

RUSSELL SANDERS

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PREPARATION DAY – PASSOVER LAMB IS SLAIN

Today (Wednesday) is the day Jesus was crucified. Since “Good Friday” is a fictitious name, perhaps we should call this “Good Wednesday.” The bible calls it “The Day of Preparation.” It was the 24 hours of preparing for the Passover feast.

Tomorrow I will explain from scripture why the crucifixion had to be on Wednesday. For now, we will simply look at what took place during these 24 hours of Passover preparation.

The first event that took place was “The Last Supper,” a Passover meal with Jesus and his twelve disciples. It had to be done on Preparation Day because when the official day (evening) of Passover was to begin, Jesus would already have died and would be in the tomb.

He did much teaching at that meal. Afterwards, he took Peter, James, and John with him to the garden of Gethsemane where He agonized in prayer before being betrayed and captured.

He was delivered first to the High Priest for chastisement, then delivered to Pilate’s Judgment Hall where He was interrogated and beaten beyond recognition during the wee hours of the morning.

As daytime broke, He was condemned to crucifixion. He was on the cross by the start of the third daytime watch (noon). He suffered on the cross until His death at the end of the third watch (3 P.M.).

The next three hours (3:00 to 6:00 p.m.) were busy. Joseph of Arimatháea had to see Pilate to obtain permission to take Jesus’ body from the cross on Calvary. He had to prepare the body to be wrapped in burial cloth (fine linens). Then Joseph had to put Him into the tomb. This all had to be completed before Passover began at sundown because Passover was a Sabbath and no work could be done on a Sabbath. (John 19:31.) The Passover Lamb of God had been slain.

While Jesus was on the cross, remarkable signs occurred. From noon until His death at 3 P.M., a great darkness came over the land. (Matt. 27:45.) The veil in the Temple that concealed the Holy of Holies was torn in two from the top to the bottom, (Matthew 27:51) and a great earthquake rocked the land. After Jesus’ resurrection, that occurred three days later, graves of the deceased saints burst open. Those saints (in their glorified bodies) appeared to many people in Jerusalem, just as Jesus also was seen in His glorified body. (Matt. 27:52.)

The signs that took place while Jesus was on the cross were so astounding that even the pagan Roman soldiers declared in Matt. 27:54, ***“Truly this was the Son of God!”***

The day concludes with the tomb being sealed with a great (very large) rock as the women sat nearby. Tomorrow is His first day (Thursday) in the tomb, and we will pick it up from there.