

RESURRECTING THE EASTER CONTROVERSY

QUARTODECIMANI



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What if no one told you what day Messiah died on or on which one He rose from the dead? Would you be able to figure it out for yourself, using nothing but the Bible? And for that matter, would you conclude the same findings as the ones you've been led to believe for so long? We know that our Saviour was slain in our stead, and we know He was raised to life the third day because the Bible says so, but how do we know that the crucifixion happened on "Good Friday" or that the Resurrection took place "Easter Sunday"? If not these days, then when did the events of the Gospel occur, and why do you memorialize that time every year as the anniversary of our redemption?

In the early years of Christendom, there arose a controversy surrounding this issue, which drastically divided the faith. This disagreement, neither mentioned nor taught in the Church today, and which has been, by and large, buried unto the present, centered around the celebration of our Savior's sacrifice, whether it should be kept at the time of what would become Easter as tradition developed, or at the time of Passover as Scripture taught. This quarrel became known as the Quartodecimen Controversy also called in after years, the Easter Controversy. (In point of fact, there were several Easter Controversies over the centuries, as Easter was not an original doctrine and took much effort to establish its practice in all regions under the rule and control of Rome. That said, even though there are others, the Quartodecimen Controversy is the one most often known as the Easter Controversy.)

The argument was not settled at any time, but was ended, for all intents and purposes, in AD 325 by the will of emperor, Constantine, and the force of the Nicene Council, which

ruled against the celebration of Passover as it had always been until that time. From thence, it became, not merely common practice, but law. And eventually Easter was made mandatory for all Christians, with Passover being branded as “heresy” and “Jewish superstition.” The conversation, what little was had, was over, and all dissenting voices silenced, not by reason, historical evidence, or Holy Writ, but by the biased right of the ruling bishops and their threat of violence.

Therefore, it is my proposal that we reopen this case once more, now that we are free to do so without fear, that we raise again this forgotten Controversy, and see if we can not come to a more sensible conclusion than our forefathers. If for nothing else, we will not settle for an answer of “because I said so” from a long-dead, semi-Christian emperor. Our Heavenly Father has given us the power of faith, for all that is unseen, but also the power of logic through which to look at tangible facts. So let us use our power to judge for ourselves, how best to honor our Savior, and to properly remember His sacrifice. And let us do so, by answering four questions:

1. *What are we trying to celebrate?*
2. *How did our celebration become ours?*
3. *What did it celebrate before it was ours?*
4. *Whose was it before it was ours?*

I will not presume to tell any person what practices they *must* keep, and which they *must* discard as refuse, beyond that of the quite obvious moral Commandments of the Bible, to which we all are required to hold in order to be part of the Faith to any degree, and them that allow for a functional society. However, I would have us all know the full scope of our religion, including what was from the beginning, and what was later introduced and why. In this way, we may all choose for ourselves freely, and in full knowledge of the facts without any assumptions, preconceptions, or persecutions. Thereafter, as you choose, do so, knowing you are now without excuse, and decide, based on truth itself, not merely what you were told. The decision is this: Will the Almighty be best venerated by man-made methods of worship, or by the beliefs and practices, He Himself of old ordained for His praise? You decide.

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As we begin our study into this ancient Controversy, I must admit outright at the outset, that I myself have already made my decision, and do proudly confess myself to be Quartodecimani, that is, I have ruled for myself in favor of Passover. As such, while my opinion of this argument may now be biased toward this belief, it was not so when initially performing the investigation myself, and I will endeavor to keep strictly to the facts of the matter, that you too may make up your own mind. And may the Most High guide your faith and understanding as you seek Him in truth. If you should find Easter once more in the end, so be it, and be blessed. I only ask that be open minded and view the facts with fresh eyes. Maybe, just maybe, you've missed something.

For the vast majority of Christians, Easter is believed to be an original aspect of true religion. *The* original aspect in fact. But it is a sad fact that for over 300 years no one inside the assembly was celebrating Easter at all. But as is the tendency with all deviations, the invention of Easter as a Christian celebration, and indeed, *the* Christian celebration, the anachronism began with a slight alteration. Whenever addressed, (admittedly rarely) the Quartodeciman Controversy is usually explained as an argument among some early Christians over whether to celebrate Passover or Easter. But this too, while attempting to summarize concisely, is actually another anachronism, as at that time, Easter was not yet added into the equation at all. As the name Quartodecimen implies, meaning "Fourteenth" in Latin, the initial argument was not a debate between Passover and Easter but rather it was all about *when* to celebrate Passover. It took a while yet to get from there to Easter.

For the first generation or so after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Savior, the entire assembly celebrated the Passover as instructed to do on the Fourteenth Day of the first month which they also calculated according to Scripture. However, with the passing of the first generation of disciples and the next, gentile converts becoming the overwhelming majority in the assembly, the Roman expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem (along with all who could be thought Jewish), and a subsequent desire for the disciples to distance themselves from Judaism, many began to arbitrarily move the Passover celebration to the week following the "Jewish celebration". Over a few centuries this became the norm for some while others carried on keeping the Passover according to the commandment. This latter group became known as Quartodecimani, and by the time of

the Nicaean Council, they had become very controversial. In an effort to unify the practices of the Faith, the council ruled in favor of the alternative celebration, so that Passover was to be celebrated on the Sunday following the “Jewish” Passover. The mistake these men seem to have made was misunderstanding the nature of the celebration. According to Scripture, Passover is the fourteenth day of the first month. It is the *day* itself. But those who came to faith later didn’t seem to grasp this fact, instead thinking Passover is something celebrated *on* that day, but not the celebration *of* that day. If it is the *day* we celebrate, it cannot be moved. But if it’s something else that we celebrate that is historically done *on* that day, then we can move it where we wish and to when. With the passing of enough time, these changes can be made and are...and were.

So the Council of Nicaea decided Passover on the Fourteenth Day of the first month was “Jewish” and arbitrarily moved the Passover to the Sunday that followed, each year. But over the passage of time, this too was moved again till it was fixed according to the calculations the Church keeps today - every spring upon the first Sunday, following the full moon that falls on or after the vernal equinox. Yet even then the talk was all about Passover...that is until the Faith became more Germanic and Anglo-Saxon influenced and eventually dominated as it moved westward. As it has been said, “Time is the ally of deceit.” And with enough time gone by, we can be lead to believe almost anything, so long as the changes are subtly in their day and take a very long time to turn.

Before we address, the three aforementioned questions relating to our current and traditional celebration of the death, and resurrection of our Master, Yeshua the Messiah (Whom the deceits of time have turned into ‘Jesus Christ’) I would ask that you would first stop reading at this time and turn to Scripture for review. Carefully study the Gospel accounts of the Passion, forgetting for the time being that you already know the story and what you are *supposed* to believe when you read it. Scrutinize, Matthew 26–28, Mark 14–16, Luke, 22–24, and John 13, 18–21. Do this with the mindset of one who has never read the Word before, and even as one who might be critical of the Book. Read these passages over and over if necessary. Once you feel you have a clear and concise and fresh perspective come back to this discourse, and then continue on from here.

We begin our study, where most of us currently are with the excepted practice of Easter among Christians, and we will work our way from our traditions backwards to the Scriptures. Then we will see how closely the two match up. The first question we must ask is, "What are we trying to celebrate when we observe Easter?" The obvious answer would be that we celebrate Easter Sunday to honor and memorialize the death of our Savior "Christ Jesus", but all the more to rejoice in His Resurrection from the grave, that very morning. And this is a very fine answer, and a seemingly holy reason to commemorate this occasion. Yet we must still ask our next question without justifying ourselves on appearances and intentions, however noble they may seem to be. If these are our reasons for doing this now, why? How did we come to celebrate this day? Was it something prior to the Resurrection of Yeshua, Whom we've taken to calling "Jesus"? It was, indeed, and it did not originally belong to the people of the Book.

Our celebration of Easter, as Protestant Christians is an almost wholesale acceptance of the Roman Catholic tradition, which itself was a heathen festival of sungod worship in the time of the Messiah, adopted and adapted. In Roman Catholic custom, the season begins with Ash Wednesday and Firebrand Sunday that kick off the fast of Lent. Lent leads up to Holy Week or Passion Week, which starts with Palm Sunday. The culmination of these days is Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday. Of all days, however, the Protestant Movement saw fit to retain only Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Our break away from Roman rule did not remove the pagan practices that the church had initially Christianized, but only trimmed some of them to our liking. In the effort of early Christianity (c.150 AD and on) to convert the masses to the faith, much of their worship had to come too, if only covered with a Christian gloss and a consortium of new names. Which brings us to question number three, "What did this celebrate before it was ours?"

Before this holiday was ours, it was Rome's, and before it was Roman it was Germanic and Celtic. The celebration was called Eostern in German or sometimes Ostern or Ostara, a heathen feast still commemorated to this day among surviving pagan religions and revivals. This also answers the final question in part but let's look at it more in depth. "Whose was it before it was ours?"

This last question asks more rhetorically than anything actually, because the information is already written out here in historical fact. When we ask, "Whose was it before it was ours?" We are asking if it came from the Word of the Most High, or from the traditions of

men, because we've already confirmed ourselves Protestant, and the only rule we are supposed to hold is Sola Scriptura, the Scriptures Alone. We may now memorialize some Christian things at Easter time, but the fact is that Easter is a time that memorialized a heathen dawn goddess (And for her true believers, still does). And for 1700 years or near enough, we have been trying to make this day fit with the Bible, but it can't be done. Rather than asking, why we celebrate Easter, we just keep justifying our practice without paying attention. Who cares if it is not pagan now to us?! It was added to true religion to lure in the heathen, to make us like them or them like us, enough so they could believe the "Gospel" without getting rid of their pagan ways. Easter was made Christian to try to make people Christian, but all it did was make Christianity more like the people who were coming to it unchanged.

Today, even Christians, who know Easter was pagan still keep the day, because they believe that "Jesus" rose that day. Well, what if it was not really that day? Then what remains for us in Easter? Nothing. So then let us return now to Scripture and challenge ourselves and what we have been taught to believe.

How do we know His death day was Good Friday? Because the Bible says so, right? We would like to think so,... But no. It never says it was a Friday. We sort of supply that little detail ourselves to help our minds make it all fit with Easter. What about Easter Sunday Resurrection? No again. We gave it that context too, so that the heathens flocking to our cause would feel right at home when they converted. And why wouldn't they? They were not even required to do anything different. All they had to change from last year's festival when they didn't believe to this year's when they did was to call their deity by a different name. And ta-da. It's all for "Jesus" now...(Well, Iesous at the time but anyway...) But is it really? No matter how badly we may try to sugarcoat it, we can never manage to make crap into candy. Add all the sugary "Jesus" you want to the fecal matter of the false worship of Easter, but it isn't going to make it any sweeter or more reflective of the Gospel record.

A shift has taken place between the first century when Yeshua actually walked the Earth and the 21st-century in which we do. We have moved away from holding fast to the foundations of faith and practice; building our house at first on what the Messiah taught us, and what He Himself practiced, we moved from this to finding excuses why we could include pagan tradition for the appeasement of the newcomers. We made excuses why

we could exclude the holy things taught in the Bible, and done by our Savior, because they felt too foreign to our way of life. And so in our modern world, where most are happy to keep going with familiarity, rather than Scriptural fidelity, we keep searching out, justifications for why it's not evil to keep such things as Easter. We claim we've made it Christian. We claim it isn't pagan anymore. We claim we use this day to honor "Jesus". But have we ever actually checked? And is this how He wanted to be honored? Or are we still excusing ourselves and our celebrations without researching them, without asking the brave questions.

If Yeshua really is the Messiah prophesied to die and rise again, wouldn't there be a part of His own religion that foreshadows this? Shouldn't we who follow Him celebrate what He did? If not, why not? And what gives us the right to select pagan feast days to memorialize the Christian Messiah? Or when have our offerings ever brought Him glory? The golden calf was pagan, but it was done for the Most High. The "strange fire" brought by Nadab and Abihu was done for Him too. When Saul offered the sacrifice, in place of Samuel, the Almighty was not pleased either, even though it was done for Him. Neither was He pleased with Cain's, offering, or the golden calves Jeroboam set up for Him. Ananias and Sapphira's offering did not please Him, nor did Paul's before his trip to Damascus. One thing, pleases the Most High of Heaven, and that is obedience in faith and love. Easter was not ordered by Him, and it cannot be tweaked to His worship.

If, in fact then a shift in our understanding and practice of Christianity took place in the early days, as to seem at first no great change of pace, but only a slight degree or two off from the direction Scripture was sending us, thousands of miles and millenniums later, in a time and place, called here and now, where should we expect to find ourselves but very far from the mark. And if this modern life has given us something, not of our Elohim, yet called it sacred to Him, what should we do about it? Should we make a change or keep towing the company line? You decide... But let's first look at the full picture and only then assess how best to venerate our Savior, Who is the Good Shepherd.

BRIEF INFO ON EASTER

In the lifetime of Yeshua of Nazareth, "Dies Solis" (Day of the Sun) was sacred to the cults who worshipped the sun, sometimes named Helios other times, Apollo or Phobos... Eventually Sol-Invictus and Mithra. This was the holiest day for pagans to worship their



idols whom they too called “Kyrious” and “Christos” (essentially “Lord” and “Christ”). At this, same time, the Sabbath, by pagans called the Day of Saturn, or as we know it today as Saturday, was known throughout the world as the day, when the worshipers of the Elohim of Israel, YHWH Almighty, gather together to praise Him in rest, and to acknowledge that He alone is the Creator. But of all the Sundays, the highest and holiest among the heathen, was the first one to follow the full moon that falls on, or after the vernal equinox, the Sunday which came to be called Eastre. In different places and ages, Sun worshipers gathered to watch the sunrise on that morning, and feasted on ham that evening. Depending on the local tradition they would decorate with symbols of eggs and rabbits and white lilies, and paid homage to the dawn goddess Eos,

The celebration of Easter is commanded nowhere in Scripture, nor is it permitted to be kept by any holy people who desire to worship of the true and living Elohim. This day

does not bring honor to our Heavenly Father, and does not glorify our Messiah. It has nothing to do with Yeshua, and had nothing to do with His people for the first hundred years of faith history. It was not until the year 166 AD, that the then Bishop of Rome, Soter adopted this holiday into Christian practice. According to the Bible, however, our Savior's resurrection did not occur on this day. No matter how we do the math, and in spite of what the papists say, if we do not begin with the end, and work backward to prove we were right, but rather review the facts to form an objective conclusion, we will discover that a Good Friday Crucifixion and an Easter Sunday Resurrection are absolutely impossible and utterly preposterous.

THE SIGN OF JONAH

Throughout our Master's earthly ministry, His most frequent and faithful proclamation, and the only one recalled by His enemies, both at His trial, and after His Resurrection (though never by them understood) was and remains to this day, the Sign of Jonah. Though Yeshua spoke of this sign in several different ways, always it said of only one single thing, the manner, means, and measure of time relating to His death and the temporality of its eventuality. Sometimes He said, "Destroy this Temple, and I will rebuild it in three days." Other times, He said, "The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day, be raised again." Sometimes He specified each thing that would befall Him from His being betrayed to being flogged and spit on, but every time He mentioned the events to come, they confirmed the fact He would be crucified, killed entombed three days, and then rise. The frequency of these assertions can be found in every Gospel: Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; 26:61; 27:40, 63. Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33-34; 14:58. Luke 9:22; 18:31-33; 24:7, 21, 46. John 2: 19 and also referenced in I Corinthians 15:3-4.

The clearest portion of Scripture explaining this, and that which actually claims the specificity of these events as well as the one which affixes the title "the Sign of Jonah" to them affirmatively is found in Matthew 12:38-42. Yeshua just finished driving out an evil spirit from a possessed man at which sight the jealous Pharisees accused Him of driving out evil by the devil's power. Then they ask Him for a Sign to prove His Authority. But having proven already in their presence, Who He is, Yeshua refused to do so saying, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a Sign, but none will be given it, except the Sign of Jonah. For as, Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so

the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Not merely three days, which could possibly imply a general time frame around that time table. Instead, He told them three days *and* three nights. That is a 72 *hour* window. It is exact, absolute, and indisputable... Except by them that desire to affix the Resurrection to the morning of the day of the sun. For them, the immediate excuses arise, everything from, “Jewish tradition held that part of the day counted as a whole day. So part of Friday, all of Saturday, and part of Sunday count as three days and nights” to “Well, three days and three nights is only generally speaking. It isn’t precisely 72 hours.”

To the first excuse, we must reply promptly that this nonsense was one of many *Pharisaical* traditions, not a Divine means of reckoning time. (And Who was it that spent most of His ministry debunking those man-made rules? That’s right. That was Yeshua.) Besides, that fact, this rabbinical ruling that declared any part of a day to be thought of as that whole entire day was not developed until the 2nd century A.D.... ergo, it did not exist at the time in which our Messiah firmly established that His time of death would endure for three days and three nights. Not to mention, that it’s an absurdity to use one Jewish tradition as an authority to explain away obedience to a biblical commandment that also happens to be a Jewish tradition.

As for the second excuse that our Messiah said “three days and three nights” as a sort of general timetable or approximation, that flies in the face of the entire statement itself with its context and its purpose. The clear intent of our Messiah, in giving any reference to any amount of time at all is for the purpose of informing His hearers, what they had to hope for in the face of His inevitable execution. If three days and three nights means *around* three days and three nights, but not *exactly* three days and three nights, then why mention that timeframe? Why offer the implication? If this was not His way of giving us specifics, then, why didn’t He simply say, “But fear not, I will rise again.” And then leave it at that, or He could have just bluntly said like Arnold Schwarzenegger, “I’ll be back.” And how about this, if not a literal meaning of three and three, then why wait any length of time? Why not come out of the tomb the second it was sealed? If the time didn’t matter, but only the Resurrection itself, then why wait?

To all this, the Chreasters (celebrants of Christmas and Easter) will raise, only at this point in the argument, a third excuse, “Well, we really can’t know what He had in mind when He said ‘days’ and ‘nights’. He might have had a different understanding of measuring time.”

Really?! That's where we are going with this?!... First off, there is no reasonable explanation why the Messiah would see time differently. (Unless we just want to believe it anyway arbitrarily) thus the conclusion must be reached that He thought of time as every other rational Hebrew human being of His day or any other. But secondly, and moreover, the Gospel of John does offer us clear evidence of our Master's, reckoning of time in chapter 11:9, "Are there not 12 hours in a day?" He was asked in reference to a completely different point, though it proves this one yet. Yeshua says there are 12 hours in a day. And contextually He was using day in this instance in reference the "light portion" of a "day" that would include evening to morning and then morning to evening. So 12 hours of day leaves 12 hours of night. Thus it must be understood that when He speaks of three days and three nights, a 72 hour period of time was what He had in mind. Between Friday evening, and Sunday morning there is not found time enough. A Friday crucifixion, no matter the math demands a Monday Resurrection, which by the pure description of events in Scripture proves impossible.

More than all this math, however, we must look at what Yeshua is actually offering as the Sign. We normally think of the *Resurrection* as His Sign, but that just simply is not so. The Sign was not that He would rise, an easy trick for the Messiah to do, but instead He put forth that the Sign would be His rising *in three days and three nights*. The *timing* is the Sign, *not the rising*.

So what is a Sign, and what is its significance? Well, principally, it is *significance*, itself, hence, why "sign" is the root of the word "significant." But the word we are left with in the Gospel is "seimeion" (Strong's G4592) meaning, "indication, manifest deed, token, mark, to distinguish, warn, signal." A translation of "oth" (Strong's H226). Signs are put forth to inform and prepare, to forewarn and make aware. A sign is offered as evidence or proof of something important. Yeshua is a Prophet, is He not? Albeit, much more than *just* a Prophet, being also High Priest, King, and the Son of the Most High, but nevertheless, He is still a Prophet too, and bound by the standard of a Prophet set by Moses in Deuteronomy 18, particularly verse 22. But beginning in verse 17 it is written, "YHWH said to me" (the "me" being Moses) "... I will raise up from them a Prophet like you" (again "you" being Moses) "from among their brothers; I will put My words in His mouth, and He will tell them everything I commanded Him. If anyone does not listen to My words that the Prophet speaks in My NAME, I Myself will call him to account." This is the part of the Bible, where the Messiah was talking about when He said in John 5:45-46, while

condemning the religious leaders, “But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed, Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.” That Prophet that Moses foretold was none other



than Yeshua, Who would speak the Word of the Most High, in the NAME of the Most High, the Divine NAME of YHWH. Yeshua spoke everything in this NAME, because it is the NAME of Authority, and because Moses said He would do so. We can be sure by faith, therefore that it happened. What does this have to do with the three days and three nights promise? Everything and then some.

Reading on in Deuteronomy 18, now, in verse 20, it says, “‘ But a prophet, who presumes to speak in My NAME, *anything* I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other elohim, must be put to death.’” So we may know that when Yeshua shows up, He speaks in the NAME of the Most High, and what He says is directly from the Most High alone, because as a Prophet, and truly the Prophet of all Prophets, He has to meet the standard set in the beginning (set by Himself, as a matter of fact). There can therefore be no if’s, and’s, or but’s about what He has to say, because the standard demands death to the liar.

The standard is what proves a man to be a true prophet, or a charlatan. Are we to believe every prophet is tested for verity but not the One Who wrote the prophecy and the One the prophecy about prophecy is foretelling? No. Messiah is going to be crystal clear when He speaks. In fact, it could be easily argued that His offering of any sign at all was to satisfy this very passage of Scripture, and prove Himself the Prophet of prophets in the end.

So, by this standard, Yeshua is giving everyone in earshot the ultimate ultimatum. "I am that guy Moses told you was coming, and if I don't prove true, you can kill me." Which is ironic, since His claim to the Sign required Him to be dead already. This thing is how we may know with surety that Yeshua meant "three days and three nights" when He said He would be dead "three days and three nights": verse 22 says, "" If what a Prophet proclaims, in the NAME of YHWH does not take place or come true, that is a message YHWH has not spoken. That Prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him."" Wow. So then, in the case of the Savior. It comes down to this: Either He raised from the dead, *exactly* three days and three nights, following His death, or He otherwise was an imposter...Resurrection or no.

"Seimeion" or "oth" is the definitive that is offered to all. This Sign of Jonah is a precise set of proofs. "If it does not happen exactly as I said it would, then I'm a liar, and you know what to do." He had been asked for proof that everything He ever said, did, believed, and preached had the backing of Heaven, and this Sign is all He ever offered as evidence. He literally hung *everything* on His timely Resurrection, all His prophecies, preaching, and every miracle He ever performed, even His Passion. According to the Word of the Almighty, if Yeshua died, and even resurrected from the tomb, it would have been for *nothing* **if** it did not match His pre-spoken Word on the subject **exactly**.

Resurrection is nothing for the One with the power of the Creator of all life. If He made everything out of nothing, why should it be hard to remake what has ceased to be? *Integrity*, that is the real miracle, because the Word of the Most High and His Sacred NAME were given, and must be always good, for He cannot lie.

We may know, then, that Yeshua gave His Word, which was the Word of the Heavenly Father spoken, in the NAME of the Heavenly Father, that He would be in the "heart of the earth" for "three days and three nights." He gave this as a Sign, as *proof*, as *evidence*, as a

warning, and as a *signal* for what to watch for to proclaim Him the Messiah, for sure, beyond all doubt whatsoever. Which means that *if* He raised from the dead, any later, or any earlier than “three days and three nights,” that miracle would have only served one purpose, to prove the Pharisees right Who said that He had been empowered by Satan. And had He risen early or late, by the Word of the Most High, and the Messiah’s own admissions, it would have been the obligation of any one who knew of His claim to promptly stone Him back to death, for being a false prophet... Yet thanks be to the Most High, that He proved true arising three days and three nights later to the moment, keeping His Word to the Letter.

PREPARATION DAY

Having establish the necessity that it be exactly three days and three nights that Messiah spent in the tomb, let us look now to the specifics the Gospels do give us regarding the day of His death. We were taught that this was Friday, but that cannot be so, being that not enough time resides between Friday and Sunday to fulfill the Sign of our Savior. And we have very little reason anyway to believe that it was Friday. So why were we taught that Good Friday was the crucifixion day? This is because the Bible tells us Yeshua died on Preparation Day (Matthew 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:42) and Friday is always Preparation Day. Is the Scripture than in error? Is the record somehow flawed? Perhaps our Master did not mean exactly what He said after all?... Or perhaps we have been missing a piece of the puzzle and believing we can still make out what it pictures.

Preparation Day takes place before every Sabbath, so that all necessities may be made ready ahead of time to allow for Sabbath to be a day of complete rest. According to Scripture, the Sabbath of YHWH is every Seventh Day, which folks would generally call ‘Saturday’ (Genesis 2:1–3; Exodus 20:8–11, 31:16–17; Matthew 4:16). (Technically, starting ‘Friday’ night at sunset as days really begin and end at sunset according to the Creation account in Genesis.) Logically if the Sabbath is Saturday, then Friday must be Preparation Day. Right? Yes... But we are still missing a piece here, and it is the clarifying verse of John 19:31 which reads, “Now it was the Day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a *special* Sabbath...” The word for “special” used here in the Gospel, “megaleis” (Strong’s G 3173) is more aptly put as “great” or “high.” This then was to be a High Sabbath, and as any Sabbath Keeper could tell us, there is nearly always a difference between a High Sabbath and a Weekly Sabbath.

While the Sabbath happens, like clockwork, every Seventh Day, without fail, there are other Holy Days, which also belong to the Heavenly Father that can fall on any day of the week and are required to be treated similarly to the Weekly Sabbath (Leviticus 23). Over the centuries, these developed the title of “High Sabbath.” It is equally true, therefore that, though every Friday is Preparation Day, *not every Preparation Day is Friday*. A Preparation Day that made ready for a High Sabbath could also fall on any day of the week. In this case, the High Sabbath being prepared for was the First Day of Unleavened Bread (Mark 14:1). So it does not have to be a Friday. How then do we figure out which day this was? If the Sign of our Master’s Authority is “three days and three nights” in the tomb, then let us begin this leg of the investigation with a look at the timing of His burial.

THE BURIAL

The day preceding the First of Unleavened Bread is in fact, the Passover (Leviticus, 23:4–8), itself, oddly enough a Preparation Day, whichever this day is during that week. This is the one in which our Saviour gave His life for us. He is the Passover Lamb (I Corinthians 5:6–8), the Lamb Who was slain (Revelation 5:6–8), and called this because He was sacrificed this day. About the ninth hour is when Yeshua gave up His spirit, which is the precise time the Passover lambs are being slain in the Temple to be made ready for cooking at sunset, roughly 3 hours later. And according to the record, it is roughly 3 hours later that the Master’s body is entombed, at about the 12th hour of the day. Matthew 27:57 says that He was entombed as evening approached.” Mark 15:42 uses the same verbiage. And Luke 23:54 says that the entombment took place on Preparation Day as “a Sabbath was about to begin.” Lastly, John 19:42, though not giving the exact timing, nevertheless confirms that when they put Yeshua’s body in the tomb, it was still Preparation Day. Combining these accounts, therefore, we find that our Saviour was put into the tomb at the precise time that the lambs are required to be put into the oven, which was “as evening approached” and as “a Sabbath was about to begin.” (Note that it always says “a” Sabbath in reference to these events, but never “the” Sabbath.) Bottom line is that our Master Yeshua was buried before sunset on the Passover, and His Words *must* be fulfilled. “Three days and three nights” later, from whatever day that was, would be the exact same time of day, only 72 hours later. He was buried in an *afternoon*. “Three days and three nights” later, the Sign of Jonah says that we can expect a resurrection in an *afternoon*, *not a morning*. Had that Preparation Day been Friday, we would have watched for His return on Monday, as evening neared.

THE EMPTY TOMB

"But the Bible says Messiah rose from the dead on Sunday morning," Many will here protest...Does it? Is that really what it says?...Or is that merely how our minds have arranged the information according to what we already expect? Have you ever checked? We always see it that way, but it is our own bias that supplies the Sunday Resurrection narrative, not the Scriptures themselves. All accounts tell us that women who followed Yeshua came to the tomb early on the first of the week. That's a fact. Matthew 28:1 says this took place, "after the Sabbath at the dawning of the first." (Note that now the Gospels are referring to "the" Sabbath. And no longer "a" Sabbath, since this one is the Weekly Sabbath, the Seventh Day.) Mark 16:2 says they got there, "very early...just after sunrise." Luke 24:1 says this was, "on the first of the week, still very early." And John 20:1 speaks of Mary setting out for the tomb, "early on the first of the week, while it was still dark..."

So, once again, combining the accounts, we see that women went to the tomb. Fact. This was on the first of the week. Fact. It was extremely early. Fact...But what did they find when they got there? That is the real question...When they arrived, did they find the Resurrection in progress? No. Did they find it about to happen? No. Did it happen shortly thereafter? No. So then, what did they find? An open tomb. Fact. Angels. Fact. And those angels telling the women that the Resurrection had *already taken place*. Fact.

The stone was not rolled way to let Him out. He was up and out of that sepulcher before ever it was opened up. While it was sealed up tight, somehow He left. The stone was rolled back to show all who could see, that, indeed, He had risen from the dead. The thing is, though, that no Gospel actually records, the *Resurrection* itself, but only the *aftermath*. It is the *discovery of the empty tomb*, not the *witness of the Resurrection* that is told to us in the Gospels. Again, it is we who have, till now, supplied the narrative. The fact of the matter is this: the arrival of these women at the tomb is so early to that there is no time in the day for anything to have taken place before this either. It is not as though we could surmise that Yeshua rose early on Sunday, and then the women showed up to find they'd just missed Him. The women's trip to the tomb was so early that there was no time for any other activity that day. Besides, by His own words, Yeshua promised to rise in an afternoon. Basically, He was to be expected back at sunset not sunrise. And since this passage records an empty tomb, Sunday morning, that automatically exes out, an

afternoon Resurrection on Sunday either, let alone one for Monday. So then, if not a Friday Crucifixion, nor a Sunday Resurrection, when did these times take place?

MASTER OF THE SABBATH

Synchronizing the stories of the four Gospels, we see that our Savior was entombed just prior to the evening, and His Resurrection must have taken place at the same time of day, albeit 72 hours later. Utilizing what else we know from the accounts, we find that the tomb was empty on Sunday morning and the angels, announcing at sunrise that Messiah had already risen. Therefore, following these facts, we must conclude that Yeshua of Nazareth rose from the dead, just before sunset the previous day, what the average person refers to as 'Saturday', thus fulfilling His prophecy, the Sign of Jonah, and proving Himself to be every bit, the Prophet like Moses, along with being the rightful King of Israel, the true High Priest of the Heavenly Temple, and the Divine Son of the only living Elohim.

In addition to proving Himself in all these rolls, Yeshua also proved another point He had made regarding Himself and the day of His Resurrection. In Matthew 12:38–42, He gave us the Sign of Jonah by which we can calculate His stay in the grave, but earlier in verse 8 of that same chapter (chapter 12), Yeshua says of Himself that He is Master of the Sabbath. Granted, He was proving a different point to the religious leaders, but it cannot be overlooked in light of the calculations of His Sign. Yeshua Messiah resurrected in late afternoon on the Sabbath Day, at which time it was custom among the Jews, to perform the ceremony of symbolically closing the Sabbath, and beginning the week. The ceremony, called Havdallah (Distinction), has come to involve pouring wine into an overflowing cup, the lighting of a braided candle, and smelling of sweet spices. The wine overflowing can signify the blessings of the Sabbath rest, spilling over into the work week or in this case, the bounty of Heaven poured out and spilling over on the Earth through the Messiah, Who keeps His promises. The braided candle denotes the union of the two houses of Israel (Judah & Ephraim) or alternatively, as the two appearing's of the one Messiah (then and yet to come), Who is Himself the Light of the world. And the fragrant spices are smelled at that time to remind us of the sweetness of the Sabbath throughout the week, or also to remind us to offer all six days as an offering of fragrant praise to our Creator and Savior. It was at about this time that our Messiah did rise, the time, known among Sabbath-keeper's as "the distinction." This was when the prayer is prayed to our

Heavenly Father, saying, "Blessed are You, YHWH, Eloheinu, King of the Universe, Who makes the distinction between the sacred and the profane, between life and death, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the Seventh Day, and the six days of labor. Blessed is YHWH Who marks (gives the sign of) the difference of holy from secular." It was at this time that the Messiah did rise according to the sign, the time marking the distinction between life and death, light and darkness, etc., And also the time marking the distinction of the Sign of Jonah from anything else that could have taken place instead.

It is further interesting to note that the Sabbath Day is not merely a rest stop at the end of a week of working, but it is symbolic in and of itself of the thousand year reign of Messiah at the end of the ages of the labors of men. The Sabbath itself is a Messianic Sign, of the Rest that the Master Himself will offer us forever. For this reason the 92nd Psalm, which proclaims that perfect dispensation of days to come, was sung by the priests of the Temple every Seventh Day. They were longing for His appearing, but when He arrived, they could not recognize Him, not even when He said, "The Son of Man is Master of the Sabbath." And not even when He offered the Sign of Jonah to say that He would rise that day. But we who follow Him faithfully and hang on His every Word can see and believe with surety that Yeshua, the Messiah, known in the west in modernity as "Jesus Christ" is Master of the Sabbath and was raised on the Sabbath.

THE CASE FOR PASSOVER

Easter, therefore, is right out the window, as far as our excuses go regarding it's acceptance. This holiday began in pagantry and proudly remains so unto this present day. As we can plainly see, Easter Sunday has nothing to do with our Saviour, the King Messiah, Yeshua, and therefore also holds no bearing on our faith. The Bible boldly shows, when we don't feel the need to nudge it along, that our Master raised to life again on the afternoon of the Sabbath, exactly three days and three nights after His entombment, just as He had borne witness that He would. And if we would, but backtrack that precise percentage of time, we would find to our surprise that this same Savior died and was buried very late in the afternoon of (what would amount to) Wednesday, for that was the timing of the Day of Preparation, that year and the Day of Passover.

And so the question must be posed, "If Easter has everything to do with a pagan dawn goddess, yet has nothing to do with our own Heavenly Father and His only begotten 'Son', then why should we continue to keep this day, holy every year? Yeshua told the Pharisees, "Thus you nullify the Word of Elohim for the sake of your traditions." May He never say the same to us. In answer to this inquiry I selected for myself to abandon my former Chreaster practices condemned by the Canon of Scripture and have readopted in their place the original Passover celebration, condoned, commended, and commanded by our Heavenly Father and His 'Son'. I began keeping this Holy Day because, unlike the other, it actually commemorates the sacrifice our Savior made for our sins, with His subsequent Resurrection, according to His word. Though I would not presume to pressure anyone to undertake the same observance as myself, simply at my say so, I would ask that all readers of this presentation personally investigate these claims, ask the hard questions of themselves, and others, and study the Scriptures and Histories with all preconceived ideas moved out of the way. Then and only then, can you decide how to move forward in life, as a Chreaster or Quartodecimani (a participant in Passover.)

For your consideration, and your investigation, let it be known that the celebration of Passover every year on the 14th day after the New Moon that rises following the ripening of barley in Israel, this day is all about Yeshua. It is always about Yeshua. And it is only about Yeshua. When the Most High killed a lamb to cover Adam and Eve with its skin, that was a type of Passover and a type of Messiah, Who died to provide covering for our sins. When Noah passed through the waters into newness of life, that was a type of Passover, and also a type of Messiah. since Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea, and we believers pass through the waters of baptism, both into newness of life. When Abraham offered Isaac on the altar, he was replaced by a lamb, that too, was a type of Passover, and a type of Messiah for the Father gave us His 'Son' on the altar, and we are replaced by Him, the Lamb Who was slain. When the Most High lead Israel, out of slavery in Egypt through the sea, and into the freedom of His Word, this instituted Passover. Our Elohim caused death to cover Egypt to slaughter all the firstborn, but He passed over all the homes of Israel, who covered their door frames with the Blood of the Passover Lamb. And in like manner at this same day, some 2000 years later, our Heavenly Father led us out of slavery to sin, through the waters of baptism, and into the freedom of His Word. When death was sent against us, the Blood of the Passover Lamb, Yeshua our Messiah was put on the door frames of our hearts, and death passed over us. Now, some 2000 years later, we can look back and see every time we eat the bread and drink the wine of

“Communion” that that Passover is everything our common faith believes and holds dear. Why would we want anything else? It was then that He gave us the “new” covenant in His Blood, and it is the celebration of Passover, not Easter, that rightly memorializes this every year. Keeping Passover is keeping that commitment and commandment in I Corinthians 11:26 along with that of first Corinthians 5:7–8.

He is risen, indeed.

