

46. God's truth over opinions

August 21, 2011

If I explain to you regarding one of the truths of God systematically according to the Word of God, would you accept it over what you've been familiar with due to the Christian tradition or your own personal opinion?

What I am trying to establish here is that the Word of God is the most important thing to follow and obey rather than personal opinion or tradition of any kind.

Some of you may wonder, "OK, preacher, where are you going with this?" I am sure that just about all of you are familiar with the tradition of Good Friday in Christianity. Good Friday is a Christian holiday observed primarily by Christians commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His death at Calvary. The holiday is observed during Holy Week on the Friday preceding Easter Sunday.

The Roman Catholic and many Protestant denominations celebrate Good Friday with their special services. Do I have a problem with that? Absolutely not, but yes. I don't have a problem with thanking the Lord Jesus for His atoning sacrifice on the cross for our sins, but I do have an issue with acknowledging Friday as the crucifixion day rather than Thursday. Before some of you start to call me as a heretic, please hear me as I explain this to you. Please refer to the chart that is included in your bulletin.

According to the church tradition, Jesus died on Friday at 3 pm and was buried in a borrowed tomb before the Sabbath began on the same day at sundown. They, the followers of Good Friday, assumed that the Sabbath mentioned in all four Gospels was a regular Sabbath which was from Friday Sundown till Saturday sundown. Then the next day, Sunday, Jesus supposedly rose from the dead. Biblically, this theology is wrong because it is ignoring the Lord's instruction for the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" in Leviticus 23:6-7 and what apostle John, the author of the Book of John wrote in John 19:31.

Leviticus 23:6-7 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

John 19:31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should 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.

The week Jesus died, the Jewish people were about to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a.k.a. the Passover of the Jews. This particular Feast had two Sabbaths – the first Sabbath was the Passover Sabbath, a.k.a. High Day that started Thursday sundown until next day; followed by the regular Sabbath which started Friday sundown until the next day at sundown.

In other words, Jesus was hung on the cross from Thursday morning 9 am till 3 pm, then He was buried on that day. This explains what Jesus said that He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. If you believe in the Good Friday concept, you would be hard pressed to jam three days and nights in that time period.

The Last Week of Jesus' Life And to the Resurrection

	Days Before and after the feast	Events of the Day	Day of Month Abib	Time of day	Jewish Day of week	Gentile Day of week	Day Night
		Jesus arrives at	(Nisan)	Sundown		Friday	
John 12:1	6	Bethany to lodge Weekly Sabbath	9th	evening 6 am	7th	Friday	
		Weekly Sabbath	9th	Morning Noon Sundown	7th	Saturday	
John 12:2	5		10th	Evening Sundown	1st	Saturday	
Mark 11:1-11 John 12:12		Entry into Jerusalem Return	10th	Morning Noon Sundown	1st	Sunday	
	4	to Bethany	11th	Evening 6 am	2nd	Sunday	
Mark 11:12-19		Fig tree cursed Return	11th	Morning Noon Sundown	2nd	Monday	
	3	to Bethany	12th	Evening 6 am	3rd	Monday	
Mark 11:20		Fig tree withered In the Temple Olivet prophecy	12th	Morning Noon Sundown	3rd	Tuesday	
Mark 14:1	2	Feast at Bethany	13th	Evening 6 am	4th	Tuesday	
Mark 14:12		Upper Room made ready	13th	Morning Noon Sundown	4th	Wednesday	
	1	Last Supper Gethsemane Betrayed / Arrest	14th	Evening 6 am	5th	Wednesday	
John 19:31 Mark 15:34	Day of Preparation for Passover a day of unleavened bread	Trial and Crucifixion Jesus dies and Passover lambs killed	14th	Morning Noon 3 pm Sundown	5th	Thursday	In the tomb
Lev 23:6-7	Passover Passover Sabbath	Feast of Unleavened Bread	15th	Evening 6 am	6th	Thursday	Day 1
John 19:31	First day Passover Sabbath	High Day	15th	Morning Noon Sundown	6th	Friday	Day 1
		Weekly Sabbath	16th	Evening 6 am	7th	Friday	Day 2
	Second day	Weekly Sabbath	16th	Morning 6 am	7th	Saturday	Day 2
			17th	Evening 6 am	1st	Saturday	Day 3
Lev 23:11 Luke 24:21	Third day	Resurrection of Jesus	17th	Morning Noon Sundown	1st	Sunday	Day 3

Matthew 12:40 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.

A. HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

John 12:12-13 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!"

We are abruptly transported from the sleepy village of Bethany to the bustling metropolis of Jerusalem. With Passover just five days away, the city was bursting with people who had come to celebrate.

Passover was a big thing in Israel. During one Passover around the time of Christ, 256,000 lambs were slain in Jerusalem. According to the ancient Jewish law, there were ten people required for every one lamb that put the population in Jerusalem at somewhere around 2.6 million people in the size of 0.8 square miles which is about 512 acres. How big is that? From Sahuarita Road to Duval Mine Road is 3.6 miles. It was a very small area for that many people.

Most of these people either heard or witnessed about the resuscitation story of Lazarus and this miracle worker Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

This multitude's hopeful opinion was this: Under the Roman's iron grip, it was natural for them to want the mighty King coming to destroy the Roman empire and free them. The Jews were watching for any sign of triumphal arrival of their Messiah with powerful and brutal force.

Hosanna means "Save now!" In reality, their chant of Hosanna that came from Psalm 118 which is a messianic victory psalm, was not a praise, rather it was more of a prayer and desire. Palm branches were a symbol of Jewish nationalism since the time of the Maccabees. This was a patriotic rally.

At this point, they would have embraced just about anyone who could free them from Rome just like they will embrace the antichrist who will bring a short temporary peace in that region and allow them to build a temple on the temple mount during the first half of the seven year Great Tribulation period.

B. THE KING ON A DONKEY

John 12:14-16 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: 15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." 16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

Let's be honest. When was the last time you saw a donkey and exclaimed, "What a majestic animal!?" You just don't do that. It is a lowly beast that often carries burdens for its master. Its cry is something many people would ridicule.

Whenever a king rode in a parade fashion on a donkey, it was during times of peace; but whenever it was times of war they would ride a horse. The first time Jesus came, He came as the suffering Servant. But when He comes back, it will be as the

conquering King to judge everyone. The Israel people were expecting Him to wear a crown after He conquered the Romans, but He wore the crown of thorns.

Jesus is coming back according to the Book of Revelation much to the unbelieving world's opinion. The pagan emperors, kings, and dictators tried to burn the Bible as if they could stop the power and the truth of God, they couldn't; the current world and governments have been trying to ignore the truth from the Bible, but it still stares at their faces. At the end of the Great Tribulation, Jesus will come back with His saints as it is mentioned in Revelation chapter 19.

Revelation 19:11-16 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

If you are a born-again Christian now, you will be in heaven someday through the rapture or death. You will come back with Jesus. We are the armies in heaven that mentioned in v14 here.

When that happens, I will be right behind Jesus. He will turn around and tell me, "JK, you need to get on your own horse instead of riding my horse behind me." Then, I will have to go all the way back of the column to get on my horse. Either way, we will be with Him.

Guess who imitates riding a white horse. That is right – the antichrist. He has no imagination of his own, but is always copying Jesus, but twisting the truth.

Revelation 6:2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

This event is known as "the Triumphal Entry". The event of the Triumphal Entry is recorded in all four Gospels. What is so special about this? It is special because the Lord our God used prophet Daniel to speak to us around 530 B.C. about what Jesus was doing here.

Daniel 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

Angel Gabriel is explaining the prophecy to Daniel:

'Week', "shabuwa" in Hebrew, was a unit of seven that represents period of seven days, a week, or seven years.

1) Seven Weeks = 49 Years

The decree of Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, the commandment to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was issued in the month Nisan which is April 445 B.C. The 49 years would take us to 397 B.C. and to Malachi and the end of the Old

Testament. These were "troublesome times," as witnessed to by both Nehemiah and Malachi.

2) Sixty Two Weeks = 434 Years

434 years would take us from the end of the Old Testament to the day of Messiah's Triumphant Entry to Jerusalem, April 6th, 32 A.D.

How do we know? A simple math will do the job.

483 years x 360 days = 173,880 days

Why 360 days instead of 365 days? Because the ancient Jewish people used a lunar calendar that has 360 days, not 365.

When we add 173,880 days to the date when Artaxerxes made a decree, we come to the exact date when Jesus entered Jerusalem through the Palm Sunday road from the Mount Olive and was welcomed by the people of Jerusalem.

Some Bible critics would say, "What Jesus did by entering into Jerusalem on that date cannot be counted as fulfilling a prophecy. Because He could count the date from the date of the decree by king Artaxerxes." OK, I can grant their objection. But can they say that Jesus self-fulfilled the date of His execution, too? What do I mean?

According to the ancient Jewish law, you are supposed to select a lamb 10th day of the month of Nisan, not Toyota, which happened to be the day of the Triumphant Entry. Then, Jesus was crucified, not because He asked for, by the Jewish religious rulers on 14th day of Nisan which happened to be the Passover date as all the lambs in the temple were killed on the same day. Originally they didn't want to kill Him during the Passover in fear of the multitude.

By the way, if you count from 10th day of Nisan as Sunday, the 14th day of Nisan, the Passover, is Thursday, NOT Friday.

V15 was quoted out of Zechariah 9:9. V16 gives us something we should ponder. When we were in the midst of a neck-deep situation, we didn't know how or what our Lord God orchestrated behind the scene. We probably even wonder if He was with us. Now, we look back, we realize that God had His hands on every aspect of the situation beyond what we could see or understand.

I am sure that Jesus' disciples had their own opinions at that time of the entry to Jerusalem while they were surrounded by the multitudes. But God's truth overrides individual opinions.

C. THE INSECURE RULERS

John 12:17-19 Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. 19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!"

I can just imagine how insecure these Jewish religious rulers had become while they watched the great crowd gather and honor Jesus. They probably were expecting Jesus to do some mind-boggling miracles to capture the hearts of this restless crowd to start a revolt before the Passover was over. How little did they know the Scripture that was unfolding before their very eyes! Though they knew the letters of the

Scripture with their head knowledge, they didn't understand it in their hearts to love Jesus.

1 Corinthians 8:1b Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

In the minds of these rulers, Jesus was nothing but a trouble maker who had to be eliminated. Their stubborn hearts and pride would not allow them to see the truth of God.

Some commentators of the Bible say, "The Old contains, the New fulfills". Jesus came to fulfill what He promised from the beginning. It has been said that it is better to fall upon the Rock than the Rock to fall upon you and crush you.

D. APPLICATIONS

1) Personal opinions – whether it is political, financial, moral, or ethical – and traditions of any area of our lives should not compete with the truth of God. We should simply accept and obey the truth of God over anything and anyone including ourselves.

2) God's prophecies are 100% true and have been fulfilled and will be fulfilled in the future. We can trust the God of the perfect track record any time.