

## The Fulfillment of History at Easter – Some Aha Moments

I am sure you have played hide and seek, either inside or outside the house. After looking high and low you finally discover the hidden person, and say, “Aha. There you are.” The study of Holy Week events provide us with “aha moments,” adding a deeper meaning to the Passion of the Christ. We often take for granted the events of Easter



week, trying to understand them in the context of today’s culture. As a result, it is easy to hear the accounts of Holy Week and not fully realize the significance and God’s precision timing of the events. Sometimes the meaning of what happened is hidden from us. Then it hits us. “Aha.”

“Aha moments” are supposed to give us the feeling – oh, wow – so that is what it is all about. I never thought of things that way. A deeper understanding will help us focus on what they mean in our lives.

**Aha Moment #1:** When Jesus entered Jerusalem on the final week he did it to coincide with the Jewish tradition of his time. The day we call Palm Sunday was

“Lamb Selection Day” in the Jewish tradition. Families of their time selected a perfect lamb to be sacrificed at the celebration of Passover, which would occur five days later. **God timed Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, just before Passover, as His way of saying, “Here is my perfect lamb for the sacrifice.”**

**Aha Moment #2:** Jewish history dictated that at 3 PM on the first day of Passover, a horn would sound and a lamb would be sacrificed. On the first day of Passover, Jesus was nailed to the cross. At 3 PM on Good Friday, Jesus lifted up his head, said “It is finished,” and died. The exact timing of his death matched the tradition of the time when lambs were sacrificed. **God saw to it that his son, the Lamb of God, was sacrificed at the exact time of the Passover tradition.**

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**Aha Moment #3:** What was happening at the time when Jesus entered the city on Palm Sunday? People were already gathering in Jerusalem for the Passover. Passover is a historical celebration of the story of Exodus, when the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt. The entire Jewish population made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem each year for the Passover festival. At the time of Jesus entry into Jerusalem there was no cause to celebrate. The people were no longer free, but instead were under oppressive Roman rule. Previous year’s riots put the Roman soldiers on high alert during the Passover celebration. When we wave palm branches in our modern church we think of a celebration, but in those times it was a political statement – like waving your country’s flag in the face of unfriendly rulers. The chanting of “Hosanna” was a thorn in the side of the Roman rulers. We think of it as a joyful chant in modern times, but at the time it meant “deliver me,” or free me. **The lamb who wanted peace and love was in the middle of an event with a very different purpose.** The people were hoping for Jesus to overthrow the Romans. That is not why he came. Jesus wanted us to overthrow Satan.

**Aha Moment #4:** Fast forward now to Thursday evening, which we call Maundy Thursday. In Jewish law festivals begin at sundown the night before. This was the night before Passover. After dining with his disciples Jesus poured out a cup of wine and said the familiar words we hear at communion in our own modern churches. The

disciples had heard these words before, but in a totally different context. In Jesus' time, when a young man wanted to ask for a woman's hand in marriage, the tradition was for the young man's father to pour out a cup of wine, and hand it to his son. The son would then offer it to the young woman saying, *"This cup is a new covenant in my blood, which I offer to you."* If the young woman accepted, she would take the cup and drink from it. In other words, the man was saying, "I love you and I'll give you my life. Will you marry me?" And, by taking the cup, the young woman's action said, "I accept your offer, and I give you *my* life in response. At the Last Supper, Jesus was making a covenant proposal to his disciples. In effect, He said, **"I love you, and I offer my life, for you."** Jesus makes this proposal to you and me, also. We have the option of whether or not to take the cup and give our life to Christ, in response to his love.

*I love you, and I offer my life, for you.*

**Aha Moment #5:** And, on resurrection day, the Bible tells us Jesus exited the tomb *before* the stone was rolled away. The moving of the stone allowed man to enter the tomb and see that Jesus was no longer there – that He had risen. His resurrection fulfilled the promise Jesus would rise in three days. **The resurrection provided living proof of God's commitment to raise believers from the dead – Jesus, and hopefully someday, you and me.**

*This cup is a new covenant in my blood....do you accept Jesus' offer?*

And, we can remember his proposal to us at the communion rail. "This

cup is a new covenant in my blood." Jesus did this because of his love for us. Do you accept Jesus' offer?



**Question:** Jesus is offering you the cup of redemption. Do you accept His offer?

**Scripture:** In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7).

**Prayer:** We thank you, Lord, for the sacrifice of your son, Jesus Christ, so we may be forgiven of our sins. Amen..

The concepts of this summary are based on a Ray Vander Laan video titled [The True Easter Story](#).