

A. Why is it important to understand these events accurately?

John 16:13—But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

John 4:24—God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

B. Extracting the leaven of Tradition and Human Reasoning.

1 Cor 5:6-8—Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

C. Days of Ignorance are over. Living in the days of the Restoration of All Things.

Acts 17:30-31—Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, 31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

D Is Easter in the Bible?

Acts 12:4—And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Acts 12:4--So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.

This passage is not talking about Easter. How do we know? The word translated Easter is the Greek word pascha (derived from the Hebrew word pesach; there is no original Greek word for Passover), and it has only one meaning. It always means Passover—it can never mean Easter. It is used 29 times in the New Testament and translated Passover on every occasion.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, in its entry "Easter," states: "The term 'Easter' is not of Christian origin. It is another form of Astarte, one of the titles of the Chaldean goddess, the queen of heaven. The festival of Pasch [Passover] held by Christians in post-apostolic times was a continuation of the Jewish feast . . . From this Pasch the pagan festival of 'Easter' was quite distinct and was introduced into the apostate Western religion, as part of the attempt to adapt pagan festivals to Christianity" (W.E. Vine, 1985, emphasis added throughout).

Easter isn't a Christian or directly biblical term, but comes from a form of the name Astarte, a Chaldean (Babylonian) goddess known as "the queen of heaven." (She is mentioned by that title in the Bible in Jeremiah:7:18 and 44:17-19, 25 and referred to in 1 Kings:11:5, 33 and 2 Kings:23:13 by the Hebrew form of her name, Ashtoreth. So "Easter" is found in the Bible—as part of the pagan religion God condemns!)

"In ancient Egypt and Persia friends exchanged decorated eggs at the spring equinox, the beginning of their New Year. These eggs were a symbol of fertility. Easter has its origin in pagan festivals representing symbols of fertility. The question of Passover versus Easter was a disputed issue among various early leaders. Not until A.D. 325—almost three centuries after Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected—was the matter settled. Regrettably, it wasn't settled on the basis of biblical truth, but on the basis of anti-Semitism and raw ecclesiastical and imperial power.

As The Encyclopaedia Britannica further explains: "A final settlement of the dispute [over whether and when to keep Easter or Passover] was one among the other reasons which led [the Roman emperor] Constantine to summon the council of Nicaea in 325 . . . The decision of the council was unanimous that Easter was to be kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world, and 'that none should hereafter follow the blindness of the Jews'" (ibid., pp. 828-829).

Abundant evidence supports the fact that the Greco-Roman church tended to amalgamate idolatrous rites into the Christianity they were introducing to heathen cultures. The philosophy was that non-Christians would be more likely to embrace Christianity if they were allowed to retain their pagan practices, especially if some Christian correspondence with their traditions could be established.

Important points to Understand about Crucifixion Week.

1. There were two Sabbaths that week because of Passover. The 15th of Nisan was a special Sabbath. Crucifixion day was also the "day of Preparation."
2. Jesus was buried between 3 PM and 6 PM on Nisan 14 at sunset before the beginning of the special Sabbath, the first day of Unleavened Bread
3. The following day, Friday, the women purchased spices according to Mark 16:1.
4. The second Sabbath that week was the normal weekly Sabbath.
5. According to Luke 23:56 the women had purchased spices after the first Sabbath then prepared the spices prior to resting on the regular weekly Sabbath. They purchased spices after the Sabbath and also prepared the spices before the Sabbath clearly pointing to two Sabbaths that week.
6. There had to be a day between the two Sabbaths for it to fit into the Scriptures. Once this is understood it becomes clear that Jesus was in the grave three days and three nights.
7. Sunset Wednesday to sunset Thursday was day one. Sunset Thursday to sunset Friday was day two; sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, the regular weekly Sabbath was day three: he was resurrected after sundown the regular weekly Sabbath. That is 72 hours so that the Scripture is fulfilled that he would not see decay.
8. In Passover the lamb was to be set aside on the 10th day of the month (triumphant entry) until the 14th day of the first month. It was set aside and ordained to die at the appointed time. With God a day is as 1000 years. When Adam sinned, God set aside the sacrificial lamb for death. There had been four days or 4000 years from Adam to the time of the crucifixion.
9. The lamb was to be examined and found without spot or blemish. The Lord was questioned by Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiaphas and no fault could be found in Him.

I. Luke 22:7-19 tell us the activities beginning the day of Passover with the securing of the upper room and the Lord entering a new covenant with us through His body and blood.

II. In the night He was arrested and taken to trial.

III. Was Jesus to be in the grave Three Days and Three Nights literally?

Matthew 12:38-41—Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, " An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

John 2:18-19—The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, " Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

IV. The Lord's body was not to suffer decay and corruption.

Acts 13:35-37—Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'YOU WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.' "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay; but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.

Matthew 27:45-47—Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

- V. Passover is observed on the 14th of Nisan every year (Leviticus 23.5). Jesus and His disciples partook of the Passover in the early evening of the previous day. Days are calculated from sunset-to-sunset, not midnight-to-midnight. The day of the crucifixion was called, "the day of preparation." This was a day set aside to prepare for the special Sabbath that would be transpiring this week because of Passover in observance of unleavened bread.

John 19:31—Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Lev 23:5-7—In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. "Then on the fifteenth day of the same month there is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. 'On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.

- VI. Passover is **not** a High Sabbath day, this important fact is often overlooked. You can tell because the usual command for a Sabbath of "an holy convocation and no work is to be done," is not given for Passover. So while Passover is a feast day, it is not a Sabbath day.

Mark 15:42-43—When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.

- VII. Crucifixion day was Nisan 14 and the following day was considered the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In that feast the first and seventh days were to be "Holy Days" or special Sabbath's.

Exodus 12:16—On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you.

- VIII. Jesus was crucified the third hour of the day or 9 AM until 3 PM.

Mark 15:25—It was the third hour when they crucified him.

Matt 27:45-46—From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land. About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"-which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

- IX. Joseph had to move quickly to secure the Lord's body and have it buried before sundown and the beginning of the special Sabbath.

Mark 15:42-45—When evening had already come, because it was the preparation day, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea came, a prominent member of the Council, who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God; and he gathered up courage and went in before Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate wondered if He was dead by this time, and summoning the centurion, he questioned him as to whether He was already dead. And ascertaining this from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

John 19:38-42—After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So he came and took away His body. Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came,

bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

- X. This fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy that he would be buried among the rich.

Isaiah 53:9—His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

Matt 27:57-59—When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. 58 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 5

- XI. The following day the women purchased and prepared the spices. And the Pharisees asked for a guard over see His tomb.

Matthew 27:62-63—The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.

- XII. In Mark 16:1 it says that the two of them bought spices to anoint the body of Jesus after the Sabbath was over. But in Luke 23:56 it says they bought the spices before the Sabbath and then rested on the Sabbath before proceeding to the tomb on Sunday morning.

Mark 16:1—**When the Sabbath was over**, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might come and anoint Him.

Luke 23:56-24:4—Then they returned and prepared spices and perfumes. And on the **Sabbath they rested** according to the commandment.

24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

John 20:1—Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.

John tells us *it was still dark* when Mary went to the tomb on Sunday morning and found it empty. Jesus was *already resurrected well before daybreak*. Thus He wasn't in the tomb *any* of the daylight portion of Sunday.

John 20:16-18—Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" (which means, Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and that He had said these things to her.

XIII. Jesus' resurrection had already taken place by the time Mary Magdalene arrived at dawn Sunday morning. (John 20.1-2)

In Matthew 28:1, his account states that "In the end of [or after] the Sabbath(s), as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week" they came to see the sepulchre (Mt. 28.1) The original Greek word used here for Sabbath is actually plural and should be translated "Sabbaths." A more appropriate rendering of Matthew 28:1 would be, "after the Sabbath's" in translation of the word Sabbatoon which is plural.

Matt 28:1-10—Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the grave. And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone and sat upon it. And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of him and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. "Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you."

And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."

Matt 17:22-23—And while they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men; 23 and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." And they were deeply grieved

1 Cor 15:3-4—For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

Summarizing the events.

1. Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover meal on a Tuesday evening in the Upper Room on Mount Zion.
2. After the Passover meal, Jesus and His disciples departed the Upper Room and walked to the Garden of Gethsemane in the Kidron Valley between the Old City and the Mount of Olives.

3. Jesus was betrayed and arrested early Tuesday evening. His various trials lasted throughout Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning.
4. Jesus was crucified at about 9:00 am on Wednesday morning. At noon, darkness filled the land. At about 3:00 pm Jesus died.
5. Jesus was buried on Wednesday about sunset.
6. The two Marys waited until after the high Sabbath on Thursday to purchase the spices for the anointing of Jesus' body. They bought the spices on Friday and then rested again during the regular Sabbath on Saturday before returning to the tomb on Sunday morning.
- 7) The resurrection of Jesus occurred between sundown Saturday and sunrise Sunday morning when the women found the stone rolled away.