

Scriptures and Doctrine :: can you explain this?

can you explain this?, on: 2007/2/4 12:40

Throughout the years I have heard "Christian" apologist address many of the seemingly inconsistent facts presented in the four gospels. Some of these explanations have been explained in ways I find satisfactory. Some on the other hand have not been explained very well. Regardless of my opinion of their explanations, I did at least think that I was aware of the most obvious facts that on the surface appear inconsistent. However, recently I have had another seemingly inconsistent fact brought to my attention that I have never before noticed, nor have I ever heard this "inconsistency" addressed by "Christian" apologist.

The "inconsistency" is between John's gospel and the other three. Someone pointed out that Matthew, Mark, and Luke have the Last Supper being eaten as the Passover meal. Therefore the events following place the death of Christ the day after the evening in which the passover meal would be eaten. John on the other hand seem to clearly say that that meal Jesus ate with his disciples was on the evening before the day in which the people would eat the passover meal. Therefore, according to John's gospel, Jesus died on the afternoon before the evening in which people would eat the passover meal. This idea is supported with the following passages...

John 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgement: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgement hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

This takes place after the evening in which Jesus ate the meal with his disciples. However, according to John, it is clear that the passover meal was still yet to come. This is why the Jews would not go into the judgment hall. They did not want to be defiled when they ate the passover meal later that day. Another verse clearly states that this day in which Jesus was being judged was the "preparation of the passover".

John 19:14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

According to this, it seems only possible that John is saying that Christ died on the afternoon before the evening in which the passover would be eaten.

This is a very stark contrast to the other Gospels that insinuate that the Last Supper was actually eaten as the passover meal. According to these authors Jesus died after the passover meal, according to John he died before. Since it can't be both, it appears that someone is relaying wrong facts. How do "Christian" apologist explain this seemingly great inconsistency? Do they have a reasonable explanation that does not force someone to abandon reason?

By presenting this I am not trying to shore up my faith, nor am I trying to tare down anyone elses. I have strong confidence in the gospels regardless of whether or not everything fits together. However I do know that some do insist that it must all fit together. I am only curious as to how someone can make John's discription fit in harmony with the other three gospel writers.

I would appreciate anyone willingness to pass on the explanations they may have heard regarding this issue.

Thank you so much.

Re: can you explain this? - posted by vico, on: 2007/2/4 13:05

I've found it interesting to study into some of these "inconsistencies"! The first thing you need to remember is something a friend once told me, he said,

"there are no contradictions or inconsistencies in the Bible. The inconsistency is in our own reasoning and in our understanding of the Bible. When someone points out a 'contradiction' in a certain passage of scripture, the problem lies in their understanding. They have one of two problems:

1. They don't understand one of the passages.
- or 2. they don't understand both of the passages.

The Word of God never contradicts itself."

So i would encourage you to study deep into this subject. may your faith in the Word of God be strengthened!

Your brother in Christ, through Christ, and for Christ,
~vico

Re: can you explain this? - posted by PaulBenson (), on: 2007/2/4 15:02

If you research Jewish history you will find there has always been a controversy over when the new month starts - is it the day the new moon is first seen or the day following? Some sects (essenes?) celebrated the Passover a day earlier than others due to this issue. It is possible the man carrying the water pot the disciples inquired of as to where they could eat at the Passover was one of those who observed the feast a day earlier. The fact he was carrying a waterpot (and not his wife or daughter) could place him in the celibate (essene?) sect. It is not unreasonable to gather Jesus both observed the Passover meal and also was crucified on the evening before the Passover if you are familiar with these facts. I know this is no where near a complete discussion of these things but I hope it will be food for thought. For me one of the most significant things I discovered in studying the Jewish feasts was the prophetic symbolism in all the feasts that spoke of the Christ to come. A very edifying study if led by the revelation of His Spirit. It also destroys the "Good Friday" myth. Passover and the first day of the feast of unleavened bread were also Sabbaths according to the teachings Moses gave the people. The week Christ was crucified there were three Sabbaths in a row with the third being the regular Saturday one. There are NO errors in the true scriptures. The modern versions are corrupted with deletions and alterations that introduce error into the teachings of the Bible. Please do not trust them for study. God Bless.

Re: can you explain this? - posted by crsschk (), on: 2007/2/4 15:34

Joh 18:28 -

The hall of judgment - To the praetorium. This was the house where Pilate lodged; hence called in our margin, Pilate's house. The praetorium is so called from being the dwelling-place of the praetor, or chief of the province. It was also the place where he held his court, and tried causes.

St. John has omitted all that passed in the house of Caiaphas - the accusations brought against Christ - the false witnesses - the insults which he received in the house of the high priest - and the assembling of the grand council, or Sanhedrin. These he found amply detailed by the other three evangelists; and for this reason it appears that he omitted them. John's is properly a supplementary Gospel.

Lest they should be defiled - The Jews considered even the touch of a Gentile as a legal defilement; and therefore would not venture into the praetorium, for fear of contracting some impurity, which would have obliged them to separate themselves from all religious ordinances till the evening, Lev_15:10, Lev_15:11, Lev_15:19, Lev_15:20.

That they might eat the passover - Some maintain that here does not mean the paschal lamb, but the other sacrifices which were offered during the paschal solemnity - for this had been eaten the evening before; and that our Lord was crucified the day after the passover. Others have maintained that the paschal lamb is here meant; that this was the proper day for sacrificing it; that it was on the very hour in which it was offered that Christ expired on the cross; and that therefore our Lord did not eat the Paschal lamb this year, or that he ate it some hours before the common time. Bishop Pearce supposes that it was lawful for the Jews to eat the paschal lamb any time between the evening of Thursday and that of Friday. He conjectures too that this permission was necessary on account of the immense number of lambs which were to be killed for that purpose. When Cestius desired to know the number of the Jews, he asked the priests how he might accomplish his wish? They informed him that this might be known by the number of the lambs slain at the passover, as never less than ten partook of one lamb, though twenty might feast on it. On this mode of computation he found the lambs to be 256,500; and therefore the Jews to be 256,500. See Josephus, War, b. vi. c. 9. s. 3.

That Jesus ate a passover this last year of his life is sufficiently evident from Mat_26:17-19; Mar_14:12-18; Luk_22:8-15; and that he ate this passover some hours before the ordinary time, and was himself slain at that hour in which the paschal lamb was ordered by the law to be sacrificed, is highly probable, if not absolutely certain. See the note on Mat_26:20, and at the conclusion of the chapter, where the subject, and the different opinions on it, are largely considered.

Mat 26:20 -

Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. - It is a common opinion that our Lord ate the passover some hours before the Jews ate it; for the Jews, according to custom, ate theirs at the end of the fourteenth day, but Christ ate his the preceding even, which was the beginning of the same sixth day, or Friday; the Jews begin their day at sun setting, we at midnight. Thus Christ ate the passover on the same day with the Jews, but not on the same hour. Christ kept this passover the beginning of the fourteenth day, the precise day and hour in which the Jews had eaten their first paschal lamb, viz. between the two evenings, about the ninth hour, or 3 o'clock, Jesus Christ our passover was sacrificed for us: for it was at this hour that he yielded up his last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice being completed, Jesus said, It Is Finished. See Exo_12:6-12. And in the same part of the same day in which the Jews had sacrificed their first paschal lamb, viz. between the two evenings, about the ninth hour, or 3 o'clock, Jesus Christ our passover was sacrificed for us: for it was at this hour that he yielded up his last breath; and then it was that, the sacrifice being completed, Jesus said, It Is Finished. See Exo_12:6, etc., and Deu_16:6, etc. See on Joh_18:28 (note), and the Treatise on the Eucharist, referred to Mat_26:19; and see the notes on Mat_26:26 and following verses.

Adam Clarke

Re:, on: 2007/2/4 16:37

Some interesting answers - and to me some new angles - to chew on! Thanks for asking the question :-)

Some have suggested that the crucifixion was actually on the Thursday, but there's also the fact that the Jewish measurement of a day apparently could include part days counted as full days. This is probably more relevant to the time Jesus was in the tomb after the crucifixion, but thought it may be helpful to mention...

I also liked the point that John's Gospel is "supplementary". He wrote with a different aim from the Synoptic Gospels, which are simply records of Jesus' life and teachings (especially Luke who states clearly that his is a carefully researched historical account).

John on the other hand presents carefully chosen "cameos" of incidents or teachings, sometimes accompanied by his commentary. He says that these are in no way an attempt at a complete account, (John 21:25; "But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written").

John's purpose is as stated in 20:30; "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

Jeannette

Re: can you explain this? - posted by Jimbabwean, on: 2007/2/4 17:01

Quote:
-----John 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgement: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgement hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

Before this verse, we read in John 13:1-20, that Jesus ate the passover before his arrest as expected.

So, what is up with John 18?

That's referring to priests, who had different ordinances applying to them, concerning the Passover. Also, it is possible that the word Passover also applied to the feast of unleavened bread which followed.

The key with some of these alleged discrepancies is usually our lack of knowledge on the intricacies of Judaism, which is understandable bearing in mind the fact that we are under a New Covenant, and we aren't that excited about the old one.