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Pleading for a total return to New Testament principles.

contend earnestly for the faith
Jude 1:3

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The Passover Day Crisis!

And it was **the preparation of the passover**, and about the sixth hour: and he says to the Jews, "**Behold your King!**"

John 19:14 AV

Hebrew days began at sundown. Night preceded day. According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover during the night of the same Hebrew day at the end of which Jesus died and was buried.

The sequence of events from their evening meal to His death, is the same in all four Gospel accounts. These events are recorded by all four in the same sequence:

- 1 Jesus and the Apostles come together for an evening meal.
- 2 With the exception of Judas Iscariot, they leave the city via the brook Kidron.
- 3 They come to the garden.
- 4 Judas arrives with several others.
- 5 Jesus is taken, under arrest, to the high priest's palace.
- 6 There Peter denies Jesus three times.
- 7 Jesus is taken to the Roman governor, Pilate.
- 8 Pilate asks Jesus "Are you the king of the Jews?"
- 9 Pilate passes sentence.

10 Jesus is nailed to the tree and He dies. (See references below)
So there is no doubt that John was recording the same period of events as the other three.

11 Matthew, Mark and Luke's accounts have the Passover being eaten during the same night as the meal recorded by John. How then do we account for John calling that Hebrew day "the preparation of the Passover"? It could not have been the preparation for something that had already happened. To say that there is a contradiction is not a solution.

It was a Preparation day but not for the Passover. John records that they wanted Jesus' body taken down and buried before sunset because the next day was a special "High day" Sabbath.

Could it be a translation problem?

You might want to skip the next bit and go to **BEHOLD!** Then return here after.

I suggest that translations of John 19:14 saying "it was the preparation of the passover," are incorrect and having **comma after the word "passover," is the cause of the confusion. The Greek does not have a comma.** Many punctuations are added by translators where they think English needs them. BibleHub have even added a red coloured semicolon after Passover (πάσχα ;)

FIRST, LET US SEE THE GREEK of John 19:14

ην δε	παρασκευη	του (δε) ¹²	πασχαωρα
but it was	Preparation	but the	Passover's hour
(δε) ¹²	ωσει {ἦν ὡς} εκτη	και	λεγει τοις ιουδαιοις
but	was about sixth	and	he says to the Jews,
ιδε*	ο βασιλευς υμων	[*imperative]	

"Behold! your King!"

There being no pause after the word "πασχα" (Passover).

Which of the two nouns, “παρασκευή” (Preparation) and "ωρα" (**hour**) is modified by the genitive words “του πασχα” (the Passover)? Grammatically it could be either.

So let us consider it being the word "ωρα" (**hour**) and that a pause, if any, be placed after **Preparation**". It could then read:

but it was Preparation, but the Passover's hour was about the sixth (6th hour, Roman time) and he says to the Jews, "**Behold your King!**"

“BEHOLD!” said he.

This is how we might render it in regular English:

also it was the Preparation day, **moreover** it was about 6 am. on the Passover day and he says to the Jews, "**Behold your King!**"

There is no conflict with Matthew, Mark or Luke. Rather there is a deeper insight into the magnitude of the crisis. It seems to me that John was emphasising both the fact the Preparation for the High day was in progress as well as it being dawn on the feast of the Passover.

Two major annual sacred ordinances are taking place on the same day. To Pilate it would appear that, at a crucial time like this, if anything could go wrong, it was, and all going wrong at once. Yet in a loud voice he shouted aloud to them. He demanded of **them** -

“Behold your King!”¹³

Before the foundation of the World, He was:-

OUR LORD! - OUR KING! – OUR PASSOVER!

References:

1. Matthew 26:20,26, Mark 14:17,22, Luke 22:14,19, John 13:2
2. Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26, Luke 22:39, John 18:1,
3. Matthew 26:36, Mark 14:32, Luke 22:40,41, John 18:1,

4. Matthew 26:47, Mark 14:43, Luke 22:47, John 18:2,
5. Matthew 26:57, Mark 14:53, Luke 22:54, John 18:13,
6. Matthew 26:70,72,74, Mark 14:68,70,71, Luke 22:57,58,60, John 18:17,25,27,
7. Matthew 27:2, Mark 15:1, Luke 23:1, John 18:28,
8. Matthew 27:11, Mark 15:2, Luke 23:3, John 18:33,
9. Matthew 27:26, Mark 15:15, Luke 23:24,25, John 19:16,
10. Matthew 27:50, Mark 15:37, Luke 23:46, John 19:30.
11. Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:31.
12. (δε) omitted in BibleHub. {ἦν ὡς} also means 'was about.' Alternative in BibleHub.
13. 1 Peter 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in these last times **for you**,

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth **will worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb** slain from the foundation of the world.

Joseph compared to Christ

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron, Georgia

Continuing series on the twelve sons of Jacob.

In our last issue, we detailed incidents from the life of Joseph, one of Jacob's twelve sons. When we compare the life of Joseph the patriarch to the life of Jesus, we see many parallels.

In his famous speech to the Sanhedrin, the martyr Stephen demonstrated that their present rejection of the Messiah was similar to the initial rejection that had been faced by many of the nation's past leaders, including Joseph. (Acts 7:9-16)

The following chart illustrates additional parallels:

<u>Joseph the patriarch</u>	<u>Jesus the Messiah</u>
Taken to Egypt as a slave (Genesis 37:25-28)	Taken to Egypt as a refugee (Matthew 2:13-15)
His bones were buried in Israel (Joshua 24:32)	Returned to Israel after Herod's death (Matt. 2:19-23)
Propheesied in youth his future rulership (Genesis 37:5-11)	Recognized his Father at a young age (Luke 2:41-51)
Initially misunderstood and doubted by family members (Genesis 37:8-11)	Initially misunderstood and doubted by family members (Mark 3:21; Luke 8:19-21)
Brothers were jealous and sold him but later reconciled (Genesis 50:15-21)	Brothers doubted him but after the resurrection became believers (John 7:5; Acts 1:14)
Betrayed for silver by brothers (Genesis 37:28)	Betrayed for silver by disciple Judas Iscariot (Luke 22:3-6)
In a family of 12 sons (Genesis 35:22-26)	Appointed 12 apostles (Luke 6:13-16)
Given a special mission from God but lived the first 30 years of life in obscurity (Gen. 41:46)	Given a special mission from God but lived the first 30 years of life in obscurity (Luke 3:23)
Overcome temptation by relying on God (Genesis 39)	Overcame temptation by relying on God (Matt. 4:1-11)
Miraculously interpreted dreams and had wisdom from God (Genesis 40:8; 41:16)	Performed many mighty works and had the wisdom of God (Matthew 13:54; John 3:2)
Forgave his brothers (Genesis 50:19-21)	Forgave his enemies (Luke 23:34)
Crowned with earthly authority and rulership (Gen. 41:37-45)	Crowned with divine authority and rulership (Acts 2:34-36)
Saved the world by storing food (Genesis 45:5)	Saved the world as the Bread of Life (John 6:48-51)

Ephraim and Manasseh

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron, Georgia

Continuing series on the twelve sons of Jacob.

In our last issue, we summarised the life of Joseph. This article continues the study by examining the lives of his two sons: Ephraim and Manasseh, as well as their respective tribes.

These two boys were born in the land of Egypt. Their father Joseph had been sold by his brothers as a slave and wrongfully imprisoned for several years. When Joseph was thirty, the Pharaoh had released him, appointing him second-in-command over the entire country. Soon, Joseph married Asenath, daughter of Potiphara priest of On. (Genesis 41:41-46)

Joseph and Asenath had two sons. Manasseh's name means "forgotten," since Joseph had left his former life behind and had reconciled himself to his new homeland. Ephraim's name means "fruitful," alluding to the blessings the Lord had given Joseph. Both boys were born during a seven-year period of exceptionally fruitful harvests. (Genesis 41:50-52)

As the Lord had revealed to Joseph, the plentiful time was followed by seven years of famine. It was during this time period that Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food. Once Joseph realised his brothers had experienced a change of heart, he revealed his identity to them. Ephraim and Manasseh were able to meet their father's entire family for the first time when the clan moved down to Egypt. (Genesis 42-45)

Before he died, their grandfather Jacob gave a special prophetic blessing to the boys. Interestingly, Jacob gave the birthright that would usually go to the firstborn to Ephraim, the younger of the two boys. In fact, this special birthright bypassed all of Joseph's older brothers, perhaps because of their treatment of Joseph. Jacob prophesied that Joseph's descendants would be both numerous and prosperous. (Genesis 48; 1 Chronicles 5:1-3; 5:23)

Though Ephraim suffered the loss of some of his sons, the Lord ensured that his line would continue. (1 Chronicles 7:20-27)

Over the next few generations, Jacob's family grew into a mighty nation. After leading them out of Egypt, Moses blessed Joseph's descendants, anticipating that the Lord would give their multitudes the best the land had to offer. (Deuteronomy 33:13-17)

Joshua, a descendant of Ephraim, faithfully assisted Moses through the wilderness wanderings, participating as a warrior and spy, and eventually leading the nation into Canaan. After the rest of the land had been apportioned, he himself received an inheritance within the land of Ephraim. Aaron's son Eleazar was also buried in Ephraim. (Numbers 13:8, Joshua 19:49-50; 24:33)

The case of Zelophehad's five daughters established that they could inherit their father's land as long as they married within their own tribe, in their case, Manasseh. (Numbers 27:1-11; 36:1-12)

Part of the tribe of Manasseh decided to settle on the east side of the Jordan River, though they were required to help their fellow tribes conquer the remainder of the land. They built an altar as a reminder to future generations that even though they were across the Jordan, they were still part of God's people. Ephraim and the other part of the tribe of Manasseh received large areas of prime land, in the midst of their brethren. (Numbers 32:33; Joshua 22)

When the people of Ephraim and Manasseh complained the land was not sufficient for their great numbers, Joshua directed them to finish conquering the land they had already been given. Failure to completely drive out the wicked inhabitants eventually led to apostasy. (Joshua 17:14-18)

Several of Israel's judges had connections to these two tribes. The judge Ehud led the Ephraimites to victory over the oppressing Edomites. Deborah judged the nation from Ephraim. Gideon, a man of Manasseh, called upon his tribe, and later upon the tribe of Ephraim. The Ephraimites were upset that he had not rallied them from the beginning, but his humble answer assuaged their wrath. (Judges 3:26-27; 4:5; 6:15; 6:35; 7:24; 8:1-3)

Gideon's son Abimelech had ties to Shechem, a city in Manasseh. Tola lived in the hill country of Ephraim. Jephthah delivered Ephraim, but because he had not called them to fight,

they became angry with him; they fought against him and they were defeated. Abdon was buried in Ephraim. Some incidents illustrating the national degradation of the time period of the judges include characters from the hill country of Ephraim. (Judges 9:1-2; 10:1; 12:1-6; 12:15; 17:1, 19:1)

Samuel's parents Elkanah and Hannah lived in the hill country of Ephraim. Certain important incidents in the life of King Saul occurred near this same region. When David was on the run, his band included men from Manasseh. Before his death, the territory of Saul's son Ishbosheth included Ephraim. (1 Samuel 1:1; 9:4; 14:22; 1 Chronicles 12:19; 2 Samuel 2:8-9)

David reigned over all Israel, except during uprisings of two rebels, Absalom his son and Sheba, both of whom had connections to the hill country of Ephraim. Solomon placed Jeroboam in charge of the forced labour of the house of Joseph; it was Jeroboam who later led the northern tribes to break away under his own kingship. (2 Samuel 18:6; 20:21; 1 Kings 11:28; 1 Kings 12:20-25)

In the hill country of Ephraim, King Abijah gave a speech to Jeroboam and his army, reminding them of God's superior power. The Lord delivered Abijah and his men because of their reliance on Him. (2 Chronicles 13:4)

Many from these two tribes joined King Asa when they saw the Lord's blessing on the southern kingdom. Both Jehoshapat and Amaziah were rebuked for partnering with the northern armies in battle, but to their credit they heeded the prophets' advice. At other times, there was war between the northern and southern kingdoms. (2 Chronicles 15:9; 19:1-4; 25:5-13)

Gahazi was struck with leprosy after falsely claiming to have been visited by prophets from the hill country of Ephraim. (2 Kings 5:22)

Some of the men of Ephraim and Manasseh participated in the Passover held by King Hezekiah, and then destroyed their idols back home. King Josiah also destroyed idols throughout the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and he collected money for the temple from the people there. (2 Chronicles 30:1-31:1; 34:6)

In the Psalms and prophets, the Lord reminds the tribes of Joseph — Manasseh and Ephraim — of their special birthright, but also warns them against troubles that division and idolatry would bring. (Psalm 60:7; 108:8; Hosea 11:8; Amos 5:15; Zechariah 10:6)

During the captivity, Ezekiel prophesied that the northern and southern kingdoms would one day be reunited as one people. This was fulfilled upon their return from exile. (Ezekiel 37:19)

Some of the first to return from captivity to Jerusalem included people from the Ephraim and Manasseh tribes. (1 Chronicles 9:3)

The descendants of Joseph, through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, played a prominent role in God's redemptive strategy. Because of Joseph's faithfulness, his descendants were blessed with a special place among the nation chosen by the Lord to set the stage for the coming of the Messiah.

“And the arms of his hands were made strong

By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob”

Genesis 49:24, NKJV

Stoikiy Muzhik

Jamie Mcllroy, Stretford

There is a film called “Bridge of Spies”, which tells an inspirational story based on true events that took place during the Cold War. The year was 1957, and a Russian KGB officer called Colonel Rudolf Abel had just been arrested in New York City for espionage.

His arrest caused quite a stir at the time, with many Americans wanting him to face the death penalty.

Tom Hanks played the part of a US Lawyer called James Donovan, who predicted that someday Colonel Abel might be more useful alive than dead, and so his aim was to find a way to convince the judge to spare Abel's life.

I'll not spoil the rest of the story for you, in case you decide to watch it for yourself!

Instead, I'll share a conversation that Tom Hanks's character had with Abel, during one of the many occasions that they spent alone together.

Colonel Abel sat calmly on a wooden chair as Donovan stood over him. The Russian opened his mouth and began to speak to him: "Standing there like that you reminded me of the man that used to come to our house when I was young. My father used to say: 'watch this man'. So I did. Every time he came. And never once did he do anything remarkable."

Donovan interrupted: "And I remind you of **him**?"

Abel continued: "This one time - I was at the age of your son - our house was overrun by partisan border guards. Dozens of them. My father was beaten, my mother was beaten, and this man, my father's friend, he was beaten. And I watched this man. Every time they hit him, he stood back up again. So they hit him harder. Still he got back to his feet. I think because of this they stopped the beating. They let him live. '**Stoikiy muzhik**' I remember them saying. Which sort of means like uh, 'standing man'... standing man..."

That little speech left an impression on me, just as it had left an impression on the young Abel. I pictured a man getting punched to the ground time and time again. I pictured him staggering back to his feet as the blood dripped from his face. Leaping up quickly at first, and then more slowly as the punches kept coming.

Why didn't he fight back?

Do you think Abel would have shared this story if the man had fought back? Of course not. The reason why this story is so powerful, isn't because the man fought back. It's because no matter how many times he was knocked to the ground, he picked himself back up again. Such that his enemy eventually gave up trying to break his spirit.

We are hard-pressed on every side, **yet not crushed**; we are perplexed, **but not in despair**; persecuted, **but not forsaken**; struck down, **but not destroyed**

2 Corinthians 4:8-9

The Apostle Paul wrote these similar **stoic** words nearly 2000 years ago. Our lives may not be under threat like the early Christians. However, we can still relate to Paul's words of encouragement.

Do you ever feel perplexed?

Do you ever feel that you are a walking target for Satan's fiery darts?

- Maybe you are in a broken marriage that you can't seem to find a way to mend
- Maybe your children are going off the rails and you can't seem to have a civil conversation with them without losing your temper
- Maybe your debts are piling up and you can't bear to open another letter from the postman
- Maybe you're ill with no sign of getting any better

Stress is like a dripping tap. Drip, drip, drip until finally you feel you can't stand it any longer and you want to lash out.

- You raise your voice and say something that you later regret
- You lose your temper and then beat yourself up afterwards
- You are frustrated with your inability to live up to the high standard that you set yourself just last Sunday! All those promises that you prayed to God are oh so quickly broken
- **You stumble... again**

Every time they hit him, he stood back up again. So they hit him harder. Still he got back to his feet.

Wouldn't it be great to be like "Standing Man"?

Wouldn't it be great to have that amazing strength of character, so that no matter how many times we stumble, we are able to quickly bounce back up on our feet again - standing tall

The Bible teaches that

tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Romans 5:3-4

We are not defined by what tribulations knock us down. We are defined by how we react to them.

The proverb says

Although a righteous person may fall seven times, **he gets up again**, but the wicked will be brought down by calamity

Proverbs 24:16

The key to our mental resilience is our faith in the Lord:

The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand

Psalms 37:23

When we are without faith, we are without hope - and when we are without hope we are liable to panic and jump to conclusions as to how our situation will end. Instead of exercising resilience **we give up**, or **we try to take matters into our own hands**.

Sarah and Abraham **took matters into their own hands**. The Lord promised Sarah a child but when the child was a long time coming she gave her maid Hagar to her husband to conceive a child instead. Even though God promised Sarah that she would have her own child, she didn't have the patience to wait. Her faith was weak and she thought she knew better than God. But she didn't, and instead, her actions placed strain on her marriage and her relationship with Hagar.

Judas Iscariot **gave up**. Heavily laden with the guilt of betraying Jesus, he lacked the faith and resilience to bounce back. Instead of looking towards the life-giving tree of Calvary for forgiveness, he turned towards Satan's lying tree of despair and hung himself.

It was Judas' lack of righteousness that caused him to forget what Jesus had said:

Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, **and I will** give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

Judas refused to accept the rest that was so graciously offered to him. How tragic is that?

Are we also refusing to accept the rest that Christ has promised to give us?

The Bible tells us:

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

The fittest, healthiest people on earth today will be burdened by old age tomorrow. The old and young are physically different but those in Christ are united in spirit.

And so Paul teaches us to focus on these invisible aspects of our lives, and not to lose heart as we age.

Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, **which is but for a moment**, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the **things which are seen are temporary**, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

James said that our life is a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. (James 4:14)

Even though we are only here for such a short time, Jesus doesn't want us to simply wish our lives away. He wants us to begin our eternal life with him today, fully in his presence.

He wants us to start now and let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

When Colonel Abel was a little boy, he was impressed by the man who refused to lie down during his moment of adversity. This made me wonder about my life. What sort of impression am I leaving on people? Am I viewed as a quitter like Judas - or an impatient man like Abraham?

Of course, Paul warned us not to become men-pleasers.

but as bond-servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart
Ephesians 6:6

Are we submitting our lives to God and following the example that Christ set?

who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, did not threaten, **but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously**
1 Peter 2:23

As Christians, we are not defined by our past sins; we are defined by how we react to our sinful behaviour.

When we stumble, we are to pray for forgiveness and get back up on our feet again. We are not to give up. We are not to wallow in the self-pity of regret and despair.

Colonel Abel was a very cool character. I suppose you would have to be if you were leading the life of a spy in a foreign country.

Donovan told him "The death sentence is not a foregone conclusion. Don't worry."

Abel said "I'm not afraid to die, Mr. Donovan. Although, it wouldn't be my first choice."

Christians ought to have that kind of attitude. Not an attitude of

fear about death and judgement, but an attitude based on the faith of the resurrection of life that Jesus spoke about.

Throughout the movie, Abel faced an uphill battle because he was hated by both Americans and Russians alike as a spy who got caught. But he remained stoic and showed little emotion.

Donovan was baffled by this characteristic and repeatedly asked him, “**Aren’t you worried?**”

Abel would offer the same deadpan response each time, “**Would it help?**”

Worry is the enemy of hope. It’s worry that keeps us on the ground, and hope that gets us back on our feet. Jesus said:

do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 6:34

Let’s reflect on these things when we are faced with the trials of the coming week.

Remember: tribulation produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:3-4)

When we stumble let’s get back on our feet like

“Stoikiy muzhik”!

GHANA APPEAL

The Church of Christ at Dennyloanhead is very grateful to all sister churches, individual brothers and sisters who contribute to the Ghana Appeal.

Please send donations to: Mrs. Christine Wood, 11 Albert Place, Stirling, FK8 2RE (Email: ctkwood@hotmail.com)

BIBLE QUESTIONS

Brother Frank Worgan is happy to receive Bible questions:

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Special meeting – The Green Hut

Saturday 21st September

“Why Jesus is The Life!”

1:00 pm Lunch 2:00 pm Message

Pilomon Raja: Tel. 07963 876942

The Green Hut, 538 Kings Rd., Stretford, Manchester, M32 8JT

Special meetings – Eastwood

Saturday 10th August

“Jesus in the Church” – Jon Galloway

Saturday 9th November

“Jesus and His Return”

6:00 pm Refreshments 7:00 pm Meeting

Adrian Limb: Tel. 01773-761 670 cofceastwood@aol.com

Seymour Road, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire, NG16 3ND

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