

## Two Common Bible Questions

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WUAS receives many questions in the mail each week. If several letters repeat the same question, then I like to respond to them in the Day Star and hope the response can benefit all our readers. This month, I have chosen two questions. Keep in mind my answers are summary responses and are not exhaustive in their treatment of the issues.

### First Question

Many preachers teach that the saints will rule and reign with Christ on Earth during the 1,000 years of Rev 20:1-4. You, however, say the Earth is desolate and the saints are in Heaven during that time. Please explain why you differ. . .

Part 1: Jesus said, Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am [going], there ye may be also. (John 14:1-3, KJV, insertion mine)

These verses indicate three things:

- (1) Jesus departed from Earth to go and prepare a place for His disciples;
- (2) Jesus will return to Earth to receive the saints; and
- (3) He will take them to Heaven where they will live with Him in His Father's house.

The language Jesus used in these verses indicates the saints are going to leave this planet at the Second Coming. Jesus did not say, I will come again, so that I may be received by you. Instead, He indicated that He would receive the saints unto Himself, so that they could live with Him in the mansions He had prepared for them when He left the Earth the first time.

We know that Jesus ascended to Heaven. (Acts 1:11) The location of God's throne and the Father's house is Heaven. (Matt 6:9; John 14:12; Col 3:1) Jesus will descend from Heaven at the Second Coming and call the righteous dead to life. (John 5:28,29; 6:39,40) The saints who are living at the time of the Second Coming will be caught up together with the resurrected saints in the air to meet the Lord. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17)

The saints fly through the air to meet the Lord because the saints are leaving Earth. Their destination is the mansions that Jesus has prepared for them.

Part 2: Revelation 20:3 says, "He [the angel from Heaven] threw him [the devil] into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time." Some people interpret this verse to mean that life on Earth during the 1,000 years will dramatically improve because the devil will not be allowed to deceive the nations.

This would be a reasonable conclusion if it were the only text on the subject, but Rev 20:3 must be aligned within the larger context. Read the context of Rev 19:11 through 20:15 carefully and notice several key points. Before I summarize them, a brief comment is necessary.

The coming Antichrist (alias false prophet, alias lamb-like beast, alias man of sin, alias the beast from the abyss) will be a physical apparition of the mighty angel Lucifer. (See previous Day Star issue: "The Four Beasts of Revelation Exposed!") When Lucifer and his demons were cast out of Heaven, they were cast into the Earth. (Rev 12:9, KJV) Currently, the devil is "locked up" in the Abyss, that is, he is confined to the spirit realm.

At the appointed time, however, God is going to unlock the Abyss and allow the devil with his angels to gloriously and physically appear before the people of Earth as a miracle working personation of God. (2 Thess 2:1-12; Rev 9:1-11; 13:11-18)

This incredible drama will last for about a year and a half. At the Second Coming, Jesus will destroy the physical personation of Lucifer (the false prophet) and the Beast (the crisis government which Lucifer leads) by casting them into a great lake of fire. Everyone having the mark of the beast will be slain by a command (the sword) that comes from the mouth of Jesus. Then, that same mouth will call the righteous dead out of their graves and they will fly toward Jesus.

The remaining people on Earth, the saints, will join the righteous dead to meet the Lord in the air.

Notice that Jesus destroys everyone on Earth at the time of the Second Coming except the saints and they will be removed from Earth! (Rev 19:15-21) Also notice that the Beast and the False Prophet will be destroyed by fire and the birds will gorge themselves on the flesh of all the wicked. Earth will be desolate during the sabbatical millennium.

Part 3: During the 1,000 years, the saints will be living in their mansions in Heaven. They will also reign with Christ in a court of law. The saints will be given the responsibility and authority to sentence the wicked. The saints will determine the appropriate suffering (as in restitution, see Rom 12:19) that each wicked person must suffer (including Lucifer and his angels). (1 Cor 6:2,3; Rev 20:4)

Part 4: At the end of the 1,000 years, the Holy City (Father's House) will descend from Heaven with the saints inside. (Rev 21:2) The wicked of all ages will be resurrected, so that (a) they can meet their Maker, and (b) understand the reasons for their upcoming restitution and execution. (Rev 20:5, 12-15) Lucifer will be released from the Abyss at the end of the 1,000 years.

Once again he will deceive the nations and personally persuade them to attack the Holy City. (Rev 20:7-10) God responds to this insolence. Fire falls from Heaven, suffering begins (restitution) that culminates with the complete annihilation of the wicked (eternal death). Then, Jesus will create a new Heaven and Earth and the saints live happily ever after!

## Second Question

My church teaches that Jesus was in the tomb three days and three nights that He died on Wednesday at sundown and was resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, just as Sunday was beginning. The Wednesday crucifixion produces three whole days and three whole nights in the tomb. How can you rule out a Wednesday crucifixion?

Part 1: This question has a long history of frustration and controversy. Most of the consternation exists because few people understand the methods used in Christ's day to measure time in months and years. Fortunately, there are two witnesses that resolve this issue the actions of Jesus and the astronomical position of the Sun and moon.

To begin this discussion, let me review the timing and order of events regarding the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for which there is general agreement:

1. 10th day of first month: Passover lamb set apart (v3)
2. 14th day of first month: Passover lamb slain at twilight as the 15th day begins and its blood is placed on the door posts.  
(v6,7)
3. 15th day of first month: Passover lamb eaten that night (v8)
4. 15th - 21st day of first month: Feast of Unleavened Bread begins after 14th day ends. (v12-18)

The importance of the specific timing of these two feasts will become obvious as you read the rest of the article.

Part 2: Based on this information, we face two questions of paramount importance in our quest to determine the specific day of the crucifixion. 1) What year did Christ die, and 2) how does God mark the commencement of a month? To begin, we need to determine the year of Christ's crucifixion, so the position of the Sun and new moon can be determined. The position of the new moon also helps us determine which day of the week the 15th day of the month occurs.

I find, for a host of reasons beyond the scope of this discussion, that Jesus was crucified in A.D. 30, the middle year of the 70th week. The 70th week began in the Spring of the Sunday year, A.D. 27 and ended with the sabbatical year, A.D. 33. Therefore, the middle year of the 70th week is a Wednesday year, A.D. 30. See below:

A.D. 30 Passovers Using Two Methods to Start the Month										
March Julian	Wed 22	Thu 23	Fri 24	Sab 25	...April... Midnight to midnight	Wed 5	Thu 6	Fri 7	Sab 8	Sun 9
Night / Day										
First Crescent Method		A		B	...Nisan... Evening Evening	C	D	E	F	Passover G
New Moon Method		①	2	3		12	13	14	15	16
		Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sab	Sun
							Passover			

  

A: Spring Equinox and new moon occur, month of Nisan begins for Jesus and disciples	C: Passover lamb slain at correct time	G: Israel eats Passover on 15th day of Nisan using Babylonian method
B: First Crescent seen Nisan begins for nation of Israel	D: Jesus eats Passover with disciples on 15th day of the month	H: Jesus resurrected before daylight
E: Full Moon 10 pm	F: Jesus crucified	

I also find, for reasons beyond the scope of this study, that God reckons a month from one new moon to the next. (Isa 66:23) In fact, God required Israel to observe new moon feasts at the first of each month, so the first day of each month was prominently known throughout the nation. (Num 10:10; 28:14, Col 2:14-16, NIV) (A new moon is a totally dark moon and is usually unobservable, therefore, the beginning of a new month was determined by calculation about two weeks before it took place.

The first day of the month was determined by subtracting the age of the current full moon from 29.53 days, which is the length of time between full moons. This may vary between 13.91 and 15.54 days.)

Scholars know that the post-exilic Jews abandoned God's method for reckoning new moons and adopted the Babylonian practice of starting a new month with the sighting of a new moon crescent. Using the Babylonian method, the onset of a month is often 2 or 3 days later than God's method.

This difference is why there is so much confusion about the time of Christ's death. Here is the source of the confusion: Jesus and His disciples observed Passover according to God's synchrony for the month, although the nation of Israel at that time was observing Passover according to Babylon's method.

Although gospel writers do not indicate which calendar they used for dating various events, which method they used can be determined by examining the actions of Jesus and the astronomical positions of the Sun and moon.

Part 3: According to solar and lunar tables posted at the U.S. Naval Observatory web site (<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/SpringPhenom.html>) for A.D. 30, the chart on the previous page shows the position of the Sun and moon, as well as the course of events during Passover

in April, A.D. 30, using the Babylonian method for starting a month. Notice how our Julian calendar and the Jewish calendar align so that Sabbath, April 8 is Passover.

Part 4: The gospel writers indicate that Jesus ate the Passover with His disciples on the day before His death. The disciples records do not indicate anything unusual about eating Passover or beginning the Feast of Unleavened Bread at a time that is not in harmony with the national Passover. (Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12)

Nor do they offer any explanation for killing the Passover lamb on Wednesday afternoon and eating it on Thursday night, although the national Passover lamb was killed on Friday. The reason for these divergent events stems from the difference in marking the beginning of the month. It would be foolish to assert that the Creator did not know the proper time for Passover. Actually, the actions of Jesus confirm what is Truth, for He is the Truth. (John 14:6)

Jesus correctly observed Passover and the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread with His disciples on Thursday, the 15th day of the month using God's method for reckoning monthly cycles. Since the new moon occurred on Wednesday, the same night as the Spring Equinox in A.D. 30, the 15th day of the first month is a Thursday. The actions of the Creator are totally synchronous with the instructions He gave Moses in Exodus 12!

Notice the timing of the events on the chart following God's synchrony for starting the month.

Part 5: The mystery is solved. Jesus celebrated Israel's final Passover on Thursday night, at exactly the right time with His disciples, on the 15th day of the first month. The alignment of the Jubilee calendar, the 70th week, the Sun and moon, plus the actions of Jesus all pinpoint the time of Passover in A.D. 30 as Thursday night. The actions of Jesus and the astronomical position of the Sun and moon are two witnesses that confirm the truth.

No wiggle room is left because no other year provides the precise alignment of the Sun and moon with the evidence recorded in Scripture!

I find three interesting points in regard to the Thursday evening Passover. First, Jesus actions must be interpreted as a confirmation of the synchrony of time according to the calendar that He established at the Exodus. Second, Jesus ended the paschal sacrifice that Thursday night. While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, take and eat; this is my body.

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matthew 26:26-28) With these words, He announced the end of 1,467 years of paschal lamb sacrifices and initiated the Lord's supper. (John 13, 1 Cor 11) The following day, He brought the Levitical code to an end. (Heb 7:12, Col 2:14-16)

Last, the actions of Jesus confirmed by the positions of the Sun and moon indicate the nation of Israel was not observing Passover on a day synchronous with God's will at the first Advent. It is ironic that now, just before the second Advent, most of the world worships God on days that are

not synchronous with His will either.

Part 6: Finally, Jesus said, For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matt 12:40) Based on the above information, there is no alternative but to interpret the words of Jesus as referring to days and nights inclusively, that is, any part of a day begins and ends the count. (See Genesis 7:12,17 and 2 Kings 20:1-11 for good examples of inclusive reckoning.)

The gospel evidence of two different times for Passover indicate two dating schemes the actions of Jesus and His disciples are in harmony with God's will and the alignment of the Sun and moon is conclusive. Jesus ate the true Passover with His disciples on Thursday night.

According to the Babylonian method for beginning a new month, Jesus died on Friday, rested in the tomb over Sabbath from His work of salvation and was resurrected on Sunday to serve in Heaven's court as man's High Priest (Heb 7:24-26). It appears that Jesus was dead for about 40 hours. More importantly, the Bible also indicates that He is alive forevermore!

I have prepared a study on God's synchrony of time that addresses this topic, as well as the Jubilee calendar and prophetic time-periods in greater detail. A hard copy is available for \$5 (includes postage) or you can download it for free at our web site: ([Great Clocks Article](#)).