

The CRUCIFIXION was not on "Good Friday"!

EASTER does not commemorate the resurrection! Here are SEVEN IRREFUTABLE PROOFS from history that the resurrection was not on Sunday morning—that Christ did not die on a "Good Friday!"

by Herman L. Hoeh

YOU HAVE probably taken for granted the "Good Friday-Easter Sunday" tradition—and no wonder! So have the theologians and scholars!

Yet most of them know that, in the year in which Jesus was crucified, *the passover*—the day of the crucifixion—**WAS NOT ON A FRIDAY!**

Theologians have tried every way to solve this enigma—this contradiction of fact. They have attempted to CHANGE the *year of Jesus' birth*; they have attempted to CHANGE the *year that He began his ministry*; they have attempted to CHANGE the *length of his ministry*; they have attempted to CHANGE the *day of his death*, and they have attempted to CHANGE the *day of his resurrection*.

Resurrection Sunday a TRADITION

The common conception that the resurrection occurred early on Sunday morning is only a *tradition*. There were no human eyewitnesses to the resurrection. The *only* source of information to which later church writers had access was the historic account revealed by the angelic messengers and preserved by the gospel writers.

The churches have failed to understand the simple Biblical record. But **YOU CAN UNDERSTAND!** If you want the **COMPLETE** proof, *from the Bible itself*, that the resurrection was not on Sunday morning, you need to write immediately for Mr. Armstrong's challenging *free* booklet "The Resurrection Was NOT on Sunday!"

In *this* present article, however, we give you the undeniable *record of history* that the crucifixion could not have been on Friday—that the resurrection was not on Sunday!

How It All Began

It was the "apostolic fathers" steeped in pagan traditions, who began to teach that the crucifixion occurred on Friday. Yet they admitted that the ancient custom of fasting on *Wednesday*—the actual day of the crucifixion, as we shall prove—probably was derived from "the

day on which Jesus was betrayed" and "on which the Sanhedrin decided to kill him"! (*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, art. "Fasting.")

What an admission!

These same teachers of the second and third century, in their attempt to establish the Easter-Sunday tradition, greatly disputed about *the year of the crucifixion*. They even varied from one and one-half years to twenty years in their dates of the length of Christ's ministry! What contradictions!

It's time we studied to see what really happened.

The Evidence of Scripture

Before we examine the seven absolutely irrefutable proofs from history, let's note for a moment the evidence from the Bible.

Jesus was teaching his disciples, according to Mark's account, that he would "be killed, and *after* three days rise again" (Mark 8:31).

Although the critics are in consternation about what Jesus meant by the expression "after three days," we need only turn to *Jesus' own interpretation*. These three days, at the completion of which Jesus would rise, are explained in Matthew 12:38-40 to include *three days and three nights*. Since Jesus in other scriptures also said that he would "rise the third day" after the day of His crucifixion, it is obvious that the resurrection must have occurred *precisely at the completion of the third day following his burial*.

Jesus was buried *before sunset* on the day of the crucifixion (Luke 23:54). Then the resurrection must have occurred *near sunset* three days later. When the women came to the tomb, early Sunday morning, *Jesus had already risen*. The angel said, "He is risen: he is not here" (Mark 16:6).

Jesus could not have risen later than near sunset Saturday afternoon—because He was *not* at the sepulchre Sunday morning. Three days before Saturday would place the crucifixion on *Wednesday*, the preparation day. Thursday of

that year must have been an *annual sabbath*, the first annual sabbath in the days of unleavened bread.

So we would know that *that sabbath* which followed the crucifixion was not necessarily the weekly sabbath, John was inspired to call it a "high day" (John 19:31), which means an annual sabbath which may occur *during the week!*

Mark picks up John's account by adding that **AFTER THAT SABBATH**, which was a high day, the women *bought* sweet spices to use in anointing the body of Jesus (Mark 16:1). This purchasing of the spices could not have been on Thursday, the annual sabbath: it must have been Friday!

Having made their purchases, the women *prepared* these ointments "and rested the sabbath day *according to the commandment*" (Luke 23:56). This was the *seventh day sabbath* upon which, near its close, Jesus was raised from the dead.

Thus the Bible proves that the resurrection was *not* on Sunday, the crucifixion *not* on Friday. **THERE WERE TWO SEPARATE SABBATHS THAT WEEK!**—one, an *annual sabbath*, the other, a *weekly sabbath*.

Matthew 28:1 Proves It!

A vital text proving that there were two sabbaths in that week has been obscured by almost every translation into English. Only Ferrar Fenton's version has this point correct.

Turn to Matthew 28:1. In the common versions it says, "In the end"—or more correctly, "After the sabbath." Notice that both of these renderings use the singular—sabbath. *But in the original Greek the word is in the PLURAL*. Fenton renders it correctly by saying, "After the Sabbaths," although the remaining part of the verse he has not translated correctly. In a footnote to this text, he says, "The Greek original is in the plural, 'Sabbaths'"—which all the scholars know!

Another verse causing the Bible apparently to contradict itself is found in

Mark 16:9. Open your Bible to this verse. This verse does *not* prove the resurrection was on Sunday. In the common versions, the comma is placed following the word "week" making it appear that Jesus arose on Sunday morning. But the use of commas in the Bible did not develop until about *fourteen centuries after* this was written.

Here is the explanation.

In the original Greek the phrase "early the first day of the week" can be *grammatically* connected either with the words "having risen" or with the words "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." The *Expositor's Greek Testament* says the phrase "early the first day of the week" may be either "connected with [having risen], indicating the time of the resurrection, or with [appeared], indicating the time of the first appearance."

Other Scriptures, which we have already noticed, prove that *it could not refer* to the time of the resurrection. As *it could refer* to the first appearance of Jesus to Mary (John 20:14), this text in Mark 16:9 should have been translated, "Now having risen, early the first day of the week he appeared first to Mary Magdalene."

The translation of this verse in the Revised Standard Version is absolutely incorrect.

Proof One: The CALENDAR Tells When

On which day of the week did Jesus' final passover fall? This simple question has perplexed theologians and historians for centuries, but the answer is so plain a child can understand it.

First, since Jesus died on the passover, we must examine the passover dates which occurred about the year of his crucifixion. This will determine with finality on *which day of the week* Christ died.

Jesus observed the *true passover* at the proper time—on the eve of the 14th of God's first month, called Nisan or Abib. You can read it in Matthew 26:2. To this agree all the gospel writers.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are thought by scholars to contradict this, by placing the crucifixion on the first day of the *feast* of unleavened bread, the 15th of Nisan. These three gospel writers say no such thing. They merely mention that the passover was also a day on which unleavened bread was used. In some versions the word "feast" is wrongly inserted in italics in Matthew 26:17.

The Jews in Judaea, but not the Galileans, were taking their own—the *Jewish*—passover a day later than God commanded (John 18:28)—which they wrongly do to this very day!

On which day of the week, then, did Jesus' final passover fall?

The passover is calculated by astronomical computation as many know. The chart which follows gives the dates of the various passovers (Nisan 14) which occurred in and near the year of the crucifixion.

Three years ago, when we published this same chart, we had available for reference only the *contradictory* comparative dates as found in *Hasting's Dictionary*, the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, the *Encyclopedia Biblica* and others. As I wrote then: "None of these references are wholly accurate." I have now a correction to make in that chart. Would that the theologians would be honest enough to make the same correction!

Here is the chart ABSOLUTELY CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE NEWLY REVEALED EXACT AND INSPIRED ASTRONOMICAL COMPUTATION PRESERVED SINCE THE DAYS OF MOSES!

Passover Dates:

- A. D. 29, Saturday, April 16
- A. D. 30, Wednesday, April 5
- A. D. 31, Wednesday, April 25
- A. D. 32, Monday, April 14
- A. D. 33, Friday, April 3

The correction is that for A. D. 30, which theologians have *PURPOSELY* placed on Friday to support their unprovable theory!

To place the passover on a Friday in 30 A. D. is to violate one of the *inspired rules* of the calendar—that no common year of the sacred calendar may have 356 days. Common years of twelve months may be only 353, 354 or 355 days long—a fact you can verify in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*. Theologians place the passover of 30 A. D. on Friday, April 7—356 days after the passover of 29 A. D. Count it for yourself! This date is two days late. The passover in 30 A. D. was only 354 days after that of 29 A. D.

These scholars forget that God had His sacred calendar, together with the Bible, preserved since the days of Moses to this very day—and that every date of the passover may be infallibly determined!

Moreover, astronomers recognize that the 14th of the month Nisan could easily have occurred on Wednesday in 30 A. D.—but the theologians will not receive their testimony because of their human traditions.

Thus, *if you want to believe that the crucifixion were in 30 A. D.*—which it was *NOT*—*you would still have to admit that Friday is NOT the day of the crucifixion!*

For the year 31 A. D. several references mistakenly give the passover, Ni-

san 14, as Monday March 26. But this is one month too early. The year 30 was intercalary—that is, it had 13 months—thus placing the passover thirty days later in 31 A. D., and on a Wednesday! During the time of Christ the passover could not occur earlier than six days after the vernal equinox—which in that year occurred on March 23, about 3 a.m. Greenwich time. Remember, in Jesus' day the equinox did *not* occur on March 21, but on March 22 or 23, because the Roman world was using the *Julian* calendar. Since March 26 was only *three* days after the equinox, it could *not* have been the passover. Hence in 31 A. D. the passover was 30 days later on a Wednesday—and *this is the ONLY POSSIBLE YEAR in which Christ could have been crucified*, as we shall PROVE.

It would take a pamphlet to explain in full detail the simple methods of computing the dates of the passover according to the sacred calendar—which most people call the "Jewish calendar"—and as there is not room in this article for it, you will have to patiently wait until it is later published.

Proof Two: the Decree of Artaxerxes

There are several basic dates from which the exact year of Christ's death may be determined. These dates are so precise that there can be no doubt that the passover upon which Jesus was crucified occurred on Wednesday, April 25, A. D. 31.

The first date is the year in which Artaxerxes issued his decree to restore and build Jerusalem (Ezra 7). It is recorded in Daniel 9:25-26 that there would be sixty-nine prophetic weeks (7 + 62) till the Messiah would come, after which he would be "cut off"—crucified—"not for himself" but for the sins of the whole world. Sixty nine prophetic weeks equals 483 years (69 x 7).

When we determine the year in which this decree was issued, we can locate the exact year, 483 years later, when Christ—the Messiah—began his ministry.

In recent years an abundance of documents from the era of Ezra and Nehemiah—business records giving exact dates according to the Persian, Egyptian and Jewish calendars, and astronomical tablets recording eclipse cycles in the years of kings—have been translated. These records continue fundamentally to corroborate the chronological table of Persian kings recorded in Ptolemy's canon.

Records, preserved in world-famous American and foreign libraries, have been found that were written in the very month that Artaxerxes—under whose reign the decree was issued—

The PLAIN TRUTH

a magazine of understanding

VOL. XXI NO. 3

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Sent FREE to all who request it,
as the Lord provides. Address
all communications to the editor.

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came to power. The death of Xerxes occurred in late December 465 B.C. and his son, Artaxerxes, came to throne in that month.

According to the Persian spring-to-spring reckoning of regnal years—as these business documents clearly show—Artaxerxes' first year extended from April 464 to April 463 B.C. These same business documents show that the Jewish autumn-to-autumn mode of reckoning, used by Esra and Nehemiah, placed the first year of Artaxerxes from September 464 to September 463 B.C. The period of time from the day the new king ascended the throne to the first year of his reign was called his ACCESSION YEAR and was regarded as completing the last regnal year of the previous king.

The astronomical tablets containing over a dozen precise records of eclipses prove that the first year of Artaxerxes, according to the Jewish reckoning, was from 464 to 463 B.C. You may verify these facts in any of the latest thorough books on archaeology.

The seventh year of Artaxerxes—the year in which he issued his decree (Ezra 7:8)—would extend from about September 458 B.C. to September 457 B.C.

From the first month to the fifth month of God's calendar—from the latter part of March to the latter part of July, 457 B.C.—Ezra journeyed to Judaea in the seventh year of Artaxerxes at which time the decree went forth to build Jerusalem as the capital of the revised Jewish nation.

And just 483 years later would bring us to the autumn of A.D. 27—the year when the Messiah would appear.

Although the date of the issuance of this decree is amply proved from astronomy, dozens of business documents, and the Canon of Ptolemy, historians

sometimes mis-interpret the facts to suit their pet theories. Then theologians quote from whatever historical sources suit them in order to change the true date for the beginning of Christ's ministry.

But the true date—457 B.C.—is absolutely fixed by the most accurate records of history written at that very time.

Some religious sects would incorrectly put this decree as late as 455 B.C. in order to have the crucifixion occur on Friday in 33 A.D.! Such a date is totally rejected by ALL historians today!

Age of Jesus at His Baptism

Jesus, according to Daniel's prophecy, was anointed the Messiah in 27 A.D., which was 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem. The next fact that we need to understand is the age of Jesus when he was baptized and entered upon his ministry.

The only historical account of this was written by Luke to Theophilus (Luke 1:1-4). In this account it is plainly stated that when Jesus began his ministry "he was about thirty years old." (Luke 3:23).

Luke did not say, "about 29," or "about 31." He said "about thirty"—and he meant it, for he was an inspired historian. Either this record is true or you might as well discard the Bible.

As Jesus was about 30 years old in the autumn of 27 A.D., then he must have been born in the autumn of 4 B.C. as we shall now prove.

Proof Three: The Death of Herod

The time of Jesus's birth is important. Jesus was born before the death of Herod the king (Mat. 2:15). When did Herod die? Again the critics are in utmost confusion because they have refused to weigh all the facts.

According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, Herod died, "having reigned, since he had procured Antigonus to be slain, thirty-four years; but since he had been declared king by the Romans, thirty-seven" (*Antiquities*, XVII, viii, 1).

The two dates for the beginning of Herod's reign are not disputed, but given

as 37 B.C. and 40 B.C. respectively. Reckoning as Josephus does, the last year of Herod's reign extended from about April 4 B.C. to April 3 B.C.

Although Herod's death is commonly dated in April 4 B.C.—or even as late as 2 B.C.—neither of these dates is correct. Simple subtraction ought to prove that! Herod died just prior to the beginning of spring in B.C. 3!

Notice!

Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews*, XVII, vi, 4, mentions an eclipse of the

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moon before the death of Herod. That eclipse, as calculated, occurred about March 13, 4 B.C. Yet it was *after* this that Herod went beyond the river Jordan to be cured of his diseases. Finding that the physicians couldn't cure him, he still revived sufficiently to return to Jericho. There, he gathered together and contrived the death of the principal men of the *entire* Jewish nation. And as if this were not enough, Herod had his son Antipater killed five days before his own death. Since these and other events occurred *after* the eclipse mentioned by Josephus, *and since Herod died just prior to a passover according to Josephus, that passover must have been THIRTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE ECLIPSE and not one month later.* Thus Herod died in B.C. 3, the *only* date that agrees with all the known facts.

As Jesus was about thirty years old in the early autumn of 27 A.D., then he must have been born in the early autumn of B.C. 4, about half a year before the death of Herod. *Jesus could not have been born before this time,* or he would have been more than thirty years old at the beginning of his ministry. Neither could he have been born later in B.C. 2 as some assume, for he would have been only twenty-eight years old. But Luke plainly said that he was *about* THIRTY years of age.

When Did the Wise Men Arrive?

But what are we going to do with the statement recorded in Matthew 2:16 that just before his death Herod had all the children in Bethlehem killed "from two years old and under"? This would appear to indicate that Jesus may have been born one year earlier than he really was born.

Most people carelessly read this account by *assuming that Herod knew the date of Jesus' birth.* They think he had all the children killed because Jesus must have been between one and two years old.

Think for a moment how illogical this would be. Would a murderer like Herod wait for at least one whole year after the Magi left before attempting to kill the child Jesus? Of course not.

The truth is that *Herod did not know the time of Jesus' birth.* Notice what the Scriptures states: *As soon as Herod saw that the Magi didn't return to him he became very angry, ordering all those little children butchered "from two years old and under, ACCORDING TO THE TIME WHICH HE HAD exactly LEARNED of the magi"* (Mat. 2:16).

Now what was the *exact time* that he learned from the magi? Was it the date of Jesus' birth?

No!

Notice verse seven of this same chap-

ter: "Then Herod privily called the magi, and learned of them exactly the time of . . ." what? The birth of Jesus? No. But "*of the appearing star.*"

Of course!

The wise men or magi had come a great distance from the East and the star had appeared *some time before the birth of Jesus* in order for them to prepare to make their journey to Bethlehem while Jesus was still very young. Since the star appeared more than one year previously, Herod took no chances but had every infant killed up to two years of age.

Jesus was slightly less than six months old at the time of Herod's death. The latest possible date for the birth of Jesus was the autumn of B.C. 4, before winter arrived (Luke 2:8). This places the commencement of the ministry of Christ, thirty years later in the autumn of the year 27.

Proof Four: Temple Under Construction 46 Years

Here is another clinching fact.

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his ministry in the autumn of 27 A.D. The *first passover* in his ministry must have occurred the next spring, A.D. 28. It was at that time that the Jews told Jesus that the temple of Herod was already "forty-six years in building" (John 2:20).

Herod began constructing the temple, after three years' thorough preparation, in the very last part of his 18th year according to Josephus (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 1). Since he reckons this 18th year from the spring of B.C. 37, the 18th year would be 20-19 B.C. The temple was begun in the months immediately preceding the passover, B.C. 19. The major part of the construction was completed by the autumn of B.C. 18 (*Antiquities* XV, xi, 6) in about 1½ years.

Forty-six full years from B.C. 19 would bring us to the beginning of A.D. 28, just before the first passover in Jesus' ministry.

If the ministry of Christ began in any other year than the autumn of A.D. 27, then the temple would *not* have been exactly 46 years in building by the time of the passover in the spring of 28 A.D.

Proof Five: The Reign of Emperor Tiberius

One of the most vital keys to the chronology of Christ's ministry—and yet one of the most universally misunderstood dates—is the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. Luke tells us that John the Baptist began to preach in his 15th year (Luke 3:1).

When was this fifteenth year?

The trouble arises from the fact that

there are at least *two dates* from which the reign of Tiberius Caesar may be counted—the *first* commences with his being made co-ruler with Augustus Caesar, at the very end of A.D. 11 or the beginning of A.D. 12. The exact month is not known, but it is not essential anyway. The *second* date begins with his sole rule in August, A.D. 14. Luke could have used either date and been historically correct. But which one *did* he use?

To be consistent with all the other facts, Luke must have used the earlier date as the beginning of the reign of Tiberius. In fact, for the word "reign" Luke uses a Greek word meaning "government" in general, indicating that he did not mean his sole emperorship, but merely his elevation to joint authority—about the end of A.D. 11 or beginning of A.D. 12.

In determining the emperor's regnal year, Luke used the customary Jewish form, practiced also by Josephus. "Josephus also . . . in order to avoid making the last year of one emperor coincide with the first year of his successor, reckoned the final year of each emperor as continuing to the end of the current year, and made the first year of his successor begin [in] April following his accession," says the competent scholar W. M. Ramsey in his book *Was Christ Born at Bethlehem?*, page 223.

This method *which has but recently been understood*, was used by Luke also to determine imperial *joint reigns*. The first year of the joint reign of Tiberius would extend from about April 12 A.D. to April 13 A.D. His fifteenth year would extend from about April 26 A.D. to April 27 A.D.

In this 15th year John the Baptist began to preach repentance all about the Jordan River before Jesus was baptized by him. *John's ministry occupied several months* in which he prepared the way for Jesus.

Notice how this dovetails with the next proof.

Proof Six: When Was Pilate Governor?

Luke names Pontius Pilate as governor of Judaea when John received his call (Luke 3:1). "Now in the fifteenth year of the *government* of Tiberius Caesar, *Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea* . . . the word of God came unto John." Pilate ruled for *ten years*. Many historians give his dates as 26 to 36 A.D., but this is a mistake.

Pilate was deposed a few months before the passover at the close of his tenth year. He *hurriedly* sailed for Rome to appeal to Emperor Tiberius. On his way news came that Tiberius died. You
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things, and God *does* seem like a myth, far off.

God ENDED *that world-kingdom!* God makes and unmakes nations and empires. God Almighty *rules* over all government and God *right now*—this very fateful hour—is weighing our Christian-professing world in the *balance*, and *we are being found* WANTING.

Today we are going the way of ancient Babylon. Today, we admire, we adore, we serve *idols of wood* and of *metals* in the FORM of automobiles, new gadgets, labour-saving devices; new forms of entertainment, new, more modern homes—while we think only of God Almighty for about one hour on Sunday. As God prophesied of some of our people, we PROFESS godliness, and Christianity, as you read in Isaiah 48:1. We SWEAR by the name of the Eternal, and we make mention of God in our prayers, but not in truth, not in righteousness.

Our lands everywhere are dotted with churches, and yet, as we read in Isaiah 2:7-8—and this is certainly true of us today: "Their land is full of silver and of gold, neither is there any end of their treasures. . . . Neither is there any end of their chariots. Their land is also full of idols, and they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made."

Think of it. *That fits our Christendom today.* We sanctimoniously practice a form of godliness, but as you read in II Timothy 4:5, we DENY *the power of God.* And it's prophesied in Isaiah 7:14 that we *never* put our *hearts* into our prayers.

Crime is mounting in our land. Juvenile delinquency is running rampant. Homes are broken up in divorce. We are hell-bent on a moral toboggan slide.

Plunging Headlong to Destruction

Are we any better than Belshazzar? Are we any better than ancient Babylon? We are going the way of Babylon, and we are going the way of Rome—to a fall. We are plunging *head-on* to the greatest fall that any nation has ever suffered *and we're not aware of it!*

We are so smug and complacent, we are so well satisfied with ourselves, we fancy that we're good Christians. Yes, we attend church. We sit there and imagine that we're worshipping God while we hear some beautiful music and a 25-minute sermon.

What an *awakening* is going to jolt this nation very soon, if we don't *heed* God's last warning and come to our senses.

I tell you on the authority of Jesus Christ, we're going to be *catastrophically* punished very soon for our own good unless we wake up.

Notice the prophecy in Isaiah 13:19-20:

"And Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

This prophecy was delivered before this happened to Babylon. This was before Judah's captivity. Isaiah was writing it. He said, "It [that is, Babylon] shall *never be inhabited*, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there."

Do you realize *that has ABSOLUTELY happened.* There is nothing but barren waste over there now. A superstition exists among Arabs against pitching a tent there in ancient Babylon. No Arab will do it.

It WILL Happen to US — Unless . . .

Do you know that for centuries the site of ancient Babylon has been TOTALLY DESOLATE? Only ancient ruins remain. *God Almighty said in Bible prophecy that Babylon would go down.* It would be destroyed. It would never be rebuilt again.

It happened!

Do you realize that God Almighty said of Egypt when it was the *greatest* power, the *greatest* nation on earth, that it was going to be INVADED and CON-

QUERED—that Egypt would go down to a second rate power and that *never again* would it be ruled by a native-born Egyptian—and THAT HAPPENED!

Egypt is still a second rate power, and from that time on down to now, there has never been a native born Egyptian ruling over Egypt.

Do you realize that God said of *Tyre*, which was the New York of the ancient world, the greatest commercial seaport city of the world at that time, that no man would ever live there, that its rock, its timber, and stone would be thrown into the Mediterranean Sea, and it would become a place for the spreading of *fisher's nets?* THAT HAPPENED. I have shown you pictures on Television of it with the fisher's nets there today.

Of *Rome—even before it was built*—God foretold its doom, its fall. There would be seven resurrections, and today we are waiting for that seventh resurrection—but *even worse, today we are going the way of ancient Rome!*

The handwriting is upon the wall of America, of Christendom, this hour. There is protection for you if you will open your eyes to God's prophecies—if you will study your Bible, *if you will surrender* your life to your Creator, *if you will only come to Him in obedience* in living faith through Jesus Christ!

The CRUCIFIXION was not on "Good Friday"

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will read this in Josephus' *Antiquities* XVIII, iv, 2.

Since Pilate was in a *great hurry* to reach Rome, he must have left shortly before the death of the Emperor which occurred in March, 37 A.D. Ten years before this is about the beginning of A.D. 27 at which time Pilate began his procuratorship.

Here is what the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* says in its article "Pilate": The assumed date for Pilate is usually "from 26 to 36 A.D. . . . Tiberius died on March 16, 37 A.D. Such a delay [in Pilate's journey to Rome] is inconceivable in view of the circumstances; hence . . . the period of his procuratorship [is] 27-27 A.D."

The *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia* states, under the article "Pilate": "He probably succeeded Gratus 27 A.D. and ended his procuratorship early in 37; it is not likely that Pilate required more than a year for his return journey to Rome . . . and he arrived there after Tiberius' death, which took place Mar. 16, 37."

Now notice. As Pilate did not begin his governorship till about the commencement of 27 A.D. and as Tiberius' 15th year ended about April of that year, *John the Baptist must have begun his ministry in the first few months of 27 A.D.*

Jesus, therefore, could *not* have begun his ministry earlier than the autumn of 27 A.D. Neither could his ministry HAVE BEGUN AFTER THE PASSOVER in the spring of A.D. 28 because the temple was already 46 years in building. Therefore Jesus must have begun to preach in the autumn of A.D. 27. THERE IS NO OTHER DATE THAT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH ALL THE PROVABLE FACTS.

To find the date of the crucifixion, we now need only find how long the ministry of Jesus lasted.

Proof Seven: How Long Was the Ministry?

The prophet Daniel foretold that the length of Christ's ministry *at his first coming*—to confirm the new covenant

—would be one-half of a prophetic week of seven years. In the midst of that prophetic week he caused the need of sacrifices for sin to cease by offering himself for the sins of the world. He was "cut off" in the midst of the week, making the ministry at his first coming *three and one-half years* (Daniel 9:26, 27). "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"—69 prophetic weeks or 483 years in all—"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. . . . And He shall confirm the covenant with many for a week"—this prophecy is not yet completely fulfilled—why? because "in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"—He died for the sins of the world in the middle of the week.

In a sense this is a dual prophecy. Christ died in the midst of the prophetic week of seven years, after 3½ years of ministry; but He also died *in the midst of the week—Wednesday!*

Now let's turn to the gospels to find the proof that Jesus Christ's ministry was exactly three and one-half years. There would have to be three passovers during the three years of his ministry, and a fourth on the last day of his earthly life—the crucifixion.

The first passover occurred in A.D. 28 and is recorded in John 2:23. "Now when He was at Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast, many believed

in his name." During the following months Jesus spent time baptizing in Judaea (John 3:22). "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea, and there tarried with them, and baptized."

The next note of time is found in John 4:35, which indicates a *lapse of time of eight months*—bringing us to December A.D. 28. *It was only "four months"* until the NEXT HARVEST season which always began about the week following the passover each spring—approximately the beginning of April. Notice Jesus' wording: "Say not ye that there are yet *four months*, and then cometh *the harvest?*" If you read on you will observe that Jesus told them the spiritual harvest of souls was ripe already, even though the literal physical harvest was still four months away.

In John 5:1 Jesus again appears at Jerusalem to celebrate a festival. "After these things was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." The festival is not named. It could have been a passover or a later festival in A.D. 29. Under no circumstances could this feast have been any of the autumn festivals of A.D. 28 because they fall in the months of September and October—months which were already passed according to John 4:35.

Two passovers have now occurred. Again in John 6:4 is another passover which brings us to a Wednesday in the year 30 A.D. "Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh." This was the third passover in Jesus' ministry. The fourth and final passover is recorded by

all the gospel writers (John 11:55). "Now the passover of the Jews was near: and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, to purify themselves."

This last passover completed a ministry of three and one-half years—from autumn of A.D. 27 to the Spring of A.D. 31—THE VERY YEAR WHEN THE PASSOVER UPON WHICH CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED FELL ON WEDNESDAY.

Since Jesus began his 3½-year ministry not later than 27 A.D., he could not have been crucified so late as 33 A.D. *There was therefore no passover which occurred on a Friday during his entire ministry!*

Yes, history proves false the tradition that Jesus was crucified on Friday and rose on Easter Sunday!

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The PLAIN TRUTH

Printed in the U.S.A.

Box 111—Pasadena, California