

Pastor Ming-Dao Wang had published an essay about “Jesus’ Three Days and Three Nights” at March 5, 1941. In the article, he simply proved the fact that Jesus was buried on Wednesday with verses from the bible, not on Friday as we normally believe in. Please read the below writing details. Thank you!

Jesus’ Three Days and Three Nights

[Matt12:38-40] Then some of the Pharisees and scribes said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.” He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet 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.

[Jonah 1:17] Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

The first verse told us that Jesus clearly prophesized that He would be buried for three days and three nights. Same as prophet Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights in old testament. And He stated that was the only sign for this wicked and adulterous generation. But as the theory that we have been taught; Jesus was crucified on Friday, and rose on Sunday morning. Then He was not buried long enough as what He had said before. It was only two nights and a day; Friday night, Saturday and Saturday night. It was only 50% of the time length of what He had said. Was Jesus prophecy not precise? Or disciples recorded Jesus burial and risen events inaccurately? Jesus’ prophecy could not be unfulfilled. [If it was, then we could not believe in Him anymore. Because if this the only miracle that He gave this evil and adulterous generation could not be accomplished, what else could prove that He is the son of God? Even if the disciples’ recording was slightly misleading, it still definitely would not turn three days and three nights into only one day and two nights. What cause these large discrepancies? What went wrong on the days calculation? If we read the Bible details, we should know that Lord Jesus’ prophecy would be carried through. And nothing wrong on the disciples’ recordings either. Lord Jesus predicted that He would be buried for three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. His disciples’ transcription showed exactly three days and three nights from the time that He was buried until risen. The time could not be more or less. Lord Jesus buried two nights and one day was not written in Bible, but wrongly calculated by people later.](#)

Some people may explain reluctantly, three days and three nights don’t have to be exactly 72 hours, if it could just occupy parts of three whole days. Jesus was buried at end of Friday; whole day Saturday was under the ground, and rose on Sunday morning. This way of date time calculation is not accurate either. Other people said that the day Jesus being buried was the first day; under the ground whole day was second day, the risen day was the third day. All could add up to three days, is that right? All these sayings are disinclined. After reading the Bible carefully few times, we know those explanations are not correct. The old testament had explicitly written: “Now the LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights”. Lord Jesus also told us clearly: “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”. It must be three days and three nights; nothing more and nothing less. No one would accept the counting for three days as but only one day and two nights instead.

We want to ask if there is any proof that Jesus was crucified on Friday. Surely people would say: "wasn't the next day Sabbath after Jesus' crucifixion? If the next day was Sabbath, then Jesus was crucified on the 6th day of the week (we named it Friday)." The misunderstanding was caused by this wrong concept. The next day after Jesus' crucifixion was truly a Sabbath, but it was not the 7th day Sabbath. It was the Passover Sabbath. In Gospel John had written: "Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left hanging on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the prisoners' legs broken and the bodies being taken down." [John 19:31]. In the scripture, John clearly indicated the Sabbath after Jesus crucifixion was a high Sabbath, not an ordinary one. This Sabbath was the annual Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. We read about the laws in old testament: "The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD's Festival of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast. On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work." [Leviticus 23:5-7]. Majority of believers only knew that the 7th day is Sabbath, for people did no work on these feasts of the Lord, same as the Sabbath. The 7th day. In Leviticus chapter 23 described these Feasts of the Lord. The fifteenth day of the first month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread's first day and for 7 days (vs6-8), the first day of the seventh month is Pentecost (vs21), the 10th day of the seventh month is Day of Atonement (vs24-25), the fifteenth day of the seventh month is the first day of Feast of Tabernacles for 8 days (vs34-36). In these feasts of the Lord, Israelites must rest, and do no work. Therefore, the Feasts of the Lord are Sabbaths also. Jesus was crucified on the preparation day, the day before Passover. The next day was Passover, then the Feast of Unleavened Bread; they were Sabbaths. Surely, those promoted that Jesus was crucified on Friday also acknowledged the Feast of Unleavened Bread a Sabbath. However, they concluded that this particular day just fell on the 7th day's Sabbath in that particular year. A Feast of Sabbath and the 7th day Sabbath met on the same day. Then the preparation day was the 6th day, (that was Friday), So the theory of Jesus being crucified on Friday was established. That was how the term '**Good Friday**' coming from.

Does the next day after Jesus being crucified a 7th day's Sabbath? The Books of Gospel told us "No" because we saw the writings in two places:

[Mark15:42] It was Preparation Day (that is, the day before the Sabbath). So as evening approached, Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent member of the Council, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body...

[Mark15:46] So Joseph bought some linen cloth, took down the body, wrapped it in the linen, and placed it in a tomb cut out of rock. Then he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid.

[Mark16:1] When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body.

[Luke23:50-56] Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, 51 who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. 52 Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. 54 It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about

to begin.⁵⁵ The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. ⁵⁶ Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

These two paragraphs clarified that the two different Sabbaths were not on the same day. Mark told us “When the Sabbath was over”, the women “bought spices, so that they might go to anoint Jesus’ body”. No doubt that the event was on the 16th day of the first month. But Luke denoted as: “Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.” Did the women bought spices before or on the day of Sabbath? Or after Sabbath? As general saying, that day was the 15th day of the first month and was also the 7th day of the week in that year. Two Sabbaths met on the same day. In this case, one paragraph must be incorrectly written among the two. If Mark was correct, then Luke was wrong. Or vice versa. No, both paragraphs of the scripture were not wrong. In fact, they were correctly written. Mark said: “the Sabbath was over”, that Sabbath was the feast’s Sabbath. Whereas “they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.”, Luke meant the 7th day Sabbath in the commandments. After the women came back from the tomb, it was Passover Sabbath. They could not go out to purchase the spices and perfumes even they were anxious to do so. Because no one would trade during Passover Sabbath. They had to wait till after the Feast of Unleavened Bread Sabbath. That situation was just what Mark described. When reading Luke’ scripts, we knew that after the women had purchased the spices and perfumes, then the 7th day Sabbath came. They had to rest for the Sabbath, so we realized there was a regular day between two Sabbaths. The women went for shopping on the ordinary day. After understanding this situation, we know that both Mark and Luke’s descriptions had no error.

With these facts, we have a conclusion. Lord Jesus was hung on the cross on the preparation day, 14th day of the first month, was buried before sun down on that day. The next day, 15th of the first month, was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That was the His first day in the ground. The 16th day of the first month was an ordinary day. The women went to purchase sweet spices. It was the second day that Lord Jesus was in the ground. The 17th day of the first month was the 7th day of the week, a Sabbath. The women rested in obedience to the commandment. It was the third day that Lord Jesus was in the ground. Based on this analysis, the 17th day of the first month was also the 7th day of the week Sabbath. Then the 16th day of first month was the 6th day of the week, the 15th day was 5th day of the week. Lord Jesus was crucified on the 14th day. It was the 4th day of the week, and it also called Wednesday.

We know that the Lord had prescribed day calculation method for Israelites. It was from sun down to sun down of the next day as a whole day (see Exodus12:18-19, Leviticus23:32). In Genesis chapter 1, it mentioned the method that the Lord calculated day; “and there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.” “and there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.” ... Jesus was buried before sun down on the 14th day. Then went into the 15th day; it was Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. He was under the ground whole night and day of the 15th day. Same for the 16th day and 17th day. Wouldn’t they be whole three nights and three days?

One must say: “According to this calculation, the time that Jesus was in the tomb still was one night more than what He predicted. In the scripture, He rose at dawn of the first day of the week.” was it? Did Jesus rise at dawn of the first day? Let’s read the scriptures.

[Matthew28:1-4] 1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. 2 There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. 4 The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

[Mark16:2-5] 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3 and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

[Luke24:1-4] 1 On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them.

[John20:1-2] 1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. 2 So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

Normally, when reading these four books of Gospel, we thought that they described the event of the first day morning. If reading thoughtfully on Matthew chapter 28, we could see that the events written from the other three books separated by a night. Mark, Luke and John described events at dawn of the first day. Matthew described the event of first night. Do readers doubt about my words? Please let me explain in detail.

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week," what period was it? We took a glance on the question and might say it was morning. However, we had to account for the words "after the Sabbath". When was it? We had already known Israeli way of counting; a day was from sun down till sun down the next day. In the book of laws said: "It is a day of Sabbath rest for you, and you must deny yourselves. From the evening of the ninth day of the month until the following evening you are to observe your Sabbath." [Leviticut23:32]. The book of Nehemiah recorded the event that Nehemiah led Israelites rested for Sabbath, "When evening shadows fell on the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I ordered the doors to be shut and not opened until the Sabbath was over. I stationed some of my own men at the gates so that no load could be brought in on the Sabbath day." (Nehemiah13:19). Even till present, the old testament-laws abiding Jewish in the world still rest for Sabbath from sun down of Friday till sun down of Saturday. "After the Sabbath" was the sun down period in the evening naturally. But why the next sentence said, "at dawn"? Sun down is an event on evening, and dawn, the morning. These two events separated with a whole night. Why did the scripture describe things this way? Not using the Israeli way of day counting which end of Sabbath was not dawn. Even if counting from mid- night to mid-night of next day as a day, end of Sabbath still was not close to dawn. Matthew would not write the event wrongly. Could it be the Bible interpreters' mistake? **Dr. Robert Young's Concordance** told us that Matthew 28:1 used a word '**epiphosko**' in Hebrew version. Luke 23:54 also used the same word. It should be "dawn was near in the first day of the week" for Matthew 28:1 through translation, and "Sabbath was coming" for Luke 23:54. Because these two verses had the same word '**epiphosko**'

in Hebrew version. If the translation was done with the same manner, we would read the scripture this way: "After the Sabbath, dawn of the first day of the week was near". Then there would not be any conflict in understanding. The same interpretation for Luke 23:54. Luke recorded Jesus was buried when "the Sabbath was coming". Matthew recorded Jesus arising when "it was near the first day of the week". There were enough evidences to show that Jesus was buried and risen near sun down. He was buried on sun down of the Passover preparation day, and resurrected near Sabbath sun down. Jesus didn't rise on the first day, but the 7th day. Not the morning, but evening.

Putting the writings of Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 21 together and comparing them side by side, we would see that Matthew recorded the scene of Jesus resurrected and came out from the sepulcher. The other three books of Gospel only recorded the events after Jesus resurrected. Matthew recorded "There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone." No doubt that Lord Jesus had risen and went out of the sepulcher during the moment angel rolled back the stone. Matthew also recorded that the guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The same chapter described that some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priest about what had happened [Matthew 28:11-15]. The other three books of Gospel had not mentioned about the earthquake, nor the angel rolling back the stone. They just described that the women went to the garden tomb, "saw the stone already rolled away", and the angels were sitting there, but not a word about the guards. If we read carefully on the three Gospels' writing, we could see there was no one in the garden tomb except the angels. Comparing these four books of Gospel, we knew that Matthew recorded the scene on sun down of the first day, and the other three books recorded the event in the morning of the second day. Earthquake, angels descending, stone rolling back, scared guards became like dead man, all these happened on the 17th day sun down, near the end of Sabbath. Lord Jesus had resurrected and walked out the tomb. That moment was the whole three days and nights after He was buried. He was just buried on the 14th day sun down near the Passover Sabbath, and He had risen on the 17th day sun down. Total exactly three days and nights by counting. Not more and not less. Just as what the Lord Jesus Himself had predicted.

There is an event that we must pay attention to; the women went to garden tomb with sweet spices for anointing Jesus' body as what Mark recorded. However, Matthew recorded "came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher". Noticing these two women not for anointing the body of Jesus, just came to tomb to check. The distance from inside of the city to outside was not short. Why they wanted to go the garden tomb? They had already known that soldiers sent by the priest were guarding the tomb and not allowing any outsiders to get in. Might be, they counted that Jesus had buried three days and nights, guards might be removed because the purpose was not allowing disciples to come to the sepulcher within three days. The priest requested Pilate to make sepulcher secured and setting watch for three days.

But the women not sure if the guards left the tomb yet after three days, so these two women went to check during dark and quiet night before. If the guards were no longer there, then they would come with their company the next morning to anoint Jesus' body. Otherwise, they would wait for a while. After knowing the thoughts of these two women, then we understand why they had bought spices on the day between two Sabbaths, the 16th day, but not went ahead to sepulcher to anoint Jesus' body. They were eager to, but could not because of the guards setting watch there for three days. No one, not even Jesus' disciples could come near the garden tomb. On the 17th day evening, near the end of the Sabbath. Mary of Magdalene and the other Mary were anxious to know if the guards were still there,

it was near the end of three days and nights after Jesus' burial. They thought that the guards might left, so they came out to the sepulcher to check. Unexpectedly, came across the earthquake, the angels coming down and rolling back the stone". The guards were still there, but were afraid and shook". The more reading in details on Matthew 28, the more we could see the event that recorded by Matthew was different than the events on other three books.

But one point we don't quite understand; since the two Mary had already heard the report from the angels and seen the appearance of the Lord, why they still went with other women to anoint Jesus' body the next morning. Probably, they could not believe what they saw and heard after back home. They might think that it was vision only. Therefore, they again went with other women to the garden tomb. Also, the event in John 20 was not the same event that recorded in Matthew 28, so did in Mark 16 and Luke 24. Mark and Luke recorded that several women brought sweet spices in the morning, they went to anoint Jesus' body. John recorded Mary of Magdalene went to the garden tomb alone while the sky was still dark. No doubt that these events also described in Mark16:1-8 and Luke24:1-11. We could see that there were three events from four books of Gospel. Matthew recorded that two women went to the tomb at night and came across the earthquake, angels descended, tomb stone rolled back, guards were scared like dead men. Jesus had risen at that moment. John recorded that Mary of Magdalene went to the sepulcher alone the next morning, she saw Jesus and came back to town, met other women with spices on the way to anoint Jesus' body, she joined them. This same event also recorded by Mark. From the four books of Gospel, only Matthew recorded the resurrection event of Jesus. [The timing of the events in the other three books regarding Jesus' resurrection differed by a night. We could see Jesus' resurrection was not on the morning of the first day of the week, but near the end of the 7th day, the end of Sabbath. Near the beginning of the first day of the week, Jesus was buried three days and nights.](#) Once understood the scriptures of the Gospels, we know that how Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees about the Son of Man would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. It was accomplished. Human heredity overrides the position of the truth in the church. It was sad that the prediction of Lord Jesus was ignored, the only miracle given by Himself to this evil and adulterous generation, was disbelief by many.

Someone may asks: "Mark16:9 recorded: 'When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene', didn't this paragraph prove that Jesus rose on the first day morning?" Is it out of the ordinary? We had already seen the scriptures clearly stated Jesus had risen at the sun down, near the end of Sabbath. Why saying He rose on the morning of first day? If this sentence is correct, then the above paragraph is wrong, vice versa. When we read the English Revised Version, the indication at the page edge: **The two oldest Greek manuscript, and some other authorities, omit from versus 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel.** If so, Mark16:9-20 could be added later by others. Because of this, how could we overthrow the clear prediction from the Lord Jesus that He would be in the ground for three days and three nights?

After we understood the truth from the Bible, we know that "Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on the morning of the first day" was the Roman Church heredity. This heredity was kept by Protestants till now. Every spring, churches commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus. Not following the Jewish calendar, on the 14th day of the first month, but pulling this day to Friday to fit to **Good Friday's** tradition. The Jewish calendar is known as lunar calendar, same as Chinese lunar calendar. The Jewish first month is two or three months later than the Chinese. Lord Jesus was crucified on 14th day of the first month of Jewish calendar; this day

would not be Friday every year. But the church of Rome disregards the truth, and commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus on Friday. If Jesus crucifixion day falls on Friday in a year, then no issue. If not, they postpone the day till the coming Friday for the commemoration. The church of Rome does that, and Protestants follow. We often see Jesus' crucifixion day on Friday in calendars published by Christian communities every year. Then after two nights and a day, Easter is in the morning of the first day.

Maybe someone would question: "If Good Friday to commemorate Jesus' crucifixion is Roman Church's heredity, then how do we calculate the actual day?" It is easy. The first 15th day after the spring equinox (the first day of spring) on lunar calendar is the Jewish 15th day of the first month. The previous day (14th day) is preparation day of Passover, it is the day to remember Jesus's crucifixion. From the evening of that day count three days and nights, near the 17th day sun down is the resurrection day. The previous night of the preparation day (13th day) is the night that Jesus was betrayed. Over these years, if the writer was in town on this night, he always gathered with other fellow Christians to commemorate the betrayal event and had holy communion in remembrance of the Lord Jesus. Cloudy day was rare in the Northern part of the country, so the big full moon appeared at the night time. Under such moon light atmosphere, it helped to remember the last supper event and the praying in Gethsemane. This kind of gathering were useful to us spiritually.

In conclusion, if we give up our biases and the human heredity, we follow the guidance of holy spirit to seek the truth with humility. We will discover that the principles in the Bible always are true with no conflicts. The subject that we just discussed is a good proof.

Pastor Ming-Dao Wang written on 03/05/1941

Esther Lee translated into English on 04/13/18

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Esther Lee

Date:04/13/18