

THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS

their bodies down from the cross before the end of that day, lest they be on the cross on the sabbath. This sabbath was not Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath of rest, but the Sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. The day of preparation was so called because it was on this day, the fourteenth day of the first month, that the lamb of the passover was slain and prepared, which is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the purpose of God, was slain from the foundation of the world.

God commanded the children of Israel that they keep the fourteenth day of the first month of each year as a memorial, because they received a great deliverance of the Lord from the bondage of the Egyptians. Exodus 12:5-6, "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it from the sheep or from the goats: and ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening." Jesus was crucified during the light portion of the passover day.

In the 23rd chapter of Leviticus, we find the account of the seven feasts the children of Israel were commanded of God to keep.

The first, the Lord's passover, was to be proclaimed an holy convocation and observed unto the Lord on the fourteenth day of the first month. Lev. 23:4-5, "These are the feasts unto the Lord, even holy convocations which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover." The second was a sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord. Lev. 23:6-8, "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein." This feast speaks of communion with Christian holy walk. The feast of the first fruits of the harvest, Lev. 23:9-14, was a prophetic type of Jesus, the first fruit of the resurrection, 1 Cor. 15:23. The fixed time was on the morrow after the sabbath, which would be on Sunday as was the rising of Christ at the end of the sabbath on Sunday. The time of the feast of Pentecost was fixed on the morrow after seven sabbaths after the feast of the first fruits. This also is a prophetic type of the Holy Spirit's coming to the church on the day of Pentecost on Sunday fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus.

So we see, since Jesus was crucified on the fourteenth day of the first month, that the day following would be the sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and not Saturday, the Jewish sabbath of rest. We have additional proof that this was not one of the weekly sabbaths that occurred every seven days in John 19:31. He said that this sabbath was an "high day." This was the first sabbath of the two that the Lord commanded them to keep during the seven days of unleavened bread. The other was the seventh day.

We believe, since Jesus said, "for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," that He meant literally three full days and nights. And that He was crucified on Wednesday, the fourteenth day of the first month, the passover day of that year, and that He was buried at the beginning of Thursday evening, the fifteenth, the sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread or at the end of Wednesday and that He rose again approximately seventy-two hours later, on the beginning of Sunday evening, the Lord's day, or at the end of Saturday.

Part Three

In 2 Tim. 2:15 we find this admonition by Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, in a letter to a young man named Timothy. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." This

infers that there is a grave danger that we might misunderstand the scriptures, unless we spend much time in their study and prayer to God for wisdom that we might not err therein.

Let me say, that I believe the primary reason for there being so much error from the truth is because of taking a portion of scripture out of its setting and not comparing scripture with scripture. A good way to study is to use a good analytical concordance which gives an almost complete list of the ways a certain word is used in the various passages in the Bible and see if your interpretation harmonizes with the truth taught in them.

In our chapter we show fifteen scriptural references that pertain to Jesus Christ's body being in the tomb, three days and three nights, and eight to his Spirit being in the heart of the earth, three days and three nights. He beautifully sets these eight dovetail together and picture the whole truth as to the time and place where Jesus was during the three days and three nights when they are studied collectively.

First let me take Christ's prophetic statement as recorded in Mat. 12:40, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The heart of the earth did not mean in the tomb. As the heart of a watermelon is the center, and the heart of the tree is the center, so the heart of the earth is the center of the earth.

Jesus speaking to one of the two thieves between whom He was crucified, said, Luke 23:43; "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Since Jesus had said that He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, this would indicate that paradise was in the heart of the earth at that time.

In Luke 16:22-23 we find this. "And it came to pass, that the begger died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." The rich man cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Abraham told him that they could not pass to him, neither could those pass to them, because there was a great gulf fixed between them. In Psalms 16:10 we find this scripture: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." This was Prophetic of Jesus, that His soul be not left in hades, in the heart of the earth, and His body not mortify in the tomb. The word hell as used in Psalms 16:10 and Luke 16:23 means "hades," a place of departed spirits or the unseen. These two scriptures indicate that hades formerly was the abiding place of both the saved and the lost, with a great gulf between them, in the heart of the earth, where Jesus said He would be three days and nights. Peter, preaching on the day of Pentecost, showed the people that this prophecy in Psalms was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Acts. 2:31, "He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." The Apostle Paul also spoke of the fulfillment of that prophesied in Psalms, Acts 13:37, "But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." Then we have this scripture that tells us that Jesus went in the Spirit and preached to the spirits in prison, 1 Pet. 3:18-19, "For Christ also hath suffered for sins the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Then we are told that He led captivity captive. This evidently means that Jesus, while His body lay in the tomb, descended into the earth and released the saved souls there; Eph. 4:8-10, "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended upon high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) We are forced to conclude that the heart of the earth, which is the center, and the lower parts of the earth mentioned in Ephesians are one and the same. The earth

being round, the lowest parts, from all points of the earth would be the center or heart of the earth. These eight scriptures harmonize completely and teach one and the same truth, which is that Jesus during the three days and three nights went to hades, which was in the heart of the earth where the saved and the lost departed spirits were separated by a great space and preached unto the saved in prison and liberated them to go to heaven above.

There are fifteen scriptures that tell of Jesus' body being in the tomb three days and three nights. Eleven state that Jesus was crucified and buried and rose again the third day. These are Mark 9:31, Mark 10:32-34, Mat. 16:21, Mat. 17:22-23, Mat. 20:18-19, Luke 9:21-22, Luke 18:18, Luke 24:4-7, Luke 24:44-47, Acts 10:36-41, and Luke 24:21-24. One, John 2:19, says, "Jesus answered and said unto them, destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Two passages say that after three days He would rise again, Mark 8:31, "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders; and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again," and Mat. 27:62-63, "Now the next day that followed the day of preparation, the chief priests and the pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." And one more, 1 Cor. 15:3-5, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures: and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

Two women came to the tomb in the end of the sabbath, which was the sabbath of rest unto Israel, and the beginning of Sunday at sundown. Jesus had already risen. This indicates the time of his resurrection. According to Jewish reckoning of time a day began at sundown and ended at sundown the next evening. In order to fulfill His prophecy about the three days and three nights his body had to be buried at the end of Wednesday, at sundown, or the beginning of Thursday, which was the beginning of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread. This time of burial is established in Luke 23:50-64. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus washed the body and wrapped it in linen and put it in the tomb. According to verse 54, this was at the end of the preparation of the passover day, and the beginning of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which began at the end of Wednesday at sundown. "And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on," Luke 23:54. This sabbath was not Saturday the day that God gave the Israelites for a day of rest, but the sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, on the fifteenth day of the first month, which followed the next day after the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, Lev. 23:1-8. We believe that Jesus was buried at the end of Wednesday and rose approximately seventy-two hours later at the end of Saturday at sundown, or three days and three nights later.

Three Days and Three Nights

By W. B. HAST

Part One

Jesus the Son of God, the possessor of heaven and earth, so loved us that he left His home in glory and became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He came to earth and took upon Himself the form of flesh, by being born a babe to the virgin Mary in a manger at Bethlehem. He lived in this cruel world approximately thirty three and one half years, suffering for our sins, homeless and rejected of men; "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief."

In the three and one-half years of His recorded earthly ministry in Judea and Galilee, journeying back and forth, preaching, teaching and ministering unto the people, possibly He covered not over two hundred miles of this earth's surface, between the two opposite ends of His travel.

As Jesus was coming from Galilee for the last time and going up to Jerusalem, where within a few days, He would give Himself to die for our sins, that we might escape everlasting torment and have eternal life, He said unto the twelve; "Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and they shall condemn him to death. And shall deliver Him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him; and the third day he shall arise again."

We herein wish to show scriptural proof that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, the passover day, the fourteenth day of the first month and that He was buried between the end of Wednesday and the beginning of Thursday, the fifteenth, the Sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and that He arose from the tomb Saturday evening, according to the way we reckon time, at the end of the third day, His body being in the grave approximately seventy-two hours. This would be Sunday, the beginning of the first day of the week, since according to Jewish time, the day began at sundown in the evening and ended at sundown the next evening.

Starting with his arrival at Bethany, which was six days before the passover, the Bible gives us an accurate daily account of some of the events up to and including the day of His resurrection. John 12:1: "Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead."

The following day or five days before the passover, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on an ass's colt. John 12:12-13. That day He went to the temple and taught the people, returning that evening to lodge in Bethany, Mat. 21:17.

The next morning, which would be four days before the passover, He cursed the fig tree on the road to the temple at Jerusalem, where He again taught the people and went out of the city in the evening, Mat. 21:18-23. "When evening was come, he went out of the city," Mark 11:19.

The events of the next day, or three days before the passover are recorded in Mark 11:20. "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots." That day in the temple, He disputed with the chief priests and the scribes and other unbelieving Jews, Mark 11:27-33, and then departed unto the mount of Olives with His disciples. Matthew records His wonderful discourse in chapters 25 and 26.

Two days before the passover they made Him a feast at the home of Simon the leper in Bethany. This was the same day that Judas made a covenant with the chief priests to betray Jesus and to deliver Him unto them, Matt. 26:14-16.

The next day, during the light period of that day preceding the passover, which began at sundown that evening, Jesus sent two of His disciples into the city to prepare the passover, Mark 14:12-16. At the end of that day in the evening, the beginning of the fourteenth day of the first month, Jesus came with the twelve and sat down to eat, it being the be-

ginning of the passover day, Mark 14:17. During the time He was in the upper room with his disciples, Jesus foretold that one of them would betray him, He instituted the Lord's Supper, washed the disciples feet, foretold that they all would be offended because of Him, made known unto them who it was that would betray Him, and He talked with them, promising to send the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit. After they had sung an hymn they went from the upper room into the garden of Gethsemane, Mat. 26:36.

Jesus praying while His disciples slept, said unto the Father: "O my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Then Judas came with a band of men from the chief priests and elders, and arrested Jesus and led Him away to Annas first, John 18:12, and Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest, where He was brought before the council, Mat. 26:57, and early the next morning before Pilate, Mat. 27:1-2. Pilate sent Jesus to king Herod, and Herod sent Him back to Pilate, who deliver Him to be crucified by the Roman soldiers.

They crucified Him between two thieves at the third hour of the daylight portion of the passover day. Mark 15:25 says: "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him." Time then, in the daylight period, was spoken of as the first hour, second hour, third hour and so on through the twelve hours of the day, starting at sunrise in the morning and ending at sunset in the evening. The night starting at sunset in the evening and ending at sunrise in the morning was divided into four watches of three hours each. From sunset in the evening, the first three hours, would be the first watch, the next three hours, the second watch, the next three hours, the third watch, and the last three before sunup, the fourth watch of the night. There was darkness over the whole land from the sixth hour till the ninth hour; Mark 15:33, and Jesus, crying out with a loud voice said "My God, My God, why has thou forsaken me?" and gave up His Spirit. This was Wednesday, the preparation, so called because the passover was prepared and eaten on this day. There were only three hours left until a new day began, that evening at sundown, which was the sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, Lev. 23:5-8. We know that this was not Saturday, the sabbath of rest, because they crucified Him the day before to avoid crucifying him on the feast day, which was evidently the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, Mat. 26:4-5: "But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people."

Now there is another scripture that adds additional proof that this sabbath was not Saturday, the Jewish sabbath of rest, but the sabbath of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, found in John 13:24-30, where Jesus identifies Judas as being the one who would betray Him, by handing Him the sop when he had dipped it. "He said unto him; that thou doest, do quickly." John said, that the disciples did not know what Jesus meant. He said that some of them thought that because Judas carried the bag, that He was telling Him to buy something for the feast. We know that this could not have referred to the passover supper, because they had already eaten it, but it referred to the first day of the feast of the unleavened bread, that followed the passover, on the next day.

In the twenty eighth chapter of Matthew, we are told that at the end of the sabbath, Saturday, which was the beginning of Sunday evening, Jewish time, the two women who came to see the tomb, were told by the angel of the Lord, that He had risen. We believe that since sundown in the evening when Jesus arose, was the beginning of Sunday, the first day of the week, according to Jewish reckoning of time that He would have been buried at about sundown Wednesday evening, since He said that He would rise again the third day. Mark verifies that as the time of his burial, Mark 15:42-47.

Part Two

Some of the unbelieving Jews, tempting Jesus, asked from Him a sign from Heaven, as proof of His being the Son of God. He said that was an evil generation, that sought after a sign, and no sign would be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. Continuing he said, "For as Jonas was three

days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," Mat. 12:40. This prophecy He fulfilled, according to His Word, on the day He arose from the tomb. The devil, through men, has continually attacked the veracity of the Biblical account of Jonah being in the whale's belly three days and three nights. If this could be successfully denied, it would cast doubt on Christ being raised from the dead; because He said, "As Jonas was, so shall the Son of man be."

There are at least two schools of thought as to the length of time that Jesus, in the spirit, was in the heart of the earth and His body in the tomb. One of which is that Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose early Sunday morning. They say, that according to Jewish time, that any part of a day is to be counted as a day, thus accounting for three days and three nights. The other is that, since Jesus arose at the beginning of Sunday, or at sundown Saturday, He must have been crucified on Wednesday and not on Friday and buried at the end of Wednesday to have completed three full days and nights in the tomb.

We herein wish to offer scriptural evidence supporting the later view. First let me say that the Jewish day was a twenty-four hour period of time from sundown to sundown the next day. It differed in this respect, that whereas according to the way we reckon time, our day begins at twelve o'clock midnight, their day began at sundown, one half of a night earlier. The evening was first and then the morning, as in Gen. 1:5, "And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night, and the evening and the morning were the first day." Matthew 28:1 says, "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the Sepulchre." You will notice that the word "day" is italicized, indicating that it was not in the original Greek writing. What is here stated, is that these two women came to the tomb at sundown Saturday evening, which was not only the end of the sabbath, but the end of the week as well and the beginning of Sunday the first day of the week. "Dawning toward the first of the week" means that new week was just beginning.

In contrast to this, Mark, Luke, and John say that the women came to the tomb in the morning. Luke says that they came very early in the morning to anoint the body of Jesus. Mark says that they came early in the morning at the rising of the sun. But John tells us of Mary Magdalene, who had been to see the tomb with the other Mary the evening before, that she came early while it was yet dark. She evidently came ahead of the main group of women, who came to anoint the body of Jesus at the rising of the sun, Sunday morning. Matthew not only tells of the two women coming to the tomb at sundown Saturday evening, but about there being an earthquake and the angel of the Lord rolled away the stone and said; "He is not here for he is risen: as he said." This, in harmony with other scriptures, establishes the time of His resurrection as being approximately sundown Saturday evening.

Now since the written Word fixes the time of His rising from the tomb as being about sundown Saturday evening, let us count back three full days and nights and see if the scriptures establish the time of His burial. This would make it at sundown Wednesday evening, and not Friday. Here are the scriptures, that put the time of His burial at the end of the preparation day and the beginning of the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, Mat. 27:57-60, Mark 15:42-47, John 19:38-42 and Luke 23:50-64: "And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor: and he was a good man, and a just: (the same had not consented to the counsel and the deed of them;) he was a Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. And took it down and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before laid. And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on."

In John 19:31 we are told that, since it was on the preparation that they were crucified, they took