

22T01e Tough Questions? – 3 Days in the Grave

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Even if you have been a Christian for a long time, there are some things in the bible and in the traditions of the modern church that are tough to understand. I find many of these downright confusing. Some of these have troubled me for years.

We want to ask those “tough questions” and then do the research to see if we can find or develop a better understanding for these “tough questions”.

So here is one that we asked during our family Bible study. Was Jesus really in the grave 3 days and 3 nights.?

Let me read you Matthew 14:40 (NKJV) *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father please guide our discussion today. Help me to stay out of the way, so you can use me. We trust you and we know you have promised the wisdom we need to understand your word in the Bible. Help us to let the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us. Bless our time together and I pray all these things in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Okay, Was Jesus in the Grave Three Days and Three Nights? Let’s look at this again. Starting with verse 39 *³⁹But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 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. ⁴¹The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. ⁴²The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.*

So, without getting into this too deeply. Jesus is answering the Pharisees demand for a sign, with a prophecy of His death and resurrection. 3 days and nights in the earth or in the grave. But was Jesus in the grave 3 days and 3 nights. Here is the problem: If Jesus died on Good Friday at about 3pm and rose on resurrection Sunday morning, well that is not 3 days and 3 nights. It’s more like 2.5 days and 2 nights.

Does this mean Jesus didn’t stay in the grave long enough to fulfill his own prophecy? Certainly not. Jesus has to have been in the grave three days and three nights, which is why the early Christians taught that he was raised on the third day (Acts 10:40, 1 Corinthians 15:4).

Okay how is this possible? Let me explain

First, The Jewish calendar is lunar or based on the phases of the moon. Our modern Calendar is the Roman calendar which is solar or based on the rotation of the Earth around the Sun. This is the reason why the date of Easter changes every year. Today in Western Christianity, Easter is celebrated on the Sunday following the Paschal Full Moon. I'm not going to go into why today. But Easter and Passover dates on our modern calendar change every year and in fact the day of the week for Passover changes every year. Passover is not always on a Friday.

Today, we think of the new day beginning when we wake up or maybe at midnight. But in Jewish culture, the new day begins at sunset. So, when the sun sets on Monday, it is not considered Monday evening, it is considered the beginning of Tuesday.

We know that Jesus resurrected on a Sunday, "the first day of the week" (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2,9; Luke 24:1) but keep in mind to a Jewish person Sunday started at sunset Saturday.

Next what do you know about "Sabbath"?

The word sabbath means "rest," and it refers to a holy day when no work is to be done. We learn about Sabbath in Leviticus 23. The seventh day of each week or Saturday is a sabbath, but there are other sabbaths as well – also known as "special Sabbaths." Some of these "special Sabbaths" are celebrated on a specific calendar date, no matter what day of the week that date falls on. Modern celebration of Christmas is one such modern holiday. Always December 25th regardless of what day of the week it happens to be.

John 19:31 says this, *Therefore, 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*

High Day or some English Translations use Special Sabbath. This was not necessarily Saturday but this was the first day of the Unleavened Bread Festival. Let read from Leviticus 23:5-6 (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.*

So, Passover was on the 14th day of Nisan and the 15th day of Nisan was a special sabbath the first day of the Unleavened Bread festival.

The special Sabbath referred to in John 19:31 after Passover was the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a holiday which is always observed on the 15th day of Nisan according to the Jewish calendar.

According to Leviticus 24:4-14, there are three special holidays in the month of Nisan: Passover (the 14th of Nisan), the Feast of Unleavened Bread (15-22 of Nisan) and the Feast of First Fruits which was held on the Sunday following the Passover.

So, we know Jesus was eating the Passover Feast the night before he was crucified and he was resurrected on Sunday. Therefore in order to be in the grave 3 days and 3 nights, Jesus must have been buried on Thursday before sunset. . Friday and Saturday were both sabbaths: Friday was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Saturday was the weekly sabbath.

So, the question you have to ask is how can we be sure that this is what happened? Sometime back, the London Royal Observatory decided to figure out if it was possible the Passover fell on a Thursday around the time of Jesus. Since the Jewish calendar is lunar, there is always a full moon on Passover. So, these very smart people determined that there were several years around the time of Jesus when this took place. For example, in 27AD Nisan 14th was April 10th a Thursday.

But it does not stop with that. I don't believe in Coincidences so listen to this. In Exodus 12:1-13, God told the Israelites that they were to select the Passover Lamb on the 10th day of Nisan. They were to examine it from the 11th to the 13th to make sure it was without blemish, and they were to sacrifice it on the 14th. If you can believe that the 14th was a Thursday, then Jesus was crucified on "the day of Preparation" (Matthew 27:62, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:31) which was the day when Passover began and the celebration began with the eating of the Passover meal. Jesus ate this meal with his disciples in the upperroom what we know as the last supper on Wednesday evening. But this means Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday which would have been the 10th of Nisan. The day the Passover lambs are to be selected.

Even more amazing is the Sunday after Passover was the Feast of First Fruits (Leviticus 23:9-11). This means Jesus' resurrection was on the day of the Feast of First Fruits. Why is this amazing. Well Paul later writes this in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23 (NKJV), *²⁰But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. ²³But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.*

So did you see that. Jesus was most assuredly in the grave three days and three nights. And Jesus was the First Fruits of the resurrection on the day of the Feast of First Fruits, He was the Passover lamb selected on the Nisan 10th and sacrificed on Nisan 14th.

I just love seeing how God weaves His Bigger, Better Plan. Jesus died on the exact day to this happen. No coincidence or anomaly, just God working in His perfect timing so we can see Him. A miracle in the middle a miracle in the greatest story ever told. Amen

Father God, thank you for giving us the resources and sources to answer these tough questions. we know you know all things. When we see how things fit perfectly in your plan. Wow. Only with God is this possible Thank you for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us. Help us to open the Bible and look into history to answer our questions. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join us for the rest of the series about the "Tough Questions" that we struggle with as Christians.

If you liked the message, please click like. And Please Subscribe to our channel and select the notification bell so you can be notified when we post new videos. Leave comments here, or our website or email me.

See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.