

# **Ellen White and the Timing of the Resurrection, First Fruits and Pentecost**

**Ray Foucher**



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**An in-depth examination of Ellen White's comments regarding timing demonstrating that they support that those events all occurred on seventh-day Sabbaths and that Pentecost should always be on a seventh-day Sabbath.**

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## Introduction

This study presents further evidence for a Sabbath Resurrection as presented in the book ***In the Heart of the Earth: The Secret Code that Reveals What is in the Heart of God*** especially in relation to statements of Ellen White. Note that this study is not an attack on Ellen White. Rather, it shows that her writings actually support a seventh-day Sabbath Pentecost despite a few of her comments to the contrary. We need to look at all of her statements that have a bearing on the subject and resolve them. And the Biblical record must always come first as even she said.

The original study ***In the Heart of the Earth*** dealt with the Biblical meaning of “heart,” “earth” and “first day of the week.” It also showed the meaning of a number of verses that have confused the understanding of resurrection timing. Much evidence was presented to show that Jesus’ resurrection actually occurred on Friday evening, at the start of the Sabbath rather than on Sunday morning.

As the timing of crucifixion week is typified by the timing of events at the Exodus, we need to also look at the experience of Israel and some related Ellen White statements. This study provides a careful analysis, including some largely-unrecognized statements, to establish that these important Biblical events occurred on seventh-day Sabbaths.

The significance of a seventh-day Sabbath Pentecost should be apparent as the Spirit of Christ is then poured out on believers on His day.

## Nisan 14 in Crucifixion Week was on Thursday

To begin, we need to establish a few points and we will then look at some statements by Ellen White. The point that Nisan 14 in crucifixion week was on a Thursday has been made very well. It was included in the section “Factors in the Timing of Passover Observance” in the book ***In the Heart of the Earth***. For crucifixion week, this matches the triumphal entry/selection of the lambs on Nisan 10, a Sunday, as EGW says:

"It was on the first day of the week that Christ made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem." (DA 569)

"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the **tenth day** of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an house:" (Exodus 12:3)

Later in that chapter about that event, she writes:

"... He, the antitypical Lamb, by a voluntary act set Himself apart as an oblation." (DA 571)

It is interesting that it says it was His act, not a choice of the Jews.

## Nisan 14 at the Exodus was on a Wednesday

The following will show that Nisan 14, the preparation of the Passover, was on a Wednesday in the year of the Exodus.

"And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on **the fifteenth day of the second month** after their departing out of the land of Egypt. ... Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that **on the sixth day** they shall prepare *that* which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, **At even**, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: And **in the morning**, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what *are* we, that ye murmur against us?" (Exodus 16:1-7)

"And it came to pass, that **at even** the quails came up, and covered the camp: and **in the morning** the dew lay round about the host." (Exodus 16:13)

"And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This *is that* which the LORD hath said, **To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath** unto the LORD: bake *that* which ye will bake *to day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day *is* a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, *which is* the sabbath, in it there shall be none." (Exodus 16:22-26)

It is apparent that the instructions were given one day and on the following six mornings there was manna on the ground with a double portion on the sixth morning to provide for the seventh day which was a seventh-day Sabbath. It could only be that the pattern looked like this:

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sabbath
			Nisan 14 Passover preparation	Nisan 15 FUB day 1 Passover at midnight Left Egypt	Nisan 16 FUB day 2	Nisan 17 FUB day 3
Nisan 18 FUB day 4	Nisan 19 FUB day 5	Nisan 20 FUB day 6	Nisan 21 FUB day 7	Nisan 22	Nisan 23	Nisan 24
Nisan 25	Nisan 26	Nisan 27	Nisan 28	Nisan 29	Nisan 30	Sivan 1 (second month)
Sivan 2	Sivan 3	Sivan 4	Sivan 5	Sivan 6	Sivan 7	Sivan 8
Sivan 9	Sivan 10	Sivan 11	Sivan 12	Sivan 13	Sivan 14	Sivan 15 <b>Arrived Wilderness of Sin</b> Manna promised
Sivan 16 Day 1 of manna	Sivan 17 Day 2 of manna	Sivan 18 Day 3 of manna	Sivan 19 Day 4 of manna	Sivan 20 Day 5 of manna	Sivan 21 Day 6 of manna	Sivan 22 No manna

Since the months each had 30 days (the calendar change in the time of Hezekiah had not yet occurred) we can work backwards to determine that Nisan 14, the day of preparation for the Passover at the Exodus was on a Wednesday. The feast of Unleavened Bread would have started at sunset marking the start of the 15<sup>th</sup>. They ate unleavened bread and observed the Passover that evening with the actual Passover (including the death of the first-born) occurring at midnight. They left Egypt in the morning it still being the fifteenth day as stated in Numbers 33:3.



## The Calendar Date for First Fruits Varies Yearly

The fact that Nisan 14 was on a different day of the week in crucifixion week compared to the Exodus should not be a concern. (Note that this is a change from the book *In the Heart of the Earth* where Nisan 14 in Egypt was placed on a Thursday.) There is nothing to say that the day of the week that feasts fell on had to match from year to year. Indeed, they generally did not as they were specified to be on a particular calendar date, not a day of the week. The only exceptions were First Fruits (the day the Wave Sheaf was offered) and Pentecost. They were always in relation to the seventh-day Sabbath. The common belief is that they occur on the day after the Sabbath while Biblical evidence shows that they were actually on the Sabbath itself.

As we know, if First Fruits was not connected to a seventh-day Sabbath it could be on any day of the week. But, as Pentecost is connected to a seventh-day Sabbath (Leviticus 23:16) and day 49 of the count is never called a Sabbath, there must be a connection to a seventh-day Sabbath.

This shows that arguments over rules for First Fruits being on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> are pointless as the timing is determined by the seventh-day Sabbath not by a fixed calendar date.

This also brings up the interesting point that, with other feasts being on fixed calendar dates, there must have been a good reason for God wanting Pentecost to fall on a particular day of the week. It could easily be reasoned that He might have wanted it to be on a Sabbath, but that is not proof that He did.

### 1. "On the Second Day of the Feast"

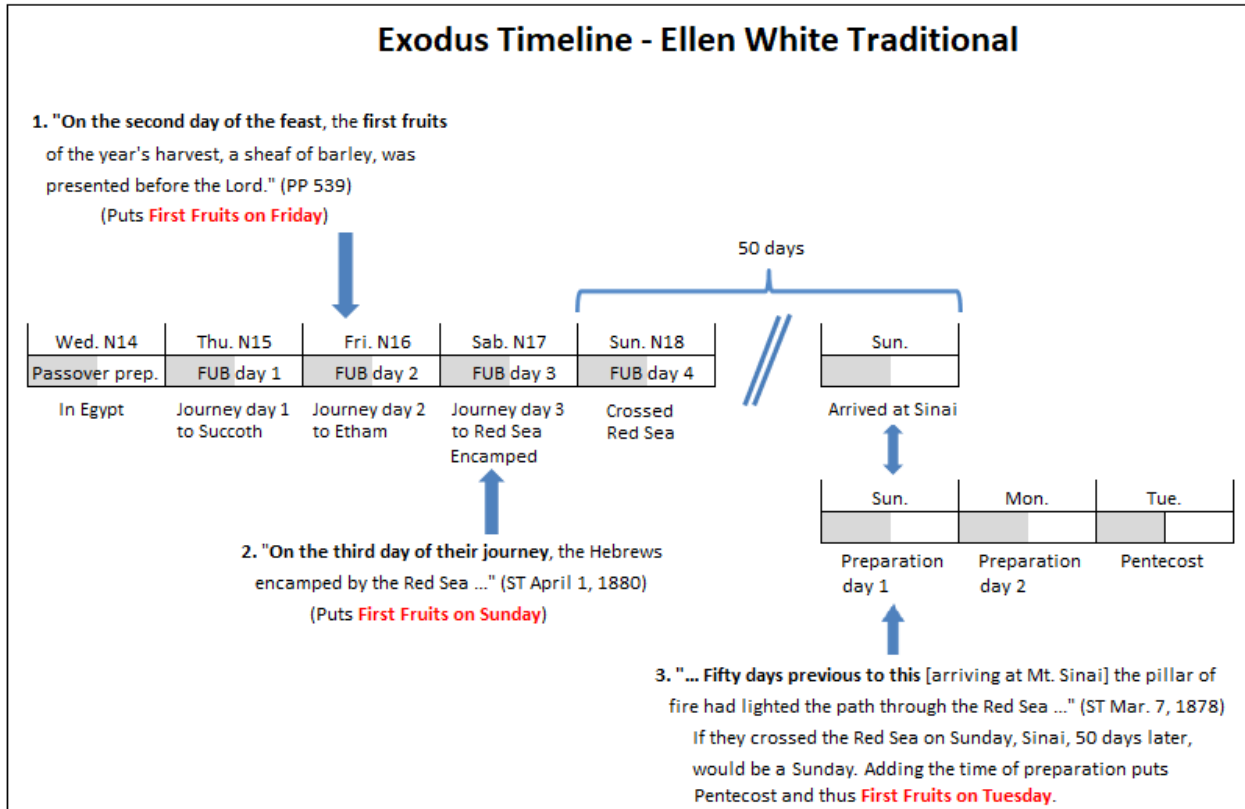
Next, let's consider three statements by Ellen White that, in various ways, present a challenge. The first is:

"The Passover was followed by the seven days' feast of unleavened bread. **On the second day of the feast, the first fruits of the year's harvest, a sheaf of barley, was presented** before the Lord. All the ceremonies of the feast were types of the work of Christ. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt

was an object lesson of redemption, which the Passover was intended to keep in memory. The slain lamb, the unleavened bread, **the sheaf of first fruits, represented the Saviour.**" (DA 77; a similar statement appears at PP 539)

This statement, given in the context of the Passover from Egypt, presents a problem because, with the Bible showing that, at the Exodus, Nisan 14 was on a Wednesday (see section "Nisan 14 at the Exodus was on a Wednesday" above), it puts First Fruits on a Friday (the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) which would also put **Pentecost on a Friday**. Even if Nisan 14 was on a Thursday at the Exodus, that statement would put First Fruits on a seventh-day Sabbath because Friday would be Nisan 15 and the first day of Unleavened Bread and the seventh-day Sabbath would be the second day of the feast. In the year of the Exodus, it would not be possible to have Nisan 14 on a Wednesday or Thursday and First Fruits (and Pentecost) on a Sunday.

See statement 1 in the following diagram and also refer to the diagram for the next two sections.



## 2. “On the Third Day of Their Journey”

**"On the third day of their journey, the Hebrews encamped by the Red Sea,** whose waters presented a seemingly impassable barrier before them, while on the south a rugged mountain obstructed their further progress. Suddenly **they beheld in the distance the flashing armor,** [must have been during daylight] waving banners, and moving chariots of a great army. As they drew nearer, the hosts of Egypt were seen in full pursuit. Terror filled the hearts of Israel. Over all the encampment rose a tumultuous sound."  
(ST April 1, 1880)

Here are related statements that help with the order of events:

- “But as the darkness of night deepened ...” (PP 287)
- “The light from God’s pillar ... lighted the road .. through the waters of the sea ...” (PP 287)
- “... in the morning watch [the morning watch is not the morning but the last watch of the night before sunrise] the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians ...” (PP 287)
- “As morning broke it revealed ... the mail-clad bodies cast upon the shore.” (PP 287-8)

This shows that, after arriving by the Red Sea during daylight, they crossed the Sea after dark which would be the next calendar day. The order of days indicated by Ellen White is:

Nisan 14 Wed.	Passover preparation	
Nisan 15 Thu.	Rameses to Succoth	day 1 of journey
Nisan 16 Fri.	Succoth to Etham	day 2 of journey
Nisan 17 Sab.	Etham to Pihahiroth	day 3 of journey
Nisan 18 Sun.	crossed the Red Sea	day 4 of journey

This statement puts the crossing of the Red Sea on a Sunday (see statement 2 in the diagram above). For those who believe that represents First Fruits, that would also put **Pentecost on a Sunday**. However, a serious problem with this statement arises when considered along with the next one – see the section below – “Fifty Days Previous” where that problem is discussed.

But first, there are other issues about this “third day of their journey” statement that I will bring up - without providing a solution.

### **The Distance Travelled**

On the first day of the Exodus the Israelites travelled from Rameses to Succoth (Exodus 12:37) a distance of about 25 km. The distance from Succoth to Pihahiroth that they travelled in two days (based on one night each at Succoth and Etham) is well over 200 kilometers even in a straight line.

### **The Eighth-day Theory**

I have seen one suggestion that they crossed the Red Sea on the eighth day from the Exodus. Perhaps that was based on the distance but I have seen no Bible or Spirit of Prophecy evidence for it. There is this interesting verse:

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.” (Exodus 19:4)

We can’t be sure what that verse means. Did God somehow hasten their progress?

### **Mt. Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula**

Ellen White may have understood Mt. Sinai to be in the Sinai Peninsula as everyone did in her day similarly to how she understood the number of planets to be as understood in her day. Just as further planets were then yet to be discovered, the true locations of the Red Sea crossing site and of Mt. Sinai (in Arabia) were not yet generally known.

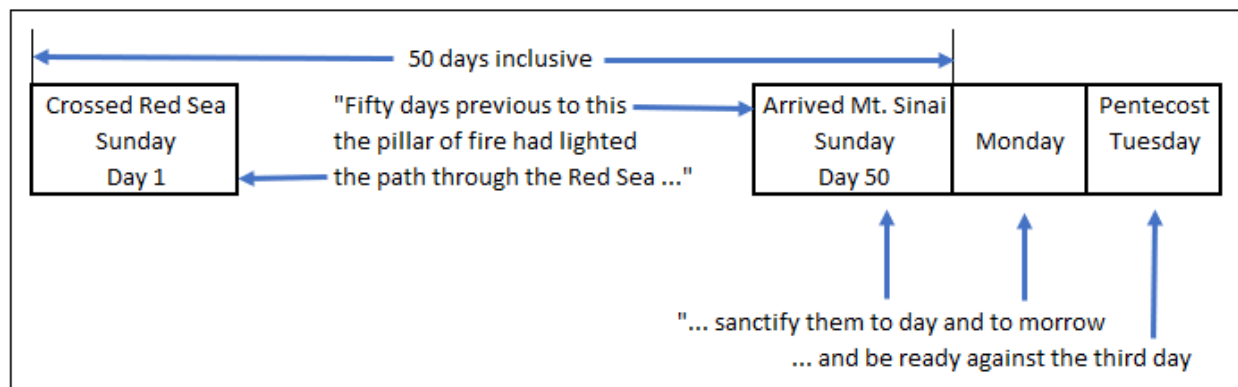
## **3. “Fifty Days Previous”**

"When the children of Israel left Rephidim they pursued their journey, winding up a narrow opening through the bold granite rocks of the desert mountains. They gradually ascended higher and higher, until there opened before them a wide extended plain, enclosed by granite ridges and mountain peaks towering toward the heavens. **Horeb's range stood before them** in somber majesty, its rocky crags towering aloft directed the eyes of

the travelers heavenward. Awful, silent grandeur reigned over all. What a contrast was **this scene** to the busy activity of Egypt! **Here** there was nothing to distract the mind, nothing to speak to the senses but the stern granite pinnacles pointing toward heaven. God had commanded Moses to bring his people to this place of natural solitude and sublimity, that they might hear his voice, and receive the statute book of heaven.

**Fifty days previous to this** [arriving at Sinai/Horeb] **the pillar of fire had lighted the path through the Red Sea** that God had miraculously opened before the marching multitudes of his people. They had since then [since crossing the Red Sea] made their way slowly onward through the desert ..." (ST Mar. 7, 1878)

Please refer to statement 2 in the diagram above. If crossing the Red Sea on a Sunday corresponded to First Fruits and thus marked the start of the count to Pentecost, then Pentecost would be 50 days (inclusive) later also on a Sunday. Yet Ellen White says they only **arrived** at Sinai 50 days after crossing the Red Sea and there were yet three days (inclusive) to Pentecost. Therefore, crossing the Red Sea cannot be the start of the 50-day count to Pentecost and cannot correspond to First Fruits as there were the additional days of preparation after arriving at Sinai and before Pentecost. See below:



If Israel both crossed the Red Sea and arrived at Mt. Sinai on Sundays, then Ellen White's statement 3 would put **Pentecost on a Tuesday**.

Clearly, there are discrepancies that need to be resolved. We will find that they can be and still uphold Ellen White's writings.

## Another Possible Scenario

The Bible speaks of Israel being baptized:

“And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;”  
(1 Corinthians 10:2)

However, as shown earlier (see the section “Fifty Days Previous”), that could not have been on the day of First Fruits. Also, the sheaf of first fruits was typical of Christ’s resurrection from the dead more than of His baptism which happened in the fall 3 ½ years before.

The meaning of being “baptized unto Moses” may just be a way of saying that they were showing their allegiance to Moses who led them Out of Egypt and through the Red Sea. The Bible mentions other baptisms connected to individuals:

“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye **baptized in the name of Paul?**” (1 Corinthians 1:13)

“This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only **the baptism of John.**” (Acts 18:25)

Those verses suggest baptism establishing a connection with Paul or John. (Those references above were not speaking of being “baptized into Jesus Christ” as in Romans 6:3.) It seems that baptism can have a more general meaning as in to be immersed in suffering:

“But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.” (Matthew 20:22)

So, that they were “baptized unto Moses” may not be typical of the resurrection of Christ.

There is, however, another resurrection event that can be connected with First Fruits and that event is the “resurrection” of Joseph when his bones were taken as Israel was leaving Egypt.

“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.” (Exodus 13:19)

There is an interesting connection between the “resurrection” of Joseph and the resurrection of Jesus:

“Jesus was resurrected from the tomb of Joseph of Ramah ("Arimathaea" in Greek). "Ramah ... means 'seat of idolatry' in Hebrew." (Joseph Good, *Rosh HaShanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come*. p24). This city is identified with the present location of Ramallah about nine miles north of Jerusalem. Just as Jesus' resurrection from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea assures us that we are going to the Promised Land, the removal of the bones of Joseph (who lived in Rameses in Egypt, the seat of idolatry) from his tomb, indicated to Pharaoh that Israel was headed to the Promised Land and not returning to Egypt. That may be why he pursued them

Moses' original request to Pharaoh was for Israel to go three days journey to hold a feast.

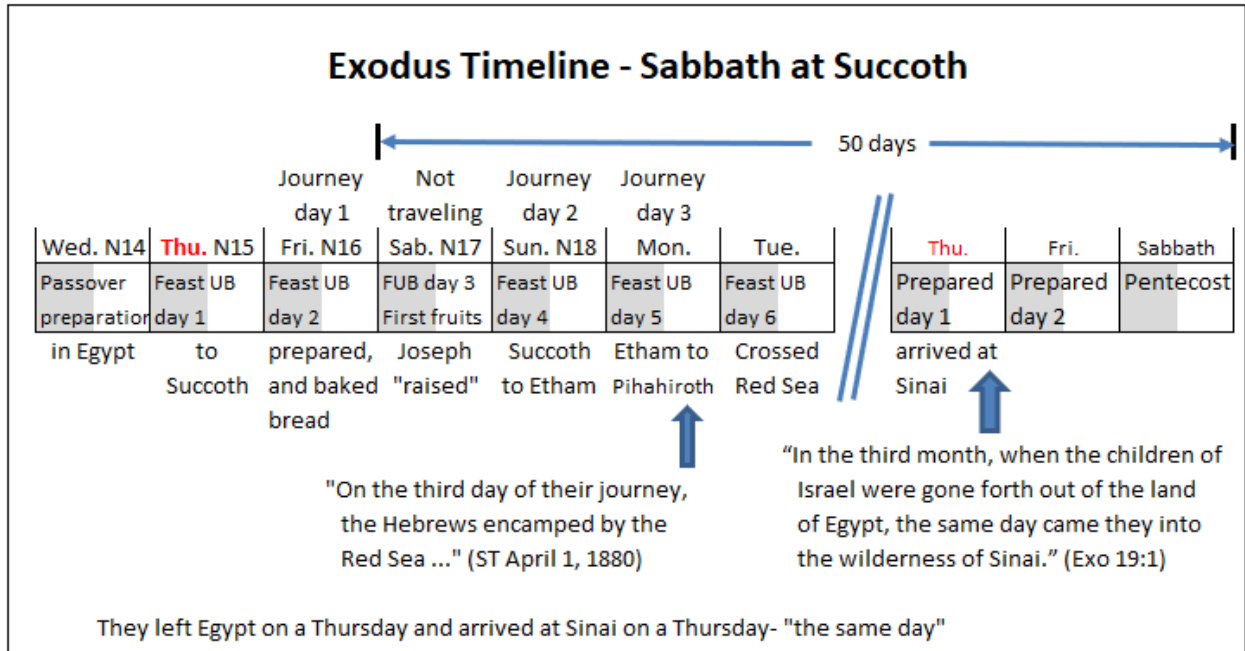
“And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, **that they may hold a feast** unto me in the wilderness. ... And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, **three days' journey** into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.” (Exodus 5:1,3)

Pharaoh understood the intent to be that they would have their feast and return.

“And he [Pharaoh] said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look *to it*; for evil *is* before you. Not so: **go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD**; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.” (Exodus 10:10-11)

“His real object was the keep the women and children as surety for the return of the men.” (PP 271).

In light of the above, here is a proposed alternate timeline for the Exodus:



It seems likely that they had instructions ahead of the Passover to travel from the various regions of Rameses (Goshen) to Succoth. They would have arrived at different times depending on their distance from Succoth. Remember, this is a very large number of people – their homes would have been spread over a big area. They would have all met at Succoth where Moses organized them for the rest of the journey together so that when they left Succoth:

“... the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.” (Exodus 13:8, NKJV)

Features of this alternative scenario:

- There was time for baking the unleavened cakes (Exodus 12:39) on the day of preparation before the Sabbath. Also, they would have been organized into those “orderly ranks” by Moses who had military training.



- The Israelites were able to observe the Sabbath by resting from their traveling in their very-temporary dwellings at Succoth.
- Israel observed a feast (first fruits) - the stated reason for leaving Egypt in the first place.
- Joseph (a type of Christ) was "raised" at the start of the Sabbath as the First Fruits.
- The timing of Joseph's "resurrection" relative to First Fruits matches that of Christ's resurrection.
- On the third day of their journeying, they arrived at the Red Sea as in Ellen White's statement 3.

When the Israelites left Succoth heading east instead of returning to Egypt, the border guards would have sent word to Pharaoh that they were not returning and he then decided to prepare his army to go after them.

This scenario matches much better in a number of ways. Since the original request was to let Israel go to hold a feast, we should expect them to do that. If holding a feast (or observing a sabbath) they were not likely to be spending the day traveling.

In the traditional scenario, there is little time for baking bread (which would take hours), they were traveling on Sabbath and again the next day instead of having their feast.

In the scenario proposed here, the First Fruits at the Exodus was connected with the "resurrection" of Joseph who was a type of Christ rather than with the baptism of Israel. And Joseph's resurrection was typical of and matched in time (early on the day of First Fruits – see the book ***In the Heart of the Earth***) the resurrection of Christ.

## Two Classes of Ellen White Statements

The three statements by Ellen White discussed above give evidence for Pentecost on three different days of the week. It is apparent that there are two classes of statements by Ellen White related to Resurrection, First Fruits and Pentecost timing.

1. Statements not meant to be chronological in nature and which reflect the common understanding of the timing of events as in the three statements given above. They are not always exactly correct chronologically **nor were they meant to be.**

2. Statements which are somewhat contrary to the common understanding and do not correspond to Bible verses. These were therefore likely given to her by special revelation because **they were meant to reveal something about the timing.**

Let's consider each of the statements presented above and see if they could reasonably fit into the first category.

### **1. On the Second Day of the Feast**

It should be kept in mind that the PP 539 statement above is from a general description of the feasts in a chapter titled "The Annual Feasts." We know from other evidence that the first fruits could not have been on the second day of the feast in every year (it would be on the second day only 1 year in 7). Therefore, it must be understood that Ellen White was not laying out the exact chronology in that chapter of Patriarchs and Prophets. She was giving a general description of the annual feasts and perhaps had the common understanding of the timing of crucifixion week in mind.

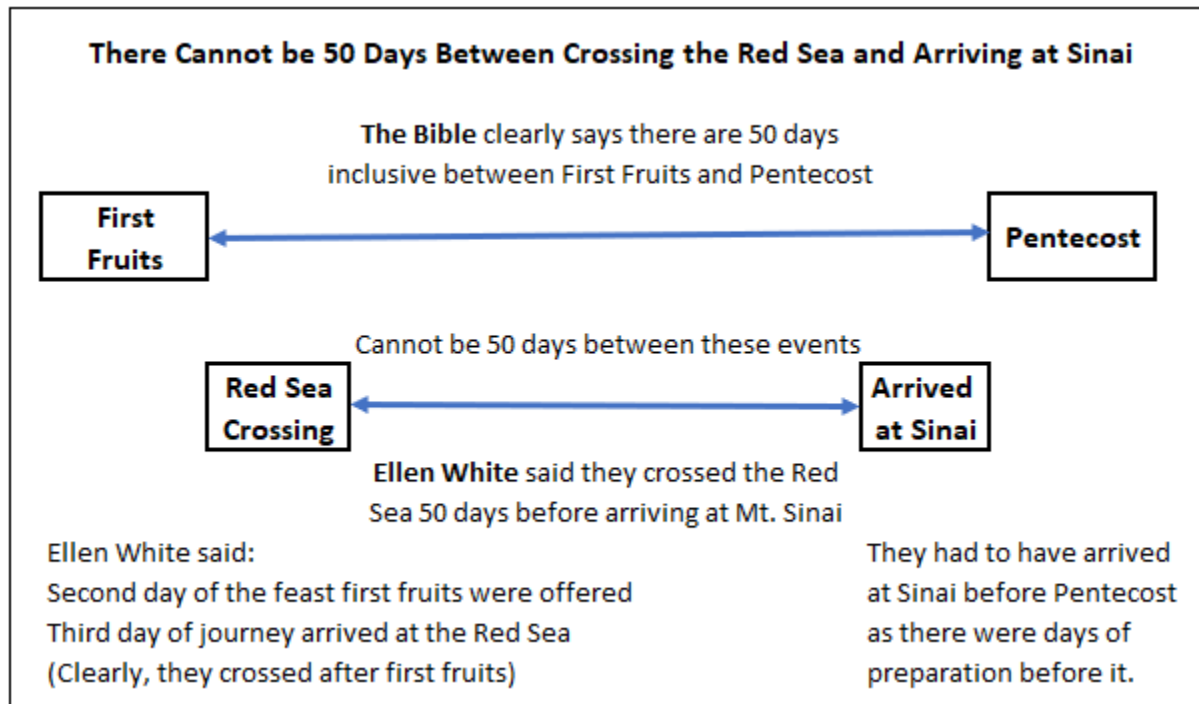
### **2. On the Third Day of Their Journey**

Ellen White could have looked at the Bible list of the encampments of the Exodus and reasonably have thought: "day 1 Rameses to Succoth, day 2 Succoth to Etham and day 3 Etham to Pihahiroth" and thus have written "On the third day of their journey, the Hebrews encamped by the Red Sea." Yet the Bible may not list all the encampments nor does it explicitly say how many nights they spent in every case. Actually, in the diagram above, they would have encamped by the Red Sea on the third day of their journeying even if it was more days than that from the day they left Egypt.

### **3. Fifty Days Previous**

There could not have been 50 days from crossing the Red Sea to arriving at Sinai **and** 50 days from the day of First Fruits to Pentecost as there were days of preparation between arriving at Sinai and the day of Pentecost. If crossing the

Red Sea was fifty days previous to arriving at Mt. Sinai, that would put the crossing two days before the day of First Fruits which, according to Ellen White's statement number one considered here, would be on Nisan 14 even before they left Egypt. Ellen White's statement number 3 could have been meant simply as a general statement like we might say "a month ago I did ..." But it then could not be used to determine the exact timing of events.



The three statements considered above can each be reasonably understood to not have been meant to establish an exact chronology of events. In fact, if they were so regarded, there would be contradictions impossible to resolve.

## Special Revelations

While the statements above can be understood to be general statements not meant to establish chronology, is it possible that there are other statements that actually were meant specifically to establish chronology?

Ellen White made statements involving timing of events that reflect the common understanding of her day – she did not need Divine revelation to write those. However, if she made statements that were not according to specific Bible verses

or the common understanding, they must have been by Divine revelation. We will look at some examples but first a Bible verse.

## The Same Day Arrived at Sinai

“In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, **the same day** came they into the wilderness of Sinai.”  
(Exodus 19:1)

“The same day” as what? They went forth from the land of Egypt on Nisan 15 and that event is referenced in the verse.

When they came into the wilderness of Sinai:

- It was not **the same calendar date** a year later.
- It was not **the same day of the month** as further evidence will indicate that the events at Mt. Sinai started about 50 days from Passover not exactly 2 months later - it was not the 15<sup>th</sup> day two months later.
- It was not **the first day of the third month** as some commentaries suggest as that would put the first day of the 50-day count to Pentecost even before they left Egypt.
- So "the same day" can only mean **the same day of the week** which would be on a Thursday.

They left Egypt on a Thursday, so they arrived at Sinai on a Thursday. The chart in the following section will help make that clear.

The Bible does not say Pentecost (the giving of the law at Sinai) was on a Sunday. For that matter, neither does it say that the post-resurrection, apostolic day of Pentecost was on a Sunday. That was the common understanding in Ellen White’s day.

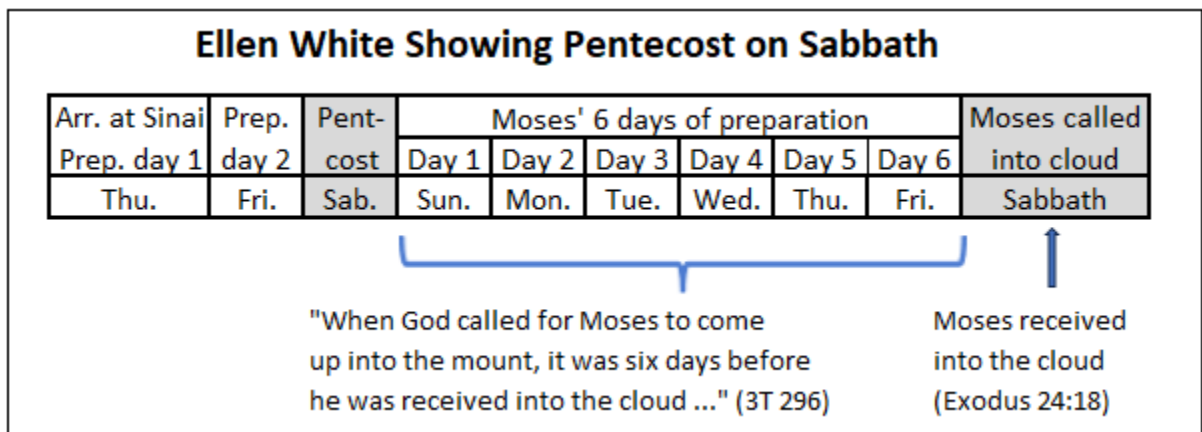
Next, let’s consider some Ellen White statements that must be from Divine revelation as they indicate timing contrary to popular understanding.

## Ellen White Pentecost on Sabbath

This statement from Patriarchs and Prophets gives further evidence of a Sabbath Pentecost and resurrection:

"And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai." For **six days** the cloud covered the mountain .... **Six days** must be employed in devoting himself to God by searching of heart, meditation, and prayer before he could be prepared for direct communication with his Maker.

**Upon the seventh day, which was the Sabbath,** Moses was called up into the cloud." (Patriarchs and Prophets, p313, referring to Exodus 24:15-16) Also, see 3T p296, shown in the diagram below.



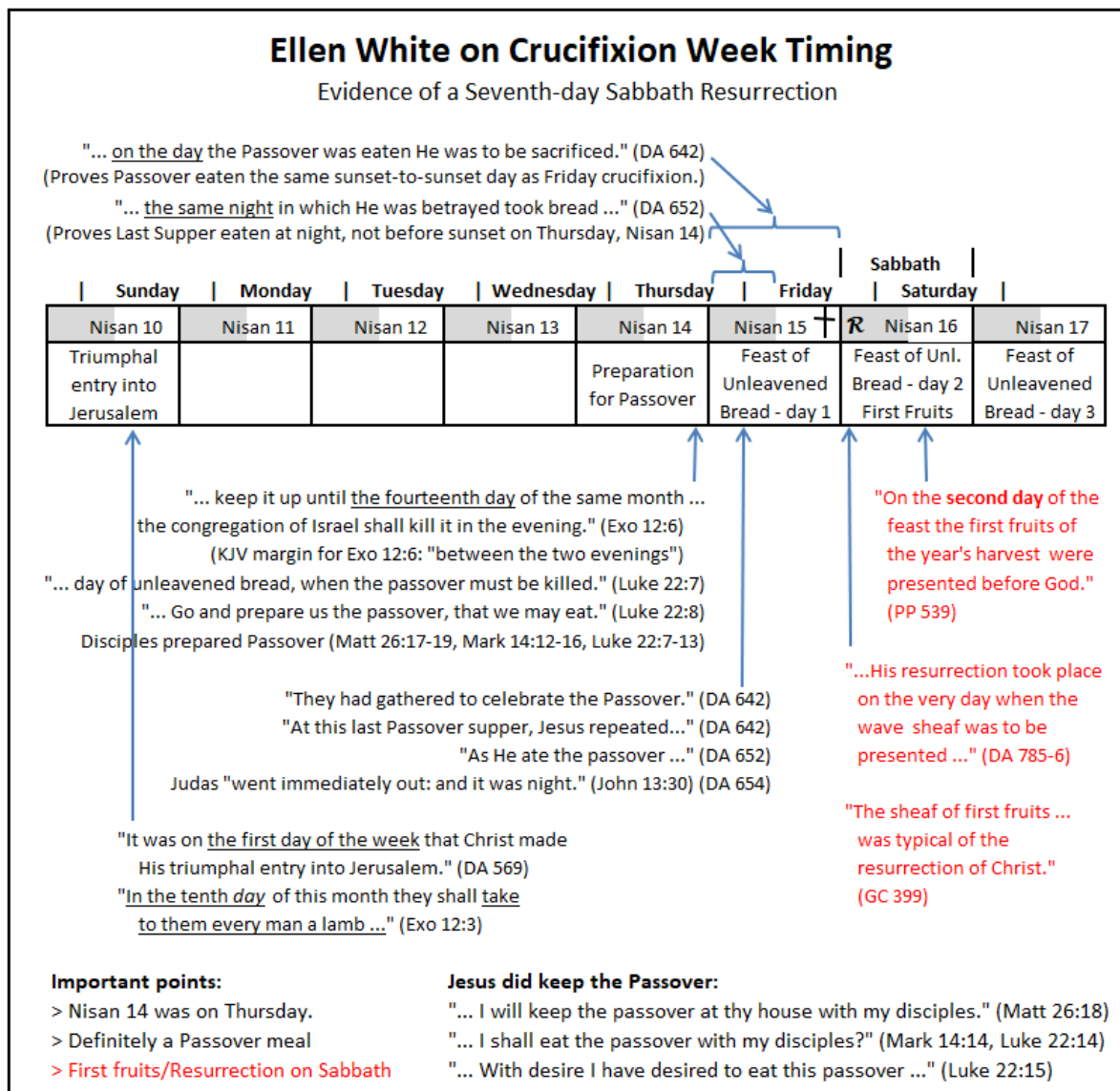
We are not missing any days in the diagram. With the day Moses was called into the cloud fixed on a Sabbath by Ellen White, if there was another day either side of the six days of Moses' preparation that is not mentioned, Pentecost would have been on a Friday and further from Sunday.

This evidence from Ellen White shows that Moses was called into the cloud on a seventh-day Sabbath, that Pentecost was on the previous Sabbath and therefore First Fruits and the resurrection it was typical of were on a seventh-day Sabbath. Type met antitype. It also gives evidence that the day they arrived at Mt. Sinai was a Thursday as that would be the first day of preparation with Friday being the second day of preparation. Note that a Sunday Pentecost would have the day before, which was a seventh-day Sabbath, as a day of preparation.

Since the Patriarchs and Prophets p313 statement is contrary to the traditional understanding, it is reasonable that she must have been given a special revelation to help us understand the correct timing.

## Ellen White Resurrection on Sabbath

Here is a diagram putting together Ellen White statements related to crucifixion week timing with Bible verses to show the possibility of a Sabbath resurrection. You may need to magnify the image below. It also appears on my site at <https://characterofgod.org/egw/>



This shows Ellen White quotes consistent with Nisan 14 in crucifixion week on a Thursday, a Sabbath resurrection and therefore a Sabbath First Fruits and Pentecost. In the case of crucifixion week, “the second day of the feast” actually was a seventh-day Sabbath in that year.

(We should note the procedure for the First Fruits (Wave Sheaf) offering. In the afternoon before the day of first fruits, standing grain was tied into a sheaf while still in the ground (Jesus put on the cross). As soon as the sun had set it was harvested (Jesus resurrected). The next morning, it was presented (waved) in the temple (Jesus appeared before His Father Sabbath morning). This is explained and documented more fully in the book *In the Heart of the Earth*.)

## Other Pioneer Statements

It is interesting that, as far as I can see, Ellen White made no comments on or objections to timing issues brought forward by A.T. Jones or Uriah Smith. It seems that the timing questions were not sorted out during Ellen White’s lifetime. In any event, she would have preferred they be worked out primarily by Bible study and that study simply wasn’t done in sufficient detail in her day.

**Uriah Smith** said that the heart of the earth does not mean the grave.

“... Where is the proof that ‘heart of the earth’ means ‘grave’? We have, time and again, called for proof on this point, but have never yet succeeded in securing any response. We have carefully searched through a dozen arguments on that side of the question, and not the first attempt do we find to prove that ‘heart of the earth’ means the ‘grave.’ The quiet assurance with which all these writers take this point for granted, the imperturbable indifference and obliviousness with which they pass it by, is astonishing. What can be said to awaken in their minds the idea that here is a point that must be proved, before their theory will stand?

The expression ‘the heart of the earth,’ has **no more reference to the grave, than it has to the moon.**” (Uriah Smith; Day of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, p8)

Good point, Uriah! I have shown that the Bible never uses the Greek word “kardia” to refer to either the physical organ that pumps blood or the middle or center of anything. In Matthew 13, after His reference to “the heart of the earth,” (Matthew 12:40), Jesus related parables where the meaning of “kardia” is clearly referring to the mind or will of man - see verses 15 and 19.

**A. T. Jones** said that Pentecost was on a Sabbath.

“Therefore, as the day of the crucifixion was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, and was Friday, the fifteenth day of the month; and as the next day, the sixteenth of the month, was the Sabbath according to the commandment, and was the first of the fifty days; any one who will count the fifty days will find for himself that ‘the fiftieth day,’ **Pentecost, fell that year on ‘the Sabbath day** according to the commandment,’ and that is the seventh day.” (A. T. Jones, Signs of the Times article The Abiding Sabbath, Mar. 11, 1886)

Jones was correct in saying that Pentecost was on a seventh-day Sabbath although he arrives at his conclusion in the wrong way. Earlier in his article he said:

“The word Pentecost signifies ‘the fiftieth day,’ and was always counted, beginning with the sixteenth day of the first month.”

If Pentecost was **always** 50 days from the sixteenth of the month it would arrive on any day of the week and be disconnected from the Sabbath. It seems that neither Jones nor anyone in his era had considered how the evidence from Numbers 33:3 indicates that the morrow after the sabbath of Leviticus 23:11 etc means the morning of the Sabbath not the following day. (Following section).

**S.N. Haskell**, in his book *The Cross and Its Shadow* (page 108), said passover was eaten on the fourteenth when the Bible shows it was to be eaten on the fifteenth. On page 115, he outlines two positions that Bible students have held (both have errors). It shows that even at the time of his writing (in 1914) there were differences among believers. It was certainly not sorted out during Ellen White’s lifetime.



## "Morrow After" = Morrow Of

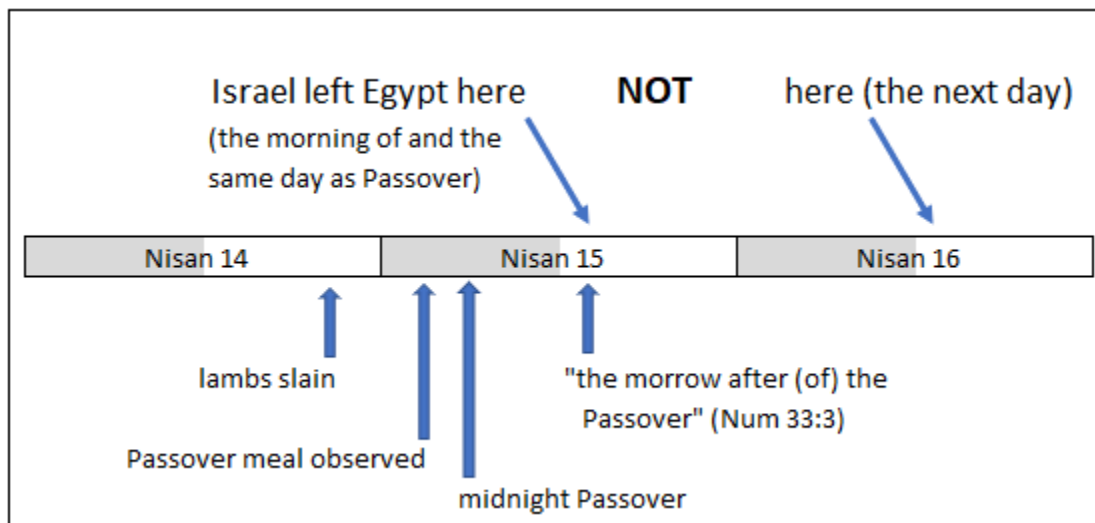
There is the important question of the timing of First Fruits (also referred to as the Wave Sheaf) in relation to the Sabbath as given in Leviticus 23:

“And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.” (Leviticus 23:11)

That is commonly understood to be a reference to Sunday. However, consider this verse:

“And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on **the morrow after the passover** the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.” (Numbers 33:3)

That verse has the same construction as those saying "the morrow after the sabbath" (Leviticus 23:11, 15) or "the morrow after the seventh sabbath" (Leviticus 23:16). It is apparent that this is the situation in Numbers 33:3:



Without question, "the morrow after the Passover" was the same calendar day as the Passover or, we could say, Passover morning. They did not wait around with sandals on feet and staff in hand for over 24 hours after the Passover before leaving Egypt.

Exodus 12:41-51 points to the Passover observance being on the same day they left Egypt rather than the emphasis being on the preparation for the passover on Nisan 14.

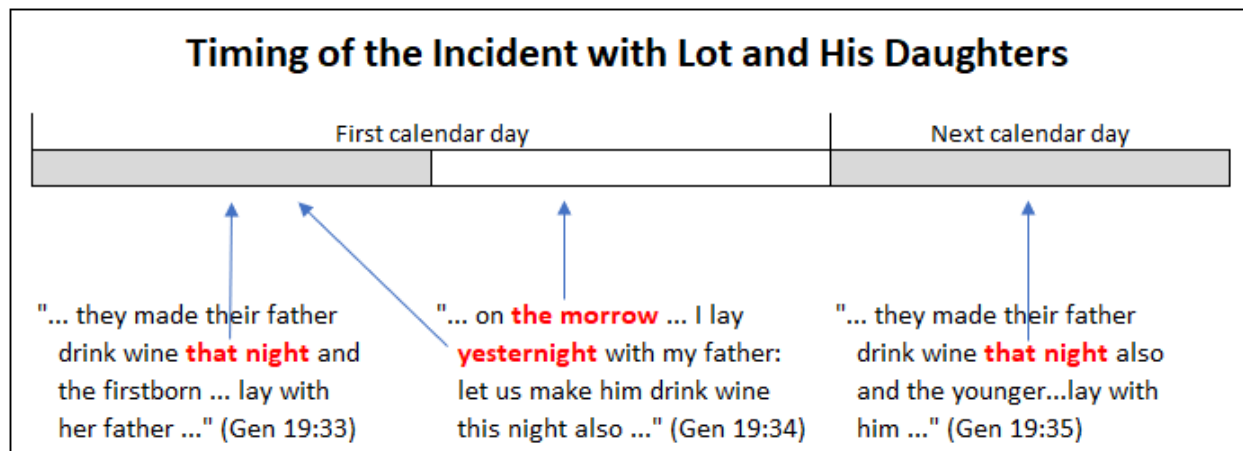
This is strong evidence that "the morrow after the sabbath" in Leviticus 23:11 and 15 and "the morrow after the seventh sabbath" in Leviticus 23:16 is a reference to Sabbath morning, not the next day.

### Lot's Daughters

Another example of the Biblical meaning of "morrow" (Hebrew "mochorath") is its use in the story of Lot's daughters:

"And it came to pass **on the morrow**, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father." (Genesis 19:34)

"On the morrow" is obviously referring to the next morning but is still the same calendar day as the "yesternight" that was referred to. That term was used by the firstborn in the morning to refer to the previous night.



Clearly, "the morrow" was not the next calendar day after the first born lay with her father. It was the following morning which would be the same calendar day. "Morrow" (Hebrew "mochorath") essentially refers to the next period of wakefulness, not the next calendar day.

## The Lamb Examined and Rejected

### The Examination

Passover lambs were to be selected on Nisan 10 and examined carefully for any defects until, if found acceptable, they were sacrificed on the fourteenth. Jesus entered Jerusalem on the tenth as the true Lamb of God. He was examined or tested by various groups.

For the Jewish leaders, the questioning and examination came to a climax on the Tuesday of Passion week. As Jesus was in the temple (Matthew 21:23), **the Pharisees** questioned Him regarding paying tribute to Caesar (Matthew 22:15-22). Then **the Sadducees** questioned Him regarding the resurrection (Matthew 22:23-33). Next the Pharisees tried again, sending **a lawyer** to examine Him regarding the law (Matthew 22:34-45). We don't know what other questions might have been asked but those significant ones are recorded. Certainly, there would have been many questions in people's minds.

Finally, the questioning ended (at least the outward questioning by Jewish authorities):

“And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.” (Matthew 22:46)

This must be referring to questions to evaluate Jesus' character and theology as He was later asked many questions during the trials including Pilate's question: “... what is truth? ...” (John 18:38).

## The Decision Recognized

Recognizing that their decision was made, Jesus spoke all the woes on them recorded in Matthew 23. Then He said:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and **ye would not!** Behold, **your house is left unto you desolate.**” (Matthew 23:37-38)

This was determined not by God’s decision but by theirs. Because of their rejection of Him, he left the temple (Matthew 24:1). From the temple, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives (on His way to Bethany) where He shared Matthew 24 and 25 with His disciples. Then He said:

“Ye know that **after two days is *the feast of the passover***, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.” (Matthew 26:2)

This was spoken on Tuesday. Two days later would be Thursday, Nisan 14, the start of Passover/Unleavened Bread. Mark says the same but combines passover and unleavened bread showing that the reference was to the whole period of Nisan 14 and Nisan 15-21.

“**After two days was *the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread***: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.” (Mark 14:1)

He is also saying that they were plotting Jesus’ death. Matthew says the same while indicating this was happening at the highest level of Judaism:

“Then assembled together **the chief priests**, and **the scribes**, and **the elders of the people**, unto the palace of **the high priest**, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.” (Matthew 26:3-4)

Having made their decision, following events revealed what was in the hearts of the Jewish leaders. It is important to note that the rejection of Christ happened on Tuesday evening well before He was taken prisoner on Thursday night.

### **The Heart vs the Hands**

The start of this time period can be further established by making a distinction between Jesus being “in the heart of the earth” and “in the hands” of His enemies. Jesus was “in the **heart** of the earth” **not** “in the **hands** of the earth” for the three days and three nights. It was only on Thursday night that He was betrayed into the **hands** of sinners:

“Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed **into the hands of sinners.**” (Matthew 26:45)

Before that point, Jesus was in the **heart** of sinners but not physically in their hands. Our primary concern is with the meaning of being “**in the heart of the earth**” not “**in the hands of the earth.**” Hands and heart are not the same. However, what is done in (or by) the hand manifests what is in the heart.

Once Jesus had died, He was freed from the suffering brought on by His persecutors. And their thoughts about Him as far as calculating how to be rid of Him would have ended – they had achieved their goal (or so they thought).

- **In the heart** = the mind hating and rejecting Him and plotting how to carry out their evil designs
- **In the hands** = the physical capture and subsequent treatment

In his **Bible Handbook** Stephen Haskell writes:

“Christ said He would be “*rejected* of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be *killed*, and *after three days* rise again.” Sometime *before* the angry mob came to arrest Him, He had been “rejected,” otherwise they would never have gathered to take Him. “After three days” had passed from the time of His *rejection*, He rose again. Christ was arrested Thursday

evening; the trial lasted all night.” (Stephen Haskell, Bible Handbook, p96, emphasis in original)

Of course, the rejection had to come before the physical arrest by the mob. It also had to come before the agreement made with Judas. Remember, they were gathered while Jesus was at Simon’s feast from which Judas left to meet with them.

Haskell makes an important point but does not follow up on it. There must have been a period of time between His rejection and when He was taken. The order of events during the three days and three nights from the perspective of Jesus’ enemies would have been:

- rejection
- plotting
- arrangement with Judas
- waiting for Judas to reveal opportunity
- arrest
- trials
- murder

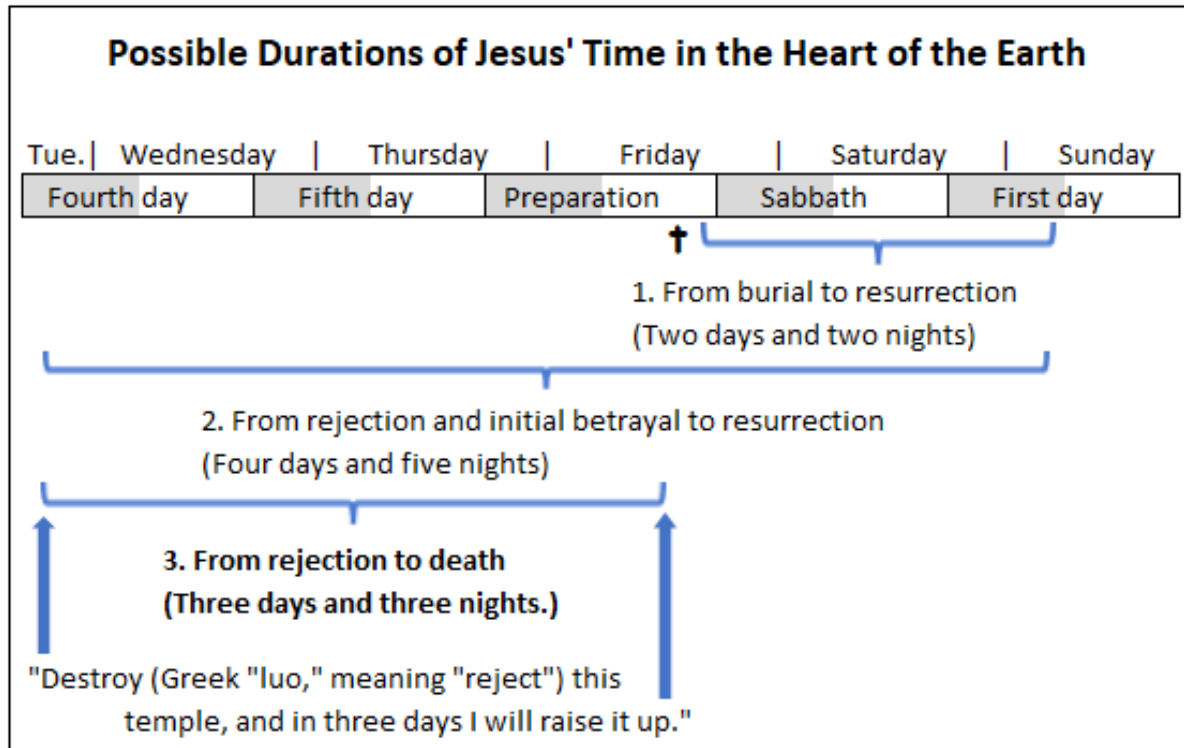
Jesus spoke of their rejection of Him:

“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders **rejected**, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?” (Matthew 21:42)

“Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be **rejected** of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.” (Luke 9:22)

## Start and End of Three Days and Three Nights

Following their rejection would be the start of Jesus’ time in the heart of the earth. Here are some possibilities for the duration of that time:



1. **Death to resurrection.** This is the standard understanding but results in only two days and two nights.
2. **Rejection to resurrection.** As the rejection/initial betrayal (the money was even paid) was clearly well before Thursday night, this scenario actually extends to four days and five nights.
3. **Rejection to death.** This period of three days and three nights corresponds to the time from when the Jewish leaders had it in their minds (hearts) to finally kill Him until the deed (the crucifixion) was done.

It could be said that He was in the **hands** of His enemies (while He was being treated according to what was in their hearts) for only one day and one night (from His physical capture until His death.) Once He was dead and buried, they could no longer, by their hands, manifest their hatred of Him.

However, it was in their hearts (having made their final decision to crucify Him) from their council on Tuesday evening and arrangement with Judas until His death.

## Destroy This Temple

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body." (John 2:19-21)

"Destroy" is from the Greek "luo" (G3089). It is never used as in "to kill." It is closer in meaning to "to loose" (and let go), "to dismiss," "to cast off." Ultimately, it could mean "**to reject.**"

That is actually the word used in the parable of the householder:

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders **rejected**, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?" (Matthew 21:42)

That was Jesus applying the parable to the Jewish leaders as a kind of last-minute plea to them to not reject Him. It was spoken earlier in the day before the feast at Simon's house.

The following verses record words (said in misunderstanding) by Jesus' enemies that were in reference to what He said. His enemies misunderstood Him to be speaking of the earthly temple building:

"And said, This fellow said, I am able to **destroy** the temple of God, and to build it in three days. (Matthew 26:61, also Mark 14:58)

"And saying, Thou that **destroyest** the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. (Matthew 27:40, also Mark 15:29)

The temple, of course, is not killed. This verse is interesting:

"Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou **loosed** (G3089) from a wife? seek not a wife." (1 Corinthians 7:27)



To be "loosed from a wife" is to be, in some way, separated from her. Jesus was loosed from his hoped-for spiritual bride, the nation of Israel, because of her rejection of Him

This verse is ironic:

"And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."  
(Matthew 27:40)

Ironic because, while they had rejected Him three days earlier, at that very moment, He was raised up just as He had said:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, **Destroy** this temple, and **in three days I will raise it up.**" (John 2:19)

"Raise" (Greek "egeiro"; G1453) is in the active voice in that verse indicating that Jesus would raise up "this temple." However, that verse cannot be referring to His resurrection because, being dead, He could not have raised Himself from the dead ("... the dead know not any thing..." Ecclesiastes 9:5). His Father raised Him:

"**Whom God hath raised** (G450) **up**, having loosed (G3089) the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." (Acts 2:24)

The word translated as "raised" (G450) in that verse is in the active voice - God raised Him from the dead as shown by many verses.

Jesus raised Himself, not from the dead, but in the sense that He had revealed His own (and His Father's) totally other-centered character.

"And I, **if I be lifted up** from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me." (John 12:32)

The crucifixion that Jesus submitted to would, through succeeding centuries, have a drawing effect on people. However, many of those present that day resisted the drawing power and persisted in their rejection.

Notice that "raise" (John 2:19) and "raised" (Acts 2:24) are completely different words. In Acts 2:24 "raised" is referring to being raised from the dead and in John 2:19 "raise" is referring to Jesus raising Himself up in the sense of (at least in the minds of some) reversing the rejection (the "luo").

## **Events from Betrayal to Resurrection on the Third Day**

There are a number of verses that seem to or are commonly understood to mean that Jesus would be raised on the third day following His death. But is that what they are saying? We need to read carefully. The point I have made is that we need to ask "the third day from when?" What is the starting point for the series of days? If we just assume it is the time/day of Jesus' death without checking that out in scripture, we are making an assumption.

This study will show, from scripture, that the starting point of the three-day period (or the time up to the third day) began before Jesus' death.

### **Start at the Starting Point**

I could say "I will be leaving on Wednesday to go to the city for a shopping trip and stay overnight. Then I will travel to visit family for a day, stay overnight and, after having my car serviced, return home on the third day." In that case, the third day is the third day (inclusive) from the starting point of the sequence of events, not from when I had my car serviced.

Below is a table showing the sequence of events during the three days. The sequence or a portion of it is mentioned in many places with varying numbers of the events included. Some of the verses give only parts of the sequence along with the third day but don't even mention His death. The first item in the complete list of events is the initial betrayal by Judas and the decision by the Jewish authorities to kill Jesus.

Events from Betrayal to Resurrection							Speaker		
			suffer many things			killed	raised again the third day	Matt 16:21*	Matthew's narrative
betrayed						killed	the third day he shall be raised again	Matt 17:22-23	Jesus
betrayed	condemned	delivered to Gentiles	mock	scourge		crucify	the third day he shall rise again	Matt 20:18-19	Jesus
betrayed						to be crucified		Matt 26:2	Jesus/Matt. narrative
							after three days, until the third day	Matt 27:63-64*	Enemies of Jesus
rejected			suffer many things			killed	after three days rise again	Mark 8:31*	Mark's narrative
		delivered				killed	he shall rise the third day	Mark 9:31	Jesus
delivered	condemned	delivered to Gentiles	mocked	scourged	spit upon	killed	the third day he shall rise again	Mark 10:33-34*	Jesus
rejected			suffer many things			slain	be raised the third day	Luke 9:22	Jesus
		delivered to Gentiles	mocked	scourged	spit upon	put to death	the third day he shall rise again	Luke 18:32-33	Jesus
delivered						crucified	the third day rise again	Luke 24:7	Angels to women
		delivered to be condemned				crucified	today is the third day since these things were done	Luke 24:20-21*	Disciples on road to Emmaus
			suffer				to rise from the dead the third day	Luke 24:46*	Jesus
destroy (Gk: luo)							in three days I will raise it up	John 2:19*	Jesus
						slew	Him God raised up the third day	Acts 10:39-40	Peter to Cornelius

Words in red are from Strong's G3860, "paradidomi"

\*See text for additional notes

The complete sequence of events is:

- rejected/betrayed
- delivered to the chief priests
- condemned by the chief priests
- delivered to the Gentiles/Romans
- condemned by the Romans
- mocked/scourged/spat upon
- crucified/killed
- buried
- raised

## Notes on Selected Passages

**Matthew 16:21** doesn't mention the betrayal but that doesn't mean He was not betrayed.

**Matthew 27:63** is merely a statement by His enemies.

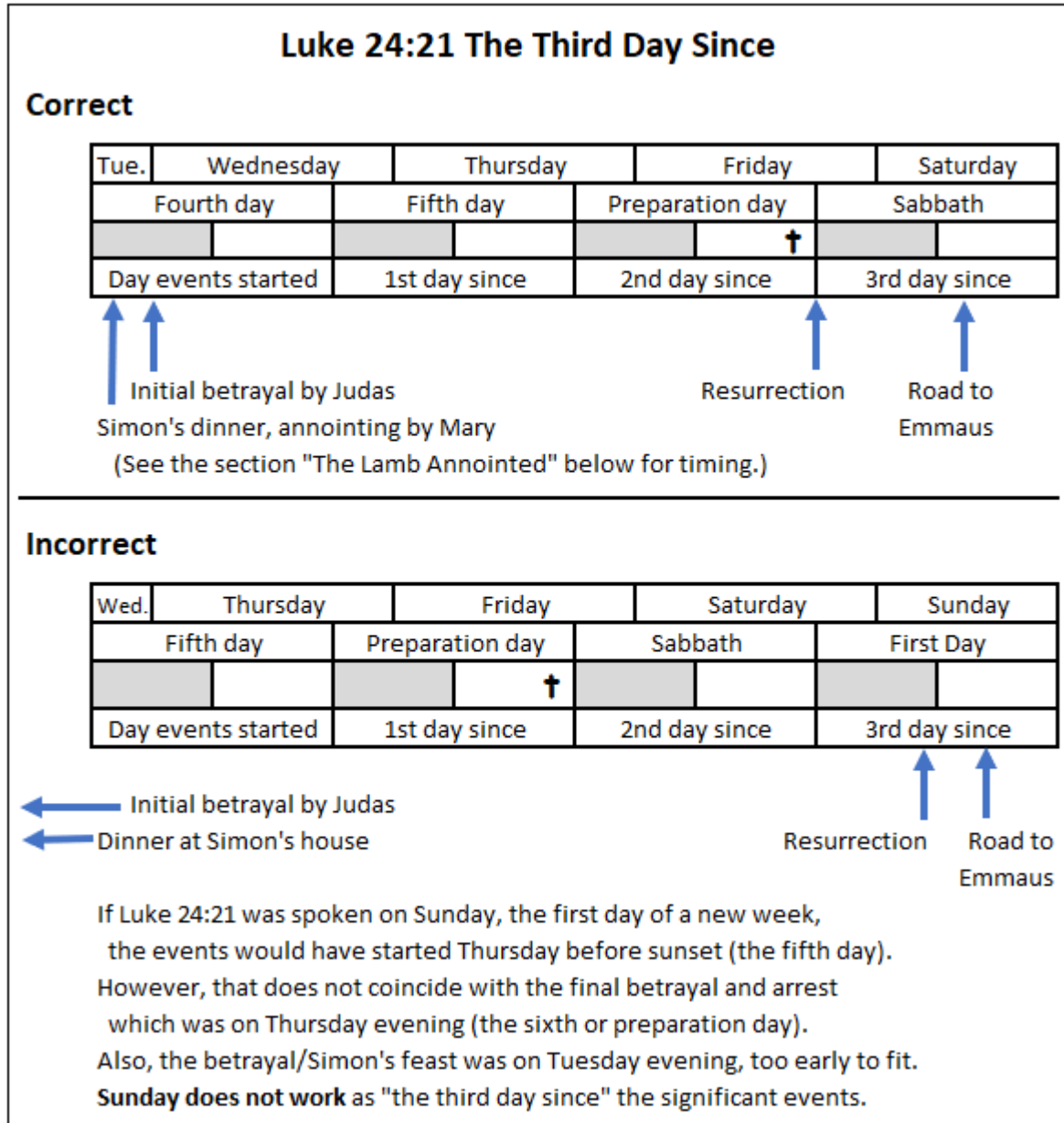
**Mark 8:31** is the only passage in the KJV that says "after three days" (excepting Matt 27:63-64 spoken by Jesus' enemies) However, other versions read "on the third day," "in three days," "three days later." One even says "after two days." The same conversation was reported by Matthew, in the KJV, as "be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21).

This verse says He will be rejected of the elders etc. That rejection would have happened before they caused Him to suffer. In the table, it appears in the same column as "betrayed" as the rejection and Judas' initial betrayal were about the same time.

**Mark 10:33-34** is the most complete list of the events.

**Luke 24:20-21** The condemnation, in this case, was by the Romans. "Today is the third day since" needs to be correctly understood.

Friday sunset to Sabbath sunset would be the third day **since** (Greek "ginomai" G1096) these things were done (or began) and the day on which the statement in Luke 24:21 was made:



Use of "ginomai" (Strong's G1096):

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was **done** (G1096), that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord ..." (Matthew 1:21-22)

The "all this" includes bringing forth her son and even the events listed before verse 21. "Ginomai" is often used in the sense of "to begin to happen" as in:

“And it came to pass (G1096), while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.” (Luke 24:51)

Remember, the conversation on the road to Emmaus was on the “same day” (Luke 24:13) as the resurrection.

**Luke 24:46** His death and crucifixion are not even mentioned. It is just that He will suffer. When did He start to suffer? Surely, He suffered from the rejection of His people.

**John 2:19-21** mentions the three days but does not include a reference to His death.

## Jesus was Delivered in Three Stages

All occurrences of “betrayed” or “delivered” in the table above are from the same Greek word “paradidomi” (G3860). It is interesting that the same term is used of God delivering His Son which, of course, was not a betrayal. Here are the three stages of Jesus being delivered:

### 1. By God to the will of man

"Who was **delivered** (G3860) for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Romans 4:25)

"He that spared not his own Son, but **delivered** (G3860) him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

Both those verses indicate that the purpose of God’s deliverance of His Son was for our good, not for harm to Jesus. The parable of the householder (Luke 20:9-16) shows this and the result.

### 2. By Judas to the chief priests:

"Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be **delivered** (G3860) unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they

shall condemn him to death death, and shall deliver (G3860) him to the Gentiles:" (Mark 10:33)

3. By the chief priests to the Romans:

"... they (the chief priests and the scribes) shall **deliver** (G3860) him to the Gentiles ..." (Mark 10:33)

All verses above about Jesus being delivered use the same original word. It means "to give into the hands of another" and may or may not include a malevolent betrayal. In the first instance, He was delivered by his Father to mankind as a whole.

## Avoiding Premature Capture

On various occasions angels had guarded Jesus from death or capture:

"More than once they took up stones to cast at Him, but **angels guarded Him** and bore Him away from the angry multitude to a place of safety. Again, as the plain truth dropped from His holy lips, the multitude laid hold of Him and led Him to the brow of a hill, intending to cast Him down. A contention arose among themselves as to what they should do with Him, when **the angels again hid Him** from the sight of the multitude, and He, passing through the midst of them, went His way." (EW 159)

But once His Father delivered Him to the will of man, He was no longer under the protection of heavenly angels. It seems that Jesus took evasive action Himself to avoid a premature capture by giving Peter and John (Luke 22:8) a sign (Luke 22:10) to follow to find the upper room where they would keep the Passover. By not giving an actual location or address, He prevented Judas from knowing ahead of time where the last supper was going to happen.

From that Thursday night supper, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane where Judas knew to find Him:

"Jesus had often resorted to Gethsemane with His disciples for meditation and prayer. They were all well acquainted with this sacred retreat. Even

Judas knew where to lead the murderous throng, that he might betray Jesus **into their hands.**" (2T 203)

In that setting, Ellen White makes the following comment:

"The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing **into the hands** of the powers of darkness." (2T 203)

This fits with the section "The Heart vs the Hands" discussed earlier.

## The Lamb Anointed

While the Jews were plotting, Jesus was in Bethany attending the feast at Simon's house from which Judas left to meet with the assembled plotters and initiate the betrayal. The Mt. of Olives (the scene of Matthew 24-25) is on the way to Bethany where Jesus spent Tuesday night. That evening He attended the feast at Simon's house in Bethany:

"Simon had been healed of the leprosy, and it was this that had drawn him to Jesus. He desired to show his gratitude, and at **Christ's last visit to Bethany** he made a feast for the Saviour and His disciples." (DA 557)

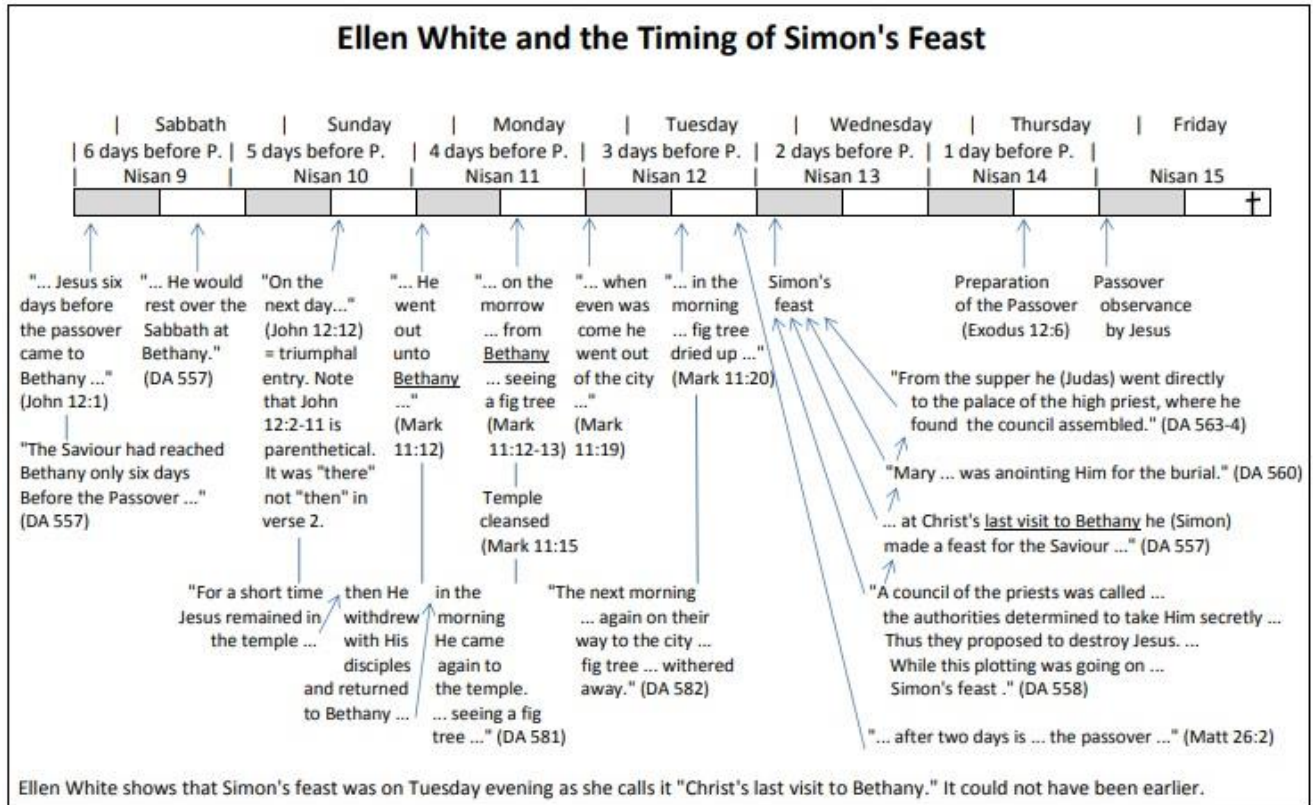
This was on Tuesday evening. It could not have been on the previous Saturday evening as some suggest as it was "Christ's last visit to Bethany." He was in Bethany on Sunday night (see Mark 11:11-12) and likely Monday night. The apparent problem in John 12 is solved by recognizing that verse 2 says "There ..." not "then." The description of the meal is parenthetical and out of chronological order. It was at this meal that Mary Magdalene was moved by God to anoint Jesus for His burial (Matthew 26:12):

"Mary knew not the full significance of her deed of love. ... She could not explain why she had chosen that occasion for anointing Jesus. The Holy Spirit had planned for her, and she had obeyed His promptings." (DA 560)

It is interesting that Simon was the uncle of Mary, Martha and Lazarus (ST May 9, 1900). By carefully examining the events, we can see that the beginning of the three days and three nights was on Tuesday evening which corresponded to the



time of the feast at Simon's house. Could it be that Jesus was anointed at that point because He was then released by the Father to the will of man to be the sacrifice?



## Jesus' and Abraham's 3 Days and 3 Nights

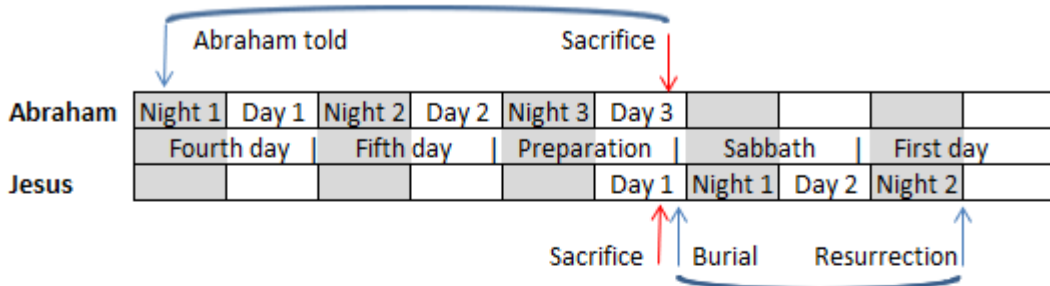
The almost sacrifice by Abraham of his son Isaac (Genesis chapter 22) is often regarded as a parallel to God giving His Son as the Lamb of God. Jesus Himself so compared it:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad." (John 8:56)

There were, of course, a few parallels. Another way in which the two experiences matched can be found when we compare Abraham's experience with that of Jesus by lining up the time of the sacrifice in each case:

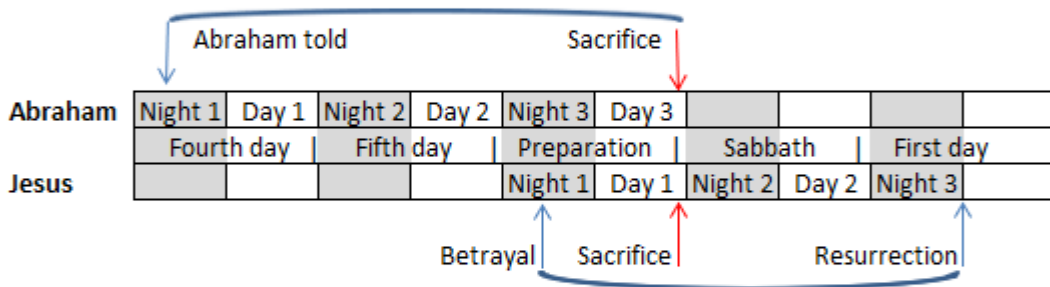
**Comparison of Jesus' and Abraham's Three-Day-and-Three-Night Experiences**

**Traditional** Jesus' "three days and three nights" started with the burial and ended with the resurrection ...



... but only resulted in **two days and two nights** in the heart of the earth (the grave).

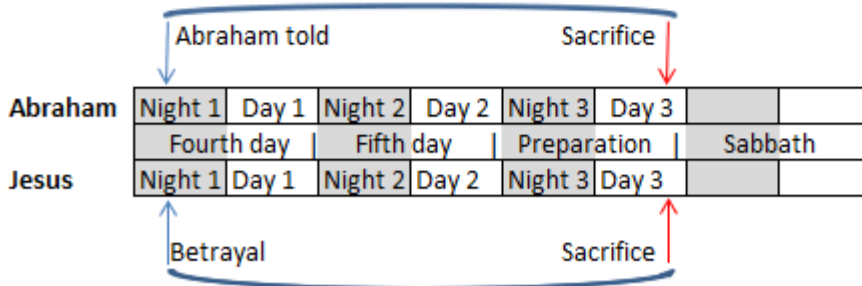
**Alternate** Jesus' "three days and three nights" started with the Thursday evening betrayal and ended with the resurrection ...



... but only resulted in **two days and three nights** in the heart of the earth (the grave).

**In the Heart of the Earth**

Jesus' "three days and three nights" started with the Tuesday evening release (and anointing via Mary) by His Father to the will of the Jews and ended with His death ...



... resulting in **three days and three nights** in the heart of the earth (the will of man) matching the timing of Abraham and Isaac.

In each case, what is lined up between the two is the time of sacrifice (red arrows). The sacrifice in Abraham's case is placed on a Friday for comparison purposes.

A comparison that is often made is that there were three days in both cases. Three understandings of that are diagrammed above. Note, in the first situation, that the three days and three nights are before the sacrifice in Abraham's case and after in Jesus' case so there is a difference when compared to the usual understanding of Jesus' resurrection

Abraham's decision to obey God and "sacrifice" his Son corresponded to and represented the Father's action to "deliver" His Son in respect of the free-will choice of the Jewish leaders.

In the third scenario above, the three days and three nights line up perfectly and at the end of the time period, in both cases, the fathers were reunited with their sons. Jesus has always kept the Sabbath in the sense of resting in His Father's love.

## Being Dead is Not Resting

The Sabbath is not meant as a period of inactivity:

"He [Jesus] told them that the rest-day which Jehovah had sanctified and set apart for a special purpose, after he had completed the work of creation, was not intended to be a period of useless inactivity. As God ceased his labor of creating, and rested upon that day and blessed it, so man was to leave the occupation of his daily life, and devote those sacred hours to healthful rest, to worship, and to holy deeds." (2SP 165)

"Heaven's work never ceases, and men should never rest from doing good. The Sabbath is not intended to be a period of useless inactivity." (DA 207)

Jesus' Sabbath example for us has been described as resting in the bosom of the Father. The Sabbath rest is resting and being refreshed in a relationship, not lying in an unconscious (dead) state. How could the Lord of the Sabbath be "asleep" on His day?

It is interesting that this verse appears in Matthew 12 the same chapter that mentions the sign of Jonah:

“For the Son of man is **Lord even of the sabbath day.**” (Matthew 12:8)

Being the Lord of the Sabbath, He could be expected to be there to preside over that day – His day.

Ellen White does make the statement: “He rested through the sacred hours of the Sabbath day.” (DA 769) Actually, the following sentence says: “In the beginning the Father and the Son had rested upon the sabbath after Their work of creation.” They were alive of course, so that statement saying “He rested” does not prove that He rested in death. However, other statements in the same chapter do say that. This section below on the Life of Christ Research Project will shed light on this.

## Ellen White on Satan's Statements

Ellen White makes other statements suggesting that Satan was behind the false Sunday-resurrection theory from very early on:

“Satan could not hinder the plan of salvation. Jesus was crucified, and arose again the third day. But Satan told his angels **that he would make the crucifixion and resurrection tell to his advantage.** He was willing that those who professed faith in Jesus should believe that the laws regulating the Jewish sacrifices and offerings ceased at the death of Christ, if he could push them further, and make them believe that the law of ten commandments also died with Christ.

...

He [Satan] told his angels that ... the Ten Commandments were so plain that many would believe that they were still binding; therefore he must seek to corrupt only one of the commandments. He then led on his representatives to attempt to change the fourth, or Sabbath, commandment, thus altering the only one of the ten which brings to view the true God, the maker of the heavens and the earth. **Satan presented before them the glorious resurrection of Jesus, and told them that by His rising on the first day of the week,** He changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

Thus Satan used the resurrection to serve his purpose. He and his angels rejoiced that the errors they had prepared took so well with the professed friends of Christ." (EW 215-216)

The resurrection was certainly not advantageous to Satan. But, after the event, he worked to make it so by changing something about it in the minds of men.

"Satan, working through unconsecrated leaders of the church, tampered with the fourth commandment also, and **essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath**, the day which God had blessed and sanctified (Genesis 2:2, 3), and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as "the venerable day of the sun." (GC 52)

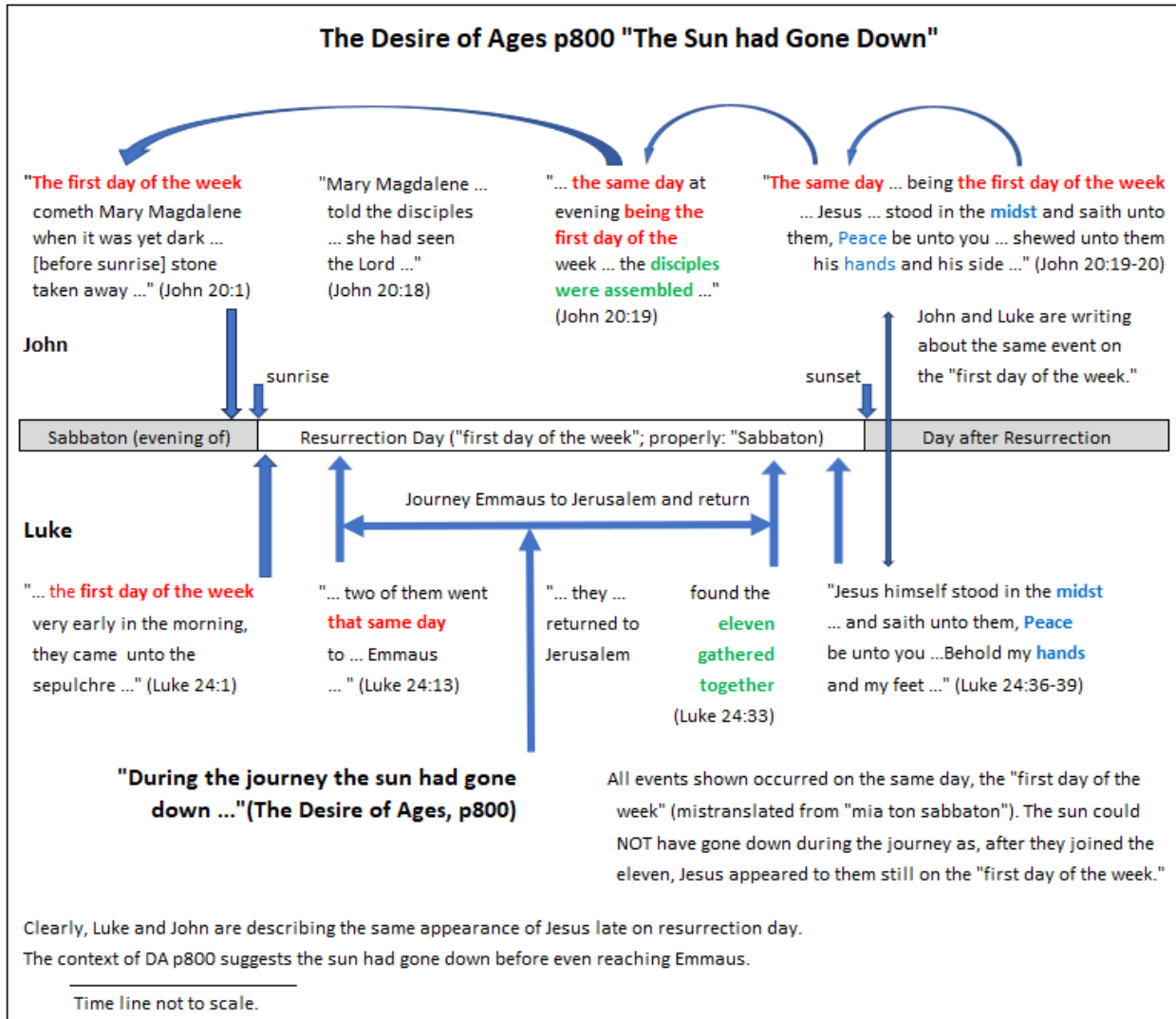
Notice the connection between those two statements – Satan was attempting to set aside the Sabbath and he was promoting a first-day-of-the week resurrection.

## The Life of Christ Research Project

As seen above, there are discrepancies within Ellen White's writings over timing issues. At times, these have been used to discredit her writings and prophetic role altogether. However, applying the same Miller's Rules for Bible study utilized by the Adventist pioneers can be helpful when applied to Ellen White's writings. We need to take all she wrote on a subject, let her writings explain themselves as far as possible and look for logical explanations to explain apparent discrepancies.

As shown above, there are undeniable issues with some of her statements regarding timing around the resurrection, first fruits and Pentecost.

Here is another example which clearly does not match what the Bible says. Thankfully, we will see that there is a logical explanation.



John (20:19-20) and Luke (24:36-39) described the same trip to and from Emmaus. John says it was the same day as the resurrection so it was before sunset when the two disciples joined the others in Jerusalem. Obviously, they travelled to Emmaus, recognized Jesus and returned to Jerusalem all within "the first day of the week." Yet Ellen White says:

"During the journey [to Emmaus] the sun had gone down ..." (DA 800)

If the sun had gone down on their way to Emmaus it certainly would not still be "the first day of the week" when they joined the other disciples. It would likely be about two hours into the next day as they would have to have completed their journey to Emmaus, prepared a meal (which they didn't get to eat), converse

briefly with Jesus and cover the approximately 11-kilometer (7-mile) trip back to Jerusalem. She also wrote, in describing the return journey to Jerusalem:

“The night is dark ...” (DA 801)

This does not match the Bible record which indicates that the journey back to Jerusalem was completed before sunset. Those statements could not have been word-for-word inspired. Then how do we explain that without discounting Ellen White’s credibility?

The explanation lies in her own statements. Here is one statement specifically related to her book *The Desire of Ages*:

"Well, my dear Willie and Edson and Emma, let us draw very nigh to God. Let us live daily as we would wish we had lived when the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, and when everyone will be rewarded according to his works. ... Tell Mary to find me some histories of the Bible that would give me the order of events.\* I have nothing and can find nothing in the library here [Basel, Switzerland].--Letter 38, 1885, p. 8."

Here is the footnote indicated by the asterisk in the quote above:

"In the preparation of *The Desire of Ages* such works were used in determining the order of events. On this point Marian Davis, writing to the manager of the Pacific Press, stated on November 23, 1896, 'In the order of chapters we followed Andrews' harmony as given in his *Life of Christ*. He is generally regarded as the very best authority, and is quoted by leading writers. We know of no better arrangement than his.' Samuel J. Andrews, *The Life of our Lord Upon the Earth*, first published in 1862. The 1891 edition was in Ellen White's library. His 'Harmony of the Gospels' appears on pages xxii to xxvii.--Compilers." (3SM, p122)

There have been claims made that portions of *The Desire of Ages* were borrowed from other authors. To examine this, the Seventh-day Adventist Church commissioned Fred Veltman, Ph.D. to do a study on Ellen White's use of other materials for her writing of *The Desire of Ages*. The complete study is available on



the church's website and his conclusions were published in *Ministry* (December, 1990).

I went to the resulting **Life of Christ Research Project** available at:

<https://archive.org/details/FredVeltmanLifeOfChristResearchProject1988> and examined the analysis for the Desire of Ages Chapter 83 The Walk to Emmaus. The project report says:

“According to our research only two sources were used in composing the text of this chapter and the earlier writings which feed into it. Once again we find Ellen White leaning upon William Hanna's *Life of Christ* (1863) and *Night Scenes in the Bible* by Daniel March (1868).” (Full Report of the Life of Christ Research Project, Dr. Fred Veltman, 1988, p735)

Here is one good example of what appears to be “borrowed” material. In one sentence, we see three strong comparisons to the equivalent sentence by Daniel March:

“During the journey **the sun had gone down**, and **before the travelers reached their place of rest**, **the laborers in the fields had left their work.**” (Ellen White *The Desire of Ages*, 1898, p800)

**“The sun has gone down** behind the gray hill-tops, and the shadows of evening have begun to deepen in the narrow valleys, and **the laborers have left the terraced orchards and vineyards** on the hill-sides **before the two travelers reach their home** ...” [Daniel March, *Night Scenes in the Bible*, 1869, p417)

One can understand that Daniel March, setting out to write a book titled “Night Scenes in the Bible,” would be inclined to imagine that certain scenes occurred at night when there is not clear Biblical evidence that they did.

In another of her books, Ellen White comments about her use of material from other authors:

“In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a



convenient manner, his words have been quoted; but in some instances no specific credit has been given, since the quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject.” (GC xii)

Her position was always:

**“Let all prove their positions from the Scriptures and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed Word of God.” (Ev 256)**

This comparison shows that Ellen White’s statements in *The Desire of Ages* regarding Christ being in the tomb over Sabbath conflict with other statements of hers (and the Bible record) supporting a Sabbath resurrection. This can be explained by her admitted use of material from other authors. Anyone denying this and clinging to statements from *The Desire of Ages* only is left with impossible contradictions. They would also be going against William Miller’s study rules (which Ellen White supported) if they were to apply to her writings.

There is no need to examine each of her Sunday statements from *The Desire of Ages* in detail. I recognize that there are some that support Jesus being in the grave over Sabbath. However, the weight of evidence from the Bible and within her own writings shows that that was not so.

Here is our choice:

1. Either she was 100% inspired and perfect in every word in *The Desire of Ages* and the standard resurrection timing is correct and we ignore the contradictions from Biblical evidence and from other of her own writings.

Or

2. Some things she wrote in *The Desire of Ages* were not intended to detail the chronology and were adapted from other sources as she herself said.

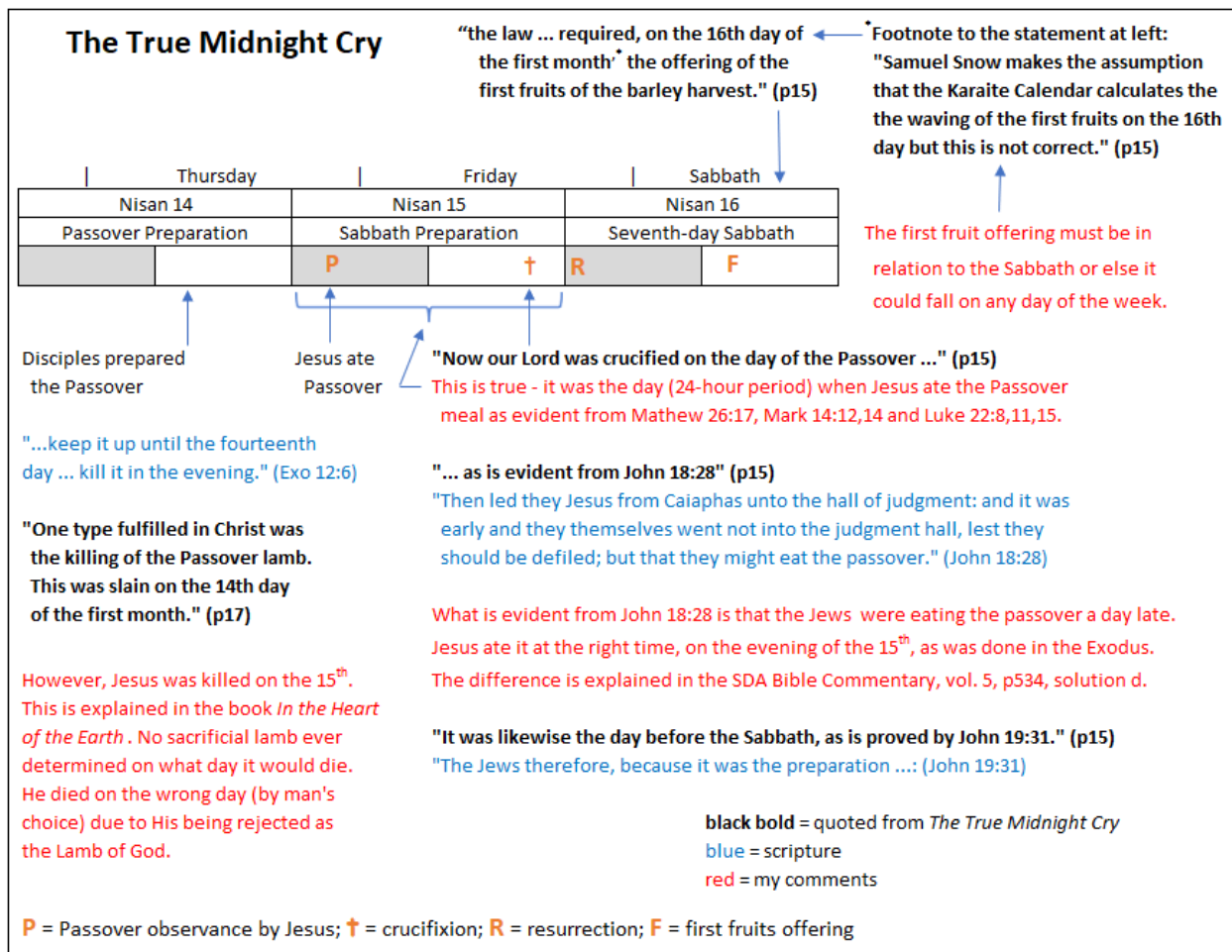
I prefer option 2 as:

- it keeps her work consistent with the Bible
- it matches what she said about her own writings

- it follows William Miller's rules for study of the Bible (and as applied to Ellen White's writings)
- it maintains her integrity as a divinely-inspired author
- it means the Biblical account stands on its own as the truth about the timing

## The Midnight Cry

The final and most recent issue I encountered in this study was again over the day of first fruits – whether it was on the seventh-day Sabbath or the day after the Sabbath. I felt this was already established but was pointed to the midnight cry message presented by Samuel Snow in July of 1844 as laid out in the booklet *The True Midnight Cry*. The author, Adrian Ebens, includes and comments on Samuel Snow's message. I carefully examined that study and diagrammed the portions relevant to first fruits timing as follows:



There is nothing in Samuel Snow's writing presented there that contradicts a Sabbath resurrection. That study dealt mainly with establishing 1844 and the chronology of that year. Where Samuel Snow determined First Fruits should occur is recognized as an incorrect assumption.

## Nehemiah Gordon Study

Included on page 15 of *The True Midnight Cry* was a link to a study by Nehemiah Gordon (<https://www.nehemiaswall.com/truth-shavuot>). That study maintains that "the morrow of the passover" at the Exodus referred to the morning of Nisan 15, the day they left Egypt. I agree with that but Nehemiah arrives at it in different way. In his study, he wrote:

"The Hebrew word for 'morrow' is mi-mocharat which refers to 'the morning after.' In the phrase 'morrow of the Sabbath' it describes Sunday morning, the morning after the 24-hour Sabbath."

He maintains that "mi-mocorath" means the next 24-hour day and that "Passover" always refers to the sacrifice. In my study *Is Nisan 14 the Feast of Passover?*, I showed that "the (LORD'S) passover" basically functions as an adjective that could describe the passover lamb, passover sacrifice/offerings, passover meal or passover observance/feast.

The concordance shows the Hebrew "pecach" (H6453) as a noun but the definition is given as:

### **H6453 pecach [peh -sakh]**

from 06452, Greek 3957; n m;

AV-passover 46, passover offerings 3; 49

1) passover

1a) sacrifice of passover

1b) animal victim of the passover

1c) festival of the passover

So, obviously, passover, in many cases, is used in reference to the sacrifice, the lamb, the feast etc. The noun (H6453) comes from the verb "pacach" (H6452)

meaning to pass over as in the Lord passing over the houses with the blood applied on the doorway.

While at the meal, they were obviously eating what was sacrificed, the eating happened the next calendar day - after the sacrifice was made. It is the timing that is important here. The meal was eaten on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the actual passover was on the 15<sup>th</sup> at midnight.

In the New Testament, "passover" was used primarily for the feast and Jesus always used Passover in reference to the meal, rather than to the sacrifice. It is even questionable whether a lamb was sacrificed for the Savior's meal with His disciples. Of course, at that meal, He presented Himself as the sacrifice.

The meal in Egypt was not on the 14<sup>th</sup> but on the early hours of the 15<sup>th</sup> before the actual Passover which occurred at midnight:

"And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S **passover**, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. ... And it came to pass, that at **midnight** the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that *was* in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle." (Exodus 12:27,29)

Saying "It (this service) is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover" shows that the sacrifice is incidental to the main event of the LORD passing over.

I have shown that "mochorath" (mi-mocharat) refers not to the next 24-hour calendar day but, essentially, to the next period of wakefulness. This is positively shown in the account of Lot's daughters (see "'Morrow After' = Morrow Of" section earlier.)

This verse in numbers (also discussed in the section just referenced) shows the same:

“And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. For the Egyptians buried all *their* firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.” (Num 33:3-4)

The phrase “which the LORD had smitten” points to the midnight passover event not to the passover sacrifice the preceding day.

The point of this is that “mochorath” does not point to the next calendar day but, as in the cases of Numbers 33:3 and Leviticus 23:11,15,16 and Lot’s daughters and other cases (see more examples in chapter 3 of *In the Heart of the Earth*) to the morning portion of the 24-hour day referenced.

One verse that does cause confusion on this point is:

"And in the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the passover of the LORD."  
(Numbers 28:16)

This is a good example of the need to look at context. The verse is not saying (consistent with the discussion above) that the fourteenth of Nisan is the day of Passover. Here is the discussion of this verse from the book *Is Nisan 14 the Feast of Passover?*:

It doesn't say “at even,” it says “in the fourteenth day” so it reads like the Passover happens “in the fourteenth day” - during the hours of the fourteenth. However, when this verse is examined in context, it is apparent that Numbers chapters 28 and 29 contain a list of the sacrifices that were to be offered on various days. The introduction to this section states:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.” (Num 28:1-2)

The particular sacrifices are listed for all the significant days of the year:

<b>Numbers</b>	<b>Specified Offerings</b>
28:3-8	Daily – 2 lambs for the continual burnt offering
28:9-10	Sabbaths - 2 lambs
28:11-15	New moons - 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat
<b>28:16</b>	<b>The fourteenth day of the first month - the Passover [lamb]</b>
28:17-25	Feast of Unleavened Bread (each day) - 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat
28:26-31	Pentecost (here called “first fruits” - “after your weeks be out”) - 2 bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat
29:1-6	Feast of Trumpets - 1 bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat
29:7-11	Day of Atonement - 1 bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat
29:12-34	Feast of Tabernacles (each day) - 13 bullocks (number decreases by 1 each day of the feast), 2 rams, 14 lambs, 1 goat
29:35-38	Last great day - 1 bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs, 1 goat

Then the whole list is summarized:

“These things ye shall do [“asah,” KJV margin: offer] unto the LORD in your set feasts, beside your vows, and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings, and for your meat offerings, and for your drink offerings, and for your peace offerings.” (Num 29:39)

Notice that it is a list of the animals that were to be offered on particular days. There is no logical reason to suppose that Num 28:16, speaking of Passover, is any different. It is not saying that the 14<sup>th</sup> was a day to celebrate a feast separate from the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Rather, it is specifying the sacrifice to be made on Nisan 14 - the Passover lamb. If it was really meaning that “in the fourteenth day ... is the passover **feast** ...” it would be the only one in the list that did not specify what was to be offered. Also, it would not make sense in light of the summary statement (Num 29:39) which talks about the various offerings.

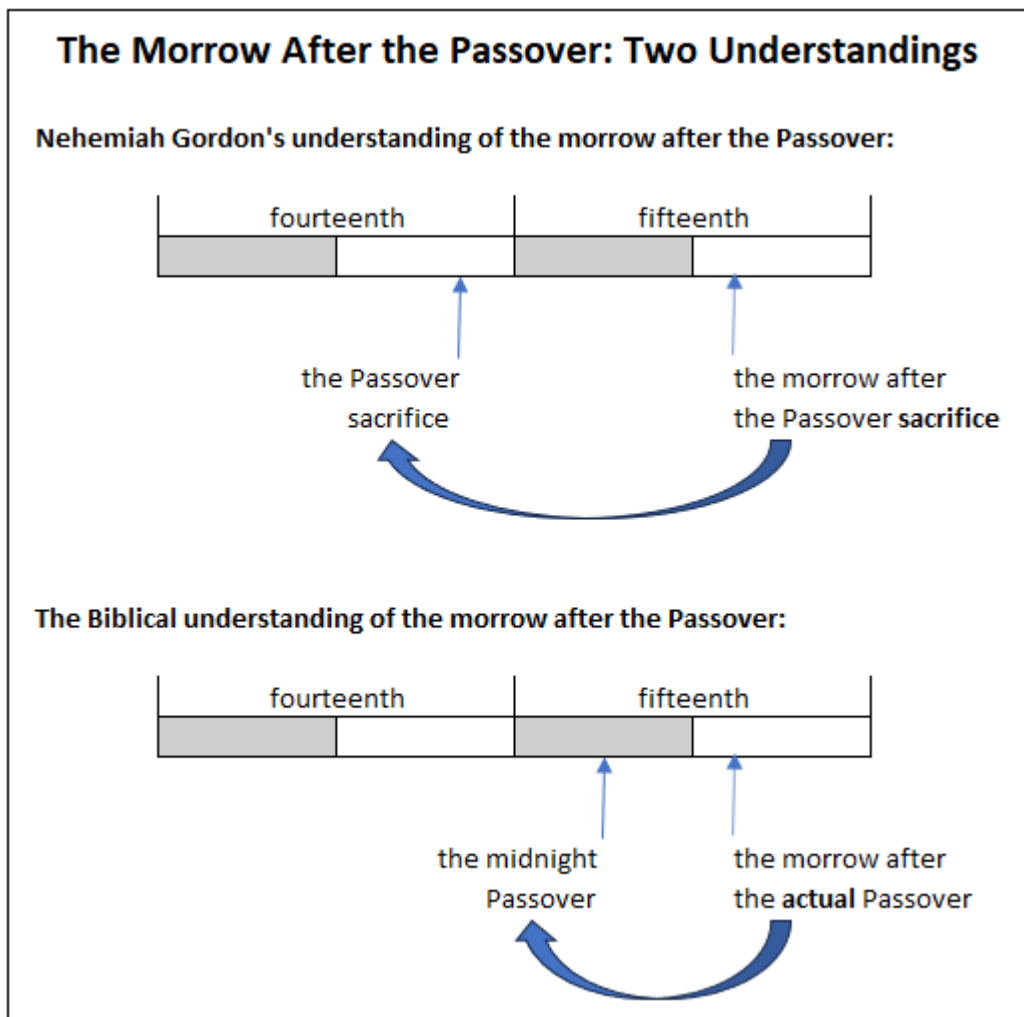
Here is an additional point. The construction of Num 28:16 is the same as verse 9.

"And in the fourteenth day of the first month **is** the passover [lamb] of the LORD." (Numbers 28:16)

"And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year ... " (Numbers 28:9)

In verse 16, the word "is" has been supplied in the KJV. I have added the word "lamb" in verse 16 above as it is understood. Obviously, they are not sacrificing the Passover day.

Here is a diagram showing the difference in the two understandings of the meaning of "the morrow after the Passover":



The Biblical understanding in the diagram above is consistent with the situation with Lot's daughters and other uses in the Bible. This shows that "on the morrow after the sabbath" (Lev 23:11,15,16) should be similarly understood.

Nehemiah Gordon does include this statement in his study which supports that there was much confusion even 2,000 years ago over the timing of first fruits:

“In late Second Temple times there was a famous debate between three different Jewish factions about the meaning of the Hebrew phrase ‘morrow of the Sabbath’ and hence about the timing of Shavuot.”

This makes is very hazardous to accept any version of the timing based on which group supported it. The truth can only come from a detailed Bible study.

## Summary

Ample evidence has been provided in the book *In the Heart of the Earth* to show that:

- “Heart” refers to the mind.
- “Earth” can mean the people of the earth.
- “First day of the week” is a mistranslation.
- “Third day” verses refer to the third day starting from the initial betrayal on Tuesday evening.
- A number of verses have been misinterpreted to prop up the Sunday-resurrection theory.
- The word “after” in Leviticus 23:11, 15, 16 is misunderstood.
- A Sabbath Pentecost (and therefore a Sabbath First Fruits/resurrection) is proved by two ways to count (1. by 50 days including the day of First Fruits and 2. by seven complete Sunday-to-Sabbath weeks (49 days) starting with the harvest which would start on the Sunday after the Sabbath of First Fruits) that can only both come to Pentecost on the same day if Pentecost is on a Sabbath. See the details in the section “Two Ways to Count” of *In the Heart of the Earth*.

**The start of the three days and three nights was marked by:**

- The anointing of Jesus (“for my burial”) by Mary (Matt 26:7).
- The Jewish leaders’ decision and plot to kill Jesus (Matt 26:3-4).
- The initial betrayal by Judas (Matt 26:14-15).



- The Father honoring (on the same evening as the events above) the free-will choice of the Jewish leaders in regard to His Son.

**The end of the three days and three nights was marked by:**

- Jesus' death (three days after His rejection).
- The realization of the Jewish leaders' goal – to be rid of the perceived threat of Jesus.
- Jesus was lifted up as He said He would be three days after the rejection.
- The veil in the temple was torn. The most holy place representing the mind/heart was exposed.

Here is a statement from material sent to me years ago.

“In order to change the Sabbath to Sunday there had to be a way in which the change could take place and yet at the same time seem consistent with all the Scriptures. For this, a deep and sophisticated scheme was planned, but it is way beyond the scope of this small study to expose every detail of the nearly 6,000 years of the subtle workings of Satan. So I will only demonstrate those that are of immediate concern.

Now, in order to move our Savior's resurrection in the Old Testament from Sabbath to Sunday, the wave sheaf offering had to be moved from Sabbath to Sunday, as it would not look good for the type or shadow of the resurrection to be on the Sabbath and then attempt to say that the antitype or substance took place on Sunday, so the translators changed the meaning of a few words and added a few words.

The following will demonstrate that the word “after” is clearly a supplied word, found in most translations of the Bible but not in the original manuscripts. It was inserted in order to make it appear that the Wave Sheaf offering and Pentecost were on Sunday.” (Curtis McDonald, 2003, *The Biblical Truth about the Wednesday Passover Crucifixion the Sabbath Morning Resurrection and EASTER The Abomination of Desolation*, p27)

McDonald (I think since deceased) makes some important points about “after” and about Ellen White's comments.

Ellen White has confirmed what is stated above:

“I saw that God had especially guarded the Bible, yet learned men, when the copies were few, had changed the words in some instances, thinking that they were making it more plain, when **they were mystifying that which was plain**, in causing it to **lean to their established views, governed by tradition**. But I saw that the word of God, as a whole is a perfect chain, one portion of scripture explaining another, true seekers for truth need not err; for not only is the word of God plain and simple in declaring the way to life, but the Holy Spirit is given to guide in understanding the way of life revealed in his Word.” (1SG 117)

Of course, Satan has worked hard to see that times and laws should be changed. The basis for claims of Sunday sacredness is a (supposed) Sunday resurrection. Has Satan also changed the understanding of the timing of Pentecost in an attempt to limit the potential blessing of its end-time fulfillment? It would seem so. These are issues that God’s people need to establish for certain. So far, much evidence (as presented herein) has not been widely understood.

In conclusion, this study has shown that Ellen White’s statements about a Sunday resurrection in *The Desire of Ages* and other statements pointing to a seventh-day sabbath Pentecost and therefore a sabbath First Fruits and resurrection can be satisfactorily resolved while maintaining her prophetic integrity. The evidence is that Jesus, as Lord of the Sabbath, was very much alive on His day and ministering to His people.