



Palm Sunday - What is the Real Story?

John 3:17: (NASB) *For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*



In just seven days, the Christian world will be enraptured in the celebration of Resurrection Sunday - the celebration of the day - the event that actually changed the course of human history. What sometimes gets overlooked are the striking events of the week before and the significant part they play in tying Old Testament events in with New Testament fulfillments. Once understood, these connections give life to God's plan through Jesus in a way that solidifies our faith in salvation. Stay with us!

First the timing of the matter: (The 9th of the Hebrew month called Nisan)

John 12:1-8: (NRSV) *¹Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ²There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. ³Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples... said, ⁵Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?... ⁷Jesus said, Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me.*

Jesus was at the home of Lazarus the day before entering Jerusalem when he was anointed by Mary to prepare for his death. No one told her to do this, yet it was the most appropriate thing to do. Mary was unknowingly preparing him for his death. How did Jesus know his time was near? Because he knew the Old Testament prophecies that timed the events.

John 12:9-13: (NRSV) *⁹When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus. ¹²The next day (the 10th of the month) the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem...*



Observations:

- Lazarus was a dramatic spectacle to the public;
- The chief priests and Pharisees were waiting for Jesus - and now Lazarus as well - because he was living proof of the power of God through Jesus;
- Word traveled through the multitudes and they also waited for Jesus;
- Jesus entered Jerusalem and the hearts of the people on the 10th of Nisan. (Note this corresponds to when the lamb was brought into the household for Passover.)





To get a sense of the story, we will begin to work with a compilation from the four Gospel accounts of Palm Sunday (Nisan 10): A compilation of [Mark 11:1-11](#), [Matthew 21:1-11](#), [Luke 19:28-44](#) and [John 12:12-19](#)

- [Mark 11:1-3](#): (NRSV) ¹When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples ²and said to them, Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. ³If anyone says to you, Why are you doing this? just say this, The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately. [Matthew 21:4-5](#): ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, ⁵Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey. [John 12:16](#): His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him.

Second, the Old Testament Passover and its timing: are they related to Palm Sunday?

[Exodus 12:14](#): (NASB) Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.

Celebrating Passover was similar to our Independence Day. It was all about God providing national deliverance from slavery, with a peculiar focus on the firstborn.

[Mark 11:4](#): They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, [Luke 19:33](#): *its owners asked them, What are you doing, untying the colt?* [Mark 11:6](#): They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. [Matthew 21:6-7](#): ⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them.

It happened just as Jesus said it would.

Let's go back to the Old Testament to see how God explained to Moses how the Passover was to unfold:





Taking in the lamb was in preparation for the imminent threat of death to the firstborn. All of Israel participated.

It was later prophesied that on the 10th of Nisan - many years later - Jesus would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and a colt.

Zechariah 9:9: (NKJV) *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Jesus was obedient to Zechariah's prophecy.

 In a pen for four days, Lamb Selection Day, maranthachapelTV

- *So after Lamb Selection Day, you've got four more days. They would put that little lamb in a special pen and watch it to be sure there was no infection or blemish or rash...they were literally inspecting that lamb every day. By the fourth day when the sun began to set, tomorrow is Passover; finally after the fourth day of inspection on the eve of the 15th of Nisan, which is Passover, they see it has no spots or blemishes. (They think) My sins for the year are going to be washed and cleansed and forgiven by God.*

The Passover Lamb vs. Jesus as the Lamb



Lamb taken in on Nisan 10

Jesus received as a King on Nisan 10



Exodus 12:5-6: (NASB)
⁵Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.

The lamb would be in the house, living with the family like a beloved pet.



Luke 19:37: *As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, Mark 11:8: Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields... (among them was) the whole multitude of the disciples, John 12:17-18: ¹⁷the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead. ¹⁸It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him.*

A few side points:

(Source: Bible Commentary from Matthew Poole) Their laying the garments upon the (donkey), and throwing them in the way, was a custom they used towards princes, as appears not only by many records out of profane authors, but from 2 Kings 9:13, where the like was done to Jehu, upon his being anointed king over Israel. For the acclamations, they were also such as were usual to princes.

(Source: John Trapp, an English Anglican Bible commentator) (a very great multitude) Bondinius saith he was met at this time by 300,000 Jews, some whereof went before Christ, some followed after, according to the solemn rites and reverence used to be given to earthly kings in their most pompous triumphs. This was the Lord's own work.

So if the people called for Jesus to save them, why didn't he?

Luke 19:37: *...(they) began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, ³⁸saying, Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven! Matthew 21:9: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven! Mark 11:9-10: ⁹Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!*

The crowd shouts "Hosanna!" What does that mean?

Hosanna: Strongs #5614 (ho-san-nah'); oh save!; an exclamation of adoration:

When we look at the use of the Hebrew words, in every instance the thought is not only "Oh save!" but "Save us now!" So, why didn't Jesus save them then?

So, the crowd was proclaiming that Jesus was the son of David, a prophet and healer, and that they were immediately looking for deliverance from Roman rule. Many of these people probably had witnessed his miracles and the crowd had great momentum. Based on all they had seen and heard, they believed Jesus was the one who could deliver them. So, why didn't he?





Interestingly, the deliverance from Egypt was the escape from certain death *for the firstborn* and not deliverance for the nation...not yet. The Passover was not about delivering the nation; it was only about delivering the firstborn.

The firstborn were a key in God's plan - they played a special role:

Exodus 13:1-2: (NRSV) ¹The LORD said to Moses: ²Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the Israelites, of human beings and animals, is mine.

What is the relationship of the firstborn in the New Testament?

Galatians 3:29: (KJV) *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Hmmm...what promise are you inheriting and how do Christians become a child of Abraham?

Hebrews 12:22-23: (ASV) ²²but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, ²³to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

The true followers of Christ are called the *church of the firstborn*. Is it a coincidence that they are called the firstborn in the New Testament and it was the firstborn who were the ones delivered in the Old Testament? We think not and can build more evidence...

1 Corinthians 5:7: (ASV) *Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our Passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ:*



Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. For whom was the Passover lamb sacrificed in the Old Testament? Only the firstborn were saved as a result. *The rest of the people of Israel were not in danger of death that night.*



Genesis 22:16-18: (KJV) ¹⁶...By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: ¹⁷That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore... ¹⁸And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed...

Let's walk through this carefully:

1. This is the promise given to Abraham, who sacrificed his son, Isaac. (An obvious picture of God giving His only son in sacrifice.)
2. Through Abraham came Isaac, the promised seed to *bless all the nations of the earth.*
3. Through Isaac came Jacob and all the nation of Israel.



4. If we are Christ's, we become inheritors of Abraham's promise.
5. At the original Passover, the firstborn was subject to death and had to be protected by the blood. The blood of the lamb saved the lives of those firstborn so that *afterwards* the entire nation (everybody else) could be saved by deliverance.
6. So why didn't Jesus save those in the crowd? He did! But the result just wasn't visible yet. (And we are still waiting patiently!) The *price* for deliverance was paid, but only to the firstborn initially. The nation, symbolized by the rest of the world, would come later.

What does the path to deliverance look like?

Luke 19:39-44: ³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, Teacher, order your disciples to stop. ⁴⁰He answered, I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out. ⁴¹As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, ⁴²saying, If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. ⁴⁴They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God.

For Israel, the path to deliverance came through terrible destruction and dispersion for centuries.

Jesus tested for four days, Lamb Selection Day, maranthachapelTV

- After Palm Sunday (which was also) "Lamb Selection Day," for the next four days Jesus spent every waking moment in the Temple being tested, challenged and inspected by the religious leaders to trap him...to find some fault with him, to get him to say something against the Law. They tested him to find a blemish in him. In the end of the four days, all of them said, even Pilate, "I find no fault in this man."





Hebrews 5:7-9: (NRSV) ⁷*In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; ⁹and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him,*

LOUD CRIES AND TEARS + REVERENT SUBMISSION + LEARNED OBEDIENCE = THE SOURCE OF OUR ETERNAL SALVATION

The path of deliverance comes through great suffering.

The Old Testament pictures continue to be fulfilled:

Numbers 9:12: (NASB) *They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.*

John 19:32-33: (NASB) ³²*So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with him; ³³but coming to Jesus, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs.*

The path for the deliverer was one of pain, burden, humiliation and treachery:

Isaiah 53:3-5: (NRSV) ³*He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised and we held him of no account. ⁴Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.*

So, is there New Testament support for the firstborn/nation true church/world picture?

Matthew 21:10-11: ¹⁰*When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, Who is this? ¹¹The crowds were saying, This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee. **John 12:19:** *The Pharisees then said to one another, You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!**

What did Jesus do with all of this power? He laid it down in sacrifice along with everything else.

These
texts are
linked!





The nation was prepared with sandals on and staff in hand to be delivered *after* the firstborn were delivered.



Pharaoh keeping Israel in bondage and death

Firstborn

delivered by the blood

The nation of Israel, delivered from Pharaoh's rule after the firstborn

Passover Lamb



The Picture



Satan keeping the world in bondage and death



Church of the Firstborn,

true followers of Christ, delivered by his blood



The whole world, delivered from Satan's rule after the firstborn



The Reality



More on the Firstborn in the New Testament:

Romans 8:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba! Father! ¹⁶The Spirit (Itself) testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

True followers of Christ have a special relationship with God as children and heirs - fellow inheritors with Christ in the promise to Abraham for the ability to bless the world.



Exodus 13:1-2: (NRSV)
¹The LORD said to Moses:
²Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the Israelites, of human beings and animals, is mine.

1 Corinthians 5:7: (ASV)
...For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ:

The Passover was given for the deliverance of the firstborn from death. Same with the blood of Jesus - to first deliver the firstborn, his followers. That is the first step...but it does not end there! There is more to the Old Testament picture and New Testament promises!

What happens to the rest of the world, pictured by the rest of the nation of Israel that awaited their deliverance?

Romans 8:18-21: (NASB) ¹⁸For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Can you imagine the anticipation on the part of Israel that night to see if the firstborn in their household will still be alive by morning? They were waiting to see if the firstborn had been delivered!

The Romans passage above uses the term *slavery*, directly linking back to the Old Testament picture of the Passover. This gives us a glimpse at the magnitude of deliverance. The whole of creation will be set free from slavery.



Romans 8:22-23: (NASB) ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now ²³And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

In that one night of Passover, the literal fulfillment actually takes a few thousand years.

Romans 8:24-25: (NASB) ²⁴For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

There is hope, but that hope is shrouded in mystery, and the story is not yet complete. But we can see through prophecy that there IS real hope!

So the Pharisees were actually prophetic in their exasperation:

John 12:19: *The Pharisees then said to one another, You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!*

This will be an actual fulfillment! The whole world will be delivered as a result of the true followers of Christ, the firstborn, being delivered by him.

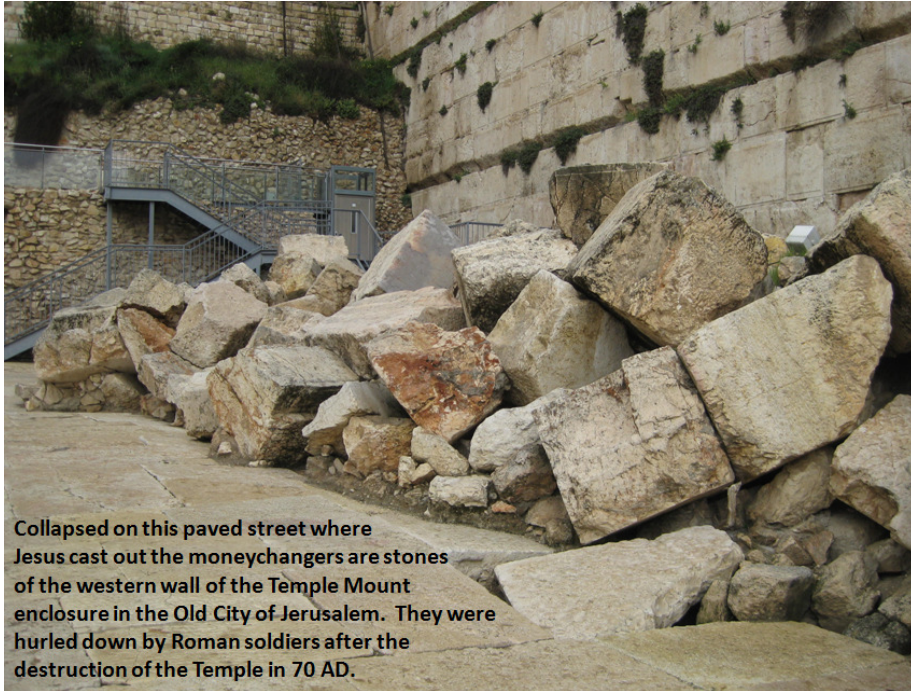
**It seems that Jesus had won over the people;
did he try and win over the Pharisees?**

A few other Passover/Crucifixion observations:

- The angel of death came at midnight/Jesus' enemies came for him in Gethsemane late at night, likely midnight
- The priest would sprinkle blood and water on the altar/blood and water came from Jesus' side
- As a father would tear his robes at the death of his son/the curtain was torn in the most holy place inside the temple



Jesus went on to create havoc in the Temple. Is this how you win over your enemies...?



Collapsed on this paved street where Jesus cast out the moneychangers are stones of the western wall of the Temple Mount enclosure in the Old City of Jerusalem. They were hurled down by Roman soldiers after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

Mark 11:15-17: (NASB) ¹⁵... And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves; ¹⁶and he would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. ¹⁷And he began to teach and say to them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a robbers' den.

Jesus takes over! And what does he do with his pre-eminence in the Temple?

Matthew 21:14-17: (NASB) ¹⁴And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, Hosanna to the Son of David, they became indignant ¹⁶and said to him, Do you hear what these children are saying? And Jesus said to them, Yes; have you never read, Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for yourself? ¹⁷And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

Jesus started healing and teaching after restoring the Temple to its rightful purpose - service to the people to bring them to God.

So, what was the reaction of his enemies?

Mark 11:18: (NASB) The chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy him; for they were afraid of him, for the whole crowd was astonished at his teaching.

They began in earnest to find a way to end this. They had enough! They had been putting up with this since the raising of Lazarus.

Romans 8:31-39: (NASB) ³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ³³Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is he who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶Just as it is written, For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered. ³⁷But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

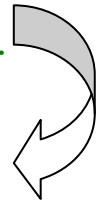


The point of Palm Sunday was that Jesus rode in victoriously and was proclaimed as the King, as Messiah. He was given all honor and respect, but it eventually turned to his death. God delivered His son over to the enemy so that he could be saved for us all.

We ought to be walking in Jesus' footsteps. Because we know the plan, have the hope and know Jesus already paid the price, we can now continue to give our lives in sacrifice as Jesus did. We can be faithful, and by God's grace, be delivered. And then once all of the true church is delivered, the deliverance of the rest of the nation - the rest of the world - will follow. How do we know? Because the Scriptures tell us so.

*So what is the real story about Palm Sunday...?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



Exodus 12:1-14 summarized into key points:

- ²*This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.*

This was to truly signal a new beginning and was the first aspect of their new Law: **Biblical Commentary by Poole:** "but as to sacred and ecclesiastical matters, this shall henceforth be your first month."

- *on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household.*

Take this lamb and "keep it" (verse 6) - this singling out would create some attachment.

- ⁵*Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.*

Of perfect form and in the early prime of its life...

- ⁶*You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight.*

This sacrifice for each household all done simultaneously denotes the personal and national nature of the event to take place...

- ⁷*They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.*

The blood being the unmistakable evidence of the sacrifice, for the life is in the blood.



- ⁸*They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.*

Roasting was the quickest preparation method and a fitting picture of the true Lamb's experience.

- ¹⁰*You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.*

This would become a standard for sacrifices under the Law - prevented misuse, etc...

- ¹¹*This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly.*

Showing the immediacy of their deliverance and the necessary preparedness to capitalize...

- *It is the passover of the LORD.*

This passing over would ultimately leave them unharmed and finally free.

- ¹³*The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

The passing over would only be possible through the sign of blood on their doorways.

- *you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.*

This was to be always remembered!

If we are truly seeking Christ as the firstborn class, it is necessary to LIVE under the blood:

1 Peter 1:18-19: (NASB) ¹⁸*knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.*

The Passover Lamb vs. Jesus as the Lamb



Lamb taken in on Nisan 10	Jesus received as a King on Nisan 10
Lamb slain on Nisan 14	Jesus slain on Nisan 14
Lamb slain late afternoon "at even"	Jesus died at 3pm "the 9 th hour"

Isaiah 53:3-5: (NRSV) ³*He was despised and rejected by others; a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity; and as one from whom others hide their faces he was despised and we held him of no account. ⁴Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.*