CHAPTER 1 OFFICIAL CHURCH COUNCILS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

This chapter will provide a concise and informative overview of the official Church Councils in the early Christian Church. It will begin with the first Apostolic Council in Jerusalem, [Acts 15], and will also include such Councils as the First Council of Nicaea [AD 325], along with the First Council of Constantinople [AD 381]. The purpose of the Councils and their contributions to the early Church will be discussed in this chapter.

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CHAPTER 2 CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY WEEK EVENTS

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

The current understanding of Holy Week events presented here is one of several held by the Church. There is currently no consensus today within the Church in regards to a chronological depiction of Holy Week events. I chose to present this variation, because it tended to point more toward the Truth relative to all the others.

Gospel of John's Perspective –

1. Jesus was crucified on Friday, [Nisan 14].
2. The evening meal before the crucifixion was not the same Paschal meal celebrated by the rest of the nation.
3. First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on [Nisan 15].
4. Paschal lambs slain on [Nisan 14], in the early afternoon.

Synoptic Gospel's Perspective –

1. Jesus was crucified on Friday, [Nisan 15].
2. The evening meal before the crucifixion was the same Paschal meal celebrated by the rest of the nation.
3. First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on [Nisan 14].
4. Paschal lambs slain on [Nisan 14], in the early afternoon.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION: (CON'T)

Given the current understanding of the events that took place during Holy Week, the following observations are made:

1. According to the Gospel of John's perspective, Jesus was crucified on Friday, [Nisan 14]. According to the Synoptic Gospel's perspective, Jesus was crucified on Friday, [Nisan 15]. Stated yet another way, all four Gospel writers are implying that Jesus' Crucifixion took place during the same twenty-four hour period, and that this period was also known for having two different calendar dates. In this manner, this current understanding points towards the Truth.

2. According to the Gospel of John's perspective, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on [Nisan 15]. According to the Synoptic Gospel's perspective, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on [Nisan 14]. Stated yet another way, all four Gospel writers are implying that the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on both days, [Nisan 14] and on [Nisan 15]. In this manner, this current understanding points towards the Truth.

3. According to all four Gospel writer's perspectives, it is implied that the paschal lambs were slain in the early afternoon of [Nisan 14] of Holy Week. This is the Truth. However, because scholars have most often relied on the traditions of men to explain this Truth[1], it has become camouflaged in the process. When one relies on the commands of God to explain this understanding the camouflage is removed, and the Truth is made more evident.

[1] The Pharisaic tradition of interpreting "between two evenings" in [Ex 12.6], from noon to sunset on [Nisan 14], contradicts God's command to remove leaven from the houses on the first day of the Feast, [Nisan 15]. [Ex 12.15; Lev 23.6,7; Num 28.17,18] If this command is obeyed, then the Pharisaic tradition contradicts God's command that the blood of the Passover sacrifice not be offered with leaven. [Ex 23.18; Ex 34.25] In other words, if there is enough leaven left over to be removed on [Nisan 15], then they offered the sacrifice on [Nisan 14] with leaven. If they offered the sacrifice on [Nisan 14] without leaven, then no leaven could possibly be removed on [Nisan 15]. Several references listed by R. Brown (*The death of the Messiah*; p.847) include, *Jubilees* 49:10; Josephus (*War* 6.9.3; p.423); Mishna *Pesahim* 5.1, 5.3; Philo (*De specialibus legibus* 2.27; p.145)

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CHAPTER 3 CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY WEEK EVENTS

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

[Nisan 14] Morning Perspective -

1. Jesus was crucified on Thursday, [Nisan 14].
2. The evening meal before the crucifixion was not the same Paschal meal celebrated by the rest of the nation.
3. First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to begin on [Nisan 15].
4. Paschal lambs to be slain on [Nisan 14], at twilight.[2]

[Nisan 14] Afternoon Perspective -

1. Jesus was crucified on Thursday, [Nisan 14].
2. The evening meal before the crucifixion was not the same Paschal meal celebrated by the rest of the nation.
3. God's Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10] was fulfilled beginning at noon.
4. First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on [Nisan 14][3].
5. Paschal lambs slain on [Nisan 14], at twilight[4] ; and
6. Paschal Lamb of God (Jesus Christ) slain on [Nisan 14], at twilight.
7. Jesus was buried during the three-hour period of darkness, before sunset.
8. First day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was to begin on [Nisan 15][5].

[2] The interpretation of "between two evenings" in [Ex 12.6] is here understood to mean, "between the evenings of Jewish man and God, that is, between sunset and darkness.
[3] In accordance with the Spirit of the Law.
[4] The interpretation of "between two evenings" in [Ex 12.6] is here understood to mean, "between the evenings of God and Jewish man, that is, between darkness and sunset.
[5] In accordance with the Letter of the Law.

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CHAPTER 3 CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF HOLY WEEK EVENTS

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Given the correct understanding of the events that took place during Holy Week, the following observations are made:

1. It was on this day and date, Thursday, [Nisan 14] of Holy Week, that the first covenant was made obsolete, and the second covenant was established. [Heb 8.13]; [Heb 10.9] this was symbolically shown when the temple veils were torn in two. The first covenant was made obsolete when the veil of the temple sanctuary was rent in two, exposing the room of the Most Holy Place. The second covenant was established when the Veil of the Temple, that is, the Flesh of His Body (Jesus' Body) [Heb 10.20]; [Jn 2.21], was pierced and rent in two with a spear, exposing the precious Blood that was poured out for many for the redemption of sins. [Heb 9.15-18]

2. It was on this day and date, Thursday, [Nisan 14] of Holy Week, that God's Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10] was fulfilled beginning at noon. This event played a necessary role in the fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy in [Lk 2.34], the Messianic prophecy in [Ps 22.2], and also in Jesus' prophecy in [Matt 12.40]. This event caused the three-hour period of darkness that covered the whole land, as well as producing a supernatural twilight in the afternoon sky. The stars would have been clearly visible in some sectors of the sky at this time. This supernatural twilight produced by God, moved the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread during Holy Week, earlier in time, from the beginning of [Nisan 15], to the early afternoon of [Nisan 14].

3. It should also be noted that although Jesus was crucified on a Thursday, this <u>does not</u> conflict with the traditional observances of Good Friday, because the time line was altered at the same time [Amos 8.7-10] was fulfilled. Our Friday today, corresponds to Thursday in Jesus' day.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

[Gen 1.5] God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night…

[Jonah 1.17] Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

[Matt 12.40] "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.

I believe that [Matt 12.40] and [Jonah 1.17] should both be interpreted symbolically from God's Word in [Gen 1.5]. The following comparisons can then be made.

1. Jonah is to the belly of the great fish, as Jesus is to the heart of the earth. Symbolically, the great fish and the earth are vehicles that are transporting their respective passengers, Jonah and Jesus, through an unspecified distance, in a specified amount of time.

2. Each passenger spends the same amount of time in their respective vehicles, a total of three days and three nights. This duration of time should be interpreted symbolically as three periods of light and three periods of darkness. In other words, God's definition of night and day found in [Gen 1.5] should be used. The reasoning for this from the perspective of [Matt 12.40], is that Jesus spoke His Prophecy from His Divine Nature as the Son of God, and not from His human nature. The reasoning for this from the perspective of [Jonah 1.17] is twofold. First, the only person to accurately witness the amount of time that Jonah spent in the belly of the great fish, was the Lord. Second, no direct statements are attributed to coming from Jonah regarding his stay in the fish's belly.

The symbolic interpretations of the three periods of light and the three periods of darkness are as follows. First, in [Jonah 1.17], the period of light (day) would encompass the time when the great fish was swimming at or near the surface of the sea. The period of darkness (night) would encompass the time when the great fish was swimming in the depths of the sea. [Jonah 2.3,5,6] [Psalm 88.6,7] Second, in [Matt 12.40], the period of light (day) would encompass the time when the earth where

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION: (CON'T)

Jesus was buried was rotating through sunlight. The period of darkness (night) would encompass the time when the earth where Jesus was buried was rotating through darkness. These symbolic interpretations can also be graphically illustrated in the form of a cycloid. In [Jonah 1.17], the cycloid would represent the path of motion in water, of Jonah's body while in the belly of the great fish, symbolically speaking, a whale, since a whale can swim into great depths and must always return to the surface for air. In [Matt 12.40], the cycloid would represent the path of motion in space, of a single point in or on the earth's surface, as it rotates around the earth's axis and revolves around the sun, in this case, the point would be represented by the location of Jesus' Body.

3. The Lord sent out a great tempest rather suddenly and unexpectedly on the sea before Jonah was thrown overboard and left for dead. The Lord also sent out a great darkness rather suddenly and unexpectedly over the whole land before Jesus was killed.

4. The start time for the three day three night journey begins at the time of burial. Jonah was physically in the whale's belly, just as Jesus was physically in the heart of the earth.

5. Jonah was swallowed by the whale in the depths of the sea, in the darkness (night). Jesus was buried in the earth during the three-hour period of darkness (night). Therefore, both vehicles first carried their passengers through a period of darkness (night).

6. The great storm ceased its raging rather suddenly after Jonah was thrown into the sea. The great darkness over the whole land departed rather suddenly after Jesus was buried in the grave.

7. Jonah is vomited onto dry land while the whale is on the surface of the sea (day). Jesus' Resurrection occurred in the early morning twilight of the first of the week (day). Therefore, both vehicles last carried their passengers through a period of light (day).

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CHAPTER 5 BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

This chapter will concentrate on Scriptural passages that show that Jesus Christ was indeed Our Passover, and the true Lamb of God as proclaimed by John the Baptist. The apostle Paul writes in [1Cor 15.3], that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. I believe that Paul here is referring to [Isa 53.7], where Jesus can be interpreted as being the Lamb that was led to slaughter. Also, the Scripture in [Ex 12.6], where Jesus can be interpreted as being the Paschal Lamb that was slain on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight. It was God who provided this supernatural twilight, in the afternoon of Thursday, [Nisan 14], by His Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10]. Also, just as God had struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt at mid-night on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, so also did He strike His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, at mid-night on that same festival day. [Mk 15.44,45]

The following Scriptural texts will provide additional material for further discussion in this chapter:

[Ex 12.5,6,10,22,29,46]; [Num 9.12]; [Isa 53.7]; [Jn 1.29,36]; [Jn 19.14,33,36]; [Acts 8.32-35]; [1Cor 5.7; 15.3]; [1 Pet 1.19]; [1 Jn 1.7; 2.2]; [Rev 5.6-14]

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CHAPTER 6 BEHOLD THE SON OF GOD

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

[Amos 8.7-10] The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob: "I will never forget anything they have done.
"Will not the land tremble for this, and all who live in it mourn? The whole land will rise like the Nile; it will be stirred up and then sink like the river of Egypt.
"In that day, "declares the Sovereign Lord, "I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.
I will turn your religious feasts into mourning and all your singing into weeping. I will make all of you wear sackcloth and shave your heads. I will make that time like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.

[Psalm 22.2] O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.

[Mk 15.34] And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

[Matt 27.46] And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Before discussing my interpretations of [Amos 8.7-10] and [Psalm 22.2], it is important to understand the total motion of the Earth. Many are already familiar with the basic motion; that is, that the Earth rotates once every twenty-four hours around its axis, and also, that it revolves once every 365.25 days around the Sun. However, in order to understand the total motion of the Earth, one needs to understand the total motion of the Sun.

The Sun is currently moving in the Galaxy toward the Vega star system at an approximate speed of 43,000 mph. This movement is vertical relative to the Ecliptic, the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun. The reason that we do not perceive the Sun's rising motion from the Earth is that the Sun is dragging all of the planets along with it in the same direction. This gravitational pull by the Sun on all of the planets results in each planet's motion forming a helix or spiral type path through space. [See Illustration]

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION: (CON'T)

Therefore, the Earth's total motion is helical in nature and not elliptical. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial to understanding how God's Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10] and [Psalm 22.2] was fulfilled on the day of Christ's Crucifixion.

Let us now briefly look at the events that occurred on Thursday, [Nisan 14] of Holy Week. Jesus was crucified at nine o'clock in the morning. Three hours later, beginning at noon, God's Prophetic Word began to be fulfilled. At this time, the Sun began to go down as perceived from the Earth. [Amos 8.9] In all actuality, it was the Earth rising upward as the Sun stood still. [Amos 8.8] [Job 9.6] This phenomenon was accomplished through the following two Acts of God. First, the Finger of God miraculously held down the Sun, and prevented it from rising. [Job 9.7] Second, the Earth's momentum was conserved during this time, which allowed the Earth to continue in its upward path and natural rotation. This was a direct result of God's natural laws instituted at the time of Creation.

As the Sun at first, seemed to go down quickly in the sky, Jesus cried out to God when its position was determined to be at the ninth hour. [Mk 15.34] In reality, the time was shortly after the sixth hour. It appeared as though three hours had elapsed in a period of only several minutes. Shortly thereafter, the Earth's Southern Hemisphere eclipsed the Sun's light heading for the Earth's Northern Hemisphere. [Lk 23.45] Most of the more reliable and ancient texts seem to favor the interpretation of an eclipse. However, this interpretation has often baffled the scholars, since a solar eclipse is naturally impossible during the full moon. Then about the ninth hour, while darkness covered the whole land, Jesus cried out to God a second time. [Matt 27.46] Therefore, Jesus' first cry to God occurred during the daytime, and His second cry to God occurred during the night season, thus fulfilling the Messianic Prophecy in [Psalm 22.2].

This was the sign that Jesus had promised to the Pharisees when they had asked for a sign from heaven. [Matt 16.1]; [Mk 8.11]; [Lk 11.16] This sign from heaven occurred as the religious feasts were about to begin. [Amos 8.10]; [Matt 26.5]; [Mk 14.2]; [Jn 18.28] This sign from heaven caused a midday darkness. [Amos 8.9]; [Matt 27.45]; [Mk 15.33]; [Lk 23.44] Finally, this sign from heaven caused an earthquake. [Amos 8.8]; [Matt 27.51,54] Therefore, I conclude that God's Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10] was fulfilled beginning at noon on the day of Christ's Crucifixion, and that it also played an essential role in the fulfillment of the Messianic Prophecy in [Psalm 22.2], as well as in the fulfillment of Simeon's Prophecy in [Lk 2.34].

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The following Scriptural texts will provide additional material for further discussion in this chapter:

[Matt 16.16,17]; [Matt 27.54]; [Jn 1.34]; [Acts 8.37]; [Acts 9.20]; [Rom 1.3,4]; [Heb 4.14]; [Heb 10.29]; [1 Jn 5.5]; [Rev 2.18]

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Teaching #1 - Resurrection after three days

This teaching was fulfilled when Jesus was crucified and killed on Thursday, [Nisan 14], and raised from the dead in the early morning twilight of Sunday, [Nisan 17], three days after His death. God's Word was fulfilled in:

[Matt 27.63]; [Mk 8.31]; [Lk 24.21]

Teaching #2 - Resurrection on the third day

This teaching was fulfilled when Jesus was crucified and killed on Thursday, [Nisan 14], and raised from the dead in the early morning twilight of Sunday, [Nisan 17], on the third day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread according to the Scriptures. God's Word was fulfilled in:

[Matt 17.23]; [Matt 20.19]; [Mk 9.31]; [Mk 10.34];
[Lk 9.22]; [Lk 18.33]; [Lk 24.7]; [Lk 24.46]

Teaching #3 - Resurrection in three days

This teaching was fulfilled when Jesus was killed during the three hour period of darkness in the early afternoon of Thursday, [Nisan 14], and raised from the dead in the third period of light following His death, that is, in the early morning twilight of Sunday, [Nisan 17]. God's Word was fulfilled in:

[Jn 2.19-21]

Summary:

Jesus' three teachings concerning His Resurrection from the dead were all fulfilled in accordance to His Word, and all three were accomplished from the same one sequence of events during that Holy Week.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

Given the correct understanding of Holy Week events, the following two observations can be made regarding Sabbath day observances.

1. According to God's Word, the first day and the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread were to be observed as special Sabbaths. [Ex 12.16; Lev 23.6-8; Num 28.17-25] Under normal circumstances, the first special Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread would have been observed entirely on the fifteenth day of the first month, in accordance to both the Spirit and the Letter of the Law. However, due to the abnormal (supernatural) circumstances that occurred during this Holy Week, the Spirit of the Law was separated from the Letter of the Law, which in effect, complicated this first special Sabbath day observance.[6]

   The separation of the Spirit from the Letter of the Law at this time changed this first special Sabbath day observance in three ways. First, from the perspective of its parameters, the required observance time was extended. An earlier start time was required, while the end time remained unchanged. Second, from the perspective of its total duration, the required observance time was shortened. Finally, the required observance time was moved up earlier in time, so that this first special Sabbath day observance ended at the time that it normally would have first begun.

   The first special Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread during Holy Week should have been observed according to the Spirit of the Law from shortly after noon on Thursday, [Nisan 14], to the end of the day at sunset. [Ex 12.6; Ex 34.25; Ex 12.15,16; Deut 16.4,7,8] It should also have been observed according to the Letter of the Law during the entire shortened fifteenth day of the first month. [Ex 12.16; Lev 23.6,7; Num 28.17,18] In regards to God's command in [Ex 12.16] that no manner of work be done on these special Sabbaths, the Jewish people observed only the requirements of the Letter of the Law, [Matt 27.62-64; Mk 15.42; Lk 23.54; Jn 19.31], but neglected the requirements of the Spirit of the Law. [Mk 15.42,46] [Neh 13.16-19] From the perspective of the Synoptic Gospels, this first special Sabbath should be remembered by the Spirit of the Law, beginning at darkness on [Nisan 14], and ending at sunset on that day. [Matt 26.17; Mk 14.12; Lk 22.7];

[6] God's Prophetic Word in [Amos 8.7-10] was fulfilled beginning at noon on Thursday, [Nisan 14], causing a mid-afternoon sunset on this day.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION: (CON'T)

2. During Holy Week, the Lord's Sabbath was observed on Saturday, [Nisan 16]. However, if it were not for these special circumstances[7], this same twenty-four hour period would have been construed as Friday, [Nisan 15]. Likewise, Sunday, [Nisan 17], would have been construed as Saturday, [Nisan 16]. Therefore, it was not the Christian Church who moved the Lord's Sabbath to Sunday; it was God who moved the first of the week into the Lord's Sabbath time slot, the time of Christ's Resurrection.

   The separation of the Spirit from the Letter of the Law is again made manifest here. Today, the majority of the Christian Church continues to observe the Sabbath day in accordance to the Spirit of the Law, on Sunday, while the Jewish people continue to observe the Sabbath day in accordance to the Letter of the Law, on Saturday.

   Jesus' other teachings relating to the Sabbath will also be discussed in this chapter.

   [Matt 12.1-8]; [Mk 2.23-28]; [Lk 6.1-5]; [Jn 4.23-24]

[7] The Jewish methods of reckoning a day from sunset to sunset, and the counting of any part of a day as a full day.

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