

The Biblical Timeline

The Days of the Events of Holy Week

Selected Scriptures

1. The Year of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

John the Baptist began his ministry during the 15th year of Tiberius (Luke 3:1) which was sometime between the middle of AD 28 and the end of AD 29. Jesus likely started His ministry shortly after John. The gospels explicitly indicate that Jesus celebrated three Passover festivals (John 2:13; 6:14; 11:55) and possibly one other (John 5:1). Christians can be reasonably certain that Jesus Christ was crucified in 33 A.D. when He was in His mid 30's (cf. Luke 3:23).

2. The Day of the Week of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

It is clear that Jesus rose from the dead early on a Sunday morning (Sunday, Matt 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). Christians are not to be dogmatic with one another about Religious days or celebration (cf. Col. 2:16), but we should try to be purposeful in the things we do. Christians typically gather together on Sunday (cf. Acts 20:7) because Jesus was raised on the first day of the week.

3. The Day of the Week of the Triumphal Entry

Jesus came into the region around Jerusalem six days before the Passover (John 12:1). After eating supper and staying the night in Bethany, He entered Jerusalem while being hailed by the people (John 12:12). The only Sabbath day during the final week of Jesus' life begins on the evening of His crucifixion (Mark 15:42). This along with several other markers of time indicate that Jesus stayed in Bethany on Friday night for the Sabbath and then came into Jerusalem on Sunday.

4. The Day of the Week of the Crucifixion of Christ

The day that Jesus was crucified is one of perennial controversy because there are several factors which must be properly understood and harmonized.

A. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Passover meal inaugurated the seven day feast of Unleavened bread. Passover can refer to the specific meal or to the entire festival (Luke 22:1).

B. Three Days and Three Nights (Matt 12:40) and "on the third day" (1 Cor. 15:4)

The timing given for the sign of Jonah was an idiom which essentially indicated a duration of time three days (or parts of a total of three days).

5. The Chronology of the Week of Christ's Crucifixion

A. Sunday, March 29, Nissan 10 (Saturday nightfall to Sunday nightfall)

Jesus' triumphantly comes into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-10; cf. John 12:1, 12) and then He spends the night in Bethany (Mark 11:11).

B. Monday, March 30, Nissan 11 (Sunday nightfall to Monday nightfall)

Coming back into Jerusalem in the morning, Jesus curses the fig tree (Mark 11:12-14; Matt 21:18-19) and weeps over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). He then cleanses the temple of the money changers (Luke 19:45-48; Mark 11:15-18).

C. Tuesday, March 31, Nissan 12 (Monday nightfall to Tuesday nightfall)

Jesus comes to Jerusalem and finds the fig tree totally withered (Mark 11:20-22). Jesus refutes His enemies (Matt 21:23; 22:15-46), teaches the people (Matt 21:28ff), and condemns the Pharisees (Matt 23:1ff).

D. Wednesday, April 1, Nissan 13 (Tuesday nightfall to Wednesday nightfall)

While staying in Bethany, Jesus is anointed with perfume and Judas agrees with the Sanhedrin to betray Jesus (Mark 14:1-11).

E. Thursday, April 2, Nissan 14 (Wednesday nightfall to Thursday nightfall)

This is the preparation day for the feast of Unleavened Bread when the Passover Lamb would be slaughtered in the evening (Mark 14:12; cf. Ex. 12:18; Lev. 23:5-6). It is a holy day and only necessary activities like food preparation are to be done (Ex. 12:16). Peter and John sent to make preparations for the Passover meal in the early part of the day (Mark 14:12-17). Jesus eats the Passover meal with disciples; nightfall on Thursday (Mark 14:17-18). After the meal and a hymn (Matt 26:30) they go to Gethsemane where He prays and the disciples sleep (Mark 14:34ff) and Jesus weeps (Luke 22:44). Jesus is betrayed by Judas and arrested (Mark 14:43).

F. Friday, April 3, Nissan 15 (Thursday nightfall to Friday nightfall)

Jesus endures three trial by the religious officials, by Annas (John 18:12-14), Caiaphas (Matt. 26:57-68), the Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71), during which time Peter denies Jesus (Mark 14:66ff). After these trials Judas commits suicide (Matt 27:1-5) and Jesus then endures three more trials by the secular officials, Pilate (John 18:28-38), Herod (Luke 23:6-12), and Pilate again (John 18:39ff), and He is ultimately condemned around 6am (John 19:14-16). Jesus is scourged while Barabbas is released (Mark 15:15) and then He is crucified around 9am (Mark 15:25). Darkness covers the land from about noon until 3pm (Mark 15:33) and Jesus dies around 3pm (Mark 15:34), the veil of the temple is torn (Mark 15:38), and the graves are opened (Matt 27:51-53). Jesus' body is buried before sundown Friday (Matt 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-43).

G. Saturday, April 4, Nissan 16 (Friday nightfall to Saturday nightfall)

The Sanhedrin place a guard around the tomb of Jesus (Matt. 27:66). After sunset on Saturday, Mary Magdalene, Mary and Salome bought and prepared spices to anoint Jesus' body (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:56).

H. Sunday, April 5, Nissan 17 (Saturday nightfall to Sunday nightfall)

Jesus rises victoriously from the grave in the early hours of Sunday morning before the women came to tend to His body (John 20:1ff). Jesus then appeared to many people alive (John 20:11ff; Matt 28:9).