

*The Resurrection
of Christ
Not on Sunday*

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"Three days and three nights
in the heart of the earth"

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST NOT ON SUNDAY

It has been taught for centuries that Christ was crucified on "Good Friday," laid in the tomb just before sunset, and that He arose very early on Easter Sunday morning. Tradition has so firmly planted that belief into the minds of most Christians that it is generally taken for a fact without serious investigation. This THEORY, although believed by many people, makes Jesus' only prophetic sign untrue.

Christ's Only Sign

When asked by certain scribes and Pharisees for a sign as proof of His being the Christ, He said, "... there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas [Jonah]. 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" (or tomb) (Matthew 12:39, 40). Other Scriptural references are made to this same sign. The scribes and Pharisees, themselves, remembered it after His resurrection, and they understood it to refer to the tomb (Matthew 27:62-64). Paul speaks of the tomb as the lower parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:9). How can anyone get three days and three nights from Friday just before sunset to Sunday at sunrise? Two nights and one day is the best that can be done with that tradition.

Some reason that a part of a day was counted as a whole. God does not do such piecework. The period was definitely three complete days and nights.

Allowing for a moment that parts of days were taken for whole days, we would have Friday, Friday night, Saturday, Saturday night, and Sunday. Count and see that we thus have three days and two nights. And actually no part of Sunday should be counted as a day because John 20:1-9 shows that the women came to the tomb on Sunday morning "when it was yet dark," and Jesus was already risen. Thus with parts of days counted as whole days we would actually have only two days and two nights, if the Good Friday-Easter Sunday tradition were correct.

If Jesus failed to completely fulfill the sign of Jonah, He is not the Christ. He is the Christ, and, therefore He was in the tomb three full days and three full nights as He said He would be.

Jonah was literally three days and three nights in the belly of the fish (Jonah 1:17). It was not three days and three nights from the time the storm began. The time was counted from the time he entered the fish's mouth until the fish vomited him up. Jesus said, "... as Jonas was ... so shall the Son of man be..." So we cannot count, as some do, from the time of His betrayal or arrest to His resurrection. If we will forget about tradition and take the Scriptures at face value, the truth will shine forth. First, when was He resurrected?

We have four witnesses who give accounts of the events connected with Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In our investigation it is the truth we want, so we shall use all four witnesses. First, let us take Mark's account (Mark 16:1-6). Read it carefully in your Bible. Notice that these women

came to anoint the body of Jesus on the first day of the week "at the rising of the sun." When they arrived, they found the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. Jesus was already risen; He was not there. An empty tomb at sunrise Sunday morning is NOT PROOF that He arose that morning.

Next, let us notice Luke's report concerning the same event (Luke 24:1-3). Read it and note the harmony with Mark's account: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and FOUND NOT the BODY of the Lord Jesus."

It could not be stated more positively that Jesus had risen some time before this visit to anoint His body. Mark and Luke are in perfect accord about this visit to the tomb, but neither of them tells when Christ arose from the tomb, but one thing is certain: He was gone at sunrise Sunday morning.

John records an earlier visit of Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb early the first day of the week, while it was YET DARK (John 20:1-5). It could hardly be sunrise and yet dark at the same time. Mary Magdalene may have been alone this time, for no other person is mentioned. She found the tomb empty at this earlier visit and ran and told Peter and John, who when they came, found the tomb empty. All three believed the body to have been stolen, for as yet they did not believe in His resurrection. After Peter and John returned

home, Mary stood without, weeping. After His resurrection, Jesus made His first appearance to her early the first day of the week. See John 20:14-17.

Keep this in mind, for we are now ready for the one text often used to prove (?) He arose on Sunday (Mark 16:9, 10): "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them..." The verb "was risen" is **past perfect tense** and shows positively that the resurrection was a thing already completed prior to the time stated here. Jesus was risen at the time He appeared—first to Mary Magdalene early the first day of the week. Compare with John 20:14-17. No proof here for a Sunday resurrection! Mark is merely stating the time of Jesus' appearance and not of His resurrection, which agrees with John's account.

Saturday Resurrection

So far, all three witnesses used have testified that the tomb was empty at every visit to it on Sunday morning, even when it was yet dark. We have one more Gospel writer to testify. Matthew tells of the time of the earthquake and resurrection. Hear him (Matt. 28:1-6): "In the end of the sabbath [late on 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... said unto the women... I know that ye seek

Jesus, which was crucified. He is NOT here: for He is RISEN...."

This occurred late on the Sabbath day, just before sunset Saturday (as the Sabbath ended at sunset (Lev. 23:32; Mark 1:32). Thus, we have found perfect harmony.

The tomb was found empty each time. Matthew has told of a visit late on the Sabbath at which time Jesus had risen. If Jesus arose just before sunset Sabbath (Saturday), when was He crucified?

Time of Crucifixion

It is generally agreed that Jesus was crucified on the preparation of the Sabbath, and that He was buried just before sunset, for the Sabbath began at even. "...the sabbath drew on" (near), (Luke 23:52-55). What Sabbath was this? Some might answer: "Why ask that; there is only one."

No, that is wrong; there are other sabbaths besides the weekly Sabbath. Let John explain: "...it was the preparation of the passover..." (John 19:14). So the day of Christ's crucifixion was also on the day they prepared the Passover lamb, which was a type of Christ (1 Cor. 5:7). "...it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) ..." (John 19:31).

Here we have the secret of the whole matter. John clearly identifies this sabbath as an high day, which shows it was not the weekly Sabbath. Another fact is: he stated it was the day following the killing of the Passover lamb. We must turn to the Old Testament record to find out about the date for the Passover. In Exodus 12:6-16 and

Leviticus 23:4-7 we find that the 14th day of the first month was the Passover. This is Jewish time and came in the springtime (month of Nisan or Abib). The next day, or 15th, was a yearly sabbath—the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (see Lev. 23:4-7). This yearly sabbath was an high day in that it was the day Israel marched out of Egyptian bondage (Num. 33:3). It was the next day after the Passover. Thus the Passover was the preparation for that high-day sabbath.

There is no reason to assume that the preparation mentioned at the time of Christ's crucifixion was Friday inasmuch as it was the yearly sabbath and not the weekly Sabbath. The 14th of Nisan was the Passover and was always on the first full moon in the spring. (See **Smith's Bible Dictionary** or article "Passover" in the **Americana Encyclopedia**.) That being true we have but to find out the time of the full moon in A.D. 31, and we have the day of the crucifixion.

Several have written to the U. S. Naval Observatory in Washington, D. C., for that calculation. The reply came back that the moon full Tuesday, March the 27th, at 1:00 p.m., Jerusalem time. The first night of the full moon would be on our Tuesday night, but since Bible time begins the day at sunset (Lev. 23:32), that would be Wednesday night, Bible time, and the day for killing the Passover lamb. Jesus was betrayed that night and was taken prisoner. Before another sunset He was in the tomb, on Wednesday. He was placed in the tomb just before sunset.

Three Days and Three Nights

Wednesday evening to Thursday evening (Wednesday night and Thursday) would have been one night and one day; Thursday evening to Friday evening (Thursday night and Friday) would have been another night and day; and Friday evening to Saturday evening (Friday night and Saturday) would have been another night and day, making a total of three days and three nights. Thus, His only sign to the scribes and Pharisees was fulfilled.

Wednesday was the Passover and preparation for that high-day sabbath. Thursday was the high-day sabbath; Friday was the preparation for the weekly Sabbath and the day the women prepared their ointments (Luke 23:56), for they had no time to do this on Wednesday before sunset. Thus, we find Christ's word true, and tradition, untrue.

With this Scriptural evidence no one should longer think to associate sacredness to Sunday on the basis of the time of Christ's resurrection. On the other hand, if we are going to honor the day of His resurrection it would have to be Saturday—the seventh day of the week. Shall we follow tradition or the Bible? (See Mark 7:7-9.)

(Capitalization of certain words in Scriptural quotations in this tract has been used for the purpose of emphasis and does not so appear in the Bible.)

For a more detailed study of this subject write to the publishers and ask for the free tract entitled: "The Time Element in the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ."

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