

הַיּוֹם בְּאֲשֶׁר קוֹמַם יֵשׁוּעַ
הַמָּשִׁיחַ מִן־הַמָּוֶת



**The Resurrection Day
Of Messiah Yeshua**

When It Happened

According To The Original
Texts

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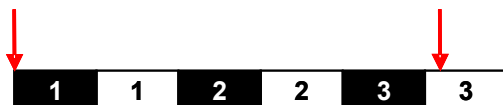
Preview is on next two Pages
(laid out in book order)

the same way. And thus I will go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish (Esther 4:16).

Now it came about on the third day [בְּיוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי] that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king’s palace in front of the king’s rooms, and the king was sitting on his royal throne in the throne room, opposite the entrance to the palace (Esther 5:1).

This text does show that Esther saw the king before the third day was completed. For it was “on the third day;” also she said the banquet was “this day.” It thus shows that part of a day can be counted as a whole. However, it does not prove that there were less than three parts day or three parts night. We should assume that Esther was giving the orders at night, because she puts the order “night or day.” In Persia the civil day was probably from dawn to dawn. Esther is scheduling a fast that will begin sometime in the night. So the matter diagrams this way:

Figure 3: How Esther Counted The Nights And Days



The Queen’s language fits the above diagram. She mentions night before day,¹⁷ and it is likely that she went to the king earlier on the third day rather than later, because later the king and his nobles might have had too much wine. Even though Esther did not explicitly mention “three nights,” it is clear that three nights fit with no problem. You can also see that there are three parts night and three parts day. So the skeptic that cites this example against Matthew 12:40 is not proving his case against a literal “three nights.” Yet, in a great deal of the Sunday Church polemical literature against “three

¹⁷ Only if the Queen did not mean to imply that the night did come before the day can we shorten the period to $d+n+d+n+d$. There are still three parts day here. Yes, there are two parts night, but Esther did not actually say “three nights,” so it would not be fair to dismiss her “night or day” ordering, and so shorten the period and proclaim it equivalent to Matthew 12:40.

days and three nights,” you will find this very example used, and it reveals the amount of integrity those writers really have.

Other skeptics quote from the Talmud. Rabbi Eliazar Ben Azariah (ca A.D. 100) is reported to say “A day and night are a period [onah] and the part of a period [onah] is as the whole of it” (יום ולילה עונה ומקצת עונה ככולה). This is really nothing but the statement that counting may be inclusive, and the Rabbi is making no claim that parts of days or nights may be deleted entirely from the counting.

Yet, John Lightfoot writes concerning Matthew 12:40:

It is not easy to translate the word ‘onah’ into good Latin: for to some it is the same with the half of a natural day [i.e. either a day or a night, 12 hours]; to some it is all one with ‘a whole natural day’ [i.e. a night + day, or day + night = 24 hours]. According to the first sense, we may observe, from the words of R. Ishmael, that sometimes four “onoth,” or halves of a natural day, may be accounted for three days: and that they, also, are so numbered, that one part or the other of those halves may be accounted for a whole [of the half-day, i.e. a day or night, 12 hours]. Compare the latter sense with the words of our Savior, which are now before us:—“A day and a night (saith the tradition) make an Onah, and a part of an Onah is as the whole.” Therefore Christ may truly be said to have been in his grave three Onoth, or “three natural days” (when yet the greatest part of the first day was wanting [lacking], and the night altogether, and the greatest part by far of the third day also), the consent of the schools and dialect of the nation agreeing thereunto. For, “the least part of the Onah concluded the whole.” So that according to this idiom, that diminutive [smallest] part of the third day, upon which Christ arose, may be computed for the whole day, and the night following it” (John Lightfoot).¹⁸

¹⁸ Volume XI, Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations upon the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, pg. 201-202, Rev. John Lightfoot, D.D. Also *Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*, 1823.

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