



His Sign

Three Days and Three Nights

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The Knotty Problem

Chapter 1

Numerous subjects have been debated and refuted, but none more hotly than the “knotty-three-days-and-three-nights-issue.” Was Christ crucified on “Good Friday,” as our Catholic friends have asserted? Did He come from the tomb early Sunday morning, just before sunrise, as most Christians assume? Why does it make any difference whether Christ did or did not present Himself to the Father at the time of the Wave Offering? The assumptions formerly made regarding these questions will herein be challenged. In the conclusion of this treatise, the reader will be further encouraged to answer the question: Is a belief “Christian,” and “valid,” without being substantiated by the Word of God?

After reading booklets and listening to three presentations in defense of the Friday-to-Sunday theory, I have prepared this document in an effort to clearly show why many Christians have come to reject this popular view. As *The Pulpit Commentary* suggests, this issue is one of the “knottiest problems” in the Gospel. Indeed, the controversy is, basically, a question of “Can the Bible be trusted to reveal the Truth and the practice of Faith?” or “Must these be interpreted by theologians in each new generation in order to make them fit the sociopolitical structure and religious mind set within that era?” The most fundamental, theological question, then, hinges upon an investigation into this “knotty” subject:

Does tradition supersede Scripture, or Scripture tradition?

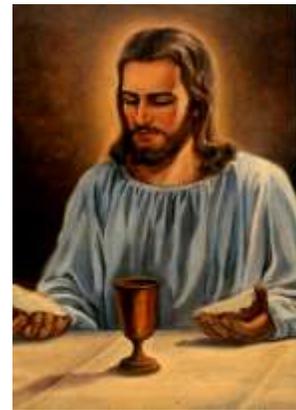
It is the purpose of this document to reveal clear answers to vital questions which implicate one’s **foundational premise**: Are my beliefs and practices grounded in the Bible, or accepted without question, because they are precious tradition? The truth about the number of days Messiah was in the tomb is inconsequential when weighed against the heavier matter of one’s underlying premise. Do I believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God? Is the Bible the highest authority in my life?

The Bible is basically a study manual, blending prophecy of the future with admonitions and warnings from the past to listen and obey God’s voice. The Scriptures reveals the character of an all-knowing God. Because our God Almighty is a loving God, He has opened within the sacred pages the future of nations and world empires, that His own may warn and be warned of coming events. No other religious guidebook dares to prophesy the future. If any world religion, such as Confucism, Buddhism, Mohandism, Islam, or the modern Humanism had such a manual filled with prophecy, it would have proven the falseness of that religion long ago. Only the God of Heaven reveals secrets (Dan. 2:28) to His servants, the prophets with unerring accuracy. Furthermore, the carnage of neglect and rebellion against Scripture is scattered throughout the pages of Holy Writ, revealing the consequences to those who have ignored or defied that “sure word of prophecy (2 Pet. 1:19).”

In addition, where the direct words of Jehovah, God Almighty, are recorded in Scripture, most Christians acknowledge these words to be especially worthy of our attention. That is true, in theory at least, of The Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, and Christ's prophecy of End Time Events (Matthew 24). Some Bibles, for example, acknowledge this unique honor by printing the direct words of Christ in red, setting them apart from the inspired commentary given by the Bible writers.

Strangely, this high regard for the exact words of the Son of God has been diminished by the prevalent dependency upon theologians to interpret that Holy Word. The next chapter will show that Christ's own prophecy of Himself has been discredited as an approximation, rather than an exact, literal, prediction and proof of His origin and mission. Thus, this research project may bring clearly to the reader the deceptiveness of **religious assurance** apart from **Bible proof**.

So, the argument continues to our day: Is the Bible to be taken literally, or shall we merely extract spiritual principles and leave the discernment for linguists to tell us when something is literal and when it is spiritual or figurative. For instance, Jesus said at the Lord's Supper, "This is My blood," and "This is My body." Do we take the words literally? No, not in this text, because Christ was with the disciples as real flesh with blood flowing through His veins. The context tells us that this Last Supper was a memorial. Thus, we know that the context interprets the passages of Scripture when we ask for Divine guidance.



Even the great reformers, Martin Luther and Zwingli, floundered upon this point. When they had met together to see if they could unite their forces in one mighty, spiritual movement, they failed because they could not agree on the literal or spiritual interpretation of the Lord's Supper. Zwingli said the words, "This is my body," meant that the bread represented the body of Christ, and the fruit of the vine represented His blood. But Luther required Zwingli to prove from Scripture that "is" means "represents."

"Where in the Bible can you show me that the verb 'is' means 'represents'?" challenged Luther.

Zwingli turned to Genesis 41:26-27 and read about Pharaoh's dream:

"The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one."

Although Zwingli had made his point based upon scripture, it did not convince Martin Luther, and the Reformation splintered into factions.

The controversy goes on through each generation. Today, the issue over the literal or figurative interpretation of the Lord's Supper has been settled. Some have chosen to believe the bread is changed into the actual body of Christ; the fruit of the vine, into His

actual blood. Others believe the context clearly indicates a figurative meaning in this case. But the rivalry has continued over other specifics, one of which is this three-days-and-three-nights issue. If the reader believes the context must reveal the meaning, truth will come through.

When we are listening to the Voice of God speak to us through the Sacred Scriptures, we will ever be learning new truths, enjoying more light, abandoning groundless assumptions, and discovering deeper treasures.

*The path of the just is as a light shining more and more unto the perfect day,
Proverbs 4:18.*

The Holy Spirit leads the honest seekers in a growth process, guiding each one into a diligent pursuit of faith in Jehovah and His Word. This diligent pursuit develops virtue in one's character and builds intimacy with the Almighty One through knowledge and commitment. 2 Peter 1:5 reminds us to *add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge*. Many recoil at this genuine "Infinity Walk" –a term among educators that refers to a sequence of physical exercises which generate metaphysical, or cognitive, pathways for overcoming blockages to further learning. But, for those who revere the Bible as the very Word of God, to be cherished and obeyed, Scripture takes preeminence over every other voice.

The farther one goes in pursuit of truth, and the deeper one digs into the traditional view of the crucifixion week, the more often the sincere student will meet those who, not willing to challenge their own foundation, try to direct the seeker back to the Friday-Sunday traditional belief, and *status-quo*. It seems that there is a prevailing attitude among many Christians, that the only subjects to be studied and believed are those recommended by official church leaders. This attitude not only shuts out further revelations of truth, it also blocks investigation of error.

As an unbiased student, on the other hand, in search of the honest-to-goodness gospel-truth, one may be compelled by the Holy Spirit to seek truth on every subject related to belief and practice. This pursuit may make the truth-seeker appear narrow and unnecessarily restricted. In our modern world most religious thought is accepted as "good," if it is earnestly pursued. A person can choose almost any form of worship, any belief about Scripture, and any behavior that appeals to his or her own sensibilities. Thus, a person may be so eclectic as to pick from many different religions. Conversely, historical truth has always been too narrow for the majority.

Ironically, the whole purpose of a jury in our court system is to decipher what is the "narrow truth." That kernel of truth will never be found by the people who pride themselves on being "broad-minded."

"Ecclesiastical truth is no less narrow," wrote W. A. Criswell in his 1969 booklet, "Why I Preach That the Bible Is Literally True."

“In the days of Noah there was no salvation outside of the ark. In the days of Moses there was no deliverance from the judgment of God except for those who were under the blood. Likewise, in our day the same truth still stands! ‘He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him’ (John 3:36).” *Ibid*, page 128.

One may invest in many commentaries, and surf the internet for others, in order to get a “balanced” view of what scholars believe to be “accurate” meaning. But one must not allow the study to stop there, for nearly all commentaries ignore fair, biblical exegesis when **traditional views** are threatened. The Bible and the Bible alone must be our basis for doctrine. Certainly, Protestants have earnestly proclaimed it; nonetheless, when tradition and the Word of God collide, a “knotty problem” emerges for many.

The following pages contain the effort of this Bible student to unravel those knots. Foundational in the approach to this study are the following principles:

- **The Bible will interpret itself.**
- **Never settle on a conclusion that makes one Scripture contradict another.**
- **Nothing will be allowed to supersede Scripture for an interpretation of Scripture.**

Let us look, then, at what the Bible actually says, and what it does not say. Thus, one may understand the events and time elements associated with the crucifixion-resurrection scenario. Then, we will make note of what tradition and history bring to bear on the subject; but, ultimately, the Bible must unravel its own knots. Within these pages the reader may follow the resolution of questions and come to conclusions based on the Bible alone. If the reader finds the methods and procedures within this treatise to be honest, the reader may also expect to find the conclusions herein to be worthy of consideration.

The Holy Spirit woos us into truth; the enemy of Christ charges in to fight it. Such super-charged reactions demand further investigation as to the cause; thereby came this manuscript. Some have suggested that this issue is not really “salvational.” This document will argue that it is salvational; for, would we want to suggest that interpretations of scriptures are optional? -equally valid? Or, that truth is a matter of preferences for the broad-minded? To the contrary: the Saviour Himself, in conflict with the devil, acknowledged a narrow, vital truth for the would-be-saint in every age:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Luke 4:4; Deut. 8:3). Emphasis supplied.

In the words of the prophet, Isaiah:

The grass withereth; the flower fadeth: but the word of God stands for ever.” Isaiah 40:8.

The Sign of Jonah

Chapter 2

The Sign, which Christ gave His critics to prove that He was truly the Messiah, requires our attention:

As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,
Matthew 12:40.

Certainly the Friday-near-sundown to Sunday-before-sunrise theory completely ignored the “three nights” element in “**The Sign**.” Jesus had once asked, “*Are there not twelve hours in a day?*” (John 11:9) We know by His question that He would not miscalculated when He gave **His Sign**. Yet, unable to justify the traditional Good-Friday-to-Easter-Sunday-Model with Christ’s own self-prophecy, **His Sign**, most have simply concluded that **The Sign** could not be taken literally; it must be a colloquialism of that time. There many Bible students have been willing to leave the subject.

Although kings had been known to credit themselves with a year of rule, even when their reign didn’t begin until the last month of the year, and we are told they could legally do the same in terms of hours in a day, we know the Son of God never claimed more than what was exactly true. We know He fulfilled each prophecy in exact time and event. When Christ gave **His Sign**, He could not have been estimating time; for with God there is “no variableness, neither shadow of turning,” James 1:17.

The word for “variableness” in the above text is used nowhere else in the New Testament. It is the Greek word, *paraloage* (#3883), which means “to misreckon, delude, beguile, or deceive.” When the Saviour expressed His knowledge that there are twelve hours in a day (John 11:9), we may be sure that He also knew there are twelve hours in a night. **His Sign** included three of each.

Notice the verses preceding the giving of “**The Sign**.” In that section of Scripture (See Matthew 12:33-37), the Saviour reproved the Pharisees for their unbelief. “*Either the tree is good and bears good fruit, or the tree is corrupt and bears corrupt fruit,*” declared the Saviour. The inference seems to be that the Pharisees’ tree was corrupt, for Christ next called them a “generation of vipers” (Verse 34).

In Verse 35, Christ seems to be reading their evil minds, contrasting his honesty with their distortions, His revelations of truth with their spurious deceptions. In the context of Matthew 12, the Saviour seems to be remonstrating with His skeptics over their careless manufacturing of ideas, requirements, and judgments as “evil treasures” from evil hearts.

The next word is “But” (Verse 36), showing contrast between their falseness and His own integrity. Then, the Lord rebuked the Pharisees for speaking **idle words**, reminding them that they would be judged by those idle words.

The Greek word for “**idle**” in Matthew 12:36 is *argos*, #692 in Strong’s Concordance. The same Greek word is found in Matthew 20:3 and 6 in the parable of the vineyard workers. There, the householder goes into the market place and finds men “**idle**.” This word is also used in 1 Timothy 5:13, speaking of young women who cast off their first faith and learn to be **idle** gossipers. Again, the word “**idle**” appears in Titus 1:12. Speaking of the Cretans, the verse says they are always liars, evil beasts, slow-bellies. The margin explains that “slow bellies” means “**idle** gluttons.”

Finally, this word “**idle**” may be found in 2 Peter 1:8 where Peter describes growing in grace (Peter’s Ladder, it is sometimes called), and concludes that if you do these things you will not be barren (**idle**), nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What, then, was Christ meaning by telling the Pharisees that **idle** words would be “accounted for” in the Judgment? **Idle**, according to Lexical Aids to the New Testament (Zodhiates), page 892, means “inactive, unprofitable, barren.” Thus, we may be assured that Christ’s words were never **idle**: **Never inactive; never unprofitable; never barren!**

In this setting, Christ addresses the Pharisees’ critical appeal for “a sign.” Would Christ lie? -Or be careless in His words? -Or speak so non-specifically that which, over time, could come to be “unprofitable,” meaning something quite different from what He intended? Would He be inconsistent, or inaccurate? Would He misreckon? Impossible! Therefore, it would be well to take seriously **His Sign**. After all, Christ was the very God in humanity; His words, the highest authority on earth.

What kind of a sign are the Pharisees asking for in this passage? The Pharisees were ever badgering the Saviour for proof that He was from Heaven, that He was the One described by the prophets, that He was the longed-for Messiah. From His perspective, He gave them what they asked for. He gave it clearly, accurately, and precisely. But, in their corrupt vanity, they could not appreciate His words. They seemed to think that some mighty miracle -something sensational -would satisfy their carnal curiosity, and at the same time, put Christ in cooperation with their control over the people. Had not Satan tried the power trick in the wilderness? He had met Christ there with the temptation to show a sign that He was Whom He believed He was. Christ would not yield to the temptation.

Christ, the Son of Man and the Son of God, gave the Pharisees **His Sign**, not as men wanted it to be then, and not as men are satisfied for it to be now: *Three days and three nights in the heart of the earth* (Matthew 12:40). Today, theologians and Bible scholars scrutinize **His Sign**, trying to find a way to justify their unbelief.

Objectively, one may see that **The Sign** proves His claim on divinity, for He was “in the earth” long enough for all to know He was really dead before He came back to life. Wasn’t that the point made regarding Lazarus; that he had been three days dead, and therefore, to open the tomb would reveal the stench of decomposing flesh? Yet, Christ did not “see corruption,” (Acts 2:31) in the grave.

For some, **His Sign** adds evidence that He was fulfilling prophecy. In addition to the prophecies regarding the manner and nature of His coming, His suffering, and His purpose, there is the prophecy of Daniel 9:27: *in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease*. He fulfilled other specification in literal as well as symbolic time. Why limit this prophetic statement to prophetic time alone? Knowing the literal accuracy of our Elohim, this statement is simply one more piece of evidence.

Returning to the Matthew 12 passage, let us take a closer look at another phrase often misunderstood: *“In the heart of the earth.”* Much disagreement may be found between commentaries on this phrase. Since it appears nowhere else in Scripture, scholars have tied the phrase in knots over whether it could mean “in the core of the earth’s sphere” (literally), or whether it might refer to some metaphysical condition in Christ’s experience.

Those, not wanting to accept the three-literal-days-and-three-literal-nights-in-the-grave construct, argue that the phrase is really an idiom meaning “under the control of sinful men.” Since there is no other place in the Bible where something is “in the heart of the earth,” we must guard against molding the meaning to suit the doctrines of men. Thereby has come the teaching that the three days and nights began when Judas sold Christ to the Sanhedrin, or that the time clock started when Jesus began to suffer in the Garden of Gethsemane, or when He was brought into Pilate’s Court, etcetera.

It is herein recommend that the words in the phrase be taken to mean the composite of the individual parts. Therefore, we will next look at the individual parts of this phrase “in the heart of the earth.” In this manner the Bible will explain the text clearly. Here is what this word study reveals:

The word “earth” is #1093 in Strong’s Concordance, and means (188 times) “earth, world, country, region, land, ground, soil;” forty-two times it means a specific land, and eighteen times it means “country.” Only two times does the word “earth” mean “earthly.” Thus, of two-hundred-and-fifty usages of the word for “earth” in the New Testament, this word, *ge*, means a physical location on or in this world in one-hundred and forty-eight of them.

Two references use the word to mean “earthly” or “worldly.” Colossians 3:2 refers to earthly things in this life, and John 3:31 translates the Greek word, *ge*, to mean “of the earth,” or “of worldly things.” It would not appear that either of these texts have anything to do with the use of “earth” as a place or condition in death, or apply to anything associated with the context of Christ’s **sign**. That leaves us with two-hundred-and-forty-eight passages in which “earth” is speaking of **the ground**.

A secondary factor perhaps, is the reality that this earth is polluted throughout. It is polluting the universe with its sin-laden aura. Christ came to reclaim and recreate this ball of physical chemistry flying in space. The importance of this redemption was typified by the Jubilees. We must not think so egotistically as to disregard the cancer in the whole organism – Earth. The Son of God came to redeem the WORLD- John 3:16. According to Strong’s #2889, “world” in the above well-known text includes the planet:

“That which pertains to space and not time. The sum total of the material universe, the beauty in it; the sum total of the persons living in the world.”

Next, consider the word *kardia*, #2588 in Strong’s, translated “heart.” It has more than one meaning in Scripture, as is also true of its modern usage. “Heart” may have a figurative meaning, as in Matthew 5:8 where we read of the blessedness of the pure in “heart.” In this passage the “heart” is the “vital part” or “seat of thought and emotion.”

The same word, *kardia*, may mean “the seat of intelligence,” as in Matthew 13:15 and John 12:40. But, in Matthew 12:40, the word *kardia*, refers to “the middle or central part,” with cross references to Ezekiel 27:4 [*Thy borders are in the midst of the seas*], and to Jonah 2:3 [*Thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas...*], according to Zodhiates, Complete Word Studies of the New Testament. No precise latitude and longitude is intended here; only the idea of being “**buried within**” is clearly the intent.

Thus, we may prevent the knotting of the thread of truth by recognizing the composite of each revealed part. “In the heart of the earth,” would simply mean “in the **midst** of the **ground**.” In other words, which a child can understand, like Jonah was swallowed up by a great sea creature, and remained there for three days and three nights, so Christ would be swallowed up in the ground (the grave) and remain there for three days and three nights. That was **The Sign** given by the Son of God.

It has been argued by some theologians that the sign of Jonah must be counted from the time he got on the ship to flee from the command of Yahweh. Many knots are tied in what was given as a simple analogy, in an effort by critics to escape the time element as the central focus in **The Sign**. Notice how misleading is this line of reasoning:

Jonah’s Experience	Christ’s Experience
1. He fled from obedience. (1:10)	1. Did Christ flee from obedience?
2. He hid from responsibility (1:5)	2. Did He hide from responsibility?
3. He tried to sleep through his crises (1:5)	3. Did He try to sleep through His crises?
4. The mariners cast lots to determine his guilt (1:7)	4. Did heavenly “mariners” cast lots to determine who would bear the guilt?
5. Jonah cried from inside the creature to be delivered (2:2, 7)	5. Did Christ cry from His tomb to be delivered?
6. He was brought up from “corruption” [the pit] (2:6)	6. Did Christ experience “corruption”? See Acts 2:27, 31; Matt. 11:23
7. He was inside the sea creature three days and three nights (1:7)	7. Was Christ buried for three days and three nights?

As one may see, the analogy does not follow Jonah’s experience, except in the length of time. That was **The Sign**. *As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale...*(Matthew 12:40). Some may contend that Christ cried from Gethsemane to

be delivered; therefore, Gethsemane begins the three nights of the Sign. But, was He already “in the heart of the earth” when He left the Last Super table? Jonah, in the analogy, prayed for deliverance after he was “in trouble.” Christ prayed for an escape, or strength to endure, BEFORE entering His trial. Note all the evidence before coming to such a conclusion.

- Christ did not flee obedience as did Jonah. No! Yet, some will suggest that the timeline for Christ’s Sign begins before His burial. What happened in the Garden of Gethsemane can have nothing to do with Christ’s Sign. To say that the Garden experience was part of The Sign is saying that the Jonah experience before his “burial” in the sea is a type of Christ’s experience before His burial in the earth. There is no parallel here! It has already been shown that the only elements Christ had in common with Jonah was the **length of time and no decay of flesh.**
- Christ did not hide from responsibility, as did Jonah. Never!
- Christ did not try to sleep through His time of “storm.” No! He prayed, ever alert to the wiles of His foe.
- The Saviour was not selected among choices by the casting of lots! Never!
- No! No! No! The only parallel in the analogy is escaping the corruption of Hell while buried **for three days and three nights.** Nothing more!

It is biased exegesis to apply the “*in the heart of the earth*” phrase of **The Sign** to anything that cannot be substantiated by the “**As Jonah...**” **If there is no parallel, it cannot be part of The Sign.** The Bible does explain itself clearly to those who are willing to believe it. Only those who are willing to align their beliefs with the Word of God will “know of the doctrine,” John 7:17.

Three Views in Conflict

Chapter 3

Now, let us look at each of the three views that have been offered to explain the events typified by the spring festivals. Most of the confusion relating to the crucifixion/resurrection can be traced to the way a Jewish person reckons time, as compared to the Roman practice. However, some of the “knottiness” in the conflicting interpretations suggested, come from a difference in viewpoint over the prepositions that precede the time element in each of the four Gospels. We will first overview the three viewpoints; then, we will examine these prepositional phrases (Chapter 4), comparing them and examining their contexts. Here are the three constructs offered by modern theologians:

Friday Crucifixion/ Early Sunday morning Resurrection.

This is the traditional view held by the majority of Christians today. It focuses on the following points:

- Christ died on a preparation day, Mark 15:42.
- The “third day” (Matthew 16:21) requirement is met, if the days are counted inclusively. The three-night-specification is not met.

Thursday Crucifixion/Early Sunday morning Resurrection.

- It fits the “third day” requirement, if the days are counted exclusively; Thursday is counted through Saturday night.
- It makes Friday a Sabbath, putting two Sabbaths together.

Wednesday Crucifixion/Sabbath sundown Resurrection.

- It fulfills the “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40).
- It fits the “after three days” (Matthew 27:63), if this expression is referring to 24-hour periods.
- It allows for the purchase and preparation of spices between two holy Sabbath days (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:27).
- It coincides with the “midst of the week” (Daniel 9:27), when sacrifices and oblations would cease, if this phrase has a literal as well as figurative application.

Only one of these models can be right. This treatise will show that the latter construct offers the most biblical evidence when the Bible is allowed to explain itself.

First, let us note the confusion caused by two opposing reckonings of time. While the Jewish day started at sunset, the Roman day began at midnight. During the time of Christ, the Jews adopted some of the Roman practices while maintaining their Mosaic reckoning

for New Moons and Sabbaths. Thus, when they said something happened at the sixth hour, it was the sixth hour after sunrise, not 6 AM, as we would reckon time.

A Roman “day,” however, started at midnight, which we have adopted in the Western World. When a Roman, or someone thinking as a Roman, would speak of something happening at the sixth hour, it was the sixth hour after midnight, or 6 AM.



Most scholars agree that John wrote his gospel in the second half of the first century. He often used Greek terms in his writing, even to the point of interpreting Hebrew concepts into Greek terminology. For this reason, we find a discrepancy between John’s record (John 19:14) and Mark’s account (Mark 15:25.) These may be harmonized by understanding the two different systems of keeping time.

According to Mark, the crucifixion took place “the third hour.” In Hebrew reckoning, this would mean 9 AM in our time. John, on the other hand, who wrote his gospel from Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia, for the Gentiles to understand, says it was “about the sixth hour” when Christ was condemned to death. The difference lies in the probability that John was thinking in Roman time which starts at midnight, and thus the death sentence was pronounced at 6 AM. It could have easily taken three hours from the death pronouncement to the raising of His body on the cross.

Next, consider the law regarding the Passover as recorded in Exodus 12:3-6:

“...on the 10th day of this month [Nisan, March or April] each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household... The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight” (NIV) Other versions say “between the evenings.”

It should be here noted that the daylight part of the Jewish day was divided into two parts: from sunrise to noon was considered the “morning” part of the day; whereas, from noon to sunset was considered the evening part of the day, and was, therefore when Scripture indicated the lamb was to be offered. “Between the evenings” meant between noon and sunset, according to *Gesenius’ Hebrew Lexicon of the Old Testament*:

“evening... in the phrase “between the two evenings” Ex. 16:12; 30:8; used as marking the space of time during which the Paschal lamb was slain, Ex. 12:6; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3; and the evening sacrifice was offered, Ex. 29:39, 41; Num. 28:4; i.e., according to the opinion of the Karaites and Samaritans (which is favored by the words of Deut. 16:6), the time between sunset and

deep twilight. The Pharisees, however, and the Rabbinists considered the time when the sun began to *descend* [similar to an Arabian word which means ‘little evening’ for when it begins to draw toward evening] to be called the first evening and the second evening to be the real sunset.”

Thus, we may conclude that the Gospels are in harmony on this point, after all, for the time between when the sun began to descend (early afternoon) and sunset (the 9th hour according to Jewish time), was the same as 3:00 PM Roman time.

This is further corroborated by the *Mishnah* in *Tractate Pesahim* (Danby, page 144), where we read that the Passover lamb was to be killed “*Bain ehrev*”...”between the evenings in its appointed time. Exodus 12:6 is explained by Art Scroll, in *The Chumash* (page 351), as “The entire congregation of the assembly of Israel shall slaughter it in the afternoon.” Josephus further corroborates the time of day of the sacrifices during a Passover feast in his *Wars of the Jews*, Chapter IX: “So these high priests, upon the coming of their feast, which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour to the eleventh [3-5 PM]...”

Christ, our Antitypical Lamb, must match the type in both time and event. As the lamb was selected and set apart on the 10th of Nisan, so Christ made His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem at the very time citizens were lined up for the “parade” of the selected lamb in its route to the Temple courtyard. There it would be examined for four days. When type met antitype, Hosannas rang through the streets of Jerusalem as the Lamb of God, the King of Kings, came through the gate. All this was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, exactly as prophesied by the prophet Zechariah:



Rejoice greatly. O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” Zech. 9:9

Some have been concerned that Christ did not keep the right day for Passover Himself, since He was Himself the Passover Lamb. Nor did He follow the Old Testament injunction to gather with one’s own household, offering a lamb per family. It should be noted, therefore, that His family had become those who believed and followed His teachings. Is it not the same today?

Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. Matthew 12:38-50

We are told that, at the time of Christ, there were tens of thousands of lambs being slaughtered on the 14th of Nisan in Jerusalem. Therefore, the priests allowed the people a window of “preparation” for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as Passover was the preparation for that celebrated week. Christ celebrated the Passover on the eve of the 13th, twenty-four hours earlier than the historical type. His own death would match that symbolic act exactly in both time and event.

On the fourteenth day of the first month [Nisan] the Lord’s Passover is to be held. On the fifteenth day of this month there is to be a festival; for seven days eat bread made without yeast (Feast of Unleavened Bread). On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work (Num. 28:16-18, NIV) See also Leviticus 23:5-8.

Another issue that must be understood in order to clear up the confusion, which has led to differing timelines for the crucifixion/resurrection events, is the purpose of the days at the beginning of the week of Unleavened Bread. As mentioned earlier, the lamb was set apart on the 10th of Nisan (Abib). It was selected and brought from Bethlehem where the lamb had been bred and nurtured for this purpose. Led through the streets of Jerusalem to the temple, it was then kept for observation until the 14th of Nisan (Abib), the Passover Day.

The Passover itself was not a holy day. It was called a “preparation day,” for it was the day the house was cleansed of all leaven, and the Passover lamb was prepared for the evening meal. The whole day’s events commemorated deliverance: historically, deliverance from Egypt, and, symbolically, deliverance from sin. Regardless of the day of the week on which the 14th of Nisan fell that year*, it would be regarded as “Preparation Day” for the annual sabbath coming the next day. The first day of the Week of Unleavened Bread was a annual Sabbath, a High Sabbath. If the 14th of Nisan (Passover) fell on the seventh day of the week, the weekly preparation day (Friday) served as preparation time for both the weekly and the annual sabbath, bringing the Passover meal an evening earlier.

If Thursday had been Passover-Crucifixion-Day, then Friday would have been an annual sabbath, a high day, as all first and last days of a week-long festival were kept. With two Sabbaths back-to-back, there would have been no time to buy spices and prepare them after the crucifixion, yet before the resurrection, as specified in the narrative.

Furthermore, a Friday-Crucifixion sequence offers no better explanation. With the list of activities that needed to fit into three days (and at least one of those days a Sabbath), one may soon realize the impossibility of cramming these activities into a small fragment of Friday, followed by the Holy Sabbath Day, followed by the dark part of the first day of the week when the tomb was found empty! Impossible!

Let us then follow the record of events as we consider the possibilities and probabilities in this constricted time frame. Without telephones, automobiles, or computers, we now take for granted to speed travel and communication, it would be virtually impossible to accomplish so much in so little time.

Certainly, we would not suppose that Joseph of Arimathea, who went secretly to Pilate to beg for the body of Christ, did so during the trial. The followers of Christ were completely overcome with horror that the One who had, just a few days before, ridden into Jerusalem amid shouts of “Hosanna to the son of David!” was now facing torture and death. They could not be shopping and arranging connections for smooth and expedient transitions during the trial!

Furthermore, Christ’s followers had seen Him heal the sick and raise the dead. Surely, had we been there, we would have hoped with them that He would come down from the cross in power and glory. His friends must have clung to that prayer while He hung there dying. Sometime after He was placed on the cross, and when all hope for the Glorious Kingdom had perished in the hearts of His faithful friends, Joseph of Arimathea sneaked into Pilate’s palace for a quick, private interview. He wanted permission to take the body of Yeshua and give it a proper burial. This took time to elbow his way through throngs of people, make contacts, get papers, and walk back up Golgotha. Remember, there were no phones, no e-mail, no fax machines, no rapid transit through the crowded city streets.

This was Friday afternoon (according to the traditional view) and it was getting late when “Plan B for Burial” went into the mental machinery. Everyone in Jerusalem knew the urgency of the situation. Deuteronomy 21:22, 23 was now in play:



And if a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God); that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

In addition to the above statute, there would have been a Sabbath day approaching, and all issues, regardless of complexity, must be resolved before the Sabbath began.

Joseph finally gained an audience with Pilate (I can’t imagine that Pilate wanted to see anyone after his wife’s dream and rebuke, plus his own growing inner torment!). How much time must that have taken? One hour? More? Then he bought new linen after Christ had expired (Mark 15:44, 46) and met Nicodemus, who accompanied him up Golgotha to take down the body. Stores close in all Jewish communities at least one hour before sundown. He must have hailed a shopkeeper as the “Closed” sign was being placed in the window.

Joseph and Nicodemus arrived at Golgotha just as the centurion ordered the soldiers to hasten the death of the three on the stakes. Joseph had known The Lamb of God was already dead. The sun was going down on that Preparation Day; the Sabbath would soon begin.

The body was prepared in a hurry. The women volunteered to do a better job later. Certainly, the sun must have been lingering on the edge of the distant hills when they laid the body in Joseph's new tomb. Fortunately, the tomb was not far from the crucifixion site. The sad followers of Christ kept that Sabbath. So, when could the women **buy the spices**, recorded by Mark (16:1-2) as happening **after** the Sabbath was passed? In the Friday-to-Sunday model, there is no time to do it! Nor in the Thursday-Crucifixion Model is there any time for the purchase and preparations, for Friday would have been the annual Sabbath, the High Sabbath and first day of Unleavened Bread, with the seventh-day Sabbath following it.

Stores were never opened on the seventh-day Sabbath, not in Jerusalem! "When the sabbath was passed," could not refer to the seventh-day Sabbath, moreover, for there were no shops opened after the Sabbath sun went down. Not until sometime after daylight the next day would the shops be opened for business. There had to be a business day between Sabbaths. The Friday-to-Sunday theory and the Thursday-to-Sunday theory, allow no time for shopping and preparing spices.

Another issue that makes the Friday-to-Sunday model unreasonable is the fact that the next day after the crucifixion the priests went to Pilate with the request to secure the tomb through the third day (Matthew 27:62-63). The next day after Friday is Sabbath. How reasonable is it to believe that the priests approached Pilate on the Sabbath for a three-day guard at the tomb, if day-one is in the past, and day-two is half over? The last half of "day-two" is going to be the first day of the guard. They all had heard about **The Sign**: Three days and three nights, just like Jonah. It seems illogical, knowing they **knew The Sign**, to think that the priests would ask for the full three days guard duty when half of the time has already passed. It was because of **The Sign** that the priests were worried in the first place! Having come to the Sabbath (in this scenario), they would have asked for 1 ½ days of service, or, at best, two days of guard duty. They knew the count had to begin with the Messiah's entry into the tomb. The tomb is what they were to guard.



Finally, although less important perhaps, it seems misleading, certainly inaccurate, to contend that any few minutes of a day can be counted as "the day." We estimate to the nearest whole number. Even if our reasoning differs from Eastern thought, The Son of God would not give a prophecy of Himself, which could not be deciphered in other cultures. Furthermore, we must admit that three nights are simply not there, not even in a fraction.

It appears to be the weakness of this Friday/Sunday Model that has led some to turn to other explanations, trying to extend the time by starting the clock before the "Temple was destroyed," as Jesus once referred to His death. This is why the parallels have been attempted with Jonah's experience, rather than to accept the fact that the **time element** was what the Saviour had in common with Jonah.

Even the second model, the Thursday Crucifixion/Sunday Resurrection Model, has more merit than the popular, traditional view. At least, in this scenario, we may calculate three nights – IF one figures by Gregorian-Roman reckoning, and has Christ arising from the Tomb on Sunday morning. Of course, those suppositions are not substantiated in Scripture. This theory also falls short when checked against Hebrew reckoning and other criterion found in the four Gospel stories. This theory simply lacks necessary support in Scripture.

Only the Wednesday Crucifixion Model allows time to do all that is recorded as having been done. Only the Wednesday Crucifixion Model respects the religious culture of the Jews, without misleading students of other cultures. Only this Model fits all specifications given by the Bible writers, as shown by the following chart:

Day Zero Night-Day	Day One Night-Day	Day Two Night-Day	Day Three Night-Day
Preparation Day Passover	Feast of Unleavened Bread	Friday Preparation Day	The Weekly Sabbath
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Preparations were made for the Passover meal in the evening. *Crucifixion took place in the afternoon. *Veil rent from top to bottom when Christ died. *An earthquake rattles everyone's nerves. *Joseph of Arimethea asked for the body of Christ. *He with Nicodemus prepared the body. *Christ's burial at or near sundown. *Rolled a stone over the tomb entrance. *The women followed and watched all that happened. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *First day of Unleavened Bread was a High Sabbath. *Everyone rested to observe the festival. *No shops could be opened for business. *Priests fearing the people, appealed to Pilate to secure the tomb through the third day. *Seal and guard set at the tomb. *First 24-hours in the tomb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stores open. *Women buy and prepare the spices. *Preparation for the weekly Sabbath day is also completed. *Second day of Pilate's guards watching over the tomb. *Second 24-hours in the tomb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Christ in the tomb for the third 24-hour period ending at sundown. *Resurrection at sundown. *Earthquake after shocks. Graves previously opened, then release their enlivened saints. *These risen saints went into the city. *Christ came from the tomb exactly 72 hours after being placed in the tomb.

Most importantly, only the Wednesday Crucifixion Model follows all specifications, including Christ's own prophecy, **His Sign**. Said the Son of God to His disciples:

*Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words will not pass away.
Mark 13:31 (NAS)*

Does this sequence match the type? Yes! In every way! Notice:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Day 0-1 Wednesday | Killed the Passover Lamb
Ate the Passover meal in the evening
<i>Christ crucified at the time of the sacrifice
"Eaten" by the earth in the evening</i> |
| Day 1-2 Thursday | First day of Unleavened Bread – a Sabbath
<i>Women rested
All stores closed</i> |
| Day 2-3 Friday | Second day of Unleavened Bread – not a Sabbath
<i>Women bought their spices and prepared them
Preparation for the weekly Sabbath</i> |
| Day 3 Sabbath | Third day of Unleavened Bread and the 7 th day Sabbath
<i>All Jerusalem rested
Jesus came from the tomb near the end of this
24-hour period; probably the same
hour he had been buried.</i> |
| Day 4: Sunday | Wave sheaf at 9:00 a.m. (Lev. 23:10; time – Jewish tradition) Always waved on the day after the weekly Sabbath. It was begun after Israel entered Canaan and planted fields for harvest. It had not been celebrated in the wilderness. There they had had no harvest. |

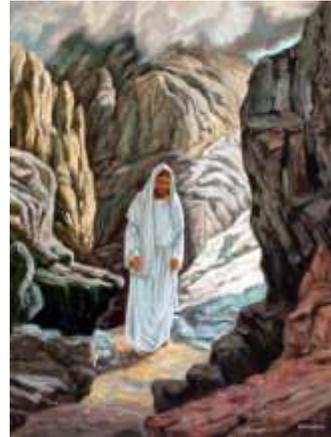
*Note from page 15: According to the U. S. Naval Observatory records, Passover was Wednesday, April 28, if in the year 28:CE, and Wednesday, April 25, if in the year 31 CE
<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/SpringPhenom.html>

The Prepositional Arguments

Chapter 4

Critics argue, “What about the fact that one Gospel writer says, “**in** three days,” another, **after** three days”? How can anyone find accuracy in that disparity? Let’s look next at each of the passages that contain these prepositional phrases. The Bible reminds us to study the Scriptures, “*here a little; there a little (Isaiah 28:10)* allowing each Bible writer, and each record of the account, to add some detail for the complete picture. The verse-by-verse synopsis of each of the four Gospels is found in Appendix 2, Page 90.

We will next examine the prepositional arguments used by critics to cast doubt on **His Sign**, as if Christ didn’t mean exactly what He had **prophesied** of Himself. If we can’t trust His own prophecy to be accurate, whose can we trust?! His enemies quoted Him as saying, “Destroy this temple and **in** three days I will build it again” Matthew 26:61, and Mark 15:29. In the next chapter of Matthew, His enemies are quoted as saying, “**after** three days (27:63). What Christ actually said is recorded in the Gospel of John when, after Jesus had cleansed the Temple the first time, the Jews sought a sign from Him to prove His authority.



*Jesus answered and said unto them,
Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up, John 2:19.*

The question of contention is: When was His body-Temple **destroyed**? It cannot be construed that His “Temple” was destroyed while He prayed in Gethsemane, or when the soldiers took Him away! Certainly, we must be honest enough to admit that His body Temple (John 2:21) was not destroyed when Judas betrayed His Lord to the Pharisees; nor was His body-Temple destroyed by the mockery of a trial, nor by the abuse and torture He endured. No! His body-Temple was not destroyed until He was dead. From this state, He promised to “raise it up” **in** three days.

By the context of John 2:19, we may see that the meaning of “**IN three days**” is in reference to “duration.” How long will it take? This is clearly the intent as indicated by the response of the Jews in verse 20.

*Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building,
and wilt thou rear it up in three days?*

So, Yeshua would be “raised up” in reference to the duration of three days. When would the time start? When His body-Temple had been destroyed. With this reasoning, Passover sundown to the first day of Unleavened Bread’s sundown would be one day. Arriving at the next day’s sundown would complete the second day, etc.

The Friday-to-Sunday Model does not meet this criterion because He wasn't in the tomb even until Sunday sundown, which would have equaled only two twenty-four-hour days. In fact, He wasn't in the tomb even at Sunday's sunrise! In this Model, Christ was only in the tomb **two** days and nights. The only model that fits the specifics is the Wednesday-Crucifixion Model. Christ entered the sepulcher at sundown Wednesday and arose from the tomb at sundown Sabbath – exactly in duration, “in three days.”

We will next consider each text that indicates that Christ would rise “the third day.” What will be crucial is the starting point for counting to the third day. Let us take a closer look at the ten passages that use the phrase, “the third day” in reference to the resurrection.

“the third day” Texts	What is the Starting Point?
<p>Matt. 17:23 ...and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again.</p>	<p>Is the starting point when they have killed him, or when they are killing him? The starting point is, therefore, debatable.</p>
<p>Matt. 20: 19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.</p>	<p>Some want to count the three days from the delivering up to be mocked. Will that bring agreement between the four Gospel writers? No. Even if crucifixion day is Day-One, as many believe, one cannot reach three days from Friday, when one realized Christ was not in the tomb on any part of Sunday, as will be revealed by this study. The starting point in this text is unclear.</p>
<p>Mark 9:31 The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.</p>	<p>From this text we have a clear starting point: After he is killed. The sundown starts the next day, so we may assuredly determine that this text is counting the days from the beginning of the day in the evening after the crucifixion.</p>
<p>Mark 10:34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill Him: and the third day he shall rise again.</p>	<p>No internal clue is given in this scripture. Are we to count from the time His enemies begin to scourge Him? Or, when they have finished killing Him? The starting point is unclear. It could be either.</p>
<p>Luke 9:22 The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and</p>	<p>Is He raised the third day after starting to suffer? Or, after being slain? If after being slain, is the count inclusive or</p>

The Third Day Texts, continued	What is the Starting Point?
<p>scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.</p>	<p>exclusive of the day on which He was slain? To be fair, we must again assume that the starting point is unclear.</p>
<p>Luke 18:31-33 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on. And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.</p>	<p>Will we count to the third day after Christ entered Jerusalem? Will we count to the third day after He fulfills the prophecies (Ps. 22:20) concerning Him? Or, will we start the count when He is delivered to the Gentiles? Or, after He is put to death? Because the Scripture is not specific enough to assuage controversy, we must include this text with those that are indecisive.</p>
<p>Luke 24:7 The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.</p>	<p>Here appears a sequence of events: *Be delivered *Be crucified *Rise again</p> <p>With that understood, we may assume that the count begins <u>after</u> He is crucified. Only in that event can one logically conclude there is a point from which to “rise again.” But, some argue otherwise, so we will leave this Scripture in the indecisive column.</p>
<p>Luke 24:21 (The disciples on the road to Emmaus speaking) But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, today is the third day <u>since</u> these things were <u>done</u>.</p>	<p>Here we have a clear starting point from the word SINCE. After Messiah had been crucified, buried, and the stone rolled in front of the doorway; after everyone went home, because everything was done – Then, the countdown to the third day. “Since,” excludes the crucifixion day in the count.</p>
<p>Luke 24:45, 46 Then opened he their understanding... Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead,(speaking to His disciples</p>	<p>The third day from the beginning of His suffering? Or, the third day from the end of His suffering? This passage allows argument; it is not specific enough.</p>

The Third Day Texts, continued in hiding).	Starting Point
<p>Acts 10:39, 40 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly...</p>	<p>The text is again unclear in its intent: The third day after He had been hanged on a tree, exclusive of the crucifixion day? Or, inclusive of the crucifixion day? -Such a “knotty” problem.</p>
<p>1 Cor. 15:3, 4 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures (Isa. 53:10).</p>	<p>This text is clearly referring to the third day after being buried.</p>

When most texts are ambiguous, while a few texts are clear, should not the clearly stated Scriptures set the guidelines for interpreting the ambiguous ones? As I understand it, that is what is meant by “*line upon line, here a little, there a little,*” Isaiah 28:10, 13.

Harmonizing the Evidence: The Third Day Dilemma

Ambiguous Texts:	Clear Texts
<p>Matt. 17:23 The third day He shall rise again.</p>	<p>Mark 9:31 And after he is killed, He shall rise again the third day.</p>
<p>Matt. 20:19 The third day He shall rise again.</p>	<p>Luke 9:22 The text seems to suggest that He will be raised the third day after being killed.</p>
<p>Mark 10:34 Shall kill him, and the third day He shall rise again.</p>	<p>Luke 24:21 Today is the third day since these things were done.</p>
<p>Mark 19:38 The third day He shall rise again.</p>	<p>1 Cor.15:3, 4 He was buried and rose again the third day.</p>
<p>Luke 18:31-33 The third day He shall rise again..</p>	<p>Matt.12:39, 40 Three days plus three nights in the heart of the earth.</p>
<p>Luke 24:45-46 He will rise from the dead the third day.</p> <p>Acts 10:39, 40 Whom God raised up the third day.</p>	

Two passages use the preposition, “**after**,” to qualify the time: Matthew 27:63, and Mark 8:31. His enemies are reporting their memory of what they have directly or indirectly heard: *After three days I will rise again.* The preposition, “after,” refers to prior completion. Translated to simple English, the statement would read: “When three days have been completed, I will rise again.” No construct meets this specification other than the Wednesday-Crucifixion Model. Three twenty-four-hour-days were exactly completed when the angel rolled back the stone and the risen Saviour stepped out of His prison-chamber. But then, our holy God always does things exactly and perfectly! That is His way!

*He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel
(Ps. 103:7). Let us seek to know His ways.*

In the Mark 8:31 reading, Christ began to teach His disciples that He must suffer, be rejected, and be killed, and after three days rise again. This listing is obviously in sequential order. Even if you reverse the first two (**be rejected and suffer**), one can clearly see that the rest of the list must remain in the order sequenced. To begin the three days when He would suffer, or be rejected, would place this Scripture in opposition to the others we have read, and disregard the chronological order intended in the verse.

The Scriptures must be interpreted so as to bring harmony between the various writers. Thus, the beginning time for counting the three days must correspond to the same beginning point as in Mark 8:31 and Matthew 27:63 which clearly state that the three days **follow** the “being killed.” Consequently, the three days occur between the killing and the rising in Mark 8:31.

Finally, we will look at the preposition “**within**.” Mark 14:58, although similar to the Matthew 26:61; 27:63, and Mark 15:29 setting and statement, is, here again, spoken by Christ’s enemies. The Bible simply records the testimony of the false witnesses. Therefore, their testimony is not to be taken as a standard for accuracy. Recognize that this statement recorded by Mark (14:58) must be regarded as an estimation, or approximation. The false witnesses were more interested in discrediting Christ’s assertion that He would build another temple made without hands, than in accurately quoting His prophetic words.

We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands [emphasis supplied].

Actually, little about their testimony was true, as to their use of His words. He hadn’t said He would destroy their Temple in three days, but they deliberately misconstrued His words. Knowing their testimony was meant to make a false report believable, we are obligated to regard this Scripture for what it is: A reporting of an event, rather than a stating of a truism. Therefore, it must not be allowed to influence our conclusions.

In summary then, we must accept the directly quoted words of the Saviour as of the highest authority. The disciples’ inspired memories of their conversations with Him must be understood to harmonize with Christ’s words. The words of His enemies, on the other

hand, must be regarded for their historical importance to the storyline, but must not be given canonical, doctrinal value.

A knotty problem? Anytime error has been established by men and believed for centuries, it becomes a difficult problem to rectify.

A story, which acknowledges this fact, is told about a noted Sabbath-keeping evangelist. When he was starting out in evangelism as a zealous young preacher, he began visiting Sunday-keeping churches for their worship services. He would fill out an interest card, return home after the service, and wait. In this manner, he would expect a phone call during the week by the pastor to set up the requested visit. As the story goes, a Baptist preacher called on him in response to such a card left in the offering plate.

“I don’t understand what your interest is in my church,” said the minister, coming directly to the point. “You indicated on the card that you are a seventh-day Sabbath-keeping minister, and that you are not looking for a new church family; so, are you visiting my church to sheep-steal? And, why have you requested a visit from me?” The Baptist minister questioned.

“I have just one question to ask you,” explained the evangelist: “Why do you keep Sunday when you claim to follow the Bible and the Bible alone? I picked up this literature in your church foyer,” he continued, showing the preacher the booklet containing the statement of Baptist beliefs. “It says you believe in the Bible and the Bible alone as a basis for your faith. Then, why do you keep Sunday when you know it has no foundation in Scripture?”

Surprised by the boldness of the young evangelist, the embarrassed Baptist preacher excused the “misunderstanding.” “Well,” he began, “we Baptists also honor the teachings of our forefathers. They kept Sunday.”

The evangelist had prepared for this moment. A Bible study and a history lesson followed. In the end, the minister realized that his beliefs were more Catholic than he had formerly recognized. Not long after that visit, it was learned that the Baptist minister, whose eyes had been opened that day to his own real foundation of belief, left the Baptist Church to become a Catholic priest. He recognized that his beliefs were based more on tradition than on Scripture, but he saw no reason to adjust to a Bible-based foundation. At least he was honest.

What is the foundation of your belief, dear Reader? Is it the Bible and the Bible alone, or does the teachings of your forefathers interpret the Scriptures for you?

Someone has aptly said, “False opinions are like false money, struck first of all by guilty men, and thereafter circulated by honest people who perpetuate the crime without knowing what they are doing.”

When we are unbiased and eager to know what is the truth, we shall search for it, as for hidden treasure, with all our hearts.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart, Jeremiah 29:13.

[Speaking of wisdom] if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God, Prov. 2:4, 5.

Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little, Isa. 28:9, 10.

Toward the Dawn

Chapter 5

We have observed days and nights changing at midnight for all of our lives. It is difficult, for some, impossible, to think in any other reference. To the Hebrew mind, however, a day was made up of “evening and morning,” (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13) not morning, noon, and night, as is now regarded in the progression of a day.



The devout Jews in the first century began their days at sunset. They followed the lunisolar calendar in which the first day of a new month began with the sighting of a new crescent moon just after sunset. Calendar modifications had been made since the days of Jeroboam [“Calendar Reform under Jeroboam,” in King, Cult, and Calendar in Ancient Israel, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1986.] None of the calendar changes altered the evening-morning reckoning, however. The Jews in Christ’s day kept Sabbaths from sundown to sundown, just as they do today.

From evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbaths, Leviticus 23:32.

The word “dawn” in the phrase, “*as it began to **dawn** toward the first day of the week*,” is found in only two places: Matthew 28:1 and Luke 23:54. The Greek word usage in each of these texts is slightly different from each other. The number in Strong’s Concordance for “dawn” is #2020. Dr. Spiros Zodhiates in The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament, has this to say about the meaning of the word for “dawn”:

Upon or besides, denoting accession, coming or drawing toward, and to shine. In Luke 23:54 the verb has the meaning to draw near, as the Jewish Sabbath which began in the evening (Lev. 23:32 [cf. John 19:31 with Deut 21:22, 23]) To dawn as the daylight, to grow toward daylight (Matt. 28:1). In the evening of the Sabbath when the Jewish day was drawing on towards the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went (or better, set out). It does not appear that they actually came at this time to visit the sepulcher, perhaps being delayed by the great earthquake (Matt. 28:2) which preceded our Lord’s resurrection (page 644).

Here, by inference, this scholar and authority on several languages suggests that Mary Magdalene and other women went to the tomb as soon as the sun went down that Sabbath. Although this theologian admits that the “dawn” refers to **the approach of a new day**, in order to preserve the traditional Easter Sunday resurrection, he interrupts Mary’s trek to the sepulcher with the great earthquake. He believes it must have delayed her arrival until the daylight was approaching. This would harmonize the Matthew 28:1 reference to “dawn” with traditional beliefs of a pre-sunrise resurrection.

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher. (Matthew. 28:1)

In this scenario, Mary, and perhaps the other women, would have been out all night. They would have left their houses as soon as the sun went down, but mysteriously not arrive at the sepulcher until just before dawn of Sunday morning.

There are other possibilities for the time gap, however. Take a closer look at each of the two Scriptures carefully. Matthew 28:1, the first of the two, reads:

In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher.

The second text, Luke 23:54 reads:

And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

These two texts seem to be in agreement, although the translators have used different wording (“dawn” vs. “drew on”). Even though some of us do not read Greek or Hebrew, and are, therefore, dependent on interlinearies as we study, we can assuredly tell that the only two references to the word “dawn” in the Greek language use a word which has a slightly different ending from each other. We must trust that the reference books give an accurate rendering of this differentiation. Notice that the word “dawn” does not appear in Luke 23:54. Instead, in the English translation, *epiphosko*, has been rendered “drew on.” According to *The New Strong’s Complete Dictionary of Bible Words*, *epiphosko*, #2020, means “to begin to grow light, to begin to dawn, and draw on.” It comes from *epiphaino*, #2014, meaning “to become visible or known, to appear, give light.”

It is clear, then, that *epiphosko*, like many English words, has more than one meaning:

- 1) To approach, or draw on, as when the sun goes down.
- 2) To begin to show light, as in the early morning.

Here are all of the entries in the Strong’s Concordance for the word “Dawn”:

Matthew 28:1 – *In the end of the sabbath, as it began to **dawn toward** the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher. (Vs. 2) And, behold there was a great earthquake... [Dawn - #2020 - epiphosko]*

2 Peter 1:19 - *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the **day dawn**, and the day star arise in your hearts (Vs.*

20) *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. [Dawn - #1306 – diaugazo]*

Those are the only Scriptures where the word “dawn” is found in the English. These two texts above are clearly unrelated in meaning. Dawn, as used by Peter, means “to glimmer through, break through, or come to spiritual understanding.” Dawn, as written in Matthew 28, means “to begin, to draw on, or to shine forth, or approach.”

In Matthew 28:1, the time that could be spoken of as “**In the end** of the Sabbath,” would not be connected to “**As it began** to dawn toward...,” without recognizing the Jewish, and biblical, reckoning of the evening ending a day as the next day began. Indeed, the day always began at sundown. Only through this understanding may we prevent the text from speaking confusion. Certainly, we can see that it would be totally inaccurate to suppose that the Sabbath ended “**as**” the sun was coming up Sunday morning. We must conclude then, that Matthew 28:1 is referring to those few minutes as the sun is going down Sabbath evening, heralding the beginning of Sunday’s night (The evening and the morning was the first day, Genesis 1:5), reminding ourselves that a biblical day begin at sundown.

If we guard against preconceived notions, and recognize the influence of long cherished traditions, we will approach the Scriptures in simple, childlike trust. Thus, we will allow the Scriptures to say what they mean and mean what they say.

There is one more scripture which uses the word *epiphosko*, but it is not translated “dawn.” Instead, it is rendered “drew,” which is also accurate, since *epiphosko* means, “to begin, or to draw on.” That text is found in Luke 23:54, and reads:

And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. [drew - #2020, to begin, or begin to dawn toward].

So far, it should be clear to the reader what the Bible is saying: That the content of the resurrection Scriptures is focused on the sundown at the end of the seventh-day Sabbath. There likely followed a sleepless night of reminiscing, sorting, and solving; of confusion and challenging misconceived conclusions. Thereby, all the biblical accounts may be harmonized.

With so few usages of the word *epiphosko*, in the New Testament, to give a full understanding of the implications and subtleness possibly hidden in the word “dawn,” we will next broaden our word study to include all suffixes. This means that we will next search for all the “dawns,” and “dawning’s.”

There are no “dawns,” listed in the concordance, but the word “dawning” reveals a list of texts that must be examined, just in case there could be important insights waiting to be discovered. The word “dawning” seems to be associated only with the “sunrise,” although four different Hebrew words are found in the concordance, covering a total of five occasions in the Old Testament.

“Drew,” the past tense of “Draw,” on the other hand, found only in the New Testament, has several uses and is translated from several different Greek words. Below one may note that the numbers on the right indicate the location of each Greek word for “drew,” to be found in a Strong’s Concordance. All of these references, except Revelation 12:4, carry the connotation of “**approaching**.” Since this is where the contention of skeptics lies, we will now focus on the New Testament use of the past tense of “draw,” the word “drew.”

Matt. 13:48	they <u>drew</u> to shore, and sat down	307
Matt. 21:1	And when they <u>drew</u> nigh to Jerusalem	1448
Mark 6:53	the land of Genesaret, and <u>drew</u> to the shore	4358
Luke 15:25	and as he came and <u>drew</u> nigh to the house,	1448
Acts 7:31	as he <u>drew</u> near to behold it, the voice of	4334
Acts 27:27	deemed that they <u>drew</u> near to some country;	4317
Rev. 12:4	And his tail <u>drew</u> the third of the stars	4951

One cannot say that the next day is “approaching,” if the “approaching” happened in the **morning** and the previous day ended at the **evening**, as we read in Matthew 28:1. There are eight or nine hours of nighttime between the evening and the morning. If one uses Bible reckoning, there will be no controversy, however. The approaching of one day is the same as the receding of the day before it. Thus, as Friday is receding into the dusk, Sabbath is approaching, dawning, drawing nigh. When the sun disappears over the horizon, Friday ends and Sabbath begins.

Some of us still follow the Bible reckoning today in regards to Sabbath observance. Why, then, is it such a mystery, such a knotty issue, to recognize that when the women had rested over the Sabbath day, they rushed to the sepulcher as soon as the sun went down? Is that not what you would have done if He was your dearest friend, and you were not ready to let go of the relationship? – Or, you had unfinished business which dominated your thoughts?

If the Sabbath ended at midnight –which it doesn’t -we would be right in assuming that the women went to the tomb sometime between one and five o’clock A.M, as is generally believed. But the Sabbath didn’t end at midnight; it ended at sundown. For this reason, skeptics squirm to keep from accepting the obvious. They assert that Jews were keeping the days from midnight to midnight under the Roman rule of the Julian calendar. This may sound like a plausible explanation by which to defend the Traditional Model, but it simply is not true.

In summary of what is important to recognize here, the word “dawn,” as used in the resurrection chapters developing our storyboard here, means “**approaching a new day**,” which we know happened at sundown; not daybreak.

Furthermore, as surprising as it may be, the term “first day of the week” is nowhere found in the Greek New Testament Scriptures, **at all!** Most of the New Testament, as we have it today, was translated from Greek, we are told. Because the tradition, set up by the Roman Church to honor Easter as the commemoration of the resurrection, had already been

established when the first Latin, German, and later, English translations were being written, we have the present reading of the Scriptures: “*as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,*” or “*on the first day of the week...early.*” This rendering illustrates the fact that, from the stoning of Stephen onward, true followers of Christ (of both Jews and Gentiles) were belittled, hated, and persecuted. Consequently, when judgment was required on the part of the early translators, the current hatred for the Jews influenced the word choices in the translating process. The above example is one of many instances.

Notice how The Interlinear Bible renders John 20:1. This is as directly translated as it is possible to be. Notice the reading:

*On the, And **first of [or after] the sabbaths**, Mary the Magdalene comes early, darkness yet being to the tomb, and sees the stone being removed from the tomb.*

If the reader is not certain what the above choppy, but direct, translation adds to the argument in this treatise, pick up a copy of *The Scriptures*, a Messianic translation, avowed to give the most literal and accurate English reading possible. Here is John 20:1 in that version:

And on the ^kfirst day of the week Miryam from Magdala came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.

Notice two points from that reading: First, the verb is more accurately rendered in the past tense. When Mary arrived at the tomb, she saw that the stone had already been removed from the tomb. Secondly, the letter “k” will catch your attention. So you read in the bottom margin below the verse: “First day of the week – See Explanatory Notes.” You then turn to the back of the Bible in search of a section called “Explanatory Notes.” There is indeed such a section. On page 1214, you will read the following explanation:

First Day of the week: The underlying Greek text is “*mia ton sabbaton,*” which when literally translated means “**one of the sabbath/s**”, but is traditionally rendered as “first day of the week.” The term “first day of the week” is literally “*prote’ hemera tis hebdomata*’ in Greek, but nowhere appears as such in the N.T.

The entry continues with an explanation of how the Bible translators borrowed a Semitic idiom [Elsewhere, I read it came from the Phoenicians.] in order to make the text say what established traditions demanded!

Study! Study! Study to show yourself approved unto Yahweh, a workman who needs not to be ashamed, who rightly discerns the word of truth (See 2 Timothy 2:15). What else has been tampered with to validate traditions? Scary thought!

What was just explained in The Scriptures, published by the Institute for Scripture Research (1998), is that the Greek phrase, translated “First day of the week,” literally

means “**one of the sabbath/s**” in Greek! This phrase, had it been placed in the verse, would be accurate, for the followers of Christ would have kept the first day of Unleavened Bread, a Sabbath, followed two days later by the seventh-day Sabbath, followed three days later by the last day of the week of Unleavened Bread, a third Sabbath, all within a week’s time. By allowing the pressure of tradition to bring into our Bibles a spurious mistranslation designed to justify tradition, we have allowed Sunday to be placed before the people as “one of the sabbaths,” according to the above reference.

Again, the Wednesday-to-Sabbath Model is the only explanation that fits the composite of all the Scriptures on the subject. Review the sequence of events that took place at Calvary for clear evidence of this. Note the following chart:

Matthew 27-28	Mark 15-16	Luke 23-24	John 19-20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Temple veil rent from top to bottom when Christ died. *An earthquake rent the rocks. *The centurion exclaimed that Jesus was the Son of God. *Women stood out of the way watching everything. *On Passover afternoon, Joseph of Arimethea begged of Pilate the body of Jesus. *Joseph placed the body in his own new tomb and rolled the stone over the door. *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary watched at the sepulcher. *This day was a preparation day. *The next day the chief priests and Pharisees asked Pilate to place a guard at the tomb so 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Temple veil torn. *No earthquake is mentioned. *The centurion exclaims that Jesus was the Son of God. *The women, including Salome, and the mother of Jesus, had come from Galilee; they watched all that happened. *Joseph, an honorable counselor, went boldly to Pilate for the body. *Joseph bought fine linen, took down the body, & wrapped it. *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary watched at the sepulcher. *No mention is made of the preparation day, or the guards at the tomb. *When the Sabbath was over, the Marys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Jesus cried out, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.” *No mention of an earthquake. *The centurion exclaimed that Jesus was a Righteous Man. *The people watching smote their breasts when Christ died. *The women watched everything. *Joseph took down the body, wrapped it, and placed it in a new tomb. *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary watched at the sepulcher. *This day was the preparation day. *The women went home, prepared spices, and rested on the Sabbath day. *No mention is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *No mention of the temple veil or an earthquake. He adds the details at the cross: casting lots, thief on the cross, and Mary put into John’s care. *John dwells on the fulfillment of prophecy in each event. *No mention is made of the women watching all. *It was the preparation for the Passover meal, so the Jews made haste to get the bodies down. *The next day was a sabbath. *No mention is made of securing the tomb, or of any earthquake. *No mention of meeting angels with messages to go tell the disciples.

<p>Matthew 27-28 that the disciples couldn't steal the body. *Pilate secured the tomb for three days. *At the end of the Sabbath the two Marys went to the sepulcher. *There was another earthquake. *Sleeping saints arise at the earthquake. *A mighty, dazzling angel rolled away the stone. *The angel sat atop the stone. *The guard fell as dead before the angel. *The angel sent the women to tell the other disciples. *They met Jesus on the way and fell at His feet and worshipped Him. *Jesus told them to tell the others to meet Him in Galilee.</p>	<p>Mark 15-16 and Salome bought spices, preparing to anoint the body. *The women came to the tomb at sunrise to anoint the body. *They found the stone rolled away, and wondered. No earthquake mentioned. *They found a young man sitting inside the tomb clothed in a long white robe; they were afraid. *No mention of the guards being overcome by the brightness of the angel. *The angel sent the women to tell the disciples & Peter. *The angel had said to meet Jesus in Galilee. *The narrative moves to the walk in the country.</p>	<p>Luke 23-24 made of a guard at the tomb. *Very early on the first day of the week the women returned to the tomb bringing their spices. *They found the tomb empty. Then two men in shining garments appeared and told them that Christ had risen. *No mention of an earthquake, or of the soldiers falling before the angel. *No mention of the two angels sending the women to tell the other disciples. *The women left the sepulcher to find the disciples. *Peter ran to the tomb to see for himself. *A detailed narrative of the walk to Emmaus follows. *He reminds them that He would rise the third day.</p>	<p>John 19-20 *Mary ran to tell the disciples and Peter. *Peter and John ran to the sepulcher to see for themselves. *Mary returned to the sepulcher to weep. *Now she found two angels sitting in the tomb. They spoke to her. When she turned back, she thought she saw the gardener. *When He spoke, she knew it was Jesus. *Jesus said, "Don't touch Me for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go tell the disciples that I am going to My Father and your Father." *That evening, while they hid from the Jews, Jesus appeared in their midst.</p>
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All of the above happened in a short afternoon, roughly two-thousand-years ago. Notice particularly the similarities and differences between the four accounts. Each one adds something not mentioned by the others.

Now, from the above Scriptures, along with my visual imagery, here is a composite narrative of what I believe happened from the cross to the empty tomb:

- Several hundred-thousand people were in Jerusalem because the Passover-Feast of Unleavened Bread event was the high point in the spring. In fact, the Jews called the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread a High Sabbath. It was one of the few occasions during the year when attendance was required. The

excited throng, some of them friends of Jesus, had no idea of the life-changing events that were about to transpire.

- When we pick up the events near sundown on Golgotha, Jesus had already refused pain killers, He had given assurance to the thief beside Him, and He had willed His mother into the care of one of His youngest followers, John. We would have seen the soldiers cast lots for His outer garment, and would have heard Jesus say, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.”
- Women, standing nearby, were weeping. They learned later that at the moment when Christ died an unseen hand sliced through the Temple veil from top to bottom, leaving in full view the empty Most Holy Place. A stone marked the place where the Ark of the Covenant should have been. The soldier near the cross saw it all.
- Joseph of Arimathea, a counselor among the Jews and a follower of Jesus, not willing to see Him thrown into an open grave, as was the custom for criminals, hastened up the hill. The sun was about to set, ushering in the yearly Sabbath – the first day of Unleavened Bread. He knew the priests were anxious to dispose of the bodies before sundown. Joseph had just acquired permission from Pilate to take the body of Jesus.
- Nicodemus accompanied Joseph of Arimathea, bringing fresh linen and aloes. Joseph approached the centurion with his official orders from Pilate. Urged on by pious priests, the soldiers were already breaking legs and using their spears to hasten the ending of this hideous spectacle on the eve of God’s holy day.
- Joseph of Arimathea took down the body of Jesus, and with the help of Nicodemus, prepared the naked, mutilated body, wrapped it in the linen, and proceeded to his own garden tomb nearby.
- The women, including Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Salome, all followed the sad procession to the garden sepulcher. They stayed and watched until the great stone was rolled over the tomb entrance.
- The sun had now set, and the sobbing company of heart-broken believers returned to their homes in the growing dusk. They needed time to sort out all that had taken place so suddenly, so unexpectedly, on this historic Passover Day. The Passover meal was supposed to be served at 6:00 that evening. Some suppers must have been late that Sabbath evening. We might wonder if any of the followers of Jesus felt like eating that meal? The disciples of Christ had eaten their Last Supper with the Saviour the night before.
- The next day was the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a High Sabbath of rest for all Jews. Competing with the Sabbath-keeping activities that were to occupy the minds of the public sector, the priests had an additional agenda: They must

convince Pilate to secure the tomb, for they remembered **His Sign**. It had been the sign of Jonah – three days and three nights. So the priests sought to have the tomb guarded for three days. Their request was granted, and the soldiers were dispatched, even though it was a sacred holiday in Jerusalem.

- The day following the Feast of Unleavened Bread High Sabbath was a business-as-usual day, a Friday-preparation-day, with more than the usual duties to finish before another sundown, which would usher in the seventh-day Sabbath. The women busied themselves shopping for the spices and whatever supplies they would need for the Sabbath day. They shopped, prepared the spices, did their Sabbath food preparation, prepared their homes and clothing, and made themselves ready for the seventh-day Sabbath, according to Mark's account.
- Eager to make a lawful journey to the sepulcher, the Marys and Salome watched as the sun went down on that, seemingly, longer-than-usual Sabbath day. Finally, they gather the supplies and spices, which they had prepared on Friday, and, taking their lanterns, they headed for the tomb in the growing dusk. Mary ran ahead, a mighty earthquake heaving the earth beneath her feet. When the other women, perhaps disoriented for a time by the quake, finally caught up with her, she had already found the tomb empty.
- Inside the tomb, Mary Magdalene was bewildered. What could have happened to her Lord? She looked about and was startled by two angels (appearing as men dressed in white). She was afraid, but they assuaged her fears with assurance that her Master had risen. She may have then rushed out looking for the other women who were following her there. When they found each other, perhaps at the edge of the garden, they returned to the sepulcher while Mary excitedly told what had just transpired. Approaching the tomb, they saw a brilliant angel sitting on the cover-stone. He spoke to the women, again explaining that their Master had risen. He then dispatched them to tell the disciples and Peter.
- Running much of the way, the women excitedly entered the meeting place where the disciples were hiding from the magistrates. When the story was recounted, some disbelieved. Peter and John raced to the garden sepulcher, to see for themselves, John arriving first. Mary's story was confirmed. The tomb was indeed empty!
- The disciples of Christ must not have gotten much sleep that night, as their doubts and ambivalent feelings of fear mingled with excitement must have kept them chattering long into the night.
- Mary Magdalene, on the other hand, had to find Jesus. The angel had said that she was to tell the others that Jesus would meet them in the place they had often met in Galilee. We are not privy to her thoughts as she made her way through the darkness of that first day of the week. She would return to the sepulcher

once more. Perhaps she hoped to question the men dressed in shining robes, whom she had met on her first visit to the tomb.

- All was silent in the garden as the first hint of sunlight gathered on that first day of the week –resurrection morning, it is traditionally called. Mary walked pensively through the trees and shrubs, tears blurring her vision as she entered the empty tomb. On that visit, she noticed the neatly folded grave shroud on the shelf. She had been too stunned to notice it before.
- Not wanting to leave the place, where only a few days before she had been near the Master she loved so dearly, she lingered in the garden. Presently, she became aware of someone else in the garden. Only a gardener would be there going about his work so early in the morning.
- By the question she asked him, we realize that even Mary did not trust what she herself had seen and heard. Perhaps the explanations made up by the doubting disciples to bring rationality to this whole bizarre aberration, had made her doubt her own experience.
- The “gardener” saw her deep sorrow. “Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?” he asked.
- Without looking up, and perhaps trying to conceal her tear-soaked face, she answered, “Sir, if you have taken him away, please tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him somewhere else.”
- In that wonderful moment when Yeshua called her name, “Mary,” she recognized Him and prostrated herself at His feet. She had washed those feet with her tears only a few days before. Now, she reached to worship at His feet, but He stopped her with His command, “Don’t touch Me. I have not yet ascended to My Father.” (KJV) Some versions read, “Don’t detain Me” or “Do not hold on to Me.”
- Obediently, she left Him to find the disciples and tell them the rest of the story, as He then had told her to do.
- Yeshua returned to Heaven to be presented as the Antitypical Lamb, the Peace Offering, and the Wave Sheaf Offering. The time would have been 9:00 A.M, for that was the time the Wave offering was presented, and Jesus fulfilled all the types in exact, literal time, as well as “prophetic time.” Although He came from the tomb at sundown Sabbath, He had waited to approach His Father until 9:00 AM for He would fulfill the type in time and event. More on that subject in the next chapter.

- Those who came out of their graves at His resurrection accompanied Him as the spring harvest. He would be presented first, then they, according to the type.
- Later that evening, Christ returned to encourage and instruct the men and women who had been His closest friends and earthly companions.

In conclusion, the evidence is compelling for a literal sundown-to-sundown burial to resurrection, spanning seventy-two hours. Christ died on Wednesday, was buried about sundown before an annual Sabbath, and came forth from the tomb at sundown of the seventh-day Sabbath exactly three days and three nights, **His Sign**.

Our Passover, Our Peace Offering

Chapter 6

One of the arguments against the “Three-Days-and-Three-Nights” Model comes from the study of the Old Testament peace offerings. That is why it will be examined here. It has been put forth that because Christ was our Peace Offering the time element can be shortened a few hours to match this type.

Leviticus 7:15-17 presents two kinds of- or reasons for- the peace offerings:

- Peace offerings for thanksgiving
- Peace offerings for vows, or voluntary offerings

Although we are thankful for the gift of grace, we cannot find an antitype in the thank offering for the death of the Son of God. No! He was not offered for a thank offering, although WE are thankful for His gift!

The second option for presenting a peace offering was to honor a vow. This was a voluntary offering, and we can find an antitype here. The Son of God did voluntarily (John 10:17, 18) vow to set Himself aside as an offering for sin, and thereby again bring peace to the universe. We may insightfully say that The Passover Lamb became our Peace Offering. That is a Truth.

- *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 4:25-5:1.*
- *For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His cross... Col. 1:19, 20.*
- *For unto us a child is born... The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end... Isa. 9:6, 7.*
- *And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest [referring to John the Baptist] ... To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, [referring to Christ] to guide our feet into the way of peace. Luke 1:76, 79.*
- *...the Lord of peace himself give you peace always, 2 Thes. 3:16*

Christ was the Prince of Peace, the Prince of Life, and our Saviour, the Lamb of God.

- *And killed the Prince of Life, who God hath raised from the dead... Acts 3:15*

- *The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua, whom you slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted... to be a Prince and a Saviour... Acts 5:30.*

Although the Passover Lamb became our Peace Offering, that did not, in any way, alter **His Sign**. Let us look, then, for the parallels between the types and antitypes in this ritual. We will note the regulations given for the peace offering, that we might better see their application and meaning applied to the Antitype.

Peace Offering: Type and Antitype (Lev. 7:15-17)

Type	Antitype
*Must be without blemish, Lev. 3:1	*No sin found in Christ, 1 John 3:5
*The fat was separated from the offering, fat being a type of sin, Ps. 37:20. The fat must be burned up, Lev. 7:31	*Christ was tested and came through victorious, Luke 4:1, 2. Again, no sin.
*The peace offering would be eaten for <u>two</u> days, Lev. 7:15-17	*How this applies to the death of our Saviour is unknown.
*The remains of the sacrifice, which were not eaten, must be burned up on the third day.	*Christ went through the second death for us. That is death by fire. "We will understand it better by and by."
*The shoulder was the priest's portion, Lev. 7:32, 33	*The government shall be upon His shoulder, Isa. 9:6; Luke 15:5
*The breast was saved for Aaron and his sons, Lev. 7:31	*He shall carry them (the lambs) in His bosom, Isa. 40:11
*The Peace Offering and the Passover Lamb were the <u>only</u> sacrifices eaten by all Israel, and both must be without blemish.	*Type met Antitype in our Saviour, our Lamb without blemish, and our Prince of Peace!



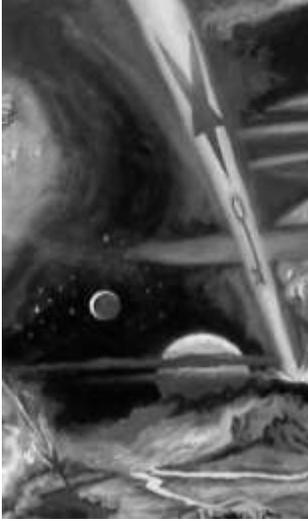
The argument is made that since the remains of the peace offering were required to be burned up on the third day, we may shorten the time for Christ in the tomb to be less than seventy-two hours. Those who reason this way say He was raised sometime on the third day, to match the Peace Offering Model. This could mean, then, that Jesus may have been crucified on Friday a few hours before sundown, placed in the tomb at sundown, call Friday day-one, apply figuratively His death for two days, and have it consumed, or finished on the third day. In this way, the

resurrection can be argued to have happened sometime on Sunday, the first day of the week, and have the antitype finished in less than seventy-two hours. This explanation, or course, ignores Christ's own words, -a serious flaw! Besides, peace offerings were offered throughout the year, on any day of the week; but, the wave offering followed the Sabbath.

For those of us who require the Bible to explain itself, to reveal the applications of types and antitypes, and to harmonize itself between each Bible writer, we must settle on the interpretation that brings the closest harmony between all contributions from Scripture, regardless of our personal preference or traditional teachings.

It makes perfect sense to apply the **burning** of the peace offering remains, to **the second death**. If it was done on the third day, then we may trust that our Saviour dealt with the second death on the third day of His entombment, if that is the antitype implied. No Scripture directly says that, but the fact that the second death is complete consummation by fire, so that sin will not ever rise again (Nahum 1:9), may be implied from the type itself. We may not understand it, but we trust the Bible enough to believe that there may be a parallel here. Everything about the offerings has an antitype in Christ. Seeing that worked out so frequently in other offerings and ceremonies, one can trust that the consummation of the peace offering may indeed have been meant to cover a wider scope than most of us have previously thought.

Peace Offering – Type	Peace Offering – Antitype
Day One: The sacrifice without blemish was made. It was eaten by all Israel.	Day One: Christ, the Lamb without blemish was sacrificed to make Peace for all spiritual Israel.
Day Two: The flesh was eaten the second day.	Day Two: His body was symbolically “eaten” up by the world, the Earth , and remained so for those two days.
Day Three: The uneaten portion was burned up, entirely..	Day Three: Because the next thing that happened was the resurrection, some suppose it corresponds to the “burning-up.” But, wait! Will not this sin-cursed earth be consumed by fire? It seems more logical to find the parallel between the burning up of the remains with the “ second death ,” by a consuming fire than with the resurrection.



As with **The Sign** of Jonah, we find that the Peace Offering holds more significance than formerly realized. The Peace Offering was about making peace on **Earth** all the way to the **Second Death**! In other words, His Peace is the Ultimate Peace! – Peace for the Plaintive; Peace for the Planet. Before Christ came from the tomb, He had gained “the keys of hell and of death,” Revelation 1:18, and had successfully used them. It was all accomplished before Christ came from the tomb, and it happened, I believe, according to the type, on the third day! “We’ll understand it better by and by” when the Saviour Himself explains some of the types and antitypes presently buried in mystery.

Important to recognize is, however, the harmony and continuity between the types and Antitype without adjusting the Scriptures to fit our own preferences, and without ignoring Christ’s own prophecy of Himself –**His Sign**.

The Antitypical Wave Sheaf

Chapter 7

If Passover on the 14th of Nisan corresponded to the Crucifixion, the 17th of Nisan must correspond to the Resurrection. Interestingly, although not directly related to this study, the 17th of Nisan has been shown to be the day the Hebrew people marched by faith through the Red Sea to salvation from the pursuing Egyptians. Even before that, Nisan 17 had great significance, for it was the day the Ark rested in the mountains of Ararat; again, a point of salvation to God's people.



Nisan 18 was the day of the wave offering, the day after the Sabbath day.. That is the type and antitype associated with the beginning of the harvest. In a sense, it may hold the most important implications for us. We will review the wave offering presented the morning of the day following Christ's resurrection. We will, in this chapter, also give attention to the day on which the Bible commanded it to be done, for it holds crucial implication for the keeping of Pentecost following fifty days later.

The reason the wave sheaf is important to our unraveling of the knotty teachings regarding the death and resurrection of our Elohim and Messiah Yeshua, is because some conscientious students of Scripture have tried to avoid giving recognition to the "first day of the week" as the starting point for counting fifty days to Pentecost. Even if not totally responsible for the confusion, this focus on avoidance of Sunday has contributed to the confusion, nonetheless. Some zealous ones resist celebrating any event of the Most High on the first day of the week, as if Satan, after all, created it!

Let us re-establish our faith in the Creator, recognizing that He has not forfeited one day of the week to His Enemy. We give too much attention and power to the fallen angel when we ignore Bible-truth on the grounds that Sunday has become associated with counterfeits. The Evil One has usurped the "sides of the North," and placed his dominion in the "mount of the congregation" (Isa. 13:14), but most of us haven't yet avoided church, camp meetings, or group worship because of it.

Should we reject Friday as the Preparation-Day because we have come into the knowledge of the Islamic religion's claim on Friday as a sacred day to their reincarnated gods, prophets, and priests? Or, do we find their anti-Christ religion innocuous simply because we know less about their counterfeits worshipped on Friday?

If this reasoning makes the reader uncomfortable, perhaps it is because the reasoning seems foreign to our mind-set based on a lifetime of warnings against sun-day worship on the first day of the week, it having come from rebellion and defiance toward our holy God.

Break out of the stereotypes schooled into our very fiber in this regard, and think for a moment about the meaning in the number "one," or "first." First" refers to the most

important, the beginning of a sequence, or something having a position of great power or authority. To reject the first day as Satanic, is to also insinuate that Jehovah got better in His creative adventure with each day in sequence; that the first was defective in some ways that allowed the devil to get his grip on it. To deny the importance and preeminence of the first day of the week, because it has been given an abominable name – “Sunday,” gives the Archenemy power a Christian should never allow. No! Each day had its perfection, including the first.

Yet, some will ignore the spiritual and symbolic insight in a Bible command –to start the time clock to Pentecost on the day after the seventh-day Sabbath –on the grounds that some people have been deceived into accepting symbols of Satan disguised and presented as belonging to Christ’s Gospel, **on the first day of the week.**

This same fear-factor, or avoidance mechanism, is present in the rejection of several other very biblical teachings. For instance, some Christians ignore the example and admonition to raise one’s hands in worship. They read the same Bible verses, but ignore the meaning and reject personal application simply because certain denominations practice it.. With these they disagree. They don’t want to be associated with “those who are “overly demonstrative;” therefore, they reject the clear statements of Scripture.

Another example is the prejudice that prevents thousands from accepting the examples and commands to keep the commandments, including the fourth. “The Jews crucified the Son of God,” they declare, “therefore we must not do that which will associate us with the Jews. After all, they were rejected; were they not?”

We are in danger of following a similar line of faulty reasoning, when we ignore Leviticus 23:11, 15 because we don’t want to have anything to do with that which has been commanded by Papal Rome. If Rome were to command that all people celebrate Easter on the seventh-day Sabbath following the Vernal Equinox, would we resist it because it came from the Papists, or because it denies the Word of God?

It seems that many Christians frame their religion by what they **avoid** for appearance-sake, as much as to what they **adhere**:

- Sabbath-keepers avoid looking like “Pentecostal hysterics;” but they ignore and deny Scripture in their effort. Most wouldn’t be associated with “hand-raisers” during worship. It would generate prejudice and make people uncomfortable.
- Sunday-keepers avoid looking like “Son-of-God-killers;” but they ignore and deny Scripture in their effort. They would not keep the seventh-day Sabbath lest they be associated with Jews, or legalists.
- Feast-keepers avoid looking like “Armstrong-followers;” they ignore and deny Scripture in their effort. Many will deny the truth put forth in this treatise, simply because the “church” doesn’t teach it.

Prejudice clouds reasoning, turning faith in the Word into fear of the watchers.

Today much truth is rejected by the approach: “Who teaches it?” rather than “What is the evidence?” Instead of, “Show me from the Word of God,” the majority of Christians say, “Show me from the teaching of our forefathers.” In some cases, the criterion shifts to “Show me from the writings of our church-prophet, founding fathers, or leading theologians.” In each of these variations, the common denominator is the primacy of interpretative leaders over Scriptural doctrine.

This does not mean that forefathers are not to be honored, or church apostles and prophet are not to be believed, but rather, that light is ever increasing. Forefathers may not have had all the evidence that is available today. Church apostles and prophets may not have had understanding given them on subjects we now understand. Many religious writers assumed that their prior teachings were all correct. Without direct revelation to challenge these assumptions, error has at times been innocently strengthened.

The calendar issue enters the picture at this point, because it has given cause for men to change the “Thus saith the Lord” in Scripture to “This is what is recognized by leading theologians; and God isn’t all that particular, anyway,” or “It isn’t a salvational issue, and God knows your good intentions.” Even among the various sects of the ancient Jews, variations in calendar-keeping crept in by simply avoiding agreement with those in greater apostasy than one’s own affiliates.

This part of my research has been adequate to convince me that the starting date for the spring calendar was biblically based on the new moon after the Vernal Equinox, with the ripening of the barley adding verification. Furthermore, the timing for the waving of an omer of barley grain was established by the weekly Sabbath, which came during the week of Unleavened Bread.

Jehovah had told Moses to establish the count to Pentecost by a “formula,” if it can be called that. This would hold great importance, for the antitype would follow in literal time. The foregoing is what appears clearly presented in Scripture:

*Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priests; And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the **Sabbath** [#7676] the priest shall wave it. And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the **Sabbath**, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete, Leviticus 23:10, 11, 15.*

In summary, the Vernal Equinox establishes the arrival of the spring season, the new moons, the months. Abib, or Nisan, the first month, contained Passover, coming on the 14th day, and the week of Unleavened Bread, which began and ended with annual Sabbaths.

During that week of Unleavened Bread, a sheaf of barley was to be presented to Jehovah. This ceremony established Pentecost, fifty days after the wave sheaf offering.

The Bible does not actually refer to this ceremony as the Wave Sheaf Offering. The act of waving a sheaf of grain (barley) before the Lord is mentioned three times in Leviticus, Chapter 23, but the term “Wave Sheaf Offering” is not a biblical term.

The wave offering was made from the green ears of barley. The month Abib means green ears (Strong’s #24 *aw-beeb*). It was offered at Jerusalem, but was not gathered strictly from Jerusalem. Keep in mind, that the barley would be budding green before the new moon that began the month of Abib. Agriculturists tell us that a couple of weeks must elapse between the time of budding and flowering barley and the formation of the embryo new grain to be waved (the wave sheaf) during the days of Unleavened Bread.

Actually, “sheaf” has been translated from the Hebrew word *omer* (Strong’s # 6016). *Omer* means “small bowl.” The word is elsewhere found in the account of the collection of manna in the wilderness (Ex. 16:16). *Strong’s New Dictionary of Bible Words* equates an *omer* with 2.4 liters (wet or dry) in our modern measuring system.

This first harvested sheaf underwent a rigorous preparation before the “omer-elevating ceremony.” The heads of grain were separated from the stalks, according to the *Mishnah*, as part of the preparation before they were waved over the altar. Notice the following quote from the *Mishnah*:

“They used to parch it with fire... They used to beat it with reeds and the stems of plants that the grains should not be crushed... [They] put it in a grist mill and took therefrom a tenth which was sifted through thirteen sieves... They put in oil and the frankincense thereof,” Menahoth 10, 4).

According to Jewish sources, the wave offering was originally offered at 9:00 A.M., although there are no Bible texts to show that. The time is not recorded in Scripture. Only the commanded **day** for the offering is clearly recorded: It was to be offered on the day after the seventh-day Sabbath within the week of Unleavened Bread. This was the command of YHWH, and this is how it was done after Israel entered the Canaan land.

This ceremony had not been performed while Israel was in the wilderness, for the Israelites had no land, and therefore, no harvest season. There had been no harvest while Israel lived as nomads for those forty years. Although the calculations for Pentecost were established at Mount Sinai, they were not practiced until Israel had entered the Promised Land. Although pre-Sinai records evidence the keeping of Yahweh’s “appointment times,” it is unclear if Pentecost was among the holy days kept by the patriarchs before Sinai. What is known is the command given to Moses for future generations.

For thousands of years, at Sabbath sundown, the high priest has met a throng of worshippers on the hillside beyond Jerusalem. He calls over the Kidron Valley, Is the sun

down yet?” A multitude of voice chorus, “The sun is down!” A sheaf of barley is then gathered in the growing dusk at the end of the Sabbath day during the week of Unleavened Bread. The throng burst into singing their praise to God as they follow the priest up the hill to the temple where the grain will be prepared for the offering on the first day of the week at 9:00 A.M. This service is done even today -by some, in memory of its fulfillment two thousand years ago -and by others, in hopeful anticipation of a future event.

The wave offering was a kind of gratitude and acknowledgment offering for the provision and the Provider of the bounty in the Promised Land, similar to tithe today. But it represented much more. More symbolism is revealed through the process of preparing the grain. The Messiah had endured the beating with rods, the scourging, the oven, and the comforting presence of the oil of the Holy Spirit –which He had without measure, -and no bones were broken by His ordeal. This was Messiah’s “preparation” before He entered the Throne of Glory as the First Fruits from Earth.

*Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors,
And the King of Glory shall come in. Ps. 24:7*

This verse was first fulfilled when He entered His glory after triumphing over His enemy. The anthem the angels sang will be sung again when He brings the wheat harvest into His glory. The anthem is repeated in verses 9 and 10. And so it will be at the wheat harvest to come.

While the Saviour represented the “first fruits” picked, the barley harvest represented those resurrected saints from all time before Pentecost (Acts 2). Many of these may have accompanied Him at His first ascension (before Acts 1:11). Similarly, the wheat harvest will have its antitype in the fall with the second coming of Christ and the harvest of living saints. Both harvests had the prerequisite of an omer of grain offered before the altar; then the ripened grain could be harvested and used for food or fodder. That is a worthy subject for another study.

The Wave Sheaf Mix Up

Chapter 8

Christ, Himself, was the Antitypical Wave Sheaf that must be offered to the Father before those resurrected at the time of the great earthquake could be “harvested” (See Matthew 27:52, 53), or taken to heaven. The 144,000 may be the omer of wheat offered to the Father before the great final harvest. We do not know if those in the first harvest waited at “the pearly gates” for their acceptance, or if they remained on earth awaiting their call. According to the types, we have reason to wonder, but the Bible is silent regarding these details in the antitype of the barley harvest.

In addition to the beautiful symbolism which typified the Saviour, we have His precision in the application of each symbol – in times as well as event. Everything about the life and ministry of the Messiah was sketched in prophecies. A few of those prophecies are as follows:

- He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, Isaiah 53:7
- Behold! The Lamb of God... John 1:29
- Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us, 1 Corinthians 5:7
- In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, Daniel 9:27

We know that he fulfilled all the other specifications in literal time. Daniel 9:27 should be no exception. While the prophecy had a true fulfillment in “prophetic time” (a day for a year), as with most prophecy, there were aspects that would also be fulfilled in literal time.

A foundational point for this chapter of the study into the controversial Crucifixion-Resurrection Models is that the calendar of events for the Wave Sheaf, and the festivals to follow, were based on **watching**. As Ancient Israel watched for the new moons and the budding of grain to determine their appointments with Yahweh, according to the types, so we must recognize the antitype will be associated with **watchfulness**. We will miss our appointments with God unless we are watching. Indeed, our Redeemer’s calendar in its antitype is riveted to the command to **watch**.

***Watch**, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come, Matthew 24:42.*

***Watch**, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh, Matthew 25:13.*

***Watch** and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak, Matt. 26:41.*

***Watch** ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man, Luke 21:36*



***Watch** ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong, 1 Corinthians 16:13.*

*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us **watch** and be sober, 1 Thessalonians 5:6.*

*But **watch** thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry, 2 Timothy 4:5.*

*But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and **watch** unto prayer, 1 Peter 4:7.*

*Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find **watching**: Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them, Luke 12:37*

Here we have the language of feast days and festivals. What a blessing in that day for all who have watched and waited! And, what sadness and remorse there will be for those who have not discerned the meaning of the signs in the heavens, nor in the ripening of the grain.

Remember therefore how thou has received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee, Revelation 3:3

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame, Revelation 16:15.

The Bible has a lot to say about the importance of watching, as watchmen guarding the wall keep alert to the events announced by the Creator Himself in the changing sky. As God's people were to watch for the Vernal Equinox and the ripening grain, so we are to be alert for the "ripening" world. We are to be the cultivator now; the angels will harvest later, in Elohim's appointed time (mo'ed).

Would YHWH set apart appointed times, such as the Sabbath, His sanctified day of worship, put His blessing on it, command that we keep it, and then allow that sacred time to be lost, so that we can't keep it? Would He? NEVER! But, His arch-enemy would stir up so much controversy-producing-prejudice that few will ever experience it.

Would YHWH set up rehearsals for the biggest event in the history of time, tell us we are to hold sacred convocations at these appointed times, and then allow His arch-enemy to so

confuse and obscure them that no one could agree on, or be sure of, those divine appointments? Would He? No! But, His arch-enemy would circulate false theories and agitate so much controversy that most will despair of finding them.

Would YHWH show us, through the emblem of the omer of grain, the part we may play when rehearsals are over, and then leave His glory for the first fruits in disarray? He would never! But, His arch-enemy would discredit those who obey the Torah commands, so that their obedience is viewed as rebellion, and tradition is championed as a worthy Guide! Having elevated the Scriptures above tradition, we herein take the position that the Bible says what it means and means what it says.

If the Sabbath intended in the Leviticus 23:15 is the seventh-day Sabbath, as the word-study suggests, then the Wave Sheaf Offering comes on the day after the seventh-day of the week, making Pentecost fall on a Sunday (or eighth day) every year. This was the intent of the Leviticus 23:15 “Sabbath” *Shabbath*, #7676, in *Strong’s Concordance*, and the practice of the Sadducees, Karaite Jews, and other Jewish reformers who took issue with the Pharisees on this point.

Those who followed the Pharisees (Orthodox Jews today, and those who honor the Rabbinic law directly or indirectly through the writings of Josephus, etc.), defend the change to Sivan 6, making the wave sheaf come on the day after the first annual sabbath at the start of the week of Unleavened Bread. This tradition, started by the Pharisees after the years in Babylon, is simply not biblical. Furthermore, the hypothesis that “sabbath” can mean the last day of “any period of seven consecutive days,” as suggested by Bible commentaries (See Appendix 3), lacks support in Scripture.

In addition, it has been taught that the words for “Sabbath” were used interchangeably in the Old Testament; therefore, one could not prove that the “Sabbath” spoken of in Leviticus 23:11, 15 was not the first day of Unleavened Bread. But, familiarity or popularity does not make error into truth. Notice what these verses actually say:

*(11) And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow **after** the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. [Sabbath=#7676-the ‘7th for rest]*

*(15) And ye shall count unto you from the morrow **after** the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; **seven Sabbaths** shall be complete:*

*(16) Even unto the morrow after the **seventh Sabbath** shall ye number fifty days...*

What happens when one starts the count to Pentecost from a festival “Sabbath” rather than the seventh-day Sabbath, is shown by the following diagram:

Crucifixion year:

UBS	2 nd Weekly	3 rd Weekly	4 th Weekly	5 th Weekly	6 th Weekly	7 th Weekly
1 st Sab.	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath
and end of UB						

UBS= Unleavened Bread Sabbath

In the crucifixion year, assuming the 7th day Sabbath was also the first day (an annual Sabbath) of Unleavened Bread (which it wasn't), we find no conflict between the command in Leviticus 23:11, 15,16, and the fulfillment of Christ's presentation to the Father and Pentecost arriving fifty days later (Acts 2).

But what happens in the next year? Passover, according to the traditional view, would land on a Thursday. The Leviticus 23 instruction is that the priest count **seven** Sabbaths. So, if we say the word "Sabbath" in this passage includes the festival Sabbaths along with weekly Sabbaths, the following is what happens to the count of "seven Sabbaths" within 50 days. Notice:

UBS	1 st Weekly	UBS	2 nd Weekly	3 rd Weekly	4 th Weekly	5 th Weekly	6 th Weekly	7 th Weekly
Thurs.	Sabbath	Thurs.	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath	Sabbath
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

In the above time line, it still takes seven weeks (7x7) to equal 49 days, with the 50th day following as Pentecost. But, count how many Sabbaths are now in those 49 days? By counting the festival holy days as "Sabbaths," argued by many as the intent of the Leviticus directive, one counts **nine** "Sabbaths"! The first two weeks of the seven required, now contain two Sabbaths each. In only one year out of every seven years would the count equal the number (7) directed by God in Leviticus for the priests to count to Pentecost: Count seven Sabbaths.

If one recognizes, however, that the Hebrew words for "Sabbath" are **not interchangeable** (See Appendix 1, page 85), and that the seventh-day Sabbath is specified exclusively in the Leviticus passage, one soon realizes that the count from the first Sabbath to the seventh Sabbath places Pentecost on the first day of the week every year, according to the command given to Moses.

It seems that, although the study on the three-days-and three-nights has been compelling to those who have followed the subject through the Scriptures, as soon as the wave sheaf has been mentioned, many have turned back to their traditional beliefs of Friday-to-Sunday. What was there in the wave sheaf teaching that created such a "knotty problem" for so many? How could anyone see all the Bible evidence and read the clearly stated command to the priests to count from Shabbath seven Shabbaths (7676), and yet turn back?. I had to get to the bottom of the objection. This study seemed to me to be obvious truth.

"If you say the Wave Sheaf was offered on Sunday," I was accused, "you are honoring a heathen day by placing Pentecost always on a Sunday, the first day of the week." "You

must make the Catholic Church very happy,” some would point out impatiently. When people become agitated with me over Scripture, I know I am onto something the devil doesn’t want known. So I kept searching.

My first word-study, as I determined to thoroughly investigate this knotty subject, was over the contention that the words for “Sabbath” used in the Hebrew language were interchangeable in meaning, as mentioned previously. This meant that one could not be sure when reading the word “Sabbath” in a text, whether the day was the seventh day of the week or an annual Sabbath in reference.

What kind of a Sabbath, weekly or yearly, makes a lot of difference in how one regards the events recorded in the New Testament account of the crucifixion week. It also begins the count to Pentecost, kept by most on both sides of the Cross. An incorrect starting point would mean a wrong date for the Feast of Weeks, as Pentecost is often called. Some believe a second Pentecost experience will be on the “right” Pentecost. It seems important to view this subject, then, from God’s revealed point of view.

Every reference to *Shabbath* (#7676), defined in Strong’s Concordance and in Zodhiates’ Complete Word Study of the Old Testament as “*The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day... The sacred seventh year,*” was examined. This word (*Shabbath*) Sabbath, was **always** used when referring to the seventh day, and often used in reference to the sacred seventh year. Once it was used for the Day of Atonement, the most solemn of all the Sabbaths, coming in the seventh month. On the other hand, the word, *Shabbathon*, was **never** used in reference to a seventh –whether a weekly or a yearly seventh. **That is an extremely important fact to understand.**

Checking other concordances, to see if they agreed with *Strong’s Concordance* and *Zodhiates’s Complete Word Study of the Old Testament*, was a discouraging process, for few concordances show the difference between the Hebrew words for “Sabbath. This is remarkable since even a novice in languages may determine from any Hebrew lexicon that the endings of the two “Sabbath” words are different. This aspect of my complete word study may be found in Appendix 4, beginning on Page 101.

“One of the knottiest problems,” it is certainly, for exegetical entries are missing from most commentaries. Nearly all Protestant commentators suggest, like the statement following, that the Sabbath was a day of rest for the Jews only. Most commentaries add personal and denominational bias, but little else. More commentary notes are to be found in Appendix 3, Page 97, all of which departed from the exegesis of Scripture, giving their own bias. One stockbroker, turned Truth-seeker, Christian, says he gave up on commentaries years ago. Some of us have come to see why someone who is serious about truth would ignore man’s wisdom. We must settle for no less than the full, unbiased truth.

Note: “The first of these [sabbaths] mentioned in verse 3 [commenting on Lev. 23:10,11] ‘is the seventh day sabbath. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation, ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings’ Of this, Christ is

the sum and substance. Wherefore, says the apostle, let no man judge you in this and the other thing; and among the rest, in respect of the sabbath-days, ‘which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ.’” (commenting on Col. 2:16, 17) *The John Burton Hoffman Commentary*.

Turning to the Interlinear Bible (1982 edition), really a lexicon, there are clearly determined differences between the characters used to spell out the seventh-day Sabbath, and the yearly Sabbaths. The words are not interchangeable!

While listing all the references to the word *Shabbath* (#7676), one may also list all the usages of the words translated from *Shabbathon* (# 7677), defined as “*a sacred time of rest, and applies to the Day of Atonement, and the first and eighth days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Trumpets, and the Feast of Tabernacles.*” Thus, one might write down all the 7677’s that have been translated as “rest.” It becomes clear that, while the word always points to a sacred time of rest, #7676 is **not** used interchangeably with #7677. ***Shabbath* only referred to the “seventh” rest –seventh-day, seventh-month, or seventh-year Sabbath rest.** See Appendix 1, Page 85.

In the Major Prophets, where it might be suggested that 7676 was used to refer to both weekly and yearly Sabbaths, we find evidence that is consistent with the earlier Bible writers: Lamentations 2:6, for example, distinguishes the solemn feasts from the Sabbaths; Ezekiel 45:17 separates the Sabbath days from the yearly feasts; Hosea 2:11 also refers to “her Sabbaths, **and** all her solemn feasts,” indicating a distinction between the two.

Next, if one separates all the references to “**a** sabbath” from, the references to “**the** sabbath,” one will find that the use of the noun marker, “the” or “a” in front of the word “Sabbath” does not conclusively specifying the type of Sabbath.

“a” sabbath		“the” Sabbath	
Ex. 16:25	today is a sabbath unto the Lord. [7676] <i>Clearly the Seventh day Sabbath. Oops!</i>	Ex. 16:23	Tomorrow is the rest of the Holy Sabbath day. [7676]
Ex. 35:2,3	a holy day, a sabbath of rest [7676] <i>Clearly the Seventh day Sabbath. Oops!</i>	Ex. 16:26	on the seventh day, which is The Sabbath, [7676]
Lev. 16:31	It shall be a sabbath of rest [7676] <i>Day of Atonement</i>	Ex. 16:29	the Lord hath given you the Sabbath [7676]
Lev. 23:24	the first day of the month Shall ye have a sabbath [7677]	Ex. 20:8	Remember the Sabbath day, [7676]
Lev. 23:32	unto you a sabbath of rest [7676] celebrate your sabbath [+7673] <i>Feast of Trumpets</i>	Ex. 20:10,11	the seventh day is the Sabbath Wherefore the Lord blessed The Sabbath [7676]
Lev. 23:39	on the first day shall be a sabbath [7677] and the 8 th day shall be a sabbath [7677]	Ex. 31:14-16	Ye shall keep the Sabbath... For it is holy. The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath [7676]
		Lev. 23:3	the seventh day is the Sabbath

<p>“a” sabbath</p>	<p>“the” Sabbath</p>
<p><i>Feast of Tabernacles</i></p>	<p>of rest [7676]</p>
<p>Lev. 25:2 the land keep a sabbath [7676+7673] <i>The Jubile</i></p>	<p>Lev. 23:11 on the morrow, after the Sabbath [7676]</p>
<p>Lev. 25:4 in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest [7676] <i>jubilee</i></p>	<p>Lev. 23:15,16 count... from the morrow after the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>Lev. 25:6 the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you [7676]</p>
	<p>Num. 15:32 a man gathering sticks upon the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Num. 28:9 on the Sabbath day two lambs [7676]</p>
	<p>Deut 5:12 keep the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Deut. 5:14,15 the seventh day is the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>2Ki. 11:5-9 A third part...entered in on the Sabbath, etc [7676]</p>
	<p>2Ki. 16:18 the covert for the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>2Chron. 23:4-8 A third part...entered in on the Sabbath, etc [7676]</p>
	<p>Neh. 10:31 that we would not buy...on the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Neh. 13:15-22 profaned the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>Ps. 92:T A Psalms for the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>Isa. 56:2 that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting [7676]</p>
	<p>Isa. 56:6 everyone that keepeth the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>Isa. 58:13 turn away thy foot from the Sabbath [7676]</p>
	<p>Jer. 17:21 bear no burden on the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Jer. 17:22-27 hallow the Sabbath day... at The gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Eze. 46:1 on the Sabbath it shall be opened, [7676+3117]</p>
	<p>Eze. 46:4 on the Sabbath day shall be six Lambs [7676]</p>
	<p>Eze. 46:12 peace offering, as he did on the Sabbath day [7676]</p>
	<p>Am. 8:5 on the Sabbath, that ye may set Forth wheat [7676]</p>

From this comparison, one may conclude that the noun-markers preceding the word “Sabbath” do not follow the rule many have been taught: That “the” precedes the seventh-day Sabbath, and “a” precedes the annual sabbaths. It just isn’t so. A careful study supports the conclusion that whenever the **seventh** day is intended, the text will read “the Sabbath.” However, the 7676 (seventh-day Sabbath) and the 7677 (yearly sabbaths) are mixed when the text reads “a Sabbath.” Sometimes “a Sabbath” referred to a yearly festival, and sometimes “a Sabbath” referred to the seventh-day Sabbath; but never does “the Sabbath” refer to a yearly festival.

By this point in the study, the reader may realize that an understanding of the use of the word “Sabbath” is essential if one expects to gain a comprehension that will prevent jumping to erroneous conclusions. This is especially true when reading through passages of Scripture on the timing for the wave sheaf offering and the countdown to Pentecost, as previously noted.

With the words for “Sabbath” and “rest” sorted, let us summarize what has been found from each book of the Old Testament where the word “Sabbath” (either 7676 or 7677) is found. Here is a summation of the word “Sabbath” as used in the Old Testament.

Genesis - Sabbath does not appear in the book which records its creation, oddly enough. However, the root word for “cessation” (7637) is there in Gen. 2:2,3, translated as rest.

Exodus - The **ONLY** word used for Sabbath in the entire book is the word *Shabbath*, (7676), and there is no mention of a feast day referred to as a Sabbath [*Shabbath*] in the book; *thus, it stands to reason that Exodus 31:13 is referring to the seventh day Sabbath only. Accordingly, the Sabbath day is the sign of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and His people presented in the book of Exodus.*

Ex. 31:12, 13, 16, 17 – The seventh-day Sabbath is a sign of the Covenant.

Jer. 31:31-33 – A new covenant in the heart – to keep His laws

Eze. 20:12, 20 – Gave them “My Sabbaths” to be a sign of the Covenant

2 Cor. 3:3 - [According to 1BC, p. 662] the Covenant written not on stone, but in the heart

This is not to say that the annual Sabbaths were unimportant in terms of the sign of our covenant with God; but this text (Ex. 31:13), is only referring to 7676, the seventh-day Sabbath. Week by week, the people of Yahweh were to demonstrate their dedication to the Creator God of the universe. Annual Sabbath were not enough to demonstrate this fact.

The sign, or seal, of God is revealed in the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, the Lord’s memorial of creation...Exodus

31:12,13. Here the Sabbath is clearly designated as a sign between God and His people, 8T 117.

The seven additional Sabbaths were scattered throughout the year as rehearsals for the Messianic events to come. They might be thought of as **signs along the road** of prophetic time to prepare the people to meet the Messiah at His first coming, and at His second coming. Indeed, Jubilee carries the timeline beyond His second advent. These annual events focused on the eradication of sin, or redemption. They were reminders of national and universal iniquity, while at the same time, offering hope in the Redeemer's Plan of Salvation and Redemption. The seventh-day Sabbath appears to have been intended, on the other hand, as a signal to the world that here is a people who worship and follow Yahweh; here is a people who have accepted the offer of salvation.

The concepts of "rest," "reflect," and "revere" were imbedded in all the Sabbaths, but not in the same sense. Certainly, when we come to understand the Sabbath "more fully," we will appreciate the additional opportunities to worship, fellowship, and bond with the heavenly and the earthly Family of God. But, it is the seventh-day Sabbath that holds out to believers the promise of eternal rest (Hebrews 4:1-11).

Leviticus -The book introduces *Shabbathon* (7677), used three times to specify a feast day:

Lev. 23:24 – *the first day of the month shall ye have a sabbath*

Lev. 23:39 – *on the first day shall be a sabbath*

Lev. 24:8 - *Every sabbath he shall set it in order*

The controversial "Sabbath" (7676) designated in Leviticus 23:11, called "**the Sabbath**," is avoided in the SDA Bible Commentary and in The Interpreter's Bible Commentary, as in many other commentaries. The 7th day Sabbath is clearly specified, nonetheless, by the word used in nearly every case (13 times).

Numbers - The only use of the word Sabbath in the entire book [three times], refers to the seventh day. Refer back to page 53.

Deuteronomy – Again, there is no reference to a Sabbath in the book, except to the seventh-day Sabbath. This is true of all other Old Testament books, as well, with only one exception: 2 Chronicles 36:21.

2 Chronicles - In 2 Chronicles 36:21 the reference to Sabbath is number 7673 – "cessation." *To fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years. Sabbath, here, must refer to land-rest.*

The study of the words for Sabbaths finished, note the summary which follows:

- *Shabbath* (#7676) refers to a sacred rest on a seventh. That seventh could be a seventh month (Atonement, once), a seventh year (Sabbatical or Jubilee), or the seventh day. Israel was guilty of profaning all of these.
- *Shabbathon* (#7677) refers to all other yearly festivals, and were clearly distinguished from the “seventh’s.”
- The possessive pronoun, “my,” associated with the Sabbath in some Scriptures, is only used with 7676, the seventh’s, and only the Sabbaths of “seventh’s” were directly indicated in texts rebuking the nation for polluting them. See Appendix 4, Page 101.

The reader may wonder, at this point, what all this has to do with the three-days-and-three-nights thesis. “Why does it matter who’s right, or what is wrong?” some have asked. Is not this study just making a “tempest in a teapot”?

My answer: Placing tradition above Scripture is spiritual treason, to be sure; but there is another reason all must know the purpose of these events, the exactness of Scripture, and the importance and proper place of both the weekly and annual Sabbaths. That important reason will be shared in the chapters ahead.

The Karaites were a sect of Jews who opposed deviations from the Torah. They took pride in following the Laws of God and of Moses without additions or deletions. Here is their explanation:

“It is worth noting that Yom Kippur is the only other day besides the weekly Sabbath, which is also referred to as a Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath is referred to as YHWH’s Sabbath [‘Today is a Sabbath of YHWH’ Ex. 16:25]; ‘Keep **My** Sabbaths’ (Lev. 19:3)] while Yom Kippur is referred to as Israel’s Sabbath [‘It shall be a Sabbath of restfulness for **you**’ Lev. 16:31; 23:32] The Sabbatical Year (*Shemittah*) is also called a Sabbath of YHWH (Lev. 24:4,5). It is also worth noting the term *Shabbaton*, which is used to describe some of the Holy Days. **It should be emphasized that the term *Shabbaton* is not the exact equivalent of Sabbath [*Shabbat*] nor is it ever used interchangeably with it.** Indeed, the term *Shabbaton* is derived from the same root as Sabbath although its exact connotation is unclear. *Shabbaton* seems to be the adjective form of the word Sabbath, and means something like ‘Restfulness’ or ‘rest-period.’ Thus the weekly Sabbath is described as a *Shabbat Shabbaton*, meaning a ‘Sabbath of Restfulness’. Similarly, the 7th year is called a *Shenat Shabbaton*, meaning a ‘Year of Restfulness’ usually translated ‘Sabbatical Year’. The term *Shabbaton* is also applied to Yom Teruah (Lev. 23:24), the first day of Sukkot (Lev. 23:39), and Shemini Atseret (8th Day of Sukkot) (Lev. 23:39). The term

Sabbath and *Shabbaton* are never used to describe any of the days of Hag HaMatzot [Feast of Tabernacles, ie.], nor are ANY of the Holy Days ever called a Sabbath other than the weekly Sabbath itself. The only exception is Yom Kippur which is the holiest day of the year on which even eating is forbidden.” *www.Karaite Korner* (emphasis supplied).

It matters, then, how we interpret Leviticus 23 because, as some are coming to understand, the sequence of events during the crucifixion week must align perfectly with the types, as given to Moses, not as altered by the Pharisees. **We must adhere to the Word of God, not the traditions of the Pharisees.** And that matters a great deal to those who take the Bible as the highest authority on earth.



What Difference Does It Make?

Chapter 9

It is a test of loyalty, an evidence of devotion to Almighty, a proof of zeal for the treasures in the Word of God that urges some to dig into Scripture as a life and death campaign. The direct commands of Yahweh have been put aside in favor of human authority and comfortable traditions. So what? What difference does it make? It won't effect your salvation. Or, will it? Who gets the last word when opinions clash, and arguments raise the room temperature? Who gets the last word when traditions beckon and the preacher interprets? How could seemingly honest teachers of Scripture hang onto traditions so clearly spawned in falsehood?

For instance, when Leviticus 23:11 clearly reads that the wave offering was made "on the morrow after the Sabbath" (7676), why were our people denying it? Why were so many upset with me for sharing it? By checking the verses in twenty-five different versions to be sure the King James was not off track here, it was determined that all the versions checked referred to the seventh-day Sabbath as the day before the wave offering. So, why were friends among the "Leadership" pulling away from this truth? What was so threatening as to alarm so many over Pentecost falling on a Sunday each spring?

Some of us are baffled by the reaction of Sabbath-keepers toward this solemn issue. This is especially true when one reckons the sequence of days, as did the ancient Jews, and discovers that the day after the seventh-day is not only the new "first day," but also the **eighth day**. In many Bible texts the eighth day had the significance of "**New Beginnings**." Below is a brief word study on "eighth day" importance in the Scriptures:

- Gen. 17:12 - And he that is eight days old shall be **circumcised** among you...
- Gen. 21:4 - And Abraham **circumcised** his son Isaac being eight days old...
- Eze. 43:27 -When an end has been made to the cleansing of the temple, the eighth day the priest would make a **peace offering** for the people.
- Luke 9:28 - About the eighth day Christ took Peter, James, and John up into a mountain where He was **transfigured**.
- Lev. 9:1 -And it came to pass on the eighth day, that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel...[The **first offerings** of Aaron.]
- Lev. 12:3 - And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be **circumcised**.
- Lev. 14:10-23 - And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs... [The **cleansing of lepers** inaugurated.]
- Lev. 15:14, 29 - [The **cleansing** of men and women who have had an issue of blood. The cleansing took place on the eighth day.]
- Lev. 22:27 -An **animal for sacrifice** was to be set apart for seven days and offered, if found worthy, on the eighth day.
- Lev. 23:36, 39 - The Feast of Tabernacles was to culminate on the eighth day in a **Great Feast**.
- Num. 6:10 - If defiled by touching death, the relative was to be separated for

- seven days, and **cleansed** on the eighth.
- Num. 29:35 - The **Feast of Tabernacles** was to end on the eighth day with a solemn assembly.
- 1 Ki. 8:66 - After Solomon **dedicated the temple**, he finished his feast on the eighth day and sent the people home rejoicing on the eighth day.
- 2 Chron 7:9 - The same as above.
- Neh. 8:18 -Nehemiah led in the **Feast of Tabernacles** for seven days, reading the book of the Law of God. The eighth day was a solemn assembly before sending the people home.
- Luke 1:59 John the Baptist was **circumcised** on the eighth day.
- Acts 7:8 - Abraham begat Isaac and **circumcised** him the eighth day.
- Phil. 3:5 - Paul boasts of being **circumcised** the eighth day.

What do all these texts have in common? They all have to do with cleansing and purification. **The eighth day marked the beginning of new life, a new beginning, a fresh start.** Four Hebrew words are translated into our English word, “eighth.”

- 8066 – *sh-miyiny*, used 28 times, from a word that means to **scratch as a diamond**.
- 8083 – *sh-mondh*, used 4 times, conveys the idea of **plumbness**.
- 3590 – *kee-dode*, used 5 times, means something **struck off, as a spark**
- 3637 – *kalam*, used only once to indicate the eighth day. It carries the meaning of being put to shame, to **receive reproach**.

In each of these Hebrew words is conveyed the subtlety of **judgment and purification**. It often represents **putting away sin and starting over**. Thus, we may recognize that Christ, as the Omer of Grain, crushed and then presented to the Father for our purification and beginning again, is appropriately suggested in the Hebrew words for “eighth.” Additionally, as a diamond is tested under pressure, acid, and fire for its true beauty to be revealed, those who are redeemed will have come through as diamonds, **measured by the plumb line in an act of judgment, and sparked by the fire of the Holy Spirit for purification**. Thus, we find the spiritual significance of the “eighth” day experience implied within the original language itself. Furthermore, its application reaches beyond the perfect Saviour to His redeemed saints at last. Certainly, one may see that those who live to experience the Last Great Day of the Feast of Tabernacles (on the eighth day), will have also experienced the preparatory purification and judgment embodied in the word “eighth,” and the events of “eighth” days.

The “eighth” day was, likewise, the “first” day of the week, and “firsts” also have hidden significance. Notice the importance of this positional term:

- Matt. 26:17 *Now the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover? KJV*

The Scriptures Bible reads:

And on the first of Unleavened Bread the taught ones came to Yeshua, saying to Him, Where do You wish us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" "Day" was supplied in this text.

First - #4413 Protos: The superlative degree of pro. **First:** used of time (John 5:4; 1 Cor. 15:45, 47; 2 Tim. 4:16; Rev. 1:11, 17; 2:8); **former, before** (Complete Word Studies of the New Testament, by Spiros Zodhiates, page 953).

In the Matthew 26 text, we may notice that reading the text, as is rendered by the King James Version, the disciples would have been asking Jesus where He wanted to eat the Passover a day late! The explanation offered by Zodhiates indicates that the word "first" can mean "**formerly or before.**" With this knowledge, we may understand the text to mean that the disciples asked Jesus on the day of Passover, or before, where He wanted to eat the Passover, which came at the eve of the first day of Unleavened Bread. Thus understood, there is no discrepancy in the text. Here are some of the uses of the word "first" in Scripture:

John 5:4 Whoever went into the pool **first** after the waters were troubled would be made whole. [in the sense of prior to the others].

1 Cor. 15:45, 47 The **first** man Adam became a living being... [First, in the sense of being before all others.]

2 Tim. 4:16 At my **first** answer no man stood with me... [First, in the sense of being his former answer, or prior to other occasions.]

Rev. 1:11, 17 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the **first**, and the last... [First, in the sense of existing before all others.]

It may be noted that there is nothing sinister about the first day of the week. The beginning of the workweek, it was not a day of worship except on Pentecost. It is shocking that Bible translators have taken liberty with the actual Greek so as to render certain texts in harmony with tradition! The only way translators could arrive at the rendering they wanted for the "first day" resurrection texts, was to borrow a Semitic idiom!

If one looks up the word "idiom" in a dictionary, one will find the definition to read something like this:

Idiom: An expression of a given language in which a phrase holds a different meaning from the individual parts.

With that explanation in mind, re-read the resurrection passages. It is evident that the phrase "first day," as rendered in the resurrection accounts, is somewhat misleading.

Mark 14:12 *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover,*

His disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?

In later reckoning the Passover came to be regarded as Day One of the eight days of Unleavened Bread. (*The Scriptures*) This is reasonable because Passover was literally the evening of the first day of Unleavened Bread. Remember, the biblical reckoning of a day is from evening to evening.

Mark 16:2, 9 *And very early on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. (Vs 9) And having risen early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Miryam from Magdala, from whom He had cast out seven demons, (The Scriptures).*

Luke 24:1 *And on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared... (Ibid.)*

John 20:1, 19 *And on the first day of the week Miryam from Magdala came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb, (Ibid.)*

Again, the footnote appears after the term ‘first day of the week,’ reminding us that this phrase appears nowhere in the original manuscripts. If the New Testament was indeed written in Greek, it is odd that the actual words for “**one of the sabbaths**,” would be subjected to a different set of linguistic rules (Semitic idioms) in order to keep the traditions established by the Roman Church during the third to the fifth centuries.

Verse 19 *When therefore it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the taught ones met, for fear of the Jews...*

Eager to meet every argument, this research included every available concordance, since some discredit the *Strong’s Concordance* when it does not support their doctrine. Most concordances were surprisingly incomplete and/or obviously biased in favor of their denominational traditions. The complete search is found in Appendix 3, Page 97, for your perusal.

But, what about the “High Sabbath” teaching some of us had learned years ago? Was it off-track, also? If Jewish commentaries [The discrepancies between Christian commentaries had already left me dubious.] may be trusted to define their own term, here is what I found:

High Sabbath – The first day of the eight-day Festival of Ingathering. This day along with the next six, which make up the first seven days of the Festival of Ingathering, are also referred to as the Festival of Tabernacles...(Qadesh La Yahweh Press at www.yahweh.org)

[Hebrew Glossary](#)  ... ritual purification of the entire people. Shabbat Shabbaton, A Sabbath of Sabbaths or **High Sabbath**. Shabbat Shalom, <http://headcoverings-by-devorah.com/OrachChayim/HebglossSh.html>

Feast of Trumpets: [Lev. 23:23-25] God commanded Israel to keep a “High Sabbath” on the first day of the seventh month, by blowing a series of trumpets. Although the Scripture does not specify what this feast represents, it possibly looked forward to the fall of Jericho. In the days of Joshua, they were instructed to march around the city of Jericho seven days. Each day the trumpets were blown by the priests, but the people kept silent. On the last day, they marched around the city seven times with the seven priests blowing seven trumpets. When the last trumpet sounded, and the people raised a great shout, and the walls of the city fell flat. Is it a coincidence that Paul said we will be raised at the “last trumpet?” [1 Cor. 15:54]. <http://www.geocities.com/lasttrumpet-2000/theo/feastday.html>

High Sabbath: A reference to annual Sabbaths and holydays. Religious holidays. In the Hebrew Scriptures the seven annual Sabbaths, or **high days**, were holy days. <http://www.bibarch.com/glossary>

According to a number of Hebrew sources, the idea of a “High Sabbath” was not associated with a certain day of the week, but was so called because of the importance of the occasions in terms of the massive production with rituals of redemption for all. Jewish sources all agree that **all** first and last days of the annual Sabbaths were “High Sabbaths.” For certain, with all sources agreeing, a “High Sabbath” was **not** an annual Sabbath, which fell on the seventh-day Sabbath, as I had grown up believing.

According to the calendar on the next page, copied from “Yahweh Sacred Days” at Qadesh La Yahweh Press (<http://www.yahweh.org/sacred>), each of these main events began and ended with a High Sabbath, a Holy Convocation. Reviewing the Hebrew spring calendar in types and antitypes, we may note the following:

Passover: On the 10th day of the first month, Nisan [roughly corresponding to April on our calendar], every family of Israel was to separate a lamb without blemish from the flock. Then, on the 14th day **in the evening** the lamb was to be killed. The Passover feast followed around six in the evening. The event commemorated their deliverance from Egypt. But, we know it had, like all the other symbols and ceremonies, a prophetic meaning, as well.

Unleavened Bread: Following Passover [Lev. 23:6-8], the 15th of Nisan, began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It covered seven days, from the 15th to the 21st of Nisan. The first and last days of this week of festival days were “High Sabbaths.” These sabbaths could fall on any day of the week. The Feast of Unleavened Bread celebrated the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, when God fed them with manna from heaven and supplied water out of the rock. While looking back to that wilderness experience, it also looked forward to the life of Christ, Who was the Bread of Heaven, without leavening (sin). Prophetically, it

also expands the ages to the final generation when the people of Yahweh will depend on Him for bread and water during the final persecution before they enter the Heavenly Canaan.

Firstfruits (wave sheaf): During the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread, came a Sunday, the first day, or the eighth day, depending upon your perspective. In the year 31 CE, the year believed by many to be the crucifixion year, wave-offering Sunday fell on the 18th of Nisan, three days after Christ was crucified as the antitypical Lamb Offering, Peace Offering, and now we know, Wave Offering. Paul reminds us,

But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept...” See 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23.

Another point that needs to be shared in this study of the Three-Days-and Three Nights sign of Jonah, is the fact that the United States Naval Observatory records may be used to verify that in the years 31 CE, the Vernal Equinox fell on March 28, the next New Moon was seen on Wednesday, April 14, making Passover fall on April 25, also a Wednesday, with First Fruits following on the fourth day after it, a Sunday.

Because there is a growing number of Bible students who are coming to the belief that there is much evidence to favor the year 28 CE as the crucifixion year, the records for that year are herein included. The U. S Naval Observatory records show the Vernal Equinox to have fallen on Friday, March 28, the next New Moon on Wednesday, April 14, making Passover fall on April 28, in the year 28 CE.

Anyone may verify the above information at the following website:

<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/SpringPhenom.html>

Oddly enough, some who refer to NASA or the Naval Observatory for evidence of time lost or added in ages past, as noted in the record of Joshua and Hezekiah, choose to ignore or deny the accuracy of this source when it is used to verify that Messiah was indeed offered “in the midst of the week.” Yet, the U.S. Naval Observatory claims accuracy in their instruments and calculations to within one hundred-thousandth of a degree.

Today, we might liken the high days in the Lord’s Calendar to the church’s General Conference, or Youth Congress, with guests arriving from all over the world. The difference was that the High Sabbaths had been instituted by God, and were calculated by the Vernal Equinox and the New Moons, not by man’s decisions, or for his convenience. For the year 2004, for example, when the Gregorian Calendar was placed over the Hebrew festivals, it looked like the following:

Abib 1	New Year ¹	Mar. 21/22	Sunday/Monday	
Abib 14 (Nisan)	Passover ² Unleavened Bread	April 3/4	Sabbath/ Sunday	High Sabbath Holy Convocation
Abib 15	Unleavened Bread ³	April 4/5	Sunday/Monday	Festival
Abib 20	Unleavened Bread ⁴	April 9/10	Friday/Sabbath	Holy Convocation
Abib 21	Wave Sheaf Offering ⁵	April 10/11	Sabbath/Sunday	
Siwan 10	Pentecost (Feast of Weeks) ⁶	May 29/30	Sabbath/ Sunday	Festival/High day Holy Convocation
Tishri 1	Trumpets ⁷	Sept. 15/16	Wed/ Thursday	High Sabbath Holy Convocation
Tishri 10	Day of Atonement ⁸	Sept 24/25	Friday/ Sabbath	Holy Convocation High Sabbath
Tishri 15	Festival of Tabernacles ⁹	Sept 29/30	Wed/ Thursday	Festival Holy Convocation
Tishri 22	Feast of Ingathering (Last Great Day) ¹⁰	Oct. 6/7	Wed/ Thursday	Festival High Sabbath Holy Convocation

It is difficult to comprehend why God's people have gone after traditions of men while claiming to follow the Bible as their rule of creed. So, let us search for clues in history. The foregoing are some answers found. More of this search into ancient history will be found in Chapter 10.

As we have seen from word studies, the real division is between Sabbaths attached to "seventh's," and all other periods of sacred rest. The honest seeker for truth is faced with the fact that both kinds of rest days, whether weekly or yearly, have their purpose and value to keep the worshipper from Laodicean slumber, and from ignorance of salvational issues revealed in the types and antitypes, including those types found in the annual festivals.

¹The scriptural new year begins with the new moon of Abib from Jerusalem as stated in Isa. 2:3.

² Passover Day begins on the fourteenth of Abib, and is the first of seven days of unleavened bread.

³ This was a normal day, except for the inclusion of unleavened bread.

⁴ This was the seventh festival day of unleavened bread and Passover Week.

⁵ This day was to come after the seventh-day Sabbath, and was not a festival, High Sabbath, or holyday.

⁶ Fifty days from the Wave Sheaf Offering, came Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks; The Sivan date changed from year to year.

⁷The first day of the seventh month came Trumpets.

⁸ The Day of Atonement was on the tenth day of the seventh month. It was for fasting, not feasting.

⁹ This day began an eight-day festival called the Festival of Ingathering, or the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁰ The last day (The Last Great Day) of the eight-day festival of ingathering marked the end of the year.

Those who insist that Leviticus 23:11 is talking about the first day of Unleavened Bread (a sabbath), are ignoring the mathematical calculation complicated by the addition of two extra sabbaths in the seven weeks between Passover and Pentecost. Furthermore, they are disregarding the fact that two different words for “Sabbath” are used in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus: *Shabbath* 7676, in Lev. 23:3, 11, 15, 16, 32; and *Shabbathon* 7677, in Lev. 23:24, 39. Therefore, it is conclusive that the writer of these verses intended that the Wave Sheaf follow the rest day associated with sevens – the seventh-day Sabbath.

With a little study, one can see that the interpretation of the Wave Sheaf comes from tradition and defensive reasoning **alone**. For most Sabbath keepers, to avoid recognizing Sunday, the first day of the week, they must deny a fixed day for Wave Sheaf and Pentecost. The Orthodox Jews and Zionists do not keep the Wave Sheaf today. Some in Israel now keep a Sivan 6 Pentecost, which came from the traditions of the Pharisees in rabbinical Judaism, after the first Temple was destroyed.

As ironic as it sounds to many Sabbath-keepers, the early apostolic church kept Pentecost on a Sunday, even while the Jerusalem Jews were keeping a Sivan 6 Pentecost which migrated through the week! The Jews had changed, but the early Christian church lived by the Torah, an odd paradox, but suggestive of the fact that the instruction of the Torah is for every generation to the end of time.

The story of how traditions grew stronger while the Word of God was left for the scholars to tie in knots gets worse in the next chapter with grave implications for feast-keepers today.

From Jewish Apostasy to Roman Creed

Chapter 10

Religious truth is based on authority. Without authority one's faith is mere speculation. If one's understanding of truth is nothing more than fallible assumption, analytical guesswork, or human surmising, one person's idea is as good as another's. Religion is wasted and powerless when it is built on philosophical conjecture. "If the faith is nothing but what a man may or may not think it to be, it is nothing," asserts W.A Criswell in his book, *Why I Preach that the Bible Is Literally True* (page 181). In order for there to be genuine religion, there must first be a message from God, heard by a listening mind, and translated into a prescribed life. Has God spoken? Yes, through His inspired prophets and through His infallible Son.

The choice is ours. Will we look within ourselves for a revelation of authority? Will we, rather, look to the hierarchy of a fallible church to proclaim what is truth and what is falsehood? Or, as a third choice, will we submit our beliefs and behaviors to the standard of 'What doth the Bible say?' The latter is the only safe pursuit.

Recapping, let the reader be reminded that by the first century CE, the Jewish religion had long since shifted their seat of authority from the Word of God to personal speculation and church dogma. Truth had gone through many changes. The *halakah*, the traditions of the elders [When later written, these oral laws became known as the *Mishnah*], had come to be regarded as more authoritative than the written *Torah*.

In the days of Christ's first advent, the Pharisees sought to legitimize their own authority by claiming that Yahweh had authorized them to make laws as they saw fit. They asserted that God had invested in them the authority to interpret *Torah* for the common people. This claim and subversion of the public into compliance with their own man-made rules and dogmas was the basis for the popery that followed a few centuries later.

Furthermore, let the reader remember that a basic premise in Romanism is that a highly respected, religious person may add to, or change the Word of God. But the popes didn't originate that attitude. It had existed for centuries. Remember that the Pharisees had claimed Moses as their progenitor. They believed that whatever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven (Matthew 18:18), just as the popes have claimed in centuries following. Of course, when that Scripture is used to override the authority of God Almighty, the abuse is pure blasphemy and attempted treason.

In both cases, and others like them through the ages, men and women have believed that they were dependent upon a human mediator to lead them and feed them spiritually. Thus, like sheep, millions have been prepared for slaughter.

At first there was no reason to label the righteous as such, for when Israel took possession of Canaan, they were a holy nation, acting as a whole in obedience to their God. This unity

was short-lived, however. The false prophets began arising soon after Canaan had been settled. Notice how Jeremiah laments over the decline of Israel.

*And I [Elohim] brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the LORD? And they that handled the law knew me not: and **the prophets prophesied by Baal**, and walked after things that do not profit, Jer. 2:7,8.*

Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their heart, Jeremiah 14:14.

I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore, they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD, Jeremiah 23:32.

Other prophets of the Lord joined the protest against the self-appointed seers who used their charisma to route the public into complacency and trust in the arm of flesh.

*It shall be unto them as a false divination in their sight... Ezekiel. 21:23.
For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd, Zechariah 10:2.*

To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isaiah 8:20 .

The Almighty had warned Israel:

*If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God **proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul**, Deuteronomy 13:1-3.*

Yes, God Almighty watches the competition rage over your heart and soul to prove whether you will cling to the Word of God, or trust in the education and charisma of man.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, Matthew 7:15.

And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many, Matthew 24:11.

Throughout biblical history there was a tendency among the professed people of God to believe the comforting words of a false prophet, rather than the disquieting warnings of the messenger of Yahweh. The false prophet came bringing a message of rejoicing, while a true prophet gave the message of danger, peril, and a need for repentance.

The false prophet was not “false” by some sinister plot, but rather by self-assertion and self-confidence, which always recommends itself to the carnal heart. So, today, many messengers speak for the Lord God Almighty without having been given a message from heaven. Men follow, because the preacher, the prophet, or the teacher of new light has charisma, sounds plausible, and is believed by others who “should know.”

In this manner, and in every age, the majority have been led to place their confidence in the arm of flesh, rather than revelation through Scripture, where *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Peter 1:21.*

The first reference from the history of Israel, reporting the various sects which arose among them, comes more than two hundred years after the last of the Old Testament prophets had penned his warnings. At first there had been “one nation under God,” Israel. Next came the division of the tribes: Apostate Israel under Jeroboam, and Judah with Benjamin led by Rehoboam, who quickly followed Israel into idolatry. As the Hebrew nation split, so grew the distinctions between “liberals and conservatives,” “primitive and new theology,” “Torah-followers and Baal-compromisers,” until they were “one” again – except, they were then united in apostasy.

The priesthood was also split between two divisions: Sadducees (Zadokites) and Pharisees. Factions came on the scene, always rallying around a reformer. As the corporate body was led into apostasy, the reformer would lead away zealots to champion the cause of God Almighty and His *Torah*, as they interpreted the Word.

The family of Zadok had argued with the “Pharis-ites” over what we today have labeled “righteousness by faith verses righteousness by works.” The original question, it seems, was, “When does the follower of Yahweh get his/her reward?”-in this life, or the next? The family of Zadok (later, called Sadducees) contented that we are rewarded in this life for following Yahweh. In other words, “righteousness contains its own reward,” or “doing good is good to do because it is good.”

The Sadducee said, “Live right before God because it is right, and you will enjoy God’s blessings now.” They became the philanthropists of the ancient world, many becoming rich like Abraham centuries before them. Wealth, to them, was the blessed reward for right-doing.” While they proudly held to what they claimed was the pure word from Moses, the *Torah*, most were corrupted by their wealth, making it easy for their religious ardor to ferment as wine. They became intoxicated with their own “superiority.”

Noting that history repeats itself may help us to compare the issues from the past to the concerns of the present. In doing so, some will awaken to serious dangers otherwise thought to be innocuous.

Two rival groups dominated Jerusalem when the Messiah walked those streets. The Sadducees were the best known of a few groups (sects) of Jews who rejected the oral *Torah* and the books added after the prophets. They followed a more biblical method for ascertaining God's calendar than the Rabbis, or Pharisees, although they did not believe in a literal resurrection.

The Pharisees had set themselves up by political connection with Rome. Caiphas, son-in-law of Annas the retired High Priest at the time of Christ, was himself not of Hebrew descent. Yet, he was made High Priest in the stead of his father-in-law. We are told by contacts in Jerusalem that none of the laws or edicts made by Caiphas during his short time as religious leader in Jerusalem were ever passed by the Sanhedrin. Not a one, except the condemnation of Christ. The very idea of a non-Jew, non-Levite, being appointed High Priest shows the magnitude of the apostasy that existed among this ruling class. Although Christ called the Pharisees "blind guides" in Matthew 23, they were given power by Rome. Thus, authorized, they had license to lead the people wherever they willed.

The Sadducees, who had known more power during the post-Second Temple period, and who followed the *Torah* without additions, escaped such scathing denunciations as were heaped on the Pharisees by the Son of God. It had been because the Sadducees followed the *Torah* as it had been written by Moses, that they became the ruling, or dominant, custodians of the Jewish priesthood through the first century BCE. But, they were not without error in some respects. Christ told the Sadducees who spoke with Him that they were in error not knowing the Scripture regarding the doctrine of rewards in heaven and eternal life. One Karaite teacher from Jerusalem explained to me that those Sadducees, who disbelieved in a heaven and an eternal reward, were a minority sect among the *Torah* keepers in the time of Christ.

Upon coming to power over the Hellenistic World, the Caesars selected the high priests to govern the Jewish people in Palestine, particularly in Jerusalem. It is not surprising that the Roman emperors chose puppet-leaders from among the sect who had the most in common with the Roman religion. The Roman religion was a pagan, works-oriented religion, with rituals, icons, and idols, much as the Greeks had honored.

Other sects arose during the first and second century BCE so that, by the time the Messiah was born, there were quite a number of conflicting groups in and around Jerusalem and Samaria. There is no record that Christ ever addressed any of them except the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Each generation of growing compromise has been met with resistance to that compromise. Thus, anciently, various sects appeared among the Jewish people. Each new group was given a label, to distinguish between those thought to be holding the compromised view from those having the truth directly from the *Torah*, the apostate from the righteous. At

each new crisis, another sect would be formed to protect what each group believed was “The Truth.” Such groups appeared as the Sadducees, Pharisees, Herodians, Zealots, Boethusians, Ananites, Essenes, Karaites, and others. Each sect believed they had the right message. They were as competitive and divided as Christians denominations have ever been.

The Pharisees, who had come to power in Jerusalem after the Romans conquered the city, taught that a second “Oral” *Torah* had been authorized by the priestly fathers. This *halakat* consisted of the oral interpretation of ordinances derived from the “traditions of the elders,” and defined elaborately the regulations for obeying the Law of Moses. They further taught that the teachings of a highly respected teacher were to be regarded as “divinely inspired,” or “authorized.” Their counsel and writings were elevated to become the interpreters of Scripture. Thus, some Jews came to regard the *halakat* as more important than the written *Torah*.

Furthermore, the Pharisees, with their thousands of laws by which to control the populace, had more in common with the philosophy of the Roman times. Even today, textbooks exonerate Ancient Rome for giving the world the matrix of modern government: Roman Law.

The Pharisees had not been in power long when the Messiah was born in Bethlehem. Suffice it to say, because the Pharisees claimed religious power, people gave them power. Of course, it was enforced by Rome until new crises arose between Rome and the Turks in later centuries. Christ rebuked these self-important law-givers among His people, and warned the people not to follow their teachings or ways. See Appendix 5 for further information about the comparison study made, comparing the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

The Pharisees taught that they were the rightful proprietors of the Law, and that the Law was written so far in their distant past that they had to make it practical for the people to be able to apply it. Few people at that time ever learned to read. Young men who were fortunate enough to be given an education, memorized the law and judgments of God, the *Torah*. The Pharisees further taught that they had license from Yahweh to not only interpret Scripture, but also add to it, as they deemed necessary.

The Pharisees soon required that the people call them “Rabbis.” They dropped the name Pharisees after the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, except when remembering historical events from the Second Temple period. So, today, if you consult the literature of the Rabbis, you are getting your information from the Pharisees post temple-destruction (70AD), -a weak source of truth as it had been given to Moses.

With such scathing rebukes heaped upon them (See Appendix 5, page 104), it is baffling to see feast-keepers today acknowledge them as authority on anything of a religious nature. Why would we today choose to use their calendar and altered reckonings in areas where the Bible is clearly in opposition to their teachings? Yet, those who teach that Pentecost can fall on any day of the week are basing their assumptions on the apostate sect of the Jews who treasure tradition above the Word of God!

Those who continue to follow the Rabbis, ignoring both the words of Christ, and the command of Jehovah to Moses (Lev. 23:11, 15,16), do so supported by a statement made by the Saviour to the multitude and His disciples:

The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore what they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. (Matt.23:2-3).

By this one statement in the King James Version, dissenters to the *Torah*-keepers justify their rejection of the command of Jehovah and the Prophecy of Christ from His own words. But we must not for a moment think that the Messiah is commending, even recommending, the Scribes and Pharisees with all their exactions. What is the Saviour really saying (according to the Hebrew here)?

“The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Don’t listen to them; listen to Moses and do what he says, not as they do.”

That is how the text reads in the Hebrew scroll of Matthew. Furthermore, it was not Christ’s purpose to challenge the teachings of Moses; but He actively denounced the traditions of the Pharisees. It seems evident from the context that He is focusing attention on the fact that their lives are inconsistent with their profession in their self-appointed authority. It is still doctrinely dangerous to follow them.

The Sadducees, by escaping Christ’s scathing rebukes, may be recommended as having remained closer to the truth than the Rabbis (Pharisees) during the early centuries of the common era. While He rebuked the Pharisees for their self-righteousness (Matt. 5:20), for having condemned the guiltless (Matt. 12:7), for haughty blindness (Matt. 15:14), for taking the seat of Moses to dispense and make up laws they themselves didn’t follow (Matt 23:2-4), for love of display, and power, and pretended piety (Matt. 23:5-7), for lack of pity for the widows and orphans (Matt. 23:14), and numerous other corruptions, Christ’s rebuke to the Sadducees seems mild by comparison.

For centuries the contest raged between sects, even beyond the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, until the Sadducees fled to secluded hideaways, the beaten minority holding at least two unpopular doctrines: Pentecost must be determined by the barley harvest after the Vernal Equinox, and fall on a first day of the week; and, there is no assurance of life beyond the grave, a doctrine we know to be unscriptural, although only scantily presented in the Old Testament.

Then, there were the Essenes (a.k.a. the “Dead Sea Sect”) who added several books to their collection of the “Bible” beyond what most Protestants carry. Nonetheless, they preserved the ancient manuscripts in clay pots, later found in caves above the shore of the Dead Sea, leaving for the world a marvelous legacy of proof that the Bible is true. The Essenes had held to the “pure faith” of their Father Abraham. So they claimed. They chose to live in communes in the desert, away from worldly pressures on their children, away from the corruption of the Greco-Roman immorality, and away from the spurious teaching of the

Pharisees coming to power in Jerusalem. There is some evidence that John the Baptist was sent with his mother to live among the Essenes while Zechariah served in the temple at Jerusalem.

According to *Messianic Jew*, Rabbi Michael Rood of “A Rood Awakening,” it was this arrangement that gave protection to the child John when the Roman soldiers, prompted by the High Priest in Jerusalem, came looking for the prophesied Christ child. The lives of both John and Jesus were in danger when the death decree went through the land to kill all babes up to the age of two. Rabbi Rood claims that the soldiers’ failure to find either child is what brought about the death of Zacharias as he served between the porch and the altar (Luke 11:51).

There is some evidence that the Essenes, Boethusians, and Sadducees continued to co-exist after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. Writings of the Essenes have appeared as late as the tenth century. References to the Sadducees and Boethusians continued in post-70 CE literature, as well, so we may know that they survived into the Early Christian Era.

In their zeal to preserve the Scriptures, however, the Essenes in later years preserved all ancient writings; some we hold as apocryphal books. They also added a few of their own writings to the Bible in later centuries. As a result, they took up practices which do not originate in our Bible.

One such practice was following a solar calendar. Living in the desert, they had no barley harvest, so they, of some necessity, took up the secular calendar promoted by the Egyptians, and later the Babylonians, followed by the Romans. It was the most widely recognized calendar, so they joined in, rather than endure the confusion that two differing calendars had caused. This subject merits more attention than the thesis of this treatise permits.

Following the *Torah*, as both the Sadducees and the Boethusians had done, the first record of Karaites on the scene appeared during the early centuries of the Common Era. They continued the teachings of Moses and the keeping of the *Torah* with its commandments, statutes, and judgments, without additions. The Karaites had no extra writings added to their Scriptures, and no oral law. According to Nehemia Gordon, a Karaite from Jerusalem, and authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jews who would dare to possess any portion of the New Testament were under the threat of death. The Rabbinite priests would turn them over to the Romans for punishment.

The Karaite Jews are important in this study for more reasons than just their adherence to the Leviticus 23 instruction for the wave offering on the day after the Sabbath. But this people became important to early SDA’s because Seventh-day Adventist pioneers used the ancient Karaite calendar to calculate their important date of October 22, 1844, as the antitypical Day of Atonement.

Indeed, the Boethusians, the Sadducees, and later the Karaites, were essentially the same group with different names at different periods of history. What they held in common was

a strict adherence to the *Torah* and a careful keeping of the lunar calendar for their religious observances.

The Pharisees, on the other hand, who, by the second century, were being called Rabbis, might have remained in obscurity and disrepute after the Roman siege of Jerusalem, but for some writers like Josephus who joined the Romans while trying to remain a Pharisee.

Their laws and oral traditions were finally gathered into what is known as the *Talmud* about 200 years after Christ. The *Talmud* was a collection of Rabbinic writings consisting of the *Mishnah* and the *Gemara*. The *Mishnah* was the first section of the *Talmud*. It consisted of the collection of oral interpretations of the scriptures that had been written down in the second and third century CE. Before 200 CE, it had been passed down by word of mouth. The *Gemara* was the second section of the *Talmud*, consisting primarily of commentary on the *Mishnah*. These rules, statutes, and explanations were greatly influenced by the years the Jews had spent in Babylon.

This section, the *Gemara*, was increased in volume through the centuries, as various rabbis put their own “spin” on the traditions recorded in the first section. The Karaites Jews ridiculed the Rabbinic Jews (10th Century) for following man-made traditions, as it had become glaringly obvious that there was little agreement among the rabbis on the correct interpretation of Scripture or their oral traditions.

When the Islamic Empire swept the Middle-East in the seventh century, the Jews were granted freedom to maintain their religious practices. During the third to the fifth centuries the Rabbis (then called Rabbinites) had collected and refined their religion into what became known as the *Babylonian Talmud*. With their revived power during the seventh century, the Rabbinites began to impose this *Talmud* on every Jew in the Empire.

Resistance to the Rabbinites was fierce; bloodshed was the result, but the Rabbinites and their *Talmud* seemed unstoppable, until the eighth century when a glimmer of hope appeared. Anan ben David, a shrewd leader, organized anti-Talmudic declarations and lobbied the Muslim government to establish a second Exilarchate, which allowed the anti-Talmudic Jews the freedom to practice their religion and be separate from the Rabbinites. This was the group known as the Karaites. They have been acclaimed for their accurate, meticulous records, and Mosaic Calendar.

Papal Rome came to power a little before the struggling Jewish factions began fighting the imposition of the *Talmud*, and about the time the early Christian converts of the first evangelists (descendants with the Apostles’ creed) began tangling with the numerous barbaric practices of the Eastern Religions. Buddhism formed the basis then for what was to become known as Theosophy in the 1800’s, better known today as “New Age” theology.

Certainly, every wind of doctrine and deception was rampant during the early to middle ages. The popes continued what the Rabbis had begun: **They created their own laws and passed them off as divinely inspired.**

In every age there have been the liberals and the conservatives, the broad-minded in the broad way; the narrow, Bible-believer in the straight way. The liberals have design their own rules and tenets of faith, while the more conservative believers have adhered as closely as possible to the original Word, although often being caught in legalism as they pushed farther and farther away from the liberal-minded, “free-grace” factions.

The Roman-Papal leadership of the third to the fifth centuries, one by one, dropped the festivals of Yahweh. It was said to have been “advisable” so as to influence, and perhaps convert, the heathen. Persecution had never let us since the days of Stephen, but some decades were worse than others. Nonetheless, the hatred of the Jews turned into a disregard for the Old Testament and severe punishment for anyone who didn’t give up their “Jewish” ways. Compromise preceded concession, followed by more conflict, as new groups split off to withdraw from the influence and apostasy of the Roman Catholic power.

The Karaite Jews were the conservative descendants of those who had preserved the ways of ancient Israel under the guidance of Moses. They, in the thirteenth century, called for a revival of “primitive godliness,” returning to the old paths blazed by Israel and led by the Prophet Moses. But, the struggle was fierce; many gave up their distinctive doctrines; others hid with hunted Christians, or were slain as the crusaders swept through their hideouts.

Papal Rome, by forcing the Christians to accept her dogmas, and by putting to death those who clung to the Bible truths passed down generation by generation, had by the sixteenth century seemed to have wiped apostolic Christianity from the earth. Yet, there is ample evidence to show that the holidays of our Creator, set in motion from the Creation of the world, were preserved by the few who hid in the region of Translavia, in southeastern Europe.

Now we are faced with the job of unraveling the twisted “yarns,” intertwined with threads of truth. One of the arguments against the fixed days for Wave Sheaf and Pentecost, for example, is that the Catholic Church substituted Easter for Passover and fixed it on a Sunday, instead of the 14th of Nisan. But, the two events are not equated. Be reminded that Passover, on the 14th day of Abib, or Nisan, is calculated by the sighting of the first crescent moon after the Vernal Equinox. It has nothing to do with the fixed calculation of the Wave Sheaf Offering on the day after the seventh-day Sabbath. Here is another case of mixing up apples with oranges.

Passover was the day Christ died; Easter was supposedly the day of His resurrection. By moving the celebration to the Sunday after Passover, it was said to be honoring His resurrection, while attempting harmony with the heathen customs associated for centuries with orgies and human sacrifice to the fertility goddess, or queen of heaven (Ezekiel 8:9, 14).

At first, Sunday was kept only once a year – Easter. Later, the Sun-day celebration was held every week. As noted in the *SDA Bible Commentary*, Volume 9, Page 362, even

Polycarp, apostle of John the Revelator, kept Passover on the 14th of Nisan, in spite of Roman edicts:

There is also John, who lay on the Lord's breast...And there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both bishop and martyr, and Thrasesas, both bishop and martyr...All these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, never swerving, but following according to the rule of the faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed...I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture, am not afraid of threats, for they have said, who were greater than I, "It is better to obey God rather than men."

It should be clear to the reader that Passover was four days before Wave Sheaf. It was **Passover** that was fixed by the Roman Catholic Church to be kept on Sundays thereafter. Thus, Passover-crucifixion and Sabbath-sundown resurrection have been replaced by one event, commanded by Papal Rome, on the first day of the week, Sunday: Easter. They didn't need to tamper with Pentecost for it had always been fixed on the first day of the week, by the command of Elohim. To avoid honoring what Satan usurped (placing his power in the "mount of the congregation" in "the sides of the north"), even Sabbath-keepers have fled from the commands of the Almighty, lest they be seen as honoring the commands of Rome. In avoiding the first day of the week Wave Offering starting point for the count-down to Pentecost, many feast-keepers have repeated the error of Protestants today: They have rejected what Jehovah commanded in order to avoid appearing "Jewish."

But the treason against the sacred Scriptures does not end there. According to modern "sentinels on the wall," Roman popery's efforts to stamp out the Sabbath of the fourth commandment have never ended. Rome never changes; she simply alters her guise. Her efforts against the seventh-day Sabbath are as active today as in the Middle Ages when millions lost their lives for adhering to the Word of God above human dogmas.

But what does all that history of the attacks on the Sabbath have to do with the subject of this treatise? Here is how they connect: In the late 1980's and early 1990's the position of the World Wide Church of God capitulated from Sabbath to Sunday. A large portion of their membership and clergy split off from their church. Seventh-day Adventist took little note of the fact. After all, some thought, they were not the "true church," anyway, so what could you expect from those who don't have the whole truth? Few realize that this major apostasy into tradition has great significance.

According to sources, who must remain anonymous for security purposes, this event was the result of "an experiment," or trial run" in ridding the modern world of Sabbath-keeping. It was completely successful. A former Andrews University professor who boasts of being the only SDA to receive a doctoral degree from the "Great Gregorione," as he puts it, was commissioned to take the feast days to the World Wide Church of God. Seventh-day Adventist are now the targeted entity. This same professor and writer has been working to start up feast keeping groups in Southern California and across the nation. As with the World Wide Church of God, well-trained in the Seven Annual Sabbaths of the Lord, then

led their Bible-believing members to elevate the annual festivals to equality with the seventh-day Sabbath, the campaign has begun in Adventism. From the stance of accepting the annual feast Sabbaths as being solely lunar, these Christians were subjecting the seventh day Sabbath to a lunar calendar. It was as if all Sabbaths, weekly and yearly, were all in one package, since they are placed together in the Sabbath chapter in Leviticus (23). Let it be known to the reader that this writer believes in keeping all the appointments of the Lord God Almighty, but to make them equal in every sense to the seventh-day Sabbath is not biblical.

Today there is a plan in effect to reduce the name “Seventh-day Adventist” to simply “Adventist.” Celebration doctrine (from Rome) has placed the feet of the liberal, sin-loving sector of the Seventh-day Adventist Church securely on the path back to Rome. The New Theology with its tolerance for sin has gathered in the minds of the “middle-roaders.” So what can influence those radical *Torah*-followers? Elevate the annual Sabbaths to be kept as **equal** with the seventh-day Sabbath as a **sign of sanctification**. That was the “bait.” The “switch” came when they were led into the “Lunar Sabbath Movement.” This technique called “Bait and Switch” worked on the World Wide Church of God. Thereby their church was broken up and significantly weakened. Now this technique is slated to work on feast-keepers among the Seventh-day Adventists. For some, it already has.

Those will be marked who resist the persuasive charisma of trained teachers of *Torah*. Friend, you must know the Word, live by the Word, and be ready to endure persecution for the Sacred Word. Only those who know the complete Word of God will stand through the last great deception.

So Who Gets the Last Word?

Chapter 11

When tradition usurps Scripture, who gets the last word in your heart, Dear Reader? That is a vital question for each of us to answer, for it reveals where our loyalties lie: **Will we stand for the right though the heavens fall? Or, will we modify our beliefs to fit the Western, secular mind? Will we live by EVERY word that proceedeth from the mouth of Jehovah, regardless of the price in this life? Or, will we join the crowd who follows the leader into adapting the Scriptures to fit modernization or tradition, on the broad road to perdition?**

Will we sing the motto: **“God said it and I believe it, and that settles it?”** Or will we take a more modern, pragmatic approach to religious thought? Will we build our faith on the shifting sand of philosophical, or even theological, opinion? Will our revelation of God and His Infallible Word be subjected to errant man, or personal preference? Will we constrict our faith to match the revealed will of Yahweh, or will we broaden our faith to tolerate, then accept, then endorse and promote the more liberal-minded, philosophical “love” of Love and Brotherhood?

When laws are made that command obedience to a religious power, which makes obedience to Yahweh appear rebellious, will we allow fear of being misunderstood, or harangued in court, or severely punished, to cloud our reason? Many will never have to face that pressure, for they will have intellectually submitted their destiny to their church “leadership” before that test is given. When the issues between loyalty to God and compliance with rational legitimacy collide, will fear of prejudice, make compromise seem negotiable?

The love of God (evidenced by loyalty to Him) casts out fear (1 John 4:18); the two are completely incompatible. **We cannot love God while fearing what will happen to us if we reveal that love in obedience and loyalty by faith in His revealed Word.**

To Christ’s question, *“When I return, will I find faith on the earth?”* (Luke 18:8), the implication is negative. The question suggests that faith will be waning from the earth when He returns. The number for the word “faith” is 4102:

Pistis, -Being persuaded, faith, belief. In general it implies such a knowledge of, assent to, and confidence in certain divine truths, especially those of the gospel, as produces good works. (*Lexical Aids to the New Testament*)

Pistis: persuasion, i.e. credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher, especially reliance upon Christ for salvation. (*Strong’s Complete Greek Dictionary*)

Matt. 8:10 *I have not found so great **faith**, no not in Israel*

there is a sickness that immobilizes most minds. The Bible calls it blindness, “spiritual blindness.”

Can one even imagine the certain disaster that would result from a motorist driving through San Francisco at rush hour, suddenly overcome by physical blindness, yet believing the hallucination that he is in control of his faculties? And what a panic would result if somehow someone could awaken him (or her) to the true nature of his peril! Recognizing the predictable panic that would result, has kept thousands of ministers quiet, even though they know the TRUTH!

Deceptions are surrounding us all. Our only safety is in the Word, and in His Hand of protection. When apparitions and miracles confront you, Dear Reader, who will get the last word? Today the aberrations of Mary are increasing at an alarming rate. When you witness this miraculous manifestation yourself, will you trust your senses? After all, these incredible events are sent to convert the world to Christ. That is their message, we are told. In South America. There has arisen a deliverer who calls himself Jesus Christ. The internet offers CD’s and DVD’s and full-sized, colored pictures of the man. It is reported (January 2007) that he is sweeping that continent into belief by his marvelous teachings and miracles.

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect, Matthew 24:24.

The elect, Dear Reader, will be those who “sigh and cry for the abomination done in (spiritual) Israel,” who “follow the Lamb wheresoever He goes,” who test every utterance by a “to-the-Law-and-to-the-Testimony.” The worrisome problem, to me, is the subtle shift already taking place among God’s professed people. Trust and loyalty has shifted to the authority figure, to the Church (whatever church doesn’t matter here), or pioneer leaders. The insidious deception is found in listening to “interpreters” rather than the Voice of God directly through the Scriptures!

In 1 Kings 11-13 and 2 Chronicles 12-13, one may read the sad story. It has been included here as a warning to be applied to these last days. The story of the disobedient man of God teaches a message that should be heeded by all. The consequences borne out in the account are no less life threatening today. Read the story as if you were there. It contains an admonition for us living in the end of time.

First Kings and Second Chronicles tell the story of the old man prophet in apostate Israel who told the man of God from Judah that the Lord said for him to come to the old man’s house. The old man was a prophet in backslidden Israel; he gave a false message, but said it was from the Lord. The man of God lost his life over believing a **contradictory message**, said to be from God. The same experience will certainly happen again today for those who allow any message to supercede the Word of God, as revealed to the student of Scripture.

While every wind of doctrine is blowing, the enemy of souls is on the rampage to destroy our walk of obedient faith. We will be tested, as was the unfaithful messenger. Read it in 1 Kings 12. A solemn warning, indeed!

Solomon had left the Lord God, Elohim, to serve Molech, the abomination of Moab (1 Kings 11:6-8). For the evil done by Solomon and his household, prophecy indicated that the kingdom would be taken from him (1 Kings 11:30-38). Only for David's sake, would Rehoboam inherit control of Judah and Benjamin. Unfortunately, Rehoboam acted as a tyrant over Israel and the ten tribes revolted. Solomon then sought to kill Jeroboam, the chosen leader of the revolting tribes (11:40), despising the prophecy that had come to his throne. How glorious his kingdom; how ponderous its rebellious end!

Jeroboam was coming up to fall-feast time, and he was not willing to send his people back to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Trumpets in a hostile environment; furthermore, he and his people enjoyed the added excitement associated with the attention given to foreign gods. Thus, Jeroboam had set up a golden calf! [How could he have forgotten the first gold calf experience? –the one in the Wilderness (Exodus 32-33) when God would have destroyed the whole nation had not Moses “stood in the gap”!]

To prevent the ten tribes from making the journey to Jerusalem for the fall feasts, he turned to the propaganda ploy of promised pleasure and “interdenominational” religious “togetherness” with his neighbors. It was the “tolerance” issue of his day, gone too far, no doubt. The dynamic is repeated today every Christmas and Easter, but it seems so much more innocent now.

He ordained a feast at Bethel, a mock festival of Trumpets. In this manner, he hoped to attract the people to his feast so they would not go up to Jerusalem to the solemn Feast of Trumpets. Thus, in the spirit of spite and revenge and careless blindness, he tried to win the support and affection of more people away from Rehoboam. See 1 Kings 12:32-33. Such was the setting for the tragedy that befell the man of God from Judah.

Israel was divided over this temptation. The old prophet in Israel refused to go to Jeroboam's abominable feast. It was not on the actual day of Trumpets, nor was it held in an authorized location, nor was it led by godly leaders, nor was it exclusively for the One True God. But the younger people saw nothing sinister in a little celebration; so it was that the old prophet's sons went to the ceremony and festivities while the old prophet stayed home.

Then came a man of God out of Judah (13:1) who gave a prophecy against the golden calf that was set up in Bethel for their festival (12:32). He cried aloud:

O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. 1 Kings 13:2

This man of God from Judah had been given directions to go to Bethel, deliver the Word of the Lord, and return “straight home.” He was not to stop to eat or drink with anyone in the land of the apostate tribes. So, when Jeroboam heard what the man had cried against the altar (1 Kings 13:2), he, pointing, shouted for those nearby to lay hold on the man of God (verse 4), but his outstretched hand withered, and the altar was rent just as the man of God had given as a sign (See verse 3). Jeroboam then cried to be healed, asking the man of God to pray that YHWH would restore his hand. With all the crowds of people witnessing these events, Jeroboam then invited the man to dine with him, as if in gratitude.

And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place, verse 8.

The man of God hastened on his way, following the command of Elohim, and the people went home. The two sons of the old prophet also went home. They told their father all that had transpired (vs. 11-12) at the celebration. The old prophet wanted to meet the man of God from Judah who had been so bold against so many, even the majority. The sons saddled the old prophet’s ass, and he was off to overtake the messenger.

Are you the man of God that came from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. (vs. 14-15).

When the man of God repeated the instruction he had received directly from the Lord, the old prophet answered his objections with these words:

I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him (13:18).

One may know that the old prophet was truly a prophet of Yahweh, because after he had lied to the man of God from Judah, the word of the Lord really came to him and he delivered a true message:

Foreasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulcher of thy fathers (1 Kings 13:21-22).

We could focus on the ease with which someone who claimed to be a messenger of Yahweh turned aside to follow someone else who claimed to be His prophet. That folly certainly teaches an important lesson to learn from this experience. There is another lesson from this story, however, that specifically relates to this knotty issue, at least at its

foundation: **What do we do with the words of a prophet when they contradict the revealed Word of God?**

Paul warned us this could happen again. It apparently was not uncommon.

Paul warns against false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, 2 Corinthians 11:13, 14

Isaiah had centuries before reminded the true Israelite:

Bind up the testimony; seal the law among my disciples. To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them, Isaiah 8:16, 20.

Indeed, we would not have confusion over the three-days-and-three-nights scripture had we clung to the law (*Torah*- the first five books written by Moses), held a correct view of “prophets” and “messengers of the Lord,” and proved all teachings by the **Scriptures (See Appendix 6, Page 107). In the tragic events that led to the death of the man of God from Judah we may find insights and warnings for our day, warnings that cut across strong feelings imbedded in icons of long-held beliefs.**

We may assume that both men in our biblical account were loyal to Jehovah. The old prophet in Bethel didn't go to the blasphemous ceremonies. He would have nothing to do with worshipping false gods. No doubt he was deeply grieved by the apostasy so blatant and shameless about him, but he was of a tribe that had valued the seed of David more than the Seed of David. His tribe had joined the United Nations and the World Council of Churches of his day. Then too, he may have felt “all alone” among brethren. Where were the seven thousand who hadn't bowed a knee to Baal? –Certainly not where he could see them.

When his sons excitedly told him about the man of God from Judah who had boldly prophesied against the altar to Baal which Jeroboam had set up to celebrate heathen deity, the old prophet must have longed to meet such a man of conviction. Perhaps he hoped to gain some encouragement from another with his special calling, one with more courage than he himself possessed. When the sons continued the story, telling about Jeroboam's fury, his withered hand, his subsequent change of attitude toward the man of God, and the miracle-healing of Jeroboam's hand, the old prophet's heart must have “burned within him” to fellowship with the messenger.

It seems apparent that the old prophet may have become somewhat self-confident and lax himself, however, for when told the instructions the man of God was to follow, he should have respected the word, however personally disappointing. Had he been accustomed to virtue and reverence, he would have. He had a desire to honor Yahweh, his Adonai; but, like Eli before him, he lacked the character to stand boldly against evil in his sons and in his nation. A visit with the man of God might bring him fortitude. He meant the man of

God no harm, but he must look out for his own needs and interests, too. His own heart was in need of encouragement right then.

The man of God from Judah, on the other hand, had great respect for the calling. He obeyed, uncompromisingly. With boldness he spoke the fate of the faithless pleasure-seekers at Bethel. But, when someone of an esteemed higher position and greater authority in Israel gave a contradictory message, his heart and good manners deferred to the older prophet. He respected his elders according to the statutes.

Today, and in every generation the test is given. How do we rank the Bible, the revealed Word of God, in the presence of a skilled theologian, or a messenger of the Lord who has been revered for generations? When the message is in error, do we reject that spurious message and remain steadfast in the Scriptures? Or, like the man of God from Judah, are we prone to trust the later counsel as “the last word” on the subject.

Thousands of Adventists are doing just that, in spite of “The Messenger’s” own counsel to take the Bible and the Bible only as a standard for right (See Appendix 6, p. 107). When the explanations and interpretation conflict with clear Bible exegesis, many today cling to the contemporary teaching as if it were a “**correction**” to the message God has already given in Scripture. By allowing anyone, regardless of rank, to undo what the Bible says, many are blindly preparing for grave deceptions while believing that following the “old prophet” is following an “up-dated” version of His commands.

The old prophet in the book of First Kings wore the label of “prophet” because he had given in the past the straight testimony of Yahweh. We may say that he, in this instance, abused his authority by speaking what was not a direct message from the Lord while claiming that it was from God. He was human. He later confessed his wrong, requesting that he be buried on the bones of the man of God. He apparently regretted his lapse into self-aggrandizement over his position, age advantage, and sage authority.

The parallel for us lies in the **test** that came to the one who had heard the voice of God, but turned aside to listen to a human voice. How steadfast are you, Dear Reader, in the Word of God?

Those who have heard (through Scripture and the Holy Spirit) the warnings should take heed:

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, Hebrews 2:1

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God...If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance... Hebrews 6:4-6

Paul must have felt the weight of great responsibility on his shoulders when he wrote:

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed –anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment!
Galatians 1:8, Amplified Version.

Certainly, Paul did not anticipate that he would be teaching any error, but that the messages believed by the listeners must be in harmony with the revealed Word of God. Even the “very elect” are in danger of falling prey to the persuasive teachers who lead others away (See Matthew 24:24). Praise Yahweh, He will not leave His chosen people without clear light on the pathway to follow.

And thine ear shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left, Isaiah 30:21.

What would it take to dislodge your footing in the Word? Could principalities (746 *Arche*, rule or authority)? Could powers (1849 *Exousia*, executive permission, right, or liberty)? Could the rulers of the darkness of this world, if they appear with miracles as angels of dazzling light? Could spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. 6:12), when that wickedness purposes to “enlighten” you, and is so disguised as to artfully confuse your mind and ensnare your soul? Who gets the last word then, Dear Reader?

Just as the Protestant Reformation was driven by an urgency to return to the literal interpretation of Scripture, so today a Latter Day Reformation must nudge us back to a hunger and thirst for the literal Word. **The Word must be craved, heard, believed, embraced, and lived.** In the words of the Reformer, John Calvin,

“Let us know that the true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning. Let us embrace and abide it resolutely. It is the first business of an interpreter to let the author say what he does say instead of attributing to him what **we think** he ought to say.”

If the Sacred Scriptures were studied and followed, the Christian would be fortified to meet the wily foe; but the Word of God is neglected, and disaster and defeat follow. {*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 210.2} None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test. Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable Word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? {*Great Controversy*, 1888, 593-594} Emphasis supplied.

The “knotty issue” of the Crucifixion-Resurrection Controversy is, at its foundation, **a test**. Will we believe the Word of God in flesh? He gave us His Sign. Or, will we qualify His Words by the testimony of human interpreters? **Who gets the last word in small issues will determine who gets the last word in the Grand Finale.**

Shabbath verses Shabbathon

Appendix 1

Objective: To determine the Sabbath for counting to Pentecost from the Wave Sheaf Offering, which was offered the day after a Sabbath, -annual Sabbath, or 7th day Sabbath?

<i>Shabbath – 7676</i>	<i>Shabbathon – 7677</i>
<p><i>“The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week. The sacred seventh year; a sabbatical year. The Sabbath was a covenant sign of God’s authority.” [The Complete Word Study: Old Testament, p. 2370]</i></p>	<p><i>“It means a sacred time of rest, a great or solemn sabbath. The term applies to the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Trumpets, and the first and eighth days of Tabernacles. The ending indicates that it is an abstract noun.” [Ibid.]</i></p>
<p>Ex. 16:23 Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath. [7th day]</p> <p>16:25 for today is a Sabbath unto the LORD. [7th day]</p> <p>16:26 on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath [7th day]</p> <p>16:29 for that the LORD hath given you the Sabbath [7th day]</p> <p>20:8 Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. [7th day]</p> <p>20:10 The seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God. [7th day]</p> <p>20:11 wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day [7th day]</p> <p>31:13 Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep for it is a sign [context suggests 7th days]</p> <p>31:14 Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore, for it is holy [7th day]</p> <p>31:15 Whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day... [7th day]</p> <p>31:16 The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath... (17) for it is a sign. [7th day]</p> <p>35:2 a holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. [7th day]</p> <p>35:3 throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day. [7th day]</p>	<p>Lev.23:24 the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath</p> <p>23:39 on the first day shall be a sabbath</p> <p style="text-align: center; padding: 10px 0;">“Rest” – 7677</p> <p>Ex. 16:23 tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath day</p> <p>31:15 but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest</p> <p>35:2 but on the seventh day...a Sabbath of rest.</p> <p>Lev 16:31 it shall be a sabbath of rest</p> <p>23:3 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest</p> <p>23:32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest</p> <p>25:4,5 the seventh year...a sabbath of rest unto the land</p> <p>Gen.2:2,3 he rested on the seventh day from all his work</p> <p>Ex.16:30 So the people rested on the seventh day</p> <p>23:12 and on the seventh day thou shalt rest</p>

Shabbath – 7676

“The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week. The sacred seventh year; a sabbatical year. The Sabbath was a covenant sign of God’s authority.” [The Complete Word Study: Old Testament, p. 2370]

- Lev.19:3 his mother, and his father, and keep my Sabbaths
19:30 Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and
23:3 The seventh day is the Sabbath of rest... You shall do no work... called ‘My feasts’ [**7th day**]
23:11 On the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave the sheaf. [**continuity suggests 7th day**]
23:15 count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath seven Sabbaths [**continuity suggests 7th day**]
23:16 even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath [**same as above**]
23:32 It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest [**context suggests the Day of Atonement is a Sabbath**]
23:38 Beside the Sabbaths of the LORD [**feasts called Sabbaths**]
24:8 Every Sabbath he shall set it in order [**context suggests 7th day**]
25:2 the land keep a Sabbath unto the LORD. [**land rest**]
25:8 thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years [**context unclear: could refer to 7th days being the focal point for counting, or it could mean seven years of feasts in a cycle.**]
26:2 Ye shall keep My Sabbaths... [**context suggests all kinds**]
26:34, 35, 43 then shall the land rest and enjoy her Sabbaths [**land-rest**]
Num 15:32 a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day [**7th day**]
28:9 on the Sabbath day two lambs... [**7th day**]
28:10 the burnt offering of every Sabbath. [**7th day**]

Shabbathon – 7677

“It means a sacred time of rest, a great or solemn sabbath. The term applies to the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Trumpets, and the first and eighth days of Tabernacles. The ending indicates that it is an abstract noun.” [Ibid.]

- Ex. 31:17 on the seventh day he **rested** and was refreshed
34:21 but on the seventh day thou shalt **rest**
Lev.26:34-35 then shall the land **rest**

Shavath – 7673

“To desist, cease, leave off, rest, come to an end. The primary idea appears to be to sit down or to sit still. Shavath may imply rest, but not in every case. God’s work was completed, and, therefore there was no need to continue. He did not need to rest like a weary man; He only stopped His creative activity.” [Ibid]

Sample texts are listed below, but this list is not exhaustive since this word does not add anything to this study.

- Ex. 5:5 And Pharaoh said...make them **rest** from their burdens
Ex. 23:12 but on the seventh day thou shalt **rest**
Ex. 34:21 on the seventh day thou shalt **rest**
2Chron. 36:21 until the land had enjoyed her **sabbaths**

Shabbath – 7676

“The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week. The sacred seventh year; a sabbatical year. The Sabbath was a covenant sign of God’s authority.” [The Complete Word Study: Old Testament, p. 2370]

De 5:12 Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify..
[7th day]

5:14 the seventh day is the Sabbath of
the LORD. [7th day]

5:15 thy God commanded thee to keep
the Sabbath day. [7th day]

2Ki 4:23 It is neither new moon nor
Sabbath... [understood to mean
7th day]

11:5-9 A third part of you that entered
in on the Sabbath... [7th day]

16:18 the covert for the Sabbath that
they had built... [7th day]

1Ch 9:32 the shewbread, to prepare it
every Sabbath [context suggests
7th day; See Lev. 24:8]

23:31 burnt sacrifices unto the LORD
in the Sabbaths, in the new moons,
and on the set feasts [context
suggests 7th day]

2Ch 2:4 on the Sabbaths, and on the new
moons, and on the solemn feasts
[7th day]

8:13 on the Sabbaths, and on the new
moons, and on the solemn feasts...
[7th day]

23:4 A third part of you entered on the
Sabbath [context suggests 7th day]

23:8 ...with them that were to go out
on the Sabbath [context suggests
7th day]

31:3 the burnt offerings for the
Sabbaths, new moons, and feasts
[context suggests 7th days]

36:21 until the land had enjoyed her
Sabbaths [context suggests both
Years and 7th days]

Ne 9:14 madest known unto them thy holy
Sabbath [7th day]

Shabbath – 7676

“The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week. The sacred seventh year; a sabbatical year. The Sabbath was a covenant sign of God’s authority.” [The Complete Word Study: Old Testament, p. 2370]

- 10:31 or any victuals on the Sabbath or on the holy days to sell... not buy it on the Sabbath. [**context suggests 7th days**]
- 10:33 of the Sabbaths, of the new moons... [**same**]
- 13:15 treading wine presses on the S. [**7th days**]
- 13:16-19 ...sold on the Sabbath...not opened unto after the Sabbath. [**7th day**]
- 13:21-22 they no more on the Sabbath.. keep the gates, to sanctify the S. [**7th day**]
- Isa. 1:13 the new moons and Sabbaths, and calling of assemblies [**7th days**]
- 56:2, 4 that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it [**7th day**]
- 56:6 everyone that keepeth the Sabbath [**7th day**]
- 58:13 If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath... a delight [**7th day**]
- 66:23 from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another [**context unclear; could be 7th days and could be all types**]
- Jer. 17:21-27 bear no burden on the Sabbath...hallow the Sabbath [**7th day**]
- Lam. 2:6 solemn feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion [**7th day**]
- Eze. 20:12, 13 Moreover I gave them My Sabbaths... greatly polluted. [**7th day**]
- 20:16 not in My statutes, but polluted My Sabbaths [**7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]
- 20:20 hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign [**7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]

Shabbath – 7676

“The Sabbath, the day of rest, the holy seventh day; a week. The sacred seventh year; a sabbatical year. The Sabbath was a covenant sign of God’s authority.” [The Complete Word Study: Old Testament, p. 2370]

- 20:21, 24 had polluted my Sabbaths
[**7th days, or possibly both**]
- 22:8 hast profaned my Sabbaths [**7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]
- 22:26 have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths [**7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]
- 23:38 profaned my Sabbaths [**7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]
- 44:24 and they shall hallow my Sabbaths **7th days, or possibly both; See 45:17**]
- 45:17 in the Sabbaths in all solemnities [**obviously, the 7th days, since the feasts are also referenced in the listing**]
- 46:1,3 on the Sabbath it shall be opened [**7th day**]
- 46:4, 12 Sabbath day shall be six lambs [**7th day**]
- Hos 2:11 and her Sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. [**7th days**]
- Am 8:5 the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat [**7th day**]

Synopsis of the Four Gospel's Record

Appendix 2

As we begin this verse-by-verse comparison, let the reader be reminded:

- Evening begins a day – Gen. 1:5, 8, 13
- Roman reckoning begins at midnight
- Bible reckoning begins at sundown.

Matthew's Account: Matthew 27:51, 57-62.

1. When Christ died, the temple veil was rent from top to bottom as a mighty earthquake rent the rocks. (Verse 51)
2. And the graves were broken open so that many bodies of saints arose from the graves **after His resurrection**. These appeared unto many in and around Jerusalem. (Verses 52-53)
3. The centurion guarding the crucifixion saw the earthquake and exclaimed that “Truly, this was the Son of God.” (Verse 54)
4. Many women, including Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and John, as well as the mother of Jesus, stood at a distance watching everything. (Verses 55-56)
5. When evening was coming, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. (Verse 57-58)
6. Next we see Joseph wrapping the body in a clean linen cloth and placing it in his own new tomb. He rolled the stone over the door and left (Verse 59-60).
7. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary watched at the sepulcher. (Verse 61)
8. The next day after the preparation day, the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate reasoning that the Romans should place a guard at the tomb to prevent the disciple of Jesus from stealing the body. This watch should be maintained until after the third day. (Verses 62-63)
9. So Pilate made the sepulcher secure until the third day from the time he was approached. (Verses 64-66)

It appears that Matthew is giving his account of what went on, telling the events as they came before his mind in importance. He tells about the crucifixion, then the earthquake, and the resurrection of saints after the third day, then he returns to the cross to follow more of the storyline.

The narrative continues in Chapter 28:

10. In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulcher. (Verse 1)
11. There was another earthquake as the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and rolled back the stone from the doorway. He sat upon the stone by the door of the tomb, his face and garments shining in the glory of heaven (Verses 2-3).
12. The guards at the tomb had, for fear, fallen as dead men before the angel. (Verse 4).
13. The angel calmed the women and assured them that Jesus had risen, but they could look inside and see the place where He had lain. (Verses 5-6)
14. The angel then sent the women to tell the other disciples that the risen Saviour would meet them at Galilee. (Verses 7-8)
15. As they were running to tell the disciples, they met Jesus who greeted them. They recognized Him, and taking hold of His feet, they worshipped Him (Verse 9)
16. Jesus instructed them to go tell the brethren that they were to go to Galilee to meet Him. While the chief priests were concocting their cover-up, the eleven disciples gathered on a mountain in Galilee where Jesus had indicated. (Verses 10-16)
17. When Jesus arrived they worshipped Him; but some doubted. (Verse 17)
18. Jesus spoke the words we have memorized as the Gospel Commission (Verses 18-20)

There, Matthew ends His version of the story. Now, as we carefully follow the account, as viewed by Mark, we will note the details that differ or are in addition to Matthew's record.

Mark's Account: Mark 15:37-47:

1. When Jesus cried out and died, the temple veil was rent from top to bottom. (Verses 37-38). **No mention is made of an earthquake.**

2. **No mention is made of the graves being opened at this time in the narrative.**
3. The centurion near the cross heard and saw Christ die, he exclaimed, “Truly this man was the Son of God.” (Verse 39)
4. There were women watching from a distance, including Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and the mother of Jesus, and **Salome**, and many **other women who had followed Him in Galilee and to Jerusalem.** (Verses 40-41)
5. When the evening was coming, Joseph of Arimathea, **an honorable counselor** and follower of Jesus, went boldly to Pilate craving the body of Jesus, intending to care for the body before sundown, for the next day was a Sabbath. (Verses 42-43)
6. **Pilate, doubting that Jesus could already be dead, checked with the centurion first.** When His death was confirmed, he gave permission for Joseph to take the body. Then, **Joseph bought fine linen, and took down the body,** wrapped it in the linen and laid the body in his own sepulcher. Then he rolled the stone over the doorway. (Verses 44-46)
7. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus watched as He was laid in the tomb. (Verse 47)
8. **No mention is made of the preparation day in Matthew’s account.** Mark’s account seems to follow the chronological order of events more closely than Matthew’s; plus, it adds several details not mentioned in Matthew’s account. Matthew had mentioned the need for a guard around the tomb until the third day, which Mark overlooked.

Mark’s account continues in Chapter 16.

9. **No mention is made of the soldiers making the tomb secure.**
10. When the Sabbath was over, the Mary’s and Salome **bought spices** preparing to anoint the body of Jesus. Then, early the first day of the week, they came to the sepulcher **at sunrise.** (Verses 1-2)
11. They found the stone had been rolled away, and wondered who had done it. **No mention was made of another earthquake. They entered the sepulcher and found a young man sitting inside clothed in a long white robe,** and they were afraid. (Verses 3-5)
12. **No mention is made of the guards outside the tomb overcome by the power**

and brightness of an angel.

13. The angel calms their fears and shows the women the place where they had laid Him. (Verse 6)
14. Then the angel instructs the women to go tell the disciples **and Peter** that Christ will meet them in Galilee. (Verse 7)
15. The women ran in amazement **trembling, and told no one, because they were afraid. But He was first seen by Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils. She went and told the disciples who were grieving.** (Verses 8-10)
16. **No mention is made of the instruction to go to Galilee to meet Jesus, nor of the concocted lie back in Jerusalem.**
17. **No mention of the disciples worshipping Jesus;** only of some doubting. (Verse 11)
18. **Now the scenario picks up with Jesus walking and talking with two disciples walking in the country. They told others who didn't believe their story. Then Mark tells how Jesus met the eleven as they were eating. Jesus rebuked their unbelief and gave them the Gospel Commission. (Verses 12-20) As He finished His commission, He was taken up into heaven.**

Luke's Account: Luke 23:46-56

1. **Jesus cried out, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,"** and died (Verse 46)
2. **No mention is made of any graves being opened at an earthquake.**
3. The centurion saw all that was done and said, **"Certainly this was a righteous man."** (Verse 47)
4. **All the people who had come to see the event smote their breasts. All His friends** and all the women who had followed there from Galilee, watched all these things. (Same as Mark's record)
5. Joseph of Arimathea, a good man and a counselor, **who had not approved of the plotting of the Jews,** begged of Pilate the body of Jesus. (Verses 50-52) **Nothing is mentioned about the time of day.**

6. Joseph took down the body, wrapped it in linen (**no mention is made of it being purchased that day**) and laid him in a new sepulcher that was hewn in stone. **No mention is made of rolling a stone in front of the tomb.** (Verse 53)
7. And the women who had come from Galilee **followed after and saw the sepulcher and how they had placed the body** (Verse 55).
8. **That day was the preparation and the Sabbath drew on.** (Verse 54)
9. **No mention is made of the soldiers securing the tomb.**
10. **The women returned home after the tomb was covered and prepared spices and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment** (Verse 56)

Luke's narrative continues in Chapter 24:

10. Very early in the morning of the first day of the week, the women brought their spices to the sepulcher. (Verse 1)
11. They found the stone rolled away, so they entered in, and found the tomb **empty**. They were perplexed as they met there **two men in shining apparel**. **The women bowed down their faces to the ground before the shining ones, who asked them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"** (Verses 2-5)
12. **No mention is made of the soldiers falling down before the angels.**
13. The two men explained how the Saviour had told them that He would be crucified and rise **the third day**. **They remembered His words.** (Verse 6-8)
14. **No mention is made of the two men sending them to tell the disciples.**
15. The women left the sepulcher and told the disciples; they believe them not. (Verses 9-11) **Peter then ran to the sepulcher and saw for himself.** (Verse 12).
16. **No mention is made about Jesus instructing them to go to Galilee to meet Him.**
17. **Here, a detailed description of the walk with the friends on the road to Emmaus occupies verses 13-35. Luke continues with details of what Matthew and Mark have only sketched: Christ's appearance to the disciples as they ate supper. He opened to their minds the Scriptures concerning His sacrifice and how He would rise again the third day.** (Verses 36-45)

19. The Gospel commission is only sketchy as presented by Luke (Verses 47-49).

John's Account: John 19:16-31:

1. **John mentions nothing about an earthquake or the rending of the Temple veil, but details the events at the cross.** (Verses 16-24)
2. **No mention is made of graves being opened at the death of Christ.**
3. **The centurion's declaration is not mentioned, but the casting lots for Christ's garment is mentioned, the thief on the other side of Christ is here mentioned, and Mary being put into the care of John is mentioned.** (Verses 25-37)
4. The women are said to be standing near the cross, instead of at a distance. (Verse 25)
5. John gives the most detail about the day of the crucifixion and **how each event had been prophesied.** It was the Jews preparation day for a High Sabbath, so the body must be taken down before the sunset. (Verse 26-31)
6. Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, **secretly** asked of Pilate the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave it to him. **Nicodemus provided myrrh and aloes. They together** took down the body of Jesus and prepared it with the spices wrapped in linen. They then laid Him in a tomb **in a garden nearby.** (Verses 38-42)
7. **No mention is made of the women watching everything done to their Lord.**
8. It was the preparation for the **Passover, so the Jews made haste to get the bodies down before the next day which was a sabbath.** (Verse 14, 31, 42)
9. **No mention is made of the securing of the tomb, or the plotting of the lie after the resurrection.**

John's narrative continues in Chapter 20:

10. Mary Magdalene went early, through the darkness, to the sepulcher on the first day of the week. She found the tomb empty. **No mention of anyone being with her.** (Verse 1)
11. **No mention is made of a great earthquake, or the angel at the sepulcher.**
12. **No mention is made of a shining angel meeting her at the tomb.**

13. **No instruction by an angel is mentioned**, but Mary ran to tell the disciples and Peter. (Verse 2)
14. **Peter and John, with John ahead, ran to the sepulcher. After seeing for themselves, they returned to their own homes.**
15. **Mary then returned to the sepulcher to weep. Two angels in white were sitting in the tomb. They spoke to her. She answered and turned back to see Whom she supposed to be the gardener. When He spoke to her, she recognized that it was Jesus.** (Verses 11-16)
16. **Jesus said to Mary, “Don’t touch me for I have not yet ascended to my Father**, but go tell the disciples that I am going to My Father and your Father. (Verses 15-17)
17. **That evening** (of the first day of the week) the disciples were hiding for fear of the Jews, when Jesus appeared in their midst. (Verses 19-20)
18. The words of instruction as remembered by John are different from the synoptic Gospels. (See Verses 21-23).

From these four accounts, we will reconstruct the major events in sequence as accurately as possible. See Pages 32-33 where this reconstruction is placed in parallel. The words of instruction, as remembered by John, are different from the Synoptic Gospels. (See verses 21-23). He adds details the others missed, as noted in the parallel columns, beginning on Page 32.



Concordance and Commentary Search

Appendix 3

Sabbaton, or Sabbata (pl) – The observation of the seventh day of the week, enjoined upon Israel, was ‘a sign’ between God and His earthly people, based upon the fact that after the six days of creative operations He rested, Ex. 31:16, 17, with 20:8-11. The Old Testament regulations were developed and systematized to such an extent that they became a burden upon the people (who otherwise rejoiced in the rest provided) and a byword for absurd extravagance. Two treatises of the Mishna (the *Shabbath* and *Erubin*) are entirely occupied with regulations for the observance; so with the discussion in the Gemara, on Rabbinical opinions.” *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*, page 311, 312.

From there the above entry turned to the Sabbath habits of the Messiah and the singular and plural uses of “Sabbath” in the New Testament. There was no mention of forms of the word for “Sabbath” indicating any other category of rest days, as we find in Strong’s references to the Old Testament.

The **root** of the word “Sabbath,” according to some sources, means a cessation, a ceasing as in Prov. 20:3, hence idleness, inactivity in Isa. 30:7. It refers to the seventh day of the week in Ex. 16:25 (today is the Sabbath of Jehovah) and every Sabbath, as in 1 Chron 9:32. The sabbatical year, every seventh year, was a Sabbath-year in which the land was not tilled, Lev. 25:4.

Then under a different entry (one may not be able to read Hebrew, but one can tell when some characters in the configurations are different.), one might find that the word for Sabbath means “an intensivity,” a great Sabbath, as in Ex. 16:23; Lev. 23:24; Ex. 31:15; 35:2; Lev. 16:31. The differentiation between kinds of “ceasing” or “resting” is determined by the ending added to the root.

Cruden’s Complete Concordance (1930) makes no distinction between word endings which some modern concordances have included. His listing of texts using the word for Sabbath, or the plural Sabbaths, is incomplete and prefaced by a paragraph of severe bias. Notice:

The sabbath, one day out of each week, was kept by the Jews on the day now called Saturday. How early this was taken to be the seventh day is not known. After the ascension of Jesus the disciples met on the first day of each week for prayer and praise. The Jewish Christians for a long time kept both the seventh and the first; but as Gentile Christians, having never kept any such day before, celebrated only the first day of the week as the Lord’s Day, the celebration of the seventh by Christians was finally abandoned.”
Page 556.

Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Bible, 1970 edition, recognizes the different words for Sabbath (page 829). *Sabbath*, or *Shabbath*, meaning “cessation,” however, is given the same meaning as *Shabbathon*, also meaning “cessation.” The list of scriptures

under Shabbath is long and lists all the Old Testament references, including Lev. 23:11 and 15. *Shabbathon*, on the other hand, is referenced to Lev. 23:24, and 39 **only**. I found that odd.

Young's Concordance differentiated between New Testament words for Sabbath, however, whereas Strong's did not. *Young's Concordance* gives the Greek *sabbata*, (Jesus went on the Sabbath day through a field – Matt. 12:1) and Colossians 2:16 (Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or in respect of a **Sabbath**) as from the same word, meaning the seventh day of rest. Young's gives *sabbaton* as used in Matthew 12:2 (not lawful to pick corn upon the Sabbath day), as having the same meaning. Thus, accordingly, the New Testament uses two forms of the word without any shade of difference in their meaning. I find that dubious.

There is no language in which different ending on a root word make no difference as to the part of speech or application of the word, so one must question Young's scholarship and/or personal bias, in this case. It is disconcerting to find how far removed from the context of Scripture most commentaries, even concordances, stray in their apparent purpose to defend man's traditions. Indeed, modern commentaries on the use of "Sabbath" in Lev. 23:11 seemed out of sync with Scripture completely. Notice the following:

“The offering described in this passage was made on the sixteenth of the first month, the day following the first Passover Sabbath, which was on the fifteenth (corresponding to the beginning of our April),” reports *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. [**That is the most commonly held view in Christendom.**]

From the above commentary one finds a valuable clue recorded as to the reason for such convoluted reasoning. “The Sabbath was NOT part of the feasts, but important in the Jewish religion.’ ‘Day after the first day of unleavened bread’ was a sabbath.” So says the above commentary. No wonder so many throw out the seventh-day Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths together. Scholarship is not always scholarly, and rarely useful in honest Bible study, many have found.

John Wesley's Expository Notes: “After the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which was a Sabbath or day of rest, as appears from Lev. 23:7, or upon the sixteenth day of the month.”

Matthew Henry Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible: “An order for the offering of a sheaf of the first-fruits, upon the second day of the feast of unleavened bread; the first day was the *Sabbath*, because it was observed as a Sabbath (v. 11), and, on the morrow after, they had this solemnity. A handful of new corn was brought to the priest, who was to heave it up, in token of his presenting it to the God of Heaven.”

The *SDA Bible Commentary's* discussion of the "wave-sheaf" is focused on the resurrection. It provided no help in this study, making no mention of the ancient ritual or its specification.

The only sources found for information on the origins, methods, and higher criticism, on this Leviticus 23 "Sabbath" word came from the Orthodox Jews and the Seventh-day Church of God. Church of Christ material seemed to favor a Thursday crucifixion. They have a little to say about the wave sheaf, but concentrate on the New Testament wording "on the third day." Following are some commentary entries for the Leviticus 23:11 text:

"On the morrow after the sabbath shall wave it...These words mean 'the day after the first day of unleavened bread'. The great significance of this lies in the fact of ultimate fulfillment of the inherent prophecy that Christ would rise from the dead on the third day. Christ was crucified on Thursday. Friday was the first day of unleavened bread. Saturday was the ordinary sabbath. And Sunday was the day after the morrow following the first day of unleavened bread. Thus, it was the occurrence during the Passion Week of those back-to-back sabbaths that resulted in the fiftieth day (the Pentecost) coming on Sunday," James Burton Coffman's Commentary (Church of Christ), on Lev. 23:11." [This commentator, obviously, is working backwards from what he wants to be true in order to establish it as "true." - **Convolutd reasoning, to be sure!**]

Day after the sabbath:

The meaning of this phrase has been the subject of much controversy. Is the sabbath in question the ordinary sabbath, or is it the first day of unleavened bread (also a sabbath)?" Wenham went on to declare that, 'Orthodox Judaism and most modern commentators favor the second suggestion.' Of course, there was controversy among the Jews over which was meant even in the days of Christ's earthly ministry. The Pharisees insisted that the sabbath was a weekly sabbath (Saturday), and the Sadducees made it the "high sabbath" of the first day of unleavened bread ([John 19:31](#)).

You will notice in later quotes, that the Jewish sources say that it was the Sadducees who taught that the wave sheaf offering was to be made on the day after the seventh-day Sabbath; not the Pharisees.

This old controversy is reflected in the statement of the gospel of Luke that, 'When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all together ... etc.' ([Acts 2:1](#)) It is a pity that this extremely illuminating passage should have been changed in our version (American Standard Version), and in the Douay, RSV, and many others. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible.*

The use of "fully come" shows that there was a dispute about when it [Pentecost] came, that the apostles honored the more extensive count (as in

the second interpretation), and that the Holy Spirit came on the day that the apostles accepted as Pentecost. It is noteworthy that the apostles did not follow the lead of the Pharisees. Lightfoot noted that the apostles' Pentecost did not coincide with the Jewish Pentecost. Dosker also admitted that according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Passover that year occurred on Thursday, Nisan 14, hence, Pentecost fell on Saturday, **[Huh? That just isn't so!]** which, of course, would have been the case if there had been only one sabbath that week! Dosker was also mystified by the fact that according to John, the Passover that year occurred on Friday the 14th of Nisan. The back-to-back sabbaths explain everything connected with this question, which is called 'one of the knottiest problems in harmonizing the Christian gospels.' *The James Burton Coffman Commentary.*

Finally, checking *Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies* revealed much the same result. The entry for Sabbath was short, but at least it showed a difference between the words translated "Sabbath" in the Old Testament. Since the Hebrew letters only are used, and no explanation is given, a novice is left without conclusive evidence as to the translation. The entry, again, as with all commentaries investigated, does show bias, however. Note: "SABBATH - to rest from labour, to keep a sabbath...or any day of rest, at the beginning or close of the great Jewish festivals: Exodus. 16:23." (Page 364)

Obviously, commentaries, man's traditions and biased reasoning, must be scrutinized with caution.

More Sabbath Word Studies

Appendix 4

Collecting all references to “My Sabbath,” adds clarity to the breadth of this subject. The Bible uses the phrase “My feasts” and “My Sabbaths,” but only the Sabbath references are included here. All such references use the word *Shabbath* (7676); none refer to the yearly festivals.

- Ex. 31:13 **Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep (7676).**
The context is plainly the 7th day.
- Lev. 19:3 **...his mother and father, & keep my Sabbaths (7676).** The context suggests the 7th day, but is not as clearly defined as in Exodus.
- Lev. 19:30 **...ye shall keep my Sabbaths (7676).** Here the context is of statutes, so the reference is to 7th days but may include other sabbaths although the Hebrew word (7676) does not reveal it.
- Lev. 23:38 **Besides the Sabbath of the LORD (7676).**
Here the feast days are clearly excluded from the Sabbaths of the Lord.
- Lev. 26:2 **Ye shall keep my Sabbath (7676).** The reference is clearly to the Ten Commandments, therefore, the 7th day Sabbath.
- Isa. 56:4 **...unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths (7676).** The chapter is clearly extolling Sabbath-keeping, for “my Sabbath” is elsewhere in the chapter called “the Sabbath.” “The” is a noun-marker to indicate one in specific.
- Eze. 20:12, 13 **Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths...they polluted (7676).** The reference here is back to Ex. 31:13, since it refers to the Sabbaths as the “sign.” Also, the reference is to polluting the Sabbaths because their hearts went after idols (vs. 16).

- **Eze. 20:16** **...polluted my Sabbaths (7676).** See above.
- **Eze. 20:20** **Hallow my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign (7676).** “They,” means the habitual keeping of the 7th day, although other scriptures imply that the sign-concept in Sabbath-keeping is inclusive of all JHWH’s set-apart time.
- **Eze. 20:21, 24** **they polluted my Sabbaths (7676).** When the reference in a text is unclear, one must use the interpretation of the text elsewhere, where it was made clear.
- **Eze. 22:8** **...profaned my Sabbaths (7676).** This Chapter refers to both statutes and commandments. Therefore, it may be argued that the Sabbaths here include the festival Sabbaths, even though the word (7676) does not thus imply.
- **Eze. 22:26** **...they hid their eyes from my Sabbaths (7676).** The meaning here is general and unspecific.
- **Eze. 23:38** **...have profaned my Sabbaths (7676).** The reference seems to be to the profanity of worshipping Yahweh and Baal at the same time.
- **Eze. 44:24** **...they shall hallow my Sabbaths (7676).** Here, “hallowing the Sabbaths” is separated from other categories of obedience, such as keeping His laws, His judgments, and His statutes. The sentence comes as if it were an after-thought, -the result of doing all the other acts of obedience.

What Can Be Profaned?

- Profane **the name of thy God** [Lev. 18:21; 19:12; 20:3; 21:6; 22:2, 32; Eze. 36:20-23; Amos 2:7; Mal. 2:11].
- Profane **a chief leader** (priest, himself, or other prince, or prophet) [Lev. 21:4; Jer. 23:11, 15; Eze. 21:25]
- Profane **person** (from whoredom, or other evil) [Lev. 21:7, 9, 14; Isa. 43:28; 1 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 12:16]
- Profane the **sanctuary**, or objects in the sanctuary [Lev. 19:8; 21:12, 23; 22:9, 15; Eze. 22:26; 23:39; 24:21; 25:3; Mal. 1:12; Acts 24:6]
- Profane **seed** (through marriage to a harlot, a parent having an evil child) [Lev.21:9, 15]
- Profane **the Sabbath day** [Neh. 13:17; Eze. 22:8, 26; 23:38; Matt. 12:5]
- **Satan** sentenced for being profane in heaven [Eze. 28:16]
- Profane **talk** [1 Tim. 4:7, 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:16]
- Profaned **thy crown** (by casting it to the ground) [Ps. 89:39]
- Profane **the Covenant** [Mal. 2:10]

A Comparison Between Pharisees and Sadducees

Appendix 5

Rebuke to the Pharisees:

1. Matthew 5:20 Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of Heaven.
2. Matthew 12:7 If ye had known what this means..., ye would not have condemned the guiltless.
3. Matthew 15:14 They be blind leaders of the blind...
4. Matthew 21:45, 46 When the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude.
5. Matthew 23:2 The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat...
6. Verse 3 ...don't follow their examples or teaching (Hebrew)
7. Verse 4 They bind heavy burdens...and they won't have anything to do with them, themselves.
8. Verse 5 All their work they do to be seen of men...
9. Verse 6 They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
10. Verse 7 Greetings in the marketplace, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi.
11. Verse 13 Woe unto you...hypocrites! You shut up the kingdom to men...
12. Verse 14 Woe unto you...hypocrites! Ye devour widows' houses, and make pretentious prayers.
13. Verse 15 Woe unto you...hypocrites! Ye compass the sea to make a convert, and make him twofold the child of hell as yourselves.
14. Verse 16 Ye blind guides...who swear by the temple...

15. Verse 23 Woe unto you...hypocrites! You pay tithes on little things, but ignore the weightier matters of the Law.
16. Verse 24 You strain a gnat and swallow a camel.
17. Verse 25 Woe... You make clean the outside of the cup, but inside are dead men's bones.
18. Verse 27 Woe... You are like whited sepulchers...
19. Verse 29 Woe... ye garnish the sepulchers of the prophets...but ye are the children of them that killed the prophets.
20. Verse 33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers...
21. Verse 38 Your house is left unto you desolate.
22. Mark 3:6 The Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.
23. Mark 8:15 Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees...
24. Mark 10:5 For the hardness of your heart, wrote he [Moses] this precept.
25. Mark 12:13 Pharisees and Herodians came to catch him in his words...
26. Mark 12:15 Why tempt ye me?
27. Luke 5:21 The Pharisees began to reason saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies?
28. Luke 16:14 The Pharisees...who were covetous, heard...and derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men: but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

Rebuke to the Sadducees:

1. Matthew 3:7 [John the Baptist speaking] Ye generation of vipers!
Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
[Speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees together]
2. Matthew 16:6, 12 Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
3. Mark 12:18-27 Ye do err not knowing the scriptures, neither the power of God (speaking of the resurrection).
4. Luke 20:27-38 Same – on the resurrection of the dead.

In the Matthew 3:7 text, John the Baptist is speaking to all the influential critics in his audience. Again in Matthew 16:6, and 12, the pride and haughtiness of the elite may be called into question. They thought themselves worthy to guide others, but they were too affluent to learn from the lowly Carpenter.

Jesus recognized that the Sadducees prided themselves on remaining true to the writings of Moses. Indeed, they had held to the written Torah more carefully than most other sects among the Jews. They thought they knew the Scriptures better than others. Jesus pointed out their error. To know **about** God without knowing **Him**, is without doubt the most hopeless error of all, especially when, because of that knowledge, one senses no need for the greater knowledge.

In conclusion, we now know that the Pharisees, by the first century, were counting the fifty days until Pentecost, using the first **yearly** Sabbath of Unleavened Bread as their starting point, instead of the seventh-day Sabbath starting point as commanded in Leviticus. Jewish practice no longer matched the biblical command. Thus, when Christians seek information from the Jews today, they are directed to the Rabbinic Jewish custom, which offers no explanation as to why they set aside the explicit directive in the Scripture. Their practice was in direct opposition to the Torah, yet it has become the standard of authority for most students who study the Jewish economy.

**The Bible – The Voice of God
In the Writing of Ellen G. White
Appendix 6**

“In searching the Scriptures, in feeding upon the words of life, O consider it is the voice of God to the soul. We may be confused sometimes over the voices of our friends; but in the Bible we have the counsel of God upon all important subjects which concern our eternal interests, and in temporal matters we may learn a great deal. Its teachings will always be suited to our peculiar circumstances and calculated to prepare us to endure trial and fit us for our God-given work.” *Letter 94, 1893*

“The Bible is God’s voice speaking to us, just as surely as if we could hear it with our ears. If we realized this, with what awe we would open God’s Word and with what earnestness we would search its precepts. The reading and contemplation of the Scriptures would be regarded as an audience with the Infinite One.” *Signs of the Times, April 4, 1906*

“We are to open the Word of God with reverence and with a sincere desire to know the will of God concerning us. Then the heavenly angels will direct our search. God speaks to us in His Word. We are in the audience chamber of the Most High, in the very presence of God. Christ enters the heart.” *Signs of the Times, March 28, 1906*

“Show that you reverence your faith, speaking reverently of sacred things. Never allow one expression of lightness and trifling to escape your lips when quoting Scripture. As you take the Bible in your hands, remember that you are on holy ground.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education, pages 194, 195*

My brethren and sisters, leave all minor tests that you may be tempted to make, and test your spirit by the witness of the Word of God. Study that Word, that you may know the character and will of God. It is positively essential that every believer make the truths of the Bible his guide and safeguard. To every young man and woman, and to those of advanced years, I testify that the study of the Word is the only safeguard for the soul who would remain steadfast unto the end.--*Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 17, pp. 25-29.*

My guide then had many things to say which left an indelible impression upon my mind. His words were solemn and earnest. He opened before me the condition of the church at Battle Creek, I can only give here a meager portion of what was said to me. He stated that the church needed the "energy of Christ"--that all must cling close to the Bible, for it alone can give a correct knowledge of God's will. A time of trial was before us, and great evils would be the result of the Phariseeism, which has in a large degree taken possession of those who occupy important positions in the work of God. 12MR 371.1

IN YOUR LETTER YOU SPEAK OF YOUR EARLY TRAINING TO HAVE IMPLICIT FAITH IN THE TESTIMONIES, AND SAY: 'I WAS LED TO CONCLUDE AND MOST FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT EVERY WORD YOU EVER SPOKE IN PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, THAT EVERY LETTER YOU WROTE UNDER ANY AND ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, WAS AS INSPIRED AS THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.'

"MY BROTHER, YOU HAVE STUDIED MY WRITINGS DILIGENTLY, AND YOU HAVE NEVER FOUND THAT I HAVE MADE ANY SUCH CLAIMS, NEITHER WILL YOU FIND THAT THE PIONEERS IN OUR CAUSE EVER MADE SUCH CLAIMS. IN MY PREFACE TO 'GREAT CONTROVERSY,' YOU HAVE NO DOUBT READ MY STATEMENT REGARDING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE BIBLE, WHICH SHOULD HAVE HELPED YOU TO A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION. General Conference Bulletin, June 2, 1913, par. 28, 29

Our eternal well-being has not been left in uncertainty. We need not depend upon the writings of "the Fathers," or upon commentators, for explanations regarding the law of God. When these men have told us all that they in their human intelligence can, we find that they do not agree. We see such a diversity of opinions that were we to follow them in deciding what is truth, we should be left in confusion and uncertainty. **The Lord has told us not to follow these human guides, but to take everything claiming to be Bible doctrine to the Scriptures.** "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. *Review and Herald*, May 28, 1901, par. 3

AS STATED IN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS BELIEVE, "THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN WHITE ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR SCRIPTURE. THEY CANNOT BE PLACED ON THE SAME LEVEL. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES STAND ALONE, THE UNIQUE STANDARD BY WHICH HER AND ALL OTHER WRITINGS MUST BE JUDGED AND TO WHICH THEY MUST BE SUBJECT" (P. 227). "YET," AS ELLEN WHITE HERSELF NOTED, "THE FACT THAT GOD HAS REVEALED HIS WILL TO MEN THROUGH HIS WORD HAS NOT RENDERED NEEDLESS THE CONTINUED PRESENCE AND GUIDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. ON THE CONTRARY, THE SPIRIT WAS PROMISED BY OUR SAVIOUR, TO OPEN THE WORD TO HIS SERVANTS, TO ILLUMINATE AND APPLY ITS TEACHINGS" (THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, P. VII). *Ye Shall Receive Power* (1995), Page 6.1.

"The words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be echoed from the pulpits of our land. This book is God's great director. It is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path. It flashes its light ahead, that we may see the path..." *Review and Herald*, February 6, 1900, par. 10.

"The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be the rule of our faith. It is a leaf from the tree of life, and by eating it, by receiving it into our minds, we shall grow strong to do the will of God. By our Christlike characters we shall show that we believe the word, that we cleave to the Bible as the only guide to heaven. So shall we be living epistles, known and read of all men, bearing a living testimony to the power of true religion," *Ibid.* May 4, 1897, par. 9.

False doctrines will sap the foundations of many, because they have not learned to discern truth from error. Our only safeguard against the wiles of Satan is to **study the Scriptures diligently**, to have an intelligent understanding of the reasons of our faith, and **faithfully to perform every known duty**. The indulgence of one known sin will cause weakness and darkness, and subject us to fierce temptations, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 19, 1908.

Those who cry unto God for deliverance from the terrible spell that Satan would weave about them, will set a high estimate upon the Scriptures. **Our only safety is in receiving the whole Bible**, not taking merely detached portions, but believing the whole truth. Your feet are upon sliding sand if you depreciate one word that is written. The Bible is a divine communication, and is as verily a message to the soul as though a voice from heaven were heard speaking to us. With what awe and reverence and humiliation should we come to the searching of the Scriptures, that we may learn of eternal realities.... **Let everyone study the Bible**, knowing that the Word of God is as enduring as the eternal throne. If you come to the study of the Scriptures in humility, with earnest prayer for guidance, angels of God will open to you its living realities; and if you cherish the precepts of truth, they will be to you as a wall of fire against the temptations, delusions, and enchantments of Satan. . . . *Our High Calling*, Page 210.4 (Emphasis supplied).

When a doctrine is presented that does not meet our minds, we should **go to the word of God**, seek the Lord in prayer, and give no place for the enemy to come in with suspicion and prejudice. We should never permit the spirit to be manifested that arraigned the priests and rulers against the Redeemer of the world. They complained that He disturbed the people, and they wished He would let them alone; for He caused perplexity and dissension. The Lord sends light to us to prove what manner of spirit we are of. We are not to deceive ourselves, *Counsel to Writers and Editors*, Page 43.1.

Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. **We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth as much as we do.** Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? *Ibid.* Page 44.1.

The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented, in the light of God's Word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. **If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of pharisaism cherished among us.** *Counsel to Writers and Editors*, Page 44.2. **Error is never harmless, *Ibid.* Page 46.2.**

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