

He Arose! ... But When?

Foundational to worship on the first day of the week is the teaching that the Savior was resurrected on Sunday morning. This teaching runs into a number of conflicts with the Scriptures; however, they are resolved when the facts of His resurrection are brought to the clear light of truth.

The 21st Century is upon us and the deception spoken of in Revelation 12:9 has truly taken place, and it likely will heighten and branch out into many new areas. The masses will be influenced as never before in ways heretofore unimaginable. We are in the midst of a social and spiritual revolution that has little room for the True Worshiper. On the contrary, the ultimate objective is to destroy the remnant of faithful followers of the True Mighty One of the Bible.

From the start the great Deceiver has sought to derail True Worship. Key to his tactics is the deflection of worship away from the Creator Yahweh*. Central to this strategy has been the shifting of the Biblical Sabbath to another day venerated by millions throughout history.

Historical evidence is overwhelming that Sunday was taken from pagan worship and added to the traditions of the church to placate pagan, sun-worshiping converts who routinely observed the "venerable day of the sun" on the first day of the week. By so doing these converts could still keep their heathen ways, but with a "Christian" connotation. This all happened within several hundred years after death and resurrection of our Savior, according to the church historian Eusebius.

There is nothing in Yahweh's Word that even hints that we should be keeping or observing Sunday. The observance of Sunday was in vogue long before the Apostles were even born, kept by pagans centuries before the Savior came to this earth. It was a day in honor of the sun-god, the one they worshiped.

*The Heavenly Father revealed His Name Yahweh to His people (Ex. 3:15). His Son Yahshua is His salvation. The Name Yahshua means "Yahweh is salvation." Write for our free ministudies, *Is His Name Jehovah or Yahweh? And How the Savior's Name Was Changed.*

So how do the vast majority of Christian churches justify the keeping of the "Sabbath" on Sunday—the first day of the week—a day later than the seventh day prescribed in the Scriptures? That is the subject of this important booklet.

How the Biblical Day Begins and Ends

Before we examine the Bible texts regarding Sunday and the resurrection of the Savior, we should review what Yahweh has to say about determining the beginning and ending of the days from His Word.

In most of the civilized, industrial world the new day begins at midnight, in the middle of darkness. There is no way one can delineate the beginning of the new day in the middle of night without some sort of timepiece. Yahweh's way, on the other hand, is easy to observe and simple to establish.

Genesis 1:5 reveals,

"And Elohim called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

The new day according to the Bible begins with evening, then comes morning. As we will see, the Biblical day ends with sunset, the going down of the sun. A new day then starts, which

lasts until sundown. A clear delineation of a day is given for us in the keeping of the Day of Atonement. Notice Leviticus 23:31-32:

"You shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month: at even, from even unto even shall you celebrate your Sabbath."

Clearly, Yahweh expects us to observe Atonement from evening unto the next evening at sunset. From sunset unto sunset. This is further clarified in Leviticus 22:6-7:

"The soul which has touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water. And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things because it is his food."

Notice that even though the man has bathed he is still unclean until the sun has set and the new day has begun. This is clear from Judges 14:18. Samson challenged the Philistines with a riddle, and gave them seven days to come up with the answer. Through deceit Samson's wife reveals the solution to the Philistines just in time, before the seventh day had ended at sunset. Note verse 18:

"And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion..." (answering his riddle).

Another scriptural example showing that the day ends at sunset is found in the account given by Nehemiah. Judah became very careless about revering the Sabbath (Neh. 13:15-22). On the Sabbath they were treading the winepress, bringing in sheaves, loading the pack animals, bringing into Jerusalem items of food to sell, and buying fish and articles from the men of Tyre. Nehemiah said they were profaning the Sabbath day by their continuing to carry on with these work activities and would bring more wrath upon those of Jerusalem. Nehemiah took action as we see in Nehemiah 13:19:

"And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates that there should no burden be brought in on the Sabbath day."

Nehemiah determined that at the decline of the sun when the evening shadows came upon the city on Friday afternoon, the city gates would be shut so that no further commerce or selling be carried on in Jerusalem because such activities would spill over into the beginning of the Sabbath at sunset.

The gates were then re-opened after the sun had set on the seventh day ending the Sabbath, allowing businesses to resume now that the Sabbath was over.

When Esther asked that all the Jews in Shushan fast for her "three days," she added in apposition, "night or day."

(For more proof, write for our free ministudy, When Does the Scriptural Day Begin?)

New Testament Days Also Begin and End at Sundown

We must remember that the New Testament is a chronicled history of the people of Yahweh who were steeped in Old Testament teachings. They continued observing the Sabbath and Holy Days as well as the customs of the Bible. Notice the striking example of Yahshua the Messiah in Mark 1:21-29.

After calling His disciples to follow with Him, Yahshua came to the gentile city of Capernaum on the Sabbath. He immediately went into the synagogue and began teaching, bringing astonishment to those assembled there. One with an unclean spirit began crying out,

disrupting the service. Yahshua commanded the spirit to come out of the man, and His fame spread throughout the land. Note that the Savior did heal the demon-possessed man who needed calming so Yahshua could carry out His teaching. He also cured Simon's wife's mother who ministered to them (v. 31). This apparently was on the Sabbath, as the sun had not set. The account continues:

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of diverse diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew Him." (Mark 1:32-34)

After sunset the Savior went to work in earnest and healed those that presented themselves to Him. We read "all the city was gathered together at the door." Because the Jews condemned healing on the Sabbath, contending it was work, Yahshua waited until sunset.

"And therefore did the Jew persecute Yahshua, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day." (John 5:16)

Having examined numerous verses from both the Old and New Testaments showing that sunset is the beginning and ending of a day, we are better prepared to perceive the time frame of the various visits to the tomb and Yahshua arose.

A Late Sabbath Visit

The majority of churchianity observes Sunday because they claim the Savior arose from the tomb on Sunday morning. They contend because He arose on Sunday, they remember His resurrection by observing Sunday as a day of rest. Some churches contend the Savior Himself changed the day; others that the Savior and the Apostles now observed Sunday as an example for us. Can we find from the Bible any evidence that the Sabbath was changed or that we are now commanded to observe Sunday? Where in the Bible do we find any indication that a resurrection day creates a day of rest anyway? Join in our study of the Scriptures as we examine this elusive claim.

Yahshua having been impaled for six hours, died. Pilate was satisfied that the Savior was dead and gave permission for Joseph of Arimathea to take down the body. He and Nicodemus wrapped the body in linen and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, and the women had followed along and observed what was happening.

Luke 23:55 tell us:

"The women who had come with Yahshua from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how His body was laid in it," NIV. Matthew 27:61 reveals that the two Mary's observed the entombment: "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb," NIV. Both Evangels tell us the woman apparently were very concerned and followed Joseph as he took the body, noting how it was placed in the new tomb.

Consider the Bible account of events. The Savior was put to death on Wednesday, the day of Passover in 31 C.E. He was then placed in the tomb just before sunset when one day ended and another began. The women had no time to wrap the body with spices because the High Day was almost upon them. The setting sun heralded the first day of Unleavened Bread, a special High Day Sabbath that began Wednesday after sunset, Abib 15. The women rested this day, Thursday, bought and prepared spices on Friday for embalming of the body, and then rested on Saturday the weekly Sabbath.

Having rested on the weekly Sabbath, and before the setting sun ended the weekly Sabbath (Saturday), the two Marys came to "see" whether the Roman guards were still sanctioned there

and to view the tomb, Matthew 28:1. The guard had already disbanded, and the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. This was not a sunrise visit. The Savior had arisen and was already gone even before the Sabbath came to an end at sunset.

Astronomy Helps Confirm a Wednesday Passover

Scripture says that Passover occurs on the 14th day of the month (evening of the 13th, Biblical time), Leviticus 23:5, Numbers 9:3, 5. The 14th is at the midpoint of the month, the time of the full moon—give or take a day depending on whether the month is 29 or 30 days.

In answer to a query about when the full moon occurred in the year 31 C.E. (year our Savior died), the U.S. Naval Observatory determined that the astronomical full moon of Abib that year was Tuesday, March 27 at 1:00 in the afternoon Jerusalem time, Julian calendar. A report by the British Astronomer Royal confirms this day and date. (The Resurrection—When? By Ithamar Quigley, p.22).

After sunset Tuesday evening—when the full moon could be seen—answer to the 14th of Abib. (Recall the new days begin at sunset, Scripturally.) It became Wednesday that night at midnight, Roman time. As the Passover sacrifice, Yahshua died that Wednesday afternoon.

Late Saturday Afternoon Entombment

Matthew 28:1 gives the clearest rendering of the four Evangelists in the King James Version. This is inspired writing sounds as if it were happening at this very moment. Note that the exact time is pin-pointed in Matthew 28:1:

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

"In the end of the Sabbath," we see from the evidence, is Saturday at sunset. The Sabbath is not over yet, the sun has not set, so this takes place at the very end of the Sabbath. It is the time of the setting of the sun, just preceding twilight. After the sun has set, the new day has begun, and twilight or dusk sets in. Total darkness follows within forty minutes to an hour after sunset. Thus, twilight is the beginning of the new day after the sun has set. There is still sufficient light to carry out a few simple, important tasks before total darkness.

Perhaps a closer examination of Matthew 28:1 is necessary. The phrase "in the end of Sabbath" might allow a reader to assume this would be midnight or sunrise. But the Greek word "*opse*" No. 3796 in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Greek Dictionary shows it to be from the same *opiso*, No. 3694 meaning (through the idea of backwardness) late in the day; by extension, after the close of the day and is translated at even, in the end.

Opse is used in only two other places. Note Mark 11:19-20:

"And when even (opse) was come, He went out of the city. And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots."

It is obvious here that the Savior left the temple at the end of the day (*opse*) after casting out the money changers, and went out of the city. They had spent the night away from Jerusalem and in the morning they came again to Jerusalem (verse 27) and entered the temple.

The only other place *opse* appears in Scripture is Mark 13:35, describing the hidden time for Yahshua's return.

"Watch you therefore: for you know not when the master of the house comes, at even [opse] or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning."

Of the four time periods mentioned here, *opse* clearly shows the time as being the day's end. It comes before midnight, before cock-crowing and before morning. This shows that the women came to the empty tomb just before sunset ended the day when evening was about to set in.

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, on the word *opse*, p. 471, says, "*Opse* followed by a genitive seems always partitive, denoting late in the period specified by the genitive (and consequently still belonging to it.)" Other translations correctly render this verse as: "Now late on the Sabbath..." ASV; "And late in the week," *Rotherham*; "In the Evening of the Sabbath day," *Lamsa*; "At the close of the Sabbath," *Moffat*; "In the end of the Sabbath," *Berry's Interlinear*; "At the end of the Sabbath," *Green's Interlinear*; "Now late on the Sabbath," TSS; "Late on the Sabbath," *Riverside Cambridge*. A careful reading of these translations shows that the Messiah had already risen before sunset ended the Sabbath.

Because of a false Sunday resurrection teaching, many assume the word dawn in Matthew 28:1 means *early dawn*, just as the first rays of sunlight streak across the eastern sky. But this is not the case here.

By Dawn's Early Light?—the Right Sequence of Events

The Greek word translated "dawn" is *epiphosko*, No. 2020 in Strong's and can mean to begin to grow light or it can mean to draw on. It is traced to *epiphaino*, No. 2014, meaning to shine upon, that is, to become visible or known. Thus, when something dawns on us, it simply means a new understanding enters our mind.

The proper understanding of this word is in the context of the passage. We know one day is changing into another and the word *opse* pinpoints the time of day as evening. So to be accurate to Yahweh's Word, we know *opse* should convey its message, to make the new day known (which Biblically happens at sunset). It cannot mean the bringing in of light, but can mean to bring on the day. If the use of *epiphosko* is used in some other meaning other than dawn in the Bible, we should pay heed to its proper meaning.

In Luke 23:53-54 we find the only other time the Greek word "epiphosko" is used in the New Testament and there it indicates the approaching of the Sabbath.

"*And he took it down, and wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in tomb that was hewn in stone, where never man before was laid. And that day was a preparation and the Sabbath drew on*" [epiphosko], Luke 23:53-54. From our foregoing study we know the days changed at the setting of the sun. When the sun had set, another day began. So we can see that the Greek *epiphosko* has to mean "to draw on." The James Moffat translation clarifies Matthew 28:1 beautifully, "*At the close of the Sabbath as the first day of the week was dawning [drawing on].*" Dr. George Ricker Berry's *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* in Matthew 28:1 reads; "*Now late on Sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward the first day of the week, came Mary the Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.*" Both Drs. Moffat and Berry in their Bible versions correctly translated *epiphosko* as the beginning of the next day at dusk, just after sunset. *Rotherham* is in harmony, but has different wording:

"*And late in the week, when it was on the point of dawning in to the first day of the week...*" Verses 3 to 6 go on to tell the sequence of events as though they are just happening. But note that verse 6 states that He has already risen before the first day of the week ever came into being.

Our Redeemer ate the Passover with His disciples just AFTER SUNSET, which had ended Tuesday and was the beginning of Wednesday, Abib 14. He went with the disciples to the garden at Gethsemane for prayer and was soon taken prisoner and given several trials that night. He was impaled about 9:00 the next morning, Wednesday (John 13-19), on Abib 14.

Darkness was upon the earth from noon until 3 p.m. when He died (Passover afternoon). Pilate was asked that His body be taken down that it might not remain on the tree on the High Sabbath

Day which was on a Thursday that year, John 19:31. The law for this is found in Deuteronomy 21:23,

"His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but you shall in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of Yahweh;) that your land be not defiled, which Yahweh you Elohim gives you for an inheritance."

Joseph of Arimathaea hastily removed the body and placed it in his own new tomb after hurriedly wrapping it with bandages, for the sun was sinking in the west, John 19:40.

Luke says the Sabbath "drew on" (*epiphosko*), meaning they were in haste as the setting sun would bring on the High day of unleavened bread, and Abib 15 would soon begin. There was much to be done from the time of the Savior's death at 3 p.m. and the setting of the sun around 6 p.m.

After He was laid in the tomb, Matthew, Mark and Luke relate what the two Marys (Magdalene and the mother of Joses) beheld where He was laid:

"And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb...and there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." (Matt. 27:60, 61)

"And Mary Magdalene and Mary [the mother] of Joses beheld where he was laid." (Mark 15:47)

"And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid." (Luke 23:54-55)

Luke goes on to tell that they prepared spices and ointments and rested on the [High] Sabbath (See John 19:31, according to the commandment of Ex. 12:16; Lev. 23:7, Num. 28:18, 25) as this was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Preparation Day Not for Weekly Sabbath

The "preparation day" mentioned in the New Testament always refers to preparing for the first day of Unleavened Bread. Friday is never called the Jews' preparation day. And nowhere in the Bible is the weekly Sabbath ever called a "high Sabbath." This is not to say we should not prepare for the weekly Sabbath, but merely to point out that the New Testament makes special mention of "the preparation day" for the first day of Unleavened Bread.

Preparation (from the Greek *paraskeue*, Strong's No. 3904) occurs six times in the New Testament. It is from No. 3903 and means readiness, get ready. In the following verses the preparation day precedes the High Sabbath, which is the first day of Unleavened Bread, Abib 15.

- Matthew 27:62 reads, "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate..." (Notice, they came to Pilate on the High Day of Abib 15, for the weekly Sabbath follows in 28:1.)
- Mark 15:42, "And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation day, that is the day before [the] Sabbath..."
- Luke 23:54, "And that day was the preparation, and [the] Sabbath drew on."
- John 19:31, 42, "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the [tree] on the Sabbath Day (for the Sabbath Day was a high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and they might be taken away...There laid they Yahshua therefore because the Jew's preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."

- John 19:14 does speak of a general preparation for the coming Passover, but this is not referring to the preparation "day" itself. The "preparation day" is specifically for the first day of Unleavened Bread when all the leavening was to be removed from the house in readiness for the seven days of unleavened bread, Leviticus 23:6-8. The word "preparation" does not refer to the weekly Sabbath.

The Two Sabbaths: High and Weekly

Luke's 23rd chapter shows an important difference between verse 54's referring to the High Sabbath. Verse 54 states simply, *"that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on."* Verse 56 explains that they rested on the Sabbath (weekly) after preparing ointments.

For a fuller appreciation of the distinction between these two Sabbaths, we consult the Greek Emphatic Diaglott. It renders verse 54 as simply "Sabbath approached," while for verse 56 it calls it "the indeed Sabbath"—two different kinds of Sabbath.

On Friday, after the Thursday High Sabbath, the women bought spices and ointments, then rested on the weekly Sabbath, Saturday, verse 56. The Greek text in Luke 23:56 has the Greek definite article to-men = the weekly Sabbath they rested; but verse 54 uses no definite article, showing that Luke differentiated between "a" High Sabbath of verse 54 and "the" weekly Sabbath of verse 56. Interestingly, the Diaglott's literal translation of the Greek phrase in verse 56 is *"t-men sabbaton,"* "the indeed Sabbath," meaning the weekly Sabbath.

Mark 15:42 refers to the time preceding the weekly Sabbath as simply "before Sabbath" (Diaglott). John 19:31, on the other hand, goes to great pains to show that the approaching annual Sabbath was a "great" or "high" Sabbath.

The day following the Passover is always a High Sabbath or annual Sabbath of Unleavened Bread regardless on which day of the week it falls. Passover comes on the 14th day of the first Biblical month. The following day, the 15th is the first day of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is observed as a High Sabbath according to Leviticus 23:5-7:

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is Yahweh's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread unto Yahweh; Seven days you must eat unleavened Bread. In the first day you shall have an holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein."

In 31 C.E. the year our Savior was put to death, Passover was on a Wednesday. He was placed in the tomb late that afternoon just before sunset, for sunset began the High Day, the first day of Unleavened Bread (John 19:31).

Luke 23:56 says the spices were bought before the Sabbath commenced:

"And they returned, and prepared spiced and ointments; and rested THE Sabbath day according to the commandment." Mark 16:1 simply says, "when the Sabbath was past" (literally, being past the Sabbath). There were two Sabbaths: the High Sabbath came on Thursday, then they rested Friday, and then came the weekly Sabbath.

"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." (Mark 16:1) The Greek for "bought" is Strong's No. 59, *agorazo*, and means "to go to market, to purchase." The women "had bought" the spices on Friday, the day after the Thursday High Sabbath, and then prepared these spices for the embalming procedure, which took considerable time.

The women could not have bought the spices on the weekly Sabbath (Neh. 10:29-31). They would not have the necessary interment spice at home and would have to buy aromatic spices for the embalming, prepare them for the mummification of the body, and still arrive "at the rising of

the sun," an impossible situation. Because there were two Sabbaths that week, High and weekly, they could buy on Friday between the Sabbaths.

A Real Mathematics Problem

Friday sunset to an Easter Sunday sunrise is an embarrassment to most theologians. They get red-faced in trying to explain how one and a half days and two night equals "three days AND three nights"! If we cannot find proof in the only sign the Savior gave us, how can we be sure that He is the Savior? Yahshua said there would be only one sign to prove His messiahship and that was the sign of Jonah: "*Three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,*" Matthew 12:40.

Some try to say the three days and three nights is just a Hebrew idiom and insist on the erroneous Friday afternoon impalement and Sunday morning resurrection. But this has serious flaws. In Hebrew, when days and nights are both mentioned together, as is the case here, the time reference is never considered idiomatic but literal (Companion Bible, Appendix 144).

For argument's sake let's assume this were an idiom. Let's say it symbolizes just part of a day for a full day. Let us examine the notion that He was put to death on Friday and arose Sunday morning.

A late Friday afternoon entombment would be a small part of one day. Saturday would be another day. Now we have part of Friday and Saturday, two days. Early Sunday morning would be another small part of a day. Extremely small parts of two days and one whole day, some allege, equals the three days.

But Scripture also says three nights. So, Friday night is one night. Saturday night is another night. We now have two nights. But they admit He is gone Sunday morning. No more than two nights fit into the puzzle—Friday and Saturday night!

We firmly believe the Scriptures teach that He was in the tomb a full 72 hours: three full days and three full night, from Wednesday sunset until Saturday sunset. No other reckoning is true to the Scriptures.

To come up with the third night, some erroneously teach that the period of darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour (noon until 3 p.m., Matthew 27:45) is the third night. But the Savior said He would be in the tomb ("heart of the earth") for the three days and three nights, Matthew 12:40. Still alive and hanging on the torture stake is hardly being in the heart of the earth!

Some even divide up the nights, saying Friday night from sunset to midnight is one night and from midnight to sunrise is another night. Aside from the fact that such a reckoning is purely Roman and not Scriptural timekeeping, it fails to account for Saturday night as well. Being consistent and adding two more "nights" for Saturday night gives an erroneous total of four "nights" if He were to have risen Sunday morning. Try as some will, they cannot fit a square peg into this round hole.

Events Between Wednesday and the Weekly Sabbath

At the time Joseph of Arimathea obtained permission to take the body, the (High) Sabbath was fast approaching. The Jews had prevailed upon Pilate to break the legs of those impaled so that they would die before the new day began. Joseph of Arimathea worked hurriedly to get the Savior's body down before the High Day Sabbath began at sunset, (John 19:31-33).

The impalement was not upon a cross. The Savior was impaled upon a post (which is the meaning of the Greek *stauros* or *xulon*—not "cross"), with one nail through both wrists and one nail through both arches of the feet. Hanging from one nail with hands overhead squeezed the

chest cavity and eventually suffocated the victim. The victim would often rise up and stand upon the nail in spite of the excruciating pain just to get air into the lungs, then slump back down again. Breaking the legs prevented this and hastened death.

Joseph wrapped the body of our Savior in a linen cloth or bandages. *"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Yahshua by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes over 70 pounds of weight. Then took they the body of Yahshua, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury."* John 19:39-40. The women followed along to the tomb to see its location (Mark 15:47, Matt. 27:61, Luke 23:55).

Assuming a Sunday resurrection, Luke's account (23:56) might appear as if the women bought spices the same day. However, it was the custom of storekeepers to close by the ninth hour (3 p.m.) before the Sabbaths. Also Mark 16:1 is clear, *"And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him."* This would have been possible only if there were more than one Sabbath involved with a day in between to buy the spices and prepare them.

Embalming was a lengthy procedure as they wrapped the body in strips of cloth beginning under the arms and mixing in spices and aloes as they went. It would have been impossible for them to buy the spices after a weekly Sabbath, prepare them, and rest the same Sabbath! Clearly this week had a High Sabbath on Thursday (first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread), which immediately follows the Passover. (Paul said that Yahshua was the Passover sacrifice, 1 Cor. 5:7.)

This annual Sabbath was in addition to the weekly Sabbath (our Saturday) on which He arose shortly before 6:00. Obviously the spices were bought and prepared on Friday between the annual High Sabbath (Thursday) and the weekly Sabbath (Saturday).

The only sign that our Savior gave to the world was that He would be in the tomb three days and three nights. *"...And there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the fish's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,"* Matthew 12:39-40.

Our Savior Was Long Gone by Sunrise

Notice Mark 16:2, *"And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."* This is the verse usually quoted by those promoting an "Easter Sunrise Service." But He was NOT there! In the following verses the angel plainly states, *"He is risen: He is not here,"* Mark 16:6. Yahshua had already arisen before sunset Saturday night. The tomb was empty.

Just because the disciples found the tomb empty at sunrise does not mean He had arisen just moments before. He had risen 12 hours earlier and had already been seen by some of His followers the previous night.

If you and I flew to Jerusalem and arrived at the tomb tomorrow morning and saw the empty tomb, would we say He arose just moments before we got there? The Bible clearly says in all four Evangelists that the Savior had already risen before the Sunday morning sunrise! He had gone from the tomb by the time the women came at sun up.

As a matter of fact, He was gone even before the sun had set ending the weekly Sabbath (Saturday). Matthew's account clearly shows that Yahshua was gone when the women arrived shortly after the setting sun brought on the first day of the week.

Women Make Several Visits to the Tomb

A significant verse is Luke 24:1, "*Now upon the first (day) of the week, very early in the morning they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain other with them.*" An examination of the Greek text shows that there is no basis for the added words "*in the morning.*" These words are not in the text. It was very early the first of the week and the stone was rolled away, revealing an empty tomb.

Strong's Concordance shows "very early" as No. 899, *bathos*" in the Greek, meaning profound (as going down, related to *bathus*, No. 901), and is translated deep and very early. Very early would be shortly after sunset. But the Savior had already arisen by sunset. And was gone long before Sunday morning sunrise.

Notice that it was "yet dark" in the following verses when Mary came to the tomb: "*The first day of the week came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and saw the stone was taken away from the sepulchre. Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the disciple whom Yahshua loved, and said unto them, They have taken away the Master out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.*" (John 20:1-2) We see that it was yet dark, and very early. This is an early visit, apparently before the sunrise, and Yahshua had already arisen.

The Scriptures record an early visit and a later visit to the tomb as Luke 24:22 reads: "*Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre.*" Matthew 28:1-8 relates this early visit of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary who came to the tomb "at the end of the Sabbath" to "see" the sepulchre. It was still the Sabbath, and the setting sun was about to herald the new day. The first day of the week was about to commence.

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first [day] of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of [Yahweh] descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for the fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead [men]. And the angel answered and said unto the women, 'Fear not: for I know that you seek Yahshua, which was [impaled]. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Master lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goes before you into Galilee; there shall you see him: lo, I have told you.' And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went and held him by the feet, and worshiped him. Then said Yahshua unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." (Matt. 28:1-10)

This visit by the two Mary's clearly took place even before the Sabbath was over, but still "in" the Sabbath. The new day was drawing on. They did not come to anoint the body of the Savior, but to "see" how things were, to prepare for the next day's activities. They knew the time was nearly due when the soldiers would leave the tomb, hence the visit. As they came, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of Yahweh rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it. For fear of the angel's brightness, like lightning, and raiment as snow, the keepers or detachment of soldiers did fear and shake and became as dead. The women were told not to fear, that Yahshua was risen, and invited them to see the empty tomb. The women were then told to inform the other disciples of the glad tidings. Enroute, they met Yahshua, all this having taken place at the very end of Sabbath.

It may appear confusing to read of Yahshua's two appearances to Mary Magdalene (and the other Mary). The accounts are given above in Matthew 28:9, and the second in John 20:15-18. The Savior first appeared to Mary Magdalene, then to the two disciples.

"Now when [Yahshua was risen, early the first [day] of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." (Mark 16:9)

The question arises, "How could Mary Magdalene who had seen and spoken with Yahshua and held Him by the feet "in the end of the Sabbath" (Matt. 28:1-10)—how could she say to Peter and John the next morning, "They have taken away the Master out of the sepulchre and we know not where they have laid Him" (John 20:1-2)?

Matthew tells us Mary came to the sepulchre before the Sabbath ended. John tells us Mary came "the first (day) of the week." This enigma arises as we compare Matthew 28:1 with John 20:1-2. Note Matthew's account; then compare with that of John:

"In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first [day] of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." (Matt. 28:1) Matthew 28:1 is in the end of the Sabbath. John 20:1 tells of Mary's coming alone: "The first [day] of the week came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and saw the stone was taken away from the sepulchre." (John 20:1) Notice the word "day" is added by translators.

Then she ran, and came to Simon Peter, and to the disciples, whom Yahshua loved, and said unto them, They have taken away the Master out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." (John 20:2)

Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre twice. Once before the ending of the Sabbath with the other Mary (Matt. 28:1), as the angels came and rolled the stone away frightening the detachment of soldiers, Matthew 28:4. She then met Yahshua, held His feet, and told the disciples about the empty tomb. They scoffed and did not believe. She was perplexed and returned again in the early darkness of morning, which John writes of, John 20:2-11.

Unbelief Grips the Apostles

Textual scholars contend that there were four recorded visits by the women to the tomb as follows: *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary at the end of the Sabbath, Matt. 28:1, John 20:1 and Mark 16:9. *Mary leaves to tell the Apostles, John 20:2-8, returns shortly thereafter, John 20:11. *By the women of Luke at "deep twilight," (Greek = bathos), Luke 24:6-9. *By the women of Mark "at the rising of the sun," Mark 16:2-8.

The Apostles simply did not believe the women, for they did not yet understand that He was to be resurrected. Luke 24:11 explains: *"And their [the women's] words were to them [the Apostle's] as idle tales, and they believed them not."* The whole idea of Yahshua's being resurrected was preposterous! The Apostles could not accept the fact that Yahshua had arisen. The women must be daydreaming!

The Apostles obviously rejected Mary's report of John 20:18: *"Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Master, and [that] he had spoken these things unto her".* They also rejected the report of the (four or so) women of Luke 24:10: *"It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary [the mother] of James, and other [women that were] with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not,"* Luke 24:10-11.

Those women recorded in Mark 16:8 said nothing to anyone: *"And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any [man]; for they were afraid."* (Mark 16:8)

Perhaps those in Mark's account said nothing for fear of being ridiculed and sneered at as were those who had preceded them "for they were afraid." If the Apostles treated the latter

reports of a resurrected Savior as "idle tales," how much more disdain and ridicule were heaped upon the two Mary's who gave the first report?

This is not unusual. When Peter is delivered from prison by an angel, he raps on the door of the house where they are praying for him, Acts 12:1-17. When the damsel recognizes Peter's voice and opens the door for joy, reporting to the others Peter is there, she is told that she is mad: "It is his angel." She was not believed either.

When Yahshua suddenly appeared in the midst of His disciples after the doors were shut (Luke 24:36-43) and said, "Peace be unto you," they were terrified. *"Yet they believed not for joy and wondered,"* until He asked for food and did eat before them.

If the Apostles could not believe their own eyes, how could they believe the report of the women? Would they not use the argument of seeing spirits or angels? The ridicule heaped upon the women likely made the Mary's doubt their own eyes and that they only imagined they had both seen Him and held Him by His feet.

Matthew 28:1-10 and John 20:1-9 likely record two distinctly different visits by the women at the tomb, Mary and Mary Magdalene at sunset, the other of Mary accompanied by Peter and John immediately afterwards. The third by the women of Luke at deep twilight; the fourth by the women of Mark "at the rising of the sun," and the fifth by Peter alone. They all found the tomb empty.

Differences Among the Accounts

Some ask why did the women come back at sunrise if they were there earlier and determined that He was gone? The answer is simply, UNBELIEF! People did not believe Yahshua arose then, and there are people today who still don't believe it. Yahweh's Word is plain in telling us He is risen indeed.

We must realize that the four Evangels do not agree on every point regarding the visits to the tomb. Note:

- How many women came to the tomb? Matthew says two; Mark implies three; Luke four; John, one.
- How many angels did the women see at the tomb? Matthew says two; Mark, one; Luke, two; John, two.
- How do they describe these angels? Matthew: sitting on the stone outside; Mark: inside sitting on the right side; Luke: standing by the women inside, John: inside sitting "the one at the head and the other at the feet.

Witnesses Testify of the 'Three Days'

As seen, the only prophecy Yahshua shared with His disciples as to His messiahship was that He would be in the tomb three days and three nights. He was in the tomb precisely three days and three nights from Wednesday afternoon until Saturday afternoon before sunset. Note the following Scriptures that all points to a complete three days:

"Saying, "Sir, we remember that the deceiver said, while He was yet alive, "AFTER three days will I rise again."" (Matt., 27:63)

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, be rejected of the elders, and [of] the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and AFTER three days rise again." (Mark 8:31)

"For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day." (Mark 9:31)

"And he said unto them, Go, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third [day] I shall be perfected." (Luke 13:32)

"And they shall scourge [him], and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again." (Luke 18:33)

"And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Messiah to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." (Luke 24:46)

"Yahshua answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19)

Matthew 27:62-66 tell that the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate and told of the above prophecies. They requested a guard: *"Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, You have a watch: go your way, make [it] as sure as you can."* (Matt. 27:64-65)

Lest the body of the Savior be stolen away, Pilate gave them a watch for the three days. This included Thursday the High Sabbath, Abib 15, Friday the day to buy spices and ointments, and Sabbath (Saturday), at the end of which He arose. The ending of Saturday would complete three days. Matthew says the keepers were still there until the earthquake when the angel rolled back the stone, Matthew 28:4.

Those on the road to Emmaus had not yet that the Messiah had risen, and were talking with Him likely late Saturday night, Luke 24:13-21. They mention that this is the third day since these things were done, but they did not pinpoint what they mean by "these things." It most likely was the sealing of the tomb, on Thursday, and now three days later they were not aware that the risen Savior Himself was talking with them.

Translators Further Errors of Catholic Church

Because most Bible translators were unfamiliar with the annual feasts days of Leviticus 23, they assumed the Sabbath mentioned in John 19:31 and corresponding verses referred to the weekly Sabbath or Saturday. The Roman Catholic Church has long taught that the Savior was put to death on Friday and arose on Sunday morning. The translators tried to make their translations fit this preconceived but erroneous idea. It is not unusual, then, to find translations that uphold the error.

Bible scholars through the ages have pointed out that our Savior was born about 4 B.C.E. Some have even postulated that His exact year of birth was clouded because through calculating the year of His death and resurrection, and comparing that with the Passover that year, it could be proved that our Savior did not rise on Sunday in 31 C.E.

Other Scriptures Answered

Generally all doubts can be erased by examining carefully the four Evangels, proving without doubt that the true Messiah arose Saturday afternoon. Thus, we must discard the erroneous Friday to Sunday sunrise hoax. Most ministers will not relinquish their erroneous teaching of a Sunday resurrection. Often the attempt to use Mark 16:9 is proof of a Sunday resurrection. Notice:

"Now when Yahshua was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast [demons]."

Almost all good Greek scholars will concur that the sense of the verse is really telling us what happened after the Savior had arisen. The comma should be after risen! Note the following punctuation: *"Now, when Yahshua was risen, early the first day of the week He appeared to Mary Magdalene out of whom He had cast seven [demons]."*

The phrase was risen is in the past perfect and gives the account of what occurred after He had risen. It is the Greek aorist tense and means occurred in the past. It does not mean that He arose on the first day of the week. He appeared to Mary Magdalene, and later made His appearance to other of His disciples as well on the first day of the week, sometime after sunset. From what the Bible teaches, we learn that at the end of the Saturday Sabbath Yahshua appeared to Mary Magdalene. The Companion Bible gives a sequence of events after the Savior's resurrection, many of which took place on what we call "Saturday night," before Sunday sunrise. Some point to Luke 24:21 in support of a less than complete three day, three night period in the tomb: *"But we trusted that it had been He Which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done."*

First, we must realize that the word "today" is omitted by the best text; somehow it crept into translation. The first part of the passage speaks about their hope that Yahshua would have set up His kingdom by this time. Now, three days after everything has occurred (things concerning the prophecies about Yahshua, v. 18), nothing apparently is happening. The phrase, "the third day since these things were done" is an idiom that is not precise in terms of time. "Luke has probably obscured an original double sense for the reference to the third day," Word Biblical Commentary, p. 1203. The resurrection has already occurred, verses 22-23, therefore this must be Sabbath evening—exactly three full days and nights since His entombment.

Catholics on the Sabbath Change

Observing Sunday instead of Yahweh's seventh-day Sabbath came from the Roman Catholic Church in the fourth century. Catholic spokesmen have challenged Protestantism by boldly stating that there is no command anywhere in the Bible to observe Sunday; that the Catholic Church changed the day of obligation to Sunday, and the world follows in lock step obedience. A few examples follow.

"From his same Catholic Church you have accepted your Sunday, and that Sunday, as the Lord's day, she has handed down as a tradition; and the entire Protestant world has accepted it as tradition, for you have not an iota of Scripture to establish it. Therefore that which you have accepted as your rule of faith, inadequate as it of course is, as well as your Sunday, you have accepted on the authority of the Roman Catholic Church." D.B. Ray, *The Papal Controversy*, p.179

"I have repeatedly offered \$1,000 to anyone who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' The Catholic Church says: 'No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week.' And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the holy Catholic Church." T. Enright, CSSR, in a lecture in 1884.

"Nowhere in the Bible do we find that [Yahshua] or the apostles ordered that the Sabbath be changed from Saturday to Sunday. We have the commandment of [Yahweh] given to Moses to keep the Sabbath day, that is the seventh day of the week, Saturday. Today most Christians keep

Sunday because it has been revealed to us by the church [Roman] outside the Bible." Catholic Virginian, Oct. 3, 1947.

Protestants Agree: Sunday is Erroneous

Similarly, even Protestant authorities recognize that Sunday as a day of worship is fallacious:

"There was and is a commandment to keep the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges, and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not. There is no Scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week...Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism." –Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, author of the Baptist Manual.

"And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because of the Bible, but the church has enjoined it." –Isaac Williams, Plain Sermons on the Catechism (Church of England)

"Is there any command in the New Testament to change the day of weekly rest from Saturday to Sunday? None." –Manual of Christian Doctrine (Episcopal)

"It is true, there is no positive command for infant baptism...nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week." –M.E. Theological Compend (Methodist)

"Much has been made of the attitude of our Savior in speech and deed toward the Sabbath. Some have imagined that by words He uttered and by deeds He did He relaxed the binding nature of the old command. This view, however, is to absolutely misunderstand and misinterpret the doing and teaching of our Savior." –G. Campbell Morgan, The Ten Commandments (Congregationalist)

Observe Sabbath, Not Sunday

Man's attempt to justify keeping Sunday because the Savior supposedly arose from the tomb on Sunday does not stand up under scrutiny. If we are going to keep a day of worship to celebrate His resurrection, then we must observe the Saturday Sabbath, for that is the day He arose from tomb.

There are other compelling reasons we should observe the Saturday Sabbath: Yahweh legislated it in the Fourth Commandment (Ex. 20:8); it was kept by Israel (Neh. 9:14); observed by the Savior (Luke 4:16), by the Apostles (Acts 13:42,44), and by His followers after His death (Luke 23:56), and will be kept in the Kingdom (Isa. 66:23).

In the final warning of events ahead of us, the Book of Revelation reveals who the real saints of the Bible are: "*Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the Commandments of Yahweh and the faith of Yahshua,*" Revelation 14:12.

There will not be a large group keeping Yahweh's Commandments at the return of the Messiah just ahead of us. Revelation 12:17 tells us that the "Dragon" "*was angry with the*

woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the Commandments of Yahweh and have the testimony of Yahshua the Messiah."

A small remnant will be all that there is of those returning to pure worship in the last days—our day. They will keep the true, seventh day Sabbath, the commanded Feasts days, Yahweh's righteous laws, and they will honor and call on His saving Name. All of these Biblical truths the Evil One has taken and hidden from popular worship.

May you be included in the number of the saints of which the Bible says, "I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have little strength, and have kept my word and have not denied my Name." Rev.3:8)

© 2007 Yahweh's Assembly In Yahshua
2963 County Road 233, Kingdom City, Missouri 65262
View us online at: www.YAIY.org
Call Toll Free: (877) 642-4101
Main Line: (573) 642-4100