

EASTER: Prophecy 106 (I Know What You Did Last Friday)

John 19:36-37, Zechariah 9:1-14:21

April 4, 2021

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Video and audio versions available online:

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/prophecy-106-i-know-what-you-did-last-friday/>

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This document was prepared by Heather Eades using Peter's notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please let Heather know. Thank you!

[Opening song: "Hush" by Deep Purple]

Prayer

Let's pray: Father, we pray that we would preach your Word. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Message

[Shouting] He is risen!

[Congregation replies: "He is risen indeed!"]

Very good--He is risen indeed... But is that Good News?ⁱ

Neagu's wife didn't think so. Bucharest, Romania, 1991: The family doctor had pronounced the 71-year-old Neagu dead of a heart attack... But three days later, gravediggers discovered that he was very much alive when they heard someone knocking from inside his coffin. When he knocked on his own front door, his wife fainted and then she wouldn't let him in the house for fear that he was a ghost.ⁱⁱ

In Barcelona, Spain, a hitchhiking farmer took shelter from the rain in an empty coffin in the back of a flatbread truck. Shortly after, two more hitchhikers jumped in the back of the truck. When the man in the coffin pushed open the lid and asked if the rain had stopped, the two hitchhikers were so terrified, they jumped from the back of the moving truck and one of them died.ⁱⁱⁱ

Cairo, Egypt, 1997: Abdel Badwai, having been pronounced dead for 12 full hours, began calling for help from a morgue refrigerator. The paramedic that found him collapsed in shock... and died.^{iv}

"He is risen!"

[Congregation responds: "He is risen indeed!"]

...But is that Good News?

[Image: on screen shows a still movie clip from 1931 *Frankenstein*, showing Dr. Frankenstein in the lab, with words at bottom of screen: "It's Alive!"]

You know, another way to say, "He is risen" is "It's alive!" which is just about the most horrifying thing you could hear in any monster movie. In every suspense movie, there always seems to come a point when everyone thinks the conflict is over; they start to celebrate, but someone is still alive. Whether that's good or bad depends on whose side you are on.

"He is risen!"

[Congregation replies: "He is risen indeed."]

Yeah, but how did that sound to King Herod, or Caiaphas, or to Pilate?

There is an old legend that Pilate's body was finally disposed of in a dark lake on a mountain in the Swiss Alps—Mt. Pilatus.

[Image: on screen shows photo of Mt. Pilatus]

The legend is that every Good Friday, his ghost can be seen above that lake, still trying to desperately, anxiously, wash the blood of Christ from his hands.

"He is risen!"

[Congregation murmurs response.]

—How did that sound to Pilate? ...How does it sound to you?

Remember what Jesus said to Pilate on Good Friday?

[Image: on screen shows painting of Pilate and Jesus in his crown of thorns surrounded by Roman centurians.]

He said, "He who delivered me over to you"—*paradidomi* is the Greek verb—"the one who delivered me over to you (he who *betrayed* me to you) has the greater sin."^v

So, who betrayed him? Who delivered him over, handed him over? It was Judas, at least... "Judas" comes from the word *Yehudah*, which is where we get the word "Jew."

Remember all the criticism over Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ*, for in it, he had Caiaphas state, "His blood be on us and our children." In the Bible, it's not just Caiaphas that says that.

So was it Judas, Pilate, Caiaphas, Herod, the Romans, or the Jews who killed Jesus?^{vi}

He is risen!

[Congregation replies quieter: "He is risen indeed."]

You know, you don't sound all that enthusiastic... Maybe even a bit nervous, like old Pilate.

Why are you nervous...? And I mean that in a really big way. Why are you nervous in general?

I have an old psychology textbook that defines neurosis this way: “a broad term for mental disorders (which sounds like “mental illness” to me) whose primary symptoms are anxiety, or what seem to be defenses against anxiety.”^{vii}

Now, I realize that there are severe mental illnesses that may have all sorts of chemical components, etc; I just have a hard time believing that anyone is not neurotic, that is terribly nervous or in denial of their own anxiety. And maybe we’re all nervous for a very good reason.

You know, Jesus said, “I am the Truth.” So, what if the Truth really is Jesus. No one can define Truth, or prove that the Truth is true...and yet we all assume that everyone around us knows the voice of Truth. (That’s why we get mad at them for lying. “You know the voice of Truth!”) It’s as if we all hear Truth calling our name.

What if every time you deny the Truth, you deny Jesus? And what if every time you break Truth, you break Jesus? What if every time you betray the Truth, you betray Jesus? Not just a dead idea, but a living person—even the Lion of the Tribe of Judah— that’s what we’ve been preaching about for the last few weeks: The Lion of the Tribe of Judah in the Old Testament. I mean, no wonder we’re nervous....

You know, Jesus also said this: “I am the Life.” So, what if the Life is “I Am” that I Am, in human flesh—that is, Jesus? Have you ever taken a life? Now most of you just thought: *Well, no, I’ve never murdered anyone. I’ve never taken a life.* Well, how about your own life? If Jesus really is “the Life,” then there’s really only one life, and it’s not yours. Where did you get your life?

Isn’t it weird how we just showed up here one day? Now you may say, “Well, I didn’t know it was his life when I called it mine...” And I believe you: “You know not what you do (as Jesus put it).”

What if, like Jesus said, “God alone is Good,” and like John said, “God is Love”? So real love must be God and everything that’s Good. Have you ever violated—done violence—to love, and realized that you were bad?

It was the late 60’s; I was 7, and as usual feeling awkward, when I noticed how my friends Kent and Tim would laugh at one little girl in our second grade class. She was “chunky” ...and I was kind of “chunky” too. They said she smelled. And so, to impress Tim and Kent, I snuck up behind her, in front of the whole class, bent over, and pretended to sniff.

Just then, Miss Torrance, our teacher (whom I had a crush on because she wore mini skirts) turned around, gasped, and cried out, “Peter! What are you doing?” I looked up into Miss Torrance’s face. I looked at that little girl’s face. And I felt like I had just crucified everything Good—and something in me died. And I just wanted to run.

I wanted to run because it felt as if the Truth had started calling my name, “Peter, Peter, Peter,” or whispering my name under every breath... “Peter, Peter, Peter.” And I just wanted to run.

In college, I was backpacking in the Gore Range when I came upon a rise, and I stopped to see the view and catch my breath. But then all of a sudden, I had the strangest sensation—it was as if it

wasn't only me that was breathing. I heard something else breathing. So, all at once I just held my breath... And the breathing kept going, but deep and with a low rumble, like a cat. Suddenly I realized that there must be a mountain lion just below my feet under the rise... And I left. I ran. And ran. And ran.

That's the closest I've ever been to being stalked by a lion. And that's how guilt feels; that's how shame feels.

The Swiss philosopher, Max Picard wrote, "A man lives; and living he flees. To live and flee are one."^{viii} He's making the point that we all run from the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We've each been running from the garden ever since we first felt shame.^{ix} We each run from a pursuer who seems to call our name under every breath.

About thirty years after that incident in second grade, and about twenty years ago now, on sabbatical, I wrote a letter to that little girl from my second grade class—of course, I've done things way worse in my life, but for some reason that one stood out. I wrote her a long and gut-wrenching apology. But I never sent it, for I didn't want to hurt her feelings any worse than I already had. And besides, it wasn't really *to her* that I needed to write the letter... I mean, she is also a sinner, and it wasn't simply against her that I had sinned.

King David wrote, "Against you," and "you only, have I sinned, O God."^x What if God is the Good, the Truth, and the Love in everyone you have ever met? What if you have violated him a million times, taken his life, and called it your own, crucified the Good, and made everything die? And now...

He is risen!

[Congregation is quiet.]

... Is that Good News?

John 19:36 · **"For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken.'"**

That clearly refers to the Passover Lamb—so Jesus is the Passover Lamb, and the Jews were commanded to not break one of bone of the Passover Lamb—just slaughter it, drain the blood, and eat it... He is risen!

John 19:37 · **"And again another Scripture says, 'They will look on him whom they have pierced.'"** [And here John quotes Zechariah the prophet.]

Since we've been preaching from the Prophets, I thought I'd preach on that verse today... **"They will look on him whom they have pierced."**

"They," would at least include one Roman Centurion. But then I thought: Maybe *"They"* is more than one Roman Centurion. And then, I remembered this old movie: *I Know What You Did Last Summer*.

[Image: on screen is image of the original movie poster for *I Know What You Did Last Summer*.]

Until last week, I had never seen this movie, but I'm sure I read the tagline on the movie poster—Can you see it? It reads: "If you're going to bury the truth, make sure it stays buried."

For the kids in this movie, "*He is Risen*" is not Good News...but a nightmare.

Video clip: movie trailer from *I Know What You Did Last Summer*
Columbia Pictures, 1997

Trailer shows montage of scenes from the movie with teens screaming, a car spinning out at night on a curvy road; male teen crouches over a body in the road, surrounded by three friends, all panicked

Male teen 1 "I think he's dead!"

The teens gather in the road of the body.

Teen girl "We can't just leave him here!"

Male teen "Tell me, little miss pre-law—what's the charge for manslaughter?"

Another clip shows the teens carrying the body to a pier and dumping it off into the water.

Male teen "We're making a pact. Right here and now, we're taking this to our grave."

Narrator "For the last year, four friends have been keeping a secret."

Clip of mom sitting with the teen girl at breakfast.

Mom "Are you on drugs?"

Girl "No."

Mom "Then what is wrong?"

Girl "I've had a rough year."

Clip switches to the teen girl holding a letter in her hand with the writing: "I know what you did last summer!" handwritten on it.

Narrator "But not all secrets stay buried."

Clip moves to the teen girl handing the letter to her friend.

Girl "Somebody sent this to me."

Clip switches to the three teens sitting outside.

Girl "Someone knows!"

Teen boy (taunting) "What—'I know what you did last summer?' Ooooooh!"

Narrator "What they thought would be a new beginning, is becoming a dead end."

Clip of the teens at a nighttime outdoor festival.

Teen boy (spins one of the girls around) A toast to us!

Clip of car spinning out and then trying to run down the teen boy who is running in the road trying to escape the car chasing him.

Clip of teen girl sitting beside the boy in a hospital room, the teen boy bandaged up.

Girl "Somebody tried to kill you last night!"

Teen boy "If he wanted me dead, he could have done it."

Narrator "And the mistake they made...is coming back to haunt them."

Clip switches back to the teens sitting outside.

Teen girl "It was an accident."

Clip switches back to teen boy in hospital.

Teen boy "It was no accident; it was murder."

Clip switches to teen girls attempting to climb in window of house.

Teen girl "What if he's still alive?"

Clip switches to crazed woman spinning a screwdriver in her hand, saying: What are you doing here?

Clip switches to trunk of car being opened.

Second teen boy "He's after me too!"

Clip shows the boy holding a similar letter, with handwritten: "I will never forget last summer".

Clips of teens arguing and girl holding hair in her hand, her hand smashing a mirror with writing on it, and the other teen girl in terror, slamming her car trunk closed.

Teen boy "You got a letter? I almost got run over! Helen got her hair chopped off! Julie gets a body in her trunk—and you get a letter? That's balanced!"

Clip at night and teens on beach being chased.

Teen girl "He's waiting for us to unravel."

Clip of teen girl screaming in anger, and repeatedly spinning screaming same words.

Teen girl "What are you waiting for, huh?! What are you waiting for?!?"

Trailer finishes with action scenes from the movie broken up by words on the screen, stating:

"Someone knows they're scared. Someone knows they're secret. And someone knows...what they did...last summer."

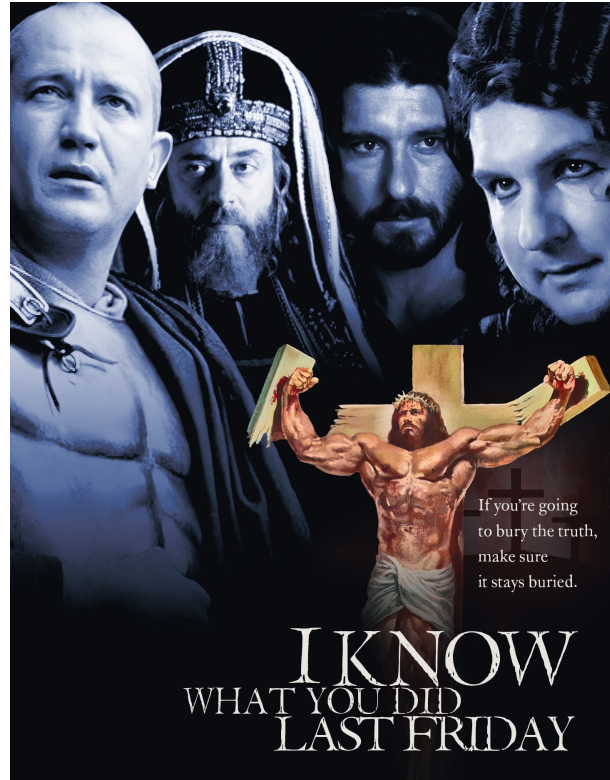
Well, that's why I titled this sermon, "I Know What You Did Last Friday."

Michael made this poster for me:



I love this—and now you can read the tagline: “If you’re going to bury the Truth make sure he stays buried.”

Or How about this one?



Lots of folks think a different Jesus is coming back the second time, because you know, “Jesus forgot to kick ass the first time,” at least that’s what they think...

Zechariah 12:10 – this is what John thinks happened last Friday—that day that Jesus was crucified:

“And I [Yahweh] will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me [God is talking], on him [“me” and “him” are one] whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child [Jesus is the “only begotten” and “firstborn from the dead, firstborn of all creation”],
“...when they look on me, on him who they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”

They will look—So the first question is most obviously, “Who is *they*?” Second question is, “What day is this?” John thinks it’s Good Friday.

¹¹ On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for [or “at”] Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. (That refers to weeping at a pagan festival, or *the annual weeping* over the death of King Josiah.)

Whatever the case, we’re talking about a lot of mourning, a whole lot of weeping!

Verse 12: **¹² The land shall mourn, each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹³ the family of the house of Levi by itself,**

and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹⁴ and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.

People will mourn *as groups*, as if we all pierced the Lord together. And people will mourn *as individuals*, as if we each pierced him in our own unique and individual way.

Next verse (Chapter 13): **“¹On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness...”**

“A fountain”—That sounds like “a fountain of weeping,” or maybe “a fountain of blood,” or maybe both—which is also “a fountain of Life,” for the life is in the blood.

So, who’s “they”? Well, it’s not just one Roman Centurion, Caiaphas, or Pilate. It’s the house of David who said, “Against you and you only have I sinned.” It’s David and his house, which by this time (hundreds and hundreds of years later) included thousands and thousands of dead people and living people... And it’s Nathan’s house—Nathan the prophet who revealed David’s sin. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem...

That’s a lot of people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, especially when you consider that Heaven is the New Jerusalem. **“They will look on him whom they have pierced.”**

And think about it: If you want to get to heaven, don’t you have to admit that you, in fact, pierced Jesus? That is exactly what it means to confess that Jesus is your Savior and Lord. “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all,” prophesied Isaiah.^{xi} Unless his blood is on you, and even in you, you have “no life in you.”^{xii}

So, all this talk about “Who killed Jesus” is all so profoundly stupid. Jesus said, “No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.”^{xiii} That means that he and his Father arranged for all of us to kill him together...

It wasn’t Romans, Jews, or nails that held him to the tree; it was his love for you. The “they” that “will look on him whom they have pierced” is everyone that’s anyone... and you.

And so now you may ask, “Well, can you tell us when this will be?” And this is where it really gets crazy, for Zechariah says, “On that day.” And John tells us that “that day” was “last Friday,” that is “Good Friday” two thousand years ago...

So now listen to what else Zechariah, and John, and apparently Jesus, seem to think happened on that day. John, because he said this happened in accordance with Scripture. Jesus, because he said that he fulfilled Scripture, and, as he said to his disciples on Easter, “Why are you so slow to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken?”^{xiv} That includes Zechariah.

Well, check out what Zechariah has spoken:

Zechariah 9-14 comprises one unit titled “An oracle,” or “A Prophecy,” or “The burden of the Word of the Lord.” And in it, the phrase “on that day,” which is also translated “*at* that day,” appears 18 times, as if all of these things in chapters 9-14 happen “on” or “at” the edge of “that day.” That one day.

In Zechariah 9, verse 9, Zechariah prophesies what we read last week:

**“Your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey.”**

[Now this is interesting, because Zechariah is in the Dead Sea Scrolls. So this stuff is lying around when Jesus is walking the face of this earth, and we actually have manuscripts of this.]

v. 16 “On that day the Lord their God will save them.”

Then in Zechariah 10:

**v. 6 “they shall be as though I had not rejected them,
for I am the Lord their God.”
v. 8 “they shall be as many as they were before.
v. 9 “Though I scattered them...
they shall remember me...
they shall live and return.”**

That’s amazing! Because that means all the rejected become the accepted.

In Chapter 11, Zechariah talks as if he’s Jesus, saying, “I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter...On that day... they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. Then the Lord said to me ‘throw them to the potter.’”

You may remember that Judas received thirty pieces of silver to betray, hand over, (*paradidomi*, in Greek), to hand over Jesus. Judas then threw the money into the temple, and the priests used the money to buy the Potter’s field in the valley of Gehenna, where Judas then hung himself.^{xv}

Jesus literally purchased Judas with his own blood according to prophecy.

Chapter 12:

**v. 3 “On that day... all the nations of the earth will gather against [Jerusalem].”
v. 6 “On that day... I will make the clans of Judah... like a flaming torch.”**
[You may remember how the Spirit fell like fire on the early church, and people from *all the nations* marveled at the worship that they witnessed.^{xvi}]
**v. 8 “On that day... the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of Yahweh...
[That’s Jesus.]
v.9 And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against
Jerusalem... [This New Jerusalem].**

And how will he destroy them? Next verse:

**v. 10 “...I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a
spirit of Grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom
they have pierced, they shall mourn...”**

They will be destroyed by looking on him whom they have pierced...and then mourn. And yet, "Blessed are those who mourn," said Jesus. "For they will inherit..." something.

Chapter 13:

v. 1 "On that day there shall be a fountain opened..."

v. 2 "On that day, ...I will cut off the names of the idols from the land..."

[Hopefully, you're aware that the last and most deceptive idol is yourself.]

v. 4 "On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies..."

[You see there is no prophecy that can even compare to what everyone will see on that day when we look on the one whom we have pierced.]

v. 6 "And if one asks [the prophet] 'What are these wounds...?' he will say, 'The wounds I received in the house of my friends.'"

Do you know that your wounds will match Christ's wounds, and his wounds will match your wounds? Your wounds will become the fountain of mercy. That's what they're there for.

Chapter 14:

v. 1 "Behold, a day is coming [Is it "that day," or another day, or both?] for the Lord, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst."

[In other words: You will *all* suffer loss... but that very loss will become a treasure that you all will share.]

v. 4 "On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives... ⁵...Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

v. 6 "On that day... ⁷...there shall be a unique day (literally: "one day"), which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night (time will not be the same on that day)..."

v. 8 "On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem (that must be "the fountain" that was opened), ⁹... And the Lord will be king over all the earth.

On that day, the Lord will be one and his name will be one. You know most people seem to believe that the Lord is not one, but two. They think he's love and just the opposite of love, which they call "justice." But from the start, Israel was taught to recite this line every day:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."

See? God's justice is salvation. And God's name is Salvation. The name Jesus (*Yeshua*) literally means "Yahweh (the Lord) is Salvation."

v. 12 Zechariah prophecies a plague—like the seven plagues in the Revelation—on "all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem [this New Jerusalem]: their flesh will rot where they stand..."

That sounds horrifying! And yet, we know that "flesh... cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Your "flesh" is your old body of death; it is your pride, it's your ego; it is the thing that eats life and poops death; it's the prison in which you are now trapped. Their ego, their flesh, will be destroyed.

v.19 “This shall be the punishment to... all the nations (peoples) that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.”

The Feast of Booths was also called the Feast of Ingathering, when all the harvest of the earth was gathered in at the end of the year, and the grapes were crushed.^{xvii} On the eighth day of the feast, which was a first day and a continual seventh day, an eternal day, the Israelites would leave their booths and enter the city. It was Israel’s greatest party—a commanded blessing.

v. 20 “And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, ‘Holy to the Lord.’”

On that day, even the war horses, will be holy. Everything will be holy.

v. 21 “And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the Lord...”

Jesus must have been thinking of this verse when he chased the money changers from the House of the Lord...

On that day, no one will pretend to have some sort of business arrangement with God... You cannot pay for the Grace of God... and you need to know, for you are the house of the Lord.

V. 21 (last verse) “And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the Lord of hosts on that day.”

That day.” That day.... What day? What day is he talking about?

Well... the day they look on him whom they have pierced.

Who’s “they”?

All the tribes of the earth—everyone.

Revelation 1:7 · “Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even [“and” or “that is”] those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.”

“They” is you. “They” is everyone. So, when is “that day”?

Matthew 24:30 “Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all of the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Matthew 26:64 “Jesus said, ‘...from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.’”

From “now on,” ... “they” is everyone, and “that day” is everyday... at least since Good Friday.

And now you may say, “How could one day be *that day*? And how could *that day* be all those things that Zechariah described?”

“How could that day be so evil and so good?”

“How could that day be the absolute worst day and the absolute best day?”

Well, tell me about this day:

[Video clip: scene from “The Passion of the Christ” of Jesus on the cross, his side being pierced to prove he was dead.]

Was that day the worst day... or the absolute best day? Was that day an evil day... or a good day... a Good Friday?

Maybe “that day” is Judgment Day...And it’s not God’s Judgment that changes—it’s our judgment that changes. It’s weird how we think we can change God’s Judgment... when it’s God’s judgement to change us. It’s his judgment to create us in his image.

What sort of tree is this?

Is this evil or is this good? Or is this the knowledge of good and evil?

Is this death or is life? Do you die here, or do you live here—or both?

Did you notice, earlier in our service, how in John 19, John mentioned that Jesus was crucified in a garden?

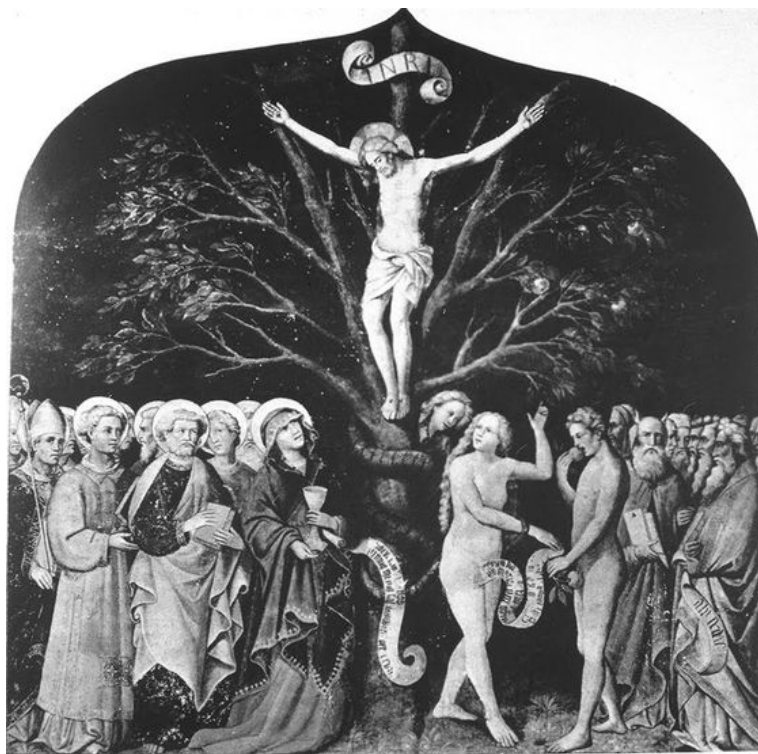


Figure 1 "Mystery of the Fall and Redemption of Man" by Giovanni da Modena (1420)

Maybe this is God’s Judgment... on all of our judgments? Maybe God is One... and we are two?

Do you run from the man on this tree? Or do you run to the man on this tree? ...or both, as if you are divided?

There were two trees in one spot... or maybe it’s one tree that we make two?

What's hanging on this tree? Well...it's God in flesh... the Good in flesh. "None is Good but God alone" said Jesus.

If you pierced him, if you took the life of the Good on this tree, what would that be? Well, that would be evil, and then you would know...evil.

But what if you received the life of the Good from this tree, what would that be? Well, that would be Grace, and then you would know the Good... And maybe the Life... for Life is a communion of grace, in which each member sacrifices for all. And this... would then be the tree of Life.

So anyway, if we took the life of the Good on this tree, that would be sin. But suppose God gave his life before we took it, that would be fore...giveness.

Suppose God in flesh said, "I give you my body and blood" before we took "his body and blood"? Well, knowledge of that—or I should say, being known by that, known by him—knowledge of forgiveness might just change everything from death to life.

Have you ever loved someone so much, that you almost wanted them to hurt you, just so you could forgive them and show them that you would die for them? Every good Father knows that nothing is as powerful for winning a child's heart, and shaping that heart in one's own image, as forgiveness.

- Suppose "forgiveness," "grace," and "love for nothing" is God's eternal judgment?
- Suppose we cannot change God's judgment, but knowledge of God's Judgment will forever change us, such that we will know good and evil, but constantly choose the good in freedom, which is life—eternal life.
- Suppose the Judgment of God is to *make us in his own image*...?

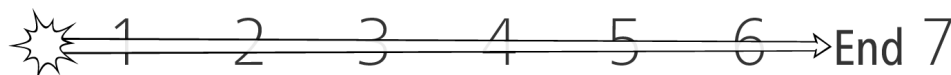
Well then, the last thing we should do is run from God's Judgment.

Knowledge that we pierced him would be knowledge that our judgment was evil, and of course, at first, we'd be tempted to run. But knowledge that he let us pierce him would be knowledge that he is Good and his judgment is Grace, which creates a communion called Life.

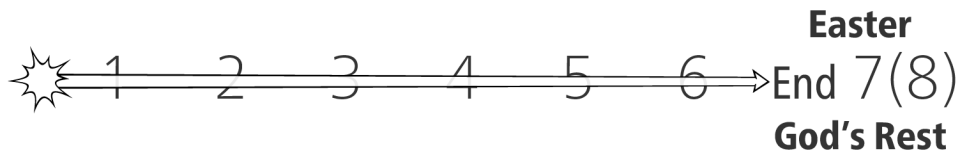
So Anyway, the "*they*" that pierced him is all of us.

And "*that day*" that we pierced him is Good Friday and Judgment Day or the edge of Judgment Day.

So, when is Judgment Day?

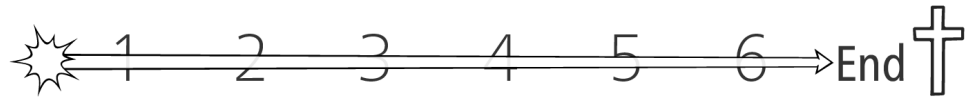


If you've been around here a while, you know that Scripture and the early church viewed time as something like this.



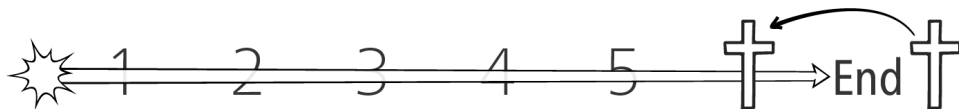
Six days, or ages, of chronological time, that end in a Seventh Day, a unique day, one day, an eternal day, that is sometimes pictured as an Eighth Day, the last great day of the Feast of Booths or Ingathering—the harvest of the earth.

Jesus rose on the Eighth Day, the Sabbath of Sabbaths.



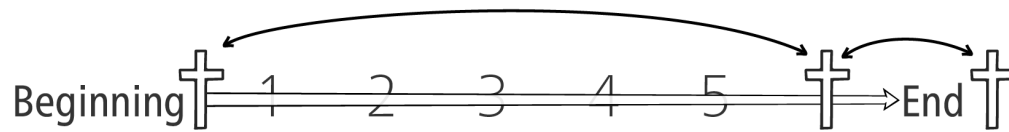
Well, at the end of time, we will all look on the one whom we have pierced.

According to Scripture, Jesus was sacrificed once for all at the end of the ages.^{xviii}



And yet, we looked on him whom we have pierced last Friday—Good Friday—at the end of the Sixth Day of Creation, sixth day of the week, sixth hour of the day.

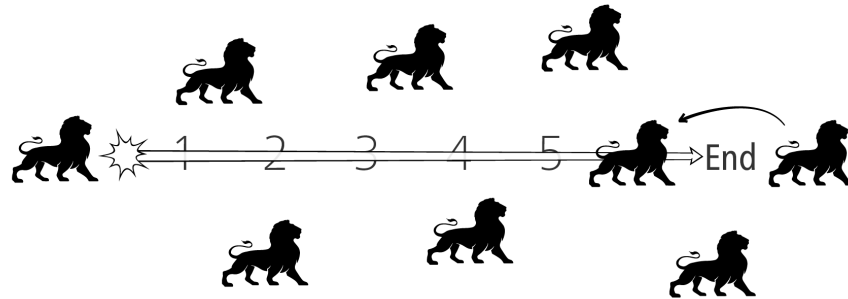
But when did you pierce him? Well, the moment you first violated the truth by telling a lie; the moment you took a life by thinking your life was your own; the moment you first refused to love; and every moment in which you reject God's Judgment in favor of your own judgement.



And when did humanity first pierce him? The Revelation tells us that the lamb of God, who is the Word of God, was slain from the foundation of the world.

And now, it also tells us that the lamb is a lion. As the wise old Masai elder said to the missionary Vincent Donovan, “All the time, we think we are the lion, [and] in the end, the lion is God.”^{xix}

I’m saying that you really are being hunted by a lion... and he is always at hand.



No wonder you’re nervous! You are just beginning to realize that you pierced the Lion of Judah, thought he was dead, and now he’s risen. You are just beginning to realize, your Judgment is evil, and now you’re being hunted by the Good.

So, if you would, whether you’re in this room or watching online...Would you just close your eyes... and get in touch with your anxiety...Think about your fears... and if you say, “I have no fears,” you’re lying.

Imagine... that you’re walking through a field and you come upon a rise...your heart is pounding, and your breathing is heavy... But then you realize something else is breathing too—so you turn and begin to walk away quickly... but the breathing follows you.

You begin to run... and you can hear, it’s running too/he’s running too. You realize it’s the Lion.^{xx}

With every breath, you know that he calls your name^{xxi}. Truth calls your name. Life calls your name. Goodness calls your name.

- All your anxiety comes from being untrue.
- All your anxiety comes from taking life, rather than giving life.
- All your anxiety comes from the fact that you’ve taken knowledge of the good, and now you cannot make yourself good, live your life, or speak the truth.

There is a voice that tells you to run—that's the voice of the evil one. And there is a voice that calls your name—that's the lion.^{xxii}

All at once he leaps; you feel his claws in your back as he pulls you to the ground enfolding you in his embrace. You know that you will die.

You feel his full weight pressing you into the dust. You feel his breath on your neck... And then... you feel his tongue; he licks your cheek. And he speaks your name.

He says:

I have chosen you, and I will not forsake you...
Do not fear, for I Am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right arm.^{xxiii}

But now... You need to know: When you broke Truth, it was my body that was broken.

I am the Life in the womb, the Life in the immigrant at your border.
I am the life in every little girl in your second-grade class.
I am the Life in every lamb that was ever slaughtered in the temple or field.
I am the Life that flows through your veins as I speak.
I am the Life that you took, when you called your life your own.

I am the Good you took from the tree in the garden of your heart... And what you did—what you do now in anxiety and fear—is evil... It is your judgment. But I do not condemn you... That is my judgment... and it is Good.

I do not condemn you, and I do not blame you, as if you could've done otherwise, for you did not know me—the Good. That is why I lifted my head on the tree in the garden and said, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." You did not know.

I consigned you to disobedience... that you would come to know.

I knew that you would take my life on the tree in the garden. But you did not know that you would take my life on the tree in the garden, and so you could not know that I give you my life on the tree in the garden, and so you did not know Grace, and so you could not have faith... in me.

I am Love without limits.

I consigned all to disobedience that I may have mercy on all^{xxiv}—that all might choose to love as they have been loved—in the very image of me.

I know what you did last Friday... it was evil. But you do not yet know what I did last Friday... it was the good; I am the Good. And to know me is to live and to never be anxious again.

And now if you say, "But I've confessed my sins and I believe your grace... but I'm still anxious, I'm still afraid," this is what I say to you:

You have confessed sins, but you still have faith in the most deceptive of all idols—yourself. You have confessed sins, but you still believe that you are created, saved, and redeemed by your own confession—your judgment.

You do not create, save, or redeem yourself; I create you, save you, and redeem you with myself—that's my judgment.

There is no trader in the house of the Lord; No one can pay, for everything that's anything is grace; it's always been and always will be, grace. When you know this, you will die to your ego and begin to live your life in me—you will live our life, our eternal life... when you know this. And you will know this, for I am your Creator, Savior, and Redeemer—I am your Wisdom, your Good Judgment, your Righteousness, your Free Will.

And so, my beloved, whom I could not love more than I do right now, when you're anxious and afraid, remember that it's me that is calling your name. It's the Devil that's telling you to run.

Don't run. Stop. Just stop, and let me remind you: I know what you did last Friday. But you do not know, or have forgotten, what I did last Friday. What I did last Friday is who I Am all the time.

I am Love. You are my creation. I do not fail. And all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.

So, no more fear. And now it's Easter. Amen.

Communion

St. Paul wrote, "I received from the Lord what I also delivered (*paradidomi*, "betrayed") to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed (*paradidomi*, "handed over") took bread...

You see, he is saying, just to give and take communion is to hand him over... Just to give and take love is to hand him over, for he is love.

He took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is broken for you, given to you; do this in remembrance of me." And in the same way, he took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you. As often as you drink it, do it in remembrance of me."^{xxvxxvi}

I told you what I *think* God is telling you when I asked you to imagine. This is what I *know* God is telling you... and asking you to eat.

Behold, look upon the one whom you have pierced. All your life, you have taken his life. Because all your life, he has given you—he has fore-given you—his life.^{xxvii} And now you know.

Last Friday is the revelation of who he always is: Absolute Love.^{xxviii}

So, close your eyes and pray, "Father, thank you for what you did last Friday. Thank you for who you are, and for revealing who I am. I am your beloved... And now I surrender to your love. Amen."

Benediction

And so, Lord God, we thank you that all thy works shall praise thy name, and that even now, this day, it happens. For John looked, and he saw every creature on earth and under the earth, and in the sea, and everything that is within them praising the one on the throne and the Lamb. So, Lord God, we praise your name today. And we thank you that that day has come to us. In Jesus's name, it's Easter. Amen.

Endnotes

ⁱ In Turin Italy, Ernesto Cataldi, 77, was found apparently lifeless. A doctor produced a death certificate and undertakers put him in a coffin. When he suddenly sat up, asked why undertakers had been called and then realized he was sitting in a coffin, he collapsed and died of fright... I guess terrified that he himself had risen.
- P. L. Tan, (1996) Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, p. 438

ⁱⁱ *Servant*, September 1991, p. 9

ⁱⁱⁱ P. L. Tan (1996), Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, p. 438

^{iv} *Rocky Mountain News*, "'Dead' man revives in morgue," July 14, 1997

^v John 19:11

^{vi} A few years ago, I read Bill O'Reilly's book "Killing Jesus."
I'd heard him say that the one the did killed Jesus was Pilate and that it had something to do with taxes... I think he blames the Romans, that is the Italians, but he seemed to give no indication that it might be Bill O'reilly.

^{vii} - Gleitman, *Psychology*, 2nd Edition

The American Psychiatric Association publishes the DSM for diagnosing Mental Illness, and for years the number of classifications just kept increasing... I remember joking with Frances that maybe each classification of Mental illness ought to be a proper name like Peter Hiett or Chris Lindenmeyer.

^{viii} - Mars Hill Review (presumably from: Max Picard, The Flight from God)

^{ix} There is a well-known story in this connection about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (author of the great Sherlock Holmes books). He sent a telegram to twelve respectable people in London, simply worded: "Flee-all is revealed." By the following night six of them had left the country! If God marked our iniquities, which of us could stand (Ps. 130:4)?
- Sinclair B. Ferguson, "Pastoral Theology: The Preacher and Hell"

^x Psalm 51:4

^{xi} Isaiah 53:6

^{xii} John 6:53-56

^{xiii} John 10:18

^{xiv} Luke 24:25

^{xv} Matthew 26:13-16, 27:3-10 (Scholars debate the reason Matthew attributes this prophecy to Jeremiah rather than Zechariah), Acts 1:16-20

^{xvi} Acts 2:5-13

^{xvii} Exodus 23:16, Leviticus 23:33-36, Deuteronomy 16:13-15

^{xviii} Hebrews 9:26

^{xix} "You told us of the High God, how we must search for him, even leave our land and our people to find him. But we have not done this. We have not left our land. We have not searched for him. He has searched for us. He has searched us out and found us. All the time we think we are the lion. In the end, the lion is God."
- Vincent J. Donovan, *Rediscovering Christianity*, p. 48

^{xx} Gordon Dalby tells a remarkable story about a man who was plagued by a recurring dream, a nightmare "in which a ferocious lion kept chasing the man until he dropped exhausted and awoke screaming." The man was dismayed; he did not know what the dream meant. Was the lion a symbol of fear? Something in his life overwhelming him? One day the man was guided by his pastor (a friend of Dalby's) to revisit the dream in prayer:

As they prayed, [the pastor] on impulse invited the man to recall the dream, even in all its fear. Hesitantly, the man agreed, and soon reported that indeed, the lion was in sight and headed his way. [The pastor] then instructed the man,

"When the lion comes close to you, try not to run away, but instead, stand there and ask him who or what he is, and what he's doing in your life . . . can you try that?" Shifting uneasily in his chair, the man agreed, then reported what was happening: "The lion is snorting and shaking his head, standing right there in front of me . . . I ask him who he is . . . and- Oh! I can't believe what he's saying! He says, 'I'm your courage and your strength. Why are you running away from me?'" - John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), p. 148

xxi Who knows what he will say to me today or to you today or into the midst of what kind of unlikely moment he will choose to say it. Not knowing is what makes today a holy mystery as every day is a holy mystery. But I believe that there are some things that by and large God is always saying to each of us. Each of us, for instance, carries around inside himself, I believe, a certain emptiness — a sense that something is missing, a restlessness, the deep feeling that somehow all is not right inside his skin. Psychologists sometimes call it anxiety, theologians sometimes call it estrangement, but whatever you call it, I doubt that there are many who do not recognize the experience itself, especially no one of our age, which has been variously termed the age of anxiety, the lost generation, the beat generation, the lonely crowd. Part of the inner world of everyone is this sense of emptiness, unease, incompleteness, and I believe that this in itself is a word from God, that this is the sound that God's voice makes in a world that has explained him away. In such a world, I suspect that maybe God speaks to us most clearly through his silence, his absence, so that we know him best through our missing him. - Frederick Buechner, *The Magnificent Defeat*

xxii Markus Barth used to tell a story about a group of thieves that robbed a bank. Fleeing the police, they abandoned the gold, for it was too much for them to carry. They hid in the Florida Everglades, imprisoned by alligators, snakes, and fear. Meanwhile, there was a trial. The judge found them guilty, but then commuted the sentence and granted a full pardon. The authorities sent search parties into the swamp looking for the thieves, to tell them they were forgiven, yet every time the thieves heard the dogs barking, they ran deeper into the swamp and hid, paralyzed with fear. Then Barth would ask His seminary students: "Were they forgiven or not forgiven?" Forgiveness was an objective reality. The debt had been paid, but forgiveness was not their subjective reality, for they didn't have faith in the judge.

xxiii Isaiah 41:9-10

xxiv Romans 11:32

xxv Notice that it is primarily the apostle Paul who applied this concept to his apostolic office, and that he once did so, namely, in 1 Corinthians 11:23, in such a way that in the same verse he also applied it to Judas' treachery: "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed (delivered), took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it. . . ." The two "deliveries" are obviously mutually determinative, so that Paul is set in the shadow of Judas, as Judas is set in the light of Paul. There is no apostolic ["handing-over, betrayal" (*paradidomi*)] which does not have behind it the judgment of Judas' ["handing-over, betrayal" (*paradidomi*)] : the handing-over of which Judas and the Jews made themselves guilty by their handing-over, is taken up again, on the basis of the death and resurrection of Jesus, in the delivery which calls the Church into life in all the world-the delivery of the apostles, of whom Paul is the least, and the one who worked more than they all. - Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics 11.2: The Doctrine of God*, p.483

xxvi Paul is revealing that whenever we love, we hand him over, for he handed himself over, from the foundation of the World. This is truly such a simple idea, and yet so hard to stomach. God is Love, and if we think this through logically, theologically, and philosophically, it can only mean that any real love is God. Our ego thinks love is its own creation, but Love is God and our Creator. Our ego is not his creation, and therefore cannot be "real;" it is the lie in which each of us are imprisoned—it is evil. Evil is real, only in the sense that a shadow is real; it is the absence of light. The Ego is the absence of truth, which we are discovering to also be the absence of Life and Love and Beauty.

xxvii "Fore-given" means being given to beforehand - before you earned it, were worthy of it, or maybe even asked for it. So forgiveness breaks down the entire world of meritocracy and the notion of deservedness. - Richard Rohr, *Everything Belongs*, p. 131

xxviii "There is nothing but God's grace. We walk upon it; we breathe it; we live and die by it; it makes the nails and axles of the universe." - Robert Louis Stevenson

Grace cannot be called forth or constrained by any claim or merit, by any existing or future condition, on the part of the creature. Nor can it be held up or rendered nugatory and ineffective by any contradiction or opposition on the part of the creature. Both in its being and its operation its necessity is within itself. In face of it there is no place for the self-

glorying or the self-praise of the creature. It comes upon the creature as absolute miracle, and with absolute power and certainty. It can be received by the creature only where there is a recognition of utter weakness and unworthiness, an utter confidence in its might and dignity, and an utter renunciation of willful self-despair. What the creature cannot claim or appropriate for itself, it cannot of itself renounce when it does partake of it, nor can it even will to deprive itself of it. The decision by which it receives and affirms grace takes place in fulfillment of the prior divine decisions. It cannot, then, be asserted over against God as a purely creaturely achievement, nor can it be revoked. . . . What kind of a God is it who in any sense of the term has to be gracious, whose grace is not His own most personal and free good-pleasure.

- Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics 11.2: The Doctrine of God*, p. 19