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Messianic Learning**
Unapologetically Pro-Torah
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“... out of Tziyon will go
forth Torah, the word of
ADONAI from
Yerushalayim.”
(Isaiah 2:3)

Jew and Gentile (Synagogue and Church), one in Messiah. (Ephesians 2:14)
“For He is our peace, Who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, ...”

If your life is not in jeopardy for what you believe, you're probably on the wrong side.

Approx. reading time: 35 minutes

Crucifixion Week Chronology¹

In response to a request from the Scribes and Pharisees for a sign to prove His Messiahship, Yeshua (Jesus)² told them, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign? No! None will be given to it but the sign of the prophet Yonah. For just as Yonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea-monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the depths of the earth.” (Matthew 12:39-40).³ Christian tradition proposes a “triumphant entry” of Messiah into Jerusalem on “Palm Sunday,” His crucifixion on “Good Friday,” and a resurrection early on “Easter” Sunday morning.

Problems with Traditional Christian Chronology

For nearly 2,000 years the Church has taught us that Messiah’s “Triumphal Entry” into Jerusalem was on “Palm Sunday,” that He celebrated His “Last Supper” with His disciples on Thursday evening the day before the Jewish Passover (since on the Hebrew calendar the day begins and ends at sunset, the meal would have been eaten during the first few hours of Friday), that He was crucified about 9:00 a.m. on “Good Friday,” died sometime around 3:00 p.m., and was resurrected just before sunrise (approximately 6:00 a.m.) on “Easter Sunday” morning. This traditional chronology creates two very significant problems that Christian theologians and Bible teachers conveniently ignore:

1. The Sign of Jonah is not fulfilled, and
2. There is an apparent inconsistency in the Gospels as to the date of the Crucifixion.

The Sign of Jonah

Yeshua told the Scribes and Pharisees that the *proof* of His Messiahship would be His fulfillment of “the Sign of Jonah.” Since the traditional chronology fails to fulfill that sign, it makes Him a liar at worst or simply wrong at best. Either option would prove that He was a false prophet (Deuteronomy 18:22) and disqualified from being Israel’s Messiah.



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Dates Inconsistency?

There is an apparent inconsistency in the Gospels as to the date of the Crucifixion and of the days immediately leading up to that event. But as I have said repeatedly on this website, when Scripture seems to contradict Scripture, we have failed to arrive at the proper interpretation.

In most English translations, Matthew and Mark write that the disciples were preparing for Passover “on the first day of Unleavened Bread”⁴ (Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12). The problem with this dating is that on the Hebrew calendar (remembering that the Gospel accounts were written by Jewish rabbis, in a Jewish land, in the Jewish language, to a primarily Jewish audience) the day begins and ends at sunset.

The Passover meal is prepared on Preparation Day — the day *before* the first day of Unleavened Bread (or Matzah) — and eaten in the first few hours after sunset, which would *then* be the first day of Matzah. Thus, if the disciples were preparing Passover *on* the first day of Matzah, they were a day late.

John says that Yeshua’s trial and crucifixion were on “the preparation day for the Passover” (John 19:14) and that the Jewish leaders who were falsely accusing Him wouldn’t enter Pilate’s judgment hall because it was Preparation Day and “they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover” (John 18:28). Mark, Luke, and John all say that Yeshua was buried “on the Day of Preparation” (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54-56; John 19:42). So, it was not possible that the day the disciples were preparing the Passover was the first day of Matzah. Nor was it possible that they were preparing the meal *on* Preparation Day. It had to have been the day *before* Preparation Day. Does the text permit that understanding?

Let’s compare the different accounts in the *Christian Standard Bible* to the Greek text of each.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?” (Matthew 26:17)

Τῇ (Tē) [The] πρώτῃ (prōtē) [first **or before**] τῶν (tōn) [the] ἀζύμων (azymōn) [Matza] ...

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrifice the Passover lamb, his disciples asked him, “Where do you want us to go and prepare the Passover so that you may eat it?” (Mark 14:12)

τῇ (tē) [The] πρώτῃ (prōtē) [first **or before**] ἡμέρᾳ (hēmera) [day] ἀζύμων (azymōn) [of Matza], ὅτε (hote) [when] τὸ (to) [the] πάσχα (pascha) [Passover] ἔθουον (ethyon) [was to be sacrificed] ...

Then the Day of Unleavened Bread came when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. (Luke 22:7)

δὲ (de) [and or but] ἦλθεν (Ēlthen) [came] ἡ (hē) [the] ἡμέρα (hēmera) [day] τῶν (tōn) [the] ἀζύμων (azymōn) [Matzah] ἣ (hē) [which] τὸ (to) [the] πάσχα (pascha) [Passover] ἔδει (edei) [was to] θύεσθαι (thy-esthai) [be sacrificed] ...

So, the answer is yes, the text *does* allow that translation. Matthew and Mark could just as easily be translated as “**Before** the Day of Unleavened Bread ...”, and Luke simply states that “the Day of Unleavened Bread came” — he does not say that the described activity occurred on that day, just that the day came. Mark and Luke explain that on the first day of Matzah the Passover Lamb was to be sacrificed, but Matthew doesn’t mention the Lamb at all.

It is important to remember that it is *impossible* to translate from one language to any other without introducing the translator’s interpretation based upon his preconceptions. As there are extremely few direct word

equivalents between languages, and nearly every word of every language has multiple meanings that depend upon their context, the task of the translator is to select the best word from all available possibilities to convey the idea which the translator *believes* the original text is trying to convey. For example, in the phrases that we are considering here, the Greek word *πρώτη* (*prōtē*), conveys the *idea* of “first,” “beginning,” “before,” “principal,” or “most important.” Since early in Christian tradition, it has been simply *assumed* that “the Last Supper” was held on Passover, so they choose to translate *πρώτη* as “first” instead of “before.”

The first phrase in Matthew 26:17, echoed in Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7, “Τῇ πρώτῃ τῶν ἄζύμων (*Te prote ton azymon*)” translates literally as “the *first* the matzah” or “the *before* the matzah.” Since this literal translation isn’t good English, the writers may have intended to convey the thought of “the *first day* of Unleavened Bread.” However, an equally valid understanding is “*before* the Feast of Unleavened Bread.” This could then be paraphrased as “at the beginning of the preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread” to provide a better understanding of what was happening.

~~On the first day for Before matzah,~~ the talmidim came to Yeshua and asked, “Where do you want us to prepare your Seder?” (Matt 26:17)

~~On the first day for Before Matzah,~~ when they *would* slaughtered the lamb for Pesach, Yeshua’s talmidim asked him, “Where do you want us to go and prepare your Seder?” (Mark 14:12)

~~Then came the day of Before Matzah,~~ on which the Passover lamb ~~had~~ *would have* to be killed. (Luke 22:7)

Remember that on the Hebrew calendar, the day begins and ends at sunset, not midnight.

Passover occurs *at twilight* (or literally, “between the evenings”) on the 14th of Aviv (Nisan) (Leviticus 23:5); thus, the Day of Preparation falls from sunset on the 13th of Aviv until sunset on the 14th of Aviv. The first day of Unleavened Bread is the 15th of Aviv (beginning at sunset the evening of the 14th of Aviv), *after* the lambs have been sacrificed on the 14th of Aviv. Yeshua was arrested after sunset at the *end* of the 13th of Aviv and the beginning of the 14th of Aviv. It was on the Day of Preparation (Aviv 14) that Yeshua was taken before Pilate (John 18:28; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66; Matthew 27:1-2), crucified at 9:00 a.m., died at 3:00 p.m., and buried just before sunset, about 6:00 pm.

Thus, the meal that Yeshua shared with his disciples (the evening before He was arrested) had to have been the evening of the 13th of Aviv (starting before the sunset that begins the 14th), the day *prior to* the Day of Preparation. As Michael Rood points out,

The KJV inaccurately translated the Greek text concerning “the *protos* of the Feast of Unleavened Bread” as “the *first day* of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.” The “first day of the feast” is the 15th day of the month of Aviv (Nisan) — which would mean that they had already missed the Passover Seder. The *protos* — *beginning of the preparations* for Unleavened Bread is the situation of which Yeshua spoke. It takes several days to prepare for the Passover Seder. The disciples were preparing for Passover at a rented townhouse in Jerusalem, rather than where they had been staying in Bethany. Bethany provided a measure of safety security for Yeshua and His disciples during the week. (Michael Rood, *The Chronological Gospels*, p. 221, his emphasis.)

Fuzzy Math

Yeshua said that He would fulfill the “sign of Jonah” by being in the grave for “three days and three nights.” On every clock that I have ever been able to find, “three days and three nights” is a period of 72 hours, and there simply are not 72 hours between 3:00 PM on Friday and 6:00 AM on Sunday.

No matter what kind of “fuzzy math” you perform, the time between a Friday evening burial and a Sunday morning resurrection cannot possibly be more than 36 hours, exactly half the time required to fulfill “the sign

of Jonah.” If Yeshua did not *literally* and *completely* fulfill “the sign of Jonah” with a *full* three days and a *full* three nights (a total of 72 hours) in the tomb, then He either lied about it or He was wrong and is thus not qualified to be the Messiah. Since He claimed to be the Messiah, then if He is not all He claimed to be, He was a false prophet. The validity of the entire Christian and Messianic faith hinges upon whether He literally fulfilled “the sign of Jonah.” One would think that the Church might consider this to be a significant problem.

The Source of the Traditional Chronology

The Church’s traditional chronology relies *totally* upon Roman Catholic tradition and conveniently chooses to ignore *both* Jewish history *and* the Biblical record. It is this writer’s opinion (and *only* an opinion, with which you are certainly at liberty to disagree) that this erroneous chronology is the direct result of Constantine’s outlawing of all Jewish practices, especially the Passover observance, in the new “Church” that he created sometime between 311 and 325 CE.⁵

The tradition that sets “Good Friday” as the day of crucifixion is based on ignorance of Hebrew tradition. It assumes that the Shabbat (Sabbath) referred to in Mark 15:42 was the seventh-day Shabbat (Saturday). The translators and interpreters did not understand that *every* Jewish Holy Day is a Shabbat, and the Shabbat referred to in verse 42 was not a Saturday, but the first day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan. The first and eighth day of Unleavened Bread are both “high” Shabbats. *Passover* is less than an hour in duration and occurs “at twilight” (which is defined as the period just after sunset but before total darkness) on the 14th of Nisan according to Leviticus 23:5-6.

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between sundown and complete darkness, comes Pesach [Passover] for ADONAI. On the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of Matzah [Unleavened Bread]; for seven days you are to eat matzah. (Leviticus 23:4-5, CJB)

So, during the ten days that included Yeshua’s crucifixion and resurrection there were *five* Sabbaths: the day of Passover was a Sabbath, the first and last days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread were both Sabbaths, First Fruits was a Sabbath, and there was also the regularly weekly seventh-day Shabbat.

As I was taught in seminary (and as I taught for many years), the Church historically justifies this discrepancy by (incorrectly) proposing that “on the Jewish calendar, any portion of a day is counted as a full day and any portion of a night is considered a full night.”

Even if this were true (and it simply is *not*), between His burial at 6:00 PM on Friday and a resurrection at 6:00 AM on Sunday there are 36 (not 72) hours, and only two nights: Friday night and Saturday night. No matter how you trim and whittle, you can get no more than one full day and

two nights; it is *mathematically impossible* to cram three days and three nights, or even any *portions* of three days *and* three nights, into 36 hours. Only when you ignore the Hebrew calendar that the Bible uses and forcibly apply the Gregorian calendar that the Church uses do you have part of Friday, all of Saturday, and

Friday 3:00 pm	Not in the grave any part of this day	Yeshua dies	
Friday 6:00 pm		Yeshua buried just before sunset	
Friday 6:00pm-midnight	Night one	In the grave	24 hours
Saturday midnight-6:00am			
Saturday 6:00 am-6:00pm	Day one		
Saturday 6:00-midnight	Night two		
Sunday midnight-6:00am			
Sunday 6:00 am	Not in the grave any part of this day	Resurrection at sunrise	

part of Sunday; you may have part of three days, but you do *not* have part of three days *and* part of three nights.

So how can we resolve this problem? I encourage you to be a good [Berean](#), and look up all these Scripture references in your Bible (or just follow the hyperlinks I have provided) and see what the Word *actually* says. *What I say or think is totally unimportant*; be concerned *only* with what Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) says through the Shliachim (Apostles).

Three Things We Can Know with Absolute Certainty

1. Yeshua was totally and absolutely Torah-observant, the only Person who ever lived who was able to do so. He was, in fact, the “Living Torah.” He simply would not — could not — violate Passover. To do so would make him “a sinner,” an unsuitable sacrifice for our redemption, and ineligible to be the Messiah.
2. If Yeshua lied (or was wrong) about how long He would be in the tomb, then He was a false prophet, and not the Messiah. So, if He said that He would prove that He is the Messiah by fulfilling “the Sign of Jonah” — by being in the earth for three days and three nights — then He was in the tomb literally for 72 hours.
3. The Scriptures are always correct! When Scripture “disagrees” with Scripture, or when the Scriptures are “wrong,” it is we who have arrived at the wrong interpretation, or there is a faulty translation from the original autograph (the original parchment that was hand-written by the Apostle or his scribe).

With those three working pre-suppositions, we have a very interesting challenge in unraveling the chronology of the crucifixion week.

The Facts as We Know Them

ADONAI spoke to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Egypt; he said, ²“You are to begin your calendar with this month; it will be the first month of the year for you. ³Speak to all the assembly of Isra’el and say, ‘On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb or kid for his family, one per household — ⁴except that if the household is too small for a whole lamb or kid, then he and his next-door neighbor should share one, dividing it in proportion to the number of people eating it. ⁵Your animal must be without defect, a male in its first year, and you may choose it from either the sheep or the goats. ⁶“You are to keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, and then the entire assembly of the community of Isra’el will slaughter it at dusk. (Exodus 12:1-6)

⁴“These are the designated times of ADONAI, the holy convocations you are to proclaim at their designated times. ⁵In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between sundown and complete darkness, comes Pesach for ADONAI. ⁶On the fifteenth day of the same month is the Festival of Matzah; for seven days you are to eat matzah. ⁷On the first day you are to have a holy convocation; don’t do any kind of ordinary work. ⁸Bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work.” (Leviticus 23:4-8)

1. Passover was given to Israel (and to those *goyim*⁶ who have either converted or otherwise attached themselves to Israel) as a foreshadow of Messiah’s atoning sacrifice.
2. Passover is on the 14th day of Nisan (formerly called Aviv), and the lamb is to be slain “at twilight” (literally, “between the evenings” or “between sundown and complete darkness” as the *Complete Jewish Bible* translates it) (Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5). From at least the Second Temple Period, “twilight” has been considered as the time between approximately 3:00 pm and sunset.
3. The Passover Lamb is to be brought into the house on the 10th day of Nisan for extensive examination until the 14th of Nisan. (Exodus 12:3)

4. To fulfill the prophetic picture of Passover, Messiah *had to* enter the Temple (be taken into the “House” — a Hebrew appellation for the Temple, from “My house shall be called a house of prayer”) on Nisan (Aviv) 10 (on no other day) and be killed “between the evenings” on Nisan (Aviv) 14 (on no other day).
5. The “sign of Jonah” was to be *literally* fulfilled: As Jonah was “in the belly of the fish” for three days and three nights (72 hours, Jonah 1:17), so Messiah was to be “in the heart of the earth” for three days and three nights (72 hours, Matthew 12:39-41). [Sorry, but that “any part of a day counts as a whole day” theory just won’t fly. “Three days and three nights” is English for a Hebrew phrase which means ... “three days and three nights.”]
6. First Fruits was literally fulfilled by the Resurrection (1Corinthians 15:20, 23), and therefore had to occur on the Day of First Fruits. But the current Jewish *Yom HaBikkurim* (the Day of First Fruits) is the first day of Shavuot (Exodus 34:22), also called Pentecost, seven weeks after Passover. However, there are two “First Fruits,” the barley first fruits and the wheat first fruits. Barley, the Spring “First Fruits” is the first of the winter planting to be harvested in Spring (Leviticus 23:9-10); wheat isn’t harvested until the summer “First Fruits” almost two months later (Exodus 34:22). [Modern Judaism only recognizes the second “First Fruits,” and my personal belief is that they do so because to acknowledge the early “First Fruits” they would have to deal with Yeshua’s fulfillment of that foreshadowing. Ignoring the early “First Fruits” eliminates that problem for them.]
7. On the Hebrew calendar, the day begins and ends at sunset, not at midnight [“God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.” (Genesis 1:5, NASB)]. On Nisan 13 and 14 (early spring), sunset occurs at approximately 6:30 (give or take a few minutes). (See “The Hebrew Calendar” at the end of this article.)
8. The three Synoptic Gospels are *incorrectly assumed* to say that Messiah’s last meal before He died was a *rabbinic* Passover Seder (Matthew 26:17-20; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-12), which is required to be prepared late in the afternoon and early evening (before sunset) of Nisan 14 and eaten during the first hours of Nisan 15; yet his “trial” before Pilate occurred the next day on “the Day of Preparation,” which is the day before the *rabbinic* Passover Seder, or Nisan 14. Moreover, John 18:28 tells us that the members of the Sanhedrin who were accusing Him “did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled but might eat the Passover.” Thus, the last meal was clearly not a *rabbinic* Passover Seder, since that was not established until late in the second or early in the third century. See the author’s article, “Passover and the ‘Last Supper.’”
9. Yeshua was in Bethany six days before Passover (“Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, the one Jesus had raised from the dead.” — John 12:1) Six days before Nisan 14 would be Nisan 8.

The members of the priesthood who attended His “trial” before Pilate did not want to enter the building to avoid being “defiled” and disqualified for eating Passover after sunset that evening, which would have been the first hour of Nisan 15.

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. They did not enter the headquarters themselves; otherwise, they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover. (John 18:28)

So, the Sadducees observed their Passover on “the first day of Unleavened Bread,” Nisan 15.

Since the Scriptures must be without error *in the original autographs*, we can only assume that between the time that the Synoptics were first written in Hebrew^{7,8} then translated into Greek, and then into Latin, and then into English, there had to have occurred an error in translation, probably due to ignorance of the Hebrew method of keeping time. The Greek word *πρώτη* (*prōtē*) that is translated as “first” in Matthew and Mark is three other times in the NAS translated as “before” — the word “first” does not appear in the Greek text of Luke. We may therefore safely assume that the original autographs said, “... *before* the day of Unleavened Bread.”

There is one other possibility that I really hesitate to present: the three verses from the Synoptics *may* possibly have been *deliberately* altered by the Roman Church to support their “Good Friday” tradition.

The Known Facts Present Challenges to be Resolved

1. If the crucifixion occurred on “Good Friday” and the Resurrection occurred just before dawn on “Easter Sunday morning” there is absolutely no possible way to account for “the Sign of Jonah.” If Yeshua died shortly after 3:00 pm and was buried before the onset of the weekly Sabbath shortly before 6:30 pm, there is an *absolute maximum* of only 39 hours between His death and resurrection. Therefore, this interpretation must be discarded as intellectually untenable.
2. The Synoptic Gospels in most English translations (Matthew 26:17, Mark 14:12, and Luke 22:7 — you *are* looking up all these Scripture references, aren’t you?) all say that the *Talmidim* (Disciples) prepared “the Passover” on “the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.” This presents a serious problem with the English translation, because Yeshua was crucified on the day of Preparation (the 14th of Aviv) and the first day of Unleavened Bread is the 15th of Aviv — the day *after* Passover. It is simply impossible that the Jewish Rabbis Mattityahu (Matthew), Mordechai (Mark), and Lukas (Luke) — who lived in strict obedience to Torah — all wrote in their original autographs that the final meal that Yeshua shared with His disciples was a “Passover” eaten on “the first day of Unleavened Bread.” Immediately above, we asserted that the true original text should be translated “... *before* the day of Unleavened Bread,” and this conflict with the English text almost surely proves that point.
3. To fulfill the prophetic sign of the Passover, it was essential that Messiah die at *exactly* the time that the Passover Lamb was being sacrificed in the Temple and that He remain “in the body of the earth” for three full days and three full nights! If the Talmidim prepared their Passover on “the first day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed,” how is it possible that Yeshua was crucified on the day of Preparation?
4. The Sanhedrin “led Yeshua from Kayafa (Caiaphas) to the governor’s headquarters. By now it was early morning. They did not enter the headquarters building because they didn’t want to become ritually defiled and thus unable to eat the *Pesach* meal.” (John 18:28). They were the leading priests of the Temple, and they did not enter the Praetorium because it was the Day of Preparation for the Passover, which would begin at sunset that evening.
5. The First Fruits was calculated as the day after the seventh-day Sabbath (the first day of the week) that comes after Passover.

⁷On the first day [of Matzah or Unleavened Bread] you are to have a holy convocation; don’t do any kind of ordinary work. ⁸Bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; do not do any kind of ordinary work.” ⁹ADONAI said to Moshe, ¹⁰“Tell the people of Israel, ‘After you enter the land I am giving you and harvest its ripe crops, you are to bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the

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cohen. ¹¹He is to wave the sheaf before ADONAI, so that you will be accepted; the cohen is to wave it on the day after the Shabbat.” (Leviticus 23:7-11)

The Pharisees, however, apparently held that “the sabbath” referred to in Leviticus 23:11 was the seventh-day Sabbath after Passover, and they celebrated “First Fruits” 50 days later as the first day of Shavuot, or Pentecost (Exodus 34:22). [Modern Judaism has survived from the sect of the Pharisees; the Sadducees “died out” after the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E.; with no Temple, they had no reason to exist.] But for Yeshua to have been resurrected in fulfillment of First Fruits, the true First Fruits of the resurrection had to be the first day of the week following Passover.

Hebrew Day-Names

The day-names on the ancient Hebrew calendar were in relation to Shabbat (not names in honor of pagan “gods,” as is our western calendar):

- *First Day*: After Havdalah⁹ (approximately an hour after sunset) Saturday night until sunset Sunday night.
- *Second Day*: Sunday sunset to Monday sunset.
- *Third Day*: Monday sunset to Tuesday sunset.
- *Third Day Toward Shabbat*: Tuesday sunset to Wednesday sunset.
- *Second Day Toward Shabbat*: Wednesday sunset to Thursday sunset.
- *Erev Shabbat*: Thursday sunset to Friday sunset.
- *Shabbat*: Friday sunset until three stars can be seen on Saturday evening. This makes the weekly Shabbat just short of 25 hours long.

So Here is My Interpretation

Please remember that this is my interpretation based in large part upon speculation; you are under absolutely no obligation to agree. Based on the known facts, I developed the following chronology of the crucifixion/ resurrection week. It is critical to remember, however, that on the Hebrew calendar, the day begins and ends at *sunset*, not midnight. **The shaded cells in the table indicate nighttime.**

John 12: ¹Six days before *Pesach*, Yeshua came to Beit-Anyah, where El'azar lived, the man Yeshua had raised from the dead; ²so they gave a dinner there in his honor. Marta served the meal, and El'azar was among those at the table with him. ³Miryam took a whole pint of pure oil of spikenard, which is very expensive, poured it on Yeshua's feet and wiped his feet with her hair, so that the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

Hebrew Date	Gregorian Date	Activity
8 Aviv (Nisan) 4028 AC	Thursday, 22 April 28	It is six days before Pesach (Passover); Yeshua arrives at the home of El'azar, Miryam, and Marta in Beit-Anyah (Bethany) (John 12:1)
9 Aviv		Dinner at Shimon's home in Bethany; Miryam anoints Yeshua for burial (John 12:2-3); Yeshua stays the night in Bethany
9Aviv	Friday, 23 April 28	Messiah's "Triumphal Entry" into Jerusalem occurs on Friday ¹⁰ the ninth of Aviv, not on Sunday (Matthew 21:1-10; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:29-38).

Shabbat 10 Aviv		Yeshua returns to Bethany to spend the night
Shabbat 10 Aviv	Saturday, 24 April 28	Because the Torah requires the Paschal (Passover) Lamb to be “taken into the house” on Aviv 10 (Exoduxx 12:2-3), Yeshua, the Ultimate Paschal Lamb, goes into the “House” (remember, this is a Hebrew euphemism for the Temple, which Yeshua referred to as “my Father’s House”) where He is carefully observed for defects by both the priesthood and the people until the 14th day of the month. Yeshua spends the afternoon of the 10th, then the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th of Nisan in the Temple being “examined” for any spiritual defect.
11 Aviv		Yeshua returns to Bethany for the night
11 Aviv	Sunday, 25 April 28	Yeshua curses a fig tree (Matthew 21:18-19; Mark 11:12-15) Yeshua cleanses the Temple (Matthew 21:12-14; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-46)
12 Aviv		Yeshua returns to Bethany for the night
12 Aviv	Monday, 26 April 28	The disciples see the withered fig tree (Matthew 21:19-22; Mark 11:20-26) Yeshua spends the day teaching in the Temple “The Lamb” is inspected by the religious authorities: • By the Pharisees (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26) • By the Sadducees (Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-39) • By the Torah-teachers (Scribes) (Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:29-34; Luke 20:40) Yeshua prophesies the destruction of the Temple (Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6)
13 Aviv		Yeshua returns to Bethany for the night
13 Aviv	Tuesday, 27 April 28	Y’hudah agrees to betray Yeshua (Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10-11; Luke 22:3-6) The disciples begin the process of preparing for Passover
14 Aviv		6:30-10:30 pm: Yeshua and the disciples eat the “Last Supper” 9:00 pm: Y’hudah leaves to betray Yeshua 10:30-11:30 pm: Yeshua prays in the garden while the Talmidim sleep 11:30 pm: Yeshua is arrested in the garden by an entire Roman cohort — according to Josephus, a contingent of between 480 and 600 highly-trained soldiers — plus an unknown, but presumably quite large, number of Temple guards, all of whom He knocks to the ground with His words when He claims to be “The I AM.” ¹¹ 12:00-7:00 am: All night long He is “examined for defect” by the Jewish Supreme Court (Sanhedrin) and no defect (fault) was found in Him. He is declared an acceptable sacrifice by the Sanhedrin.
14 Aviv Passover at twilight	Wednesday, 28 April 28	7:00 am: Early in the morning Yeshua is taken before the civil court of Rome, where no defect (fault) was found in Him. He is declared an acceptable sacrifice by Rome, the highest secular court in the world. 7:30-10:00 am: Yeshua is mocked, beaten, and scourged. 10:00-11:30 am: The Roman execution squad takes him to Golgotha, where He is crucified sometime before noon. 12:00-3:00 pm: Darkness covers the land from noon until 3:00 pm (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44). 3:00-4:00 pm: Messiah’s last few human minutes. He breathes out His spirit shortly after 3:00 pm, at the same exact time that the Paschal Sacrifice begins in the Temple (between the evenings); the earthquake tears the temple veil from top to bottom.

Crucifixion Week Chronology

		4:00-5:30 pm: The execution squad confirms His death with a spear thrust. Yeshua is taken from the cross, and Yosef and Nicodemus properly embalm Him at the tomb, but the women have left and do not see the embalming process. The Romans seal tomb before sunset (which occurs approximately 6:30 pm).
Unleavened Bread begins 15 Aviv		First full night in the tomb
15 Aviv	Thursday, 29 April 28	First full day in the tomb
16 Aviv		Second full night in the tomb
16 Aviv	Friday, 30 April 28	Second full day in the tomb As this is the day after the first day of Unleavened Bread, it is not a Sabbath. The women who saw Him placed in the tomb spend the day purchasing about a hundred pounds of burial spices. It takes most of their day, so they will return to the tomb on Sunday morning to properly embalm Him.
17 Aviv		Third full night in the tomb
17 Aviv	Saturday, 1 May 28	Third full day in the tomb
Firstfruits 18 Aviv		6:30-6:45 pm: The Resurrection occurs almost exactly 72 hours after Messiah's burial, within minutes after sunset, just as the First Day of the Week begins. Remember that Havdalah delays the end of Shabbat by almost an hour after sunset, until the first three stars can be seen. Technically, for that hour, it is both Shabbat and the First Day of the Week. (The "Sign of Jonah" is that Messiah will be "in the heart of the earth" for three days and three nights, so the time of His Resurrection needs to be calculated not from the time of His death, but rather from the time of His burial.)
18 Aviv		6:45-7:00 am: The women arrive at the tomb at first light and discover the Resurrection has occurred: the tomb is empty. 10:00-noon: Yeshua meets two disciples near Emmaus
19 Aviv		

This chronology resolves each of the interpretive "challenges" noted:

1. The "Good Friday/Easter Sunday" theory was discarded as simply intellectually untenable.
2. It demonstrates how Yeshua and His Talmidim ate their final meal together the night before Passover.
3. It demonstrates how Yeshua literally fulfilled three key Messianic prophet pictures:
 - a. The Paschal Lamb (taken into the "House" on 10 Nisan and sacrificed on 14 Nisan)
 - b. The Sign of Jonah (a full 72 hours "in the heart of the earth")
 - c. First Fruits (the first fruits of the resurrection)

It's certainly not perfect by any means, but it agrees with *all* of Scripture and allows for a literal fulfillment of these three critical prophetic signs. In the final analysis, we must remember that the Scriptures are without error; therefore, the *apparent* inconsistency *must* be an error in our interpretation that is yet to be resolved.

The Hebrew Calendar

One of the most difficult concepts to thoroughly understand when dealing with Bible chronology is that the Hebrew calendar is significantly different than the Gregorian calendar that most of the rest of the world uses.

The Hebrew calendar is a lunisolar calendar. That is, the months are based on the cycle of the phases of the moon, the year is based on the trip of the earth around the sun, and the day begins and ends at sunset.

Since the Hebrew lunar year is about eleven days shorter than the solar year, the Gregorian calendar and the Hebrew calendar are never completely in sync.¹² That is, the first day of Nisan (Nisan 1) on the Hebrew calendar will only fall on March 28 once every several years. To keep the months at least in their correct season of the year, an extra intercalary month (like a “leap month”) is added every two or three years. Even then, the average Hebrew calendar year is about 6 minutes and 40 seconds longer than the mean tropical year,¹³ so that every 216 years the Hebrew calendar will fall a day behind the mean tropical year, and about every 231 years it will fall a day behind the mean Gregorian calendar year.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. (Gen. 1:1-5, ESV)

Based on the authority of the first paragraph in the Torah, the Hebrew day begins and ends at sunset, so any date on the Hebrew calendar begins at sunset the previous date on the Gregorian calendar. This picture shows Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day). On the Gregorian calendar for the year shown in the picture, it is Friday, Nisan 27 (or Gregorian April 6). In this example, Yom HaShoah actually begins at sunset Thursday evening and continues until sunset Friday evening, and so it is celebrated on both Thursday the 5th (after sunset) and Friday the 6th (during daylight hours).¹⁴



Thursday	Friday
5 Nisan 26	6 Nisan 27 Yom HaShoah
Nisan 27 Yom HaShoah	Nisan 28

¹ **About the Author:** Dr. Rickard L. Sawyer has been privileged to serve the Master as a Bible teacher, pastor, and theologian since 1965. He holds a Master of Arts (MA) in Bible, a Master of Theology (ThM) in Systematic Theology, a Doctor of Theology (ThD) in Cults and Comparative Religion, a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) in Bible College Administration and Curriculum Development, a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Business and Organizational Management, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Church Administration (all *summa cum laude*), an Associate of Arts in Criminal Justice (*magna cum laude*), and completed four years of study towards a Doctor of Naturopathy (ND).

² Out of respect toward those who are named in the Bible, I refer to them *not* by the names bestowed upon them by the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, but by their original Hebrew names, as they were known by their friends, families, and everyone who ever knew them. For most of us who speak English as our primary language, our names are important to us. In Israel — both ancient and modern — however, names are of *critical* importance, as they are the very definition of who the person is; that is, the name describes an important characteristic of the person and is considered the very representation of the person. When we change a Hebrew person's name, we change our understanding of who that person is. The name “Jesus” in English has no significant meaning; however, the Hebrew name “Yeshua” is of *especially* critical importance. In the first chapter of his biography of the

Messiah, Dr. Lukas (Luke) affirms that the angel Gavri'el (Gabriel) instructed a young Hebrew maiden named Miryam (Mary) that she would become pregnant through the power of Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) and that she was to name her son Yeshua, *which is the Hebrew word for "Salvation."* See Luke 1:26-35 and Matthew 1:18-25. To assist the reader, the first time I refer to a Hebrew person in this paper I will provide both their true name and the name bestowed upon them by Roman and Anglican tradition.

³ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Complete Jewish Bible* by David H. Stern. Copyright © 1998. All rights reserved. Used by permission of Messianic Jewish Publishers, 6120 Day Long Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029. www.messianicjewish.net.

⁴ The Biblical sequence of events for the Passover sacrifice in Egypt was as follows: the Passover lamb was sacrificed "at twilight" or "between the evenings" on 14 Aviv (now called Nisan), then roasted, then eaten. On the Hebrew calendar the day begins and ends at sunset (see "The Hebrew Calendar" at the end of this article), so while the lamb was roasting sunset came, and it becomes the next day. So the lamb was actually eaten on first day of Unleavened Bread, 15 Aviv. However, the sacrifice for the "permanent statute" (Exodus 12:14) can only be slain in the Temple, so until the Temple is restored, no lamb can be sacrificed in compliance with Torah. Instead, presently a lamb shank bone is sometimes placed on the Passover table as a memorial.

⁵ See, for example, the author's *The Model for the Messianic Community*, Appendix E and Appendix F.

⁶ *Goyim* is the Hebrew word for "nations." While it sometimes is used to refer to the nation of Israel, the far most common use of the word (singular, *goy*) refers to someone who is not a biological descendant of Avraham (Abraham), Yitz'chak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob); that is, someone who is not ethnically Jewish.

⁷ See the author's "The Model for the Messianic Community," Appendix B. "Were the Apostolic Scriptures Written in Hebrew?"

⁸ See also "The Model for the Messianic Community," Appendix C. "Scholars Who Support a Hebrew Origin for the Apostolic Scriptures."

⁹ *Havdalah* is the Hebrew word for "separation" and refers to the verbal declaration made at the end of Shabbat or a Jewish holiday, in which the holy day is separated from the rest of the week; the sacred is separated from the mundane. Today the formal Havdalah service is performed no earlier than nightfall on Saturday night, when three stars can be seen in the sky, or about an hour after sunset. Thus Shabbat "lingers" for us, making the day last about 25 hours.

¹⁰ I originally had the "Triumphal Entry" happening on Shabbat, 10 Nisan. On the morning of 28 March 2024, I had an interesting discussion about this article with my friend Rabbi Harold Workman. He asked me, if the "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem happened on Shabbat, how were the people carrying all the palm branches. That would have been prohibited by their religious custom, as they were not allowed to carry anything on Shabbat. So, I looked a bit closer to the text and noticed that John tells us that Yeshua arrived in Bethany six days before Passover. Counting backward six days from Passover we find Yeshua arriving in Bethany on the 8th of Aviv. This allows the Triumphal Entry to occur on Friday, the 9th of Aviv and He still is "taken into the house" on the 10th as Torah required. Thanks, Hal!

¹¹ Most English versions translate John 18:5-8 by quoting Yeshua as saying "I am *He*" when the lynch mob told Him they were looking for Him. (The NASB places the word [He] in brackets.) "Then Jesus, knowing everything that was about to happen to Him, went out and said to them, 'Who is it you're looking for?' 'Jesus the Nazarene,' they answered. 'I am *He*,' Jesus told them. Judas, who betrayed Him, was also standing with them. When He told them, 'I am *He*,' they stepped back and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, 'Who is it you're looking for?' 'Jesus the Nazarene,' they said. 'I told you I am *He*,' Jesus replied. 'So if you're looking for Me, let these men go.'" (John 18:4-8).

Many modern English translations indicate editorial additions or changes by placing those changes in italics. Check your Bible and you may find that in this passage the word "He" appears in italics, indicating that the word has been added by the editors and does not appear in the manuscripts which were used for the translation. In my opinion, this one of the most extremely significant passages in the Gospels!

If you check the Greek text, you will find that it quotes Yeshua as saying "Εγώ (*Egō*) εἰμι (*eimi*)" which does not translate as "I am He." The correct translation is "I AM," the Name of God which is too sacred to pronounce.

Read carefully the encounter between Moshe and HaShem (the God of Avraham, Yitz'chak, and Ya'akov): "Moses asked God, 'If I go to the Israelites and say to them: "The God of your fathers has sent me to you," and they ask me, "What is His name?" what should I tell them?' God replied to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I AM has sent me to you."'" (Exodus 3:13-14)

The God of Israel says that His name is "I AM." When Yeshua told the lynch mob that His name is "I AM," the sheer power of His Name knocked them (all 600 or 700 of them) to the ground, where they were forced to stay until He allowed them to get up!

"From His mouth came a sharp sword, so that with it He might strike the nations. He will shepherd them with an iron scepter. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty. ... The rest were killed with the sword that came from the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." (Revelation 19:15, 21)

¹² To confuse things even further, a prophetic year is always 360 days.

¹³ A tropical year (also known as a solar year), for general purposes, is the time that the Sun takes to return to the same position in the cycle of seasons, as seen from Earth. For example, the time from vernal equinox to vernal equinox, or from summer solstice to summer solstice. Because of the precession of the equinoxes, the seasonal cycle does not remain exactly synchronized with the position of the Earth in its orbit around the Sun. Consequently, the tropical year is about 20 minutes shorter than the time it takes Earth to complete one full orbit around the Sun as measured with respect to the fixed stars (the sidereal year). [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropical_year]

¹⁴ Picture and some text from hebrew4christians.com/Holidays/holidays.html.