

The Heart of the Gospel – The Resurrection

- *What is the most important event in the history of mankind?*
- *Is it the birth of Jesus Christ or His crucifixion and resurrection?*

Ecclesiastes 7:1 (NKJV)

¹A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth;

- *Why is the day of one's death better than the day of one's birth?*
- *What we have ultimately amounted to and accomplished is seen at the conclusion of our lives.*
- *It is not just how we begin but how we end.*
- *If Jesus was never born into this world then we could never have been saved.*
- *But it wasn't Christ's birth that saved us, but His death and resurrection.*

1 Corinthians 9:24 (NKJV)

²⁴Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

- *What brought salvation to mankind was not that Jesus Christ began the race but that He finished the race.*
- *On the cross Jesus said, "It is finished."*
- *Jesus has given us this example so that we can run the race that He has set before us.*
- *Once we have received Jesus Christ and are born again, the race is not for our justification, since we have received that at our new birth, but the crowns, inheritances and rewards that He promises those that run the race well and overcome.*

1 Kings 20:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰Then Ben-Hadad sent to him and said, "The gods do so to me, and more also, if enough dust is left of Samaria for a handful for each of the people who follow me."

¹¹So the king of Israel answered and said, "Tell him, 'Let not the one who puts on his armor boast like the one who takes it off.' "

- *The boasting is not in what we start but in what we are able to finish.*

Hebrews 10:12 (NKJV)

¹²But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

- *Jesus Christ overcame death and Hell through His suffering, death and resurrection and ascended to Heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. Jesus was victorious and the battle had been won.*
- *The reason that Christ's crucifixion and resurrection are the most important events in history is that it brings fulfillment to the purpose of His birth.*
- *It is essential for us to understand that Jesus could have failed.*
- *Jesus Christ could not have failed as the Son of God.*
- *However, Jesus, as the Son of Man, could have failed. This gives us a greater insight into how deeply Jesus suffered for us.*

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- *Jesus was tempted in every way, even as we are, but without sin.*
- *The very concept of temptation entails with it the possibility of failure.*
- *As Christ lay lifeless in the grave the question raised could be, "Did He overcome every temptation?"*
- *Christ's resurrection is absolute proof that He went through the cross unto death and did not fail but overcame.*
- *If Jesus had failed He would have remained in the grave and His soul would have been eternally condemned to Hell.*

1 John 4:3 (NKJV)

³and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

- *The spirit of the Antichrist claims that Jesus did not come in the flesh.*
- *For Christ not to have come in the flesh means His sacrifice and temptations and agony were only illusionary and thus there is no real salvation for mankind.*

Romans 10:9 (NKJV)

⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

- *It is faith in Christ's resurrection that is key for our salvation.*

Romans 4:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

²⁵who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

- “who was delivered up because of our offenses”- *Jesus was crucified because of our sins.*
- “was raised because of our justification” – *Jesus was resurrected so that we could be justified. Through Christ's resurrection not only are we forgiven but we are also counted as righteous with the righteousness of God Himself.*

1 Corinthians 15:1–8 (NKJV)

¹Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand,

²by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you— unless you believed in vain.

³For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

⁴and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

- *The heart of the Gospel is that Christ died for our sins, was buried and the third day He rose according to the Scriptures.*
- “the third day” – *An important part of our confession of faith is that Jesus was literally in the grave for three days and nights. Jesus was not just in the grave for an hour or a day or two days but literally three days and nights even as He had prophesied.*
- *One of the reasons Jesus is said to be in the grave three days and nights is that His death was irrefutable and in the natural irreversible.*

⁵and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

⁶After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

⁷After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

⁸Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

- *Paul here is referring to the events around Christ's resurrection and the excitement of each eyewitness who encountered the resurrected Saviour.*
- *Paul begins with Peter's encounter with the resurrected Saviour and ends with his own personal experience.*
- *The apostles were not to be only witnesses of Jesus' ministry upon the earth but eyewitnesses of His suffering, His death and His resurrection.*
- *They were willing to die for what they had seen and experienced. They were not serving the memory of a dead leader but the Resurrected Saviour, the Son of God.*

1 Corinthians 15:12–19 (NKJV)

¹²Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

¹³But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

¹⁴And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

- *If Christ was not resurrected then our preaching is useless and our faith is worthless.*

¹⁵Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up—if in fact the dead do not rise.

- *If Christ is not raised from the dead not only is our preaching useless but also in fact we are false witnesses that spread darkness and confusion.*

¹⁶For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen.

¹⁷And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!

- *If Christ is not risen then we have been deceived to believe that we have been forgiven when in fact we have not been.*

¹⁸Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

¹⁹If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

- *If Christ has not risen then we have believed a false hope and all our loved ones have perished and they no longer exist.*
- *If Christ has not risen then we are the most miserable of all men, because we are sacrificing our lives here on this earth for a Heaven that does not exist.*

1 Corinthians 15:32 (NKJV)

³²If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!"

- If the dead do not rise, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!” – *This verse summarizes exactly how we should spend our lives if there is no resurrection.*

1:1–4 (NKJV)

¹Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

²which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,

³concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

⁴and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

- *Christ’s resurrection was the ultimate proof that He is the Son of God.*
- *“who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh” – Jesus Christ was declared the Son of Man through His virgin birth.*
- *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” – Jesus Christ was declared the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead.*
- *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” – Even though Jesus became that sin offering, the power of His holiness was so perfect that death and Hell could not restrain Him. Jesus came forth from Hell after paying the full price of man’s sins and rebellion still as that perfect and spotless Lamb of God.*
- *The Old Testament is rich with revelations of Jesus Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection.*
- *Without weaving in the Old Testament into the tapestry of the New Testament we will find our knowledge of Christ’s sacrifice limited.*
- *The splendor of God’s Word really comes alive as we bring both the Old Testament and the New Testament together to paint a complete picture.*
- *We are going to look at the Old Testament to give us clarity in regards to the timetable of the events that took place at the time of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection.*

Genesis 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

- *The Biblical day begins at sunset not at sunrise or at midnight.*

- *This is a Biblical principle that things begin in darkness and end in light.*

Leviticus 23:1–7 (NKJV)

¹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

²“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘The feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My feasts.

- *Leviticus 23 defines those appointed times, which were to be set-aside for the Lord.*

³Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

- *The weekly Sabbath was to be a holy convocation and no work was to be done.*

⁴These are the feasts of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times.

⁵On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover.

⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

⁷On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

- *The Passover was to be a holy convocation and was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Leviticus 23:8 - The last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Leviticus 23:21 – Pentecost was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Leviticus 23:24 – The Feast of Trumpets was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Leviticus 23:27 – The Day of Atonement was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Leviticus 23:34 – The Feast of Tabernacles was to be treated like a Sabbath.*
- *Therefore we can see from the Old Testament that besides the weekly Sabbaths we have Special Sabbaths, holy convocations or what the Jews refer to as “High Days”.*
- *Whatever day of the week the Passover fell on became a Sabbath day or a High Day.*

John 19:31 (NKJV)

³¹Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

- *The first thing we can determine from Scripture is that Jesus' crucifixion did not take place the day before the weekly Sabbath but the special Sabbath of the Passover.*
- *What day of the week was Jesus Christ crucified on?*

Matthew 12:40 (NKJV)

⁴⁰For 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.

- *Jesus clearly states that He will be in heart of the earth for three days and three nights.*
- *The expression "three days and three nights" makes it clear that Jesus is prophesying "three days" as three complete 24-hour periods and not just partial days.*
- *Since Christ's resurrection took place on the first day of the week, our Sunday, that means that Christ had to be in the grave Thursday, Friday and Saturday.*
- *Therefore Christ's crucifixion must have taken place on the Wednesday.*
- *We established that the day of the week of Christ's crucifixion by working backwards from the day of His resurrection was a Wednesday.*
- *Now we are going to look at Scripture and work our way forward to determine the day of His crucifixion.*

John 12:1–2 (NKJV)

¹Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

²There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

John 12:12–13 (NKJV)

¹²The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

¹³took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"

- *From John 12:1 we see Christ came walking to Bethany six days before the Passover – Friday during the day. – 9th of Nisan*
- *The 5th day before the Passover - Christ had supper at Martha's house in the evening – This is our Friday night or Biblically the weekly Sabbath. - 10th of Nisan*

- *The 10th of Nisan is the day according to Exodus 12:3-6 that the lambs were to be set apart to become the Passover lambs. It is at this meal at Martha's house that Mary anoints Jesus with the oil of Spikenard. Jesus states that this was done in preparation for His death and burial.*
- *The 4th day before the Passover – "The next day Jesus goes into Jerusalem." The next day is referring to the day after the Sabbath and thus it is our Sunday. Jesus enters Jerusalem with a great multitude waving palm leaves and shouting "Hosanna". This is what is referred to by some as Palm Sunday. - 11th of Nisan*
- *The 3rd day before the Passover is the Monday. - 12th of Nisan*
- *The 2nd day before the Passover is the Tuesday. - 13th of Nisan*
- *The day before the Passover, the Preparation day, is the Wednesday and the day Jesus was crucified. - 14th of Nisan.*
- *Wednesday at sunset, the new day begins and is the beginning of 15th of Nisan, the start of the Passover and a High Sabbath. (Our Thursday starts at midnight)*
- *Does that answer why we don't have a Good Friday service?*
- *By celebrating Good Friday we are contradicting the very words of Jesus Christ.*
- *Why did church tradition begin to teach that Jesus was crucified on the Friday?*
- *To answer this question properly we need to go back to the origins of Easter.*
- *Easter actually is a pagan term referring to the Chaldean goddess Astarte, the queen of Heaven, the goddess of fertility, sexuality and war. In the Old Testament this pagan goddess is called Ashtoreth.*
- *The Church's celebration of Easter began with the decree by the council of Nicaea in 325 AD.*
- *The decision of the council was unanimous that Easter was to be kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world, and 'that none should hereafter follow the blindness of the Jews''*
- *Why did the Church adopt Easter and Friday as the day of the week of Christ's crucifixion?*
 1. *A desire to distance themselves from the Jewish roots of Christianity.*
 2. *An anti-Semitic influence that permeated the official leaders of the Roman church.*

3. *A desire to not only distances the Church from its Jewish roots but to embrace the pagan population surrounding them.*
4. *An ignorance of the Old Testament, which led to a misinterpretation of the New Testament.*

Day	Hebrew Calendar	# of days before the Passover	Event
Friday	9 th of Nisan	6 days before	Jesus enters into Bethany
Saturday	10 th of Nisan	5 days before	Jesus has dinner at Lazarus'. Mary anoints Jesus for burial. The Passover lambs are picked and separated.
Sunday	11 th of Nisan	4 days before	Jesus' procession into Jerusalem
Monday	12 th of Nisan	3 days before	
Tuesday	13 th of Nisan	2 days before	
Wednesday	14 th of Nisan	1 days before	The Preparation Day The Last Supper Jesus is crucified.
Thursday	15 th of Nisan		The Passover A High Day – A Special Sabbath

- *We see clearly that by the fourth century the Church had wrongly interpreted the day of the week surrounding Christ's crucifixion.*

- *This not only resulted in alienating what the Old Testament clearly teaches about the Biblical Passover but also contradicts the very words of Jesus where He clearly states that He would be in the grave three days and three nights.*
- *The next question that we are faced with is, “When did Christ’s resurrection take place?”*
- *Again for us to properly answer this question we must look to the Old Testament to understand and interpret the New Testament.*
- *Three things that Caiaphas performed as High Priest.*

John 11:47–52 (NKJV)

⁴⁷Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs.

⁴⁸If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

⁴⁹And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all,

⁵⁰nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”

⁵¹Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

⁵²and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

- *1. Caiaphas as the High Priest prophesied Jesus’ redemptive death.*

Matthew 27:62–66 (NKJV)

⁶²On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate,

⁶³saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’

⁶⁴Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.”

⁶⁵Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.”

⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

- *2. Caiaphas as High Priest, in his vain attempt to stop the resurrection of Jesus Christ, set his own temple guards around the tomb and sealed it with his own high priestly seal and thus provided eyewitnesses to the resurrection.*

John 20:1 (NKJV)

¹Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

- “while it was still dark” - *Jesus Christ’s resurrection took place before sunrise on the first day of the week.*

Leviticus 23:5–11 (NKJV)

⁵On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover.

⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

⁷On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.

⁸But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it.’ ”

⁹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

¹⁰“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.

¹¹He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

- *The High Priest’s duties included performing the wave offering of the first of the first fruits.*
- *In the week that the Passover was celebrated, as the weekly Sabbath was drawing to a close and the sun was setting, marking the end of the Sabbath and the beginning of the first day of the week, the High Priest would wave a sheaf of barley before the Lord as a declaration of the first of the firstfruits.*
- *What does the first of the firstfruits represents?*

1 Corinthians 15:20 (NKJV)

²⁰But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

- *Jesus is the First of the Firstfruits.*
- *3. Caiaphas, as the High Priest, unknowingly was proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*
- *As the sun was setting on the Sabbath day Caiaphas, as the High Priest, was waving the barley sheaf before the Lord and proclaiming the first of the firstfruits, the resurrection of Jesus Christ and Jesus was coming forth from the tomb.*
- *Caiaphas who was moved with envy and plotted Jesus death, prophesied Christ’s redemptive sacrifice, provided eyewitnesses of Christ’s bodily resurrection and then prophetically declared the resurrection of Jesus Christ as he waved the barley sheaf before the Lord.*

- *These truths are deeply embedded in the Old Testament and their application can only be seen and understood in light of Jesus Christ and the New Testament. These are witnesses of the perfect inspiration of God's Word.*

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.**

- *These events perfectly exemplify the truth of this promise. The very ones that had plotted to try to destroy Jesus were used by God to fulfill Christ's mission to be the Saviour of mankind.*
- *reason we don't have a sunrise service is because the setting of the sun marks Christ's resurrection and not its rising.*

Romans 14:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵**One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.**

⁶**He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.**

- *What is the New Testament ordinance for celebrating and remembering Christ's sacrifice?*
- *Communion.*

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV)

²³**For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;**

²⁴**and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

²⁵**In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

²⁶**For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**