

The CRUCIFIXION was NOT on FRIDAY!

Easter Sunday does NOT commemorate the resurrection! Christ did NOT die on “Good Friday”! Read here the astounding, irrefutable PROOF that the true date of the crucifixion and the resurrection can be known!

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Reprinted from March 1959 Plain Truth

Either the “Good Friday Easter Sunday” tradition is a *fable* – or you have no Savior! Jesus gave only one sign to prove that He was the Messiah! And that sign was the *length of time He would be dead and buried*.

Notice Jesus’ own words concerning the **ONLY SIGN** that would prove His Messiahship:

“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign 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 DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS** IN THE HEART OF THE EARTH” (Mat. 12:39-40).

If He did not fulfil that sign, then He was an impostor and you are without a Savior!

Of course theologians and scholars deny Jesus fulfilled this sign. They say He was in the heart of the earth only one day and two nights – half as long as He thought He would be! And in so doing they deny the **ONLY PROOF** Jesus gave that He is the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

It Was Prophesied!

Did you know that it was prophesied that people would deny this sign – would deny that Jesus actually is the very Christ?

Turn to the Scripture: “But there were false prophets also among the people {in Old Testament times}, even as there shall be false teachers among you {Christians}, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord that bought them...* and **MANY** shall follow their pernicious ways” (II Peter 2:1-2).

The **MANY** are today denying their Savior by believing a tradition that rejects the only sign Jesus gave to prove He is the Messiah!

Did you know that it was not until after the death of the last of the twelve apostles – John – that the “Good Friday-Easter Sunday” tradition began to spread through the churches?

How Long Dead and Buried?

Let’s examine Jesus’ own words, recorded in the gospels, to find out *if He meant what He said* about the sign of Jonas. Did Jesus really expect to be buried in the earth three days and three nights?

Notice Mark 8:31: “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.”

Did you grasp that? Jesus did *not* say “after a day and a half.” Jesus said, “*after three days.*”

Consider! If Jesus were crucified and buried late on “Good Friday,” then one day *after* would be Saturday evening, and two days *after* would be Sunday evening, and three days *after* would be Monday evening. Either Jesus was not crucified on “Good Friday,” or He did not fulfil His sign and He is therefore an impostor and not the Messiah!

Did Jesus fulfil His sign? Turn to Matthew 28:6. Here is the testimony of the angel: “He {Jesus} is not here: for He is risen **AS HE SAID**”! Jesus did fulfil His sign, exactly as He said He would. He is the Savior. Then HE could not have been crucified on “Good Friday”!

But this is not all. Turn to John 2:19,21: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.... But He spake of the temple of His body.” If Jesus would have been crucified and buried on Friday evening and been resurrected on Sunday morning, the temple – His body – would have been built in a day and one-half. But Jesus did not say it would occur in a day and one-half. Not even in two and one-half days, but in **THREE DAYS’ TIME** – 72 hours. In other words, in exactly three days and three nights, at the precise moment, three 24-hour days after his death and burial. Isn’t it plain that Jesus meant exactly what He said? – three days and three nights, not parts of three days.

But Jesus also declared He would rise “the third day.” Let us suppose again that Jesus was crucified on Friday. If He were to rise on the *first day* after His crucifixion and burial, He would be raised on Saturday; if on the *second day* after His crucifixion, He would rise on Sunday; but if He were to rise on the *third day*, He would have been raised on Monday! But Jesus was already resurrected by Sunday morning. Plainly, Friday was not the day of the crucifixion!

How clear that all these expressions mean the same thing – three days and three nights – 72 hours! Jesus never once said He would be parts of three days in the grave.

1

How the Bible Counts Days

Adam Clarke, in his commentary on Matthew 12:40, quotes the *Jewish Talmud* in support of the idea that three days and three nights supposedly mean one day and two nights! The *Seventh Day Adventist Bible Commentary* implies the same. But the Bible is not interpreted by the Jewish Talmud or by a human Commentary. Jesus rejected the Talmudic traditions of the Jews.

In the April 1956 issues of the *Review and Herald*, the official publication of the Seventh Day Adventists, appeared two articles on the crucifixion listing several texts which, they claim, indicate that three days means no more than a day and one-half! Let’s look at these verses to see if the Scripture supports what they claim.

Here is the first text they offer as “proof” that “*after three days*” does *not* mean *after three days*! Notice it!

King Rehoboam told the people who came to meet him: “Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed” (II Chronicles 10:5). The same event is quoted in I Kings 12:5, “Depart yet for three days, then come again unto me.” The story continues with verse 12: “So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, *as the king had appointed*, saying, Come to me again the third day.”

The people left “for three days” and – “*as the king had appointed*.” Let us suppose they had first met the king sometime on Friday. As they were ordered to return at the end of three days, they could not have returned before the same time of day the following Monday. Now was Monday “*the third day*” from the day they had originally met with the King? The first day from that Friday was Saturday; the second day from that Friday was Sunday; and *the third day* was Monday – exactly the time the king expected them to return.

Monday, not Sunday, was the third day from Friday.

Notice how the Bible counts *from* one period of time to another. Turn to Nehemiah 5:14: “... I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is **TWELVE YEARS**, not thirteen years. Similarly, the third day *from* a Friday is a Monday, not a Sunday.

The next text the *Adventist Commentary* offers as “proof” that “three days and three nights” means only one day and two nights is in Esther 4:16 and 5:1. “Fast ye for me,” said Queen Esther, “and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also ... will fast likewise; and so will I go unto the king.” “Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel” and went to the king. Which day was this? – the third day of the fast. Suppose Queen Esther had requested the Jews late Friday evening, shortly before sunset, to fast. The first day of their fast would have been Saturday; the second day would have been Sunday; and on the third day – Monday – the Queen would have entered the king’s palace. Isn’t that plain and simple? The Jews did not fast parts of three days, but three days, night and day!

The *Adventist Bible Commentary* and the *Review and Herald* claim that the manner of counting the eight days for circumcising a boy baby demonstrated that three days and three nights do not mean three days and three nights. Let us see if this claim is true. Turn to Genesis 17:12. “He that is eight days old shall be circumcised.” Jesus was circumcised. When? “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision, his name was called Jesus” (Luke 2:21). The Revised Version renders the verse: “And when eight days were fulfilled...” Let us suppose Jesus were born on a Monday. One week later, the following Monday, He would have been seven days old. He would have been eight days old on the following Tuesday – the correct day of His circumcision. Was that Tuesday “the eighth day” (Luke 1:59) *from the day of birth*? Exactly! One day from a Monday is a Tuesday. The eighth day from a Monday is the Tuesday of the following week – no matter what the Talmud says! Here again is no proof that three days and three nights mean only parts of three days.

Another illustration is also presented – II Kings 18:9-10. In these verses it is claimed that “at the end of three years” (verse 10) means only *parts* of three years, not at the end of three full years. The siege of Samaria, the ancient capital of Israel, commenced in the fourth year of Hezekiah and ended in his sixth year. Here, the *Adventist Commentary* claims is “proof” that “the end of three years” means only half that length of time!

How could the siege of Samaria have ended “at the end of three years”? By having begun at the *beginning* of Hezekiah’s fourth year, and ending at the close of Hezekiah’s sixth year – three years! Not a year and one-half, a meaning some try to read into this verse. In no other way could the siege have continued till the “end of three years.” The original inspired Hebrew gives the meaning precisely, so there can be no doubt. It reads: “at the *ends* of three years.” From one end of the year to the other, in three successive years the siege continued – for three full years, exactly as the Bible declares.

Notice that in each of these examples, three days means three days, not *parts* of three days or only a day and one-half. There is no exception! After three days does not mean after one and a half days. It means after three days!

What Day Was the Resurrection?

Jesus was buried shortly *before sunset* on the day of the crucifixion (Luke 23:54). Since Jesus said that He would “rise the third day” after the day of His crucifixion, it is obvious that the resurrection must have occurred precisely *at the completion of the third day following His burial*.

Then the resurrection must have occurred *near sunset* three days later. When the women came to the tomb, early Sunday morning, *Jesus had already risen*. The angel said, “He is risen: he is *not* here” (Mark 16:6).

Therefore Jesus could not have risen later than near sunset Saturday afternoon three days after His burial – because He was *not* at the sepulchre Sunday morning.

Three days before Saturday would place the crucifixion *on Wednesday*, the preparation day for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thursday of that year must have been an *annual Sabbath*, the first annual Sabbath in the Days of Unleavened Bread.

2

So that we would know that *that Sabbath* which followed the crucifixion was not necessarily the weekly Sabbath, John was inspired to call it a “high day” (John 19:31), which, according to Jewish usage, means an *annual Sabbath* which may occur any day *during the week*!

Mark picks up John’s account by adding that **AFTER THAT SABBATH**, which was a high day, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the women *bought* sweet spices to use in anointing the body of Jesus (Mark 16:1). This purchasing of the spices could not have been on Thursday, the annual Sabbath: it must have been Friday!

Having made their purchases, the women *prepared* these ointments “and rested the Sabbath day *according to the commandment*” (Luke 23:56). This was the *seventh day Sabbath* upon which, near its close, Jesus was raised from the dead.

Thus the Bible proves that the resurrection was *not* on Sunday, the crucifixion *not* on Friday. **THERE WERE TWO SEPARATE SABBATHS THAT WEEK!** – one, an *annual Sabbath*, the other, a *weekly Sabbath*.

Matthew 28:1 Proves It!

A vital text proving that there were two Sabbaths in that week has been obscured by almost every translation into English. Only Ferrar Fenton’s version has this point correct.

Turn to Matthew 28:1. In the common versions it says, “In the end” – or more correctly, “*After the Sabbath*.” Notice that both of these renderings use the singular – Sabbath. *But in the original Greek the word is in the PLURAL*. Fenton renders it correctly by saying, “*After the Sabbaths*.” In a footnote to this text, he says, “*The Greek original is in the plural, ‘Sabbaths’*” – which all the scholars should know!

Another verse causing the Bible apparently to contradict itself is found in Mark 16:9. Open your Bible to this verse. This verse does *not* prove the resurrection was on Sunday. In the common versions, the comma is placed following the word “week,” making it *appear* that Jesus arose on Sunday morning. But the use of commas in the Bible did not develop until about *fourteen centuries after* this was written.

Here is the explanation.

In the original Greek the phrase “early the first day of the week” can be *grammatically* connected either with the words “having risen” or with the words “he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.” The *Expositor’s Greek Testament* says the phrase “early the first day of the week” may be either “connected with {having risen}, indicating the time of the resurrection, or with {appeared}, indicating the time of the first appearance.”

The Scriptures elsewhere prove *it could not refer* to the time of the resurrection. As *it could refer* to the first appearance of Jesus to Mary (John 20:14), Mark 16:9 should have been translated, “Now having risen, early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.”

The Montgomery translation renders this verse correctly. The translation of this verse in the Revised Standard Version is absolutely incorrect.

How It All Began

It was the so-called “apostolic fathers,” steeped in pagan traditions, who first began to teach that the crucifixion occurred on Friday. Yet they admitted that the ancient custom of fasting *on Wednesday* – the actual day of the crucifixion, as we shall prove – probably was derived from “the day on which Jesus was betrayed” and “on which the Sanhedrin decided to kill him”! (*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, art. “Fasting.”)

What an admission!

These same men attempted to **CHANGE** the *year of Jesus' birth*; they attempted to **CHANGE** the *year that He began His ministry*; they attempted to **CHANGE** the *length of His ministry*; they attempted to **CHANGE** the *day of His death*, and they attempted to **change** the *day of His resurrection* – all to justify a pagan tradition of the Sunday resurrection of Nimrod, the pagan savior!

Astounding proof exists of these attempts to change the day of the resurrection and of the crucifixion. James A. Walther, in an article entitled "The Chronology of Passion Week," in the June 1958 *Journal of Biblical Literature*, mentions that numerous Catholic writers for centuries maintained that Jesus ate the Passover Tuesday night – that early Wednesday morning He was taken by the Jewish mob. He declares: "References in the *Didascalía*, in Epiphanius, in Victorinus of Pettau, ... support the Tuesday {night} Passover dating and the subsequent arrest of Jesus in the morning hours of Wednesday."

One of the first attempts to change the day of the resurrection from late Saturday to the early hours of Sunday occurred in the spurious "Gospel of Peter," probably circulated from Rome about the time of the death of the apostle John. This "gospel" reads as follows: "... And they drew out the nails from the hands of the Lord, and laid Him upon the earth ... And the Jews rejoiced, and gave His body to Joseph that he might bury it... And he took the Lord, and washed Him, and rolled Him in a linen cloth, and brought Him into His own tomb.... And I and my companions were grieved; and being wounded in mind we hid ourselves.... And upon all these things we fasted and sat mourning NIGHT AND DAY UNTIL THE SABBATH.

"But the scribes and Pharisees and elders being gathered together one with another... came to Pilate, beseeching him and saying, Give us soldiers, that we may guard His sepulchre *for three days*, lest His disciples come and steal Him away.... And with them came elders and scribes to the sepulchre, and having rolled a great stone together with the centurion and the soldiers, they all together set it at the door of the sepulchre; and they affixed seven seals... and guarded it. And *early in the morning as the Sabbath was {dawning}*, there came a multitude from Jerusalem and the region round about, that they might see the sepulchre that was sealed.

"And in the night in which the Lord's day was drawing on... the tomb was opened" – and the resurrection supposedly occurs. (From the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, volume 10.)

3

Notice! Between the crucifixion and the Sabbath, the disciples and Peter are said to have fasted "night and day until the Sabbath." This alone is a candid admission that the crucifixion was not on "Good Friday"! It was decades later before the idea of a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday morning resurrection was widely believed.

Which Day Was the Passover?

The apostle Paul called Jesus Christ our Passover (I Corinthians 5:7). According to the gospel records, Jesus was crucified on the Passover day – Abib (or Nisan) 14 – immediately before the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus ate the Passover – which was also a day on which no leavened bread was used – (Luke 22:8) on the eve of the 14th of Abib, shortly after sunset. This was the precise time commanded for the first Passover in Exodus 12:6. (Remember that according to the Bible a day begins at sunset, not at midnight.) But the Jews, following their own traditions, killed their lambs late on the afternoon of the 14th and ate them the next night (John 18:28).

In either case the Jews and Jesus and the apostles agreed as to which day it was. There was no question about the date. The only difference concerned what ought to have been done on that date. But how did the Jews know which day it was? How did Jesus and the apostles know that this was the Passover day as *God had appointed it*?

By **God's** calendar, of course! The Passover was the 14th day of the first month according to the Sacred Calendar used by Jesus and the Jews.

But where did this calendar come from? Was it the invention of Jewish tradition – or revealed by God to the people? Was Jesus observing the Passover according to Jewish tradition or according to the revelation of God?

IF THE CALENDAR WHICH JESUS AND THE JEWS WERE USING WAS A DIVINELY INSPIRED CALENDAR AND IF THE JEWS ARE STILL USING THAT SAME CALENDAR TODAY, THEN WE CAN KNOW PRECISELY WHICH DAY THE PASSOVER WAS IN THE YEAR OF THE CRUCIFIXION!

Is the Calendar of the Jews Divinely Inspired?

We are told that the "Jewish Calendar" is an invention of the Jews – that it is different today from the one which the Jews and Jesus used. We are further told that the Jews at first determined the months solely by observation of the new moons and that they determined the year by observing the clouds which ended the rainy season and which allowed the spring harvest to begin.

But is this true? Is observation the basis of **God's** Calendar?

Will every individual be able to observe the faint crest of the new moon at the same time? Do people always *agree* upon what they see? And what if the day were cloudy and no one can see the new moon –

what then? And how would the Jews know which day should be the first of the month – the day when the new moon occurred, or the day when they first saw the new moon?

Did God give the Jews permission to create their own calendar; or did He, instead, reveal to Israel His very own Sacred Calendar and require them to preserve it through all generations?

Notice the answer in Scripture!

Consider Nehemiah 8:9. The Feast of Trumpets – the first day of the seventh month – “this day is **HOLY** unto the Lord your God.”

Do you grasp it? It is God who made the day holy. No man can make anything holy. The 10th verse repeats again that *that* day is holy to God. Since that day is holy to God, then God must determine which day it is. The very fact that this annual festival is **HOLY TO GOD** is proof that man is not free for himself to determine which day it is. The only way for the Jews to have known that the seventh annual new moon is holy is by having been given a calendar which reveals which day it is!

If the Jews were left solely to observation, and the day were cloudy or the atmosphere were not clear, they certainly would not have been able to know which day was holy to God. **OBVIOUSLY THE JEWS WERE NOT LEFT TO OBSERVATION! GOD MUST HAVE REVEALED TO THEM HOW TO CALCULATE HIS DIVINE CALENDAR!**

Notice the proof of Scripture: “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even *these are My feasts*” (Lev. 23:2).

The Israelites are required to proclaim a convocation – a commanded meeting for the people – on the days of God’s choice, but God determined which days are His feasts.

And now notice Exodus 23:15: “Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days **AS I COMMANDED THEE, IN THE TIME APPOINTED OF THE MONTH ABIB...** and none shall appear before Me empty).”

Notice that the particular days of the festival are *appointed by God*. God *commanded* the Israelites when to celebrate His Festival. Men must appear before Him. Unless God had revealed His own inspired calendar, the Jews could never have known by observation alone when to appear before God and which days were holy.

And notice further, Psalm 81:3-5: “Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, *in the time appointed*, on our solemn feast day, for this was a *statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.*”

God, not man, determines the times and the seasons (Dan. 2:21).

Jews in Possession of God’s Calendar

It is the Jews to whom God committed His revelations or oracles. Paul declared: “What advantage then hath the Jew? ... chiefly, *because that unto them were committed the oracles of God*” (Romans 3:1-2).

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The oracles of God included the Old Testament Scriptures, the knowledge of the week and the knowledge of the Sacred Calendar. The Jew preserved for the world the knowledge of which day the seventh day of the week is. Without a knowledge of when a week begins and ends *we could never have told from the Bible alone which day the seventh day actually is*. No nation preserved the week properly until they learned it from the Jews! That is the record of history.

And in the same way only the Jews have preserved God’s calendar. “But,” you ask, “what if some Jews did not believe in the oracles of God – including the Sacred Calendar – which were committed to them? Did they lose them or corrupt them?”

The Bible gives us the answer plainly in Romans 3:3-4: “For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar.”

If the Jews did not believe in what God committed to them, even if they lie about God’s truth, **THEY STILL MUST PRESERVE THEM** or God has failed to be God! Notice: “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children **FOREVER**” (Deut. 29:29). The Jews have had to preserve these things. God purposed it!

Jews Forbidden to Determine Calendar for Themselves

Now consider what God says of those Jews who decided not to follow the calendar God gave them and decided, instead, to observe their own new moons for themselves. Did God say that was permissible? Was that all right with Him?

Turn to God’s answer in Isaiah 1:14: “**YOUR** new moons and **YOUR** appointed feasts My soul hateth ...” The same condemnation is voiced in Hosea 2:11 against the House of Israel.

But do we find specific laws in the Bible *which forbid the Jews to determine for themselves when the year begins?*

Indeed we do: “There shall not be found among you ... an **OBSERVER OF TIMES** ...” (Deut 18:10). The same command is repeated in Leviticus 19:26: “Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood ... nor **OBSERVE TIMES.**”

Why? "For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearken unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, *the Lord they God hath not suffered thee so to do*" (Deut. 18:14).

The words "observer of times" are translated from *anan* – meaning "cloud" – in the original Hebrew. An observer of times is one who "*watched the clouds*" in order to determine when the winter rainy season was over and when the spring harvest season would begin. He was one who set himself up in place of God to determine when the year should begin in the spring. But God forbids any such thing.

Notice from Galatians 4:10 that Paul forbids the observance of "times" or "months" and *holidays* which the Gentile converts had been accustomed to celebrate. *Here is a surprising NEW TESTAMENT command not to follow the months of the pagan Roman calendar then in use, but rather to follow the months as God gave them.* Because this command was not followed by the professing Christian world, the Roman calendar is still in use today.

If the Jews have not preserved the Sacred Calendar since the crucifixion, then Christians would not know when to observe the Passover ANNUALLY – or any of the other Holy Days of God commanded for New Testament times (I Cor. 5:8 and 16:8, Acts 18:21 and 20:6). For proof that the Passover has to be observed annually – not several times each year – write immediately for Mr. Armstrong's free booklet "When and How Often Should We Partake of the 'Lord's Supper'?" (See Benson's Commentary and Scott's Commentary for further particulars on an "observer of times.")

How plain that God has required the Jews to preserve His sacred calendar!

Even the great Jewish calendar expert Maimondes, who lived nearly 1000 years ago, declared that the Jews preserved the calendar "transmitted by the Sages from one generation to another on the authority of Moses, our Teacher ... *on the basis of calculation*" (from *Sanctification of the New Moon*, chapter 18, #7).

Now that we have determined that the calendar which Jesus and the Jews used was divinely inspired of God and committed to the Jews for transmission through all generations, then there are only two things left in order to prove when the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ occurred. One is to determine the calendar dates of the Passover during the years of Christ's ministry. The other is to determine the exact year of the crucifixion.

Now for the seven historical and calendrical proofs that the "Good Friday-Easter Sunday" tradition is a fable which denies Jesus to be the Savior.

Proof One: The CALENDAR Tells *When*

Here is the chart, which can be verified by any work on the "Jewish Calendar," ABSOLUTELY CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE EXACT AND INSPIRED COMPUTATION PRESERVED SINCE THE DAYS OF MOSES!

Passover Dates

A.D. 29, Saturday, April 16
A.D. 30, Wednesday, April 5
A.D. 31, Wednesday, April 25
A.D. 32, Monday, April 14
A.D. 33, Friday, April 3

To place the Passover on a Friday in 30 A.D. is to violate one of the *inspired rules* of the calendar – that no common year of the sacred calendar may have 356 days. Common years of twelve months may be only 353, 354 or 355 days long – a fact you can verify in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. Theologians place the Passover of 30 A.D. on Friday, April 7 – 356 days after the Passover of 29 A.D. Count it for yourself! This date is two days late. The Passover in 30 A.D. was only 354 days after that of 29 A.D.

These scholars forget that God had His sacred calendar, together with the Bible, preserved since the days of Moses to this very day – and that every date of the Passover may be infallibly determined!

Moreover, astronomers recognize that the 14th of the month Nisan could have occurred on Wednesday in 30 A.D., as well as in 31 A.D. – but the theologians will not receive their testimony because of their human traditions.

Thus, *if you want to believe that the crucifixion were in 30 A.D. – which it was NOT – you would still have to admit that Friday is NOT the day of the crucifixion!*

For the year 31 A.D. several references, unacquainted with God's calendar, mistakenly give the Passover, Nisan 14, as Monday, March 26. But this is one month too early. The year 30-31 A.D. was intercalary – that is, it had 13 months – thus placing the Passover thirty days later in 31 A.D., and on a Wednesday!

During the time of Christ and up to 142 A.D., according to the rules of the Sacred Calendar, the Passover could not occur earlier than six days after the vernal equinox – which in that year occurred on March 23, about 3 a.m. Greenwich time. Remember, in Jesus' day the equinox did *not* occur on March 21, but on March 22 or 23, because the Roman world was using the *Julian* calendar. Since March 26 was only *three*

days after the equinox, it could *not* have been the Passover. Hence in 31 A.D. the Passover was 30 days later on a Wednesday – *and this is the ONLY POSSIBLE YEAR in which Christ could have been crucified*, as we shall now PROVE.

It would take a pamphlet to explain in full detail the simple methods to computing the dates of the Passover according to the Sacred Calendar – which most people call the “Jewish calendar” – and as there is not room in this article for it, you will have to patiently wait until it is later published.

Proof Two: the Decree of Artaxerxes

There are several basic dates from which the exact year of Christ’s death may be determined. These dates are so precise that there can be no doubt that the Passover upon which Jesus was crucified occurred on Wednesday, April 25, A.D. 31.

The first date is the year in which Artaxerxes issued his decree to restore and build Jerusalem (Ezra 7). It is recorded in Daniel 9:25-26 that there would be sixty-nine prophetic weeks (7+ 62) till the Messiah would come, after which He would be “cut off” – crucified – “not for himself” but for the sins of the whole world. Sixty-nine prophetic weeks equals 483 years (69 x 7).

When we determine the year in which this decree was issued, we can locate the exact year, 483 years later, when Christ – the Messiah – began His ministry.

In recent years an abundance of documents from the era of Ezra and Nehemiah – business records giving exact dates according to the Persian, Egyptian and Jewish calendars, and astronomical tablets recording eclipse cycles in the years of kings – have been translated. These records continue fundamentally to corroborate the chronological table of Persian kings recorded in Ptolemy’s canon.

Records, preserved in world-famous American and foreign libraries, have been found that were written in the very month that Artaxerxes – under whose reign the decree was issued – came to power. The death of Xerxes occurred in late December 465 B.C. and his son, Artaxerxes, came to throne in that month.

According to the Persian spring-to-spring reckoning of regnal years – as these business documents clearly show – Artaxerxes’ first year extended from April 464 to April 463 B.C. These same business documents show that *the Jewish autumn-to-autumn mode of reckoning, used by Ezra and Nehemiah, placed the first year of Artaxerxes from September 464 to September 463 B.C.* The period of time from the day the new king ascended the throne to the first year of his reign was called his ACCESSION YEAR and was regarded as *completing the last regnal year of the previous king.*

The astronomical tablets containing over a dozen precise records of eclipses *prove* that the *first year of Artaxerxes*, according to the Jewish reckoning, was from 464 to 463 B.C. You may verify these facts in any of the latest thorough books on archaeology.

The *seventh year of Artaxerxes* – the year in which he issued his decree (Ezra 7:8) – would extend from about September 458 B.C. to September 457 B.C.

From the first month to the fifth month of God’s calendar – from the latter part of March to the latter part of July, 457 B.C. – Ezra journeyed to Judaea *in the seventh year of Artaxerxes* at which time the decree went forth to build Jerusalem as the capital of the revised Jewish nation.

And just 483 years later would bring us to the autumn of A.D. 27 – *the year when the Messiah would appear.*

Although the date of the issuance of this decree is *amply proved* from astronomy, dozens of business documents, and the Canon of Ptolemy, historians sometimes mis-interpret the facts to suit their pet theories. Then theologians quote from whatever historical sources suit them in order to change the true date for the beginning of Christ’s ministry.

But the true date – 457 B.C. – is absolutely fixed by the most accurate records of history written at that very time.

Some religious sects would incorrectly put this decree as late as 455 B.C. in order to have the crucifixion occur on Friday in 33A.D.! Such a date is totally rejected by ALL historians today!

Age of Jesus at His Baptism

Jesus, according to Daniel’s prophecy was anointed the Messiah in 27 A.D., which was 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem. The next fact that we need to understand is the age of Jesus when He was baptized and entered upon His ministry.

The only historical account of this was written by Luke to Theophilus (Luke 1:1-4). In this account it is plainly stated that when Jesus began His ministry “*he was about thirty years old.*” (Luke 3:23).⁶

SACRED CALENDAR

with the corresponding Roman months at the right
in the year before the crucifixion.

30 A.D. 1ST MONTH							30 A.D.
NISAN							
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SABBATH	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30		

ROMAN CALENDAR

with the corresponding Sacred month at the left
in the year before the crucifixion.

30 A.D. MARCH				30 A.D. APRIL			
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SABBATH	
				23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21		

SACRED CALENDAR

with the corresponding Roman months at the right
in the year of the crucifixion.

31 A.D. 1ST MONTH							31 A.D.
NISAN							
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SABBATH	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30		

ROMAN CALENDAR

with the corresponding Sacred month at the left
in the year of the crucifixion.

31 A.D. APRIL				31 A.D. MAY			
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SABBATH	
				12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11		

Luke did *not* say, "about 29," or "about 31." He records that Jesus "began to be about thirty" – and *he meant it*, for he was an inspired historian. Either this record is true or you might as well discard the Bible.

As Jesus was about 30 years old in the autumn of 27 A.D., then He must have been born in the autumn of 4 B.C. as we shall now prove.

Proof Three: The Death of Herod

The time of Jesus' birth is important. Jesus was born *before* the death of Herod the king (Mat. 2:15). When did Herod die? Again the critics are in utmost confusion because they have *refused to weigh all the facts*.

According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, Herod died, "having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven" (*Antiquities*, XVII, viii, 1).

The two dates for the beginning of Herod's reign are not disputed, but given as 37 B.C. and 40 B.C. respectively. Reckoning as Josephus does, *the last year of Herod's reign extended from about April 4 B.C. to April 3 B.C.*

Although Herod's death is commonly dated in April 4 B.C. – or even as late as 2 B.C. – neither of these dates is correct. Simple subtraction ought to prove that! Herod died just prior to the beginning of spring in B.C. 3!

Notice!

Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVII, vi, 4, mentions an eclipse of the moon before the death of Herod. That eclipse, as calculated, occurred about March 13, 4 B.C. Yet it was *after* this that Herod went beyond the river Jordan to be cured of his diseases. Finding that the physicians couldn't cure him, he still revived sufficiently to return to Jericho. There, he gathered together and contrived the death of the principal men of the *entire* Jewish nation. And as if this were not enough, Herod had his son Antipater killed five days before his own death. Since these and other events occurred *after* the eclipse mentioned by Josephus, *and since Herod died just prior to a Passover according to Josephus, that Passover must have been THIRTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE ECLIPSE and not one month later.* Thus Herod died in B.C. 3, the *only* date that agrees with all the known facts of history.

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As Jesus was about thirty years old in the early autumn of 27 A.D., then He must have been born in the early autumn of B.C. 4, about half a year before the death of Herod. *Jesus could not have been born before this time*, or He would have been more than thirty years old at the beginning of His ministry. Neither could HE have been born later in B.C. 2 as some assume, for He would have been only twenty-eight years old. But Luke plainly said that He was *about* THIRTY years of age.

When Did the Wise Men Arrive?

But what are we going to do with the statement recorded in Matthew 2:16 that just before his death Herod had all the children in Bethlehem killed "from two years old and under"? This would appear to indicate that Jesus may have been born one year earlier than He really was born.

Most people carelessly read this account by *assuming that Herod knew the date of Jesus' birth.* They think he had all the children killed because Jesus must have been between one and two years old.

Think for a moment how illogical this would be. Would a murderer like Herod wait for at least one whole year after the Magi left before attempting to kill the child Jesus? Of course not.

The truth is that *Herod did not know the time of Jesus' birth.* Notice what the Scriptures states: *As soon as Herod saw that the Magi didn't return to him he became very angry, ordering all those little children butchered "from two years old and under, ACCORDING TO THE TIME WHICH HE HAD exactly LEARNED of the magi"* (Mat. 2:16).

Now what was the *exact time* that he learned from the magi? Was it the date of Jesus' birth? No!

Notice verse seven of this same chapter: "Then Herod privily called the magi, and learned of them exactly the time of ... what? The birth of Jesus? No. But "*of the appearing star.*"

Of course!

The wise men or magi had come a great distance from the East and the star had appeared *some time before the birth of Jesus* in order for them to prepare to make their journey to Bethlehem while Jesus was still very young. Since the star appeared more than one year previously, Herod took no chances but had every infant killed up to two years of age.

Jesus was slightly less than six months old at the time of Herod's death. The latest possible date for the birth of Jesus was the autumn of B.C. 4, before winter arrived (Luke 2:8). This places the commencement of the ministry of Christ, thirty years later in the autumn of the year 27.

Proof Four: Temple Under Construction 46 Years

Here is another clinching fact.

Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry in the autumn of 27 A.D. The *first Passover* in His ministry must have occurred at the next spring, A.D. 28. It was at the time that the Jews told Jesus that the temple of Herod was already "forty-six years in building" (John 2:20).

Herod began constructing the temple, after three years' thorough preparation, in the very last part of his 18th year according to Josephus (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 1). Since he reckons this 18th year from the spring of B.C. 37, the 18th year would be 20-19B.C. The temple was begun in the months immediately preceding the Passover, B.C. 19. The major part of the construction was completed by the autumn of B.C. 18 (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 6) in about 1 ½ years.

Forty-six full years from B.C 19 would bring us to the beginning of A.D. 28, just before the first Passover in Jesus' ministry.

If the ministry of Christ began in any other year than the autumn of A.D. 27, then the temple would *not* have been exactly 46 years in building by the time of the Passover in the spring of 28 A.D.

Proof Five: The Reign of Emperor Tiberius

One of the most vital keys to the chronology of Christ's ministry – and yet one of the most universally misunderstood dates – is the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. Luke tells us that John the Baptist began to preach in his 15th year (Luke 3:1).

When was this fifteenth year?

The trouble arises from the fact that there are at least *two dates* from which the reign of Tiberius Caesar may be counted – the *first* commences with his being made co-ruler with Augustus Caesar, at the very end of A.D. 11 or the beginning of A.D. 12. The exact month is not known, but it is not essential anyway. The *second* date begins with his sole rule in August, A.D. 14. Luke could have used either date and been historically correct. But which one *did* he use?

To be consistent with all the other facts, Luke must have used the earlier date as the beginning of the reign of Tiberius. In fact, for the word “reign” Luke uses a Greek word meaning “government” in general, indicating that he did not mean sole emperorship, but merely his elevation to joint authority – about the end of A.D. 11 or beginning of A.D. 12.

In determining the emperor’s regnal year, Luke used the customary Jewish form, practiced also by Josephus. “Josephus also ... in order to avoid making the last year of one emperor coincide with the first year of his successor, reckoned the final year of each emperor as continuing to the end of the current year, and made the first year of his successor begin {in} April following his accession,” says the competent scholar W.M. Ramsey in his book *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?*, page 223.

This method *which has but recently been understood*, was used by Luke also to determine imperial *joint reigns*. The first year of the joint reign of Tiberius would extend from about April 12 A.D. to April 13 A.D. His fifteenth year would extend from about April 26 A.D. to April 27 A.D.

In this 15th year John the Baptist began to preach repentance all about the Jordan River before Jesus was baptized by him. *John’s ministry occupied several months* in which he prepare the way for Jesus.

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Notice how this dovetails with the next proof.

Proof Six: When Was Pilate Governor?

Luke names Pontius Pilate as governor of Judaea when John received his call (Luke 3:1). “Now in the fifteenth year of the *government* of Tiberius Caesar, *Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea*... the word of God came unto John.” Pilate ruled *for ten years*. Many historians give his dates as 26 to 36 A.D., but this is a mistake.

Pilate was deposed a few months before the Passover at the close of his tenth year. He *hurriedly* sailed for Rome to appeal to Emperor Tiberius. On his way news came that Tiberius died. You will read this in Josephus’ *Antiquities* XVIII, iv, 2.

Since Pilate was in a *great hurry* to reach Rome, he must have left shortly before the death of the Emperor which occurred in March, 37 A.D. Ten years before this is about the beginning of A.D. 27 at which time Pilate began his procuratorship.

Here is what the *International Standard Bible Encyclopededia* says in its article “Pilate”: The assumed date for Pilate is usually “from 26 to 36 A.D. ... Tiberius died on March 16, 37A.D. Such a delay {in Pilate’s journey to Rome} is inconceivable in view of the circumstances; hence ... the period of his procuratorship {is} 27-37 A.D.”

The *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* states, under the article “Pilate”: “He probably succeeded Gratus 27 A.D. and ended his procuratorship early in 37; it is not likely that Pilate required more than a year for his return journey to Rome ... and he arrived there after Tiberius’ death, which took place Mar. 16, 37.”

Now notice. As Pilate did not begin his governorship till about the commencement of 27 A.D. and as Tiberius’ 15th year ended about April of that year, *John the Baptist must have begun his ministry in the first few months of 27 A.D.*

Jesus, therefore, could *not* have begun His ministry earlier than the autumn of 27 A.D. Neither could His ministry **HAVE BEGUN AFTER THE PASSOVER** in the spring of A.D. 28 because the temple was already 46 years in building. Therefore Jesus must have begun to preach in the autumn of A.D. 27. **THERE IS NO OTHER DATE THAT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH ALL THE PROVABLE FACTS.**

To find the date of the crucifixion, we now need only find how long the ministry of Jesus lasted.

Proof Seven: How Long Was the Ministry?

The prophet Daniel foretold that the length of Christ’s ministry *at His first coming* – to confirm the new covenant – would be one-half of a prophetic week of seven years. In the midst of that prophetic week He caused the need of sacrifices for sin to cease by offering Himself for the sins of the world. He was “cut off” in the midst of the week, making the ministry at His first coming *three and one-half years* (Daniel 9:26,27). “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks” – 69 prophetic weeks or 483 years in all – “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.... And He shall confirm the covenant with many for a week” – this prophecy is not yet completely fulfilled – why? because “in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” – He died for the sins of the world in the middle of the week.

In a sense this is a dual prophecy. Christ died in the midst of the prophetic week of seven years, after 3 ½ years of ministry; but He also died *in the midst of the week – Wednesday!*

Now let's turn to the gospels to find the proof that Jesus Christ's ministry was exactly three and one-half years. There would have to be three Passovers during the three years of His ministry, and a fourth on the last day of His earthly life – the crucifixion.

The first Passover occurred in A.D. 28 and is recorded in John 2:23. "Now when He was at Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in his name." During the following weeks Jesus spent time baptizing in Judaea (John 3:22). "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea, and tarried with them, and baptized."

The next note of time is found in John 4:35, which indicates *a lapse of time of nearly seven weeks* – bringing us to about Pentecost A.D. 28 when Jesus began to preach publicly (Luke 4:16).

In Luke 6:1 is the next time reference – "the second Sabbath after the first." This is an obscure translation. It comes from the Greek *deuteroproton sabbaton* which means the "second Sabbath of first rank" – the second high day or annual Sabbath – the last day of Unleavened Bread in 29 A.D. (*Die Biblische Chronologie* by Friedrich Westberg, page 122). And in 29 A.D. that last day fell on a Saturday according to the Sacred Calendar as Matthew 12:14 and Mark 3:6 plainly state.

Two Passovers have now occurred. Again in John 6:4 is another Passover which brings us to a Wednesday in the year 30 A.D. "Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh." This was the third Passover in Jesus' ministry. The fourth and final Passover is recorded by all the gospel writers (John 11:55). "Now the Passover of the Jews was near: and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover, to purify themselves."

This last Passover completed a ministry of three and one-half years – from autumn of A.D. 27 to the Spring of A.D. 31 – **THE VERY YEAR WHEN THE PASSOVER UPON WHICH CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED FELL ON WEDNESDAY.**

Since Jesus began His 3 ½-year ministry not later than 27 A.D., He could not have been crucified so late as 33 A.D. *There was therefore no Passover which occurred on a Friday during His entire ministry!*

Yes, history proves false the tradition that Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on Easter Sunday!

In *this* present article we have given you the undeniable *record of history* and of the calendar that the crucifixion could not have been on Friday – that the resurrection was not on Sunday.

Now you need the *COMPETE* proof, *from the Bible itself*, that the resurrection was not on Sunday morning, so write immediately for Mr. Armstrong's challenging *free* booklet "*The Resurrection Was NOT on Sunday!*"