

# Three Days and Three Nights And Daniel's Seventieth Week

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Certain of the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign, “But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: for as Jonah was **three days and three nights in the whale’s** [2785, *large fish, sea monster*] **belly**; so shall the Son of man be **three days and three nights in the heart of the earth**” (Matthew 12:39, 40).

Did Jesus mean three twenty-four hour days, or just parts of three days? Was Jesus resurrected on Sunday, or was He resurrected on the Sabbath (Saturday)? On which day of the week was Jesus crucified? What is the plain truth on this subject? First we need to determine the day of the week on which Jesus was crucified.

Jesus fulfilled the Passover sacrifice, “...For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore **let us keep the feast**, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but **with the unleavened bread** of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8). The Passover sacrifices were performed on the fourteenth of Abib (Exodus 12:6). The month of Abib is the first month of the year on the Hebrew calendar, and it is in the springtime.

The first of God’s annual Sabbaths is on the fifteenth of Abib. The days of the week on which God’s annual Sabbaths can fall will vary from year to year. We are going to begin in the Book of Daniel to see on which day of the week Jesus was to be crucified.

“...[F]rom the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem to the **Messiah** [4899, *Anointed*] **the Prince** [5057, *a leader, ruler*] shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks...” (Daniel 9:25). The sixty-nine weeks are calculated to be 483 days ( $7 \times 69 = 483$  days). Using a day for a year it equals 483 years. The decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued by King Artaxerxes I to Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

At the conclusion of the 69<sup>th</sup> week the Messiah was to be killed. “And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah **be cut off** [3772, *to kill, to destroy, to make a covenant*], but not for Himself...” (Daniel 9:26). The death of the Messiah brought in the New Covenant, for by His death, “...He takes away the first [*covenant*], that He may establish the second [*covenant*]. By that will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:9, 10).

Continue in verse 26: “and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and to the end of the war desolations are determined” (Daniel 9:26). The temple and the city were destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Roman forces. God allowed the temple to be destroyed because it was no longer needed with the coming

of the New Covenant. The temple, “Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, **that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience**; which stood only in meats and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them **until the time of reformation**” (Hebrews 9:9, 10).

Daniel 9:27 continues speaking of the Messiah. “And He shall confirm [1396, *to make strong, firm*] the covenant [1285, *to cut a covenant*] with many [7227, *a multitude*] for one week...” (v. 27). *Strong’s* 7227 is from 7231, which means to “to be increased, multiplied.” The covenant is made with an ever increasing number of people.

Continue verse 27: “and **in the midst of the week** He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease...” **It was Jesus’ sacrifice that ended the sacrificial system!** “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4). Jesus was cut off before the beginning of the seventieth week. The midst of the week is the fourth day, i.e. Wednesday. Jesus died on the fourteenth of Abib in 30 A.D., which was a Wednesday; thus His death fulfilled the timing of “in the midst of the week.”

At sunset on the fourteenth of Abib the sixty-ninth week ended, and the seventieth week began. The seventieth week is made up of God’s seven annual holy days. The first of the seven annual holy days is on the fifteenth of Abib, which was on Thursday in 30 A.D. The seven annual holy days are a revelation of the covenant that is confirmed with an ever increasing number for one week.

The number seventy represents the nations, i.e. the people, as descended from the sons of Noah: “...and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood” (Genesis 10:32). There are seventy descendants listed in chapter ten. Seven is the number of sanctification, i.e. purification. Seventy sevens is the sanctification (7) of the nations (70). This is the ever increasing number.

Seven also means to finish, or to complete something. The fulfillment of the seventieth week will be “...to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophesy, and **to anoint the Most Holy**” (Daniel 9:24). This will be the completion of the sanctification (7) of the nations (70).

This process began when Jesus died for the sins of man, and it will conclude when “...the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be **no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away**” (Revelation 21:3, 4). The seventieth week will never end, because the seventh day of the seventieth week is the eternal Sabbath rest.

The fourth day was not just randomly picked as the day of Jesus’ death. The number four represents creation, and that is why Jesus died on the fourth day of the week. “For if we have

been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:5, 6).

Therefore, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God...” (1 Peter 1:23). The incorruptible seed is through Jesus Christ. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creation**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). We become a new creation through the blood of Jesus, which was shed on the fourth day, the number of creation in scripture.

The crucifixion of Jesus began at the third hour, which is about 9:00 A.M. (Mark 15:25). “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land to the ninth hour” (Matthew 27:45). The sixth hour is the zenith of the sun, i.e. solar noon. Six is man’s number, so it was at the sixth hour that the sins of man were placed on the head of Jesus, and the land became dark. (Darkness symbolizes sin.) Jesus died at the ninth hour (Matthew 26:45-50; Mark 15:33-41; Luke 23:44-49). The ninth hour is three hours before sunset, when the next day begins.

“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation [*the day prior to a Sabbath*], that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away” (John 19:31). The Sabbath day mentioned here is not the seventh day Sabbath, but it is the annual holy day that occurs on the fifteenth of Abib (Leviticus 23:6, 7). When they came to Jesus, He was already dead, “...that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken” (John 19:36). Also see Exodus 12:46.

Biblical days begin and end at sunset. The days were divided into twelve equal hours from sunrise to sunset (John 11:9; Matthew 20:1-8). Jesus’ death was three hours before sunset. Joseph of Arimathea “...went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never before was man laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on [2020, *to be near commencing*]” (Luke 23:52-54).

Jesus was buried late on the afternoon of the fourteenth day, just before the beginning of the annual Sabbath day that is on the fifteenth. “And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid” (v. 55).

It was close to the beginning of the annual Sabbath, so the women did not have time to purchase and prepare spices before the Sabbath began. “And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him” (Mark 16:1). The crucifixion was on Wednesday, the annual Sabbath was on Thursday; therefore on Friday, after the annual Sabbath, they bought and prepared the spices.

“And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56). Mark says, “when the Sabbath was past,” they bought sweet spices, but here it says, they “prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath.” Obviously these are two different Sabbaths. They purchased and prepared the spices on Friday the day after the annual Sabbath, and then they rested on the Sabbath day, i.e. Saturday.

“Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the sepulcher, bringing the spices they had prepared...And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher. And they entered in, and found not the body of Jesus” (Luke 24:1-3). Early on Sunday they found that Jesus had already been resurrected. They were told by two angels, “He is not here, but is risen...” (v. 6).

The account in Matthew also makes it plain that when the women came to the tomb, Jesus had already been resurrected. “In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn [2020, *to be near commencing*] toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher. And behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it....And the angel answered and said to the women, Fear not you: for I know that you seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen...” (Matthew 28:1, 2, 5, 6).

The account in Mark 16:1-8 is similar. When they came to tomb on the first day of the week, Jesus had already risen. Mark 16:9 says, “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene...” This appears to state that Jesus rose on the first day of the week. However, the literal translation reads, “having risen and early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene...” The literal rendering does not say that He rose on the first day of the week.

The account in the Book of John says, “The first day of the week comes Mary Magdalene early, **when it was yet dark**, to the sepulcher, and sees the stone taken away from the sepulcher” (John 20:1). In every instance, when they came to the tomb on the first day of the week, Jesus had already risen. Nowhere does it say that He was rising, or rose on the first day of the week.

Jesus said that the sign He would give was that He would be “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” If we count three full twenty-four hour days from late Wednesday afternoon, we end up late Sabbath afternoon. Jesus was resurrected late on the Sabbath day.

Do we believe the words of Jesus, or do we believe the words of the so-called Bible scholars, who seem to be mathematically challenged. Counting only parts of three days and three nights from Friday afternoon would mean that He could not have been resurrected before Sunday night, which, Biblically, would be the second day of the week, i.e. early on Monday, unless you want to claim that it was three days and two nights. This is called “circular reasoning,” which is “a fault in reasoning in which the premise and conclusion are each in turn used to prove the other” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*).

The seventh day Sabbath represents the eternal rest that we are to labor to enter into. “There remains therefore a **rest** [4520, *the keeping of a Sabbath*] to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His” (Hebrews 4:9, 10). On what day did God rest from His work? “...And God did rest the **seventh day** from all His works” (v. 4). “Let us labor therefore **to enter into that rest...**” (v. 11).

The Sabbath is at the end of the week. “Six days shall you labor, and do all your work. But the **seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God: in it you shall not do any work...**” (Exodus 20:9, 10). The work that we must do to enter into God’s Sabbath rest is to “Be not overcome [3528, *to conquer, vanquish, subdue*] of evil, but overcome [3528] with good” (Romans 12:21). The number six represents man, and man must labor to overcome his evil tendencies in order to enter into the Sabbath rest. “He that overcomes [3528] shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7).

What does God have to say about the Catholic and Protestant custom of proclaiming Sunday as the day of Jesus’ resurrection? “And He brought me into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, **with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east**” (Ezekiel 8:16).

What do so-called Christians do on Easter Sunday morning? They worship the rising of the sun in the east. This is part of the sun worship that originated in Babylon after Noah’s flood. The Eternal God calls this an abomination (vv. 15, 17). Biblical directions are calculated from Jerusalem. Facing eastward from Jerusalem is to face toward Babylon and the rising of the sun. This is idolatry.

The temple symbolizes the church. “And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? **For you are the temple of the living God...**Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean [169, *lewd, foul, impure*] thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:16-18).

God does not accept false worship. We have seen that Jesus died on the fourth day of the week, and was resurrected on the seventh day Sabbath. Jesus was three full days and three full nights in the grave, **just as He said He would be**. Do we believe Jesus, or do we believe the lie? “God is a Spirit: and they who worship Him **must worship Him in spirit and in truth**” (John 4:24).