

Our Savior's Resurrection

Try as you may, you simply cannot fit three days and three nights into a Friday afternoon impalement to Sunday morning resurrection. Yet, the three days and nights are the only sign given that the Savior was the true Messiah (Matt. 12:40). Here's the answer to this paradox!

One of the most perplexing problems faced by many Bible students is the question of how Friday could be the day our Savior was put to death. Let us check carefully what the Bible teaches. Note the following Bible passage.

"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered saying, Master, we would see a sign from You.

"But He answered and said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall be no sign be given to it, but the signs of the prophet Jonas:

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the fish's belly; so shall the Son of man be three day and three nights in the heart of the earth," Matthew 12:38-40.

Note carefully the "as" and "so" in verse 40. Yahshua definitely states, "Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." In no way can three full days and three full nights be squeezed into a period from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning. (Yahshua was quoting Jonah 1:17.)

Yet, the argument by those contending for a Friday-Sunday teaching is that the Jews counted a part of a day as a whole day. This supposedly allows "three day and three nights" to somehow be sandwiched into the time period from Friday to Sunday.

Those arguing the point show certain examples in the Old Testament where parts of days are counted as whole days. In Hebrew idiom this may be true. But in Hebrew, when the word "nights" is also included with "days," only full days are possible. So it is in Yahshua's quotation of Jonah 1:17. He would be in the grave three full days and three full nights.

This the Only Sign

Now, noticing that Yahshua mentioned three nights in conjunction with three days, we see that there are only two nights falling within the erroneous Friday to Sunday morning theory. The third night doesn't exist!

Regarding the Greek, a close check of a concordance will reveal that the Greek word meta (translated "after") is coupled with a time-period in 91 occurrences in the New Testament. An example is Matthew 17:1, "After six days..." But never is a part of a day considered to be a complete day in any one of the 91 occurrences.

The three days and three nights that the Savior was to be in the heart of the earth is the only real sign He promised that He was the Savior of the world. Yet, there are those who ignore or think that the three days and three nights are of little consequence.

Yahshua, however, thinks it is important and critical to our understanding. He said there would be no other sign of His messiahship!

Weekly and High Day Sabbaths

The Friday impalement theory grew out of misunderstanding that the Sabbath following impalement was the weekly Sabbath day. The early converts to the Savior were Jews, and the

leaders of the various assemblies were Jews. As these early pioneers died off, converts from pagan backgrounds swelled the church roles.

Many of these new converts detested the Jews and did not bother to study the Old Testament, neither did they become proficient in the Hebrew language. Their understanding resulted from a study of the Old Testament in the Greek, known as the Septuagint. These early "Christians" were ignorant of much of the Old Testament and had minimal comprehension of Yahweh's grand design for mankind.

Being unfamiliar with the Old Testament, these early religionists assumed that the Sabbath following the "preparation day" was the seventh day of the week, our Saturday. This obviously is wrong. Note the following:

"The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the tree over the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away." John 19:31.

The Sabbath referred to here is a "high day," not the seventh day of the week (our Saturday). It is one of the seven annual Sabbaths given to Israel and is known as the First Day of Unleavened Bread, Leviticus 23:6-8. Not only is Israel to observe the seventh day weekly Sabbath, but in addition seven special Sabbaths (annual "high days") are to be observed throughout the year.

Clearly from John 19:31 the day upon which the Savior was impaled was the preparation day for a "high-day Sabbath," an annual Sabbath and not the seventh day of the week.

Many knowledgeable scholars point out that this "preparation day" in the New Testament does not refer to preparing for the weekly Sabbath. We certainly prepare for and make ready well in advance for the approaching Saturday Sabbath, for it is the weekly day of rest, a memorial of Yahweh's creative power.

But the term "preparation day" in the New Testament refers to special preparations made for the approaching "High Sabbath," the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Passion Week Finally Understood

The actual sequence of events surrounding the week the Savior died runs as follows: On Tuesday evening, after the day ended at sunset, the Savior sat down with his twelve disciples in the Upper Room where they ate the last meal together, John 13.

They partook of the Passover memorial, then walked to the garden following the singing of the great Hallel (Psalm 115-118), Matthew 26:30. There Yahshua prayed and then was taken prisoner. This took place on (our Tuesday night) the Preparation day for the "high day," of the annual Sabbaths, known as the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Then following the betrayal by Judas came the four trials of the Messiah, ending in His impalement, all of which took place on Wednesday. He died shortly after 3:00 p.m.

His body was taken off the tree shortly before sunset, just before the High Sabbath began at the setting of the sun.

Messiah Resurrected Late Saturday

The Savior was in the tomb three nights: Wednesday night, Thursday night, and Friday night. He was in the tomb all day Thursday, all day Friday, and was resurrected just before sunset on our Saturday afternoon, a full 72 hours. We are told this in Matthew 28:1: *"In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn [Greek = epiphosko meaning to draw on toward] the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."* "Dawn (*epiphosko*) does not refer to the rising of the sun.

The women came only to "see" the sepulchre at the closing hours of the weekly Sabbath. Undoubtedly their thoughts had been on the Savior they loved even as they were observing the "high day of Unleavened Bread." Because they were planning to embalm His body, they perhaps wanted to see whether the Roman guard was still on duty at sunset. They came to the tomb as the setting sun brought the ending of one day and the beginning of another.

When they arrived, to their astonishment, the Savior was gone! The angel told them He had already risen and showed them the place where He had lain, Matthew 28:6-8.

'I Will Rise After Three Days'

Understand that the day that followed the preparation day was a high day. Even though this was a high Sabbath, the chief priests and Pharisees had gone to Pilate requesting that a guard be placed at the tomb, for the Savior had declared, "*After three days, I will rise again,*" Matthew 17:62-65. Pilate agreed to a three-day guard for the tomb.

At the death of the Savior, Mark 15:42 states: "*And now when the even was come because it was the preparation, that is the day before the Sabbath.*" It was just before the "high Sabbath," the first day of unleavened bread when Joseph of Arimathaea took the body of Yahshua, and wrapping it in fine linen, laid Him in his own sepulchre.

Continuing in verse 16:1 we learn, "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."

The high Sabbath ended Thursday night at sunset. The women then bought and prepared spices on Friday, preparing to embalm the body of the Savior after the weekly Sabbath. Luke reveals that they had prepared these spices and ointments, then "*rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment,*" Luke 23:56.

The high day that year was on Thursday. The women rested on that holy day. Friday they bought the spices and prepared them, along with the ointments, for embalming Yahshua's body. Then Luke tells us they rested on the weekly Sabbath (Saturday) according to the commandment. The Roman guard would still be on duty until late Saturday.

No Time for a Friday-Sunday Span

If we accept the false Friday impalement and a Sunday morning resurrection there simply is no time for the women to go to the market, buy spices and grind and mix them in preparing for the embalming of the body. They would not do it on the Sabbath (Friday sunset to Saturday sunset).

The erroneous Friday impalement is based on tradition and faulty Bible interpretation. The error has been perpetuated by church councils and creeds. But the plain statements of the Bible and custom of the Jew's observing of the seven annual Sabbaths show clearly that the Savior was put to death on a Wednesday, the middle of the week.

He arose 72 hours later on the weekly Sabbath, for He was gone when the women came to "see" tomb at the ending of the Sabbath and the empty tomb was confirmed later on the first day of the week.

A preposterous argument has been used to defend the erroneous Friday-Sunday impalement theory. It goes like this: By counting parts of Friday and Sunday makes two days, plus all of Saturday makes three days. Then Friday night and Saturday night makes two nights.

To account for the third night, appeal is made to the three-hour period of darkness from noon until 3:00 Wednesday afternoon:

"Now from the sixth hour [noon] there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour [3:00]." (Matt. 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44)

This period of time is touted as the third night, for darkness encompassed the whole land. Yet, there is a most difficult problem: *"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."* (Matt. 12:40) This flimsy argument lacks belief—the Savior was not yet "in the heart of the earth," in the tomb. He was still hanging from the stake! In no way can this three-hour period be considered the third night.

Nothing Changes Worship to Sunday

The main reason usually given to justify worship on Sunday is that the Savior arose on Sunday morning. The New Testament Evangelists show when people came to the tomb Sunday morning it was indeed empty! But that does not mean He arose Sunday, for when the women came as the setting sun ended the Sabbath (late Saturday afternoon), He was already gone. The tomb was already empty Saturday night.

Now that you have learned that the Savior was not raised from the dead on Sunday morning (He was raised late Saturday afternoon), there is no reason why you should observe Sunday as a day of worship, for Sunday is directly from Mother Babylon and derives from paganism, from worship of the sun. Sunday is known as the "day of the invincible sun."

Furthermore, nowhere are we told to remember Yahshua's resurrection. People mistakenly gather at an "Easter sunrise service" to worship the risen Savior, but He actually arose late Saturday afternoon. Well-intentioned people who observe Easter are keeping the wrong day and the wrong time. We are told to remember His death, 1Corinthians 11:26. There is not one Biblical command to celebrate Easter. It is a pagan custom as are the Easter eggs, rabbits, hot-cross buns, baked ham, none of which is allowed by the Bible. (Write for our comprehensive booklets, *Passover: A Memorial for All Time and He Arose...But When?*)

Seventh-Day Sabbath A Sign

Yahweh's Sabbath are the clear sign given by the Heavenly Father, Ezekiel 20:12, 20. The Saturday Sabbath memorializes Yahweh's rest on the seventh day. He commanded that His people also rest on that day as a memorial to Him, His creation, and redemption of His people.

Even if we assume that the Savior had risen on the first day of the week, there is nothing prescribed or even hinted at anywhere in Scripture authorizing man to change the Sabbath to that day! In fact, the Bible records that the Apostles continued to hold Sabbath meetings, for both Jews as well as Greeks, long after the Savior had died and been resurrected (Acts 13:14; 17:2; 18:4).

Seventh-Day Sabbath Is Forever

The weekly Saturday Sabbath will be kept in the Millennium and observed by all Yahweh's people as we see in Isaiah 66:23. The law and the Ten Commandments will be enforced, and as Micah tell us chapter 4: *"But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of Yahweh shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and the people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh and to the house of the Elohim of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar*

off: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," 1-3.

The law will go forth out of Zion, which includes the Ten Commandments and observance of the Saturday Sabbath. The entire world will then observe the same Sabbath that Yahweh set apart as a day of rest. It is the same Sabbath observed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, followed by Moses and the Israelites as well as the Savior and the Apostles. It will be kept in the Kingdom: *"And it shall come to pass, [that] from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, says Yahweh" (Isa. 66:23).*

You Can Have A Part

If you have read this far, YOU have been called to learn of His ways, to learn of His laws, to submit to His way of life now to enable you to be a teacher in the Kingdom under our Savior Yahshua when He sets up His rule in Jerusalem (Matt. 19:28).

We are called to become a kingdom of priests, to teach Yahweh's laws now and in the Kingdom. A living lesson acted out upon the stage of life is the best teacher. Are you willing to be an open letter to the world by obedience to Yahweh's New Covenant that He is making with His elect? Notice His words:

"This [is] the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says Yahweh, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." (Heb. 10:16)

The blessing He promises are out of this world. Will you be ready to receive them?

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