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John 19 - Part IV

Preparation - A High Day

John 19:31: *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. (verse 14: *And it was the preparation of the Passover...*).*

It is late in the day, Jesus is dead but the two thieves are still alive. There is however, an urgency to get all of them down from the cross before sunset, according to Jewish law (Dt 21:22-23). So to speed up death the legs are broken. It was also preparation day for the Passover and Sabbath, a high or great day, which occurs irregularly. So as not to confuse the modern Good Friday with the Jewish ceremonial calendar, here are the occurrences from Wikipedia when the two preparations coincide:

“While the Eve of Passover can occur on Shabbat as many as three times in a decade, it is also possible for as many as 20 years to pass between two occurrences. During the 20th century, the Eve of Passover fell on Shabbat in 1903, 1910, 1923, 1927, 1930, 1950, 1954, 1974, 1977, 1981 and 1994. In the 21st century, the Eve of Passover has fallen on Shabbat three times: in 2001, 2005, and 2008. Future occurrences in the 21st century will take place in 2021, 2025, 2045, 2048, 2052, 2072, 2075, 2079, and 2099.”

It is estimated that the occurrence of the cross was April 03, AD 30.

As a rigid Sabbatarian, the main emphasis was always on keeping the day and very little on the preparation. I think that attitude carried over somewhat, into spiritual Sabbath keeping. The Lord has shown me that the emphasis should be on the preparation to enter the Sabbath rest in Jesus Christ. This topic is new to me, so likely the understanding will continue to evolve as how to relate to the spiritual preparation day, a type of a period of time.

Passover: Preparation day for the Passover occurs on the 14th of the first of the Jewish month of Abib (young, green), also called Nisan (their flight). Below is a list of things done in preparation, all of which can be viewed allegorically (Ex 12:1-28):

1. In late afternoon, the lamb without blemish, brought into the house on the 10th, would be killed and roasted by fire.
2. Blood of the lamb is put on the side-posts and lintel of the door of the house wherein it was to be eaten.
3. All leaven was removed from the house.
4. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs were prepared also, as part of the meal to begin after sunset. As all food was to be prepared before the feast began.
5. The final preparation to eat the meal was to have the loins girded, shoes on the feet and staff in hand.

Sabbath: **Mark 15:42:** *And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath.* From John Gill's Exposition of the Bible: *The Syriac version reads, or, "the night of the sixth day."* Preparations were made because all business work (KJ "servile") and non-Sabbath recreation were to be avoided. Normally, food preparations were allowed on the Sabbath, but not during Passover. Everyone was to be ready by putting aside worldly things out of their mind, and focus more on spiritual things.

Both preparations were for entering a rest. The “unleavened bread” and removal of all leaven from houses is a figure of how to enter the spiritual rest: **Matthew 16:11-12**: *11. How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? 12. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. A little leaven leavens the whole lump* (Galatians 5:9). Consider the house as the heart and the blood being the understanding of the cross which we obtain by spiritually eating the Lamb (cf Jn 6:54, 56). Jesus is the bread of life, but, any false ideas held can create confusion, and even skew why Jesus died. **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**: *6. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7. Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: 8. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

The manna experience adds significantly to preparation for the Sabbath: **Exodus 16:4-5**: *4. Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. 5. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.* Young and the LITV render the underlined phrase “gather the matter of a day in its day.” The Hebrew for matter is actually *word* ^(h1697), and the way it is rendered in the KJ margin of the Cambridge Bible. In our Bible studies, we gather understanding day by day. In the allegorical sixth day, we will gather twice the daily portion in preparation of ceasing from our own works and entering the rest of Christ. The Sabbath day is to be a reminder of being delivered from Egypt (Dt 5:15) - not a legal requirement to keep the rituals associated with the day, but a spiritual reminder of being delivered from a worldly way of life into eternal life in Christ (Jn 5:24).

There is another key reason for gathering double on the sixth day: **Exodus 16:26**: *Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.* There will come a time when you cannot buy or sell the truth (Rv 13:17). *Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on a sabbath* (Mt 24:20 YLT). In ancient times, food had to be prepared and stored for winter use; all our works are to cease on the sabbath.

Preparation is also seen in the parable of the 10 virgins: **Matthew 25:1-5**: *1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.*

All the virgins are waiting to enter into the marriage and become the bride of Christ. The wise virgins prepared while the unwise did not, and they all slept while waiting for the coming of the Bridegroom. There are two ways the bride is described in Revelation: As being *arrayed in fine linen, clean and white* - which is her righteousness (Rv 19:7-8); and as New Jerusalem (Rv 21:9-10), which Paul states is the *mother of us all* (Gal 4:26). Oil is a type for the spirit or understanding, in this case, supplied by the Sons of Oil (Zech 4:11-14) - Christ.

Matthew 25:6: *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.* It was at midnight, the darkest part of night, that the firstborn of Egypt were slain (Ex 12:29). The firstborn of those who were prepared were not slain. Consider the firstborn as Christ in you (Col 1:27). The unwise virgins went to the wise for more oil, and they were told, *Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves* (Mt 25:9). Remember, no bread (truth) is to be found in field (world Mt 13:38) when the time comes to rest in Christ. Apparently, they obtained something, but not what was needed; for when they came back and knocked at the door, they were told, *I know you not* (cf verses 10-12).

Our preparation is always the gathering of truth in our lifetime. The high, or great day however, represents the revelation of the cross in the last generation which brings spiritual completeness. Truth today is already scarce; the marriage is just before Christ's return. **Romans 13:8-14:** 8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loves another hath fulfilled the law.* 9. *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* 10. *Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* 11. *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.* 12. *The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.* 13. *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.* 14. *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

John 19:32-37: 32. *Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.* 33. *But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:* 34. *But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.* 35. *And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knows that he says (is) true, that ye might believe.* 36. *For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.* 37. *And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.*

They brake not his legs: Exodus 12:46: *In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof (cp Ps 34:20).* Eat all the Lamb, Christ will not be divided (break bones apart) in the understanding of God's people as he is today.

They shall look on him whom they pierced: Zechariah 12:10: *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness (eat bitter herbs Ex 12:8) for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.* Bitterness comes when a person clearly sees the cross and how their firstborn thoughts are responsible for the death of the firstborn Son of God.

Forthwith came there out blood and water: 1John 5:4-9: 4. *for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.* 5. *Who is it the one overcoming the world? If not the one believing that Jesus is the Son of God.* 6. *This is the one that came because of water and blood--Jesus Christ. Not in the water only, but in the water and the blood. And it is the Spirit bearing witness, because the Spirit is the truth.* 7. *Because there are three bearing witness: 8. the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree in one.* 9. *We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son (literal to the Greek).*

Water is thoughts (Dt 32:1-2) and blood represents the soul (Lv 17:14), or the record from where the thoughts originate; and it is the spirit which expresses them in words (cf Jn 6:63). Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom 8:3) and was tempted in all points as are we (Heb 4:15). Human testimony (spirit, water) is polluted, but God's testimony, which is given about His Son via the cross, is greater and will correct our understanding and heal the soul. So, Jesus came, not only in the water and the blood, but because of our water and blood. The Spirit, which is the truth, bears witness, even as our own spirits bear witness also, that we need healing. It is coming to see that Jesus was the *righteous one* (Lk 23:47) who came to save us. Then like the Roman Centurion standing near the cross, we can say, "*Truly this man was the Son of God!*" (Mk 13:39). Amen.