



Love+One

God is Love

1 John 4:8

Scriptures/Notes

Spring Feast of the Lord

Crucifixion to Resurrection

(Traditionally known as Easter)

In studying the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus in association with our celebrating Easter, we adhere to what man has established rather than what Scripture declares. Honoring Jesus' death on a Friday and His resurrection on a Sunday doesn't follow biblical teaching. First observation is the time schedule. It does not give us a three day or 72 hour time period. Here is where we have to stop and ask ourselves, why is this not accurate? What are we missing in understanding the Scriptures? Have we overlooked a very important understanding of how the Jewish people celebrated the Feasts of the Lord; the shadow of things to come; meaning His death and resurrection?

Try as we might, it is impossible to fit three days and three nights between a late Friday burial and a Sunday morning resurrection. The Good Friday–Easter Sunday tradition simply isn't biblical. About one billion Protestants and another billion Catholics believe that Jesus Christ was crucified and entombed on a Friday afternoon—Good Friday—and raised to life again at daybreak on Easter Sunday morning, a day and a half later. Yet when we compare this to what Jesus Himself said about how long He would be entombed, we find a major contradiction. How long did Jesus say He would be in the grave? *But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* Matthew 12:40 Also, *A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.* Matthew 16:4 The context in which Jesus Christ said these words is important. The scribes and Pharisees were demanding a miraculous sign from Him to prove that He was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. This was the *only* sign Jesus gave that He was the promised Messiah.

Traditional Timing against the Scriptures

John 19:30-42

The key to the timing of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection lies in understanding God's timetable for counting when days begin and end, as well as the timing of His biblical festivals during the spring of the year when these events took place.

The Gospels are clear that Jesus died and His body was hurriedly placed in the tomb late in the afternoon, just before sundown when a Sabbath began *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was already dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced. And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might secretly take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulcher was nigh at hand.*

By the traditional "Good Friday-Easter Sunday" timing, from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown is one night and one day. Saturday night to Sunday daybreak is another night, giving us two nights and one day. So where do we get another night and two days to equal the three days and three nights Jesus said He would be in the tomb? Most theologians and religious scholars try to work around it by arguing that any part of a day or night counts as a day or night. Thus, they say, the final few minutes of that Friday afternoon were the first day, all day Saturday was the second day, and the first few minutes of Sunday morning were the third day. This only adds up to three days and two nights, not three days and *three* nights.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. John 20:1 This tells us that on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, *while it was still dark*. Did you catch the problem here? John tells us *it was still dark* when Mary went to the tomb on Sunday morning and found it empty. Jesus was *already resurrected well*

before daybreak. Thus He wasn't in the tomb *any* of the daylight portion of Sunday, so none of that can be counted as a day. That leaves us with, at most, part of a day on Friday, all of Friday night, a whole daylight portion on Saturday, and most of Saturday night. That totals one full day and part of another, and one full night and most of another, still *at least a full day and a full night short* of the time Jesus said He would be in the tomb.

Understanding God's Time is the Key

The key to understanding the timing of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection lies in understanding God's timetable for counting when days begin and end, as well as the timing of His biblical festivals during the spring of the year when these events took place. Most people have no idea that the Bible talks about two kinds of Sabbath days—the normal weekly Sabbath day that falls on the seventh day of the week and seven annual Sabbath days which is the celebration of the Feast of the Lord: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles.

We first need to realize that God doesn't begin and end days at midnight as we do—that is man's established method of counting time; the Gregorian Calendar devised by the Romans. *And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.* Genesis 1:5 This tells us quite plainly that God counts a day as beginning with the evening (the night portion) and ending at the next evening, so the evening (nighttime) and the morning (daylight) were the first day. God repeats this formula for the entire six days of creation.

In Leviticus 23, where God lists all of His holy Sabbaths and festivals, He makes it clear that they are to be observed "from evening to evening." *It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even to even, shall you celebrate your sabbath.* Leviticus 23:32 In other words, from sunset to sunset, when the sun went down and evening began. This is why Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, followers of Jesus, hurriedly placed His body in Joseph's nearby tomb just before sundown. (John 19:39-42) A Sabbath was beginning at sundown when work would have to cease.

Two kinds of "Sabbaths"

As John tells us: *The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.* John 19:31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies of those crucified should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath, for that Sabbath was a *high day*, the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken to hasten death, and that they might be taken away. In the Jewish culture of that time, the chores of cooking and housecleaning were done on the day before a Sabbath to avoid working on God's

designated day of rest. Thus the day before the Sabbath was commonly called “the preparation day.” Clearly the day on which Christ was crucified and His body placed in the tomb was the day immediately preceding a Sabbath.

The question is, *which* Sabbath? Most people assume John is speaking of the regular weekly Sabbath day, observed from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. From John’s clear statement here, most people assume Jesus died and was buried on a Friday—thus the traditional belief that Jesus was crucified and died on *Good Friday*. Again, most people have no idea that the Bible talks about *two kinds* of Sabbath days—the normal weekly Sabbath day that falls on the seventh day of the week (not to be confused with Sunday, which is the *first* day of the week), and seven *annual* Sabbath days, listed in Leviticus 23 and mentioned in various passages throughout the Bible, that could fall on *any* day of the week.

Because traditional Christianity long ago abandoned these biblical annual Sabbath days (as well as the weekly Sabbath), for many centuries people have failed to recognize what the Gospels plainly tell us about when Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected and why “Good Friday–Easter Sunday” never happened that way. Most people fail to note that John explicitly tells us that the Sabbath that began at sundown immediately after Jesus was entombed was one of these *annual* Sabbath days.

This explanation that the “Sabbath was a *high day*”; *high day* being a term used to differentiate the seven annual Sabbaths from the regular weekly Sabbath days. So what was this “high day” that immediately followed Jesus Christ’s hurried entombment? The Gospels tell us that on the evening before Jesus was condemned and crucified, He kept the Passover with His disciples. *And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.* Matthew 26:19-20 Also, *And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.* Mark 14:16-17 And, *And they went, and found as he had saith to them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.* Luke 22:13-16 They prepared for the Passover which is the death of Christ. Jesus knew it was imitate.

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord’s passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread to the Lord: seven days you must eat unleavened bread. In the first day you shall have an holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein. Leviticus 23:5-7 The first day of this Feast is “a holy convocation” on which “no customary work” is to be done. This day is the first of God’s annual Sabbaths. This is the “high day” of which John wrote. Passover began at sundown and ended the following day at sundown, when this annual Sabbath began. Jesus kept the Passover with His disciples, then was arrested later that night. After daybreak the next day He was questioned before Pontius Pilate, crucified, then hurriedly entombed just before the next sunset when the “high day,” the first day of the

Feast of Unleavened Bread, began. Leviticus 23 tells us the order and timing of these days, and the Gospels confirm the order of events as they unfolded.

Jesus Crucified on Wednesday, not Friday

In A.D. 31, the year of these events, the Passover meal was eaten on Tuesday night and Wednesday sundown marked the beginning of the “high day,” the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus, then, was crucified and entombed on a *Wednesday* afternoon, not on *Friday*. It is impossible to fit three days and three nights between a late Friday burial and a Sunday morning resurrection. The Good Friday–Easter Sunday tradition simply isn’t biblical to Scriptures.

In the Book of Mark: *And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.* Mark 16:1 In that time, when the body of a loved one was placed in a tomb they would commonly place aromatic spices in the tomb alongside the body to reduce the smell as the remains decayed. Since Jesus’ body was placed in the tomb just before that high-day Sabbath began, the women had no time to buy those spices before the Sabbath. Also, they could not have purchased them on the Sabbath day as that would have been forbidden. Thus, Mark says, they bought the spices *after the Sabbath* when the Sabbath was past. Notice also in Luke: *And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.* Luke 23:55-56

Mark clearly states that the women bought the spices *after* the Sabbath—*when the Sabbath was past*. Luke tells us that the women prepared the spices and fragrant oils, after which *they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment*. So they bought the spices *after the Sabbath*, and then they prepared the spices *before resting on the Sabbath*. This is a clear contradiction between these two Gospel accounts unless *two* Sabbaths were involved. When we understand that *two different Sabbaths* are mentioned, we then can see how the timing of Jesus’ death and resurrection took place.

Mark tells us that after the “high day” Sabbath, which began Wednesday evening at sundown and ended Thursday evening at sundown, the women bought the spices to anoint Jesus’ body. Luke then tells us that the women prepared the spices—activity which would have taken place on Friday—and that afterward *they rested on the Sabbath* (the normal weekly Sabbath day, observed Friday sunset to Saturday sunset) according to the commandment. By comparing details in both accounts, we can clearly see that two different Sabbaths are mentioned along with a workday in between. The first Sabbath was a “high day”—*the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread*, which fell on a Thursday. The *second was the weekly seventh-day Sabbath*.

The original Greek in which the New Testament gospels were written also plainly tells us that two Sabbath days were involved in these accounts. In Matthew we read: *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.* Matthew 28:1 Where Matthew writes that the women went to the tomb “after the Sabbath,” the word *Sabbath* here is actually *plural* and should be translated “*Sabbaths.*” (Bible versions such as Alfred Marshall’s Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, Green’s Literal Translation, Young’s Literal Translation, and Ferrar Fenton’s Translation make this clear.)

When was Jesus Resurrected?

We have seen, then, that Jesus Christ was crucified and entombed on a Wednesday, just before an *annual* Sabbath began—not the weekly Sabbath. So when was He resurrected? *The first day of the week comes Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, to the sepulchre, and sees the stone taken away from the sepulchre.* John 20:1 Also, *Now upon the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.* Luke 24:1-3 Scriptures tell us that the sun had not yet risen; it was still dark when Mary found the tomb empty. Obviously, Jesus was not resurrected at sunrise on Sunday morning. So when did this take place? The answer is simple when we read the Gospels and Jesus Christ’s own words. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* Matthew 12:40 The people asked for a sign and Jesus told them there would be no sign, but the sign of Jonas.

As we have proven, Jesus was entombed —placed “in the heart of the earth”—just before sundown on a Wednesday. All we have to do is count forward. One day and one night brings us to Thursday at sundown. Another day and night brings us to Friday at sundown. A third day and night brings us to Saturday at sundown. According to Jesus Christ’s own words He would have been resurrected three days and three nights after He was entombed, at around the same time—near sunset. Does this fit with the Scriptures? Yes—as we have seen, He was already risen and the tomb empty when Mary arrived *while it was still dark* on Sunday morning.

While no one was around to witness His resurrection (which took place inside a sealed tomb watched over by armed guards), Jesus Christ’s own words and the details recorded in the Gospels show that it had to have happened three days and three nights after His burial, near sunset at the end of the weekly Sabbath. We have the Scriptures in Matthew to tell us what happened at Jesus’ resurrection. *In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the*

angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Matthew 28:1-6

Scriptures are precise to what happened to Jesus when he was crucified, died on the Cross, buried in a tomb, and resurrect three days later. In taking the time to study the order of events and understand the timing of feasts and Sabbaths, we can clearly identify when these events of Jesus's death unfolded. Following traditions set forth by man and celebrated annually for generations doesn't make it truth or biblically correct. Be aware of what truths you are holding onto; the truth given by Scriptures or man's interpretation.

