

The Seventh Day Sabbath Starts at Sunrise and Ends at Sunset

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If one should ask a Christian, protestant or even some Catholics when the Seventh Day Sabbath begins and ends, the answer would normally be from “sunset to sunset.” Until April 2017, that would have been my immediate response as well. However, while attempting to assist an inquirer regarding another Sabbath question, I was permitted by the Eternal to come across some historical information conveying that in ancient times, the Sabbath was initially observed starting at sunrise rather than the commonly practiced sunset to sunset schedule. Thus, in keeping with the wise Biblical admonition to prove all things, I was compelled to search the scriptures to verify the Biblical schedule of the Seventh Day Sabbath. I had long proved and known since my youth that the Sabbath is on the seventh day. Yet, this was the first time it occurred to me that I needed to verify whether the seventh day Sabbath starts at evening or at sunrise. Having done so, I came to understand that the Sabbath begins at sunrise per the Bible, not at evening or sunset as commonly presented by tradition. The remainder of this paper will summarize my findings on the Sabbath sunrise schedule per the Bible.

We need to observe the Sabbath of the seventh day as the Eternal commanded without adding to or taking away from His directive. We must make sure we model and teach it as He requires so we don't cause others to sin by erroneous teaching and or bad example. Like me, many people do their best to get everything ready such as food, clothes, etc. before the Sabbath starts. Some of us, would rather forego doing anything, even missing meals, to avoid infringing on the Sabbath. Others who are not so minded would on Sabbath, before or after services, go to stores and restaurants to buy food (not a good example for the watching world). If the Christians come to understand that, per the Bible, a day starts in the morning and not at evening as many falsely assume, they would understand that they have more than enough time to adequately prepare for the Sabbath and not need to make unnecessary sacrifices or scorn Sabbath rules. Ultimately, this is a matter of obedience to Eternal's command for us not to add or subtract from His Word. Although not covered in this paper, the start of annual holy days and annual Sabbaths are impacted as well. For this paper, the focus will remain on the Sabbath of the seventh day only.

Definitions of relevant words from Genesis 1 and 2:

1. ***Choshek*** (Unpleasant dense darkness, without any light)
2. Or (Light)
3. ***Yom*** (Daylight, warm, daytime)
4. ***Layila*** (Twist from light, Dark with some light for earth, Night)
5. ***Erev*** (Mix of light and darkness, Light waning to sunset, Evening)
6. ***Boqer*** (Light waxing towards day, Dawn)

Support: Sequentially numbered points of proof, evidence, or argument offered in descending order of importance---the strongest and most central point first.

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A. The Genesis Account and Definition of a Day and Sabbath Day:

1. *The First Six Days in Context of Genesis 1:1-5*

In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and **darkness** was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of Elohim was hovering over the face of the waters. And Elohim said, “Let there be **light**,” and there was light. And Elohim saw that the light was good. And Elohim separated the light from the darkness. Elohim called the light **Day**, and the **darkness** he called **Night**. And there was **evening** and there was **morning**, the first day.

2. *Meaning of the Narrative in context of the afore bolded words –*

*Elohim created the day (yom/light), before the first evening (erev/mix) which started earth’s initial 24-hour period of the six to follow. Prior to this initial step, there was no day, no 24-hour period. The evening came after Elohim had already created daylight (yom) – not before light. So the first part of the 24-hour period started with the day before the evening and ended with the evening. That evening turned to night(layilah/twist) which ended at dawn (boqer/morning). The logic of the narrative implies that the evening came after the light was made since evening cannot precede light as it is the result of diming light. The second half of the 24-hour period began when evening turned to night which then ended at dawn; not at evening or night. The ending clause “there was evening and there was morning, day one” (yom echad) was not intended to define the start and end of a day as many assume. Rather, it simply states what happened after the first light of day was placed. The section of the clause stating, “there was evening and morning” specifies that evening came after the light of day and ended at dawn; with the night (layilah) in between. The section “day one” or the first day, just reiterates that the light of day was the initialization and how Elohim established earth’s first 24-hour period. So, day one was created by the first daylight placed on Earth by Elohim. The same clause follows each event for all six days to specify when Elohim did each subsequent work. Not surprisingly, **Psalms** 74:16 states “The day is Yours, the night also is Yours. You have prepared the light and the sun.” It reflects the proper order of daylight before night and that light existed independently and before the sun, moon and stars were created. Also, **Psalm** 113:3 states “From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Eternal is to be praised!” This Psalm also implies a day starts from the rising of the sun; not at sunset.*

3. *The Darkness over the Earth was an unwanted condition, not a start or part of time*

Another aspect of the narrative is its pertinence to earth time. One error commonly made by sabbatarians, is to regard the initial darkness mentioned in Genesis 1:2 as a marker of time. They also equate that condition of darkness with the evening that came after light was already placed. They fail to realize that, per the Bible, darkness and night are not the same. Again darkness (choshek) is unpleasant and void of light, while night(layila) was created after light, contains some light, and is pleasant). It was not the start or part of the 24-hour period. With those two mistakes, they assume that the 24-hour period started with darkness which they

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confuse with evening or night. With that wrong notion, they reason that if a day starts at evening it must then end at evening; despite the fact the Bible clearly states evening and dawn; not evening and evening. Although the darkness existed over the earth before daylight, time markers such as days and weeks did not yet exist. In other words, when “the earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep”, a 24-hour period as we know it did not yet exist. The darkness then was a state of the creation, whether as a byproduct of an incomplete creation or by some destructive event after an initial creation. That darkness was a condition of the then empty earth; not a measure of time of any sort or the start of earth’s 24-hour period.

Earth’s first 24-hour period began when Elohim declared that first light and called it “day.” That first light, which started earth’s first daylight, later waned into evening, then transitioned to night, and ended at dawn. The 24-hour period could not begin with evening or night since yom by syntax and definition is light and warm; not evening or night. The Hebrew text implies that the evening came after the light was made. Evening cannot exist without or before light since it is a phase consisting of daylight fading from the afternoon to sundown. The condition of darkness over the earth became relevant to earth time only after light of day was established and darkness over the earth was changed to night by that light. That darkness became a part of earth time after the Lord changed it by light and called it night. Before that, darkness was a miserable part of the formless and void condition, which Elohim did not intend for Earth. Moreover, three days afterwards being the fourth day, Elohim appointed luminaries to continue the rule of both day and night of the 24-hour periods to follow.

*Darkness was not first. The manifest Light of Elohim was First; existing before all creation and was the Creator of all. As it is written “In Him was life, and the life was the **light** of men. The light **shines** in the **darkness**, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:4-5). The **true light**, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him” (John 1:9-10). “And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the **day dawns** and the **Morning Star** rises in your hearts,” (2 Peter 1:19). “I, **Yeshua**, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the **Bright Morning Star**” (Revelation 22:16). *By the above Bible texts and others, it was that Light, that Morning Star, the Logos that shined through the darkness and gave the first light/day. It was His light that transformed the harsh darkness to the first pleasant night over the earth for the first three days of creation. Thus, it is most fitting that Elohim should give light preeminence over the darkness by making it the beginning of earth’s day and its dawning the end of the darkness. In every way, Yeshua is literally the true source of light and life over all creation. The following are some other Biblical references showing that daylight precedes the night.**

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4) Sacrifices Prove 24-Hour Period Must Start with Daylight and Cannot Start at Dusk

a. **Exodus** 40:1-2, 29, 34, 38: *Initial cycle of the daily sacrifices started in the day; not at sundown.*

b. **Leviticus** 6:8-13:

The Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, “Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the **law of the burnt offering**. The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar **all night until the morning**, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. And the priest shall put on his linen garment and put his linen undergarment on his body, and he shall take up the **ashes** to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar and put them beside the altar. Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not go out. The priest shall burn wood on it **every morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering** on it and shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

c. **Numbers** 28:1-4: *Order of sacrifices is from morning to morning, not evening to evening.*

The Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, “Command the people of Israel and say to them, ‘My offering, my food for my food offerings, my pleasing aroma, you shall be careful to offer to me at its appointed time.’ And you shall say to them, This is the food offering that you shall offer to the Eternal: two male lambs a year old without blemish, day by day, as a regular offering. The **one lamb** you shall offer in the **morning**, and the **other lamb** you shall offer at **twilight**;

***Note:** Wood and Offering was set in the morning to burn all night to ashes until replaced at dawn. The first lamb in the morning and second lamb at twilight. Since both animals are for one day, not two, and must be offered in sequential order on the same day, then the evening and night until dawn in which the second lamb burns to ashes are part of the same day; not the start of a new day. In the morning, the ashes would be removed and new wood arranged and a new set of animals selected for the sacrifices of the new day. This lends to a day to dawn schedule; not evening to evening. So, this sacrifice command works perfectly only with a day to dawn schedule. Yet, it cannot be kept as commanded under an evening to evening schedule, since the sacrifices intended for a single day would overlap two days.*

To illustrate, lets mentally visualize an attempt to offer the daily sacrifices of the first day of the week under an evening to evening schedule. Since the first sacrifice must be offered in the morning and the second one offered in the evening of the same day, how could the priest offer the first sacrifice in the order and time commanded if a day starts at evening? It can't be done since the law dictates that the first sacrifice of the day must be offered in the morning. Contrary to the commandment, if a day started at evening, the evening sacrifice would be the first one and the morning sacrifice would be the second. Also, contrary to the law, the second animal selected for the evening sacrifice of the first day would be offered on the second day of the week if evening starts a new day.

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Furthermore, as the week progressed, this schedule would eventually mix the sacrifices of the sixth day, a common workday, with those of the seventh day Sabbath. Considering the prescribed schedule for sacrifices stated in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, the morning and evening sacrifices must be offered with the first animal offered in the morning and second one offered in the evening of the same day; not two days. Think it through carefully. This can only be done, as commanded, in a dawn to dawn schedule; and cannot be done in an evening to evening schedule. This is another proof that a day starts with sunrise and not evening, since the Eternal would never give His people a command that could not be performed.

5. The Scriptures uses specific words for phases of a day, the words do not interchange

Jonah 4:7-8: And Elohim appointeth a worm **at** the going up of the **dawn** on the **morrow**, and it smiteth the gourd, and it drieth up... And it **cometh** to pass, about the **rising** of the **sun**, that Elohim appointeth a cutting east wind, and the sun smiteth on the head of Jonah, and he wrappeth himself up, and asketh his soul to die, and saith, 'Better is my death than my life.'

Numbers 9:15: On the **day** that the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony. And at **evening** it was over the tabernacle like the appearance of fire until **morning**.

Numbers 9:21: And sometimes the cloud remained from **evening** until **morning**. And when the cloud lifted in the **morning**, they set out, or if it continued for a **day** and a **night**, when the cloud lifted they set out.

Note: The above texts show the Bible uses day (yom), evening (erev), dawn (boqer), and night (layila) with consistent meaning. They show that a day begins after dawn; not at evening

Exodus 10:13: So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the Eternal brought an east wind upon the land **all that day** and **all that night**. When it was **morning**, the east wind had brought the locusts.

Note: All that day and all that night; not all that night and all that day. The daytime of that 24-hour period preceded the night of that period.

Exodus 18:13: The **next day** Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses **from morning till evening**.

Note: The next day (Machar) started from morning to till evening; not evening to morning.

Exodus 32:5-6: When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "**Tomorrow** shall be a feast to the Eternal." And they rose up **early the next day** and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

Note: "Tomorrow" the morning started new day; not a part of the prior evening.

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Numbers 11:32: “And the people rose **all that day and all night and all the next day**, and gathered the quail. Those who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.”

Note: Started collecting at day (yom), through the night (layila) and all the next (mokaran) day (yom). This pattern shows day to dawn; not evening to evening.

1Samuel 19:24: And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked **all that day and all that night**. Thus it is said, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

Note: The day of that period preceded the period's night; a day to dawn schedule.

6. Implications on the First Six Days –

The Work of Creation was being done during the yom (daylight) part of the 24-hour periods cyclically throughout all six days; not during the night. Throughout the six days, the Bible specifies that each daylight period was followed by an evening to dawn period; not evening to evening. We can understand by inference, that the night (layila) is between this parameter of evening and dawn since evening precedes the night which ends at dawn. If a day started at evening, then the day's duration would be only 12-hours long instead of 24-hours long. Yet, this 12-hour parameter of evening to morning was preceded by 12-hours of daylight to which started the cycle of 24-hour days. It logically follows that all the six days began with a 12-hour phase of light of day which, after evening, transitioned to another 12-hour phase of night, which ended at dawn. So, all the work accomplished on each day was done during the first 12-hour parameter of daylight; after which came period of evening to dawn. No work was being done between the evening and dawn 12-hour period. Elohim set the precedent for man to follow; work during the daylight and to sleep at night.

*The New Testament also reflects the same pattern. In fact, Messiah Yeshua affirmed this when He said. “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). In another passage, “Yeshua answered, 'Are there not **twelve hours** in the day? if any one may walk in the day, he doth not stumble, because the light of this world he doth see; and if any one may walk in the **night**, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him.” (John 11:9-10).*

Note: The Master's statements show that it was understood that night comes after the light of day; not before. It also shows the Genesis 24-hour pattern, set by Elohim, of 12-hour daylight for work followed by the 12-hour dark phase of sunset, night when work stops until dawn.

Evening is the ending of daylight of the same day; not the start of a new day –

John 20:1, 19: And on the **first** of the **sabbaths**, Mary the Magdalene doth come **early** (there

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being yet **darkness**) to the tomb, and she seeth the stone having been taken away out of the tomb... It being, therefore, **evening**, on **that day**, the **first** of the **sabbaths**, and the doors having been shut where the disciples were assembled, through fear of the Jews, Yeshua came and stood in the midst, and saith to them, 'Peace to you;'

Note: When evening came, “that day” was still the same day. Evening doesn't start a day.

Mark 4:1, 35: And again he began to teach by the sea, and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he, having gone into the boat, sat in the sea, and all the multitude was near the sea, on the land... And he saith to them on **that day**, **evening** having **come**, 'We may pass over to the other side...'

Note: The significance is that Yeshua started teaching earlier during a day, and it remained that same day when evening came; not becoming another day. So evening doesn't start the day.

7. Implications on The Sabbath Day Genesis 2:1-3(See Appendix A Interlinear Sheet) – Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day Elohim finished His work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done. So Elohim blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it Elohim rested from all His work that He had done in creation.

Per the Bible, The Creator stopped and did no work on the seventh yom; not the seventh erev or layila. Thus, having examined the above Genesis narratives in context of its specific wording and logical sequence of events, the Sabbath schedule started with the daylight per Genesis; not evening to evening or sunset to sunset. Notice, the statement “there was evening and there was dawn” applied to each of the prior six days, is starkly excluded in its account of the Sabbath of the seventh day. Furthermore, the New Testament accounts of the start or parts of days confirms this. There's not a single reference in Scripture of the Sabbath starting at or being a part of evening, sunset, or night. Thus, the Bible tells us plainly that the first seventh day started with daylight; not evening. Therefore, the seventh day Sabbath starts with the daylight and is of the day; not evening or night.

B. The Sabbath Starts at Daylight and Ends at Evening; Is of The Day and Not The Night

1. The Mana Instructions Affirm this fact

Exodus 16:22-23-26: *With hands-on instruction, Moses identified the Sabbath as starting the morrow (machar*) of the sixth day. He didn't say the evening. Morrow is another English word for morning. *Machar is the Hebrew word for morrow, commonly next morning.* On the sixth **day** they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, “This is what the Eternal has commanded: ‘**Tomorrow** is a **day** of **solemn rest**, a holy **Sabbath** to the Eternal; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the **morning**.’” So they laid it

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aside till the **morning**, as Moses commanded them, and it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. Moses said, “Eat it **today**, for today is a **Sabbath** to the Eternal; **today** you will not find it in the field.

Note: On the sixth day, Moses said tomorrow is the Sabbath; he didn't mention the evening. When the seventh daylight started, he said today is the Sabbath; not the prior evening. Although meat (quail) was being provided for them every evening, not once did the Eternal give any instructions or restrictions concerning it. Every instruction was strictly about the collecting of the mana from morning to noon for six days; not one directive was given for the evening or the quail. Why was it so, since the quail would require much more work and hours to prepare? Well, in giving Israel that hands-on training on how to keep the Sabbath, Moses, as instructed by the Eternal, clearly told them it starts in the morning after the six day, not once mentioning or implying the evening. The Eternal is not the author of confusion, if He wanted them to start the Sabbath at evening, He would have specified that the sixth evening was the Sabbath. Please note and consider, that when the six day came, Moses never gave any instructions about the evening or once mentioned it. How could this be, if the Sabbath started in the evening? This simply means that the evening had nothing to do with the Sabbath of the seventh day. He gave the meat (quail) and bread (manna) Sabbath training to Israel and had Moses record it to make it clear to all who love Him when the seventh day Sabbath starts and ends. It is a 12-hour rest that starts with the sunrise of the seventh day and ends at the evening of the seventh day; not 24-hours. It is of the light only and not of the dark, and so does not carry over the night to the next dawn. This fact agrees with the Genesis account that disassociates the Sabbath of the seventh day from the clause about the “evening and morning” related to all the other six days.

2. Leviticus 23:26-32, are Rules for the Day of Atonements, Not the Seventh Day Sabbath: And the Eternal spoke to Moses, saying, “Now on the **tenth day** of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the Eternal. And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the Eternal your Elohim. For whoever is not afflicted on that very day shall be cut off from his people. And whoever does any work on that very day, that person I will destroy from among his people. You shall not do any work. It is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict yourselves. On the **ninth day** of the month **beginning at evening, from evening to evening** shall you keep your Sabbath” (Shabbaton).

In reading the above, people commonly, yet erroneously conclude that the Day of Atonements begins at sunset and ends at the sunset of the same day. They also make the error of applying the schedule of the Day of Atonement to that of the Seventh Day Sabbath. They came to the wrong conclusions from failing to realize the following facts.

a. Starts Evening of the Ninth and Ends by Evening of the tenth of the Seventh Month –

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It starts on the eve of the ninth day and ends on eve of the tenth day of seventh month. If days begin at evening as commonly believed, then this holy appointment would start at the beginning of the ninth day with sacrifices done during the light part of the ninth and end at the evening which would exclude the tenth day of the seventh month, and so not meeting the above schedule. With a day to dawn framework, the ninth of the seventh month would start in the day, the holy day would start at the evening of the ninth day, the ninth would end by morning, the tenth day would start in the day, the holy day services would start during the tenth day and end on the tenth day by the evening; so meeting the schedule. Please see DOA schedule sheet.

b. Schedule Applies to the Day of Atonements, Not the Sabbath of the Seventh Day –

This evening to evening schedule is not for the seventh day Sabbath or for all the other holy days. The Sabbath per Genesis started at the light of day like the other six days, and some other holy days, like Shavuot, also start during the day (Leviticus 23:21, Acts 2:1). Other appointments like the Passover and the Day of Atonements start in the evening and end at evening on dates that begin in the day. Thus, the schedule of an appointment does not affect when a day starts. Their schedules tell us what time within the 24-hours to start observing the appointed time, not that the day starts at evening. For example, although the 14th of Aviv starts in the morning, Passover starts at twilight of the 14th; not in the morning when the day started. Please see Appendix C for a schedule of the Appointed times.

3. Old and New Testament Accounts of the Sabbath not Starting at Evening

Nehemiah 13:19: As soon as it began to **grow dark** at the gates of Jerusalem **before the Sabbath**, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the Sabbath. And I stationed some of my servants at the gates, that no load might be brought in on the Sabbath day.

*Note: Nehemiah's guarding of the Sabbath lends to a sunrise Sabbath schedule; not evening or dusk one. Grow Dark (**Tsâlal**) – Hebrew conveying the idea of hovering over (compare H6754)); to shade, as twilight or an opaque object; begin to be dark, shadowing. Darkness of night came but the Sabbath did not start. If Sabbath started at evening, it should have already started, since it was almost dark. Also, if Sabbath started at evening, why would the faithful and zealous prophet, who was urgently striving to safeguard the Sabbath, wait until the last minutes towards nightfall to implement his solution? It would make sense for him to have arranged this earlier. Per the text, it was growing dark, the evening transitioning to nightfall, and the Sabbath didn't yet start. It is evident that Nehemiah set the guard on time for the Sabbath that would start in the morning, rather than waiting the last moment for an evening Sabbath.*

New day starts after dawn, not at evening –

Matthew 28:1: And on the **eve** of the sabbaths, at the **dawn, toward** the first of the sabbaths, came Mary the Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre...

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Note: If the Sabbath started at evening, the next phase would be Sabbath morning, not the first of the week. Also, it clearly states the first day of the week started at dawn, not evening.

Evening came and it was still the preparation, not yet rest time (Sabbaton)

Mark 15:42: And now **evening** having **come**, seeing it was the **preparation**, that is, the **fore-sabbath**,

i) Joseph of Arimathea's time to ask Pilate for the Body

Mark 15:43: Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, who also himself was waiting for the reign of Elohim, **came**, boldly **entered** in unto **Pilate**, and **asked** the body of Yeshua.

ii) Pilate's inquiry and receipt of confirmation of the death

Mark 15:44, 45

And **Pilate wondered** if he were already **dead**, and having **called** near the **centurion**, did question him if he were long dead,... and having **known** it **from** the **centurion**, he **granted** the **body** to **Joseph**.

iii) Joseph of Arimathea's time to go to Golgotha

iv) Time required to carefully remove the spikes from hands and feet and take the Body down without damaging or dropping it

v) Time to clean, anoint, rap, transport and place the Body in a tomb at a garden location (not Golgotha)

vi) Time to roll great stone over the tomb

Mark 15:46-47

And **he**, having **brought** fine **linen**, and having **taken** him **down**, **wrapped** him in the linen, and **laid** him in a **sepulcher** that had been hewn out of a rock, and he **rolled** a **stone** unto the **door** of the **sepulcher**, and **Mary** the **Magdalene**, and **Mary** of **Joses**, were **beholding** where **he** is **laid**.

Note: It was already evening, and all that work was done and that Sabbath hadn't yet come.

vii) Then they rested on Sabbath according to the commandment; on time

Luke 23:54: And the **day** was a **preparation**, and **sabbath** was **approaching**,

Luke 23:55: and the **women** also who have come with him out of Galilee having followed after, **beheld** the **tomb**, and how his **body** was **placed**,

Luke 23:56: and having **turned back**, they **made** ready **spices** and **ointments**, and **on** the **sabbath**, indeed, they **rested**, **according** to the **command**.

Note: Implications of the above – Luke shows that after the burial, the women still had enough time to prepare the spices before resting on that Sabbath on time; “according to the command.” How can Sabbath start at evening, since the New Testament Gospels state that it

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was already evening and still the preparation day when Christ was taken from the stake? Can anyone, with all sincerity, say all the above work could be done by human beings starting at evening before night comes, let alone sundown? Like the account in Nehemiah, the evening came but it was not yet the Sabbath; either Sabbath does start at sunset or it doesn't. If the Sabbath started at evening, the disciples would not have been able to start all that work at evening and finish on time to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

In the narratives of the preparation of Christ's Body for burial, the Sabbath did not start at evening. So, the Sabbath which "drew near" would have to be one that came hours after His Body was taken down; long after evening. By the way, the Greek word for drew near is epiphōskō which means dawning. So that sabbath would come during the day; not the evening or night. Since, the Gospel accounts lend to a Sabbath that did not start at evening, by inference, it is reasonable to conclude that sabbath started on a day at sunrise.

The implications of the above Old and New Testament texts are that Earth's 24-hour period cyclically starts with a period of daylight which wanes to evening; followed by a period from sunset, which turns to night, and ends at dawn. More directly, Genesis 2:1-3 plainly states the Sabbath was established during the yom (day/light) as were all the works done on each of the preceding six days of creation. The Sabbath schedule, however is relegated only to the hours of daylight time; not part of nightfall.

Scriptures Demonstrating Timing and Parts of a 24-Hour Period:

1. **Evening/twilight** (Erev) – Diming of daylight before sunset

Exodus 12:5-6

Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth **day** of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at **twilight** (erev).

Exodus 12:18

In the first month, from the fourteenth **day** of the month at **evening**, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first **day** of the month at **evening**.

2. **Sunset** (Shemes Bo) – Sun no longer visible; only fading light before night

Genesis 15:12: As the **sun** was going **down**, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great **darkness** fell upon him.

Genesis 15:17: When the **sun** had gone **down** and it was **dark**, behold, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces.

3. **Morning, Dawn and Day**

Exodus 12:18: In the first month, from the fourteenth **day** (yom) of the month at **evening** (erev), you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first **day** of the month at **evening**.

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Matthew 28:1: as it began to **dawn** (epiphosko) toward the first...

Mark 1:35: And in the **morning** (pro-ee), rising up a great while **before day** (ennuchon), He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Note: This verse shows that morning (dawn) starts before daytime. As the evening is the intermediate phase between day and night, the morning is an intermediate phase between night and day.

John 11:9: Are there not twelve hours in a **day** (hemera)

Note: This verse affirms that the daylight is generally 12-hours long.

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C. Sabbath Schedule of Ancient Israel – Historical and Scholarly Perspectives

The other reason most Sabbatarians site as evidence for a sunset to sunset Sabbath is that most Jews observe it from evening to evening. They often defend this notion with statements like the Jews are “God’s chosen people who have His oracles and so they know best when and how the Sabbath should be kept.” However, what these Sabbatarians don’t take into consideration is that the Jews had numerous sects with different beliefs and practices and different Sabbath schedules. Indeed, there were several such as the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Herodians and others. For the efficacy of this presentation, the following will cover only the Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes as they were the primary and most influential of the Jewish sects.

a. Sadducees:

1. Origin and Function – Priest of Second Temple Era
2. Sabbath Schedule – Sunrise to Sunset

"in the second Temple, throughout its entire existence, the practice seems to have been in all ritual matters to reckon the day from dawn to dawn, and not according to the later practice, from sunset to sunset...even the rabbis, who, themselves, reckoned the day from sunset to sunset, and refused to admit the legitimacy of any other practice, or rather, absolutely ignored all divergent practice, none the less had to admit the validity of the interpretation of Lev. 7:15... the day was at one time reckoned from sunrise to sunrise... The earlier practice, which continued until the time of the secondary strata of the Priestly code, was to reckon the day from dawn to dawn... The later practice was to reckon the day from sunset to sunset... It was probably coincident with the revision of the festival calendar, which took place in the period after the time of Ezra, and was, in all probability, the work of the soferim or of the Great Synod in the fourth century B.C.

This may also be inferred from the statement in the Talmud (Berachoth 33a) that the men of the Great Synod instituted the ceremonies of Kiddush and Havdalah, the solemn sanctification of the Sabbath on Friday eve, and its equally solemn ushering out on Saturday eve, in other words, ceremonies specifically marking the beginning and close of the Sabbath as at sunset. These were ceremonies for the Jewish home instead of the Temple. This, coupled with the fact that in the second Temple the old system of reckoning the day from dawn to dawn continued to be observed, as we have seen, may perhaps indicate that this entire innovation was the work of an anti-priestly group or party in the Great Synod... (*The Sources of the Creation Story - Gen. 1:1- 2:4, p. 169-212*).

b. Pharisees:

1. Origin and Function – Rabbinical Sect of Second Temple Era
2. Sabbath Schedule – Evening to Evening

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Rabbi Israel Drazin wrote:

“It is well known that Jews begin their day in the evening at sunset, not at midnight and not at daybreak, but this was not always so. Many scholars are convinced that the biblical Israelite day started at daybreak. It seems possible that the Judeans who were exiled to Babylon accepted the Babylonian practice of beginning the day with the prior evening.

We know for certain that the day began in the Temple at daybreak and it is assumed that the priests in the Temple retained the ancient practice for as long as the Temple existed. When the Bible states “there was evening and there was morning, one day” in Genesis 1:5, its meaning is literal: God completed what was stated earlier during the “daylight period” and this was followed by evening, and when morning came, the day ended – “one day.” The Hebrew is *erev* and *boker*. The first means “evening” and the second “morning” or “daybreak.” <http://booksnthoughts.com/why-women-must-start-shabbat-before-men/>

Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary wrote:

“Finally, the festival calendar clearly alludes to a division of time that regards the evening as part of the day just ended. ... Second, the talmudic innovation of reckoning a day from the eve before suggests a larger view of life. While we may never know what prompted the Rabbis to reconfigure the day, the existential benefit is indisputable.”

<http://www.jtsa.edu/prebuilt/ParashahArchives/5758/bereshit.shtml>

c. Essenes:

1. Origin and Function – Second Temple era sect that left mainstream Judaism to avoid its corruptions of the Tanak
2. Sabbath Schedule – Sunrise to Sunset

“There were sects of Judaism that believed that the morning began the day of the Jewish calendar. I am not familiar with how the Sadducees did their calendar, as they did not survive as a sect, nor did any of their writings (if they had any). Many people equate Sadducees with Karaites, but this is not correct, Karaites follow the normal Jewish calendar, with exceptions to how a new moon is reckoned, and when Shavu'ot is.

If indeed the Jews at Qumran were Essenes, then we could say that there was an Essene calendar that was based off the book 1 Enoch and Jubilees. While you might not find the very specific phrasing of “the day begins at sunrise,” the calendars they propose are solar calendars, which have their basis with the rising and the falling of the sun as their measurement of counting days. Unlike a lunar calendar, which is based on the appearance of (or lack thereof) the moon. Many ancient civilizations used a solar calendar, and in fact a variant of a solar calendar is what is commonly used in America, given to us by the Romans, which is why we reckon the day at sunrise. So when you read discussions of ancient Jewish

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sects, the term solar calendar has the implicit understanding that the days are reckoned at sunrise.

You can read some information regarding the calendar of Enoch here. Be aware that if you do a Google search of the Enoch calendar you will find lots of websites of new "Messianic Christian" sects that are attempting to revive the use of the Enochian calendar.

In terms of normative Judaism, the Rashbam claims that the Jewish day begins at sunrise, though he also says that his words are not to contradict halachah, but that he is simply giving what he considers the p'shat of the text. It is unknown if he was aware of any Essene documentation or if he came to this conclusion on his own.

Rashbam on Genesis 1:5

ויהי ערב ויהי בקר – אין כתיב כאן ויהי לילה ויהי יום אלא ויהי ערב, שהעריב יום ראשון ושיקע האור, ויהי בוקר, בוקרו של לילה, שעלה עמוד השחר. הרי הושלם יום א' מן הו' ימים שאמר הק' בי' הדברות, ואח"כ התחיל יום שיני, ויאמר אלהים יהי רקיע. ולא בא הכתוב לומר שהערב והבקר יום אחד הם, כי לא הצרכנו לפרש אלא היאך היו ששה ימים, שהבקר יום ונגמרה הלילה, הרי נגמר יום אחד והתחיל יום שיני

And it was evening and it was morning – It does not say “it was night and it was day”, but “it was evening”, [meaning] the first day passed and the light set, “and it was morning”, the ending of the night, for the dawn broke. One day of the six days mentioned in the Ten Commandments was completed. Afterwards the second day began, and God said “Let there be sky.” The verse is not coming to tell us that evening and morning constitute one day, for we do not need to explain anything but how the six days were, for with the coming of the morning the night was over – thus one day was completed and the second day begun.

Source: <http://thetorah.com/can-torah-contradict-halacha/>

d. General Scholarly Consensus:

"...Early in the old testament period, when Canaan was under Egypt's influence, the day started at sunrise... later, perhaps under Babylonian influence, the calendar seems to have changed. the day began at moonrise (1800 hrs) and a whole day became an evening and a morning..." (*Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible* - p.163).

"...according to the Karaite historian Al-QirqisanI (ca. 975 CE), the dissident Meswi al-Okbari (ca.850 CE) broke from traditional Rabbinical Judaism in an attempt to get back to the original religion and began the reckoning of the day from sunrise. (*The Itinerary of R. Benjamin of Tudela*, ix, 5-8, ed. Gruhut-Adler, (1904), p. 23).

"...To the Light He gives the name Day, to the Darkness the name Night...Thus the work of the first day, reckoned probably from morning to morning, is accomplished. The period of

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Light is followed by Evening and Darkness, which comes to an end with the next morning when the second day begins..." (*Peake's Commentary on The Bible, p.136*).

"Among the Greeks the day was reckoned from sunset to sunset..." (*Handbook of Chronology, op.cit., p.8*)

"the **Mishnah** (the collection of Jewish law made at the end of the 2nd century AD) fully describes the system which the Jews had worked out under Babylonian influence..." (*Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible*).

"In order to fix the beginning and ending of the Sabbath-day and festivals and to determine the precise hour for certain religious observances it becomes necessary to know the exact times of the rising and setting of the sun. According to the strict interpretation of the Mosaic law, every day begins with sunrise and ends with sunset... (*Jewish Encyclopedia, p. 591-597*).

"There can be no doubt that in pre-exilic times the Israelites reckoned the day from morning to morning. The day began with the dawn and closed with the end of the night following it..." (*Jacob Zallel Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1951), p. 446*).

"Among the ancient Israelites, as among the Greeks, the day was reckoned from sunset to sunset. This was the custom also of the Gauls and ancient Germans, and was probably connected originally with the cult of the moon. There is, however, evidence that this was not the custom at all times..." (*Delitzsch in Dillmann's commentary on Gen. i. 5*).

"...Numerous scholars have argued for the existence in Bible times of a sunrise method of day reckoning...the evidence for the sunrise reckoning is significant and cannot be ignored..." (*The Time of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, Chapter 5*).

"the days of creation are not reckoned from evening to evening, but from morning to morning..." (*Commentary on the Old Testament, The First Book of Moses, p. 51*).

"From a very early period the time of reckoning the day was from sunset to sunset, and this BECAME THE JEWISH METHOD..." (*Unger's Bible Dictionary, "Day", page 1098*).

"...In earlier traditions a day apparently began at sunrise (e.g., Lev. 7:15-17; Judg. 19:4-19)... later its beginning was at sunset and its end at the following sunset... this system became normative... and is still observed in Jewish tradition, where for example , the sabbath begins

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on Friday evening at sunset and ends Saturday at sunset..." (*Oxford Companion to the Bible*, p.744).

"When the Jews returned to Palestine after their Babylonian exile (516 B.C.E.) they brought back with them the Babylonian astronomy and way of reckoning time..." (*What is a Jew*, p. 108).

"Days were reckoned from morning to morning..." Following the reign of King Josia (c. 640-609), and especially after the Babylonian exile a number of significant and enduring changes occurred in the Israelite calendar showing that the Jews gradually adopted the Babylonian calendar of the time...the seven day week persisted despite its failure to divide evenly either the month or the year. the day however, was counted from evening to evening, after the Babylonian fashion..." (*New Catholic Encyclopedia -Volume 11, p.1068*).

"...The nighttime is considered as belonging to the preceding period of daylight. from this there developed the meaning of "day" in the sense of the cycle made up of one period of daylight and one period of darkness, or according to our modern reckoning, twenty-four hours...from the natural viewpoint the twenty-four hour day begins at sunrise... however, beside this conception there arose another idea of the twenty-four hour day, according to which this daily period began at sunset. it was no doubt the lunar calendar of the Jews which gave rise to this viewpoint... although the earlier computation did not die out completely, the custom of considering the day as beginning at sunset became general in later Jewish times..." (*Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Bible. p.497*).

"In the Old Testament the earlier practice seems to have been to consider that the day began in the morning. In Gen. 19:34, for example, the "morrow" (ASV) or "Next Day" (RSV) clearly begins with the morning after the preceding night..." (*Jack Finegan, The Handbook of Biblical Chronology, p.7-8*).

"In Israel, the day was for a long time reckoned from morning to morning...and it was in fact in the morning, with the creation of light, that the world began; the distinction of day and night, and time too, began on a morning (Gen. 1:3-5, cf. 14:16, 18). The opposite conclusion has been drawn from the refrain which punctuates the story of creation: "There was an evening and there was a morning, the first, second, etc., day"; This phrase, however, coming after the description of each creative work (which clearly happens during the period of light), indicates rather the vacant time till the morning, the end of a day and the beginning of the next work...The change of reckoning must therefore have taken place between the end of the monarchy and the age of Nehemias... this would bring us to the beginning of the exile..." (*Ancient Israel, p.181-182*).

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"That the custom of reckoning the day as beginning in the evening and lasting until the following evening was probably of late origin is shown by the phrase "tarry all night" (Jdg 19:6-9); the context shows that the day is regarded as beginning in the morning; in the evening the day "declined," and until the new day (morning) arrived it was necessary to "tarry all night" (compare also Number 11:32)" (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)

Above Consensus compiled by: (<http://www.isawthelightministries.com/daystarts.html>)

The significant point of the above information is that there are numerous reliable historical and scholarly sources affirming that ancient Israel originally observed a dawn to dawn daily schedule and Sabbath and that the sunset to sunset came later of Babylonian origin. Also, if the historians and scholars are correct about the Sadducees' day to dawn schedule, then it would be the correct one since Christ never admonished the Sadducees for their schedule per the New Testament. Also the Sadducees do have a track record of being correct about the holy appointments, while the Pharisees fostering the sunset to sunset schedule are known to have instituted new year and holy day schedules that are outright contrary to Scripture.

Conclusions:

Per my observations as stated in the above paragraphs a day starts at sunrise, not evening or sunset. When read without the influence of tradition, the specific Biblical wording and order of the Genesis chapter 1 narrative shows that a day starts from daylight, which then wanes to evening, then turning into night, and ends at dawn. It shows work being done during the daytime of each six days followed by an evening and dawn for each six days. Also, Genesis chapter 2 and Exodus 16 clearly state that Sabbath was established during the seventh day, not the seventh evening; definitely not sunset. The daily sacrifice order and timing show a day must start from dawn and can't start at evening or dusk. Furthermore, we saw that the evening to evening timing schedule of the Day of Atonements spans between two dates; starting the evening of the 9th and ending at evening of the 10th of the Seventh month. That schedule was specifically for the Day of Atonements; not for the Seventh Day Sabbath. There are numerous New and Old Testament texts that show a day starts at sunrise and ends at dawn. On reviewing the New Testament records, we saw that a day and the morrow start from dawn per the Gospels. Lastly we especially noted the time needed for Messiah's disciples to go and request His Body after it was already evening, to carefully and securely remove and lower it from the cross, then to clean, prepare, transport, and place it in a tomb before the Sabbath started lends more to a day start rather than a sunset to sunset schedule. Per the consensus of Jewish records and expert biblical documents reviewed, the Ancient Israelites initially observed days beginning from dawn to dawn and weekly Sabbath with a daytime schedule. The Sadducees, who oversaw the temple at the time of Messiah, regarded days from day to dawn accordingly. After reviewing and considering the Biblical and historical evidence, I had to conclude that a day begins with daylight and ends at dawn. Thus, the seventh 24-hour period is a period that starts at daylight and ends following dawn. Yet, the Sabbath of the seventh day is only of the light, starting with

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the daylight and ending at sunset; not evening to evening, or sunset to sunset as postulated by most Sabbatarians.

As I completed the historical research, which was done after the Biblical research, I could not help but feel perplexed that many who call themselves ministers or pastors have access to all this information and yet teach falsehood. That to me is unjust. But I thank the Eternal in the Name of His Wonderful Son Yeshua the Messiah, Savior, King over kings, and the Morning Star, that His Spirit guided me and others to know the truth. As it is written, “The secret of the Eternal is revealed to them that fear Him and His Covenant to give them understanding.” Mine eyes are ever toward the Eternal: for He will bring my feet out of the net” (Psalm 25:14-15).