
- That afternoon Jesus walks with two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus. One of them is Jesus' uncle Clopas, the brother of Joseph. Neither of the disciples recognizes Jesus until He breaks bread with them.

### **Mystery of the Three in One**

One of the great mysteries of Christianity is the concept of the Trinity. In other words, how can God who is one, also be distinguishable as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet this mystery is unveiled in the Feast of First Fruits and Jesus demonstrated it perfectly.

During the Feast of First Fruits, the priests made three separate wave offerings to God:

1. During the early evening hours of First Fruits, the Sanhedrim went out to a pre-selected barley field and cut down the sheaves of barley within three pre-selected areas of that field. Then they took the sheaves of barley back to the Temple where the priests made a wave offering of them to God.
2. Next, the heads of the barley sheaves were beaten with canes to remove the grain, which was then roasted with fire and ground into extremely fine flour. From the flour that was produced, one omer<sup>39</sup> was set aside in a container as an offering to God. At the morning service<sup>40</sup> of First Fruits, the priests made a wave offering to God of the flour in its container. No Israelite could partake of any food made from grains before the wave offering of the omer was completed.
3. Later that day, the priests would make a wave offering of unleavened bread made from the flour.

From the wave offerings of the: **1)** sheaves, **2)** flour, and **3)** unleavened bread we see can see the concept of the trinity portrayed. All of them were of one substance (barley) but appear in different forms.

Jesus Christ, the first fruits<sup>41</sup> also appeared in three different forms. **1)** Before He died (was cut down) Jesus had one appearance (the sheaf). **2)** After He had been raised from the dead, he had another appearance. Mary Magdalene who knew Him well did not recognize Him at the garden tomb, thinking He was the gardener. She did not recognize Him until He spoke with her. He had

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<sup>38</sup> The reference for this is Matthew 28:2-4.

<sup>39</sup> One omer is equivalent to about five pints.

<sup>40</sup> The morning Temple service was conducted at the third hour or about 9:00 am

<sup>41</sup> *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** of those who are asleep.* (1 Corinthians 5:20)

appeared to her as the offering of the omer of flour. This is evidenced by the fact that Jesus told her not to cling to Him, as he had not yet ascended to the Father (The women had come to the tomb early in the day and the wave offering of the omer of flour had not taken place in the Temple yet). No one was permitted to partake of anything made of grain until the omer was offered. **3)** Jesus appeared differently, this time as the offering of the unleavened bread, to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. One of those disciples was even Jesus' Uncle Clopas who did not recognize Him until He broke bread with them.