



February 28, 2025

Chronology around Christ's Crucifixion, Burial, and Resurrection

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Last Friday evening we discussed the truth that Christ was indeed in the grave for 3 days and 3 nights. Let's continue this evening with more focus on the events around the time of Christ's crucifixion.

How many of you like mystery stories or as some call them "who done it?"

My wife Gayle enjoyed the mystery programs on Public Television such as the Poirot episodes (1989-2013) and the old "Murder She Wrote" programs. I have enjoyed the Columbo episodes including the re-runs over the years when I find time to watch them. From 1971-2003, the actor Peter Falk played the lead character so well. He seemed like a bumbling absent minded detective but in reality he was piecing together the clues and playing the perpetrators like a well-tuned violin. The plot approach is different, in that the villain is revealed early on but the case is developed to expose him in a step by step process until Columbo announced "you are under arrest!"

The events relating to the crucifixion and subsequent resurrection of our Savior are misunderstood and wrongly interpreted by most in the Christian community who adopt a "Good Friday-Easter Sunday tradition". But the clues and specific details to unravel the chronology are clearly there. Let's review them again.

The timing of the Passover meal that Jesus observed with His disciples before His arrest was the evening that began Abib 14, the same timing as that of the Passover meal of Exodus 12:6-9. One of the keys to understanding the narrative and terms is the truth about the Abib 14 Passover being followed by the Abib 15 high day convocation or annual Sabbath. Leviticus 23:5-7 corroborates these details given first in Exodus 12.

The day during which Jesus ate the Passover meal, was arrested in the Garden, was tried, scourged, crucified and killed was called the "preparation" (Luke 23:54; John 19:31) or "the Preparation Day of the Passover" (John 19:14). There is some confusion in understanding the term because the Feast of Unleavened Bread was also called generically "Passover."

"Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover" (Luke 22:1). Just as the sixth day of the week was the preparation day for the seventh day Sabbath, so Passover day was the preparation day for the annual Sabbath of the First Day of Unleavened Bread. This is corroborated by John 19:31 which tells us that the day following the preparation day was a *"high day Sabbath"*. Mark 15:42 also states that the Preparation was the day before the Sabbath. Jesus died some time shortly after the 3 hour period of darkness that ended at the ninth hour - about 3:00 PM. (Matt 27:46-50; Luke 23:44-46).

Late in the day, yet still on Preparation Day, before Abib 15 began, Joseph of Arimathea requested the body of Jesus, prepared the body, and then laid it in his tomb. Sunset and the high day Sabbath drew near and the women from Galilee observed the tomb and the body of Jesus being laid in it (Luke 23:54-55) Then we are told, *"Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And then they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment."* (Luke 23:56) This is an important and key detail in determining the chronology and sequence of events.

The women could not buy spices on the high day Sabbath. They would have to wait until the next day after Abib 15 Sabbath. But then we are told after they prepared the spices they rested on the Sabbath. This shows there was a market

day and work day after the annual Sabbath followed by another Sabbath. The particular Sabbath is clarified by the phrase "*according to the commandment.*" This Sabbath is the weekly seventh day Sabbath commanded by the Fourth commandment.

Mark comments on this also. "*Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him.*" (Mark 16:1) Notice that Mark mentions that the women bought the spices AFTER the Sabbath, and Luke states that they prepared the spices BEFORE the Sabbath. This would sound like a contradiction unless we realize that two Sabbaths are involved in this three-day period. After resting on the weekly Sabbath, which ended Saturday at sunset, they went to the tomb the next morning to be there at first light, but, they discovered the tomb was already empty.

Matthew makes it plain that two Sabbaths had passed since Jesus was crucified. On this verse (Matthew 28:1) nearly all translators have allowed *tradition* to control their translation. It is not "Sabbath" but "Sabbaths" in the Greek text (the genitive case and the plural number). The verse properly translated would read: "*Now after the Sabbaths . . .*" This allows for an annual Sabbath on Thursday and a regular Sabbath on Saturday.

This vital text proving that there were two Sabbaths in that week has been obscured by almost every translation into English. Only Ferrar Fenton's version has this point correct. Fenton renders it correctly by saying, "*After the SABBATHS,*" . . . In a footnote to this text, he says, "The Greek original is in the plural, 'Sabbaths.'" We'll summarize more of the above details and examine the timing of the resurrection and appearance of Jesus following that, next time...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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