

Resurrection Day

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The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a key-component of our eternal salvation. See 1 Corinthians 15. We are now risen with Christ, alive unto God (see Romans 6).

Though there is no plainly stated scripture directing His people to celebrate a certain day for Christ's resurrection, in response to the importance of His resurrection, we certainly can celebrate, and should celebrate every day by living out the fullness of what the Savior Jesus/Yeshua has made the way for.

Every day is the day to rejoice in the Messiah's/Christ's resurrection. This article is by no means to facilitate contention amongst believers nor a hindering unhealthy concern about a day to celebrate. The goals are to facilitate a study into how the timing of Christ being crucified relates to Passover, and to examine into the possibility of knowing when the literal date of His resurrection was, with consideration in choosing particular days to especially remember Christ being crucified and resurrected.

As a preliminary summarizing statement, I have personally concluded that in celebrating a certain time for Christ's resurrection, to intentionally celebrate on the weekend that corresponds to Passover since that is when congregations typically gather. There is no resurrection without death. Consider the deliberate symbolism of Passover before the Lord. Celebrate from your heart in gratitude. Personally celebrate from conviction as worship unto God. Celebrate with the congregation you are called to. If your congregation gathers on Saturday, rejoice corporately in one accord Saturday. If they gather on Sunday, rejoice corporately in one accord on Sunday. If they gather 3 days following Passover, join them! Since we are the family of Christ, consider celebrating with your extended family and go to more than one! Through my research, I believe Jesus arose sometime between Saturday morning and Sunday morning. Based on the following research, it seems more likely to have been sometime Saturday. If I could find an absolutely convincingly utterly accurate and clear-to-study calendar that lines up the Hebrew Calendar to the Gregorian calendar, I believe a more clear decision can be made. It appears that Jesus was likely crucified on a Wednesday around 3pm, which would conclude an earlier resurrection. God wants us to know Him as Father. Our heart in worship is a far higher priority than striving at details that are understandably harder to search out.

My hope is to present information as I have studied it, leaving room for the reader to further research for conclusions.

Choosing for it to relate to Passover rather than a date on the Gregorian Calendar:

This article is being written in the year 2020, when the day commonly designated to celebrate Christ's resurrection is on the day also designated as Easter. In the KJV translation, the word Easter is used once, at Acts 12:4, yet every other time is translated as what we know in English as "passover". This is important to note because this shows us that at the time of the KJV translation, the term "Easter" was already culturally understood and being used in association with celebrating Christ's resurrection. At this time (2020), the day designated as "Easter" is still rooted from a decision in 325AD, where it was set forth for celebration to be on the Sunday following the first moon during or after the vernal equinox. Passover is always on a full moon due to the way the Hebrew Calendar is set up (interestingly pointing to Genesis 1:14). The topic of the roots of the term "Easter" is worth studying, but let's proceed on the point in focus.

In many cultures, we celebrate holidays annually according to the Gregorian Calendar. For example, my birthday is July 14th. In 2020, it will be on a Tuesday, but in 2021, July 14th is on a Wednesday. If we were to consider an annual date on the Gregorian Calendar to celebrate Christ's resurrection, we would need to know what date on the Gregorian Calendar He resurrected. We can speculate, discern by His Spirit, or even debatably research when He was crucified and resurrected by attempting to correlate the Hebrew and Gregorian Calendars. Theories will be presented at the end.

What does seem more sure however is the importance of the relation of Passover to Christ being crucified as the spotless Lamb of God. This is a topic of great value to study, but again our focus for this article is on searching out a specific day to celebrate His resurrection. The scriptures are clear that Christ was crucified during Passover. For this reason, I personally see more value in celebrating in relation to Passover due to the significance of the parallel of what Christ Jesus has done for us, rather than a certain day according to the Gregorian Calendar (so that the focus on Passover remains involved). In other words, if Christ was raised on the Saturday or Sunday following the Passover, then that weekend (or even 3 days later) makes great sense in celebrating (opposed to using a certain date from the Gregorian Calendar). The other case that can be made is to find the number date (of the month) from the Jewish calendar and celebrate that annually, Passover for example, being celebrated the 14th day of Nisan.

Researching the timeline of Christ's death and resurrection according to the scriptures.

All four gospels record Jesus directing the disciples to get the room for the preparation of passover, as the start of the feast of unleavened bread. Jesus is the sinless bread from heaven, our Passover Lamb.

In the account of Mt, Mk and Lk, we see that Jesus died on the cross about the 9th hour (approx 3pm). This makes it uniquely a sign from God that it was dark from the 6th hour to the 9th hour.

It is clear in scripture that a sabbath was immediately following the crucifixion, keeping in mind that the Jewish day starts at sunset based on Genesis 1:5.

John 19:30-31, AMP:

Since it was the day of Preparation [for the Sabbath], in order to prevent the bodies from hanging on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high holy day) the Jews asked Pilate to have their legs broken [to hasten death] and the bodies taken away.

With 3pm in mind, and John's account as read from chapter 19:30-31, many make the case that Jesus was crucified on Friday afternoon because of the portion that reads "in order to prevent the bodies from hanging on the cross on the Sabbath". There is however another element to this scripture, which is that this Sabbath was a "high" day, or what is often referred to as a "high sabbath". The sabbath most are familiar with is the 7th day sabbath (Shabbat), observed from Friday at sunset to Saturday at sunset, with Saturday night (sunset) beginning the new week.

Regarding a high day sabbath: In Leviticus 23:5 we read that Passover begins the 14th day of the first month (Nisan), and in v.6 that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th. In the gospels we read that they are rightfully referred to as one celebration. In Lev 23:6 we further read that it is a 7 day feast of eating unleavened bread. In verses 7 and 8 we read that the first day and last day are to be "a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work." This reveals additional Sabbaths that may or may not fall on the 7th day sabbath.

Note that the disciples were preparing passover, and it is clear that Jesus referred to what they ate as a passover (ref: Luke 22:15). If they prepared on the 13th, and ate that night, that night is a new day, the 14th (the start of

Passover). That night is when Jesus was taken. The torture began soon after. Before the next night fall (the start of the 15th), Jesus is crucified and dies on the cross. Assuming that the understanding of the Jews in that time lined up with the directives as they seem in Leviticus 23 (and in support of this case, it is still observed this way today), this would mean that the 15th was a high sabbath, referring then to the shortly arriving new day (sunset) following Jesus being taken down from the cross.

Now let's consider the 3 days. We can read several times in the written Word of God that Jesus was going to rise, and did rise, on the third day. For those concerned that His literal burial (versus death) begins the 3-day count down, we can see in John 19:42 that He was laid in the sepulcher before sunset (not right at sunset).

Based on this, let's consider options:

If crucified on Friday afternoon and raised Sunday morning, as commonly taught:

3pm on Friday was still day time (though dark as a sign).

Friday during the daytime would be the 6th day of the week according to how days are observed.

The question is then, should this count as one day since sunset was assumedly in less than 6 hours?

For the sake of considering if Friday is an option, let's say those remaining hours can count as one day, since it was yet before sunset. Friday night to Saturday night, being the 2nd day. Saturday night, to Sunday being the 3rd day.

This would seem to be a feasible option for consideration, except that Jesus said (as read in Mt 12:40) "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."

Friday 3pm to Sunday morning is three days, but only covers 2 nights.

Sunday late morning / early afternoon is the latest option for His Resurrection

All four gospel accounts (one being enough) state that it was the first day of the week, meaning Saturday sunset to Sunday sunset. In Matthew's gospel it

states that it was still dark (at least when the Marys left from where they were staying). This understandably leads to the question of whether it was still dark when they arrived, or when they departed for the day. In Mark 16:2 it clarifies that they left or arrived at the rising of the sun, but first bought spices with intent to anoint Him (ref: v1). The rising of the sun clarifies that it was morning time, making it unquestionably what is called Sunday. The reason I state as “the latest option” is because the tomb was found empty sometime Sunday in the day time, but He resurrected before they arrived, leaving the possibility (in theory for this study) of Him resurrecting Saturday night or sooner.

What are our options to examine to fulfill a full three days and nights?

It would seem that two Sabbaths are required, the High Sabbath (first day of unleavened bread), and Shabbat (the 7th day sabbath), due to the earnestness of the Marys to come and anoint the body of Jesus, yet not being able to come until Sunday morning.

Jesus had publicly declared He'd come back to life in 3 days. Perhaps the ointments were an excuse for an inner conflict of belief? Yet, they particularly loved His presence so much that they were the first followers reported to see the empty tomb, the angel of the Lord, and Jesus Himself! We see it reported in two gospels that they got spices to anoint Jesus. Two sabbaths and preparation time for the spices may have been needed to keep them away (per se) three days.

Briefly referenced recently, let's read Mark 16:1-2

v.1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

v.2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

When quickly reading, it may appear that they bought spices on the way to going to the tomb, but 3 things: (1) v.2 then says, “and very early in the morning on the first day...” seeming to clarify a change in time between the previous statement, and (2) the time needed to prepare spices. (3) Luke 23 confirms that spices were prepared. In v.55 we see that the women followed Joseph right after the crucifixion “and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body

was laid.” Then the following verse confirms that it could not have been Sunday morning that they prepared: “And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.”

The questions relating to the preparation of the spices are these: Would they have time to go to the market before sunset? The Jews with the shops would have needed time to close down before sunset. Even if they did go to the market right before sunset, would they have also had time to prepare the spices before the sabbath began? As referenced in Luke 23, they rested on the sabbath day. This sabbath rest then could then refer to the high sabbath (the night into day following His crucifixion) or a following 7th day sabbath. They were unable to buy the spices during the high sabbath, but what about the day after? Was the day after the 7th day sabbath, or a day that work could be done?

Two cases to consider, allowing for 3 days and 3 nights:

Theory 1: That Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, immediately followed by a High Sabbath that evening, another day (not a sabbath), then 7th day Sabbath, then Sunday morning.

According to this theory, the Marys may have waited until the high sabbath was over before buying the spices (one night), bought the spices and prepared them the next available day (2 nights), waited through the 7th day sabbath (3 nights), then came as soon as possible when there was just enough light to see.

The following are three theories of when Jesus resurrected within this theory:

The days of the month listed are assuming the following of the 14th day of Nisan for Passover.

14th day (starting at night), Passover with disciples and Jesus allows Himself to be taken that night.

14th day crucified (Jesus in the heart of the earth for part of a day, after 3pm).
About 3pm Wednesday.

15th day high sabbath (1st night in the heart of the earth).

15th day high sabbath (1st full day in heart of the earth).

16th day (2nd night in heart of the earth).

16th day (2nd full day in the heart of the earth).

17th day, 7th day Sabbath (3rd night in the heart of the earth), Friday night.

17th day, 7th day Sabbath (3rd full day in the heart of the earth), Saturday morning.

Then concluding that Jesus raises on the 18th day (Saturday night), the first day of the week (at sunset), followed by the tomb being found empty the next morning (on Sunday).

Jesus died on the cross at 3pm. Is it possible that the countdown began right then, to where those remaining hours counted as one day, or even as part of one day?

In theory, if the first hours counted as one full “day”:

14th day crucified (Jesus in the heart of the earth for 1st day, after 3pm).

Wednesday.

15th day high sabbath (1st night in the heart of the earth) Wednesday night.

15th day high sabbath (2nd day in heart of the earth) Thursday.

16th day (2nd night in heart of the earth) Thursday night.

16th day (3rd day in the heart of the earth) Friday.

17th day, 7th day Sabbath (3rd night in the heart of the earth), Friday Night.

Then resurrected at dawn of the Shabbat, Saturday morning.

In theory, if it counted as part of a day, assuming to equal 3 full days:

14th day crucified (Jesus in the heart of the earth for part of a day, after 3pm).

15th day high sabbath (1st night in the heart of the earth) Wed night.

15th day high sabbath (2nd day, 1st full day in heart of the earth).

16th day of Nisan (2nd night in heart of the earth) Thu night.

16th day of Nisan (3rd day, 2nd full day in the heart of the earth).

17th day of Nisan, 7th day Sabbath (3rd night in the heart of the earth), Friday Night.

17th day of Nisan, 7th day Sabbath (3rd day begins, plus the hours on the 14th) concluding in theory that Jesus resurrected before sunset on Saturday (sometime during the day).

Based on these three options, assuming 3 nights are actually fulfilled, we would then consider that Jesus would have resurrected at or between: Saturday morning and Saturday at sunset.

Some take being in “the heart of the earth” as being in the tomb, versus literally in the heart of the earth, which is a different topic. Either way, the Bible

is clear that the tomb was near the cross (ref: John 19:41-42). If this theory were true, then figure to add a little more time past 3pm.

Theory 2: Is that Jesus was crucified on Thursday, not Wednesday, with two consecutive Sabbaths that year, versus there being a day in between.

This still leaves room for the Marys to find the tomb empty on Sunday morning.

Many lean to this theory due to Luke 24:21 and 29, which is when two disciples don't realize they are talking to Jesus after His resurrection.

v.21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

v.29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

This shows us that the statement in v.21 was made before sunset. Scholars debate on the proper translation as it relates to the 3 day statement. Figure if Jesus died before sunset Thursday, then Friday same time is 24hrs, Saturday same time is 48hrs, and Sunday same time is 72hrs, three literal days. If we count the literal Jewish days, assuming He was crucified on the 14th (right before the 15th) and that it was a Thursday, then 1 day would be the 15th (Friday just before sunset), 2 days (Saturday just before sunset), and 3 days landing on Sunday just before sunset. Is it possible that they would have considered it as starting the 15th since it was just hours later? Or is it possible that the statement meant less than 4 days (or 96 hours)? Without further personal convincing study confirmed by the Holy Spirit, I am not ready to make a decision based on this scripture reference.

Many also lean towards a Thursday crucifixion for other reasons.

One reason is because from reading the scriptures concerning the empty tomb, it is blatantly pointing towards Sunday, pulling our attention then to Sunday. It was a wonderful morning.

Many protestants choose Sunday mornings as their main gathering for worship. Most claim this is due to the belief that Jesus rose again on Sunday.

They point to this custom of Sunday morning gathering being rooted from the early Church based on Acts 20:7.

And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

They broke bread daily, house to house as well (ref: Acts 2:46). Could it mean, on Saturday night, they were together (again)? Sunday morning is part of the first day. Acts 20:9 refers to Paul preaching long, so was it closer to 3-6 hours or over half a day? It is hard to prove scripturally that the early disciples had a conviction to worship on Sunday mornings as a main gathering in response to Christ's resurrection.

Those who defend the Friday night crucifixion theory with a Sunday morning resurrection also refer to Jesus's reference to 3 days and 3 nights either as an idiom, or as God having the authority to make such a decision.

We will now further examine if Thursday night could be an option for consideration to fulfill 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth.

Note: "Night" is referring to starting at sunset. Some also think it's possible the Marys went to get the spices early Sunday, but that would contradict what we have read from Luke 23:56.

Thursday crucified at 3pm (part of day time fulfilled)

Marys possibly somehow bought spices, and possibly prepared.

Thursday night (one night fulfilled), High Sabbath.

Friday morning (2 days or partial days fulfilled) High Sabbath.

Friday night begins 7th day sabbath (two nights fulfilled).

Saturday morning 7th day sabbath (3 days or partial days fulfilled)

Saturday night (3 nights fulfilled). Could the Marys have access to buy ointment this night? They could at least finish preparing, though that too may contradict Luke 23:56.

This then in theory leaves Sunday morning (time depending on if Thursday afternoon counted towards a day or as a full day) as Jesus's resurrection time.

Many people say Thursday could not be an option for His crucifixion assuming that there would not have been time or access on Thursday or Saturday to prepare.

We have now looked at theories based around a Wednesday and Thursday crucifixion, leaving us with Jesus having resurrected between Saturday morning and Sunday morning, or somewhere between the end of the 7th day and sometime on the 1st day of the week.

Examining in relation to the Hebrew Calendar:

The only other information I am aware of for consideration is searching out if we can know what the Passover schedule really was at this time, based on the Hebrew calendar. One of the problems people have with this is that some believe calendar records are too tainted over time to line up a Hebrew day to a Gregorian day of the week, even if lining up the full moon (that happens during Passover).

Based on the theories presented, and for the sake of seeking options in the Hebrew calendar, we are assuming that Passover must have been on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday (for those who take the 3 nights as an idiom). Historical texts record that Pilate was in position from 26-36AD. It is commonly believed that Jesus died and rose again between 30-34AD.

We will need an exact Hebrew Calendar date for this research. For the purpose of examining options, reasonably assume then that Jesus is crucified as the Passover Lamb on Passover, on the 14th.

And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! (John 19:14)

As John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

At this point in my research, I am relying on others' expertise and considering their findings to the scriptures.

I do not know if this following calendar converter is accurate, but Thursdays do not seem to be an option to consider between at least 20-40AD, and considering Fridays as an option seem to irreverently undermine what Jesus Himself spoke (not to claim that remembering His crucifixion with the family of Christ on a Friday is wrong). Any other day besides Wednesday, as we have concluded do not seem to be an option for consideration. If these converters are accurate, this makes a strong case for a Wednesday crucifixion.

<https://peacecrusader.wordpress.com/2009/07/19/was-jesus-crucified-sometime-in-a-d-30/> uses

<http://the-light.com/cal/converter/>

and shows 30AD as a Wednesday April 3rd

which also lines up with <https://www.hebcal.com/converter/>

a well known of converter.

The following link calculates the dates differently making a Thursday for Passover an option for consideration in 34AD, and Wednesday in 28 and 31AD.

http://intercontinentalcog.org/Appendix/Passover_dates_26-34_AD.php

Interestingly, this following website also makes a case, examining the options of 28 and 31AD, also claiming for Passover to have been on Wednesday night

<http://timeofreckoning.org/category/messiahs-crucifixion-31-ad>

At the following website, you can read of a very detailed case made to support the Crucifixion being on Wednesday April 5th, 30AD

http://www.cbcg.org/franklin/cal_of_christ_part1_revised.pdf

Could Jesus rise from the dead during Sabbath?

I believe in theory that the Word leaves room for this.

John 5:16-17

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to play him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Luke 14:5

And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

In Conclusion:

I do not believe the above information of itself proves a certain time, but does point to the weekend (or if preferred from personal conviction, 3 days) following the Passover Lamb as a time to celebrate the resurrection of the spotless lamb of God.

It appears very likely that Jesus bowed His head at 3pm as the first day of Passover was ending (what has commonly been celebrated as “Good Friday”), and they were entering into the high sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For those who would like to know, 3pm in Jerusalem would be: 5am PST, 6am MST, 7am CST, and 8am EST. As we deduced earlier, it seems extremely likely that Jesus resurrected between Saturday morning and Sunday morning, depending on whether He was crucified on a Wednesday or Thursday, and depending on what qualified as 3 day times (within 3 days and 3 nights).

It is God’s will that we experientially know (as a lifestyle) the power of His resurrection. He is the first born amongst many brethren, the redeemed!

I pray that you are blessed with a growing literal knowing of Christ being the life in you!