

Lord of the Sabbath

Program #12

The Day of Resurrection

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Welcome to the Lord of the Sabbath weekly radio program. This is Brother Kenny. Today, I am going to try to solve a mystery. I want to know how Jesus could die on a Friday and then rise on a Sunday AFTER three days? It simply does not make sense.

I want to believe my Bible is the true word of my God who cannot lie. A Friday/Sunday death and resurrection teaching therefore troubles me deeply. I had to determine for myself what happened that famous Passion Week. I had to test how a Friday/Sunday scenario could possibly fit with the Bible.

Last week, I suggested that in trying to determine from the Bible what day Jesus was resurrected from the dead, it is helpful to carefully study the visits of Mary Magdalene to the tomb. I had covered two descriptions of a visit she made to the tomb. One account was from the Apostle Matthew and another from the Apostle John. They are SO DIFFERENT that at least one must be grossly WRONG! OR, as I tried to explain, they may both be true but describe DIFFERENT VISITS.

Let's start with the account of the gospel of Mark to unravel the mysteries of just when Jesus actually died and rose. Mark was NOT present during the Passion Week. He was NOT an eyewitness to its events. I am not saying Mark's account wasn't inspired by God or is not to be trusted. However, I think it is prudent to not take the gospel account of Mark out of context or give it precedence over accounts written by John and Matthew who were eye-witnesses to the death of Jesus AND what happened after His resurrection.

If you ask a Bible student where it says that Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday morning you will get a reference to Mark 16: 9:

Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

At first glance from this New King James Bible translation, who would NOT think that this verse states that Jesus rose early Sunday morning? We get that impression because of where the comma is placed in the verse. But, you do not have to be a Greek language scholar to discover that commas were not used in the earliest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that we have.

So, why is a comma there? Probably because some human (or humans) added it to our English version of the Bible to have us understand what they THOUGHT was written in Greek. Unfortunately, there is another possibility. They may have added the comma to help fortify a prior belief they held and to help make the gospel accounts coincide.

Note that without the comma there, it would be difficult to know whether the phrase “early the first day of the week“ was referring to when “Jesus was risen“ or when “He appeared first to Mary.” At least some Greek scholars agree that in the Greek language, the phrase “early the first day of the week” would refer to what comes AFTER it, and NOT what came before.

In other words, Mark may have been trying to communicate that it was early on the first day of the week when the now risen Jesus appeared to Mary. The other possibility is that Mark was making the point that Jesus had risen early on the first day of the week and THEN appeared to Mary. Which was it? I am no Greek scholar but it surely seems peculiar to have to stress it was a Jesus who had risen earlier that morning that then later appeared to Mary. Would anyone expect a still dead Jesus to appear to Mary?

I should also note that respected English versions of the Bible render the verse differently including placing a comma directly before and after the phrase “early on the first day of the week.” This shows the dilemma that even skilled translators have as to whether the phase is applying to the time Jesus rose; or to the time the risen Jesus appeared to Mary. The Holman Christian Bible is one that makes it clear that the timing is about His appearance to Mary and NOT the time of His resurrection.

Now, does a comma DELETION prove that Jesus DID NOT rise on Sunday morning? NO, I won’t claim that for a minute. But, I would hope that you too would not claim that a comma’s ADDITION proves that Jesus rose on a Sunday! We should have more substantial evidence about when this miracle occurred to make any claim at all about it.

If you still want to hang your hat on a Sunday morning resurrection of Jesus based on this one verse in the entire New Testament, you may want to consider this additional fact. Some important early Greek manuscripts DO NOT include Verse 9 at all! It appears that this “longer ending” from Verse 9-20 was added later and NOT written by Mark at all!

So, if you have a trustworthy answer concerning the use of the comma or the clarifying phrase in Mark 9, or how some earlier manuscripts do not even have a Verse 9, I will surely listen. But, if you don’t, I would suggest you NOT try to convince me that the Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the dead early Sunday morning. That long-held, traditional teaching is simply NOT contained in the Bible. You may believe a myth.

Now, I am going to explore some additional evidence concerning this mystery of on what day of the week DID Jesus actually rise from the dead. When I first found it, I was flabbergasted. I had looked up some scriptures in an old 1611 Kings James Version of the Bible. I was reading Matthew for an unrelated reason when I noticed Matt 28:1:

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. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

Three things hit me like a ton of bricks. One was I now knew HOW the large stone was rolled away from the tomb entrance. “The angel of the Lord” did it. He came as lightening from heaven and caused an earthquake. Wow, I had not seen that in any other gospel. I wondered why, don’t you? Checking the gospels carefully, only Matthew reveals this fact surrounding the visit of Mary Magdalene to the tomb. Why? Could the other accounts be describing a DIFFERENT visit altogether?

Second, this angel was so awesome it essentially scared the Roman guards to death; that is they became as dead; frozen and unable to move or talk that night. This is another interesting fact not found elsewhere in the gospels and also turns out to be important in understanding just when Jesus died and was resurrected.

But, the third discovery was the biggest shocker. When did this event happen according to Matthew who was an Apostle AND an eye-witness to Passion Week? Look closely. It was “in the end of the Sabbath.” If that is a correct translation, since we know the Sabbaths of the Lord end at sunset, the angel came NOT on Sunday morning but LATE on Saturday afternoon just before sunset. How could this be? Well, all I know for sure is that if this angel of the Lord told Mary that Jesus was risen and not there, and she went and looked inside the tomb to confirm it, then Jesus had INDEED risen on Saturday, the Sabbath day, and NOT on Sunday like I had been taught!

That was truly astonishing! It stopped me cold in my tracks; like those guards who were frozen by what they had seen that afternoon. Suddenly, I was getting a different picture of what took place that Passion Week. If Jesus had already risen late on Saturday afternoon, then, of course the tomb would STILL be empty when the OTHER gospel accounts describe visits of various people to the tomb early the next morning on what we would now call Sunday!

My excitement soared. My heart was pounding. Could this Saturday resurrection possibly be true when everyone I had listened to all my life claimed the resurrection had happened on Sunday morning, probably while it was still dark? Then, I noticed too, in the New King James Version, its writers changed the words of the original to “after the Sabbath“ apparently to harmonize the gospel accounts.

No wonder few people, including me, had ever noticed that the accounts were NOT about the same visit of Mary Magdalene to the tomb. It boggled my mind! It started to look like the gospel accounts that once seemed contradictory simply were not well understood. I breathed a sigh of spiritual relief that at least the original scriptures were not in error.

I was next drawn to the language “as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week.” Didn’t that clearly mean Sunday morning at dawn like the other gospel accounts? Wasn’t “dawn” the time when the sky lightened up just before the sun rose over the horizon?

I pulled out my Strong’s Concordance. I looked up the word “dawn” and found it used only twice in the New Testament. To my surprise, it was two different Greek words both translated in English as “dawn!” The second one (used in 2 Peter 1: 19) has a clear

implication of light coming forth; even as a Morning Star. But, the word used in Matt. 28: 1 has the more general implication of something coming forth, or coming upon you.

As we know, in a Hebrew week the new days came forth and began at sunset: NOT just before sunrise, and NOT at midnight as in today's Gregorian calendar. This is God's expressed way of keeping time. Even Webster's New World Dictionary has for its number 2 meaning of the English word "dawn": "to begin to appear, develop" which would fit with the start of a new day AT SUNSET when it gets dark, since it DOES NOT have any connotation of meaning the appearance of light, or daylight or daybreak.

Notice too that NOTHING else in the Matthew account suggests a lightening of the sky at daybreak. That is just before the sun rises in the east which most people would associate with dawn. Could Mary have come to the tomb as the Sabbath was ending hoping to be able to anoint the body of Jesus later that day? This would NOT have been allowed on the Sabbath since touching dead bodies then would defile oneself.

Further study of the oldest Greek manuscripts leave one even less certain that this visit was on Sunday morning just before sunrise. There is credible evidence that the gospel of Matthew was originally written in Aramaic and then translated into Greek. Experts claim the Aramaic versions of Matthew are even more suggestive that this visit accompanied by the earthquake occurred AS the seventh day Sabbath was ending. It happened BEFORE the first day of the week, which would be called Sunday, had even started!

Well, this might all be just interesting speculation based upon language and translation idiosyncrasies. And, why even fuss with it? Why is it really important on what day Jesus actually died or rose? Isn't it way more important that we just believe that Jesus both died as our Savior and rose as our Lord! Yes, I believe that it is. So, you may ask, "Kenny, why are you making such a big deal out of this issue?" That is a fair question.

The answer is that the people who truly ARE making a big deal out of exactly on what day of the week our Lord rose are our Christian Churches. Many of their leaders teach an assembly for worship on Sunday and a celebration of the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday morning. It is a big deal to them! If wrong, it becomes a big deal to me. I don't like being fooled or be taken to be any less able than they are to understand the scriptures.

A little historical investigation of how this change from the Bible teachings all began is easily shown to be a development in the Church at Rome hundreds of years AFTER Jesus had risen and all the eye-witnesses were dead. And, these old teachings and traditions continued in the Protestant Churches even after their reformation and break with the Roman Catholic Church for other reasons of scriptural errors or intentional change.

If such worship practices are merely the tradition of Popes, in what was the Church at Rome for the Roman Empire and Emperors, rather than from the revealed Truth of God, then that upsets me. I see it as righteous anger much like the anger of Jesus when the religious leaders of His time made His Father's House into a den of thieves. So, I keep searching my Bible to see what it reveals. I believe I must act on this revealed Truth and

NOT on the traditions of men, even if they were, or still are, well-meaning men.

My studies combine key scriptures from the earliest manuscripts with an understanding of the Passover feast which Jesus kept perfectly, even His final one for His death as our Passover Lamb. This had led me to new conclusions about when Jesus died and rose.

In summary, it appears that Jesus actually rose on Saturday, Abib 17, just before 6:00 PM. Our previous study showed that Jesus died on Abib 14 at about 3:00 PM in the afternoon. Obviously, if Abib 17 is a Saturday, Abib 14 would be a Wednesday.

In the remainder of this program, I want to touch on a number of other scriptures and prophecies that are CONSISTENT with a late Wednesday death and burial, and a Saturday resurrection, of Jesus. I will also comment on why a Friday death and burial and early Sunday morning resurrection is INCONSISTENT with the revealed word of God.

Let us start with the activities of Mary Magdalene. All four gospels record her at the crucifixion. According to Matthew and Mark, we find Mary at the tomb when Jesus was buried and she saw where He was laid. She goes AFTER the Sabbath to buy spices to anoint Jesus. She prepares spices and rests on the Sabbath BEFORE the first day of the week.

Mary SEEMS to go to the tomb on the first day of the week with the spices while it is still dark and then sees that the stone has already been rolled away. Then, two men in shining garments (not the one angel Matthew describes) tell her He is risen and she leaves to tell the eleven that the tomb is open and the body of Jesus is not there.

But, the disciples STILL did not believe her. However, Peter and John, wanting to know the truth, run to the tomb and also find it is empty. Mary apparently also followed them back at the tomb and she sees Peter leave marveling about what he had seen. On this visit, she actually sees Jesus, thinking He was the gardener, and talks with Him. The last time that we hear directly of Mary the risen Jesus sends her AGAIN to His disciples to tell them He is ascending to His Father. Mary then faithfully goes back the third time to the disciples explaining that she has SEEN the Lord and telling them what He had spoken to her.

Now, if we think Jesus died late Friday afternoon and rose early Sunday morning, we have some problems with how Mary could possibly have done all that is indicated in the gospel accounts in just one visit. For example, Luke reports that Mary bought spices AFTER the Sabbath. That would have to be AFTER the weekly Sabbath ended about 6:00 PM on what we would call Saturday night. Supposedly, Mary and the other women could have prepared the spices later that Saturday night as John indicates. Then, after sleeping Saturday night, they could rise early Sunday, while it was still dark, and go to the tomb BEFORE sunrise bringing the spices to the tomb and wondering who would roll back the stone. There is such an account in the gospels.

It would be all well and good at first glance. Unfortunately, we find Luke telling us that Mary and the women from Galilee returned from the tomb, prepared spices and rested on the Sabbath. Well, that just will not wash. They can't prepare spices BEFORE they rest on Sabbath and buy the spices AFTER the Sabbath.

Something is wrong! It is either the Bible or the Friday/Sunday account. I suggest it is the latter. In the Wednesday/Saturday account, this apparent impossibility simply melts away. If Mary left the tomb late on Wednesday night, she would not be able to buy spices until after the high Sabbath on Thursday ended. Whether she bought the spices Thursday night or Friday morning, and prepared them either Thursday night or Friday during the day is not clear from scripture but is immaterial. With the tomb closed by a large stone, and with the armed guard still at the tomb, the women simply could not have anointed Jesus on Friday. They would have had to wait until the guard was gone which would have been in the end of Saturday or surely sometime on Sunday morning.

It seems that Mary waits until the weekly Sabbath is about to end, and according to Matthew; she comes to LOOK at the tomb. Notice the exact words in Matt 28:1 are (in the NKJV) are "came to see the tomb." Apparently only Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came. No mention is made of other women coming with them, or of her or them bringing the spices for the anointing of Jesus. Why not?

Isn't it reasonable that they came to SEE if the tomb was still under guard BEFORE lugging the spices to the tomb? Remember that Nicodemus brought 100 pounds of spices to the burial tomb on Wednesday. Why would the women come lugging all their spices unless they knew they could get to the body of Jesus?

Now, we can understand why spices were finally brought to the tomb first Sunday morning. That was when the guards should be gone. The women who came with the spices Sunday morning are wondering who would roll the stone away rather than wondering whether the guards would have now departed. Why? Sunday morning would have been the third day since the guard was placed there on Thursday morning by Pilate and they could leave. Scripture actually records that was when they left the tomb.

So, it seems that the Wednesday/Saturday scenario meets all the tests of all the gospels that I can find. But the Friday/Sunday scenario DOES NOT. If you can show me how it does, please contact me to discuss it further.

However, there is one subtle understanding that one has to grasp for the Wednesday/Saturday scenario to completely align with all the gospels. That is, if Mary Magdalene came and discovered the tomb was already empty late on Saturday afternoon, why would she return Sunday morning with the spices to anoint Jesus?

Checking closely, the visit describing the women coming to the tomb on Sunday morning in Mark 16: 2 does NOT specifically mention Mary Magdalene. She is mentioned in the previous verse as one of the women who had BOUGHT spices after the (high) Sabbath on Thursday. The spices would be bought at an earlier time than when they were

prepared or brought to the tomb. You might casually assume Mary was among them before sunrise on Sunday morning, but it would only be an assumption not confirmed by scripture.

In Luke's account, it clearly describes the women bringing spices very early in the morning. We find the "they" who came describes the women who had come with Him from Galilee. Mary Magdalene is not mentioned as one of them. Best the scholars can determine Mary was NOT from Galilee. So, it seems it was just the other women who came with the spices while it was still dark and saw just one young man, or angel, sitting in the tomb. This was probably the same angel that Mary saw late on Saturday who rolled away the stone at that time.

During the first visit by Mary Magdalene to the tomb on Sunday morning is when she sees the TWO angels at the tomb and returns to tell the eleven. This time Peter and John decide to take a look for themselves. Apparently Mary comes back again and observes Peter leave the tomb. In fact, later in Mark 16: 9 when Mary is mentioned as coming to the tomb early on the first day of the week when the sun had risen (seemingly later than the accounts of the women who came with the spices much earlier while it was still dark) is when Jesus appears to her. That is her second visit that Sunday morning.

Notice too that it is after this second visit that Mary Magdalene, when she has seen and talked with Jesus, that she goes back a second time from the tomb to tell His disciples that she had now seen Him. Yet, they still did not believe her! On Saturday, the night before, when the angel rolled the stone away and she came to tell them that, they would not believe her because her words "seemed like idle tales" as read in Luke's gospel.

I realize that it is difficult to follow all these different verses and accounts of different visits to the tomb by Mary Magdalene without a graphic or chart. This is easier to follow in our Resurrection Booklet. Request one if you want to study this in more depth.

But, I hope that what I have shared today will raise your interest to check for yourself how the Friday/Sunday scenario has significant scriptural inconsistencies whereas the Wednesday/Saturday scenario seems to fit consistently.

With the short time remaining, I will just touch on a two other major inconsistencies for the Friday/Sunday fable. Many have claimed that Jesus' own prediction of rising the third day, or on the third day, fit's the Friday/Sunday account just fine. Isn't Friday, Saturday and Sunday three days?

Well those certainly are three days that have something to do with the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord. What those proponents don't typically mention are the three verses that say He will rise AFTER three days.

The chief priests quote Jesus as saying, "After three days I will rise again." when asking Pilate for a guard to prevent deception by His disciples stealing His body. But, just as convincing should be the words of His disciples about Jesus' prediction in Mark 8: 31

before what may be text added to Mark's gospel:

And, He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and after three days rise again.

Now if you believe Jesus was killed on Friday afternoon, can you tell me how, according to the word of God in the gospel of Mark, His rising on Sunday would be three days AFTER He was killed? It simply does not wash. This old dog will not hunt.

Of course, if He was killed on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday would be one day after, Friday two days after, and Saturday three days after He was killed; just as Jesus said.

But, the most important words about His death, burial and resurrection are the words of Jesus Himself. In Matt. 12: 40 we find Jesus giving the ONLY sign of His being the promised Messiah to the scribes and Pharisees:

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Now you may have heard explanations of how Jesus being buried in a rock tomb in the earth from late Friday to early Sunday morning can meet this test sign given by Jesus Himself to those who would not believe who He was. Some say it is just an Aramaic idiom for "three days." Others claim it can mean three days, or any part thereof, using an inclusive Hebrew counting of days.

But, shall we consider the three nights? Are they to be counted inclusively too? No matter how I try, I can only find Jesus in the earth Friday night and Saturday night if He died Friday afternoon and He rose on Sunday morning. Where is the third night? Where is even any part of a third night? Do you see the problem I see?

Do you now also see the ONLY sign that Jesus gave to us unbelievers to know He was truly the very Son of God, the Messiah of Israel? He was dead and buried in the earth during the daylight of Thursday, Friday and Saturday and during the nights of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Now that you know the Truth, will it set you free? Or, will you stay stuck in mystery and error concerning the greatest week since God's week of creation?

Isn't it high time to get the facts straight from our Bible and not from tradition? Can we accept Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath whom Jesus said He was? Should it surprise you that the Lord of the Sabbath has the power to do good on the Sabbath and rise from the dead as our blessed hope on the day He created for man?

I have covered much ground quickly and only the main discrepancies in a Friday/Sunday scenario belief. There is much more that could be said. The subject is worth studying in depth, wouldn't you agree? And, that kind of depth is simply not possible on a short

radio program. That is why I have produced a more comprehensive booklet titled "Resurrection Week---The True Days Jesus Died and Rose!"

I will send it to you free but I hope you can contribute at least \$10.00 to LawstSheep Ministries to help pay for these booklets and for the radio time at the station where you are listening today.

If you want the booklet, write to me at LawstSheep Ministries, Box 203, Delmont, PA 15626 and include your own mailing address. I will send the Booklet to you free of charge. If you can make a donation, please make your check payable to Kenny Kitzke for the Lord of the Sabbath program.

As you might guess from this study, I will not be celebrating the resurrection of my Lord on Easter Sunday this year. I've seen, and will heed, His ONLY sign. Instead, I will be keeping the commanded and even more informative and inspiring Passover Feast of the LORD this spring.

Next week I will begin to cover the meaning and observance of the Lord's Feast of Unleavened Bread. Until next Sabbath, may the Lord of the Sabbath bring you love, peace and joy in your work.