



Was Jesus Crucified on Wednesday or Friday?

You may be wondering what brought this question up, as the topic has not come up in our Sunday School class. Great question. During the Bethlehem Star video, a question was asked about Matt 12:40:

“For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Mt 12:40, ESV)

I responded that this was a Jewish idiom pointing to three in total, counting portions of days as days, and that the Bible sometimes does this with day counts. One of the men present mentioned that Chuck Missler believes that Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday.

Two days later I received a video from a brother that walked through this whole teaching of Jesus being Crucified on a Wednesday. Subsequent to that I tracked down the video my Missler as well as two other videos by believers who teach that Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday. A day or two later I was talking to another brother and the subject came up.

The best video that presents the theory of the crucifixion on a Wednesday that I have seen, and I have seen a few, can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX74uXL2t_0&t=317s

Although I believe he is incorrect and makes a number of factually incorrect arguments, he does so with great zeal, and I am certain he believes what he is teaching. Equally, I want those who are interested to hear the best argument for a Wednesday crucifixion that I can find.

I believe the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus was crucified and placed in the grave on Friday (by Jewish reckoning prior to sunset) and rose from the grave Sunday (by Jewish reckoning of time after sunset on Saturday evening), no later than early morning Sunday when the women found the tomb empty.

This paper first outlines the four evidences for what I believe. Second it provides four responses to the main points in the video that I mentioned above. A response to the authors four main points.

I recognize that some very smart and very godly men believe in a Wednesday crucifixion. But the reader must also recognize that a greater number of very smart and very godly men believe in a Friday crucifixion and that this has been the majority position of the church historically and well as the position of the early church fathers.

In short, in the positive sense, in the order they will be presented, I have 3 strands of evidence that I believe Jesus was crucified on a Friday and rose from the grave on a Sunday. Let me give them to you in summary form and then I will further explain each point.

- 1) Mark does a wonderful job of cataloguing the last week of Jesus' life. When you graph that out, I would argue that it become crystal clear that the Triumphal Entry occurred on a Sunday, the crucifixion on a Friday, and the Resurrection on a Sunday.

- a. It is interesting the God details the creation week in Genesis and the recreation week in the gospels.
- 2) When you create a model that demands that Jesus be in the grave for three full (24 hour days) you create a totally different problem with a number of verses where Jesus predicts or it is declared that he rose **on** the third day.
- 3) The Bible in multiple places handles portions of days and count them as a day.
- 4) The festival days of the Old Testament, in particular the first three of the seven mentioned in Leviticus 23, namely (Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Feast of First Fruits) find their fulfillment in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the precise day of those celebrations.

EVIDENCE #1 - Let's start by mapping of the last week of Jesus' life as outlined by Mark in the gospel that bears his name.

I thought the best way to begin to tackle this question was to review the last week of Jesus' life as recorded by Mark to see if we can work backwards to determine the days (knowing that Jesus rose from the grave sometime on Sunday (by Jewish accounting of days and times, at the earliest sunset on Saturday night to early Sunday morning when the women arrived at the tomb and Jesus was not there). With that, to the book of Mark:

Day 1 – 11:1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples ² and said to them, “Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it(Mar 11:1-2, ESV).

So, Jesus is traveling for sure from Bethany to Bethlehem (approx. 2 miles) and in the greater context it appears he travels from Jericho to Jerusalem (approx. 15 miles). In either case it is clear that whatever day this is, it is not a Sabbath. The Jews were only allowed to travel about 2/3 of a mile (2000 cubits) on the Sabbath.

Jesus sends two disciples ahead to get the colt and bring it back to Jesus. They do, and ultimately we see Jesus ride into Jerusalem under the shouts of “*Hosanna! Blessed is he who come in the name of the Lord.*”

Then we read: ¹¹ And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. (Mar 11:11, ESV). We end the day with Jesus and the apostles traveling to Bethany, likely spending the night with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus or Simon the leper. **End Day 1.**

Day 2 - ¹² On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it,

he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it. (Mar 11:12-13, ESV).

So according to Mark, this is the “*following day*” so day 2, traveling from Bethany back to Jerusalem, Jesus encounters a fig tree that has nothing but leaves. Jesus curses the fig tree in front of his disciples.

Next, we read how Jesus cleansed the temple and ran out the money changers, next we read: ¹⁹ And when evening came they went out of the city. (Mar 11:19, ESV). We can assume that they go back to Bethany, but Mark tells us they definitely leave the city. **End Day 2.** In passing day 2 cannot be a Sabbath day because of the travels that occurred that morning.

Day 3 – The next morning, seemingly coming from Bethany and headed back to Jerusalem we read: ²⁰ As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. ²¹ And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” (Mar 11:20-21, ESV). The tree that Jesus had cursed the day before is already withered away. Notice their travels took them by the same tree Jesus had cursed the day prior.

Upon arriving at the temple Jesus’ authority is immediately challenged by chief priests, scribes, and elders. Ultimately, they will not answer Jesus’ question, so He refuses to answer their question.

Jesus begins teaching in the temple in parables. First the parable of the vineyard with application (12:1-11). The parable angered the religious leaders, but they feared arresting Jesus, so they left him and went away.

Next the religious leaders send some of the Pharisees and Herodians to trap Jesus on the matter of taxes. Jesus totally confounds their scheme with His wisdom (12:13-17). Next some Sadducees come and attempt to trap Jesus with a question about the resurrection (12:18-23). Jesus rebukes them showing they do not understand the power of God or the Word of God (12:24-27). Next a scribe comes, having heard the prior dispute and asks Jesus which commandment is the most important commandment of all (12:28-34).

While Jesus is teaching in the temple, he shows how the people do not understand Psalm 110:1. As he continues to teach Jesus warns those listening to beware of the scribes and explains why (12:38-40). Next, He sits down opposite the treasury and observes and comments on the widow who places two small copper coins in the offering box (12:41-44).

As Jesus and the disciples were exiting the temple, the disciples comment on the great building of the temple (13:1). This results in a very long discourse (speech) by Jesus. It involves the destruction that will occur in 70AD and his ultimate return at the end of the age. This discourse goes all the way to (13:37). What Mark tells us next is very helpful:

14:1 It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, ² for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.” (Mar 14:1-2, ESV).

We are then told that it is two days before the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. We should assume this is attached to Day 3 (could be day 4, but seems to connect to day 3). Then as we will see **Day 3 ends**. Just another observation in passing, day 3 cannot be a Sabbath day because of all the travels.

Day 4 – This assumes that Mark has not missed any days, although because this is the final week of Jesus’ life and Mark is detailing items day-by-day, it is likely a good assumption. Equally, as you will see in just a second it is clear no days have been missed.

Then we read, Jesus is back at Bethany in the house of Simon the Leper where he is anointed by a woman with ointment from an alabaster flask (14:3-9). Judas then goes to the chief priests and betrays Jesus (14:10-11).

Day 5 – Then we read: ¹² And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹³ And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ ¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” ¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. (Mar 14:12-16, ESV). So clearly this is a new day, again on day three the Passover was two days away, now it arrives, this must be day 5. We know when they will eat the Passover sometime shortly after sunset on Nisan 14. That means this is Nisan 13 as they are preparing that day, preparing for the Passover that evening (after sunset).

Day 6 – Here is the evening and the Jewish **start** of a new day. In this case **day 6**. Then we read: ¹⁷ And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.” ¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?” ²⁰ He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. ²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” ²² And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.” ²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. ²⁴ And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. ²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” (Mar 14:17-25, ESV). It seems on **day six**, at the start of the day (that evening) Jesus celebrates the Passover with his disciples and institutes the Lord’s supper (on Nisan 14). They sing a hymn and go out to the mount of Olives (14:26). Jesus warns them that they will fall away, Peter and the others deny that there is any way that could ever happen

(14:29-31). Jesus takes the apostles to Gethsemane, where he prays and they keep falling asleep (14:32-40). Jesus then tells them that the time of his betrayal is at hand. (14:41-42).

Then we read: ⁴³ And immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. (Mar 14:43, ESV). Ultimately Jesus's disciples flee and they seized Jesus and lead him to the high priest (14:53). Peter followed at a distance and observed the scam trial that occurred in the middle of the night. In (14:55) the chief priest along with the whole Sanhedrin questioned Jesus, seeking testimony that would allow them to call for his execution (14:55). Many bore false witness against Jesus, but their testimonies did not agree (14:56). One person bore false witness and said: ⁵⁸ "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'" ⁵⁹ Yet even about this their testimony did not agree. (Mar 14:58-59, ESV). The high priest sensing this was not going anywhere finally asked Jesus directly: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the blessed?" Then we read: ⁶² And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mar 14:62, ESV). The high priest tore his garments and declared that what Jesus had said was blasphemy, and Jesus deserved death. Then we are told that all the Sanhedrin agreed with the High Priest. They spat on Jesus and they mocked Jesus.

In (14:66-72) we have the denials of Peter recorded.

As soon as it was morning (still on **Day 6**) the Chief Priests in consultation had Jesus delivered to Pilate (15:1). Pilate questioned Jesus (15:2-4).

Then we read this: ⁶ Now at the feast he used to release for them one prisoner for whom they asked. ⁷ And among the rebels in prison, who had committed murder in the insurrection, there was a man called Barabbas. ⁸ And the crowd came up and began to ask Pilate to do as he usually did for them. ⁹ And he answered them, saying, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" ¹⁰ For he perceived that it was out of envy that the chief priests had delivered him up. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release for them Barabbas instead. ¹² And Pilate again said to them, "Then what shall I do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" ¹³ And they cried out again, "Crucify him." ¹⁴ And Pilate said to them, "Why? What evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him." ¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. (Mar 15:6-15, ESV).

What feast is Mark referring to? Yes, the **Passover**, which started at sundown the evening before, this is still Day 6. **The feast is the Passover.**

Ultimately after being mocked by the soldiers, Jesus is led away to be crucified (15:16-20).

Jesus is crucified at Golgotha at the third hour or **approximately 9:00am** in the morning of the Passover (Day 6) in our countdown (15:21-32).

At this sixth hour (**approximately noon**) there is darkness over the land until the ninth hour (**approximately 3:00pm**) (15:33).

Also, around 3:00pm Jesus cries out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani” uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. This happened at **approximately 3:00pm still on day 6.**

Then Mark writes: ⁴² And when evening had come, since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath (Mar 15:42, ESV).

So evening is approaching, it is the day of preparation, which is the day before the Sabbath, **so Day 6 was a Friday, with Day 7 being a Saturday Sabbath.** The timeline at the end will prove this. Joseph of Arimathea goes and requested the body of Jesus to get him buried before the start of the Sabbath at **Sundown on Friday.** Here is what Luke records: ⁴³ Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴ Pilate was surprised to hear that he should have already died. And summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. ⁴⁵ And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the corpse to Joseph. ⁴⁶ And Joseph bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud and laid him in a tomb that had been cut out of the rock. And he rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁷ Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid. (Mar 15:43-47, ESV).

Thus, Mark records that Jesus is placed in the tomb **prior to the start of the Sabbath.** We can estimate that Jesus was placed in the grave somewhere no earlier than 3:00pm and no later than sunset on **day 6** of the timeline.

Now we know that **day 7** is the Jewish Sabbath and we read in **Mark 16:1: When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. (ESV).**

Day 7 was not only the Jewish Sabbath, but it was the **first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread** which is a week-long celebration. **Jesus was in the tomb for the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.**

Mark 16:1 is **day 8**, it occurred after the Sabbath was past. Mark recording nothing about **day 7.** **Day 8** would have started Saturday at sunset and proceeded until Sunday at Sunset.

Now the first Sunday of the week would have also been the **Feast of First Fruits** which occurs the first Sunday during the week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which in this year started on a Saturday. Thus day 8 is more than a Sunday, it is the **Feast of First Fruits. Jesus was in the grave for the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and rose from the grave during the Feast of First Fruits, which always occurred on a Sunday.**

Now, if we have mapped the days correctly here is what we would find:

Day 1 – Sunday – This day could not be a Sabbath because of the travel of Jesus and his disciples for they clearly traveled greater than a Sabbath day’s journey. But we see the triumphal entry occurred on Sunday, the day after the weekly Sabbath and one week prior to resurrection Sunday.

Day 2 – Monday – This day could not be a Sabbath because of the travel of Jesus and his disciples for they clearly traveled greater than a Sabbath day’s journey.

Day 3 – Tuesday – This day could not be a Sabbath because of the travel of Jesus and his disciples for they clearly traveled greater than a Sabbath day’s journey.

Day 4 – Wednesday – It is unlikely that this day is a Sabbath because the woman carried an alabaster box and anointed Jesus, this would not likely have occurred on the Sabbath.

Day 5 – Thursday – Is the day the disciples prepare for the Passover. The disciples are traveling, they are looking for a man carrying a water-pitcher. Day 5 cannot be the sabbath due to the travel and work that is occurring on day 5.

Day 6 - Friday also (Passover) (also the day that Jesus our Passover lamb died for us). The start of that day (evening) Jesus and the disciples went to the Mt of Olives, in excess of a Sabbath day’s journey. This day cannot be a Sabbath. Equally we would have had the Jews driving to crucify Jesus on the Sabbath.

Day 7 - Saturday (the Jewish weekly Sabbath) also (the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread). Not only are we told this day is the Sabbath by Mark, it is the only day people are not breaking the Sabbath by their activities, thus a review of activity on each day demands day seven (in the timeline) was the Jewish weekly Sabbath.

Day 8 - Sunday also (Resurrection Sunday) also (Feast of First Fruits). This becomes the anchor for all other days. This allows us to map the week.

This seems indisputable. Even if you disagree with a particular point, the only day where the Sabbath is not being openly violated is day 7 in Mark’s accounting. All other days the Sabbath is being broken by multiple people which means only day 7 in the flow can be the Sabbath.

EVIDENCE #2 - In the model where Jesus is crucified on a Wednesday maintains Jesus’ body in the tomb for three full days and three full nights, and in all honesty part of a fourth day. Let’s look at the Wednesday timeline:

- a. Jesus is placed in the tomb (small amount of day 1) somewhere between 3pm and 6pm (day 1) (Wednesday this Theory’s reckoning) (we will say 2 hours total).
- b. Jesus is in the tomb (full second day) (Thursday by this theory’s reckoning) (26 hours total).
- c. Jesus is in tomb (full third day) (Friday by this theory’s reckoning) (50 hours).
- d. Jesus is in the tomb (full fourth day) (Saturday by this theory’s reckoning) (74 hours).
- e. Then Jesus rises from the grave at sunset on Saturday (which would be Sunday by Jewish reckoning).
 - i. So much for sunrise services, we should have sunset services. 😊 OK, I am just having fun.

- f. This means it will be 10 hours or so (6:00pm to let's say 4:30am the next morning) before the ladies learn of Jesus' resurrection.

This creates a whole new set of problems. His body would have needed to be in the tomb for three full days and a part of a fourth day. The problem with this is extremely obvious in the discussion between Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, please forgive me for the long quote, but it makes the point in two different ways:

“1 ¶ But on the **first day of the week**, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. 4 While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. 5 And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified **and on the third day rise.**" 8 And they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, 11 but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened. 13 ¶ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. 16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, **it is now the third day since these things happened.**” (Lu 24:1-21, ESV)

OK, so these verses start on Sunday, resurrection morning (see 24:1). It is on that day that other things occurred as well that Luke writes about including Peter arising and running to the tomb (24:12), and that very day the two men making the trip to Emmaus (24:13). As they were making that trip Jesus drew near to them, but they did not recognize Him. Jesus (who they did not yet recognize) inquired as to what they were discussing? Then Cleopas answered are you the only person in Jerusalem who does not know about the things that have happened in these days? Jesus (although they do not recognize Him) responds, “what things”? They talk about what happened with Jesus, a mighty prophet in word and deed, how He was delivered up by the chief priests and rulers and condemned to death and crucified. They had hoped He was the Messiah. **And besides**

that, it is **now the third day since these things happened**. It is Sunday and that is “**the third day**” since these things have happened.

NKJV - ““But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, **today is the third day** since these things happened.” (Lu 24:21 NKJV)

By our friends reckoning this would be the **fourth** or **fifth day (depending on how you count)**. This is very confusing. There is no way the Wednesday crucifixion theory works with Luke’s account in Luke 24.

Another problem with this understanding. Paul in what scholars tell us is an **early creed** says this to the church in Corinth:

“3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was **raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.” (1Co 15:3-5, ESV)

Again, Paul indicates He was **raised on the third day**. If the second scenario is true Jesus would have been **raised on the fourth day**.

But it is not just Paul, this prophecy is given a number of times:

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and **on the third day be raised**. (Mat 16:21, ESV). Not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

²² As they were gathering^[f] in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill him, and he will be **raised on the third day**.” And they were greatly distressed. (Mat 17:22-23, ESV). Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

“and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified, and **he will be raised on the third day**.” (Mt 20:19, ESV) Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

²¹ And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²² saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.” (Luk 9:21-22, ESV). Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

³¹ And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. ³² For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. ³³ And after flogging him, they will kill him, and **on the third day he will rise**.” (Luk 18:31-33, ESV). Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, (Luk 24:44-46, ESV). Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, (Acts 10:39-40, ESV). Again, not after the third day, **but on the third day**.

Now consider with me, if you demand that Jesus be in the grave for three “full” days. Then it becomes **impossible** for Him to rise from the grave **on the third day**. Does that make sense?

I will stop here, hopefully this makes the point. Jesus cannot be in the grave for **three full days** and yet rise from the grave **on the third day**.

Recognizing this is possibly a fatal flaw in the Wednesday theory, our brother at time 25:30 attempts to justify this obvious error by saying, well although Jesus died on a Wednesday he was not really buried until Thursday. Unfortunately, that is not what the Bible says:

“**38 ¶** After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. **39** Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. **40** So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. **41** Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. **42** *So because of the Jewish day of Preparation*, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.” (Joh 19:38-42, ESV)

Clearly Jesus was laid in the tomb on Preparation Day, the same day he was crucified. All the arguments about people not having wristwatches are irrelevant. Equally, it would not matter. He is still in the grave three full days and thus cannot rise “**on the third day**” by our brother’s propose new Wednesday crucifixion timeline.

At time 28:30, our friend recognizing the previous argument might not convince people on the matter of **four actual days** is now really **three days** he makes this weird argument that the first day of Unleavened bread is “day one” thus we should not count that his body went in the tomb the day before. He is mixing two different points and this whole argument is irrational and irrelevant. **His timeline has Jesus in the grave for over three full days**.

EVIDENCE #3 – The Bible in multiple places will treat a part of a day as a full day. Here is a quick example, this one coming from Genesis. When Joseph’s brothers went to Egypt to buy grain because the famine was so severe in Canaan, we read this:

“**14** But Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you. You are spies. **15** By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here.

16 Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." 17 And **he put them all together in custody for three days.**" (Ge 42:14-17, ESV)

Fair enough, they are placed in jail for three days, then we read:

"18 **On the third day** Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: 19 if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, 20 and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so. 21 ¶ Then they said to one another, "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us." 22 And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood." 23 They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them. 24 Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. 25 And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them." (Ge 42:18-25, ESV)

Then we are told Joseph let them go **on the third day**. So clearly, they were not in jail for **three full, 24-hour days**, but three days (any part counting as the day). So, it appears they were jailed (likely one afternoon), spent the next day in jail, and were released sometime on the third day. **This would be very similar to what I believe happened with Jesus.**

OK, maybe you feel like one argument is not enough. Here is another. Going to the book of Exodus; ⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ **For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.** (Ex 20:8-11, ESV).

Now did God work for six literal 24-hour days or did He labor for some portion of a day, at most the daylight hours of the day. If so, then how can Moses say "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth? What is interesting about this point is I have never run into anyone who demanded that this verse must mean God worked 24x6.

EVIDENCE #4 – The Feast Days

The festival days of the Old Testament, in particular the first three festival days of the seven mentioned in Leviticus 23, namely (Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Feast of First Fruits) find their fulfillment in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the precise day of those celebrations.

The Passover is the most mentioned Feast Day in the Hebrew Bible, it is mentioned over 50 times in 15 different passages. We will look at the first mention:

“1 ¶ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. 3 Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. 4 And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, 6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight. 7 "Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8 They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. 10 And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11 In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. 13 The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt. 14 "This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.” (Ex 12:1-14, ESV)

Our Lord celebrated the Passover on Nisan 14 at evening, at the start of the day with his disciples. In fact the last Passover of our Lord was the meal where he initiated the Lord's Supper. Equally it was around 3:00pm on the 14th of Nisan as the day was coming to an end that Jesus died. Paul said this to the church in Corinth: “Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” (1Co 5:6, ESV)

But Jesus fulfilled more than the Passover he fulfilled the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for his body laid in the grave on the first day, the solemn assembly of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Feast of Unleaved Bread started the day after Passover and ran for a week. There are seven passages that reference the Feast of Unleaved Bread. We will look at the first: “**15** Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. **16** On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you.” (Ex 12:15-16, ESV)

Thus Jesus was in the grave for the solemn assembly that started the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is likely that Paul's reference in I Cor 5:18 to leaven following his discussion of the Passover is connecting to Jesus being the fulfillment of the Feast of Unleavened Bread for believers: "7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (1Co 5:7-8, ESV)

Christ not only fulfilled the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but his resurrection also fulfilled the Feast of First Fruits. The Feast of First Fruits was a very unique holiday in that it was celebrated on a Sunday. It was a one-day festival that was always celebrated the day after the Sabbath during the week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus, it was the only Jewish Feast Day that was always celebrated on a Sunday! Here is what Moses wrote in Leviticus 10: "9 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10 "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, 11 and he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." (Le 23:9-11, ESV)

This while the Jews were bring their one-sheaf wave offering on that very day, Jesus stepped out of the grave victorious. Here is what Paul said to the church in Corinth: "20 ¶ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (1Co 15:20-23, ESV)

Thus Jesus perfectly, and on the actual festival day, fulfilled the Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of First Fruits.

So above are my four evidences that Jesus was crucified on a Friday and rose from the grave on a Sunday. The first two dealing directly with the topic, the third dealing with the concern about partial days counting as a day and the fourth dealing with the events in Jesus' life literally fulfilling Jewish festival days.

Now I would like to provide **four responses**, these are only meaningful if you watch our brother's video that I linked early on in this paper, otherwise they may not make a great deal of sense. But these are responses to my brother who created the video articulating the Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday. As above, please allow me to give them to you in summary form and then I will further explain each point.

- 1) In the video, John claims that the high day in John 19:31 is the holy convocation day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Nothing I can find in Biblical or Jewish writing connects these. The term high day does not mean holy convocation.

- 2) In the video, John claims that the day of preparation was the day preparing for the holy convocation of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is historically incorrect. Jewish history tells us that the day prior to the Sabbath began to be referred to as the Preparation Day.
- 3) Our friend makes a big deal of the word “bought” in Mark 16:1 comes to a completely incorrect conclusion showing that he does not understand the Aorist tense and his point is easily overthrown by comparing it to Luke’s account.
- 4) As far as I can tell, none of the early church fathers believed in A Wednesday crucifixion and at best it was a minority position in the early church. I say at best for I have only been able to find one older reference that references Wednesday. Of course, we do not base our beliefs on what any group believed. But in this case, I bring this up as the final nail.

RESPONSE #1 - What our brother does in his teaching on the Wednesday theory is he takes the Hebrew phrase in Leviticus 23 **קֹדֶשׁ (qodesh)** most often translated **holy** and **מִקְרָא (miqra’)** meaning **convocation, gathering, or assembling** and calls these this phrase **high days**.

- a. First, the term would be translated as **solemn meetings** or **holy gatherings**, but **not high days**.
- b. Second, the Bible never calls these days “**high days**.”
- c. The phrase “**high day**” is only used by John in John 19:31. The two Greek words are **μέγας (megas)** normally translated **great** and **ἡμέρα (hemera)** meaning **day**. It was not a **solemn day**, this is a **mega day!**
- d. Jewish people today or in the time of Jesus never called these solemn assemblies of Leviticus 23, **high days**.
 - i. Not in the Bible.
 - ii. Not anywhere I can find in Jewish History.
- e. Edersheim in his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, writes: “*The Sabbath about to open was a ‘high day’—it was both a Sabbath and the second Paschal Day, which was regarded in every respect equally sacred with the first.*”
Therefore, the coincidence of the annual with the weekly Sabbath made this day “a high day.”

By the way Edersheim’s understanding is in line with the timeline from **Evidence #1**.

RESPONSE #2 - At time 14:50ish in the video our brother states: “*The day of preparation is what they did on Passover day preparing for the high Sabbath on the next day.*”

- a. This is factually incorrect.
- b. Preparation day was the day that immediately proceeded the normally weekly Sabbath day. It picked up this name when, due to concerns over Hellenization the Pharisees and the Sadducees imposed strict conditions on Sabbath keeping. According to Josephus (Jos. Antiq. XVI. vi. 2): “*the people began to make preparations for the sabbath well before the sunset with which the observances*

actually began, suspending normal business and social activity and preparing all food in advance.”

- i. This point is very easy to Google.
- c. The testimony of Jewish History is that **preparation day** was the day before the weekly Sabbath observance.

RESPONSE #3 - Our friend also made a big deal of Mark 16:1:

“When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him.” (Mr 16:1, ESV)

- a. His point, and he states it a couple of times is that the Sabbath here (is the high day) and it was past and Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome went and purchased spices. According to the Wednesday crucifixion theory this was after the solemn assembly of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Sabbath here) and prior to the weekly Sabbath. His point being they purchased spices after the “high day” (Sabbath here, but not weekly Sabbath) but before the actual Sabbath to anoint the body. One might wonder why they did not immediately go on the day they purchased the materials, rather than waiting what will now be two days. But our brother does not even attempt to explain this obvious issue.
- b. That is not what this verse says.
- c. This understanding is very confusing and shows a lack of understanding of the Greek and weak exposition of the verses under consideration.
- d. The English phrase “*bought spices*” is a single Greek verb ἀγοράζω *agorazo ag-or-ad’-zo*, which means to purchase in the marketplace and it is in the aorist tense. *The aorist tense is characterized by its emphasis on punctiliar action; that is, the concept of the verb is considered without regard for past, present, or future time. There is no direct or clear English equivalent for this tense, though it is generally rendered as a simple past tense in most translations.* What Mark is likely telling us is that they purchased spices at the end of the Sabbath (sunset) on Saturday, which would have been the start of a new day by Jewish reckoning. It is possible, because this is Aorist tense that they had already purchased the spices and they are now bringing them. But I believe Mark is outlining what happened Saturday evening, (immediately) after the Sabbath was past.
- e. In Luke’s account here is what he writes: ⁵⁰ Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, ⁵¹ who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. ⁵⁴ It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. ⁵⁵ The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. (Luk 23:50-56, ESV). Jesus was crucified on Friday the day of preparation, the women saw where Jesus was buried, went home and prepared spices and ointments. They rested on the Sabbath, since they could not make the trip or work on the Sabbath, and then first thing Sunday morning they headed for the tomb. In fact, here is the next verse we

read: 24:1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. (Luke 24:1, ESV).

RESPONSE #4 - The church, including the Early Church Fathers, as best as I can tell, universally believed that the timeline of Jesus being killed commenced on a Friday and He rose from the grave on Sunday. In fact, I can only find one early reference to a possible Wednesday crucifixion.

Many of these men were of Jewish descent others were fluent in multiple languages (Latin, Hebrew, and Greek). If the high day was really the solemn assembly in Leviticus 23, if the preparation day was really the preparation day for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they would have quickly caught those things. The fact that the early church, nearly universally held to a Friday crucifixion, should be a compelling argument for us today.

We do not hang our hat on the understanding of the early church fathers, or the ancient church, but in this case their voices are near, if not, universal (a rarity indeed).

Equally, we have the other evidences that have helped get us to this being the eighth item I list.

In closing, if you watch the video (linked early on), I agree with many things our brother says about the Jewish festival days and their relationship to the Messiah! Those things are worthy of repeating.

But, his explanation of *high days* is not contained in the Bible or Jewish history. His explanation of the *preparation day* is easily overthrown by studying the use of this phrase in Jewish history. His attempt to make **four actual days, three days** is really the **Achilles heel** of his whole argument. His confusion with the Greek in Mark 16 and his lack of comparing the account with other gospels writers creates a confusing piece of information in his timeline which is easily overturned by looking at the Greek or Luke's account.

In closing, I really want to deal with one additional thing our brother states in the video: Early on in the video he stated: if *“three days and three nights is an idiom this is the worst sign that Jesus gave to prove He was the Messiah.”* This is a ridiculous statement, the fact that Jesus will rise from the grave is the miracle, not that He will be in the grave 72 literal hours. That statement is ridiculous! Again, this is taking one verse (Matt 12:40) and demanding an interpretation that overthrows a host of verses that predict or declare that Jesus will or did rise from the grave **on the third day.**

For reference:

