

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, and John 11:55-57

(Gospels forged together into one seamless story, in collaboration with New American Standard Bible, authored by Michael Gibson, Founder of Spirit & Truth, dba Key 2 Changes: “Follow Me: A Message from God”, a journey with Jesus)

31 AD, April 17, Thursday Morning (Abib/Nisan 8)¹ [5th 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:

1. Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem.

The Lesson:

In this lesson we will focus on the timing of 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.

¹ **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.

We in Western cultures base our time on the Gregorian calendar. This calendar was derived from the Julian calendar developed by Julius Caesar in 46 BC and modified by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 AD. The Gregorian calendar is a solar calendar, basing its calculations on the earth's movement around the sun, which makes a complete cycle about every 365 days. The calendar consists of twelve months: 7 of 31 days, 4 of 30 days and 1 of 28 days. An extra day is added to the 28-day month every 4th year and every 100th year to keep it accurate. The Gregorian calendar does not have a recurring cycle of dates.

The Hebrew or Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar. It is based on the movement of the moon around the earth, which makes a complete cycle about every 29-1/2 days. This calendar also consists of twelve months, but the beginning of each month is determined by visual observation of a new moon. In order to maintain accuracy with the solar year, an extra (13th) month is added seven times within a nineteen-year period. This extra month follows the twelfth month, Adar and is called Ve Adar or "second" Adar. The Hebrew or Jewish calendar has a recurring cycle of dates every nineteen years.

January 1st is New Years Day on the Gregorian calendar but the Hebrew year contains two New Years Days. In Exodus 12:2, God ordained that the first month of the year for Israelites would be Abib. 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. It is from the new moon of Abib that all the Feasts of the Lord ("appointed times of Jesus Christ") as ordained by God in Leviticus 23, are determined. The Jewish people currently call this month **Nisan** and it corresponds to our March/April time frame.

The Jewish people also have a civil calendar, which begins at the new moon of Ethanim, the supposed birth date of Adam. We know this date as Rosh Hashanah meaning "Head of the Year". They use this New Year's date to mark the beginning of the year for kings, childbirth and contracts. The name Ethanim means "permanent" and is the seventh month of the God ordained year. The Jewish people currently call this month **Tishri** and it corresponds to our September/October time frame.

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 ... 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. The 7th 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 – **Pesach/Passover** (Aviv 15)
2. Seventh day of **Unleavened Bread** (Aviv 21)
3. Feast of Pentecost – **Shavuot/Seven Sevens (Weeks)** – (50 days from Aviv 21)
4. Day of Blowing (Trumpets) – **Rosh Hashanah** (Ethanim/Tishrei 1)
5. Day of Atonement – **Yom Kippur** (Ethanim/Tishrei 10)
6. First day of Tabernacles – **Sukkot** (Ethanim/Tishrei 15)
7. The **Eighth day** – **Simchat Atzeret** (Ethanim/Tishrei 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.² 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.

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 descendents 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

31 AD, April 17, Thursday, Abib 8 daytime (5th day of the week)

- 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 9 nighttime (6th day of the week)

- Jesus spends the night at Zaccheus’ house.

Friday, Abib 9 daytime (6th 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 20 miles from Jericho to Bethany.³
- Jesus arrives at the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha in Bethany before sundown.⁴

Friday, Abib 10 nighttime (7th day of the week)

- The weekly Sabbath (Rest) begins.
- Mary anoints Jesus’ feet with perfume.⁵
- Jesus spends the night at Lazarus’s house.

² “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).

³ 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.

⁴ According to John 12:1, Jesus arrived six days before the Passover of the Jews, which began on Abib 15.

⁵ 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!’*”

Saturday, Abib 10 daytime (7th day of the week)

- **Shabbat Hagadol**⁶
- Jesus leaves Bethany, which is about 2 miles from Jerusalem.⁷
- At Bethphage (House of Figs) Jesus mounts a donkey⁸ and rides the rest of the way into Jerusalem.⁹
- The triumphal entry into Jerusalem.¹⁰
- Each family chooses a Passover lamb¹¹
- Palm branches.¹²
- Hosannas.¹³
- Stones crying out.¹⁴
- Jesus spends the entire day in Jerusalem.

SPOTLESS LAMB OF GOD

“They shall be without defect” – Numbers 28:31

Saturday, Abib 11 nighttime (1st day of the week)

- Jesus returns to Bethany for the night.

Sunday, Abib 11 daytime (1st day of the week)

⁶ 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.

⁷ A Sabbath’s days 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.

⁸ 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.”*

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ 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 (20 miles) on the Sabbath (Rest), definitely a violation of Mosaic Law. Jesus did not break the Law but fulfilled it completely.

¹¹ According to Exodus 12:3, each family was to select its Passover lamb on the 10th of Abib, 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 14th 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 10th of Abib until His crucifixion four days later on the 14th 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.

¹² 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.”*

¹³ The word Hosanna means, “Save, please” or “Please, deliver us”.

¹⁴ 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.

- Jesus returns to Jerusalem the second time and curses the fig tree.¹⁵
- He drives the moneychangers out of the Temple for the second time.

Sunday, Abib 12 *nighttime* (2nd day of the week)

- Jesus spends the night in Bethany.

Monday, Abib 12 *daytime* (2nd 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)¹⁶
- The high priest, Caiaphas and the leaders plot together to seize Jesus before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which began at evening on the 15th of Abib.

Monday, Abib 13 *nighttime* (3rd 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 13 *daytime* (3rd day of the week)

- Judas consorts with the Jewish leaders and is paid thirty pieces of silver.¹⁷
- 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 14 *nighttime* (4th day of the week) - **The Lord's Passover**¹⁸

- The Lord's Passover is also known as the Day of Preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread,¹⁹ which begins the following evening. At the start of 14th (6:00 pm) Jewish people

¹⁵The 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.

¹⁶ Jesus' predictions of future events are discussed in future lessons.

¹⁷ 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.*

¹⁸ According to Leviticus 23:5 the 14th 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.

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 Feast²⁰ by eating their Passover lamb and unleavened bread after sundown (6:00 pm) at the start of Abib 15.

- **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.²¹
- In the Garden of Gethsemane.²²
- Judas betrays Jesus.
- Jesus tried before Annas.
- Peter begins his denials of Christ.
- The cock crows the first time.²³
- Jesus is tried before Caiaphas.
- Peter denies the Lord the third time.
- The cock crows the second time.²⁴
- Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin.

Wednesday, Abib 14 *daytime* (4th 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.²⁵

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ The use of the term Passover confuses many Christians since there are **two** Passovers, so I’ll try to explain it here.

1. The Lord’s Passover is on the 14th 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 1st day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which lasts for seven days, is on the 15th 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.

²¹ 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.

²² 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.

²³ The third of the Roman night watches known as “cockcrow” ended at 3:00 am.

²⁴ This was generally reckoned to be around 4:30 am.

²⁵ 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 where 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

- Darkness comes over the land at noon.
- Being the true Lamb of God, Jesus dies at 3:00 pm on Golgotha²⁶ just as the Passover lambs are being slain.
- Women prepare the spices **before** the Sabbath (Luke 23:50-56).

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 15 nighttime (5th 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 15 daytime (5th 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 16 nighttime (6th day of the week)

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

Friday, Abib 16 daytime (6th 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 17 nighttime (7th day of the week)

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

Saturday, Abib 17 daytime (7th day of the week)

- The weekly Sabbath continues.
- Jesus spends His **third day**²⁷ in the grave.

He said, *“I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.”*

²⁶ 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.

²⁷ 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.

Saturday, Abib 18 *nighttime (1st day of the week)*

- The first day of the week begins.
- The Feast of First Fruits begins.²⁸
- 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.
- An earthquake occurs during the night, when the angel rolls away the stone from Jesus’ tomb.²⁹ Jesus rises from the dead.

Sunday, Abib 18 *daytime (1st 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 omer³⁰ was set aside in a container as an offering to God. At the morning service³¹ 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.

²⁸ 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.

²⁹ The reference for this is Matthew 28:2-4.

³⁰ One omer is equivalent to about five pints.

³¹ The morning Temple service was conducted at the third hour or about 9:00 am

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 fruits³² 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 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.

³² *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the **first fruits** of those who are asleep. (1 Corinthians 5:20)*