

That You May Continue to Believe...



AN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Jesus Crucified and Buried John 19:14-42

There are a couple of significant difficulties in John 19:14. The first involves the phrase “day of Preparation” and the second involves the phrase “the sixth hour”. I did not mention either problem last time because they deserved more time than I had coming at the end of the lesson. Let me start off this morning by addressing both and let me do that by re-reading verse 14.

^{ESV} **John 19:14**...Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

The phrase “**day of Preparation**” is a technical term that means Friday¹. It is used to speak of the preparation for the Sabbath. When it says, “**day of Preparation of Passover week**” it means the day of Sabbath Preparation in the Passover Week. There are no uses in Jewish literature of word ever meaning anything but Friday. Josephus actually explains what the word means for his non-Jewish readers. The confusion comes because it is a great Sabbath. That is, that year the first day of Passover actually fell on the Sabbath. A couple of computer models tell us that

that actually happened in both 30 and 33 AD. It might be helpful to compare this great Sabbath to Christmas falling on Sunday.

The phrase “**the sixth hour**” used here by John differs from Mark who says that the crucifixion took place at the third hour.

^{ESV} **Mark 15:25**...And it was the third hour when they crucified him.

Of course, you have to remember that when time is mentioned in the New Testament it is an approximation. The ancients had no timepieces. The common practice was to divide the day up into three time periods marked by the phrases: “**the third hour**”, “**the sixth hour**” and “**the ninth hour**”². The other predominant phrases they used were “**early in the morning**” and “**late in the day**”. Now there are those that like to speculate that John was using Roman time and meant the sixth hour which would have been calculated from midnight. If that had been the case he would have meant around 6 AM. Of course, that produces exactly the same problem as the text does here. It is just three hours before Mark as opposed to three hours after Mark. The reason that most of the people hold that John was using Roman time instead of Jewish time is because they find it hard to believe everything that had to occur in the crucifixion could occur in so short a time. But I will talk more about that in a minute. The thing I want you to remember is that they were not as precise in measuring time as we are today. They could say the “**seventh hour**” (4:52) or the “**tenth hour**” (1:39) but they tended to use the approximations. Leon Morris makes the point in his commentary that the Romans used the phrase “**within the hour**” in almost exactly the same way we use the phrase “**in a minute**” or “**in a second**”; they just

were not much more precise than that. As a result, most commentators think that both writers meant late morning. That will work especially since John includes the adverb “**about**” with the phrase “**the sixth hour**”. Listen to Leon Morris.

It is more likely that in neither Mark nor John is the hour to be regarded as more than an approximation. People in antiquity did not have clocks or watches, and the reckoning of time was always very approximate. The "third hour" may denote nothing more firm than a time about the middle of the morning, while "about the sixth hour" can well signify getting on towards noon. Late morning would suit both expressions unless there were some reason for thinking that either was being given with more than usual accuracy. No such reason exists here.³

Now, let me talk about just two other things. Both Matthew and Luke focus on the sixth hour like John does. In their gospels, they record that darkness came over the “**whole earth**” from the “**sixth to the ninth hour**” which would mean, I think, that that happened shortly after the crucifixion began.

^{ESV} **Matthew 27:45**...Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.

^{ESV} **Luke 23:44**...It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour,

Mark adds one other important point of information. He makes the point that later when Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate to plead for Jesus’ body that Pilate was shocked that Jesus had died so quickly. The word he used is “**marvel**” and is translated in John as “**astonished**”.

^{ESV} **Mark 15:44**...Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. (ἐθαύμασεν generally means “**to marvel**”. It is translated in John 7:21 as

“astonished” to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died.

That seems to mesh exactly with the point John is going to make about the crucifixion. John is going to argue that Jesus died quickly and the reason that He died quickly is that He died of His own prerogative after He had completed all that the Father had intended⁴. Beyond that, and this is perhaps the most conclusive argument of all, the Passover lambs, which whom John is going to clearly associate Jesus later on, were not allowed to be killed until noon and after⁵.

Let's read verse 15.

^{NIV} **John 19:15**...They cried out, **"Away with him, away with him, crucify him!"** Pilate said to them, **"Shall I crucify your King?"** The chief priests answered, **"We have no king but Caesar."**

Now, it is not easy to describe the hatred expressed in verse 15. The phrase **“take him away”** is an interpretive translation of a single Greek word ἀρῶν. It just means **“Away, away!”** You see they are ordering Pilate to **“take him way”** not from their presence but from the place of the living⁶. The verb may also mean to **“raise, raise”**. If that is its meaning they are talking especially about the crucifixion. But their ultimate desire is made perfectly clear by the use of the other phrase **“crucify Him.”**

Of course, Pilate taunted them. The text stresses the position of the “king” in Herod's question, **“Shall I crucify your king?”** and it uses something in Greek called an historical present. Let me see if I can explain what I mean. The phrase

“they were shouting” is in the past tense in Greek. But the phrase **“Pilate was saying”** is in the present tense in Greek. Greek writers sometimes do that to make the seen all that more vivid to the reader, almost like a play. So, it reads something like this, **“They were shouting ‘Away, away. Crucify Him.’ And here Pilate is saying ‘Your King, shall I crucify?’**

Finally, they answer and you ought to notice that the chief priests are the ones saying this, **“we have no king but Caesar.”** Literally, it is **“we are having no king but Caesar.”**

This, especially in the rejection of God’s precious Son, was the single worst thing they could have said. The Old Testament is replete with references to the kingship of YHWH over the nation of Israel.

^{NIV} **Judges 8:23**...But Gideon told them, **“I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD will rule over you.”**

^{NIV} **1 Samuel 8:7**...And the LORD told him: **“Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king.”**

^{NIV} **Psalm 47:7**... For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.

But here as an act of political expediency, they are rejecting God in order to procure the death of God’s Son. But they are even going beyond that in rejecting their own hope of a future Messiah. It is potent irony in the hands of John especially when uttered by the religious leaders of the nation and it is the

ultimate evidence of the truth of John 1:11, "**He came to his own, but his own did not receive him.**"⁷

Calvin is right when he says...

Let us suppose that Jesus Christ was not the Christ; still they have no excuse for acknowledging *no other king but Caesar*⁸.

Alfred Edersheim is even rougher...

With this cry Judaism was, in the person of its representatives, guilty of denial of God, of blasphemy, of apostasy. It committed suicide; and, ever since, has its dead body been carried in show from land to land, and from century to century: to be dead, and to remain dead, till He come a second time, who is the Resurrection and the Life!⁹

Now, let's look at verse 16.

^{ESV} **John 19:16**...So he delivered him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus,¹⁷ and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.¹⁸ There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

The word used in verse 16 for "**to hand over**" is an important word in John, especially in the last few chapters of John. Jesus used it when He was talking to Pilate and said, "**the sin of him who handed me over is greater than your sin (19:11).**" It is used of Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane where it calls him "**the hander-overer (18:5)**" or "**betray**" and it used finally of Jesus on the cross when "He hands over His spirit" to the Father (19:30).

The normal Roman military squad assigned crucifixion detail consisted of four Roman soldiers which will fit later on with the idea that his clothes were divided up into four parts. In all probability, the soldiers flogged Jesus again. If so, the particular flogging (there were three levels of flogging) given to men about to be crucified was horrific¹⁰. It was designed to induce shock and blood loss and in many cases hastened death through dehydration. Sometimes, the Romans administered a form of painkiller to the victims that consisted of myrrh mixed with wine. John does not record it being offered to Jesus but Mark does and then he goes on quickly to tell his readers Jesus did not take it (15:23).

bearing his own cross...

Anyway, verse 17 says Jesus carried His own cross. It would not have been customary in those days to have carried a whole cross, that is, both the crossbar and the upright gibbet¹¹. Normally, the victim in a crucifixion carried the crossbeam, called a patibulum, from the place of sentencing to the place of execution¹². The early church fathers often connected to that of Isaac carrying the wood upon which Abraham intended to sacrifice him¹³. John omits that Simon the Cyrene helped carry the cross of Jesus. He also does not tell us here, nor for that matter do any of the other three gospels, that Jesus was nailed to the cross. Oftentimes, the condemned were tied to their crosses. Of course, Jesus was nailed to His cross. We just don't learn that until His encounter with Thomas in John 20.

^{ESV} **John 20:25**...So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe."

Luke also records the same in Peter's sermon in Acts 2.

^{ESV} **Acts 2:23**...this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
...place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha

It says they took Him out to the Place of the Skull which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha. The Greek word that is used here in Greek is κρανίου and means "skull"; the Hebrew or Aramaic word that is used here "Golgotha" is also the word for "skull". The other word we often used for the place "**Calvary**" is based upon the Latin word for skull. It is used only in Luke 23:33 and only in the KJV. It may have been called "**the place of the skull**" because of its appearance. It certainly would not have been called that because it was a place where skulls lay around. The ancient Jews would have never allowed such a thing. Most scholars do not believe that the modern place called Gordon's Calvary fits. There is no suggestion from the text that the place was on a hill though that is consistent with the fact that the Romans apparently wanted the executions to be seen.

There they crucified him ...

It says that there they crucified Him. The Romans used three kinds of crosses: the St. Andrews (X-shaped) (crux decussata), the St. Anthony's (T-shaped) (crux commissa) and the ordinary Latin cross (crux immissa)¹⁴. Most commentators agree with the historical tradition that it was this last type especially since both Matthew and Luke write that the sign was placed above His head.¹⁵

^{ESV} **Matthew 27:37**...And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.**"

^{ESV} **Luke 23:38**...There was also an inscription over him, "**This is the King of the Jews.**"

John is the only writer that explains the contention caused by Pilate's sign.

^{ESV} **John 19:19**...Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, "**Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.**" ²⁰ Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. ²¹ So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "**Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'**" ²² Pilate answered, "**What I have written I have written.**"

Apparently, the Jews resented the implication of Pilate's sign especially since the crucifixion took place near a busy thoroughfare. Perhaps, John is pointing out the fact that in the crucifixion of Jesus, the words Jesus spoke about drawing all kinds of men to Himself are fulfilled (12:32). Anyway, they wanted Pilate to amend his sign to say that Jesus only claimed to be the King of the Jews. Of course, after the way they pressured Pilate to do what he did not want to do, there was no way he was going to accommodate them. Still, John uses this phrase by Pilate to literarily connect what is going to happen in the rest of the chapter.

You see the phrase that Pilate uses "ὃ γέγραφα, γέγραφα" (ha gegrapha, gepgrapha), is in the perfect tense in Greek. The idea is that it represents completed action in the past with a result in the present. That means that this thing is completed and the result is so and so. Here, Pilate repeats the same word and the result turns the phrase into something like this, "**That is what I have**

written and the result is that it is what is going to stay written.” Now, I am making that point because in the rest of the chapter, and even into the beginning of the next John is going to point out with excruciating clarity how each **action is the result of the fulfillment of Scripture**. It is as if he is using this statement of Pilate to show his first century fence-straddling Jewish audience that these actions, which to them were so shameful, were the very actions ordained by God to bring about the salvation of His people. He lets Pilate point to the authority of his word over the Jews and **he then takes the idea and turns it to point to the authority of the Word of God over this the darkest event in history**.

You can see that starting in verse 23.

^{ESV} **John 19:23**...When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom,²⁴ so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things,

Since the earliest days of the church, Bible students have seen this as a fulfillment of Psalm 22.

^{NIV} **Psalm 22:18**...They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

And from the earliest days of the church, commentators have supplied all kinds of fanciful and allegorical interpretations to what is signified by the **“seamless garment”**. Some have seen it as referring to the garment of the High Priest thus equating Christ to be the true High Priest.

^{NIV} **Exodus 39:27**...For Aaron and his sons, they made tunics of fine linen-- the work of a weaver--

Some have seen this “**seamless garment**” as referring to the unity of the church. Some have seen it as an analogous reference to Joseph and his betrayal by his brothers. There is no way to know if John intended any of those things¹⁶. What is clear is that John viewed this act as a clear fulfillment of Scripture.

Now in verse 25, there seems to be a break from the fulfillment motif that I have been talking about but I don't think, in fact, that there is any break at all.

^{NIV} **John 19:25**... but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour (evkei,nhj th/j w[raj) the disciple took her to his own home.

Now, I brought up the point about the apparent break in this fulfillment motif because when you look at the commentaries they are all over the place. That is especially true of the Catholics. The reason for that is, I think, the special veneration they give to Mary. As a result, what they tend to do is to see Mary as a metaphor for the church. That is, they see Mary representing the church. The act of Jesus entrusting Mary to the Beloved Disciple then becomes equal to Jesus entrusting the care of His church to the Apostles¹⁷. Now, I do not have any really significant problems with saying that Jesus entrusted the care of His church to the apostles but I don't think that is what is going on here.

In fact, I think there has been a tendency in Protestant exegesis to avoid interpreting the passage as we might have had it not been for Catholic excesses¹⁸.

You see what I think is going on here is the fulfillment of the conversation Mary and Jesus had back in chapter 2 at Cana. You will remember there that Mary had prodded Jesus into action. She had complained, **"They have no wine."** In His answer to her Jesus said simply, **"Dear woman, why do you involve me? My hour has not yet come."**

Now I argued back at that point that there was the possibility that Mary wanted vindication and that Jesus was telling her that that vindication could only occur in the hour of His glorification. I think that Jesus is telling her here, **"This is my hour. From here on out, you will need no vindication. Everyone will know the truth. This is my hour. This is the fulfillment of all that had to happen."**

Now, I come to that explanation partly because of the fulfillment motif going on all around this passage and partly because of the repetition of the key words here that were first introduced in chapter two. The words are **"dear woman"**, **"hour"** and **"wine"** and the connecting command to John that matches up with **"whatever He says to you, do it."** Of course, the wine is not the wine of joy, which Jesus gave at Cana. Instead, it is a wine of a much different kind. Look at verse 28.

^{ESV} **John 19:28**...After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), **"I thirst."** ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, **"It is finished,"** and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

You will notice that the reason given for this even is that Scripture might be fulfilled. John viewed this passage as a fulfillment of Psalm 69:21.

^{NIV} **Psalm 69:21**...They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.

Of course, wine vinegar is much different than the drink referred to in Mark as vinegar mixed with myrrh. Wine mixed with myrrh was an anesthesia and would have dulled Jesus' pain. He refused to drink that drink. Wine vinegar was a simple and inexpensive soldiers drink. He did drink it. But you ought to notice, especially since John goes out of his way to use a different word for stick (he uses the word ὕσσωπος...hyssop rather than κάλαμος...reed) than the other gospel writers that he is calling attention to the connection of even this scene to the Passover.

^{NIV} **Exodus 12:22**...Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning.

Finally, it says that after Jesus received the drink, He said, **"It is finished"** and He bowed His head and handed over His spirit. He gave up His spirit, it was not taken from Him. Of course, the principal focus is what Jesus says. He says, **"It is finished."** Now I have made this point before but the verb here is a perfect tense verb that points to a completed action in the past with a connected result in the present. I think it is clear that the issue that concerned Him was the work which the Father had given Him to accomplish. Jesus was saying, **"That work is finished...and the result is...is what?"** The result is in John, I think, that we now possess eternal life and that **"eternal life"** is life that consists both in length and in quality. It is life that our great Passover Lamb has sought for us and that work was finished right here.

In verses 31 through 37, John tells us that Jesus fulfilled the Scripture even in His death.

^{ESV} **John 19:31**...Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. ³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ³⁵ He who saw it has borne witness--his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth--that you also may believe. ³⁶ For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

Now, the most common misunderstanding about death by crucifixion that occurs is that most people think it was quick. Actually, death usually took three to four days. Death did not usually occur because of blood loss but rather because of asphyxiation or dehydration. In the Roman world, when people were crucified they were not usually taken down from their crosses but were left to be exposed to the weather and to scavenging animals.

The Jews, however, had scruples that the Romans did not have. They would not leave people on the cross overnight. That created a problem of course. They could not take down those that were condemned until they were dead and they could not abide leaving the dead exposed overnight. This scruple was held in strict compliance with the word of God.

^{NIV} **Deuteronomy 21:22**...If a man guilty of a capital offense is put to death and his body is hung on a tree, ²³ you must not leave his body on the tree overnight.

Be sure to bury him that same day, because anyone who is hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not desecrate the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Now that problem was resolved by the Roman practice of *crurifragium*¹⁹. *Crurifragium* involved the breaking of the legs of the person condemned²⁰. You see what happened in a crucifixion is that a person's body weight caused them to sag as they hung on the cross. That sagging forced their body downward through fatigue and dehydration until they were unable to take a breath. The Romans, who were masters of torture, figured out that if a small seat-like piece was added to the lower part of the cross it would be possible to extend the suffering of the person who was dying. That person would be able to shift their weight by pushing up with their legs and sit for a second and take a breath. The same thing could happen, of course, even without the "sedecula" if a person had been nailed or tied securely to the cross.

Crurifragium solved that problem. It involved taking a large mallet, really a sledgehammer and shattering the legs of the condemned person so that they were no longer able to push up and take a breath. Of course, the wound itself was so horrific and painful that it hastened death as well. After a person had their legs shattered, death occurred in a matter of minutes.

So, the text says they broke the bones of the two other men but when they came to Jesus He was already dead. John tells us that this was the fulfillment of Scripture. Most likely the Scripture that was fulfilled was either Numbers 9:12 or Exodus 12:46. Both refer to the handling of the Passover lamb.

^{NIV} **Numbers 9:12...**They must not leave any of it till morning or break any of its bones. When they celebrate the Passover, they must follow all the regulations.

^{NIV} **Exodus 12:46...**“It must be eaten inside one house; take none of the meat outside the house. Do not break any of the bones.”

But the text does say that a Roman soldier came and pierced the side of Jesus with a spear and from that wound came blood and water. Now, there has been since the early days of the church endless speculation about what was signified by the issue of blood and water. Usually, especially in the Middle Ages, the two things are equated to the Lord’s Supper and to baptism. But I think and so did the Reformers that John was only making two points. First, Jesus was really dead. Secondly, even this action of the soldier was a fulfillment of Scripture.

^{NIV} **Zechariah 12:10...**“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. ”

^{NIV} **Zechariah 13:6...**If someone asks him, 'What are these wounds on your body?' he will answer, 'The wounds I was given at the house of my friends.'

Finally, let’s read verse 38 to the end of the chapter.

^{NIV} **John 19:38...**After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. ³⁹ Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. ⁴¹ Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So

because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.²¹

Let me just make a couple of points. Both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus are presented as secret or fearful disciples of Jesus. It says that straight out about Joseph and it implies it about Nicodemus but here they come boldly and without hesitation and plead for the body of Jesus. They take His body and lovingly wrap it in clothes and apply spices and lay it in a tomb never before used (Matthew tells us it was Joseph's own tomb 27:60) and they do that because they have made their decision about Jesus. They have made their decision that Jesus was the fulfillment of all that Scripture had promised concerning the Messiah of God and you will remember that that is what John has been arguing all along. He has been trying to get those first century Jewish fence straddlers to come out for Jesus, to cleave to Him in faith, to cling to Him even if it meant being excommunicated from the synagogue. Now let me ask you, **"What else could John though the Holy Spirit have done to make his case that Jesus is the fulfillment of all that God intended in cleansing His people from their sin?"** I would say there is nothing else that could have been done.

Oh brothers and sisters, my prayer for you is that you too will cleave to Jesus. My prayer for you is that you will cleave to Him in faith recognizing that He is God's perfect, holy, harmless Passover Lamb for you. My prayer is that you will not be drawn away by the allurements or promises of this world but will cleave unto Him now and forever and that by doing so you will come to know Him and in doing so come to know eternal life.

Now, it is the custom of the many Reformed Churches to hold each year at Easter something they call a *Tenebras* Service. In that Good Friday service, they read the passages of the Lord's crucifixion and suffering for sinners. At the end of the service, they do not speak of the Lord's resurrection but simply turn out the lights and go out from each other without speaking, mourning their sin that nailed Him to the cross. Then they meet on Sunday and celebrate with great joy and gladness the glory of the resurrected Lord.

Now, we are going to stop right there but this is no *Tenebras* service. We are not doleful or broken hearted. Our Lord is risen. He is risen indeed. It is just that we will have to wait till next week to see it in the text.

¹ Henry George Liddell, and Robert Scott, *A Greek English Lexicon Rvd. By Sir Henry Stuart Jones* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 1324 c. The entry is as follows: III. among the Jews, *the day of Preparation, before the sabbath of the Passover, Ev.Marc.15.42, Ev.Jo.19.14,31, etc.; h[mera paraskeu/hj Ev.Luc. 23.54.*

Cf. Irenaeus, *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 7.1 p.40 (Taken from Volume 1 of Ante-Nicene Fathers published by Hendrickson Publishers rpt. *Martyrdom of Polycarp* was trans. by Cleveland Coxe D.D.) "His pursuers then, along with horsemen, and taking the youth with them, went forth at supper-time on the **day of the preparation** with their usual weapons, as if going out against a robber." Coxe footnotes the phrase "day of preparation" and says, "That is, on Friday."

Cf. Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 16. p.163 (Electronic Edition) "Caesar the emperor, it seemed good to me and my counselors, according to the sentence and oath of the people of Rome, that the Jews have liberty to make use of their own customs, according to the law of their forefathers, as they made use of them under Hyrcanus the high priest of the Almighty God; and that their sacred money be not touched, but be sent to Jerusalem, and that it be committed to the care of the receivers at Jerusalem; and that they be not obliged to go before any judge on the sabbath day, nor on **the day of the preparation to it**, after the ninth hour." Clearly a Friday.

Cf. Walter Bauer, (Rvd. By Arndt, Gingrich and Danker) *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* 2nd Edition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 622. ...acc. to Jewish usage (Jos., Ant. 16, 163) it was Friday, on which day everything had to be prepared for the Sabbath, when no work was permitted Mt 27: 62 (CCTorrey, ZAW 65, '53, 242=JBL 50, '31, 234 n. 3, "sunset". Mk 15:42; Jn. 19:31. *h`me,ra h=n paraskeuh/j* Lk 23:54 (v.1. *paraskeuh. ol evstin prosa,bbaton* cf. Mk 15:42). *th.n paraskeuh.n tw/n Vloudai,wn*(~ Jn. 19.42.

paraskeuh. tou/ pa,sca(a day of preparation for the Passover (or Friday of Passover Week) vs. 14. For the Christians as well paraskeuh. served to designate the sixth day of the week.

Cf. DNTT V.3...408. The noun *paraskeuè*, which is found in secular Gk. from Hdt. onwards, means preparation, but in Christian literature it is used only of the day of preparation for a festival or sabbath. According to Jewish usage, it was the Friday on which everything had to be prepared for the sabbath (Josephus, *Ant.* 16, 163; Syne *Epistola* 4, p. 161D; cf. Matt. 27:62; Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:54; Jn. 19:3 1, 42). In the Didache it is regarded as a fast day, marking the death of Jesus (Did. 8:1).

Cf. TDNT V.7...20. Preparation = *paraskeuh,n* Mt. 27:62; Jn. 19:3 1, 42; Lk. 23:54, Here we have: *paraskeuh/j kai. sa,bbaton evpe,fwsken.* The ref. is obviously to the shining of the first star as the Sabbath comes. An explanation is given for the Hell, reader in Mk. 15:42: *h=n paraskeuh. o[evstin prosa,bbaton.* Jn. 19:14 refers to the *paraskeuh. tou/ pa,sca.* Jn. 19:31 says of the Sabbath after the preparation *h=n ga.r mega,lh h` h`me,ra evkei,nou tou/ sabba,tou.* It is gt. because acc. to John's chronology it coincides with the first day of the feast of the Passover and Unleavened Bread. Cf. Str.-B., II, 581 f. (Information is in footnotes 58-9)

Cf. D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991) 603-4. "Despite the fact that Barrett (p. 545) confidently insists *paraskeuè tou pascha* must refer to the Preparation day of (*i.e.* before) the Passover, he does not offer any evidence of a single instance where *paraskeuè* refers to the day before any feast day other than Sabbath.¹ If this latter identification is correct, then *tou pascha* must be taken to mean, not 'of the Passover', but 'of the Passover Feast' or 'of the Passover week'. This is a perfectly acceptable rendering, since 'Passover' can refer to the Passover meal, the day of the Passover meal, or (as in this case) the entire Passover week (*i.e.* Passover day plus the immediately ensuing Feast of Unleavened Bread: cf. Jos., *Ant.* xiv. 21; xvii. 213; *Bel.* ii. 10; Lk. 22:1; cf. notes on 18:28). Hence *paraskeuè tou pascha* probably means 'Friday of Passover week' (cf. also notes on v. 31). In this view, John and the Synoptics agree that the last supper was eaten on Thursday evening (*i.e.* the onset of Friday, by Jewish reckoning), and was a Passover meal.

We must nevertheless advance a reason as to why the day is here introduced. The strength of the view that *paraskeue* refers to the day before Passover turns less on linguistic arguments than on its (alleged) explanatory power: it makes possible the view that John is affirming that Jesus himself is the slaughtered Passover lamb. But another reason can be given for this insertion of the day. This is preparation for vv. 31–37, where the piercing of Jesus' side by a spear, and the 'sudden flow of blood and water', turns on the need to ensure that Jesus and those crucified with him be taken down from the cross promptly, since it was already *paraskeue* (v. 31) and the next day, the Sabbath, was a special Sabbath (since it fell within the Passover week). This pattern — an advance time notice to anticipate the development of a theological theme that turns on this time notice — is already found in ch. 5: John remarks in passing that the healing of the man who had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years took place on a Sabbath (v. 9), and thus prepares for the Sabbath-controversy recorded a little farther on in the chapter (vv. 16ff.)."

Cf. Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary.* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1997) 628. In the footnote, he writes "paraskeuh,; see above on vs. 14. There is no

question of a Passover preparation. The reference is only to Friday. John is in complete agreement with the Synoptics here (cf. Mk. 15:42; Lk. 23:54; see also Bultmann, *Comm.*, in loc.).”

² B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1954) 272. Westcott holds that the hours were calculated in John from midnight but this is almost certainly wrong. Surely John 4 describes Jesus coming to the well at noon and not 6 AM. It seems inconceivable that he had traveled all night but rather that he had started at daybreak. Even Westcott admits that his view is unusual.

Cf. John Calvin, *Commentary on John* (Calvin CD Rom by Ages) 19:15, 614-615. “It is plain enough from other passages that the day was at that time divided into four parts, as the night also contained four watches; in consequence of which, the Evangelists sometimes allot not more than four hours to each day, and extend each hour to three, and, at the same time, reckon the space of an hour, which was drawing to a close, as belonging to the next part. According to this calculation, *John* relates that Christ was condemned *about the sixth hour*, because the time of the day was drawing towards *the sixth hour*, or towards the second part of the day. Hence we infer that Christ was crucified at or about *the sixth hour*; for, as the Evangelist afterwards mentions, (John 19:20,) *the place was near to the city. The darkness* began between the sixth and ninth hour, and lasted till the ninth hour, at which time Christ died.

³ Johnny V. Miller, “The Time of the Crucifixion,” in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 26 no 2 Je 1983, p 157-166. Miller quotes Leon Morris.

⁴ C.H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 437. Dodd makes the point fairly convincingly that Jesus use of the words, ‘It is finished’ is purposely tied to whole purpose of His being sent and commissioned. “We may recall me earlier passages which use the same verb of Christ. In iv. 34 we may recall that His *brw/ma*, (that by which He lives on earth) is *ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με και. τελειω,sw αυτου/ to. e;rgon* = that I might do the will of Him who sent me and **finish** His work. Again in v. 36, among the primary evidences of Christ’s plenary commission are *γὰρ ἔργα ἃ δέδωκέν μοι ὁ πατήρ ἵνα τελειώσω αὐτὰ* for the work that the Father gave me that I might **finish** it. Thus it appears that the very existence of the incarnate Word on earth is bound with the accomplishment (*τελειώσιj*= **finishing**) of the work of man’s salvation according to the will of God.”

⁵ Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel V.2* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1942), 624. “The hour of the double sacrifice is drawing near. It is midday. The Passover lambs are being prepared for sacrifice, and the Lamb of God is likewise sentenced to death. Hence the hour ‘marks the end of Judaism’ (Lagrange).”

⁶ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John (Rvd.)* (Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 709. “*a=ron* is usually taken to mean ‘Away with him,’ but Lightfoot points out that verb may also mean ‘raise.’ He thinks that there may be a subtle Johannine reference to the exaltation of Jesus.”

⁷ Carson, 606.

⁸ Calvin, 19:15, 615.

⁹ Alfred Edershiem, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. (McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing:), 580.

¹⁰ A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 26. Whites mention three types of scourging. "The authors are correct also in the minor point of the beating. The jurists recognize a gradation of beatings: *fustes*, *flagella*, *verbera*. The severer beating was never a punishment in itself but was associated with other punishments. The lightest form, *fustigatio*, is frequently associated with a magisterial warning, when the governor reckons that the situation did not require a formal *cognitio*. Thus in the case of fires caused by negligence, the *Praefectus Vigilum* at Rome might give the negligent party a severe warning with a beating or the threat of a beating by *fustes*. This was technically an act of *coercitio* pure and simple. The same was done by provincial governors when dealing with the ancient equivalent of juvenile gangs. Luke has this technique in mind when he represents Pilate as saying: 'You have brought this man to me as disturbing the people. But he has done nothing deserving the death penalty. So I will give him a warning and let him go.'"

¹¹ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to John*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-1954), vol. 2, 425. Hendriksen believes it was the whole cross but is pretty much alone in that view.

¹² Strack-Billerbeck. Vol. 1, p. 587. It was customary for the condemned to carry their own crosses.

Cf. F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel & Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1983), 366.

¹³ Irenaeus. *Against Heresies* (Book 4.5.4 Sages CDRom p.964.) Cf. Clement of Alexandria. *The Instructor* (Sages CDRom Book 1.5, 421)

¹⁴ Alfred Edershiem, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. (McLean, Virginia: MacDonald Publishing:), 584.

Cf. John McClintock, & James Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, (Electronic Edition: Ages CDRom) "**Cross**", 44-45. "The *crux immissa* (or Latin cross) differed from the former by the projection of the upright post (do>ru u[yhlon, or *stipes*) above the transverse beam (ke>rav ejgka>rsion, or *patibulum*, Eusebius, *de V.Constant.* 1:31). That this was the kind of cross on which our Lord died is obvious (among other reasons) from the mention of the "title" (q.v.), as placed *above* our Lord's head, and from the almost unanimous tradition; it is repeatedly found on the coins and columns of Constantine.

Besides the four corners (αἰκρά, or *apices*, Tert.) of the cross was a fifth (φῆγμα), projecting out of the central stein, on which the body of the sufferer rested (Justin Mart. *Tryph.* 91, who [*nore suo*] compares it to the horn of a rhinoceros; *sedilis excessus*, Tertull. *adv. Nat.* 1:12; Iren. *adv. Haeres.* 1:12). This was to prevent the weight of the body from tearing away the hands, since it was impossible that it “should rest upon nothing but four great wounds” (Jeremy Taylor, *Life of Christ*, 3, 15:2). This projection is probably alluded to in the famous lines of Maecenas (ap. Sen. *Ep.* 101). Lipsius, however, thinks otherwise (*De Cruce*, 1:6). Whether there was also a ὑποπόδιον, or support to the feet (as we see in pictures), is doubtful. Gregory of Tours mentions it; but he is the earliest authority, and has no weight.”

¹⁵ Of course, it would have been possible to put something above his head on a T-shaped cross if the body sagged.

¹⁶ Calvin, 19:24, 620. Calvin particularly rips into the Papists regarding this point. “As to the allegorical meaning to which some men have tortured this passage, by making it mean, that heretics tear Scripture in pieces, it is too far-fetched; though I would not object to such a comparison as this, — that, as the *garments* of Christ were once divided by ungodly *soldiers*, so, in the present day, there are perverse men who, by foreign inventions, tear the whole of the Scripture, with which Christ is clothed, in order that he may be manifested to us. But the wickedness of the Papists, accompanied by shocking blasphemy against God, is intolerable. They tell us, that Scripture is torn to pieces by heretics, but that *the coat* — that is, the Church — remains entire; and thus they endeavor to prove that, without paying any attention to the authority of Scripture, the unity of faith consists in the mere title of the Church; as if the unity of the Church were itself founded on any thing else than the authority of Scripture. When, therefore, they separate faith from Scripture, so that it may continue to be attached to the Church alone, by such a divorce they not only strip Christ of his *garments*, but tear in pieces his body by shocking sacrilege. And though we should admit what they maintain, that *the coat without seam* is a figure of the Church, they will be very far from gaining their point: for it will still remain to be proved, that the Church is placed under their authority, of which they show no sign whatever.

¹⁷ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John V29a* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 922

¹⁸ Calvin, 19:25, 621. The beloved Calvin is representative of what I mean. He sees the scene as a simple fulfillment of Jesus’ obligation to ‘honor his mother’. “The Evangelist here mentions incidentally, that while Christ obeyed God the Father, he did not fail to perform the duty which he owed, as a son, towards *his mother*.”

¹⁹ W. Hall Harris, *The Gospel of John: Introduction and Commentary* (www.bible.org, pg. 207). Thus the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men who had been crucified with Jesus. This breaking of the legs was called in Latin the *crurifragium*, and was done with a heavy mallet.

²⁰ Gaius Suetonius, (trans. by Robert Graves) *Twelve Caesars* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1957) p. 88, 131. Concerning Augustus Suetonius writes, “Yet, when one Polus, a favourite freedman, was convicted of adultery with free-born Roman matrons, Augustus ordered him to commit suicide;

and sentenced Thallus, an imperial secretary, to have his legs broken for divulging the contents of a dispatch - his fee had been twenty-five gold pieces." Concerning Tiberius he writes, "The story goes that once, while sacrificing, he took an erotic fancy to the acolyte who carried the incense casket, and could hardly wait for the ceremony to end before hurrying him and his brother, the sacred trumpeter, out of the temple and indecently assaulting them both. When they protested at this dastardly crime he had their legs broken." In both cases he means *crurifragium*. Cf. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 4.5.2 He writes of the slaughter of the Jews by Idumaens and how they desecrated bodies, "Nay, they proceeded to that degree of impiety, as to cast away their dead bodies without burial, although the Jews used to take so much care of the burial of men, that they took down those that were condemned and crucified, and buried them before the going down of the sun." The point is that the Jews fastidiousness made it clear the dead were buried before the start of the Sabbath.