

## Chronology of the Crucifixion Week

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The chronology and dating of the crucifixion week has been a matter of intrigue for centuries. A harmonious resolution of this subject is quite simple once the reader understands the synchrony of four calendars.

First, the Creation calendar defines the commencement of a day at evening, thus Sunday night precedes Sunday light. (Genesis 1)

Second, the Roman calendar defines the commencement of a day at midnight, the result is that Wednesday night and Thursday morning share the same darkness but midnight splits the night into two dates.

Third, the Creation calendar defines the commencement of a month with the conjunction of a new moon. (Numbers 28:14; 1 Samuel 20; Isaiah 66:23)

Fourth, the ancient Babylonian calendar, later adopted by the Jews, defines the commencement of a month with sighting the first crescent of a new moon.

After the Babylonian exile, the Jews were divided on the date of the observance of Passover. Some Jews insisted on following Creation's calendar, that is, Nisan 1 began on the day of a new moon. Jewish leaders, however, insisted on using the Babylonian method for determining the first day of each month. The High Priest waited until the first crescent of the new moon was sighted before declaring the commencement of Nisan 1.

Because the conjunction of a new moon and the sighting of the first crescent of a new moon in Jerusalem is typically 16 to 40 hours later, the celebration of two Passovers on two different days in Israel was not uncommon. In fact, the national Passover usually occurred two days later than the Passover observed by conservative Jews.

For centuries after the resurrection of Jesus, Christians argued over the observance of Easter. Some Christians wanted to observe Easter on Nisan 16 the actual *date* that Jesus arose. Others, especially Roman Christians, wanted to observe Easter on the Sunday that followed Passover to commemorate the *day* of Christ's resurrection. Finally, the emperor Constantine decided to end the controversy by disconnecting the time of Easter from the Jewish Passover.

To defend this position, he contemptuously referred to the practice of the Jews observing two Passovers in a year as evidence that one should not trust their calculations for determining the arrival of Easter. He wrote, "They [the Jews] do not possess the truth in this Easter question; for in their blindness and repugnance to all improvement, they frequently celebrate two Passovers in the same year. (Eusebius, Vita Const., Lib iii., 18-20, insertion mine)

The celebration of two Passovers is odd because God commanded the observance of Passover on Nisan 15! What happened?

The presence of two calendars explains the presence of two Passovers during the Crucifixion week. The Bible clearly states that Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples on Nisan 15 (Mark 14:14-18; Luke 22) and the Bible indicates He died on the cross just before the national Passover which took place on Nisan 15 (John 18:28).

Evidently, the Creator followed the Creation Calendar for determining the date of Passover whereas Jewish leaders used the Babylonian Calendar to determine the date for Passover. Knowing there are two calendars in play in Scripture and these two calendars are two days apart, the following is a presentation of the events that occurred during crucifixion week.

The following outline presents the events of the Passion week in chronological order. Remember, a day begins at sundown and the dates given to each day reflects the presence of two calendars; the Creation Calendar **[C]** and the Babylonian Calendar **[B]**. As you read through the course of events, notice this phenomenon: The chronological order of events is preserved by each gospel writer. There are some slight variations among the gospel writers on the timing of events, but the order of events is not altered.

This is a crucial point. Each writer tells the story in its order and all four agree on the order of events! Because the gospel writers base their statements about timing on both calendars, the timing of events reveals which calendar they are using.

C= Creation Calendar \*\*\*\* B = Babylonian Calendar

|        |                |               |                                  |  |
|--------|----------------|---------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Nissan | <b>C</b><br>11 | <b>B</b><br>9 | Sunday Night<br>Sunday Light     | Jesus Arrived in Bethany (John 12:1)   |
| Nisan  | 12             | 10            | Monday Night<br><br>Monday Light | Mary washes Jesus' feet at Simon's house (Mark 14:1)<br>Jesus goes to temple, publically rebukes the leaders of Israel (Matt 23)<br>Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives predicts end of Jerusalem and world (Matt 24,25)<br>Judas goes to chief priests offering to condemn Jesus (Mark 14:10, Luke 22:1)<br>So, chief priests hold meeting to plan the death of Jesus (Matt 26:3-5) |
| Nisan  | 13             | 11            | Tuesday Night                    |  |

|                         |    |    |                                    |  |
|-------------------------|----|----|------------------------------------|--|
|                         |    |    | Tuesday Light                      | Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (John 12:12-16)   |
| Nisan                   | 14 | 12 | Wednesday Night<br>Wednesday Light | Disciples make preparations for Passover meal (Mark 14:12, Matt 26:17)   |
| Nisan                   | 15 | 13 | Thursday Night                     | Jesus ate Passover at midnight with disciples (Mark 14:17,18)<br>Jesus predicted His betrayal (Matt 26:20,21)<br>Jesus eager to eat this Passover <i>before</i> He suffers (Luke 22:15)<br>Judas leaves after midnight meal to betray Jesus (John 13:30) |
|                         |    |    | Thursday Light                     | They sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives (Matt 26:30)<br>Jesus spent the day talking to the disciples. (John 13:36-16:33)<br>Jesus predicted the scattering of the disciples (Matt 26:31,32)<br>Jesus prayed for His disciples. (John 17)    |
| Nisan                   | 16 | 14 | Friday Night                       | Jesus takes Peter, James and John into Gethsemane. (Matt 26:36)<br>Jesus betrayed and arrested. (Luke 22:44-47)<br>Peter denied knowing Jesus. (Luke 22:60,61)   |
|                         |    |    | Friday Light                       | Jesus taken before the chief priests and elders. (Luke 22:66, Matt 27:1)<br>Jesus taken to Caiaphas then to Pilate. (John 18:28)<br>Jesus taken to Herod. (Luke 23:7,12)<br>Pilate offers to release prisoner to Jews for their Passover. (John 18:39)   |
| <b>Jesus Crucified:</b> |    |    |                                    | Jesus crucified about the third hour. (9 am) (Mark 15:25)  |
| (April 7, A.D. 30)      |    |    |                                    | Darkness covered the land from noon to 3 pm. (Mark 15:33, 34)  |

Jesus died about the ninth hour. (3 pm) (Matt 27:46)  
Jesus' body was not prepared because Sabbath was so close. (Luke 23:55)  
Jews asked Pilate to have the bodies removed for Passover (John 19:31)

|              |    |    |                      |   |
|--------------|----|----|----------------------|---|
| <b>Nisan</b> | 17 | 15 | <b>Sabbath Night</b> | National Passover celebrated.<br>Disciples mourning,, chief priests worried that Jesus' body might be stolen.                             |
|              |    |    | Sabbath Light        | Chief priests ask Pilate to seal the tomb. (Matt 27:62)   |
| Nisan        | 18 | 16 | Sunday Night         | Disciples hiding for fear of the Jews.  |
|              |    |    | Sunday Light         | Mary and Mary go to the tomb near sunrise. Empty! (Mark 16:1)<br>Afternoon: Jesus walks with Cleopas and a friend to Emmaus. (Luke 24:13) |

The following commentary is provided to assist in the study of the outline above. Carefully note which calendar is being used in each step.

**A. Sunday light in Bethany, Nisan 9 using Babylonian reckoning**

John 12:1: "Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead."

Since Passover occurs on Nisan 15, six day earlier would be the Nisan 9. John's account is based on the Babylonian (the national) calendar for reasons that will prove to be self evident later on.

After sunset, Monday began. Mark makes the following comments using the Creation calendar. Notice what he says:

**B. Monday night in Bethany, Nisan 12, using Creation's Calendar**

Mark 14:1-3 Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. "But not during the Feast," they said, "or the people may riot." While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head."

According to the Creation calendar (new moon reckoning), Passover [Nisan 15] was two days away from this Monday night service where Mary anointed the feet of Jesus. The two days between this event are Tuesday the 13th and Wednesday the 14th because Passover is to be eaten on the 15th or Thursday night.

## Monday light

(Remember, night comes before light.) So, Monday night passes and on Monday morning Jesus and His disciples go to the temple where He publically rebukes on the leaders of Israel. (Matthew 23) This makes them furious.

Afterwards, Jesus and His disciples retire to the mount of Olives and Jesus predicts the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world. (Matthew 24,25) At the close of this presentation, Jesus foretells His death. He said to the disciples, "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." (Matthew 26:1,2)

## Monday afternoon

That afternoon, Judas went to the chief priests and offered to condemn Jesus. (Mark 14:10) Perhaps the public rebuke against the leaders of Israel offended Judas. Luke 22:1 says, "Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people.

Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus."

So, an executive meeting was called by the leaders of Israel. The Bible says: Matthew 26:3-5, "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. But they said, Not on the [national] feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people."

### C. Tuesday afternoon, Nisan 13, using Creation's Calendar / New Moon reckoning

John 12:12-14: The next day [Tuesday afternoon] the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem [from Bethany]. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!" Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written..."

### D. Wednesday light, Nisan 14, using Creation's Calendar / New Moon reckoning

Luke 22:7: "Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed." (Nisan 14) Notice the specifications of the law:

Exodus 12:6 "Take care of them [the lambs] until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight [as Nisan 15begins]." Leviticus 23:5,6 "The Lord's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast."

Matthew 26:17: "On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread [according to the Creation calendar], the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover [tonight]?"

Mark 14:12 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover [tonight]?"

E. Thursday night Passover, Nisan 15, using Creation's Calendar / New Moon reckoning

Mark 14:17,18 "When evening came, Jesus arrived [at the upper room] with the Twelve. While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me--one who is eating with me."

Matt 26:20,21 "When evening came [Nisan 15], Jesus was reclining at the table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me."

Luke 22:15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you **before** I suffer." (Clearly, this Passover occurs before the national Passover. John 18:28)

John 13:30 "As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night...." John indicates it "was night" to emphasize the fact that Judas violated the law by leaving the upper room during the night. The law required everyone to stay indoors until light. "Exodus 12:22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the door frame. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning." According to the law and Jewish custom, Jesus and disciples spent all of Thursday night in the upper room.

John 13:29 Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the [upcoming national Passover] Feast, or to give something to the poor [who could not afford the perfect lambs required for the national Passover].

Luke indicates that Jesus said the following to Peter *before* going to the Mount of Olives. "Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.... Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him." (Luke 22:34,39) Luke's account differs on this with respect to that of Mark. See Thursday afternoon.

## **Sunrise Thursday morning:**

Matt 26:30 "When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." Peter asked the Lord where He was going. (John 13:36) Jesus spent most of the day on the Mount of Olives talking to His disciples. (John 13:36-16:33) Jesus wanted to prepare the disciples for His arrest that would occur that night.

## Thursday afternoon

Matthew 26:31,32 Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Jesus predicted Peter's betrayal. Mark 14:29,30 Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not." " I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "today--yes, tonight--before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."

At the end of Thursday, Jesus prayed for His disciples. (John 17)

F. Friday night, Nisan 16, using Creation's Calendar which is Nisan 14 Babylonian Calendar

John 18:1 " When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it. Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples."

As the sun set, Jesus knew the time had come for His arrest. He took Peter, James and John into the Garden of Gethsemane. Matt 26:36, 37 says, "Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray. He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled."

Luke 22: 44-47 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.

"Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him..."

Luke 22:54 "Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance."

Later, Peter denied Jesus. Luke 22: 60,61 Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times."

## **Friday light, Nisan 14 Babylonian Calendar / First Crescent Starts Month:**

Luke 22:66 "At daybreak the council of the elders of the people, both the chief priests and teachers of the law, met together, and Jesus was led before them. "If you are the Christ, " they said, "tell us." Jesus answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe me..."

Matthew 27:1 "Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death."

John 18:28 "Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor [Pilate]. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover [that night]. (This is the second Passover.)

Luke 23:1,2 Then the whole assembly rose and led him off to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, "We have found this man subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar and claims to be Christ, a king."

Luke 23:7,12 When he [Pilate] learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.... That day Herod and Pilate became friends--before this they had been enemies."

## **Friday Noon**

Luke 23:44,45 "It was now about the sixth hour [noon], and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour [3 p.m.], for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two."

Luke 23:54 "It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin."

Preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread required preparation. A search for yeast was required as well as the killing of the paschal lamb. Therefore, the day before Passover came to be called, "Preparation Day." In A.D. 30, using Babylonian reckoning, Preparation Day was Friday, Nisan 14. Jesus was crucified between noon and 3 p.m.

Luke 23:55 "The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment."

John 19:31 "Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath [because national Passover occurred on a seventh day Sabbath]. Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down."



John 19:38. 42 "Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away... Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there."

## **Sabbath night**

All is quite. Jesus is in the tomb. Disciples are in hiding, worried. Jewish leaders also worried.

## **Sabbath light**

Matt 27:62 The next day [on the day of Passover no less!], the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went [begging] to Pilate. "Sir," they said, "we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise again.' So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first."

## **Sunday night**

All is quite. Jesus in the tomb. Guards outside the tomb. Disciples hiding. Jewish leaders celebrating.

## **Sunday light**

Mark 16:1 "When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb..."

Luke 24:1 " On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb..."

John 20:1 "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance."

Luke 24: 13 "Now that same day [Sunday, the day of resurrection] two of them [Cleopas and a friend] were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened [during the national Passover weekend]. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him."

## **What Date Was Passover Observed: Nisan 14 or Nisan 15?**

Some people dispute that God required the Passover meal to be eaten on Nisan 15. They claim

the Passover meal should have been eaten on Nisan 14. This writer finds the Passover meal was eaten at midnight on the 15th of Nisan. This conclusion is reached from the following five Scriptures.

1. Exodus 12:3,6-12 (emphasis mine): "Tell the whole community of Israel that on the **tenth day of this month** each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.... 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**. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs. That **same night** they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but **roast it over the fire**--head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it. This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. **Eat it in haste**; it is the Lord's Passover. **"On that same night** I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn--both men and animals--and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord."Comment: If this were the only reference in the Bible to the date of the Passover, one might conclude that Passover was eaten on the 14th of the Nisan. However, when we add more Scripture to this study, we will find that preparing the Passover lamb began during late afternoon of Nisan 14 (twilight) and after roasting the lamb, the meal was eaten six hours later, at midnight on Nisan 15. The following text indicates the preparation for Passover began at twilight on the 14th day, but the Feast of Unleavened Bread began the next day, on Nisan 15.
2. Leviticus 23:5,6: "The Lord's Passover begins **at twilight on the fourteenth day** of the first month. **On the fifteenth day of that month** the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast."From this text we find that the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15. This is a key point because notice the next text:
3. Exodus 12:17,18: (insertions mine) says: "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread [on Nisan 15], because it was **on this very day** that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day [as the day ends] until the evening of the twenty-first day [as the day ends]."Point: The children of Israel ate the Passover at midnight on Nisan 15 and they were delivered from Egypt at day break on the 15th of Nisan. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated on Nisan 15 because it was the very day of deliverance. The Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted seven whole days: Nisan 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21.
4. Numbers 28:16,17: "On the fourteenth day of the first month 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."The language of this text could be made to appear that the Passover was eaten on Nisan 14. However, we have already seen that the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt on Nisan 15. (Exodus 12:17) Therefore, Numbers 28:16,17 has to be understood within the context that Passover began on Nisan 14 (that is, preparations for the meal), but the meal itself is eaten six hours later at midnight on Nisan 15. Notice the following text:
5. Luke 22:1, 7,8: Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was

approaching... Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

## **Commentary**

It would be unlawful for Jesus to send His disciples to slay the Passover Lamb at twilight on Nisan 15 and eat the Passover on Nisan 16 when He Himself had instructed Moses and the children of Israel they were to slay the Passover Lamb at twilight on Nisan 14 and eat the Passover meal at midnight on Nisan 15. This text emphasizes why the whole of Scripture has to be reviewed when searching for truth. The actions of Jesus are not difficult to reconcile with His statute on the timing of Passover if one understands that the Jews killed the Passover lamb as Nisan 15 began (as Nisan 14 ended) so that the Feast of Unleavened Bread could be eaten at midnight on Nisan 15. The flawless behavior of Jesus in this text proves that Passover was eaten on Nisan 15, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## **The Julian Date of Christ's Crucifixion**

"Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven sevens, and sixty-two sevens. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble."

(Daniel 9:25)

Four decrees were issued for the restoration of Jerusalem. Cyrus gave the first decree in 536 B.C. (Ezra 1) Darius gave the second decree in 519 B.C.. (Ezra 6) Artaxerxes gave the third and fourth decrees in 457 and 444 B.C. (Ezra 7 and Nehemiah 2, respectively) God used the word "weeks" instead of years in this prophecy to indicate a specific synchrony for this all important decree.

In verse 25, God adds another specification that removes all doubt as to which of the four decrees God will use to count off the seventy weeks: "**From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. . .**" With these words, Gabriel points to the public ministry of the Messiah.

Gabriel used seven weeks and sixty-two weeks to highlight the all important synchrony of a decree that would occur in a Sunday year and at the *beginning* of a Jubilee cycle of seven weeks. (See Chart 6.5) By separating the 69 weeks into two smaller pieces the first of which was a Jubilee cycle, God did everything He could to help Israel identify the right decree.

**Notice how this works:** In verse 24, God pointed to a decree that would occur during a Sunday year by using the words "seventy weeks." (This is true because weeks of years always begin with a Sunday year.) In verse 25, God indicates the decree will occur at the beginning of "seven weeks" or 49 years. A seven week cycle is a Jubilee cycle of forty-nine years and it

always begins with a Sunday year. Only one of the four decrees meets this specification.

The decree in 457 B.C. occurred in a Sunday year which also happens to start a new cycle of seven weeks (Jubilee cycle). Incidentally, because 457 B.C. is a Jubilee year, so is 702 B.C. The Jubilee year of 702 B.C. is the only Jubilee year mentioned in the Bible. (Isaiah 37:30) When pointing to the ministry of Jesus, God used language so plain that wise men from Ur figured it out! But, the religious leaders in Jerusalem never did figure it out.

Note: My book, *"Great Clocks From God,"* discusses the year of the Exodus (1437 B.C.) and a host of other issues that accompany this topic. The synchrony of the Jubilee calendar began with the Exodus and 1437 B.C. is the first Sunday year.

The synchrony of the weekly cycle forces 457 B.C. to be a Sunday year and counting from the Exodus, 457 B.C. is a Jubilee year. From the Bible we learn that on or about the very first day of the very first month of the year of Jubilee (Nisan 1), King Artaxerxes issued a decree providing for the refurbishing of Jerusalem and its temple. (Ezra 7)

We also know that Ezra left Babylon with the decree in his hand on Nisan 12, the twelfth day of the first month! (Ezra 8:31)

**The Decree of Artaxerxes, Nisan 1, 457 B.C. Jubilee Cycle #21 since the Exodus**

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday   | Sabbath  |         |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| 457 B.C.  | 456 B.C. | 455 B.C. | 454 B.C.  | 453 B.C. | 452 B.C. | 451 B.C. | Week 1  |
| <b>Decree</b>   |          |          |           |          |          |          |         |
| 450 B.C.  | 449 B.C. | 448 B.C. | 447 B.C.  | 446 B.C. | 445 B.C. | 444 B.C. | Week 2  |
| 443 B.C.  | 442 B.C. | 441 B.C. | 440 B.C.  | 439 B.C. | 438 B.C. | 437 B.C. | Week 3  |
| 436 B.C.  | 435 B.C. | 434 B.C. | 433 B.C.  | 432 B.C. | 431 B.C. | 430 B.C. | Week 4  |
| 429 B.C.  | 428 B.C. | 427 B.C. | 426 B.C.  | 425 B.C. | 424 B.C. | 423 B.C. | Week 5  |
| 422 B.C.  | 421 B.C. | 420 B.C. | 419 B.C.  | 418 B.C. | 417 B.C. | 416 B.C. | Week 6  |
| 415 B.C.  | 414 B.C. | 413 B.C. | 412 B.C.  | 411 B.C. | 410 B.C. | 409 B.C. | Week 7  |
| Jubilee Cycle #22 since the Exodus starts with 408 B.C. - |          |          |           |          |          |          |         |
| 408 B.C.  | 407 B.C. | 406 B.C. | 405 B.C.  | 404 B.C. | 403 B.C. | 402 B.C. | Week 8  |
| <b>Jubilee</b>  |          |          |           |          |          |          |         |
| 401 B.C.  | 400 B.C. | 399 B.C. | 398 B.C.  | 397 B.C. | 396 B.C. | 395 B.C. | Week 9  |
| 394 B.C.  | 393 B.C. | 392 B.C. | 391 B.C.  | 390 B.C. | 389 B.C. | 388 B.C. | Week 10 |

**Chart 6.5**

Look at Chart 6.5 and count off the "seven weeks" which Gabriel mentioned (457 - 409 B.C.).

Notice that the "sixty-two weeks" mentioned by Gabriel began with 408 B.C. and if this chart were large enough, the 69th week would end with the Sabbath year of A.D. 26.

Therefore, the 70th week would begin with the Sunday year of A.D. 27. Notice how 457 B.C. is both a Sunday year and a Year of Jubilee. *None of the other decrees to restore and rebuild Jerusalem can satisfy the synchrony that God indicates.* The decree in 444 B.C. occurred in a Sabbath year (See week two in Chart 6.5), the decree of Darius in 519 B.C. occurred in a Monday year and the decree by Cyrus in 536 B.C. occurred during a Friday year.

These facts prevent the other three decrees from meeting the "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks" requirement that Gabriel specified. If this information does not convince the reader, history also confirms that these three decrees cannot meet the Daniel 9 specifications either. Here is how:

If 457 B.C. is the correct decree and it marks the beginning of the seventy weeks, then we should expect the appearing of Messiah "seven and sixty-two weeks later" ( $69 \times 7 = 483$  years), in the Sunday year of A.D. 27. History precisely confirms this to be the case! Jesus waited until His 30th birthday, which occurred in the Fall of A.D. 27., to begin His ministry. (Jesus wasn't born on December 25.)

Notice how Luke documents the year of Jesus' baptism: **"In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene. . . . The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ."** (Luke 3:1,15)

Have you wondered why people thought John might be the Christ? I find they were expectant because some of the people knew that 483 years had lapsed since the decree of Artaxerxes. The year had come for the Messiah to appear and John the Baptist, a forerunner of Messiah, was attracting a lot of attention because the power of the Holy Spirit rested upon Him. (Luke 1:17)

Within this context Luke wrote, **"When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased. Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. . . ."** (Luke 3:21-23)

## Tiberius and A.D. 27

Some scholars claim that the fifteenth year of Tiberius could not be A.D. 27. But, it is! The Romans did not date Caesar's rule with regnal years. Rather, the official count of years in Roman service was determined by the years Tiberius held tribunician power.

Therefore, A.D. 27 would have been the 33rd or 34th year of Tiberius' tribunician power

(Tiberius was granted power as a member of the tribune in 6 B.C.). I raise this point because Luke dates the 15th year of Tiberius according to Jewish tradition, not Roman tradition. The 15th year of Tiberius according to Jewish tradition began in the fall of A.D. 27. Here's how:

History says that on August 19, A.D. 14, Augustus died. Tiberius stalled the Senate for awhile and he did not allow the members to name him emperor for almost a month, but on September 17, A.D. 14 he became the emperor at the age of 56.

Luke dates the reign of Tiberius using the Jewish tradition of inclusive dating. This means Luke counted the ascension year of Tiberius as "year 1," even though the ascension year was just a few days in length before a new civil year began on Tishri 1.

Josephus also followed this practice when he dated the reigns of the Herods. (Antiquities xv. 5.2; xvii. 8.1) The Mishnah further confirms this method of Jewish regnal reckoning. (Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1.1) During the time of Christ, the Jews observed a Fall-to-Fall *civil* calendar (Tishri 1 to Tishri 1).

Therefore: Tiberius ascended to the throne on September 17, A.D. 14, during a Jewish civil year that ended about a month later. (October 12, A.D. 14.) So, Luke counted September 17 to October 12 as "year 1" because it was the year that Tiberius ascended to the throne. Therefore, the Jews regarded the following civil year, Tishri 1 to Tishri 1 (October 12, A.D. 14 to October 3, A.D. 15) as the second year of Tiberius. (See below.)

### **Luke's Account: The Reign of Tiberius Caesar**

Year 1 = A.D. 14/14 (September 17 - October 12)  
Year 2 = A.D. 14/15 (Tishri 1 to Tishri 1)  
Year 3 = A.D. 15/16 (Tishri 1 to Tishri 1)  
Year 4 = A.D. 16/17 Etc.  
Year 5 = A.D. 17/18  
Year 6 = A.D. 18/19  
Year 7 = A.D. 19/20  
Year 8 = A.D. 20/21  
Year 9 = A.D. 21/22  
Year 10 = A.D. 22/23  
Year 11 = A.D. 23/24  
Year 12 = A.D. 24/25  
Year 13 = A.D. 25/26  
Year 14 = A.D. 26/27  
Year 15 = A.D. 27/28 Jesus baptized

This chart shows Tishri 1 (October 19, A.D. 27 through November 6, A.D. 28) as the 15th year of Tiberius. According to Jewish reckoning and according to Luke, Jesus was baptized in the Fall of A.D. 27, sometime after Tishri 1. (The length of Christ's public ministry on Earth was almost 32 months.)

Just as Gabriel predicted, Jesus arrived at the banks of the Jordan River where John baptized Him. Jesus began His public ministry in the Sunday year of A.D. 27, which is the first year of the seventieth week! This is not the end of the story. Two additional facts from history confirm this synchrony of the Jubilee calendar. In short, God's timing is amazing.

## The Wise Men

The story of Jesus' birth includes a surprising visit by the magi from the East. Many people do not realize that the magi were careful students of prophecy. Scholars believe they were clergymen from Ur, in the province of Babylon.

Evidently, they had discovered and deeply studied Daniel's writings, as well as other books now included in the Old Testament. The magi understood that the priests and kings in Israel were typically 30 years of age when they ascended to authority. (Numbers 4; Genesis 41:46; 1 Samuel 13:1; 2 Samuel 5:4; 1 Chronicles 23:3)

Using this information, they had calculated the year when the sixty-nine weeks would end, then they subtracted 30 years from that calculation to determine the year of Messiah's birth. When they saw the star appear in the heavens, they knew *that star* was a sign from God that Messiah had been born.

Think about it. The wise men are not called wise men without a reason. Their round-trip journey to see baby Jesus required them to walk more than a thousand miles over a period of a year. The intensity of their desire and their devotion to see the Messiah was obvious.

Their lavish gifts for baby Jesus reveals a love for God that few Jews could understand. (The gifts from the Magi financially sustained Mary, Joseph and Jesus during their stay in Egypt when they escaped Herod's decree to kill all baby boys less than two years of age.) Wise men do not go to these extremes on a whim. Like Simeon and Anna, the elderly prophets of Israel who longed to see Messiah, the wise men longed to see the Savior of the world with their own eyes.

Their visit is a powerful affirmation that the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. is the correct decree for starting the 483 year countdown. Consider their question to king Herod: **"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."** (Matthew 2:2)

They were not questioning *whether the king of the Jews had been born*. They were wanting to know *where* He had been born. Perhaps they did not have access to Micah's writings. If they did, they could have gone directly to Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2)

Their presence in Jerusalem at just the right time suggests they understood Daniel 9 since *no other prophecy* in the Bible pinpoints the time of Messiah's birth other than Daniel 9.

How could mere "Gentiles" from a distant land be better informed on the timing of Messiah's appearing than Jewish scholars? How did the Samaritan woman at the well know Messiah's

coming was near. She anticipated the appearing of the Messiah because she said: ". . . **I know that Messiah (called Christ) is coming . . . when he comes, he will explain everything to us.**" (John 4:25)

The answer is simple. Centuries earlier, the Lord had said, "**You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.**" (Jeremiah 29:13) Unfortunately, Jewish scholars were not looking for Jesus. They were caught up in their tiny world of pseudo-scholarship. They had nit-picked the Word of God into so many senseless pieces, they could no longer see the big picture.

Even though the religious leaders discussed and debated the prophecies of Daniel between themselves, they could not understand Gabriel's words. Ironically, the same situation appears to be true today. Scholars today still twist and distort Gabriel's words, just as they were during the time of the first Advent. Unfortunately, they have led millions of people to look for a non-existent pre-tribulation rapture.

## Jesus Died In The Middle of the 70th Week!

God's timing is always perfect. Let us review the facts. First, 457 B.C. aligns with the weekly cycle of years that began at the Exodus in 1437 B.C. (Exodus 12:1) Second, 457 B.C. also aligns with the Jubilee cycle of forty-nine years that began at the Exodus.

Third, Messiah appeared sixty-nine weeks later in A.D. 27 to be baptized by John the Baptist. Fourth, 457 B.C. is affirmed by the presence of the wise men shortly after Jesus was born. But, the fifth and best proof that the 457 B.C. decree is the decree indicated in Daniel 9, is the timing of the death of Jesus. Jesus began His ministry on time and Jesus died on time.

The death of Jesus not only confirms the synchrony of the Jubilee calendar, but it also confirms the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. as the right decree. Paul was aware of this phenomenon: "**But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law . . . You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.**" (Galatians 4:4; Romans 5:6)

## Gabriel's Statement

Gabriel said, "**After the sixty-two sevens, the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. . . . He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven. In the middle of the [last] seven he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.**" (Daniel 9:26,27, insertion mine)

Look ahead to Chart 6.7. Notice how A.D. 30 is located the *middle* of the seventieth week of years. (Evidence presented later in this study demonstrates that Jesus was crucified in A.D. 30.) Of course, there should be no question among Christians that Jesus *confirmed* the covenant that God first gave to Adam and Eve, as well as Abraham and his descendants, and He put an end to animal sacrifices and ceremonial offerings when He died on the cross. (Colossians 2)



Yet, very few Christians realize that Daniel predicted and Jesus fulfilled the prophecy with His death in the middle of the seventieth week!

Look again at Chart 6.7. Counting from the decree of Artaxerxes, notice that A.D. 30 is in the middle of the seventieth week. Notice also that A.D. 30 occurs in the middle of the 210th week of years counting from the Exodus in 1437 B.C. Also notice that the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 began with the 141st week (7 x 141 = 987 years) counting from the Exodus.

## Counting Weeks From The Exodus

### (1437 B.C.) And The Decree of Artaxerxes (457 B.C.)

| Sun                | Mon  | Tue  | Wed     | Thu  | Fri  | Sab  | Weeks Since Decree | Weeks Since Exodus |
|--------------------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1437 B.C. Exodus   | 1436 | 1435 | 1434    | 1433 | 1432 | 1431 | --                 | 1                  |
| ---                | ---  | ---  | ---     | ---  | ---  | ---  | ---                | ---                |
| 457 B.C. - 456     | 456  | 455  | 454     | 453  | 452  | 451  | 1st                | 141                |
| 450                | 449  | 448  | 447     | 446  | ---  | ---  | 2nd                | 142                |
| Weeks 3 through 68 |      |      |         |      |      |      |                    |                    |
| A.D. 20            | 21   | 22   | 23      | 24   | 25   | 26   | 69th               | 209                |
| A.D. 27            | 28   | 29   | A.D. 30 | 31   | 32   | 33   | 70th               | 210                |
| 34                 | 35   | 36   | 37      | ---  | ---  |      | 71st               | 211                |

**Chart 6.7**

## Proving A.D. 30 is the Year of Christ's Death

There is sufficient astronomical and Scriptural evidence to prove beyond intellectual debate that Jesus was crucified on Friday, April 7, A.D. 30. If we allow Bible history and the synchrony of God's Great Clocks to resolve the time of His death, all of the data presented in the Gospels concerning Christ's passion week will harmoniously fit together. In fact, A.D. 30 *exclusively satisfies* the synchrony required by all seven clocks which the Creator devised! In fact, A.D. 30 is the *only* year during which all of the events described in Scripture can occur.

## How Israel Measured Time

Before we examine the timing of Christ's death though, a few words about how time is measured in the Bible is necessary. The Jews normally measured time *inclusively*. Any part of a year, month or day was counted as a whole unit. Remember how Tiberius came to power about two months before Tishri 1 (the beginning of a new Jewish civil year), but those two months were counted as a *whole year* by Luke. (Luke 3:1)

Similarly, if someone came to your home on Tuesday and left on Wednesday, the ancients would measure the time your guest visited in your home to be two days and two nights Tuesday and Wednesday even though the actual time was less than 24 hours. The inclusive method for measuring time also explains how Jesus was dead for three days and three nights (Matthew 12:40), even though the Bible says the Father resurrected Jesus *on* not after the third day! (Acts 10:40)

Because of inclusive reckoning, Jesus was in the tomb for three days and three nights: Friday, Sabbath and Sunday. He died on Friday afternoon, rested in the Tomb on Sabbath and was resurrected on Sunday. However, the number of hours that Jesus was dead was less than forty hours (two hours on Friday afternoon, 24 hours on Sabbath and ten to twelve hours on Sunday).

The measurement of time in Bible prophecy is highly important. There are *18 prophetic time periods in Daniel and Revelation and from God's perspective, all of them use inclusive reckoning*. The decree by Artaxerxes is 457 B.C. occurs *during* the first year of the seventy weeks, therefore the year of the decree is *included* in the count of 490 years. (See Chart 6.7.)

The time period of forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness was measured with inclusive reckoning. (Deuteronomy 2:14; Numbers 14:34) The three days allotted to Pharaoh's cupbearer was measured with inclusive reckoning. (Genesis 40:12,13)

Daniel 9:27 says, ". . . **In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.**" Gabriel said Jesus would die in the middle year of the seventieth week. (See Chart 6.7.) Since we know that Jesus died at the time of Passover (John 12) and there is highly accurate astronomical data for A.D. 30 (accurate to within one or two hours), this makes it very easy to determine the precise date of Jesus' death.

## One Moon Two Months

History says the Jews abandoned God's "new moon" synchrony for determining the beginning of a new month. In its place they adopted the Babylonian method of sighting the first crescent of a new moon to determine the beginning of a month. *Even today, Jews and Moslems continue the practice of sighting a new moon to determine the beginning of a religious month*. But, God's synchrony for starting a new month is based on calculation, not observation.

A new moon occurs when the moon intersects an imaginary line between the Earth and the Sun. Since a new moon cannot be seen, the time of conjunction has to be calculated. Calculation of a new moon is not difficult. (See Numbers 28:14; 1 Samuel 20:24-27; Isaiah 66:23)

Of course, when two different methods for starting a given month are used, there are two different results. The difference between these two methods is one or two days. The sighting of the new crescent of a moon typically occurs in Jerusalem anywhere between 16 to 40 hours after conjunction.

Because there are two methods for starting a new month (thus, two calendars) in the New Testament, there is some confusion about the timing of Christ's death.

The Bible indicates that Jesus and His disciples (and other Jews) observed Passover according to the "new moon" calendar even though the nation of Israel observed its corporate Passover according to the Babylonian method for starting a new month. (See Mark 14 and John 13, 18)

Since the moon determines the first day of the month for both groups of people, the position of the moon plays an important role in determining the date for Passover. God commanded the Passover lamb to be slain on Nisan 14 as the day was ending and after roasting the lamb for a few hours, the roasted lamb was to be eaten at midnight on the fifteenth day of the first month. The Lord passed over Egypt at midnight on the fifteenth of Nisan. (Exodus 12; Leviticus 23:5,6)

*Therefore, any attempt to determine a date and time for the death of Jesus has to address the astronomical position of a new moon for Nisan 1, as well as the first sighting of the crescent of a new moon.*

After the Babylonian captivity, the Jews often observed two Feasts of Passover in the same month. This conflict (and many other contradictory issues) gave the Romans another reason to mock the Jews. Even as late as the fourth century, the emperor Constantine used the competing observance of two Passovers to prove that Christians should not depend upon the Jews to determine the correct time for Easter.

Notice his denigrating comments: "We ought not, therefore, to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Savior has shown us another way; our worship follows a more legitimate and more convenient course; and consequently, in unanimously adopting this mode, we desire, dearest brethren, to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews, for it is truly shameful for us to hear them boast that without their direction we could not keep this feast [of Easter at the proper time]."

How can they be in the right, they who, after the death of the Savior, have no longer been led by reason but by wild violence, as their delusions may urge them? They do not possess the truth in this Easter question; for in their blindness and repugnance to all improvement, they frequently celebrate two Passovers in the same year. (Eusebius, Vita Const., Lib iii., 18-20, insertions mine)

## **Jesus And Two Passovers**

When Jesus came to Earth, He came to declare the truth on many issues which the Jews had distorted. The presence of two calendars (and two Passovers) in Israel solves an interesting mystery, namely, how Jesus could observe Passover at its appointed time with His disciples in the upper room (on Nisan 15 Mark 14:14-16) and within the same year, also die at the time of the national Passover which took place on Nisan 15 (John 19:14-31)!

The solution to this mystery is simple. Jesus and His disciples observed Passover in the upper

room according to God's synchrony for the month (new moon to new moon), but Jesus died on the cross according to the Babylonian method of starting a new month (the sighting of the first crescent of a new moon)! Since the observance of two calendars was a common part of Jewish life, Gospel writers do not specifically mention that two conflicting calendars existed.

For two thousand years, this silence has caused a lot of controversy over the day and date of Christ's death. I hope the following explanation clarifies the complexities regarding the dating of Christ's death.

Jesus was crucified on Friday afternoon, April 7, A.D. 30 which is the precise year required by Daniel 9! Even though most Christians accept A.D. 30 as the year of Christ's death, few understand that it is in the middle of the seventieth week and even fewer understand how this date is determined.

## Step 1

Solar and lunar tables posted at the United States Naval Observatory (USNO) website offer astronomical data covering the years during which Jesus was on Earth. This data has been carefully verified by several astronomers and is accurate to within one to two hours. The published dates and times are given in Universal Time.

Here are the dates and times for three years, especially notice the days of the week:

A.D. 29 Vernal Equinox: Tuesday, March 22, 4 p.m.  
First New Moon on or after Equinox: Saturday, April 2, 5 p.m.

A.D. 30 Vernal Equinox: Wednesday, March 22, 10 p.m.  
First New Moon on or after Equinox: Wednesday, March 22, 6 p.m.

A.D. 31 Vernal Equinox: Friday, March 23, 3 a.m.  
First New Moon on or after Equinox: Tuesday, April 10, 12 noon

Source: <http://www.usno.navy.mil/USNO/astronomical-applications/data-services/spring-phenom/?searchterm=spring%20phenomena>

## Step 2

According to the dates and times from the USNO, a new moon occurred on the same night as the Equinox in A.D. 30. (Jerusalem local time for the new moon was 8 p.m. and for the Equinox, midnight.) Since a new moon and the Equinox occurred on the same day, a new month and a new year began on Wednesday night, March 22, Universal Time. Converting Universal Time to Bible Time: Wednesday night, March 22 becomes Thursday, Nisan 1. This translation is necessary because a day in God's calendar begins at sundown. (Genesis 1; Leviticus 23:32) Notice in Chart 6.8 that New Year's day (Nisan 1) begins on Thursday and Passover (Nisan 15) also occurs on Thursday.

## Jesus Ate Passover Thursday Night, Nisan 15, A.D. 30

### New Moon Calendar

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday   | Sabbath  |
|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ---      | ---      | ---      | ---       | Nisan 1  | Nisan 2  | Nisan 3  |
| Nisan 4  | Nisan 5  | Nisan 6  | Nisan 7   | Nisan 8  | Nisan 9  | Nisan 10 |
| Nisan 11 | Nisan 12 | Nisan 13 | Nisan 14  | Nisan 15 | Nisan 16 | Nisan 17 |

If Jesus and His disciples observed Passover according to the new moon calendar, Chart 6.8 indicates that Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover together on Thursday night at midnight. (Remember, in God's calendar the night precedes the light.) We know that God required the Jews to slay the Passover lamb near sundown on Nisan 14. (Exodus 12:6)

At the time of Christ's last Passover, the disciples killed the paschal lamb about sundown on Wednesday afternoon and they roasted it until about midnight on Thursday, Nisan 15. Jesus and His disciples then celebrated the Passover for it was at midnight that the Lord passed over Egypt. (Exodus 11:4)

Mark 14:16 clearly indicates that Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples before going to His death. The sequence of events went like this: Jesus ate the Passover on Thursday night. On Thursday (the light part of Thursday follows the night part of Thursday) Jesus spent the day with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. (Mark 14:26)

As Friday night settled upon them, Jesus and three disciples went into to the Garden of Gethsemane. (Mark 14:32) Jesus was arrested that night while in the garden. His trial began that night and He was crucified at 9 a.m. and He died around 3 pm.

The Jews celebrated their national Passover on Sabbath night, at midnight, while Jesus lay in the tomb. (Remember, Sabbath night comes before Sabbath light.) The textual harmony from the gospels on this matter is presented in my book, *"Great Clocks From God."*

The Bible does not indicate anything unusual about Jesus eating Passover or beginning the Feast of Unleavened Bread at a time that was not in harmony with the national Passover. (Compare Matthew 26: 17 with Mark 14:12.) The Bible also does not offer any justification for killing the Passover lamb on late Wednesday afternoon and eating the Passover on Thursday night, even though the national Passover lamb was killed two days later on Friday.

This silence occurs for two reasons. First, the dating of the Passover was a common conflict, one of many conflicts among religious sects in Israel; therefore, a discussion about the presence of two calendars is not included in the gospels.

Second, the gospel writers did not attempt to include *for our understanding* everything that was common knowledge in their day. However, with a little background investigation, we find that John dates the Passion week of Jesus with the Babylonian calendar (John 12) and Mark uses the new moon calendar. (Mark 14)

This explains why there is an apparent conflict between some of the things Mark and John write. Once we understand which calendar they are using, the writings of Mark and John are in perfect harmony.

The Bible clearly indicates two Passovers were celebrated during the year that Jesus was crucified. It would be blasphemous to assert the Creator did not know *the true time* for Passover. Actually, Jesus' actions affirm what is Truth, for He is the Truth. (John 14:6)

*Jesus correctly observed Passover* with His disciples in the upper room on Thursday night, the 15th day of Nisan using God's synchrony for determining monthly cycles. The Creator's actions perfectly synchronize with the instructions that Moses recorded in Exodus 12. The timing of the new moon (the USNO tables) and the testimony of the gospel writers confirm it!

### Step 3

History says the Jewish nation synchronized Nisan 1, at the time of Christ, with the sighting of the first crescent of a new moon. Depending on the visibility afforded by weather, the position of the Sun and the season, the first sighting of the crescent of a new moon in Jerusalem occurs between 16 and 40 hours *after* a new moon.

Since it is impossible for us to precisely determine when the crescent of a new moon was sighted in A.D. 30, we have to let Bible facts help put the pieces together. The following facts help to determine the correct date: 1) Since the sighting of the new moon crescent is most probable two days after a new moon; 2)

Since Jesus was arrested on the night *after* He ate the Passover with His disciples; 3) Since the Jews observed Nisan 15 on a seventh day Sabbath the year of Christ's death (John 19:14-31), this means Nisan 1 (according to the Babylonian calendar) had to occur on Sabbath (March 25). See below. These matters force the sighting of the first crescent two days after a new moon.

## Jesus Was Crucified Friday Afternoon, Nisan 14, A.D. 30

### First Crescent Calendar

| Sunday  | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday   | Sabbath  |
|---------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ---     | ---      | ---      | ---       | ---      | ---      | Nisan 1  |
| Nisan 2 | Nisan 3  | Nisan 4  | Nisan 5   | Nisan 6  | Nisan 7  | Nisan 8  |
| Nisan 9 | Nisan 10 | Nisan 11 | Nisan 12  | Nisan 13 | Nisan 14 | Nisan 15 |

Therefore, the national Passover lamb would have been killed near sundown on Friday, the fourteenth day of the month and the Passover would have been eaten on Sabbath, Nisan 15, about midnight (Friday night).

The important point to remember is that the Lamb of God died on the cross about 3 p.m. Friday afternoon and buried before sundown because a *special* Sabbath was about to begin. Special

or *high Sabbaths* occurred when two Sabbaths coincided. When required feasts like the Passover occurred on a seventh day Sabbath, a "high Sabbath" occurred. (John 19:31)

In summary, we know the following facts: 1) We know the astronomical positions of the Sun and moon for A.D. 30; 2) We know that Jesus properly observed the Passover using God's new moon reckoning for the beginning of a month; 3)

We know that Jesus rested in the tomb over Sabbath and rose *on the first day of the week*, (John 20:1; Acts 10:40); 4) We know that A.D. 30 occurs in the middle of the seventieth week. This information leads to a solid conclusion: Jesus was crucified on Friday, April 7, A.D. 30 (or Nisan 14, Babylonian calendar).

The actions of Jesus and the astronomical positions of the Sun and moon are two witnesses that confirm the truth. No wiggle room is left. A.D. 30 is the only year during the seventieth week that will satisfy all the necessary specifications.

## The Seventy Weeks Nailed Down

Now that we know the date of Christ's death, the seventy weeks prophecy has no wiggle room left in it. When it comes to locating the seventy weeks of Daniel 9, there is amazing harmony from several issues. Consider the following:

1. The seventy weeks have to begin with a Sunday year. The synchrony of the week of years from the year of the Exodus and the year of Christ's death proves that 457 B.C. is a Sunday year.
2. The seventy weeks have to begin with a Year of Jubilee. The synchrony of Jubilee cycles from the year of the Exodus confirms the "seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks" specification. 457 B.C. is a Jubilee year and Jesus began His ministry 483 years later, in the Sunday year of A.D. 27, the first year of the seventieth week.
3. The appearance of the wise men at the birth of Jesus affirms their understanding about the sixty-nine weeks found in Daniel 9.
4. The baptism of Messiah occurred during the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar which is A.D. 27 which is the first year of the seventieth week.
5. The Jubilee calendar and the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. forces A.D. 30 to be the middle year of the seventieth week Jesus died at just the right time.
6. The astronomical position of the Sun and moon in A.D. 30 confirms that Jesus and His disciples ate Passover at the correct time.
7. The actions of the Jews and their use of the moon's first crescent method is consistent with the Bible record, meaning Jesus was crucified at Passover according to their calendar on Friday, April 7, A.D. 30.
8. Constantine also refers to the fact that Jews frequently observed two Passovers in the same year.
9. The four gospels are in perfect harmony on the order of these events.

When these nine points are woven together, all wiggle room concerning the timing of the

seventieth week and the death of Jesus is eliminated. **No other time frame can meet or satisfy the prophetic or astronomical synchrony required for the seventieth week. - The overwhelming abundance of harmonious facts supports the conclusion that the seventieth week occurred from Spring A.D. 27 to Spring A.D. 34. Jesus was crucified on Friday morning, April 7, A.D. 30 about 9 am and He died for you and me about six hours later.**

Note: For more information on this topic, see *Day Star* issue February, 2000. Also, see *Great Clocks from God*, available for free download at [Great Clocks From God](#)