

Christ Was Crucified At The Third Hour

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Christ Was Crucified at the Third Hour (Mk. 15:25).

Christ Was Not Crucified Until the Sixth Hour (Jn. 19:14-15).

The Jewish method of calculating time during Christ's ministry involved two sets of twelve hours. In other words, there was a twelfth hour that occurred during the night and it corresponded to midnight, while there was a twelfth hour during the day which corresponded to noon. This is why Christ made the distinction between the twelve hours of the day, versus the twelve hours of the night,

I (Christ) must work the works of Him (Almighty God) who sent me while it is day; the night is coming (reference to his soon coming execution) when no one can work (Jn. 9:4; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Jesus answered, '**Are there not twelve hours in the day?** If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world (Christ; cf. Jn. 9:5)' (Jn. 11:9; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

In John's account of events that lead to Christ's execution, much of Satan's manipulation of the Jewish religious leadership took place in the darkness, which Christ referred to figuratively in John 9:4, and this was confirmed in Luke's account,

When I (Christ) was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize me. **But this is your hour, and the power of darkness** (Lk. 22:53; cf. Jn. 12:27; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

It was during the early hours of the morning before sunrise that Christ was interrogated by both the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities (Jn. 18:28). It was also the Preparation Day before the first High Holy Day of Unleavened Bread (see study: The Feast of Unleavened Bread) and the Pharisees wanted to make sure that Christ was dead prior to the commencement of this festival. It was pointed out to Pilate that the one responsible for betraying Christ was actually Satan, who is always associated with the works of darkness (Eph. 6:12),

Then Pilate said to him (Christ), 'Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know that I have power (authority) to crucify you and power to release you?'¹¹ Jesus answered, 'You could have no power at all against me unless it had been given (to) you from above (by Almighty God). Therefore **the one** (Satan) **who has delivered me to you has the greater sin**' (Jn. 19:10-11; cf. Jn. 8:44; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

All the interaction between the Roman authorities and the Jewish religious leaders took place before sunrise on the Preparation Day,

But you (Jewish religious leadership) have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews? ⁴⁰ Then they (the same religious leaders) all cried again, saying, 'Not this man (Christ), but Barabbas!' Now Barabbas was a robber (Jn. 18:39-40; cf. Lk. 23:13-25; Ed. notes in parentheses).

After attempting to free Christ three times, Pilate finally agreed to hand Christ over to the Jewish religious leaders, and it was around midnight,

And he (Pilate) said to them (the religious rulers) the third time, 'Why, what evil has he (Christ) done? I have found no reason for death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go.' ²³ But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that he be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed (Lk. 23:22-23; Ed. notes in parentheses).

From then on Pilate sought to release him (Christ), but the Jews cried out saying, 'If you let this man (Christ) go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.' ¹³ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ **Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour** (midnight). And he said to the Jews, 'Behold your King!' (Jn. 19:12-14; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The twelfth hour corresponds to 6:00 am and is followed by the first hour of the day, or 7:00 am. Therefore, the third hour of the day corresponds to 9:00 am when the morning sacrifice was offered (Lev. 9:17; Nu. 28:8; 2Kgs. 16:15),

Now it was the third hour (9:00 am), and they (the Romans) crucified him (Christ) (Mk. 15:25; Ed. notes in parentheses).

From the sixth hour of the day, or noon, until the ninth hour, or 3:00 pm, there was darkness over all the land,

Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land (Mt. 27:45; cf. Mk. 15:33; Lk. 23:44).

Shortly after the time of the evening sacrifice, or 3:00 pm, Christ died (Lk. 23:46). Therefore, Christ hung on a wooden stake for six hours before he finally died; not to mention the scourging he endured prior to being nailed to a stake.

So far it has been shown that the sixth hour, mentioned in John 19:14-15, is associated with the time that Pilate released Christ to the Jewish religious leaders. There is no mention of Christ being crucified at the sixth hour; not even in John's account. Luke's account of these same events confirms that Christ was handed over to the Jewish leaders after Pilate had attempted to free him, and this was approximately midnight,

So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they (the Jewish leaders) requested. ²⁵ And he released the one they requested (Barabbas), who for insurrection and murder had been thrown into prison; but he (Pilate) delivered Jesus to their will (Lk. 23:24-25; Ed. notes in parentheses).

It wasn't until the morning that Christ was actually crucified as both Mark and Luke attested,

And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified him (Christ), and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left (Lk. 23:33; cf. Mk. 15:25; Ed. note in parenthesis).

In conclusion, there is no contradiction between Mark's and John's account of events that occurred leading up to Christ's death. Both Mark and John offered different perspectives and information, while agreeing on the most important lessons. One of those lessons involved Barabbas who was guilty of death, and yet Christ became a substitute that allowed Barabbas to continue living. Metaphorically, Barabbas represents every sinner that would forfeit their opportunity of everlasting life, if it was not for Christ paying the death penalty on their behalf. However, Christ's "covering" the sins of the world (Jn. 1:19) only applies to those who repent and begin living a new life of obedience to every word of God (Mt. 4:4),

From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, '**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand** (has drawn near) (Mt. 4:17; cf. Mk. 1:15; 6:12; Lk. 13:3, 5; Ac. 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 26:20; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than we first believed. ¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore **let us cast off the works of darkness**, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly (decently) as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy (Rom. 13:11-13; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added; see study: Jealousy and Envy).

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