

Lesson 58

Time – 4/4/30 AD, 14 to 15 Nisan

Between the death and burial of Jesus, from just after 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

In the last lesson we saw Jesus' last three cries from the Cross after the darkness had lifted. We then studied the Messianic Psalm 32 which prophetically contained Jesus' last cry, "Into your hands I commit my spirit." Finally, we saw prophecy fulfilled when the soldiers ran a spear through Jesus' side and blood and water gushed out. In this lesson we will proceed to the burial of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

The Women who were Witnesses

Matthew 27:55-56 Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses,¹ and the mother of Zebedee's sons.²

Mark 15:40-41 Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger³ and of Joses, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs. Many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there.

Luke 23:49 But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

First the soldiers had come up and had broken the legs of the two thieves crucified beside Jesus. This was to ensure they would die relatively quickly of asphyxiation. After they had broken their legs, they moved on to Jesus and pierced His side with a spear. They then would have waited until the two thieves had expired. Evidently, during this time they moved John and the three women back from the foot of the cross where they had been up until His death.

On page 9 in Lesson 11 of this series the proofs were presented that the three women listed here were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Mary's sister Salome, who was the mother of the Apostles James and John. There is no need to go over that again.

A large group of women disciples, of which those three were a part, having remained in Galilee for a time, had rejoined Jesus and the Twelve when He had come down from the Mt. of Transfiguration eight months earlier. They would have been part of the body of disciples who

¹ This was Mary, the mother of Jesus whose two eldest sons were James and Joseph (Matthew 13:55). Joses is another form of Joseph.

² Zebedee was the father of James and John (Matthew 4:21).

³ He was called James the Younger to differentiate him from James the Apostle who was the brother of John. James the Younger went on to become the leader of the Church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13, 21:18, Galatians 2:9, 12) and wrote the Epistle of James.

The Burial

John 19:38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea ⁴ asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus,⁵ but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

Matthew 27:57-58 As evening approached, there came a rich man ⁶ from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body, and Pilate ordered that it be given to him.

Mark 15:42-45 It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath).⁷ So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly ⁸ to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead.⁹ Summoning the centurion, he asked him if Jesus had already died. When he learned from the centurion that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.

Luke 23:50-52 Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright (*or righteous*) man, who had not consented to their decision and action.¹⁰ He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body.

⁴ The Greek spelling of Arimathea here is Ἀριμαθαία {hä-rē-mä-thī'-ä}. It seems to be a Grecianized form of the Hebrew הר רמיה {har rä-mä'} which means "mountain of Ramah." Ramah was the home of Samuel the Prophet. I believe it had also been the birthplace and original home of John the Baptist. It was about 5 miles NNW of Jerusalem.

⁵ Joseph is described as "a disciple of Jesus." It is perhaps instructive that as a "disciple" he was also described as "a good and righteous man," and "waiting for the Kingdom of God."

⁶ Considering that Josephus' description of the Sadducees as being primarily the sect of the rich (Josephus, *Antiquities* Book 13, Chapter 10, 6) it is likely that Joseph of Arimathea had been a Sadducee while Nicodemus had been a Pharisee.

⁷ The Sabbath here was the special Sabbath of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. All four of the Gospels tell us that Jesus was crucified on the Preparation Day, the day before the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Matthew 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:14, 31).

⁸ The word "boldly" here (the Greek *τολμάω* {tol-mä'-ō}) indicates that it took some courage to risk the wrath of the Sanhedrin to do this. At the least, it probably cost him his seat in that body.

⁹ Although it had always been the plan to kill the prisoners and take them down before nightfall to avoid offending Jewish traditions, Pilate was surprised to find that Jesus was already dead. Ordinarily, crucifixion victims could linger on for days.

¹⁰ Joseph of Arimathea had already put himself in the crosshairs of the Sanhedrin by refusing to go along with their verdict.

Normally, the bodies of condemned criminals were buried near the city dump which was in the valley outside of the city which was called Gehenna.¹¹ Instead, Joseph offered his own unused tomb. This request by Joseph would have taken the Sanhedrin by surprise. As we will see later, they were aware of Jesus' promise that He would be raised from the dead after three days. They undoubtedly had their own plans for Jesus' body to make that difficult. If they could discredit any claim that He had risen from the dead, they could declare that Jesus could not have been "the prophet" foretold by the LORD in Deuteronomy 18:15-22. They may have intended to burn it. As it was, his burial in Joseph's tomb was sanctioned by the Roman governor and they had to use Roman soldiers to guard the tomb that Jesus was in.

Between the time that Jesus died shortly after 3:00 PM and the time that His body was taken off of the cross must have been at least an hour and a half. Evidently, after Joseph of Arimathea had seen Jesus die by dismissing His spirit into the hands of the Father, but before His body was pierced with the spear, Joseph had gone back to the Fortress Antonia (by a difficult road at least three quarters of a mile) and consulted Pilate. Then Pilate had sent by messenger for the centurion who was at the Cross. The centurion came to Pilate and confirmed that Jesus was dead. He then evidently returned with Joseph and Nicodemus to the Cross where he gave them Jesus' body. This sequence of events thus involved four trips from the Cross to the Fortress which would have been about three to four miles. The travel time alone would have been at least an hour.¹² That didn't include the time it took for the consultation between Pilate and Joseph and the consultation between Pilate and the centurion. This was the centurion who had said "Surely this man was the Son of God!" I can't help thinking that he also delivered to Pilate a little of what he had seen at the cross. Although Pilate had remained at the Fortress, he would have experienced the darkness and the earthquake.

It seems likely that the legs of the two thieves weren't broken until the centurion got back from Pilate. It would have been then that Jesus's side was pierced, and his body was taken down off the cross and given to Joseph of Arimathea.

John 19:39-40 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.¹³ Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.¹⁴

¹¹ *Gehenna became identified with and used as a name for Hell or Hades, the place of condemnation.*

¹² *We don't know if Joseph or the centurion covered the distance on foot or rode on horseback.*

¹³ *Since this was late on the Day of Preparation, the shops would have been closed. I think it is likely that what Nicodemus had supplied was what he had laid aside for his own burial. This mirrored what Joseph of Arimathea had done when he gave his own tomb. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that Jesus was "with the rich in his death" (Isaiah 53:9).*

¹⁴ *This explanation of Jewish burial customs accords with the late date (95 AD) and readers (Gentile) of John's Gospel.*

Matthew 27:59 Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

Mark 15:46a So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen,

Luke 23:53a Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth

This quantity of spices (75 pounds) used in the burial could only have been afforded by the very rich. Their purpose was aromatic, to mask the smell of decay. They were never intended to preserve the body. We have no reason to believe that Joseph and Nicodemus didn't use the entire 75 pounds. Evidently, the spices were wrapped between the linen strips and the body. The weight of the burial spices suggests that Nicodemus brought them in a cart. He probably got them and the linen wrappings from his house while Joseph was waiting before Pilate for permission to take Jesus' body. Although the tomb wasn't far away from the cross, they probably used the cart to carry Jesus' body there. It should be noted that handling a dead body technically made them unclean and not fit to participate in the ritual of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.¹⁵ On that day, that wasn't important because the ritual of Passover had been replaced with the reality of the Cross.

John 19:41-42 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation¹⁶ and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Matthew 27:60 and placed it in his own new tomb¹⁷ that he had cut out of the rock.¹⁸ He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away.

Mark 15:46b and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb.

Luke 23:53b-54 and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

¹⁵ Numbers 19:11, Numbers 9:10-11

¹⁶ The phrase "because it was the Jewish day of Preparation" is to explain why there wasn't at least the usual ritual of mourners and family following the body to the tomb. First, there wasn't time before twilight, and second, association with a dead body would have made the mourners unclean.

¹⁷ This indicated that Joseph of Arimathea was old enough to be contemplating death.

¹⁸ Joseph was a rich man, and his tomb afforded the preferred view for Jewish tombs. It looked down on the Temple.

According to the NIV, John says that a garden was located “at the place” Jesus was crucified. The other four translations I looked at (ASV, NASB, NRSV, KJV) have it that a garden was “in the place” Jesus was crucified. This tells us that the tomb was in the same garden where they had crucified Jesus. The traditional locations in Jerusalem are about a hundred yards apart. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of those locations.

Normally Jewish tombs were used for generations by entire families. The bodies of those who had recently died would be wrapped in linen with aromatic spices. Then, after a reasonable period of time, when the bodies had decomposed, their bones would be gathered up and put in labelled bone jars and set aside in the same tomb. That left space for the next body to be buried. Joseph’s tomb had never been used. It had been expensively prepared in a prime spot, overlooking the Temple, with a garden adjoining.

It seems fitting that the place where Jesus was crucified was a garden,¹⁹ since it was in a Garden that the original tree of life was located. Figuratively, the Cross became the new tree of life (Galatians 3:13, 1 Peter 2:24).²⁰ Given what we know, this wasn’t a small garden. It was probably more like a small park on the side of the hill just outside and looming above the northern wall of the city.

Matthew 27:61 **Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.**

Mark 15:47 **Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where he was laid.**

Luke 23:55-56 **The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.**

We see that Mary sat opposite the tomb while Joseph and Nicodemus prepared and buried the body of Jesus.²¹ Since John had just recently been entrusted by Jesus with her safety, it is likely that he was there as well. That may be why, when he and Peter later went to the tomb, he ran ahead of Peter. He knew exactly where it was.

The precautions of the Pharisees **Time – 4/4/30 AD, 15 Nisan**

¹⁹ *This is quite contrary to the usual view of paintings and movies of the crucifixion occurring on a bare hillside.*

²⁰ *The site of the Cross will be the site of the Tree of Life in the restored Jerusalem. It may well have been the site of the original Tree of Life in the original garden. See my notes on Genesis.*

²¹ *We know that before twilight, the end of the Jewish day, the soul of Jesus was already in Paradise with the dying thief. Jesus had promised him “today you will be with me in paradise.”*

Matthew 27:62 **The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests *High Priests* and the Pharisees went to Pilate.**

“Preparation Day” is a term which refers to the day before a Sabbath during which no work can be performed. It is a “preparation day” because certain things need to be done to prepare for the next day’s living so that work will not be required. The “preparation day” referred to here was a special “Preparation Day” because the “Sabbath” it preceded was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. On this Special Sabbath, all leaven had to be removed from every house, and so in addition to the usual preparations, every house needed to be swept and scrubbed. That was in addition to the extra preparations for the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

So, the day we see here was a Sabbath, a day on which no work was to be done, and yet the High Priests (Annas and Caiaphas) were engaging in work to go to Pilate with this request. What had them so worried?

Matthew 27:63 **“Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’**

It is true they had seen Jesus die, but they had also seen the midday darkness, the earthquake and the ripping of the Temple veil. They were worried that God wasn’t cooperating in the eradication of the teaching of this troublesome Galilean. They also remembered a prophecy that Jesus had made of His resurrection. Just in the Gospel of Matthew, the prophecy was recorded three times (Matthew 16:21, 17:22, and 20:18-19). It is interesting that the Pharisees and High Priests remembered Jesus’ prophecy, and His disciples didn’t. It seems that Jesus’ disciples were only listening to what they wanted to hear. They had never absorbed what He had said about His coming death, let alone His resurrection.

Matthew 27:64 **So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day.²² Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.”**

The day was the day after Jesus’ crucifixion. The High Priests and the Pharisees were worried that Jesus’ disciples would fake His resurrection. His disciples didn’t even understand enough to believe or not believe in His resurrection.

Matthew 27:65 **“Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.”**

²² *It must be remembered that this conversation took place the day after Jesus’ death. The first day referred to the day after the guard was posted on Thursday. The third day would have been Sunday.*

So Pilate gave them a Roman guard. What must Pilate have thought? His wife had experienced the dream about Jesus, Pilate had been impressed with Jesus, and he had written the provocative placard that was placed on the cross, “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Now he saw that the Jewish leaders were still scared of Him.

Matthew 27:66 **So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.**

We have to believe that before the High Priests (Annas and Caiaphas) sealed the tomb, they made sure that Jesus’ body was still there. This pretty much destroys the contentions of some unbelievers that Jesus had just passed out, but was revived after being taken off the cross. He would also then have had to survive three full days in the tomb without food or water, as that was the earliest He could have been rescued after the seal was applied. The Greek word for “seal” here is σφραγίζω {sfrag-id'-zo} which according to Strong’s can mean to make secure, or to seal up. I think that is the meaning here. This wasn’t like an official seal on a document, which would have only shown that the tomb had been opened. This was something that would make it more difficult to open, like concrete.

The Day of the Crucifixion and the Time in the Grave

Before we proceed historically, I think it is a good place to study why we have placed this chronologically on 14 Nisan, 30 AD, which was a Wednesday. I will deal with this by presenting the material I found when answering four questions about the time of the crucifixion.

Question: Was the crucifixion and Passover on Friday or Wednesday?

Comments

There is a widespread acceptance in the Church of the idea that the Crucifixion of Christ took place on “Good Friday.” According to Elwell “Its origins as a special holy day go back to the development of Holy Week in Jerusalem in the late fourth century.”²³ In the Zondervan Picture Encyclopedia of the Bible, under the article on the Passover, I discovered the following statement: “According to an ancient church tradition, Jesus was arrested on Wednesday (cf. Epiphanius, *de fide* XXII, 1).” That would also mean he was crucified on Wednesday. Whatever the ancient tradition was, there is ample reason to assert from Biblical sources that Christ was crucified on Wednesday.

I have always supposed that the primary reason the Church decided (three hundred years after the fact) that the Crucifixion happened on Friday was that the Scriptures (*listed below*) said the day after the Crucifixion was a Sabbath.

²³ *Just after the Roman Emperor Constantine built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.*

Mark 15:42-43 “It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body.”

Luke 23:50-54 “Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus’ body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin.”

John 19:31 “Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.”

You might notice that the last passage from John 19 goes so far as to say that the day was a “special” Sabbath. Also the “Day of Preparation” mentioned in all three passages is not just any day, but the Day before Passover and Passover Week as is carefully explained in John 19:14.

John 19:14 “It was the day of Preparation of Passover Week, about the sixth hour. “Here is your king,” Pilate said to the Jews.”

If all Sabbaths were Saturdays, the issue would be settled. The only problem is a Sabbath can be any Saturday or Festival day. The day following the Passover sacrifice is such a day. It is the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Since any day could be a Sabbath, the three verses listed above do not indicate what day of the week the Lord was Crucified. However, there are other passages that do. For one thing if Jesus was in the grave three full days, He couldn’t have been crucified on Friday and be raised by Sunday.

1. The Prophecies of the Three Days - The following prophecies make it clear that Christ would be in the tomb three days and three nights. One prophecy would be enough! This one was repeated six times! Furthermore they were by Christ himself, and stated that this was to be the great sign of His Messiahship! There is no way that you can work out Friday night to Sunday morning as being three days and three nights without making the veracity of the Word of God look ridiculous.

Matthew 12:39-40 “He answered, ‘A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’”

Matthew 27:63-64 “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day.’”²⁴

Mark 8:30-31 “Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.”

Mark 9:30-31 “They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.’”

Mark 10:33-34 “‘We are going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.’”

John 2:18-22 “Then the Jews demanded of him, ‘What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.’ The Jews replied, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?’ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.”

2. The Women in Luke - The following passage seems to support a Friday crucifixion, but only at first glance. It seems to indicate that the next day after the crucifixion was the Sabbath on which they rested after preparing the spices on the night of the Crucifixion, and it seems that immediately following the Passover the next day they went to the Tomb.

Luke 23:55-24:1 “The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment. On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb.”

However, this passage actually supports the Wednesday Crucifixion since according to Jewish time the new day and therefore the Sabbath started at sundown. If they went home at this time it would already be the Sabbath, the Special Sabbath, and they could not have worked on the

²⁴ *It must be remembered that this conversation took place the day after Jesus death. The third day refers to the day after the guard was posted on Thursday. The third day would have been Sunday.*

spices and perfumes until the next non-Sabbath day. If the crucifixion was on Friday the only time they could have done their work was on Saturday night before the Sunday morning resurrection. The passage in Luke 23 indicates that a Sabbath chronologically followed their preparations. The next Sabbath would have been a week later. So a Friday crucifixion does not agree with the implications of this passage. Only a Wednesday crucifixion would provide a non-Sabbath day on which to work between the Crucifixion and Sunday morning. One woman, Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha, probably had to go all the way to Bethany for the perfume that the Lord had told her to save for His burial.²⁵ Travel during a Sabbath was forbidden!

That Jewish time was reckoned from evening to evening is supported by the following verse.

Leviticus 23:32 “It is a sabbath of rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your sabbath.”

3. The Women in Matthew.

Matthew 28:1 “After the ~~Sabbath~~ **Sabbaths**, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.”

The word “Sabbath” as it appears in all the Greek Texts is σαββάτων {sä'b-bä-t ōn} which is the genitive plural and actually should be translated from the Greek as “Sabbaths”. This would indicate there were two Sabbaths between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection Sunday. Those two Sabbaths were the Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread on Thursday, and the regular weekly Sabbath on Saturday.

4. The Events Enumerated in the Gospels. In a reading of the four Gospels, I can only find four days clearly delineated in the events between Palm Sunday and the crucifixion. They were the Palm Sunday entrance into Jerusalem, one later day of teaching in the Temple, the day the Last Supper was prepared, and the day of Jesus arrest, trial, and crucifixion. Six days are definitely not indicated by the narration. Six days would be required to stretch from Sunday to Friday.

How then did the Church come up with Friday as the day of the crucifixion? My guess is it arose through ignorance of and hostility to Jewish customs.

²⁵ **John 12:3,7** *Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. — “Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “[It was intended] that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial.*

5. On the Internet is the following calendar conversion website at <http://genealogy.org/~scottlee/calconvert.cgi>. I entered 14 Nisan 3790, the day of Christ's crucifixion to the program and it printed out the following table.²⁶

Calendar Conversions

The date you entered is

Julian day number: 1732110

Day of week: **Wednesday**

Gregorian calendar: 3 April 0030 AD (modern civil calendar)

Julian calendar: 5 April 0030 AD (old civil calendar)

Jewish calendar: 14 Nisan 3790 (3790/8/14)

Interestingly enough if you fix 33 AD as the year of Christ's crucifixion, which would be correct if the almost universally acknowledged blunder of fixing Christ's birth in 1 AD was correct, then the date of the crucifixion would have been on Friday. It makes you think that they knowingly chose a questionable year rather than revisit their placement of the crucifixion on Friday. Below is the date conversion of Passover in 33 AD from the website.

The date you entered is

Julian day number: 1733204

Day of week: **Friday**

Gregorian calendar: 1 April 0033 AD (modern civil calendar)

Julian calendar: 3 April 0033 AD (old civil calendar)

Jewish calendar: 14 Nisan 3793 (3793/8/14)

Answer: The crucifixion and Passover was on Wednesday 14 Nisan 30 AD and on that one day in history the appointed time of twilight fell at noon when darkness covered Jerusalem, not 6:00 PM.

Question: Why is it important that we establish that Christ was Crucified on Wednesday?

Answer:

1. Because it is vital to understand that the Word of God is completely accurate. If we believe that the Word of God is so fuzzy as to interpret 36 hours (Friday at 6:00 PM to Sunday at 6:00 AM) as 72 hours we will never come close to fully understanding the Scriptures.

2. Because the three day typology occurs all over the scriptures. If you do not think the three days are important, you will never catch the importance of the three day types in the Word.

²⁶ The website <https://www.hebcal.com/converter/?hd=14&hm=Nisan&hy=3790&h2g=1> also gives the same result. There are undoubtedly many others.

3. Because the tradition of the Friday crucifixion has created all kinds of dating problems. The only years in which 14 Nisan was a Friday were 33 AD and 26 AD. It seems like the Catholic Church, to support their tradition of a Friday crucifixion decided to pick 33 AD as the year of the Crucifixion. That was a year during which Passover occurred on Friday. However, as a result, because they thought the Bible taught that Jesus lived until His 33rd year, they had to set the birth of Christ in 1 AD.²⁷ Unfortunately, that date was clearly wrong because according to history it was four years after the death of Herod the Great. According to the Bible Herod was alive at the birth of Jesus (Matthew 2:1). If they had picked 26 AD as the year of His Friday Crucifixion that would have put the death of Christ in the same year recorded as the year shown by history (Luke 3:1-2) as the year “the word of God came to John in the wilderness” to be baptized. The Bible clearly shows that there were at least three Passovers between the Baptism of Jesus and His crucifixion.²⁸

Question? Are there any other evidences of a Wednesday Crucifixion?

Answer:

Yes. The following verse is evidence:

John 12:1-2 “Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.”

If Jesus arrived in Bethany six days before the Passover and was crucified on Friday, then Passover /1st Day of the Feast was Saturday. That would mean he arrived in Bethany on Sunday and entered Jerusalem no earlier than Monday. If he was crucified on Wednesday, that would mean he arrived in Bethany on Friday, rested on Saturday and entered Jerusalem on Sunday, as accords with the tradition of Palm Sunday.

Question:

How do you deal with the problem of the phrase “the third day.”

One of the problems of interpreting the time is what seems to be the inconsistent description of the day of Jesus’ resurrection. On the one hand Matthew 12:40 is crystal clear that the resurrection took place after Jesus had been buried at least three days and three nights.

Matthew 12:40 “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish,²⁹ so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

²⁷ *It was at this time (525 AD) that the AD and BC system of dating was initiated as a result of Dionysius Exiguus’ placement of the Crucifixion in 33 AD.*

²⁸ *A careful study of John 4:34 shows that there were actually four.*

²⁹ *Jonah 1:17*

Also the Pharisees described Jesus prophecy of the time of His resurrection as follows, also in the book of Matthew as “after three days”:

Matthew 27:63 “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’””

Mark also describes his resurrection as “after three days.”

Mark 8:31 “He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests (high priests) and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.”

Mark 9:30b-31 “Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.’”

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John also described how Jesus promised to build His Temple “in three days.”

John 2:19 “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.’”

In another place Mark described the promise as “three days later he will rise.”

Mark 10:33-34 “‘We are going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests (high priests) and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.’”

On the other hand, nine times Jesus is described as being resurrected “the third day.” However, it is important to note that none of the descriptions say “**on** the third day” in spite of the fact that the NIV takes the liberty of adding the word in their translation. Is there a discrepancy, or do we just misunderstand what the term “raised the third day” means? Since the Gospel of Matthew contains three of the ten times, and His resurrection is described there as being “the third day” as well as after “three days and three nights” and “after three days,” it seems likely that in the usage of the day, “the third day” was understood by Matthew to include all three days, not just part of the third day. Otherwise Matthew would be contradicting himself. Furthermore, look at the whole passage in Matthew 27:62-64:

Matthew 27:62-64 The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests (high priests) and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day.

This is an important passage for interpreting what the phrase “raised the third day” used in other passages mean. Here the Pharisees have obviously said that Jesus would be raised “after three days” yet here, on the first day after Jesus death they say the tomb should be guarded “until the third day” after they were speaking. This obviously means until after the fourth day was complete (their third day) and His prophecy could be shown to be unreliable.

Below are the three passages in Matthew which say Jesus would be raised “the third day.” It should be understood that there is no preposition “on” here in the Greek. However, because the words “the third day” are in the dative case, the translators chose to supply the preposition “on” to “the third day.” However, this isn’t the only choice that they could have made in translating the dative case. They could have also correctly used the prepositions “since,” “next to” or “against.” I have made those substitutions below in the passages in question. Any of these prepositions used instead of “on” would imply that the third day had passed.

Matthew 16:21 “From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests (high priests) and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and ~~on~~ *since*³⁰ the third day be raised to life.

Matthew 17:22-23 “When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, ‘The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and ~~on~~ *since*³¹ the third day he will be raised to life.’”

Matthew 20:17-19 “Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, ‘We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests (high priests) and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. ~~On~~ *since*³² the third day he will be raised to life!’”

Below are the six other passages that refer to “the third day.” Five of them were recorded by Luke and one by Paul.

Luke 9:22 “And he said, ‘The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests (high priests) and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and ~~on~~ *since*³³ the third day be raised to life.’”

Luke 18:31-33 “Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, ‘We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be

³⁰ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day” is in the dative case. Luke 24:21 has “since” as the interpretation of the dative case.*

³¹ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³² *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³³ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

handed over to the Gentiles.³⁴ They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. ~~On~~ *Since*³⁵ the third day he will rise again.”

Luke 24:6-7 “He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and ~~on~~ *since*³⁶ the third day be raised again.’”

Luke 24:46-47 “He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead ~~on~~ *since*³⁷ the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’”

Acts 10:39-40 “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead ~~on~~ *since*³⁸ the third day and caused him to be seen.” (*Peter talking*)

1 Corinthians 15:3-5 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised ~~on~~ *since*³⁹ the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.

In the following passage in Luke the wording is slightly different. It says “it is the third day since.”

Luke 24:19-23 “What things?” he asked. “About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests (high priests) and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this⁴⁰ took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.

Evidently, the phrase, “It is the third day since” can be understood somewhat like the English sentence, “It is three days since.” We would understand that to mean that all three days have passed.

³⁴ *Lamentations 4:20*

³⁵ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³⁶ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³⁷ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³⁸ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

³⁹ *There is no “on” in the Greek. However, “the third day is in the dative case.*

⁴⁰ *Here there is no preposition but “all this” is in the dative case. Here the translators correctly supplied “since.”*

Also, it should be noted that whatever day Jesus was crucified on, we know that he was buried at the beginning of the next day, the Special Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread to fulfill the meaning of that Feast on the day of the Feast. His burial on that day spoke of the body of Christ who was the bread that came down from Heaven without leaven (yeast). Paul pointed to the connection in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 “Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are.⁴¹ For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, **let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.**

If Jesus was buried on the next day (which started at 6 PM) after He was crucified, and he was crucified on Friday, “on the third day” would have been Monday, not Sunday. Saturday would have been “on the first day.” Sunday would have been “on the second day.”

Answer:

The phrase always means after three full days, not after two partial days and a full day.

⁴¹ *During the Day of Preparation for the Passover, the Jewish house was swept and dusted in every nook and cranny to eliminate every speck of yeast or leaven from the house. This was to assure that the Passover bread was completely pure. Christians, who have truly celebrated the real Passover, by believing in the redemptive power of the cross, have become the truly pure bread in Jesus Christ. Since we are pure, spiritually, it is up to us to live, experientially, as we are positionally.*