



\*HE IS SAVIOR, Acts 4:12

April, 2025

## His Ministries April 2025 Newsletter, covering March 2025

[As we study how the Israelites were instructed to prepare for the Passover, we see its connection to us as followers of Jesus Christ, *our Passover Lamb*, about what He did for His own and for us as Gentile believers in Him.)

### Passover Instituted

Exodus 12:1-10 God had commanded Israel to select *a male lamb without blemish on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish first month (Nisan), and keep it for inspection for 4 days and then kill it at twilight* (between the ninth and eleventh hours). The Lamb's blood was to be applied to the door posts to cause the destroyer to pass over. *The Lord had said that on that night He will smite all the firstborn of Egypt, but when He sees the blood He will pass over you and the plague (death) shall not be upon you to destroy you.* (12:13-14.)

It was Sunday morning A.D. 32, *the Presentation day*, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem presenting Himself as the Coming King at the beginning of the Passover week, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9, *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee, He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."* [Rulers always rode on horses, not on donkeys. This is another proof of the exactness of Bible prophecies.]

This took place on the day predicted by Daniel (Dan. 9:24-26). That day was the day that the Messiah was to be presented, and *then 4 days later killed, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the same month, "cut off but not for Himself"*. This is the day we call *Palm Sunday* and it is calculated from March 14<sup>th</sup> 445 B.C., and was exactly 173,880 days after Artaxerxes Longimanus had given the commandment to *"restore and rebuild Jerusalem"*. (Nehemiah 2:1, 5-8, 17-18.)

From the *New Testament* we read that followers of Jesus had many times wanted to declare Jesus as their *Messiah-King*, but He always had, *before this very day*, said, *"My time has not yet come"*, but on this day He not only allowed it, He arranged it (Matt. 26:17b-18), fulfilling Ps. 118:26 and Daniel 9:26. But when the Pharisees rebuked Him for allowing people to declare Him as their *Messiah-King*, Jesus responded and said, *"If these would hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out"*. (Luke 19:28-44.)

According to the command given in Exodus 12:3, 5, 6 (when Passover was instituted), Jesus had to come to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, which was the day for the Jews to select a Passover lamb to be inspected, and be kept four days before it was to be killed on Passover.

(At the same time when Jesus, *the Lamb of God*, was riding into Jerusalem, there were about 250 thousand sheep driven to Jerusalem to be killed on Passover. An estimated 2 million Jews gathered there for the most important feast in Israel.)

## Jesus' final week in Jerusalem

On His arrival in Jerusalem He first **cleansed the Temple** by casting out the *money-changers* and others who were financially profiting from selling animals to be sacrificed.

**He cursed the fig tree** (symbolizing Israel) **that had leaves but no fruit** (Luke 13:6-9) **for Israel had a show of religion, but no fruit.**

Jesus taught His disciples about the last days warning them **first of all about deception that will be rampant before His Second Coming.** He also told them about the **Great Tribulation** (24:15-21) that will come to test them before **His Second Coming.**

*[“And one of the twelve, Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you? And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time on he sought opportunity to betray him. “]*

*“Now on the first day of the Feasts of the Unleavened Bread his disciples came to Jesus saying to Him, ‘Where do you want us to prepare to eat the Passover? And He said, ‘Go into the city to the certain man, and say unto him, the Teacher says, ‘My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples. So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover...”* (Matt. 26:17-19.)

On the Wednesday evening he had arranged to have His Passover meal with His 12 apostles...

And while they were eating Jesus said, **“Most assuredly, I say unto you one of you will betray me. Then the disciples looked at each other, perplexed about whom He spoke...It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it. Having dipped the bread He gave it to Judas Iscariot... Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you do, do it quickly... and he went out immediately. And it was night.”** (John 13:21b-22, 26-27,30.)

After Judas left, Jesus *instituted the Lord's Supper.* **“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat, this is my body. Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.”** Then they sang a hymn and they, the eleven, left with Jesus to go to *the Mount of Olives.* (Matt. 26:26-30.)

He took Peter, James and John closer in with Him while He, in *the Garden of Gethsemane* prayed in agony. **“His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground”.** (Luke 22:44b.)

[Under a great emotional stress tiny blood vessels can rupture in the sweat glands and produce mixture of blood and sweat that is called, *Hematidroses.*]

Judas, knowing where Jesus and the eleven would have gone, led a group of chief priests, elders and *captains of the temple* to arrest the Lord. **They kept Him all Wednesday night till morning in illegal trials before the high priests** (back and forth between high priests and Pilate), **and at daybreak before the Sanhedrin Council.** He was accused of blasphemy, claiming equality with God that carries the death penalty, but because Jews were under Roman power, they did not have authority to put prisoners to death. Thus they had to take Jesus to Pilate, but he was not interested in their religious charges so they had to invent political charges against Jesus. When Pilate found out that Jesus was *“Galilean”*, he sent Jesus to Herod – but Herod sent Him back to Pilate, who eventually, under public pressure, declared Jesus **innocent but condemned.** **Pilate wrote a title to be put on the cross.** The writing was: **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.** *It was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, The King of the Jews, but that He had said, “I am the King of the Jews.”* Pilate said, *“What I have written, I have written.”* So Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him, and soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and pressed it on His head, and mocking Him they put on Him a purple robe.

... After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished *so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled,* He said, **“I thirst!”** A vessel full of sour wine was sitting there, *they put it on hyssop, and put in His mouth.* When Jesus has received the sour wine, He said, **“It is finished!”** **And bowing His head, He gave up His Spirit.**

*Therefore because it was the Preparation Day (Thursday), that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that was an additional Sabbath, a high day) Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs, but one of the soldiers pierced His side with spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who had seen has testified, and his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you might believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones were broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced. "*

*After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, for a fear of Jews, asked Pilate that they might take away the body of Jesus; Pilate gave them permission. So they came and took away the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with spices, as the custom of Jews is to bury. Now the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had not yet been laid, so they laid Jesus, because of the Jews Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby."*

*"On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. She ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him...' Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in and saw and believed." (John 19:28-42.) HE IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!*

This year the Jewish Passover and Christian celebration of Resurrection Sunday (called *Easter*) fall on the same week, beginning on April 13<sup>th</sup>, *Palm Sunday* through April 20<sup>th</sup>, the *Feasts of the First Fruits - Resurrection Sunday*.

When the Scribes and Pharisees were requesting signs of Jesus' coming from God, His answer to them was, ***"No sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*** [No "partial days and nights"-explanation will do! Many have tried to make *three days and three nights as partial days and nights* be excepted as full days and nights! It will not work!]

Preaching the Gospel, as we all are commanded to do, is teaching that Jesus is the Virgin-born son of God, and that He died for our sins, was buried and rose again on the third day, all according to the Scriptures. (1 Corinth. 15:1-4; Matt. 12:40.) His sacrifice brought forgiveness and eternal salvation to all who accept Him as their Savior and Lord. (John 8:24; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 14:6.) ***"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin or the world."*** (John 1:29.)

## Easter

[This word appears in the King James Version of the Bible only once (Acts 12:4). It is actually a mistranslation or misinterpretation of a Greek word, "*pascha*" which actually does mean *Passover, which is a Jewish feast*. *Easter* replaces the Jewish Passover ("*pascha*") among those who have accepted Jesus as their Messiah and Savior. The trouble with the timing of Easter, until about the 8<sup>th</sup> century, was caused primarily by the fact that the Jews observed a calendar based on lunar months. Passover was celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, and it was not therefore tied to any day of the week. The first dispute was whether Christians should celebrate this festival on a weekday or the following Sunday especially after "*bunnies and eggs*" became pagan addition and part of the *Easter-celebration*.]



Several years ago, our ministry participated in supplying information about Mormonism that resulted in a family and children (originally from South Africa who had immigrated to Australia) to leave the LDS Church. Zibby, had been raised in the LDS Church, and she wrote to us asking many questions. She had two very good LDS friends, Elmien and Alex, who was the Relief Society President, (and who were also originally from South Africa) that she shared with what she had found out from us about Mormonism. We have been sending them our Newsletters for many years, and Dennis has sent more information and compared what the Bible teaches ... all these families have left the Mormon Church and are now Bible believing Christians. Zibby and her family moved south of Perth where they bought an Avocado farm. Elmien and Leon have become very involved in their church and participated even in street witnessing. Recently several other Mormon couples started attending their Christian church and Elmien and Leon befriended them and had answers to their questions. They continue to disciple them and encourage them. One of these visiting Mormon ladies has been sharing with her family and recently their 18-year-old son was radically saved and requested to be baptized. In time we hope he will share his testimony about that event with us. In the meantime, we would like to share these photos of his baptism in the Indian Ocean! This is a "Praise God" event to be shared on Resurrection Sunday!



We are so very thank full for your prayers that I was able to get this newsletter out and done. It was a huge struggle, is all I can say, for I had lost again most of what I had written meant for this Newsletter. We are also so thankful for your support and personal prayers for us too, for this work is not easy.

Our new computer came (it is still in a box), but I wanted to make sure that I will be able to learn what I can before I venture to write what I am planning to write.

We also lost our *computer guy*, who moved to Arizona and we have not been able to find a new one yet.

Your prayers are needed for Judy, Marlene, Aira, Sam, Taylan and his family, Vladimir, Heber, Helen, Elmien, Leon, Roy, Lois, Suzi, Sharon, Luke, Bruce, Connie , Paul, Julie, Mark and Virve, Al and Sandy and our dear friend, Tubi.

***Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.*** (Psalm, 122:6-7.)

May the Lord be with you and bless you abundantly.

Rauni and Dennis

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