

The Time Element  
in the  
**CRUCIFIXION**  
and  
**RESURRECTION**  
of  
**CHRIST**

THE TIME ELEMENT  
IN THE  
CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION

**The Time Element  
in the  
Crucifixion and Resurrection  
of Christ**

●

*A Study  
Of the Word of God  
In the Interest of Bible Truth*

*"And ye shall know the truth,  
And the truth shall make you free."*

—John 8:32—



**The Bible Advocate Press**  
Stanberry, Missouri 64489

This tract is one of many pieces of literature (dealing with Bible subjects) which is distributed free of charge. Freewill offerings make this possible.

A free tract fund is maintained by the publishers, and gifts to it are invited so that there will be money to keep this free literature program in operation. However, no one who is financially unable to remit an offering should hesitate to avail himself of tracts for personal use or for giving to others. The first consideration is to get the printed message of salvation into homes where it will be read. We trust that the Lord will provide for enough money to be given by those who can give to make up for those who cannot.

Order tracts (or send offerings to the special tract fund) by writing to: The Bible Advocate Press, P. O. Box 158, Stanberry, Missouri 64489.

On the inside of the back cover will be found a partial list of other free tracts. A complete listing of all available literature will gladly be sent upon request.

## THE TIME ELEMENT IN THE CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The Bible is truly a wonderful book, and the study of it brings great happiness, comfort, and hope for something better than this present pain-and-sorrow-befraught existence. The Bible teaches us the way of salvation (escape from the death penalty imposed upon the human race because of sin) through Jesus, the Son of God. This truth constitutes the heart of the Scriptures.

The plan of salvation is told and retold by writers of the Bible as they were directed by Divine inspiration. Many methods have been used to emphasize it, make it understandable, and to communicate it to us, such as by stories of incidents and events, by parables, by examples and illustrations, by allegory and symbols, and by direct teaching. All are skillfully blended together to clearly reveal God's will and wish for man—the way of life that prepares men and women for the glorious eternal kingdom of the Heavenly Father and His Son.

## CHRIST AND THE SIGN OF JONAH

One of the interesting Old Testament incidents which is closely linked with the salvation theme is the one involving Jonah and the great fish. It is a story with a great lesson—the lesson of obedience. However, it is more than that. It is also an illustration, or type, of part of the work of Christ.

Jonah is a type of Christ—not in his refusal to do what God asked, but in the experience of being swallowed by the great fish which the Lord prepared.

Had not Christ linked Himself to this preacher who had been commissioned to "go to Nineveh . . . and cry against it,"<sup>2</sup> it is unlikely that anyone would have imagined that there was any connection between the work and life of Christ and Jonah's experience in being cast out of a storm-tossed ship into the sea, there to be caught and swallowed by "a great fish" which "the Lord had prepared" for that purpose. But Christ could not have failed to make use of this story in His preaching, for it was not an incident that just accidentally happened. God planned it, and it was to be a vitally impor-

<sup>1</sup>By the term "Old Testament" we are referring to the first of the two major divisions of the Bible which begins with the book of Genesis and ends with the book of Malachi. These divisions, as designated by the compilers, are not to be confused with the Old and New Testaments as defined by the inspired writers of the Bible. Additional information is available on this subject of the two testaments by writing to the publishers.

<sup>2</sup>Scripture quoted in this tract has been set in italic type to give it emphasis and to make it readily recognizable. Also some words in Scriptural quotations have been purposely set with capital letters to achieve additional emphasis and do not so appear in the Bible.

tant factor in substantiating the plan of salvation. Without the record of this unusual incident, there would be grave doubt as to whether there will be any salvation for man, for unless the Man who is declared to be the heart of the plan of redemption, who gave His life on the cross of Calvary, was really the divine Son of God, without sin, there can be no assurance of salvation for anyone.

Without the account of the story of Jonah and his fish-captor, there would be no positive proof with which to refute the claim that the Christ of the Bible was an imposter or pretender, for He, Himself, told some doubting and skeptical scribes and Pharisees, who had doubt about His true identity, even though they had seen Him perform miracles, that no sign other than the sign, or miracle, of Jonah would be given by which to prove His claim to Messiahship. The account of this is found in Matthew 12:38-40 as follows:

*Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.*

*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:*

*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.*

Thus, the plan of salvation is involved in

this story. Unless Christ was in the grave the exact time specified in this record of Jonah, He was not the true Messiah. Therefore, the time element in the Scriptural teaching concerning the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ is most vital—as we shall endeavor to show.

As we begin a Scriptural investigation of this subject, we would point out that Jesus referred to the story of Jonah as something that really happened. It is also important to note that Matthew's record of Jesus' statement teaches that after His death, Jesus would be in the tomb for *three days* and *three nights*, or a total of 72 hours—exactly the same length of time that Jonah was entombed inside the fish. Thus, Jonah (in the whale's belly) was a type of Jesus in the earthly tomb.

#### A PUZZLING QUESTION

This teaching of Jesus introduces us to a very puzzling question: How can this type be true of Jesus? If Jesus was crucified on "Good Friday," placed in the tomb just before sundown that day, and arose on Sunday morning, as it might appear from a casual reading of certain Scriptures, He was not in the tomb three days and three nights, and, thus, could not have been the true Messiah. Yet, He clearly stated (as is recorded in Matthew 12:39, 40) that the only sign that would be given to show that He was the Messiah would be His three-days-and-three-nights' entombment in the heart of the earth, or the same length of time

that Jonah was inside the whale.

Is this a contradiction, or is there a way to harmonize this statement of Jesus with the recorded facts of what happened? A careful examination of Scripture will reveal that there is no incompatibleness, but rather that there is complete harmony. A positive clarification is to be found which reveals that Jesus was not only telling the truth, but that He was truly "*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29). Besides this, a study of this subject will disclose additional evidence of the divine inspiration of the Bible and that God is very exacting in everything He does.

In Jonah 1:17 we read:

*Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.*

This makes it clear that Jonah was actually inside, or entombed in, the fish (or whale) a full three days and three nights, which is equal to 72 hours. Previous to this, Jonah had been on a ship fleeing from his duty, but the time he was on the ship was not counted in the three days and three nights he was inside the fish. To make the type true, neither can we count the time that Christ was in the hands of the Jews and Romans. Only the time He was actually in the tomb is to be considered. To fulfill His word He must have been in the tomb exactly three days and three nights.

## WHEN WAS CHRIST PLACED IN THE TOMB?

It should now be helpful, as we continue the study of the time element in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, to determine when Jesus was placed in the tomb. He was placed there on the same day He was crucified—in the evening of that day near sundown. Concerning this, we quote the record of His burial as recorded in Mark 15:42:

*And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea . . . came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.*

The same record is to be found in Luke 23:53, thus:

*And he [Joseph] took it [the body of Jesus] down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.*

These verses logically pose the questions: Which day of the week was the *Sabbath*? and which day was the *preparation*?

According to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, as found in Exodus 20: 8-11, the seventh day of the week is designated as the Sabbath, which is today called *Saturday*. Therefore, if the Sabbath mentioned in Luke 23:53 was the seventh day of the week, or the Sabbath according to the fourth commandment, it might well be

concluded that Friday (the day immediately preceding the Sabbath) was the preparation day mentioned in this same verse. Thus, from this reasoning and Scriptural record it would appear that Christ was crucified and buried on Friday—just before sundown. That is the commonly accepted conclusion, and it would seem to have Biblical foundation.

However, if this conclusion is correct, Christ did not fulfill the prophecy He uttered concerning Himself, for if He arose on Sunday morning, as is generally believed, He was in the tomb only two nights and one day: Sabbath night<sup>3</sup>—1 night; Sabbath—1 day; and Sunday night—2 nights. Even if we were to count the short period between the time He was placed in the tomb and sundown as another day (for which there is no basis for doing), the count would only be increased to two days and two nights—one day and one night short of the time Christ said He would be in the grave. And if He was not there the full length of time He said He would be, He was an imposter, for He said this would be the only sign given.

Any thought of counting any daylight part of Sunday, in which Christ might have been in the tomb before He actually arose, as another day would definitely have to be dismissed, for the angel (according to John's

<sup>3</sup>This count is according to Bible time, which begins the 24-hour-day period at sundown—the night part of the day coming first.

record—John 20:1) told certain women who went to the tomb before sunup that Christ was already risen and gone at that time. John states that the visit was made “when it was yet dark.”

Therefore, we must conclude that there is something wrong with the Friday-crucifixion-Sunday-resurrection theory, because we believe that Christ was the true Son of God and that He told the truth. Thus, it will be necessary to search further to find a harmonious explanation of these events.

#### **WHEN DID CHRIST LEAVE THE TOMB?**

It might seem like weak exposition to pose the question: “When did Christ leave the tomb?” before answering the question asked in the previous heading, namely: “When was Christ placed in the tomb?” We proceed this way because the time as to when Christ was *placed in the tomb* can best be determined by establishing *when He burst forth from His place of entombment*.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead was a wonderful occurrence. All the Gospel writers testify to the fact of the Resurrection, but, surprising as it may be, not one of them tells exactly (the exact minute) when this event took place. This, however, is not to say that the Bible does not give us enough information about the time of the Resurrection to determine approximately when it took place—that is, the day and the period of the day in which it occurred.

Here is exactly what each Gospel writer

tells us about the Resurrection:

MARK:

*And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they [Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome] came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.*

*And . . . the stone was rolled away . . . And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man . . . clothed in a long white garment . . . And he saith unto them . . . ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen: he is not here: behold the place where they laid him (Mark 16:2-6).*

It is to be noted that Mark does not give any indication as to when Jesus left the tomb. He merely records that some women made a visit to the tomb “*at the rising of the sun*” only to find that Christ was not there.

JOHN:

*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.*

*Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter . . . Then . . . Peter . . . went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself (John 20:1-7).*

What is to be gleaned from this passage of Scripture? Just this: Neither does

John give even a hint as to when Christ left the tomb. He merely states that those who went there before daylight—"when it was yet dark"—found "*the stone taken away*" and that Jesus was not there. It is to be observed that this visit was made earlier than the account given by Mark.

**LUKE:**

*Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre...*

*And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.*

*And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.*

*...two men...in shining garments ...said...He is not here, but is risen ... (Luke 24:1-6).*

And neither does Luke give any clue as to when Christ departed from the sepulchre. He only collaborates what the other writers record: that Christ was gone when the women arrived there. But we have not yet read Matthew's account of the Resurrection.

**MATTHEW REVEALS THE TIME**

**MATTHEW:**

*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.*

*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 (Matt. 28:1, 2, 5, and 6).*

In these verses we find that Matthew adds some very important information regarding the event, but we find no contradiction in his account. Matthew is the only writer that pin-points the time of the Resurrection. He tells of a visit made to the tomb *before* the first day of the week had begun—"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week." He does not say exactly how long this was before the next day began, but it is definite that it was in the last part of the Sabbath.

This fully explains why Christ was not in the tomb when visits were made after the Sabbath ended—upon the first day of the week. The women in Matthew's account were there (in the vicinity, at least) at the time of the Resurrection, for Matthew states that "*there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it,*" yet they did not actually see Christ taken from the tomb.

It is to be noted that Matthew expresses the time of the Resurrection with two different terms: "*in the end of the Sabbath,*" and "*as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week.*" These are synonymous. The



Sabbath ended, and still ends, at sunset (see Lev. 23:32).

#### THE MEANING OF THE WORD "DAWN"

The word "dawn" in verse one (of Matthew 28) deserves some comment. Although it is usually applied to the morning, its usage here could not possibly indicate the time of the rising of the sun. First of all, Matthew had just said that it was "in the end of the Sabbath." Thus, since the Sabbath ended at sunset, it would be impossible for "dawn" to mean *morning here*, for the sun would not rise until some 12 hours later. It could not be in the end of the Sabbath and morning at the same time.

Secondly, the word "dawn" is used here as a verb and not as a noun. Notice that the wording is *not* "as it began to be dawn," but "as it began TO DAWN TOWARD." Under the verb form of the word, the dictionary (Webster) gives: "to begin to appear, develop, or give promise; first appearance; beginning." Therefore, we must understand that the Resurrection took place at the time when the first day of the week was near at hand, beginning to appear—when dusk and lengthening shadows gave promise of a new day about to begin, but BEFORE and not AFTER. It was in the end of a day and not in the beginning of one.

The word "dawn" is translated from the Greek word *epiphosko*. *Parkhurst's Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines this word as follows: "To draw on, as the Jewish Sabbath, which began in the eve-

ning, (see Lev. 23:32; Neh. 13:19). Thus the verb is plainly used, Luke 23:54 (compare John 19:31 with Deut. 21:22, 23) and in the same view it may be understood wherein it occurs, namely Matt. 28:1 ... In the evening of the Sabbath, when the (Jewish) day was drawing on towards the first day of the week."

The word "toward" is a mighty obstacle in the way of a Sunday morning resurrection. As long as it was dawning, or drawing on toward the first day of the week, it is certain that the first day of the week had not arrived.

At this point it should be helpful to note how other men have translated Matthew 28:1, or at least part of it. Here are a few such translations:

*Revised Version* and *American Standard Version*:

"Now late on the sabbath."

*Peshitto Syriac*:

"And in the close of the sabbath"

*American Bible Union New Testament*, published by American Baptist Publishing Society:

(Continued on page 18)

(On the next two pages will be found a chart [with accompanying notes] showing a condensed day-by-day transpiring of events before, during, and after the time of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. It should be helpful in forming a clear picture regarding the time that Christ was dead and in the grave and when He was resurrected.)

GRAPHICALLY SHOWING THE TIME ELEMENT

In the Resurrection and Crucifixion of Christ

"FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD . . . CALLED THE PASSOVER" -- Luke 22:1; Exodus 12:6-21

JESUS IN THE TOMB (Matt. 12:40):  
3 days and 3 nights = 72 hours  
(six 12-hour parts -- John 11:9)

FRIDAY (Nisan 9th)	SABBATH (Nisan 10th) Weekly Sab.	SUNDAY (Nisan 11th)	MONDAY (Nisan 12th)	TUESDAY (Nisan 13th)	WEDNESDAY (Nisan 14th) Preparation Day	THURSDAY (Nisan 15th) Hi. Day Sab.	FRIDAY (Nisan 16th)	SABBATH (Nisan 17th) Weekly Sabbath	SUNDAY (Nisan 18th)	MONDAY (Nisan 19th)	TUESDAY (Nisan 20th)	WEDNESDAY (Nisan 21st) Hi. Day Sab.	
night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	night day	
Jesus Journeyed to Bethany Mk. 11:1,2; John 12:1	Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem John 12:12-15	Fig Tree Cursed Mark 11:13,14	Fig Tree Dried Up Mark 11:19,20	Upper Room Reserved Luke 22:8-14	The Lord's Supper Instituted Luke 22:7-14	The Trial Luke 22:66	Jesus 1 night and 1 day in the tomb --	Entombed 2 Nights and 2 Days --	Jesus 3 Nights and 3 Days in the Tomb --	Visits Made to Tomb While Dark and At Sunrise; Jesus Not There!	Fifth Day of Unleavened Bread Exodus 13:6,7	Sixth Day of Unleavened Bread Deut. 16:8	Yearly High Day Sabbath Exodus 12:15-18
--	Jesus Wapt Over Jerusalem Luke 19:41	--	Jesus Returns to Cast Out Money Changers Mark 11:15	Jesus Secludes Himself	Judas Betrays Christ Luke 22:17,48	Jesus Crucified; 3-hour Darkness Matt. 27:34-50	Yearly High Day Sabbath John 19:31	Women Bought and Prepared Spices With Which to Anoint the Body of Jesus Matt. 27:62-66	Earthquake Opens Tomb and Jesus is Resurrected (before sundown) Matt. 28:1-7	Exodus 13:6,7	Deut. 16:8	Exodus 12:15-18	
Martha Prepared Supper John 12:2	Jesus Observes Temple Mark 11:11	Jesus Returns to Cast Out Money Changers Mark 11:15	Jesus Secludes Himself	Jesus Secludes Himself	Judas Betrays Christ Luke 22:17,48	Jesus Crucified; 3-hour Darkness Matt. 27:34-50	Yearly High Day Sabbath John 19:31	Women Bought and Prepared Spices With Which to Anoint the Body of Jesus Matt. 27:62-66	Earthquake Opens Tomb and Jesus is Resurrected (before sundown) Matt. 28:1-7	Exodus 13:6,7	Deut. 16:8	Exodus 12:15-18	

The above chart shows events which took place each day of the last week of the life of Christ before His crucifixion, and on to the close of the time of unleavened bread. John 12:1 tells us it was six days before the passover when Jesus went to Bethany. Evidently this means six days before the passover **sabbath**. This same word meaning is found in John 19:14 which tells us that the day of the crucifixion was "the preparation of the passover." The day of the crucifixion was actually the passover day, the day on the beginning of which they had eaten the passover lamb. But it was the day of preparation for the "high day" or Passover sabbath and thus Friday, Nisan 9, is six days before the passover **sabbath**.

The references shown on the chart tell

of events which happened on each day of the week. At the beginning of Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan Jesus and the disciples ate the Passover meal and Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. During the light part of this same day Jesus was crucified, on the preparation of the (passover) sabbath. He was placed in the tomb just before sunset, as the (passover) sabbath drew on. He remained in the tomb Thursday night and day, Friday night and day, and the weekly Sabbath night and day, arising from the tomb just before sunset. Thus He was in the tomb 72 hours, or a full 3 days and 3 nights. Thus He fulfilled the prophecy which He gave as recorded in Matthew 12:40 "so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

"Now late in the sabbath."

Dean Alfred:

"Now in the end of the Sabbath."

Rotherham:

"And late in the week, when it was on the point of dawning into the first of the week."

George Ricker Berry (in his *Greek New Testament Interlinear*):

"Now late on sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward first of week."

James Moffatt:

"At the close of the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning."

*The Sinaitic Palimpsest* (older than any known Greek text) confirms the renderings given:

"And on the evening of the Sabbath, as the first day of the week dawned."

At first thought it might seem rather strange that the Resurrection should have occurred just before sunset. Yet, when we think further, we discover that this is the very time of day that it should have happened—had to happen—in order for the prophetic words of Jesus to be fulfilled exactly.

Now we have found the time (approximate) of the Resurrection, but when we compare it with the presumed time that Christ was placed in the tomb, the search for the answer concerning the time element in our study becomes even more perplexing. If Christ was placed in the tomb just before sunset Friday, and if He arose just before

sunset Sabbath, He was in the tomb only 24 hours, or one day and one night. This cannot be true, for in no sense, then, could it be said that the day after He arose was "the third day since these things were done" (see Luke 24:21).

Jesus said He would be in the grave three days and three nights. Thus, since we have found that He was resurrected in the end of the Sabbath, we have only to count back the length of time He prophesied He would be there to determine when He was placed in the sepulchre. This back-counting takes us to just before sundown Wednesday, which means that Jesus was crucified on that day and *not* on Friday.

(Now it can be seen why we dealt with the question regarding the time Christ left the tomb in order to answer the previous question: "When was Christ placed in the tomb?")

"But," it might be questioned, "how can this be? How could Christ have been crucified on Wednesday when it is clearly stated that the crucifixion day was the preparation day for the Sabbath?" John gives the answer:

*The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day [the day following the preparation day] was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (John 19:31).*

This shows that Christ was crucified on

a day called "*the preparation.*" Was this the preparation (day) for the seventh-day Sabbath? No, it was not. It could not have been for at least three reasons: Firstly, the day before the weekly Sabbath was never called a "*preparation,*" secondly, the weekly Sabbath (as designated in the Ten Commandments) was also never called or referred to as a "*high day,*" and thirdly, the same writer (John) tells us positively (in verse 14 of this chapter) exactly which occasion this preparation day preceded. He said:

*And it was the preparation of the pass-over, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!*

This preparation day was for the Passover, meaning the Passover Sabbath, and "*an high day.*" Thus, after John states that this "*was the preparation of the passover,*" (in verse 14) we must understand that the "*preparation*" in verse 31 is the same as mentioned in verse 14, and that "*the sabbath day*" in verse 31 corresponds to "*the pass-over*" in verse 14.

Jesus—the true Passover Lamb of God—was killed on the same day that the Passover lamb had always been slain, and we have just noticed that this was on a *preparation day*. However, this was not a preparation day for an ordinary weekly Sabbath, for we have just shown: "*that sabbath was an high day,*" and (we repeat) the weekly Sabbath was never called *an high day*.

It is argued by some that this special high-day sabbath occurred on the same day

as the weekly Sabbath. This could not be the case, because it can be proven astronomically that the moon fullled the year of the crucifixion on Tuesday at 2 p.m. (This date has been collaborated by both the U. S. Naval Observatory and by the British Astronomer Royal.) The Passover always occurred on the day following the night of the fulling of the moon. Therefore, the Passover could not have been on the weekly Sabbath.

#### OTHER DAYS CALLED SABBATHS

It is to be observed that days other than the seventh day of the week were also called *sabbaths*. For instance, we find a different day called a *sabbath* in this verse:

*Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation (Lev. 23:24).*

Then in the thirty-ninth verse another sabbath is mentioned, thus:

*Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath.*

When we review some Old Testament Scriptures pertaining to the institution of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which followed immediately afterward, we

find yet another day called a *sabbath*, and this is the *sabbath*, or "high day" John refers to in chapter 19, verse 31 (previously quoted).

Thus, it becomes necessary to determine what day, or occasion, is meant when the word *sabbath* is used in Scripture, and, according to the Scriptures just quoted, it can be seen that the *sabbath* which came the next day after Christ was crucified was not necessarily the weekly seventh-day Sabbath according to the commandment.

### THE PASSOVER SABBATH

Christ was killed on the fourteenth day of the first month (Hebrew)—the same day on which the Passover lamb was slain under the old covenant (see Exodus 12:1-6), and this could occur on any day of the week. The day following the killing of the Passover lamb was always a *sabbath* day. This we determine from the following verses:

*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 unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.*

*In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein (Lev. 23:5-7).*

Here the fifteenth day is not called a *sabbath*; it is called "an holy convocation," which, according to the twenty-fourth verse—  
"*... in the first day of the month, shall ye*

*have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation"*—means a *sabbath*. It was a time when no servile work (or work of any kind) was to be done. This made it a *sabbath*.

By this it can be seen that the day following the crucifixion of Christ, which Luke called "*the sabbath*" (Luke 23:54), would, of necessity, have to correspond to the day following the Passover according to Leviticus 23, and this was a *sabbath* but *not the seventh-day Sabbath*.

The crucifixion day was the preparation day for the Passover *sabbath* to follow, and that was not necessarily Friday. In this particular year the preparation day was Wednesday. (This will be verified later.) Jesus died about three o'clock in the afternoon on that day, and just before sunset He was placed in the tomb. Seventy-two hours later (or three days and three nights) would have been just before sundown on the seventh-day Sabbath, which was the time (according to Matthew 28:1-6) when the angel opened the tomb and said:

*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 (vv. 4, 5).*

### TIME OF THE ENTOMBMENT

Now we shall proceed with our study by considering some other verses pertaining to the time of Christ's entombment. This

time is referred to in the Gospels in three different ways—as follows:

1. Jesus would “*be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*” (Matt. 12:40).
2. He would “*be raised again the third day*” (Matt. 16:21; also see Matt. 17:23 and 20:19, Mark 9:31, and Luke 9:22).
3. Jesus had said: “*After three days I will rise again*” (Matt. 27:63; see also Mark 8:31).

Knowing that the Bible is Divinely inspired, and thus true and without contradiction, there must be complete harmony between these three designated periods of time, and especially between the terms: “*the third day*” and “*after three days.*” And there is. The reference (in these verses) to the time Christ would be in the grave in no way disputes or contradicts the doctrine of the Wednesday crucifixion and Sabbath (just before sundown) resurrection. They harmonize with this truth in a wonderful way and show the exactness of God.

#### “RAISED . . . THE THIRD DAY”:

How could Jesus have been in the tomb three days and three nights and rise *the third day*? This question is easily answered. He was placed in the tomb on Wednesday (just before sundown). Twenty-four hours later would have been just before sundown Thursday, which marked the first day He was in the tomb. Following the same counting, Friday would have been the second day, and

Saturday (just before sundown—72 hours later) would have been the third day (full twenty-four-hour days) that He was entombed, and He rose from the grave that day.

#### “AFTER THREE DAYS”:

Again, how could Christ have arisen the third day and at the same time left the tomb *after three days*? This is the answer: According to Matthew, He would be in the grave three days and three nights—72 hours. Thus, after that period of time would be *after* He had been there three days. He could not have risen before the expiration of the three days. There was time after the elapsing of the specified time and sundown for Him to make His exit from the tomb and still do so *on the third day*.

Therefore, we find perfect harmony in all three designations of the time, with everything working out to the exact minute as we should know God would have worked it out. Praise His name!

#### “THE THIRD DAY SINCE . . .”

There is one more time reference made that is linked to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. This was made by one of the two men who were walking from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus on the next day after the Resurrection, while Jesus (unknown to them) joined them and walked along with them. They were talking about the recent events involved in the death and resurrection of Jesus when one said:

*But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to day is the third day since these things were done (Luke 24:21).*

We have previously noted several verses wherein it is stated that Jesus was to rise on the *third day* (following His crucifixion and burial). If this *third day* (mentioned by one of the two disciples going to Emmaus) was **THE** *third day* after Christ was placed in the tomb, then it would seem that the conclusion would have to be that the Resurrection occurred on the first day of the week. However, this would be in direct contradiction with statements in other verses which we have considered—one being the sign of Jonah and another the statement made by Matthew that Christ was not found in the tomb in the end of the Sabbath.

We would observe, though, that this is not a contradictory statement (made in Luke 24:21), as can be readily seen by observing *exactly* what is said in the verse under consideration. When we do, it can be seen that not only is there *no* contradiction but that it is impossible for Sunday to have been "*the third day since*" (or after) the day of Christ's crucifixion. Why? Because:

*If Sunday was the third day AFTER the day of the crucifixion it could not have taken place on Friday. It would have had to occur on Thursday, for if SUNDAY was the third day AFTER, then (counting backward), Saturday would have been the second day*

AFTER, and *Friday* would have been the *first day AFTER* the crucifixion day—not the day **OF** this event. It would be absurd and out of harmony with common understanding and grammatical diction to say that the day on which Christ was crucified was **the first day AFTER** (since) it was done. That just does not make sense, does it?

We will now show, by observing *exactly* what the disciple said, that his statement neither complicates the subject nor does it in any way contradict that which is stated in other parts of the Bible.

Although the verse under consideration is often quoted to substantiate the belief that Christ was resurrected on Sunday, it does not so state. The disciple did *not* say: "Today is the third day *since the crucifixion and entombment* of Jesus." Rather, he said: "... to day is the third day **SINCE THESE THINGS** were done." Thus, it would first be necessary to determine what was meant by "*these things*."

Very apparently the two men had been talking about more than the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, for we read in the fourteenth verse:

*And they talked together of ALL these things which had happened.*

This would have included *all* that had been done in connection with the death and burial of Jesus. The last thing that was done was the sealing of the tomb and setting of a watch. This was on the day after His death, or Thursday, as we determine by these verses:

Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying... Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure... Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch (Matt. 27:62-66).

Thus, the time to count the days after would be from the day on which the last thing was done in connection with the crucifixion, and this was that which we have just pointed out—the sealing of the tomb and the setting of the watch, and this was on Thursday. Hence, Friday would have been the first day after, Saturday the second day after, and Sunday the third day after “all these things” had happened. Again we find perfect harmony in the Scriptures.

#### WHY THIS STUDY?

Why should we study this subject in such detail? Does it really make any difference as to the day on which Christ was crucified and on which day He was resurrected? Is it not true that the most important thing is to believe that Jesus died for us and rose again that we might live (eternally) also? Yes, it is true that that which He did for us is vitally important, and, without other factors involved, it is of greater importance than the time element. But since other factors are involved, the time element

is also vital. Besides, it gives great satisfaction to know that we are believing and teaching Scriptural truth. It is a lack of understanding of this subject that has led to other false teachings.

#### THE OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY— A FALSE TEACHING

We would point out that the observance of Sunday as a day for rest and worship has, in the main, been an outgrowth of the teaching that Christ was raised from the dead on Sunday, which, when we see what the Scriptures really set forth concerning the time element in the crucifixion and resurrection of the Saviour, leaves this doctrine without support. When asked why they observe Sunday as the Sabbath, most of those questioned will reply: “Because Christ rose on that day.”

It is because we see people changing the commandment of God and thereby losing His divine blessing because of a misunderstanding (or lack of Bible knowledge) relative to the true time of the Resurrection that we are impressed with the need of preparing and publishing this study.

The prophet, Daniel, said that there would be a power (men) who would “*think to change times and laws*” (see Daniel 7:25). In one instance this happened when Sunday was substituted for Saturday as the day for rest from work and for going to church for worship. This change was wrought by men, for there is no Scriptural injunction for the change. And it is dangerous to adjust our



worship of God and of Christ according to the doctrine of men and to establish our faith in conformity with the teachings of men. Christ called it "vain." He said:

*But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matt. 15:9).*

Even if it could be proven that Christ rose on Sunday (which it cannot be) that would constitute no basis for changing the Sabbath commandment and establishing a new day for rest and worship, because there is not even a hint in the Bible that the day upon which Christ was resurrected was to be considered as a sacred, holy, or sanctified day, or even as a day to be used for private or public worship and for rest.

Furthermore, there is not even the slightest Scriptural intimation that the day of Christ's resurrection was to be celebrated or remembered in *any* special way. Therefore, the time of Christ's resurrection does not give any reason for keeping Sunday instead of the Sabbath.

#### **THE OBSERVANCE OF "GOOD FRIDAY"**

Another outgrowth of the false teaching about the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ is "Good Friday." Each year most of the churches have a special service on the Friday before Easter. This day is designated as "Good Friday," and it is celebrated as the day of the crucifixion. However, after having read thus far in this treatise on the subject and having carefully compared state-

ments made herein with the Bible, it should not be difficult to see that there is no Scriptural foundation for the observance of this day.

It is true that Christ taught that we should remember His death. He instituted a service for this purpose, which Paul refers to as the "*Lord's Supper*" (1 Cor. 11:20)—a time when unleavened bread and fruit of the vine is to be taken as emblems of His broken body and shed blood. However, he instituted this service during the *night* that He was betrayed, or the night of the day on which He was crucified, and *not on the day* He was resurrected. Therefore, taking the communion on Sunday is also without Scriptural justification. It seems that those who believe that Christ was crucified on Friday should at least take communion on *that* day.

"Good Friday" is another institution of man. Christ was not crucified on Friday, as we have clearly shown—this event having taken place on Wednesday afternoon. However, this does not mean that Wednesday is the day to always be observed as the time of His crucifixion. Just as birthdays fall on different days of the week each year, likewise, the anniversary of the crucifixion also comes on a different day each year.

Thus, "Good Friday" must also be discarded, because it is unscriptural.

#### **WHAT ABOUT EASTER?**

Since we have shown that Christ was not resurrected on Sunday, there is, there-

fore, no Bible grounds for the observance of Easter, although it is one of the most important special days in most churches. We have shown that Christ actually arose from the tomb just before sundown on Sabbath, the day *preceding* Sunday. Easter-sunrise-services are completely unscriptural. There is no example or teaching in the Bible for the celebration of the resurrection of Christ—as we have already pointed out.

To observe Easter as a special, sacred, and religious day and then hide colored eggs for children to hunt, and then break the commandment by lying to them by trying to make them believe that rabbits laid them, is very inconsistent, to say the least. It is religious mockery and an infamous sin.

### CONCLUSION

We have presented what we believe is the truth relative to the time element in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and why we think it is important. You are invited to do as the people in Berea. They were commended for being "*more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so*" (Acts 17:11).

Search the Bible and study it carefully so that you will be personally assured that we have rightly interpreted the Word of God. There is a great blessing in knowing the truth. Jesus said:

*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free* (John 8:32).

### OTHER FREE BIBLE TRACTS

Order for personal study or giving to others

Title	Pages each
Steps to Salvation . . . . .	18
Wondrous Grace—	
God's Life-Saving Gift . . . . .	32
The Second Coming of Christ . . . . .	32
Can You Afford to Take the Chance? . . . . .	16
The Ordinance of Baptism . . . . .	16
The Observance of the Lord's Supper . . . . .	24
If a Man Die, Does He Still Live? . . . . .	24
Palestine, Jews and Bible Prophecy . . . . .	24
The Destiny of the Earth	
...Destroyed or Restored? . . . . .	16
A Real Love Story . . . . .	4
The Return of the Jews and Jerusalem . . . . .	4
Should the 7th-Day Sabbath Be	
Observed by Christians Today? . . . . .	20
The Ten Commandments . . . . .	3
Has Time Been Lost? . . . . .	16
About Face . . . . .	10
Religious Surgery . . . . .	8
Adam's Apple . . . . .	4
Bible Baptism . . . . .	6
Christmas Investigated . . . . .	28
Faith and Repentance . . . . .	4
Is the Bible True? . . . . .	4
Jesus Is Coming Again . . . . .	4
Keeping Fit Spiritually . . . . .	8
Legal Advice from Heaven . . . . .	4
The 1,000-Year Reign with Christ . . . . .	16
The Punishment of the Wicked . . . . .	32

Order from

THE BIBLE ADVOCATE PRESS

Stanberry, Missouri 64489