

THE GOOD FRIDAY MYTH

(Bible verses quoted are from the NKJV unless otherwise noted)

[Brackets are around the text added by translators]

IS THE FRIDAY CRUCIFIXION–SUNDAY RESURRECTION A BIBLICAL TRUTH?

Today, millions of people and hundreds of church organizations teach and believe that Christ was crucified on a Friday and resurrected early Sunday morning. At one time, in my life, I also believed that; after all, the men (ministry) responsible for teaching the truth of God’s Word said it was so. But is this what your bible actually says? What is the truth?

Like all deceptions, those who are victimized often have a difficult time believing that they have been the victim of a fraud. Occasionally the false information is so thoroughly indoctrinated that it becomes nearly impossible for the individual to believe the truth. In the past some have tried to set the record straight.

Much of our problem lies in the lack of understanding of how life was lived at this time in Jewish history. People think in terms of how life is lived today, but it is important to think in terms of how they lived in the time of Christ. By applying the correct understanding to how their everyday life was centered on religious principles—especially the observations of God’s Sabbaths—and then following the actions of the men and women who dealt with the body of Christ, the proof of the complete three day and night interment of Christ is not disputable.

THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS

This is not the first work pointing out the fallacies of a Friday crucifixion. In the Companion Bible, E.W. Bullinger did an outstanding work of showing that Christ’s statement in **Matthew 12:38-40** meant exactly three twenty-four-hour periods. ***“Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered saying, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the Prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’”***

Christ meant exactly that! He would spend three full days and three full nights in the grave before being brought back to life. By this statement Christ places His stamp of authority as our Messiah by being in the grave for three complete days and three complete nights. The phrase “heart of the earth” is used symbolically, representing a grave. Christ tells us that this is how we can know that He is truly the Messiah, and is a challenge given to us also as a proof of Christ’s Messiahship. A point is made by Christ in **John 11** that

should not be missed; He delayed His coming to Lazarus until he had been dead and in the grave for four days. **John 11:39** *“Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, ‘Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been [dead] four days.’”*

Christ delayed His coming to Lazarus for two reasons. First was to dispense all doubt that Lazarus was dead because the Jews had a tradition that a person was not considered dead until no life was seen for three days. Second, Christ wanted to show that He had the power over the grave (death). This is the foundation for Christ’s statement in **Matthew 12** of three days and three nights, making the point to them that by your own tradition I am going to show you the absolute truth of my death and resurrection. No Jew would accept Christ’s death based on the erroneous Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection. They would say that Christ never truly died, and that it was a hoax. Even today, the swoon theory is one of the fallacious arguments used by some of the unbelieving opponents to deny the death of Christ. Christ is telling the skeptical unbelieving Jews that this is how they (and we) can know that He is the Messiah.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

By first examining how the actions of the men and women who dealt with Christ’s body after His death would not fit a Friday/Sunday scenario, as the true story told by the Bible will reveal. It begins with Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, and the two Mary’s, whose actions are recorded in the gospels in **Matthew 27:57-59**, **Mark 15:43-47**, **Luke 23:50-56**, and **John 19:38-42**. The facts as related in these four gospels must be understood, not individually, but collectively giving the true account of the time from His death to His resurrection.

In addition, it should be remembered that the “dos and don’ts” of that society dominated how and why people acted as they did.

HOW TIME WAS KEPT

The numbered hours, as the Jews kept time, were divided into two twelve-hour periods similar to what is now used to mark time. The difference comes in when they began their first hour, as their day started at sunset. Hour number one began at that time. Sunset in Jerusalem in that day of history was a few minutes after 6 p.m. present time. Therefore, the hour 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in today’s time would have been the twelfth hour for them. The ninth hour then occurred three hours before, which would have been 3 p.m. in today’s time. **John 11:9** *“Jesus answered, ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? ...’”*

THE MONTHS OF THE JEWISH CALENDAR

The monthly calendar in the time of Christ began in the spring of the year, unlike the Gregorian calendar today which starts in the middle of winter (January). **Esther 3:7** says, *“In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur (that [is,] the lot), before Haman to determine the day of the month, until [it fell on the] twelfth [month,] which [is] the month Adar.”* **Exodus 12:1-2** ties it together. *“Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ‘This month [shall be] your beginning of months; it [shall be] the first month of the year to you.’”*

OTHER SABBATHS

Another time element needing explanation is that God calls other days of the year Sabbaths as well as the seventh day of the week. This is the reason that John called the day following the crucifixion a “High Day,” differentiating it from the weekly Sabbath. In addition to the weekly Sabbath there are seven annual feast days proclaimed by God in **Leviticus 23** that require a preparation day. First are the two Sabbaths of Unleavened Bread, then the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), followed by Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles, and the Eighth Day Feast. These are the seven days in the year which require holy convocations, referred to as High Day Sabbaths. Knowing this fact makes it obvious what the real sequence of events was following the death of Christ.

THE HOUR OF DEATH

In **Matthew 27:46** and **Mark 15:34** Christ’s death is recorded at the ninth hour, matching the present-day time of 3 p.m. He was sacrificed in the Hebrew month of Nisan, which corresponds with the Gregorian month of April at this time of the year. Sunset occurred shortly after 6 p.m. As Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus—two wealthy men—witnessed the crucifixion they would not have been standing among the mockers or the soldiers, but apart and together because of their status in the community. Once the soldier thrust Christ through, confirming His death, it became clear that Christ had perished. Any hopes they may have had of Christ saving Himself were dashed.

THE BURIAL DECISION

Upon witnessing the death of Christ, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus made the decision to have His body placed in Joseph’s newly made tomb, and as best they could prepare the body for burial. They would not have their Messiah buried in a grave with criminals, which would mean being dumped into their garbage dump, where the crucified bodies of criminals were disposed of by burning.

By agreement they set out on their individual tasks knowing that they needed to be finished before sundown, the end of the first preparation day, before the first annual Sabbath of Unleavened Bread began, which was the first high day of the New Year. Joseph's first task would be to go to Pilate to get permission to take the body of Christ, and Nicodemus needed to obtain the needed spices for the burial. Meanwhile, the two women waited at the site of the crucifixion to see what would happen to the body. **Mark 15:47** ***"And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Joses observed where He was laid."***

SUNSET ENDS THE DAY

At this point it is important to know how this society functioned, and it is critical to understand that at the going down of the sun the day ended and a new day began. **Luke 4:40** explains how it was kept. ***"When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them."*** The people waited for the Sabbath to end at the setting of the sun before bringing their sick to be healed because they feared what the authorities might do to them if they did anything that would remotely be considered work on the Sabbath day, including all buying and selling.

As the sun was setting in Jerusalem at that time of the year it would be a few minutes after 6 p.m., giving Joseph and Nicodemus about three hours to accomplish getting permission to take the body down and to prepare it for burial and transporting it to the tomb. Joseph's first task was to get permission to take the body down so that it could be prepared for burial. **Mark 15:42-46**. ***"Now when evening had come, because it was the Preparation Day, that is the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate marveled that He was already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him if He had been dead for some time. So when he found out from the centurion he granted the body to Joseph. Then he brought fine linen, took Him down, wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the tomb."***

This entailed Joseph returning to the city and requesting an audience with Pilate; then waiting for Pilate to receive Him. Pilate then took the time to confirm Christ's death. Remember, the main mode of travel at this time was walking. He then had to receive official permission to present at the crucifixion site for the removal of the body of Jesus. On his return trip he needed to obtain the linen cloth, either by purchase or getting it from his home. While this was being done Nicodemus returned to his residence in the city to obtain the one hundred pounds of spices. **John 19:39** ***"And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds."***

PREPARATION OF HIS BODY

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, page 1664, shows that these spices that these men used were not in the form of an ointment, but a powder. *“John furnishes the further particulars that the tomb was in a ‘garden’ near where Jesus was crucified. He also tells of the munificence (great liberality of giving,) of Nicodemus, who brought as much as one hundred pounds (about 75 pounds, avoirdupois) of spices – a mixture of myrrh and aloes, (sandalwood), (vs. 39), with which to enwrap the body of Jesus. (These spices were an expensive purchase. In our money today would amount to \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00.) This is not to be thought of as an anointing: rather, the spices formed a powder strewn between the folds of the linen bandages (of Luthardt, comment on John 19:40). The body, thus prepared, was then placed in the tomb, and a great stone rolled to the entrance. The burial of necessity was a hurried one.”* The story of the Resurrection of Lazarus confirms this. **John 11:44** *“And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘loose him and let him go.’”* The term “graveclothes” is #G2750 in Strong’s Concordance, and the definition from The Complete Word Study Dictionary—New Testament “is a band or bandage for swathing infants or dead bodies, in the New Testament, used only in relation to dead bodies.” Lazarus had to be loosed from his wrappings for him to move about.

John 19:40 says *“Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.”*

Note that the linen is defined in the plural and the dry mixture was held to the body by wrapping it with strips of linen cloth. This entailed time and effort on the part of these two men, including washing the body before it was wrapped. The body was then placed in Joseph’s tomb. The total amount of time that had elapsed to accomplish these tasks for the burial brought them to just before sunset as shown in **Luke 23:54-55** *“That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near. And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.”*

ONLY THREE HOURS

The work and travel of these two men easily could have taken more than three hours, but because of the coming of the high day first Sabbath of Unleavened Bread they had to hurry, which they did, as verified in **Luke 23:54. Matthew 27:60-61** *“and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.”* It was not until all the work of the two men had been accomplished that the two women were able to return to their dwellings just before the beginning of the Sabbath. **Mark 16:1** records

what happened next. ***“Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary [the mother] of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.”*** In this case it was oil needed to anoint the body.

Three points should be emphasized here. The first Sabbath mentioned in **Mark 16:1** was over before the spices were purchased by the women. Why? All of the shops were closed before the setting of the sun because the shopkeepers would be in their homes ready to greet and keep the coming Sabbath. Also, the spices that the women intended to use had to be in the form of oil so they could be used to anoint the body by saturating the linen cloth that the body had been wrapped in, which required preparation as is shown in **Luke 23:56** ***“Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.”*** The next question is: When did they purchase the spices? Obviously, it would be done after the first Sabbath. It now becomes clear that there were two Sabbaths involved in this sequence of events.

Luke only explained that preparation (work) was necessary to prepare the fragrant oils, and then they rested on the Sabbath. However, this could not have occurred unless there was an intervening day not accounted for by Luke. There was no time after placing Christ in the tomb. The purchase and preparation of the oil occurred following the first Sabbath. The time sequence is laid out in **Mark 15:47** ***“And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Joseph observed where He was laid.”*** After this they would have returned to Bethany, which was less than two miles away, where they were staying for the Sabbath observance.

ANOINTING FOR BURIAL

The goal of the women to anoint the body was never accomplished. The answer as to why is found in **John 12:7**. ***“But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.’”*** The oil should have been applied right after the body was bound. They did not have the oil at that time, so they planned on applying the oil early on Sunday morning, but found that He was already risen.

It should be noted that there were three women involved in buying and preparing the spices and would have entailed the two Mary's informing Salome of the plan to anoint the body and have her join them in the purchasing and preparing the spices on the day following the Sabbath.

As previously shown, there was no time left on that preparation day to walk back to Jerusalem to the marketplace to purchase the spices needed and prepare them into anointing oil before the commencement of the first Sabbath. If one follows the Friday crucifixion story, as Mark explained, they waited until after the Sabbath to accomplish these tasks, plainly showing that they needed to wait until Sunday, the day following the Sabbath, to purchase and prepare the spices. It would have been impossible for them to go to the tomb on Sunday because they would have been busy preparing the spiced oil.

FRIDAY/SUNDAY SCENARIO IMPOSSIBLE

Therefore, there is only one truth supported by the facts as recorded by the bible accounts. When placed in the right order the facts absolutely negate a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection because Christ was already gone from the tomb on Sunday morning. Using a Friday crucifixion, the Sabbath they rested on would have been the weekly Sabbath. **Mark 16:1** makes it clear that they rested first on the high day Sabbath and then purchased the spices. ***“Now when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, Mary [the mother] of James, and Salome brought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.”***

What then is the truth of the sequence of events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection? It becomes obvious that the truth lies in knowing that God designated other days as Sabbaths as well as the weekly Sabbath as has been shown. There are seven annual Sabbath days in the year which require holy convocations.

Knowing this fact makes it clear what the real sequence of events was. Christ was sacrificed on the day of the Passover—the 14th of Nisan, a Wednesday, which was the preparation day for the first day of Unleavened Bread—a high day Sabbath—which fell on a Thursday, leaving Friday, a preparation day for the weekly Sabbath. **John 19:31** ***“Therefore, because it was the Preparation [Day] that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day),...”*** These facts show there were two preparation days that week, Wednesday, and Friday. As noted, the first preparation day (Wednesday,) ended before the women were able to buy and prepare the spices. The second preparation day, Friday, is the day they bought and prepared the spices. They then rested on the weekly Sabbath, going to the tomb on Sunday, meaning that Christ was in the grave from slightly before sunset on Wednesday until slightly before sunset on Saturday; thus fulfilling His statement that He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.

The fraud of a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection is just that! It is a deception, a scam that began in the reign of Constantine (325 AD) and was perpetrated on millions of unsuspecting believers continuing until the present time.

It is true that many who have read this truth of the Bible will not take it to heart. The indoctrination has been so relentless, so complete, and so overwhelming that the victims of this fraud cannot believe that they have been deluded into believing a falsehood. **Revelation 12:9** ***“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”*** This is not the only place in the bible warning of the insidious nature of the enemy and his workers. **II Corinthians 11:14-15**. ***“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”***

Speaking to the unbelieving Jews of His day Christ said in **John 8:44-45** ***"You are of [your] father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own [resources,] for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."***

To understand why this deception is so complete one should remember the admonition of Christ when He spoke of the kingdom and the path to everlasting life. **Matthew 7:13-14** ***"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide [is] the gate and broad [is] the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow [is] the gate and difficult [is] the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it."***

It is the relentless desire for the truth that will take us to the narrow gate that the Father opens to those who seek the path, and allows one to enter.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR GUARDING THE TRUTH

As true believers in the biblical record we should be on our guard. **Matthew 24:24** tells us, ***"For false christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."*** True Christians must be on guard, recognizing the deceitfulness of a Friday crucifixion and Sunday resurrection, and stop venerating these false days and begin to recognize the Passover Lamb, Christ, and the true day on which He was sacrificed. The proof is in **John 1:29** ***"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'"*** Paul tells us in **I Corinthians 5:7** ***"Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."*** **Revelation 6:16** ***"and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!'"***

The 14th of Nisan (the first month of the Hebrew calendar) is the true Passover, and should be observed with the new symbols of the wine for His blood and the bread for His body. This is the day, the 14th of Nisan that is an annual memorial, a yearly recognition to be observed as the true day of Christ's sacrifice.

Christ set an example for us to follow with the Passover meal He took with His disciples before His crucifixion by instituting the bread and the wine. **Matthew 26:17** ***"Now on the first [day of the Feast] of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, 'Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?'"*** **Matthew 26:26-28** ***"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke [it], and gave [it] to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and gave thanks,***

and gave [it] to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'"

It is necessary for us to follow this example that He set by doing the same thing on the same day, the 14th of Nisan, memorializing His sacrifice for us.

There is no more clear admonition than that of Paul to the **Romans** in Chapter **12:1-2**. ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what [is] that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."***

Note: See Calendar Generator for 30AD at www.biblicalcalendarproof.com as shown in the red, the 10th of Nisan is a Sabbath, meaning that the 14th would fall on a Wednesday. In the Gregorian calendar (in black), the 6th of April was a Saturday, making the 10th a Wednesday, the day of the Passover. See the chart on the following page.

Don Roth 08-02-16 (Revised 2021 06 18)

Revised 2021 10 22

Gregorian Calendar			Hebrew Calendar			Solar Calendar													
PREVIOUS YEAR						THE BELOW DATES REPRESENT THE SABBATHS OF EACH MONTH												NEXT YEAR	
Jan				Feb				Mar					Apr				May		
5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18
7	14	21	28	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	Nisan	10	17	24	1	8	15	22
4075										212623	4076	3							
294	301	308	315	322	329	336	343	350	357	364	6	13	20	27	34	41	48	55	62
	Jun					Jul				Aug					Sep				Oct
25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5
	Sivan					Tamm				Av					Elul			Tish	
29	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	1	8	15
69	76	83	90	97	104	111	118	125	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202
				Nov				Dec				31 AD	Jan				Feb		
12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22
		Chesh				Kis				Tev					Shev				Adar
22	29	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	1	8	15	22	29	6
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209	216	223	230	237	244	251	258	265	272	279	286	293	300	307	314	321	328	335	342

Biblical Calendar Proof
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Calendar Generator Timeline

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AD Generate

Receive Additional Information

Jesus Christ's Crucifixion—Wednesday, April 10, 30AD—14 Nisan Passover

YEAR 4076 AM (AFTER MAN)

Passover	(Saturday) Apr 10	
Unleavened Bread	Apr 11	Apr 17
Pentecost	Jun 2	
Feast of Trumpets	Sep 21	
Day of Atonement	Sep 30	
Feast of Tabernacles	Oct 5	Oct 11
Last Great Day	Oct 12	

THE ABOVE DATES ARE OBSERVED THE PREVIOUS EVENING, AFTER SUNSET