

IT WASN'T GOOD  
AND  
IT WASN'T FRIDAY  
2010  
Luke 23:13-25

INTRO: This morning, for our listeners on internet, we are having service in one of our member's shop. In the school we are using until we get our own building, we are limited to time. We are always in a rush. I ask you, would you permit me to stretch my cramped preacher's soul and let me preach for nigh on an hour?

The day we are commemorating today is called Good Friday. In 2008 I wanted to do this message I had called, "It Wasn't Good, and It Wasn't Friday." I'm not sure what happened but the message was just begun and I had not given it yet. This year I want to give that message. What we commemorate today is the day Jesus was crucified. The Son of God, was nailed to the cross, and on this cross He died. And we call that day, "Good Friday", and I say it wasn't good and it wasn't Friday.

I want to begin this message by stating what I believe to be a fact, and that is that Christ did not die on Friday. Now I have heard theological math that says that you can get three days and three nights from Friday until Sunday morning, or you can get three days and two nights. But I would go beyond saying that Christ was not crucified on Friday to say that Jesus did not rise Sunday morning either. Sunday morning, very early, while it was yet dark, the ladies arrived at the tomb and Jesus was not there! The sun had not yet risen to the point where the priest in the temple declared that the day time had officially arrived. So, at the very longest possible time, we get 2 days and 2 nights. No, it wasn't Friday.

I. IT WASN'T FRIDAY

Now we want to go to the Scriptures to see just what exactly prophecy says. You see, the Scriptures are so very clear on this subject that we have no room left for guessing. For this we go to Matthew 12 (read 38-40). Let us now briefly go to Jonah to verify this (read 1:17). So we go back to Matthew 12:38-40. Now I want you to notice this first of all and very carefully, and that is that this prophecy says Jesus

will be in the heart of the earth 3 days and 3 nights. This prophecy does not deal with how long He will be dead. It deals with how long He will be buried. It says He will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. So, from when He was placed in the earth until He would be resurrected, would be three days and three nights. That is a lot of sound information with no loop holes.

So, let us take a "Good Friday" view for just a moment. So He is crucified Friday evening. So, Friday evening to Saturday morning is one night. Ok, so you want to count the moments remaining on Friday and call that a day. Many theologians do that and say the Hebrews reckoned time like that. So we now have a day and a night and it is Saturday morning. Then Saturday is another day. That is 2 daytimes and 1 night time. And now you say, "Well, He was also in the grave from Saturday night until Sunday morning." Well, let us be very generous and add another day and a night. So now we have a teensy bit of a day, say  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour. A full night. A full day. Another full night, and a teensy wee bit of a day. So we have 1 whole day and two days that are at the max  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour long and 2 whole nights with no bits.

How do Bible scholars figure this? Let me give you two examples. Adam Clarke says, "Our Lord rose from the grave on the day but one after his crucifixion: so that, in the computation in this verse, the part of the day on which he was crucified, and the part of that on which he rose again, are severally estimated as an entire day; and this, no doubt, exactly corresponded to the time in which Jonah was in the belly of the fish."

The Online Bible 'Family NT Notes', says, "Three days and three nights; that is, parts of three days and nights. The burial of Christ took place on Friday. That was reckoned, according to Jewish custom, as one day. Saturday, through the whole of which Christ was in the tomb, called the heart of the earth, was another day; and the Christian Sabbath, on the morning of which he rose from the dead, was the third day; or according to their mode of speaking, three days and three nights."

So I ask you, do those answers leave you content? Does that sound like a fulfillment of the prophecy of Jonah? I never was content with that and have very carefully researched the matter. So, I want to recommend to you that Jesus was in the heart of the earth, 3 full days and 3 full nights, just as Jonah was in the heart of the fish, 3 days and three nights!

So, I want to recommend as a starting point, a definite point and one we know, and that is the time of day that Jesus died and therefore, when He would have been buried. So, how do you figure out when Jesus died? I think it is not hard. Any school boy could figure that out. Well, let us go to Luke 23:44-46 (read). So He died sometime shortly after 3:00 p.m. That is the time the Passover Lambs began to die. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Passover Lamb. After that Joseph of Arimathia received permission to bury Jesus. That will have taken some time. Then he gathered together all the things needed to bury a body (John 19:39-41). So, no doubt that it was just barely before sunset that Jesus was placed in Joseph's own tomb. It would have been before sunset because the next day was a Sabbath and at sunset the Sabbath began (Mark 15:42). So, He would have been buried just before sunset, of the day He died.

Now that we have established the time of His death, we can easily determine the time of the resurrection. Someone tell me when 3 days and 3 nights would have ended if we start from Friday evening? Well, that is Monday evening, so we have a problem. How do we proceed? We have established the time of day He was buried, and now, second, since we are uncertain of the day He died, we need to see if we can determine when He arose. If He is to be in the heart of the earth 3 days and 3 nights and He was put in the grave just before sun set, what time of day would He have arisen? At the same time of day 3 days and 3 nights later. It cannot be otherwise. That is in the evening, just before sunset.

"But", you may say, "The Bible clearly says He arose early Sunday morning." No, actually, what the Gospels record for us is that Sunday morning, very early in the morning, while it was yet dark, the ladies went

to anoint Him but He was risen already (Jn. 20:1). Now it is important to note that it was still dark when they came to the tomb. And, furthermore, He was risen already!

So, since He was buried in the evening just before sunset, He would have been raised in the evening just before sunset. If, by Sunday morning He was raised already, when did He rise? Saturday evening, just before the sun set. Now, having established when He arose, we need only count back 3 days and 3 nights and you have the answer as to when Jesus was buried. What day was it? Wednesday evening.

Now you may say, "This all sounds very strange to me. How did we then ever come to think it was Friday?" There is, I think, a good reason why it is held that Jesus died on Friday. And explaining that, will explain another question that many might have. For this we go to Mark 15:42 which says, "Now when the evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is the day before the Sabbath..." So, because the next day was the Sabbath, it is very natural to conclude that the crucifixion took place on Friday, because the Sabbath or Saturday, follows Friday.

To answer this point we go to Leviticus 23 which outlines the special days of the Jewish year. In verses 1-3 we have the Sabbath. That is the seventh day Sabbath. Then in 23:4-6 we have the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread. On the 14th of Nisan in the evening was the Passover. Then on the 15th was the first day of unleavened bread. We have this in verse 6. Then in verse 7 we are told that the seven days of unleavened bread begin with a Sabbath and end with a Sabbath. So, what we have is that the first Sabbath of the feast of unleavened bread came immediately after the Passover. So the Passover began just before sunset, and at sunset the first day of unleavened bread began, and that was a Sabbath. That is why Mark 15:42 says, "Now when the evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is the day before the Sabbath..."

With that, let me give another bit of information that is helpful here. The Passover did not always fall on the same day of the week. So, if it fell on a

Monday, Tuesday would be a Sabbath and the day before it would be a day of preparation. If it fell on Wednesday, as in the year Jesus died, then Thursday would be a Sabbath. Friday would be a preparation day, and Saturday the weekly Sabbath. So, what would the week Jesus died have been like? Wednesday was a preparation day and in the evening the Passover. Thursday was the Unleavened bread Sabbath. Friday was a preparation day for the weekly Sabbath, and Saturday, the Sabbath.

Now let me show you something very interesting, and it gives further evidence for what I am saying. We go to Matthew 28:1 (read). Now in the original it does not say, "After the Sabbath..." It says, "After the Sabbaths..." plural. This first day of the week came after more than one Sabbath in that week. When was Jesus crucified? Wednesday evening. When did He rise from the dead? Saturday evening. Sunday morning He had been alive from the very beginning of the first day of the week, which is in the evening.

Now let me make one more point of interest. Let us say that the year Jesus died, the Passover had been on Monday evening. Three days and three nights later would have made His resurrection on Thursday evening. Let us say it had been on Tuesday evening. Three days and three nights later would have been Friday evening. Now, the feast of first-fruits took place on the first day after the weekly Sabbath of that week. If He had died in a year when the Passover came on Monday or Tuesday, and He had been raised three days and three nights later, He would not have fulfilled the feast of first-fruits which came the day after the Sabbath. But since He died in that particular year where the Passover came on Wednesday evening, He fulfilled the day of First-fruits right to the very day! Such is the foreknowledge of God!

## II. IT WASN'T GOOD

Well, if it wasn't Friday, it wasn't good either. I do not know how the name Good Friday came into existence. It does not seem anybody knows. There seems to be no solid historical information. The most common view is that this day was called "God's Friday" at one point. Chris Armstrong in an internet

article called, "Christian History Corner: The Goodness of Good Friday", says, "Many believe this name simply evolved - as language does. They point to the earlier designation, God's Friday, as its root. (This seems a reasonable conjecture, given that goodbye is evolved from God be with you.)"

However that may be, one wonders how it could come to be called either 'God's Friday' or 'Good Friday'. Yes, I understand that good often does come out of bad, and in that sense this day could be called Good Friday. But no matter how you slice it, this seems a misnomer; a day badly named.

Was it God's Friday, or man's Friday? In this day God allowed man to exercise his free will in the most horrible manner ever manifested anywhere in the history of mankind, and man manifested just how dark his heart can become. Here was a Man who was in their way. He had stepped on their toes, but rightly so. He had reproved them, but rightly so. He had told them what they were, but rightly so. Listen to Matthew 23:22-33, "And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men's* bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of

those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt*. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?"

Well, you understand that Jesus did not build up any brownie points here. I wonder, Christian friend, do you and I speak up when we should? Or do we keep quiet because we know that the truth will not be well accepted? The Lord Jesus spoke the truth, stood by the truth, lived by the truth and said He was the truth. And when you do those things, it will reveal darkness and darkness hates the light or the truth and seeks to extinguish the light. I ask you, has darkness put the fear into you and made you quiet?

Well, all the darkness of man's wicked heart, and particularly in the heart of those who professed to be true believers, those who professed to stand for the truth, came to the surface and they began to seek how to put this Man, who lived the truth, to death. Let me tell you where it began. Oh, what a warning is here. We go to John 12 (read 1-6). Now the indication is that Judas robbed the bag from time to time. And here Mary uses up very expensive perfume on Jesus. Judas said they could have made 300 denari right there. And guess what? They could have given it to the poor! You see, here is a man, in whom the devil has a beachhead, a place where he can enter and walk about through the rest of his soul. Here is a man who argues truthfully on the outside, but a devil drives his soul within. Oh, how dangerous to let sin dwell within.

Now you understand that on the Jewish calendar, the day begins at sundown. And on the beginning of this day we call 'Good Friday' though it wasn't good and though it wasn't Friday, Jesus had the last supper with His disciples. Passover Day had begun. We call it Good Friday. Now let us read John 13:1-2 (read). Now you remember how Jesus washed their feet and after this He foretold that one of them would betray Him (read 13:18-27). This man, in whom Satan had a beachhead now is taken over by Satan. Satan entered him. I ask you, is this 'Good Friday'?

Now let me read to you one of the saddest verses in the Bible (John 13:30). It was night in every sense

of the word. It was night for Judas. It was night for man. It was night for Jesus. It was dark! Then in Matthew 26:14-16 we read this: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, 'What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?' And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him."

Well, while Judas had gone to the priests Jesus went to pray at the Garden of Gethsemane. It is here Judas kissed Jesus with the kiss of betrayal. This is Good Friday? Is this God's day? Is this 'Good Friday'? Is it good anything? But once the ball of sin had started to roll, it rolled where Judas was not willing for it to roll. And it rolled, and it rolled until God the Son hung on the cross. The deeds of this day, right up until the close of this day were horrible, horrible, and horrible. This is God's Friday? No, this is man's day!

Oh, I know you can argue for the name and say good came out of it. It did, tremendous good! But it was not a good day. I just want to briefly give to you what took place this day. In the evening, after the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples make their way to the Garden of Gethsemane. A lot of last minute teaching took place on this walk. And once they reached the Garden of Gethsemane, the darkest hours for Jesus had been reached. Here Jesus' extreme agony began. Here, there was given to Him to drink, a cup sizzling with poison. The fumes of the stench of sin so struck Jesus that He came under a great agony. He begged. He prayed. "Oh God take this cup from Me!" And every time His soul began to give into what was before Him, He looked into the cup again, and smelled the foul, potent fumes again, and shrank back in horror once more. Idolatry, vice of every description, fornication, adultery, sodomy, lesbianism, lying, cheating, stealing, hating God, hating righteousness, and every other imaginable sin was in that cup, only they were all multiplied by the 100's of thousands. And He was to raise this cup to His mouth and drink it. Twice, after an hour of agony He gave up and went back to the disciples. It is nearing midnight or it is midnight and they are

sleeping. While in His presence in His darkest hour, they are sleeping, sleeping!

Then He went back a third time, and this time, after an hour of agony, after the blood began to ooze out of His pores for pressure, He took the cup and drank. And now He is a filthy fornicator. He is an adulterer. He is a thief. He is a Sodomite. He is every imaginable sin there is, only multiplied! He must die, this wicked Man. He must die like the rest of us sinners, for His Father, Almighty God, made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us. And He allowed His Son to go through this for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him!

And no sooner was that over, and this disciple, in whom Satan had found an avenue to enter his soul from which to control his being through the sin of greed, came to the garden. With him was a multitude. It was dark. They had torches. They had a rope. And with the evidence of divinity before them, they continued their dastardly deed. There, wicked man tied up the Creator of the universe and took Him to be tried at the court of humanity.

And because of all the politics that went on in Judaism in those days, they took Him to Annas, the father-in-law to Caiaphas first. Yes, this old man still rules, though he has been put off his seat. But, this business is a little messy for his pretty fleshly hands, and he sends Jesus to Caiaphas. It is better if somebody else is responsible for this, umm, this dirty little deed. Here, in the presence of the Sanhedrin, birds of a feather flock together you know; here the trial is long and difficult. Yes, man in his darkest hour has to check to see if the Creator is fit to live. But, Caiaphas does not have the authority to condemn Jesus. Somehow they must bring the powers that be on side. And so, Jesus is delivered to Pilate, the secular ruler.

But something of interest takes place now. That greedy man who held the purse, who for 30 pieces of silver sold His master with a kiss, sees to his dismay that this thing is going where he never expected it to go. "Oh, God. How could I ever have done such a thing. Oh God, I had no idea this would

happen." And before Jesus reaches Pilate, Judas repents a repentance unto death, and commits suicide. It is too late. Yes, you see, Satan had one avenue open in Judas at the wrong time; an avenue through which he could bring Judas to his own destruction.

Well, even this secular leader does not take long to determine that there is nothing wrong with the Man they have brought for trial. "Hey, you Jews! What have you brought this guy to me for?" And the answer is, "If He was not a very bad man, we would not have brought Him." And Pilate said, "You take Him and judge Him." Well, you know how political pressures work. When Pilate said that he could find no fault in this man at all they insist that He is a very bad Man, so bad that He must die. And furthermore, they say, "If you let Him go, you are not Ceasar's friend." Oh, what a squeeze for a politician. But Pilate is not without his political means, and his manipulative mind falls on a very timely piece of information. In conversation with these Jews he discovers that Jesus is from Herod's jurisdiction. He wipes the beads of political perspiration from his brow and sends Him to Herod. Oh, how good it is to get this mess off his hands. You see, sometimes even secular political leaders have more conviction than the religious.

So, it is off to Herod. But Herod wants a show. You know how Romans are? Anything for a show. But Jesus is not into the Hollywood business and soon He is sent back to Pilate. Poor political Pilate. But then, hey, just a minute. Oh my! Why didn't I think of this sooner. Yes, yes bring Him. You see, all of a sudden Pilate had a bright idea. At this time of year they used to release one prisoner. He would choose a very bad one named Barabbus. He was fittingly so named as John Trapp says, "That is, by interpretation, his father's son, his white son, his darling, his tidling, {a} whom he had cockered and not crossed from his youth. Such children are often undone, as Absalom, Amnon, and Adonijah were by their parents' indulgence. How many a Barabbas, brought to the gallows, blameth his fond father, and haply curseth him in hell!"

Pilate has struck on a gold mine. Offer them Jesus or Barabbas. Nobody, but nobody would want Barabas on the loose! But oh, you do not know those religious Jews! Oh the wicked heart of man when once it is turned loose to sin! So Pilate says, "Hey, listen. I have a proposition for you. I have here this notable prisoner named Barabbas. I will give you a choice between Jesus and Barabus. Which one do you want?" And you would not believe it. They said, "Set Barabas free. Set Barabus free!" But what then of Jesus? What shall I do with Him? Crucify Him, crucify Him!

And thus began the whipping, the scourging. And after much very cruel treatment, they made their way down the 'via dolorosa'. The Creator, beaten and bleeding, begins to carry His own cross. He must die. Good Friday? Hello! Oh, what a brutal trip, this path to Golgotha. And then the cruel square nails fasten the body of Jesus to the cross, and then begins the agony. Good Friday? Every breath costs a fortune to His already mutilated body. But the option is pay or die, and the body fights and fights and pulls on the nails in the hands and pushes on the nail in the feet. Anything for one more breath. And seconds as long as days turn into minutes which are as long as months and yet the body fights, fights, fights. And we call it "Good Friday"? What am I missing?

And then at last, death. Sweet death. Oh welcome death. And then, oh glory! Before the next moments are past He is in glory with the Father! So is the thief that was beside Him. Ah, blessed release. If there was anything good about this day, that was it! Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit. It is finished, and now, blessed now, it is glory!

CONCL: So, I conclude that it wasn't good and it wasn't Friday. I want to tell you a little story. I have told it before, but you will find it worth listening to again. Let me tell you why I am reading it. Judas let one sin grow in his heart. He should have repented. From all he had seen of the works of Jesus and all he had heard of the words of Jesus, he should have repented a long time ago. But he let one sin grow. And when he could have had himself a little fortune from a very expensive bottle of perfume, it was wasted on Jesus. Now that is enough to make a greedy person a handy tool for the devil. And if the devil happens to

need something important right at that time, that is enough ground for him to enter. And once inside, he will ride you to death. Are you here this morning and there is something that needs to go? This morning, for once, it could be Good Friday. You could deal with this thing this morning.

So here is the story as recounted by J. Oswald Sanders:

J. Oswald Sanders gives in his little book, *This I Remember*, this little story, "On occasion I was invited to speak at the Whitsuntide Convention at Cliff College near Sheffield in England, of which Samuel Chadwich had been the Principal and which attracted thousands of people. While dining I found myself sitting alongside an elderly man who told me he came from Huddersfield. I was immediately interested because I had sometimes used an illustration which involved that town, but I had never been quite sure of its authenticity. So I told him the story, and asked if it were true.

"Yes, it is true all right", he replied. "When I was a boy I used to run messages for the old Quaker you mention and he used to give me an orange and a penny. It is true all right."

And this is the story.

As a young man, Sir John Ramsden established his textile mill in the small town of Huddersfield. As his business prospered, he bought increasing areas of land to enlarge his mill and accommodate his growing band of employees. Eventually he was able to purchase the whole town with the exception of one house adjoining the mill which was owned and occupied by an old Quaker.

At last, in order that he might be able to boast that Huddersfield was all his, Sir John determined to pay the Quaker a personal visit, and make an offer so generous that he could not refuse it.

"I suppose you know who I am," said Sir John, when the door opened.

"Oh yes," responded the Quaker in his quaint English, "I know who thee art."

"And I suppose you can guess why I am here?"

'Oh yes, I can guess why thee art here.'

'You know I have often tried to buy your property but you would not sell it. Well, I will make a very generous offer. If you will sell your property to me, I will cover the land with gold sovereigns.' He did not dream that such an offer could meet with refusal.

For a few moments the Quaker was silent, then with a quizzical smile he said, 'If the wilt put them edgeways we might talk business.'

Angry and crestfallen, Sir John turned on his heel and left the house. When he had reached the gate, the old Quaker called after him,

'Sir John, remember that Huddersfield belongs to thee *and to me.*'

In order to reach his home, the Quaker could walk all over all the rest of Sir John's Huddersfield. If there is some area of our lives on which Satan has some claim, he can tramp through all the rest of our lives to reach that part in which he has a vested interest. And in the words of Sanders, Satan can say, "Christ, remember that that soul belongs to you *and to me!*"

I ask you this morning, is it well with your soul? We have communion this afternoon? Is all clear? Let one sin grow, and at some opportune time, Satan may well take advantage of you.