

REMINDER

Volume XVII

March 20, 2011

Number 12



WHAT DAY WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED?

(Original by Grady Daniel, edited and updated by Cooper Abrams)

*N*o one disputes that Jesus arose on Sunday morning, but there is much debate as to what day He was crucified. Most of us were taught Friday was the day Jesus was crucified and this has been widely accepted as the traditional day of crucifixion. But if Christ was crucified on Friday, how was He in the grave for three days and three nights as Jesus said in Matthew 12:40 He would be?

The key to understanding the day of the week on which Christ was crucified lies in Matthew 12:38-40, where He specifically states He will be in *“the heart of the earth”* for *“three days and three nights.”*

The traditional explanation mistakenly says that Jesus was crucified on Friday. Trying to justify that Friday was the day of the crucifixion those that whole this view say that the Jews counted any part of a day as a full day. That is, part of Friday is day one; Saturday, day two; and if arose sometime Sunday morning = day three.

This explanation has some serious problems, for the Jews did not reckon time the way we do. This is one of the first considerations

1. The Jewish day ended at sundown (6:00 PM) and the new day began at sunrise (6:00 AM).

2. Their Sabbath Day began at sundown Friday (about 6 p.m.)

and ended at sundown Saturday. In Genesis 1:5 after the first day of creation, God said *“... the evening and the morning were the first day.”* After the completion of each day of creation the Lord states the *“... the evening and the morning were the _____ day.”*

3. The word “day”, when used by itself, always and only refers to a period of time. The word has to be modified to specify what period of time it means. For example, in Acts 10:40, the Bible says, *“Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly.”* The word day, there, is modified by the word “third”, and, therefore, we know it refers specifically to only the third day (see also Acts 20:7 which refers to Sunday...the “first day” of the week). Romans 2:16 says, *“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel”*, referring to the Judgment Day).

The modifier makes it specific as to the period of time. Grammatically, three days and three nights means three twenty four hour periods of time.

If Jesus was crucified on the traditional Friday and rose again anytime after 6 p.m. Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath), He could not have been in the tomb (“heart of the earth”) three full days and three full nights as He said He would be. Some might try to dismiss the importance of Jesus' statement, but He said it would be a sign to the Jews that He *was* the Messiah. If He was not actually in the grave three full days and three full nights, there would be no way to authenticate the sign, so He had to be in the tomb the full time as He stated.

In the Jewish way of reckoning time, from Friday at 6 p.m. to Saturday at 6 p.m., only twenty-four hours would have passed if Jesus had been buried before 6 p.m. on Friday. From Saturday at 6 p.m. until Sunday morning at day break, it would have been a maximum of twelve hours. That gives a total of only thirty-six hours, not the seventy-two hours

(continued inside)

the Bible records that He was in the grave. Jesus said He would be in the grave for seventy-two hours and therefore He could not have been crucified on Friday.

Friday afternoon to Saturday 6 PM = 24 hours.

Saturday, 6 PM to Sunday, 6 AM = 12 hours.

Total = 36 hours (not enough time)

❑ **WERE THESE THREE LITERAL DAYS/NIGHTS?**

Some mistakenly refer to the passage where in John 11:9 Jesus asked, “...*are there not twelve hours in the day*” to explain away the problem with the time. In creation, God divided the day and night. The evening and the morning = 1 day. If there were twelve (12) hours in a day, then there must have been twelve (hours) in a night and the total would be twenty-four hours.

Also, anytime in the Bible when the word “day” is preceded by a number, it means whatever number of days is denoted by that number. “Day” can also be used in the Bible to mean an unspecified period of days such as Day of the Lord.

Dr. Charles Halff, Director of the Christian Jew Foundation, in writing “The Fallacies of Easter” stated: “*Sometimes people ask, 'Didn't the Jews count part of a day as a whole day or part of a night as a whole night?' Let me say this, beloved. Whenever you have the expression 'day and night' mentioned together in the Hebrew Scriptures, it always means a full day and a full night. . . For instance, if you will turn to Esther 4:16; 5:1; 1 Samuel; 30:12-13, and of course Jonah 1:17, you will find the expression 'three days and three nights.' And in every instance it means full days and full nights - not part of a day and part of a night.*”

From Friday to Sunday is not three 24-hour days. Jesus said he would be resurrected after three (3) days. In Mark 8:31, the Bible states, “*And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*” Counting backwards from Sunday three days, you will not arrive at Friday. You have to count the way the Jews did.

❑ **HOW COULD WEDNESDAY BE THE DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH?**

But if He was crucified the day before the Sabbath, how could He have been crucified on Wednesday? The answer lies in the fact that the Jews celebrated more Sabbaths than just the weekly Sabbath - they had a number of feast days that were called “High Sabbaths,” or high days. He arose on the first day of the week after the Sabbaths* (plural). Sometime after 6 p.m. Saturday, end of the Jewish day, in Matthew 28:1 we read; “*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.*”

Dr. C. I. Scofield states that the word, “Sabbath” in this verse is plural; from the Greek word “sabbata.” The day after the crucifixion was not the regular (Saturday) Sabbath but a Special (“High” - Greek, “megas”, large) Sabbath.

John 19:31 says, “*The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on 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.”

The Jews observed several “high” Sabbaths (“holy convocations”) in their seasons. Leviticus 23:3-6 says, “*Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings. These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.*”

The first Jewish month (Nisan or Abib) is our April. The Feast of the Passover (a high Sabbath) and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread (another high Sabbath) were celebrated on April 14th and 15th respectively.

The day Jesus died was the preparation day (Wednesday) for the Passover celebration that was to be held on Thursday - “*And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he (meaning Pilate) saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!*” (John 19:14). This was the morning of the crucifixion day. Verse 31 states, “*The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on 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.*”

Therefore, Passover (Nisan 14) was on Thursday, that year, the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on Friday (seven day feast last to Nisan 21), and the regular weekday Sabbath was on Saturday. Jesus was crucified in the morning on Wednesday, and He was placed in the tomb before 6 P.M. that day. He arose from the grave sometime after 6 P.M. on Saturday, which would be early Sunday morning, the first day of the week, according to Jewish time-keeping. This explanation fits Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 12:40 that He would be “*three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*”

❑ **FURTHER EVIDENCE FROM THE BIBLE**

The women purchased spices “after the Sabbath” or the Passover (Nisan 14 - Thursday) which would have been Friday as Mark 15:42 and Luke 23:52-54 state. They would not have broken the Law and purchased anything on the Day of the Passover, or the regular Sabbath on Saturday. Luke 23:56 says they returned and prepared the spices and “rested on the Sabbath” which was the regular Sabbath on Saturday. Then on the first day of the week, Sunday morning they went to the tomb to prepare the body.

❑ **CONCLUSION:**

This is the only view that fits the biblical account. Jesus was crucified on Wednesday and buried before 6:00 PM that day. The Jewish day, which began at 6:00 PM, was the Passover (Nisan 14). Therefore, the Passover began on Wednesday after 6:00 PM, which would actually be Thursday as the Jews reckoned time. The women, who brought the spices on Friday, rested on Saturday and

went on Sunday morning after 6:00 AM, finding the empty tomb. This is the series of events and is accord with Jesus' statement in Matthew 12:38-40. Hence, Jesus was in the grave three full days and three nights. Any other view violates the biblical account and the historical facts. ■



Should Christians Celebrate Easter?

Many Christians are unaware of the origins of Easter, which is actually a pagan festival held in honor of idols. In fact, Easter was celebrated hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus Christ. It wasn't until at least 300 years *after* the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the

establishment of Roman Catholicism that the official celebration of his resurrection began to be intermingled with the pagan practices of Easter.

Some interesting facts -

The word "Easter" and the goddess it represents -

The word "Easter" is derived from "Eostre," the pagan Anglo-Saxon goddess, and/or "Eostare," the Norse pagan festival of spring. When God gave the law to the Israelites in the Old Testament, He clearly instructed them to refrain from even uttering the name of other gods (*Exodus 23:13*). Names like Aphrodite, Asherah, Ashtoreth, Astarte, Diana, Eostre, Ianna, Ishtar, Isis, Ostara, Semiramis, Venus, . . . call her what you will, but she is one and the same - a false goddess, an idol, worshiped by pagans, and God declares that she is detestable.

Asherah is mentioned in the Old Testament quite frequently (*Ex. 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Deut. 12:2-4; Deut. 16:21; etc.*). Ashtoreth (the Babylonian goddess of the woods and nature) is also mentioned by name in the Bible (*Judges 2:11-13; I Samuel 7:3; I Kings 11:5, 33*). In every instance, she is an idol which greatly angers God. Inanna, the Sumerian patron of the temple prostitutes (also considered the merciful mother who intercedes with the gods on behalf of her worshipers), is represented with a star inscribed in a circle. There are several scriptures which clearly show that worship of any of the celestial elements (sun, moon or stars) is forbidden by God (*Deut. 17:2-5; II Kings 21:3-7, II Kings 23:4-15; Ezekiel 8:15-16*). Ishtar [pronounced "Aes-tar"] (the Babylonian/Chaldean goddess of love and war) and Semiramis (an Assyrian goddess) were both known as the "Queen of Heaven." And the "Queen of Heaven" is specifically mentioned in the Bible (*Jer. 7:18; 44:19, 25*).

What, other than the obvious connection of the words "Easter" and "Eostre" does this goddess have to do with the modern celebration of Easter? Plenty.

□ **Spring and Nature.** Diana (the Ephesian goddess of sex, fertility, virginity and motherhood) was said to be the source of nature. Eostre (an Anglo-Saxon/Teutonic goddess) was the goddess of the sunrise and spring. Ostara (a Norse/Saxon

goddess) was the maiden goddess of spring.

□ **Sunrise Services.** The book of Ezekiel shows rather clearly what God thinks of sunrise services: ". . . *there. . . were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east*" (*Ez. 8:16*). We know that the sun is only in the east at sunrise. God will not spare those who observe this practice, look upon them with pity, or even listen to them (*Ez. 8:1-18*). Besides, if it is the Christian's intent to observe the resurrection of Jesus Christ, one should take note that he arose before, not during, sunrise (*John 20:1*)!



□ **Bunnies and Eggs.** According to Teutonic myth, the hare was once a bird whom Eostre changed into a four-footed creature. Thus, it can also lay eggs. The hare is also the sacred companion and sacrificial victim of Eostre. Astarte (a Phoenician/Syrian goddess), on the other hand, was believed to have been hatched from a huge egg which fell into the Euphrates.

□ **Good Friday.** Did you ever wonder why Good Friday is recognized as the day Jesus died and Sunday as the day He arose, but yet had trouble explaining how he could thus be buried for three days and three nights (*Matt. 12:40; 27:63; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34*)? The answer is simple: He didn't actually die on "Good Friday." The Chaldeans offered cakes to Ishtar on the equivalent of the day we know as Good Friday. When the Roman Catholic Church wanted to appease the paganistic people in order to "convert" them to Christianity, they moved the dates accordingly! He was actually crucified on a Wednesday.

□ **Hot Cross Buns and Fires.** Cakes bearing a cross-like symbol representing the pair of cow-horns on the moon goddess, Isis, were offered by ancient Egyptians. The cakes which Greeks offered to Astarte and other divinities were called *bous* or *boun*, from which the word "bun" is derived. The Babylonians/Chaldeans offered similar cakes to the "Queen of Heaven." Fires were lit on top of mountains and had to be kindled from new fire, drawn from wood by friction. The fire was then used to bake cakes in sacrifice to Semiramis, the "Queen of Heaven." This practice, along with burning incense, was used in conjunction with baking the cakes and is mentioned specifically in the Bible (*I Kings 11:8; II Kings 17:7-16; 18:4; 23:4-15; Isaiah 17:8*). In addition to the cross imprinted on these cakes representing the horns of the goddess, it also sometimes represented the four seasons or four phases of the moon. Cakes were also offered to or eaten in honor of Apollo, Diana, Hecate, and the moon (also Diana's symbol).

□ **Lent.** The word "lent" is of Anglo-Saxon origin meaning "spring." Lent developed from the pagan celebration of weeping, fasting, and mourning for 40 days over the death of Tammuz (one day for each year of his life). Tammuz (the son/husband of the Babylonian idol Ishtar) was killed by a wild boar and then allegedly resurrected. This mourning of Tammuz is specifically prophesied by Ezekiel in the Bible and is characterized by God Himself as being detestable (*Ez. 8:13-15*).

□ **Lily.** Asherah (a Sidonian goddess) was frequently represented as a nude woman bestride a lion with a lily (symbolizing grace and sex appeal) in one hand and a serpent (symbolizing fecundity) in the other.

□ **New Clothing.** The tradition of wearing new clothing for Easter comes from the superstition that a new garment worn at Easter means good luck throughout the year.

□ **The Festival.** The timing of the festival of “Eostar” (the festival of spring) predates the birth of Jesus Christ, and the festival was always celebrated in conjunction with pagan idol worship. In 325 A.D., it was conveniently linked to the full moon on or following the spring or vernal equinox, March 21, when nature is in resurrection after winter. This is also when Easter is celebrated in modern times. Of course, there isn't anything wrong with remembering and observing the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

□ **Who celebrates Easter?** Witches, who base their celebrations (including Halloween) on the phases of the moon, celebrate Easter. Christians, however, are clearly forbidden from observing this pagan celebration (*Deut. 12:30-31; Luke 4:8; I Cor. 10:20-22; Eph. 5:11*). There is a good reason why the early church never spoke of Easter and why there is absolutely no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament (The only exception is a mistranslation in the King James Version of *Acts 12:4*, where it gives the word “Easter” instead of the correct translation “Passover”).

Should Christians celebrate Easter? If it means having Easter egg hunts, bunnies, and such, **NO**. But we **CAN** use this specific day to remember and celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In truth, we do that every time we get together on Sunday, **for EVERY Sunday is RESURRECTION DAY!**

Like Christmas, the Bible-believing Christian must be diligent to “**Abstain from all appearance of evil!**” (*I Thess. 5:22*). Unlike Halloween, Christmas and Easter have almost totally lost their original, pagan meanings, and it would seem that if a Christian can keep things focused on the **real reason** for the celebration, there would be no need to “throw the baby out with the bathwater.” In a word, let us, as believers in the Risen Christ, “**Observe RESURRECTION SUNDAY, rather than Easter.**” ■

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of March 13, 2011

Sunday School -----	21
Sunday Morning Service -----	38
Sunday Evening Service -----	34
Wed. Evening, 03/16/11 Service -----	23

INSURANCE FUND REPORT FOR THIS MONTH:

Monthly Requirement -----	\$ 273.08
Amount Received since 03/06/11 -----	\$ 65.92
Amount Still Needed By 04/06/11:	\$ 207.16

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: Mary Byars Cradle Roll 2: Larry Byars Helper: NEED VOLUNTEER!
6:30 p.m. Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: Charity Crawford Cradle Roll 2: Brian Crawford Helper: NEED VOLUNTEER!
Wed. Evening Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: LeAnna White Cradle Roll 2: Seth White Helper: NEED VOLUNTEER!

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of March 13, 2010

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$ 1,652.00
Insurance Fund -----	\$ 23.00
Total Received for Week of 03/13/11:	\$ 1,675.64

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

LISTEN TO -



ABIDINGRADIO.COM

www.southheightsbaptist.com