

- Judaism and Christianity are referred to as the “Singing Religions”
- Luther: “Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor”
- Sunday School singing mistakes: Bringing in the Sheets, It Took America, Andy Walks With Me, There’s Gonna Be a Re-Bible, Genesis-Exodus-Ridiculous-Numbers-Deuteronomy, He Healed All the Sick and He Made up the Beds, The Angels Peck at Me from Heaven’s Open Door

Matthew 26:26-30 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

- We know the hymn Jesus sang - it was called “THE HALLEL,” the name of a section of Psalms (113-118) sung at certain festivals; so called because they begin with “HALLELUJAH” (113:1), which is Hebrew for “PRAISE YE JEHOVAH” (the English reads “PRAISE YE THE LORD”)
- Traditionally, the Hallel was written by Ezra the Scribe to commemorate the building of the second Temple after the captivity; Psalm 118 was the last and thus the most important part to be sung (it was Martin Luther’s favorite Psalm - “nearest my heart”)
- The Hallel was read responsively, like THE GREAT HALLEL in Psalm 136
- “Historia Scholastica” says that verses 22-23 describe a literal stone that was discarded by the builders, until it was finally found to be perfectly fit for the most honorable place, coupling the sides of the walls together; this astonished the builders and Ezra chronicled the event
- Little did Ezra know he was writing prophetically!

THE JEWS TRADITIONALLY SANG THE HALLEL AT THREE SPECIAL OCCASIONS:

1. In homes before (113-114) and after (115-118) the Passover supper
2. In the temple on Passover while the evening (3 pm) sacrifices were slain
3. In the streets on Pentecost after the morning (9 am) sacrifices were slain

BUT IN THE YEAR JESUS DIED, THE JEWS MISSED THE HALLEL’S MESSAGE ENTIRELY:

1. Jewish Disciples missed it at the Passover supper
2. Jewish Priests missed it during the Passover sacrifices
3. Jewish Leaders missed it during the Pentecost celebration

**A. In homes before (113-114) and after (115-118) the Passover supper
Jewish Disciples missed it at the Passover supper**

- Imagine Psalm 118 sung from Jesus’ perspective! (v. 6, 10, 13, 18, 22-24)
- Exodus 12:8 gave instructions for Passover: *“And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it.”*
- Jesus served unleavened bread, but no lamb - only wine representing His blood
- Imagine the disciples singing Psalm 118:27 just before they leave
- But they didn’t realize that the Lamb of God was among them!

**B. In the temple on Passover while the evening (3 pm) sacrifices were slain
Jewish Priests missed it during the Passover sacrifices**

- Jesus crucified at Passover. Pilate (John 18:39) said: *“But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?”*
- Paul took up this theme in 1 Corinthians 5:7 - *“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”*

- Jesus died at 3:00 p.m. (the ninth hour) according to Mark 15:34-38 - *And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.*
- As Jesus died and the veil was rent, the priests were offering the many Passover sacrifices AND SINGING THE HALLEL (118:22-24)
- **A CORNER IS WHERE TWO THINGS MEET!** Jews & Gentiles, Bond & Free, Law & Grace, Heaven & Earth, Mercy & Truth, Righteousness & Peace (*Psalm 85:10 - Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*)
- **IN HEBREW, “HEAD” (HEADSTONE OF THE CORNER) IS “ROSH” WHICH MEANS:** head, chief, leader, prince, captain, point, top, first rank, best, highest, supreme, summit, sum, beginning, commencement, foremost, principal, source, zenith, total, most excellent, head cornerstone!
- **MOFFAT TRANSLATION OF PSALMS 118:22** - *“The stone the builders cast aside is now the building’s strength and pride.”*

**C. In the streets on Pentecost after the morning (9 am) sacrifices were slain
Jewish Leaders missed it during the Pentecost celebration**

- Fifty days later, the people were in the streets just after the morning sacrifice, singing the Hallel in celebration of Pentecost; at the same time (9 am, or the third hour), 120 “spiritual drunks” stumbled from the upper room and filled the streets with their praise (Acts 2:15)
- Contrast the two groups: the Jewish leaders, with solemn faces, are merely singing the words of praise from the Hallel, while the disciples are experiencing them! (RITUAL VERSUS REALITY)
- **EACH PSALM (EXCEPT 114) INTRODUCES NEW WORDS FOR WORSHIP:**
- *Psalm 113:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. (HALAL - to make a show, to boast, to be clamorously foolish, to rave)*
- *Psalm 115:18 But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD. (BARAK - to kneel in adoration)*
- *Psalm 116:2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. (QARA - to call out, to preach, to proclaim, to cry unto)*
- *Psalm 116:17 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. (TOWDAH - a choir of worshippers with upraised hands)*
- *Psalm 117:1 O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. (SHABACH - to address in a loud tone, triumph, glory)*
- *Psalm 118:1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. (YADAH - to worship with extended hands)*
- *Psalm 118:24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. (GIYL - to spin around under the influence of violent emotion)*
- *Psalm 118:28 Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. (RUWM - to exalt, to extol, to lift up, to set on high)*

THE JEWS MAY HAVE MISSED IT, BUT WE KNOW WHO JESUS IS ... SO WE WORSHIP HIM!

Illustration: *The workers building the Taj Mahal, Shah Jahan’s elaborate monument to his late wife, almost discarded her coffin among other refuse! We could be guilty of discarding Jesus in the church!*