

When Was Christ Crucified?

A Wednesday Crucifixion and “Three Days and Three Nights” Timeline

PURPOSE

To show how a Wednesday burial is mapped using sunset-to-sunset biblical days, producing three nights and three days and placing the resurrection late on the weekly Sabbath, just before sunset.

3

DAYS

3

NIGHTS

“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Matthew 12:40

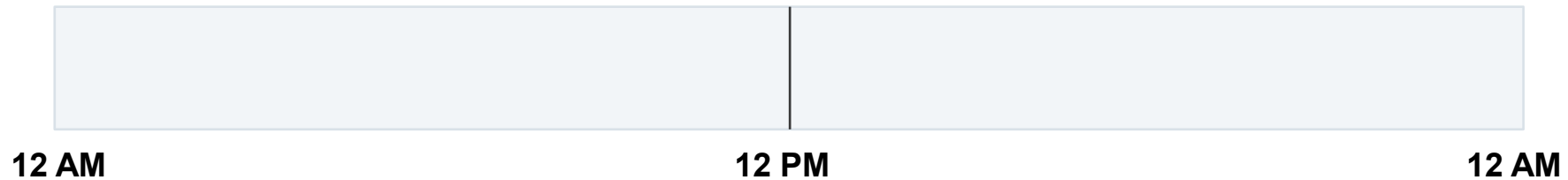
1. The starting point: a biblical day begins in the evening

Genesis describes the sequence as “evening and morning.”

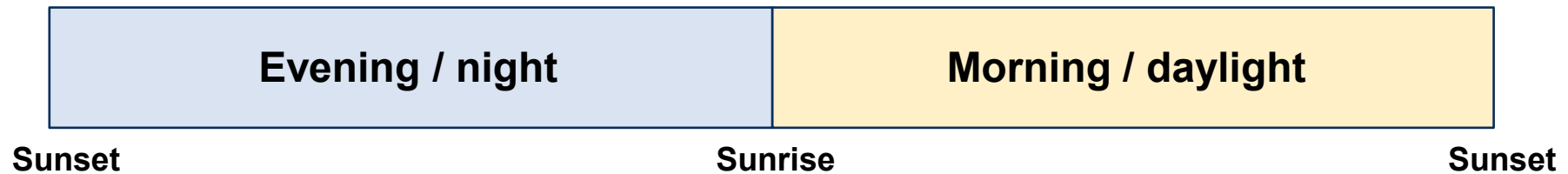
*“And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the **evening** and the **morning** were the first day.”*

Genesis 1:5

Modern day



Biblical day



Key point

A biblical day crosses our midnight boundary. We use 6 PM as sundown. **Remember**, daylight savings time wasn't made a law in the U.S. until 1918. Back then, they used standard time (6 PM).

2. First see the week using our modern calendar

Each modern day runs from 12:00 AM to 12:00 AM.

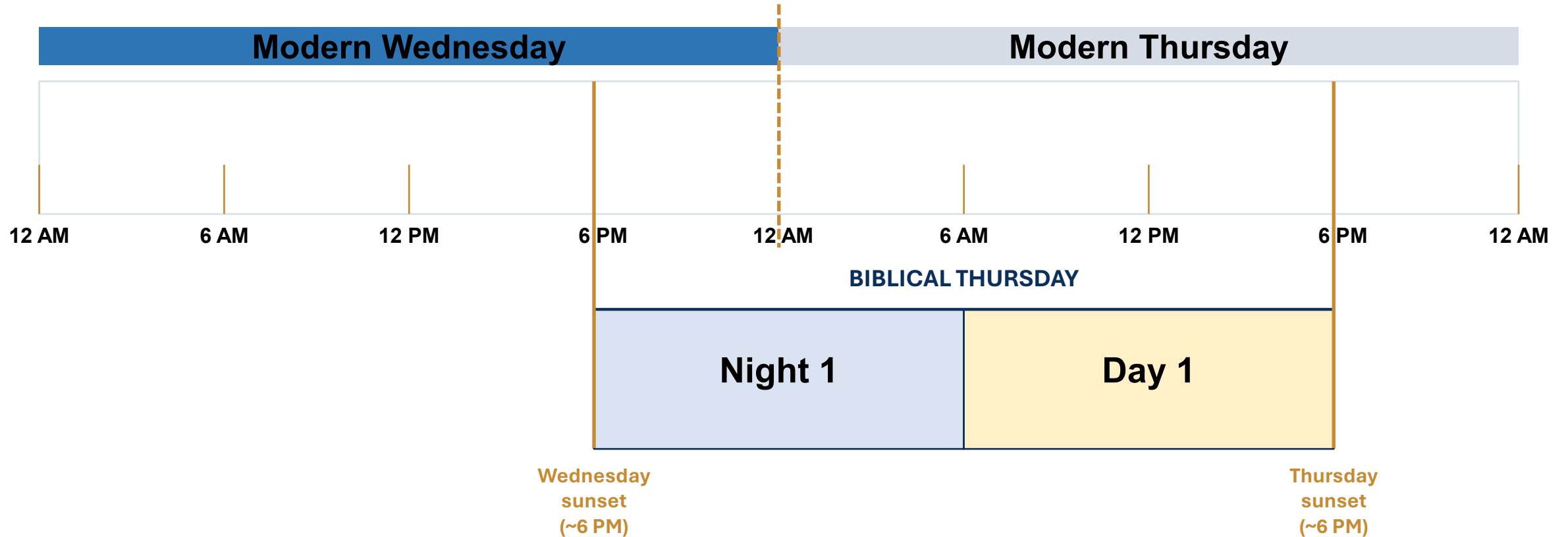


This is the familiar midnight-to-midnight frame.

The next slide overlays the biblical evening-to-evening frame on top of it.

3. Biblical Thursday begins on modern Wednesday evening

The biblical boundary and the modern boundary do not fall at the same time.

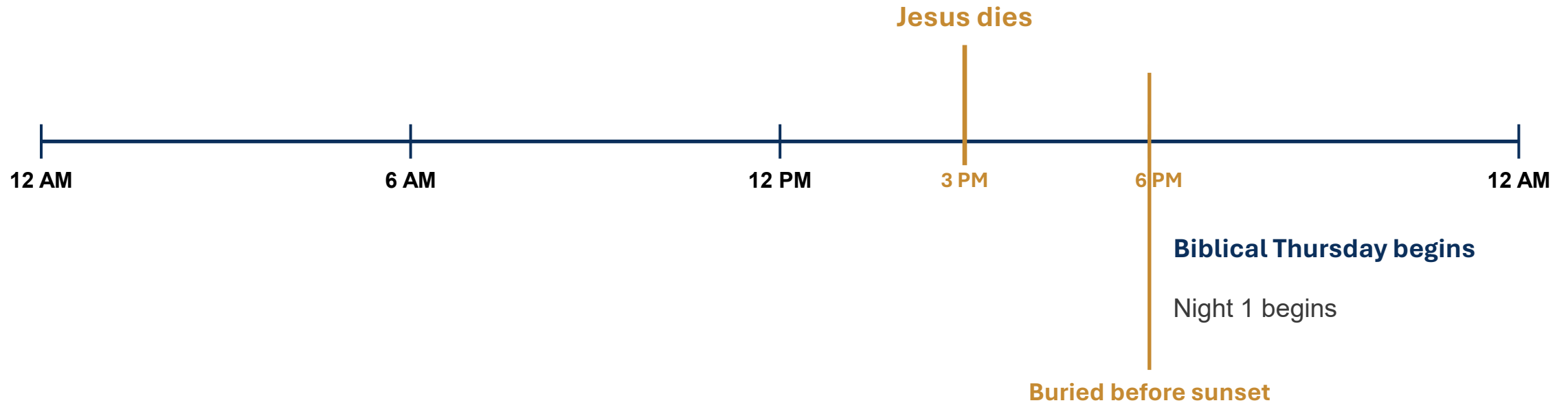


What changes?

What we call Wednesday evening is already the beginning of biblical Thursday.

4. The crucifixion and burial occur before biblical Thursday begins

Daniel 9:27's “midst of the week” is understood as Wednesday. Jesus dies Wednesday afternoon and is buried before sunset.



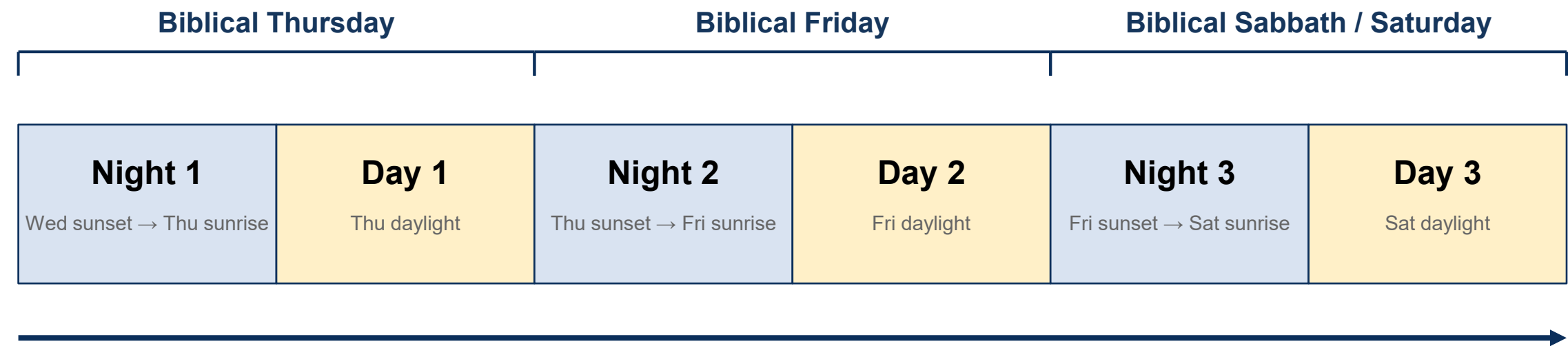
Why burial before sunset matters

The burial is completed before the evening boundary. Once sunset arrives, biblical Thursday—and the first counted night—has begun.

Daniel 9:27; crucifixion/burial references: Matthew 27:45–61; Mark 15:33–47; Luke 23:44–56; John 19:28–42.

5. Three nights and three days: Using sunset to sunset

The night portion comes first in each biblical day.



Three complete nights + three complete days

Jesus spent exactly 72 hours in the grave. He would have come out as soon as 72 hours had passed—some time just before 6 PM on the Sabbath. Any time before or after 72 hours is **not** three days and three nights.

End point

John 19:31.

The Jews wanted Christ off the Cross on Wednesday because it was a high (preparation) day and they wanted to avoid breaking their (the Jews) Sabbath.

Matthew 12:40.

The third daylight period occurs during the weekly Sabbath and ends at Saturday sunset. Christ rises just before that Sabbath closes because he was placed in the grave before the Sabbath began.

6. John's wording allows for a high Sabbath and the weekly Sabbath

John distinguishes the festival “high day” from the seventh-day Sabbath.



Luke 23:56 and Mark 16:1 point to two Sabbaths that week: a high-day Sabbath followed by a workday for buying and preparing spices, then the weekly Sabbath—consistent with a Wednesday crucifixion.

Luke 23:56

The women prepared spices and then “rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.”

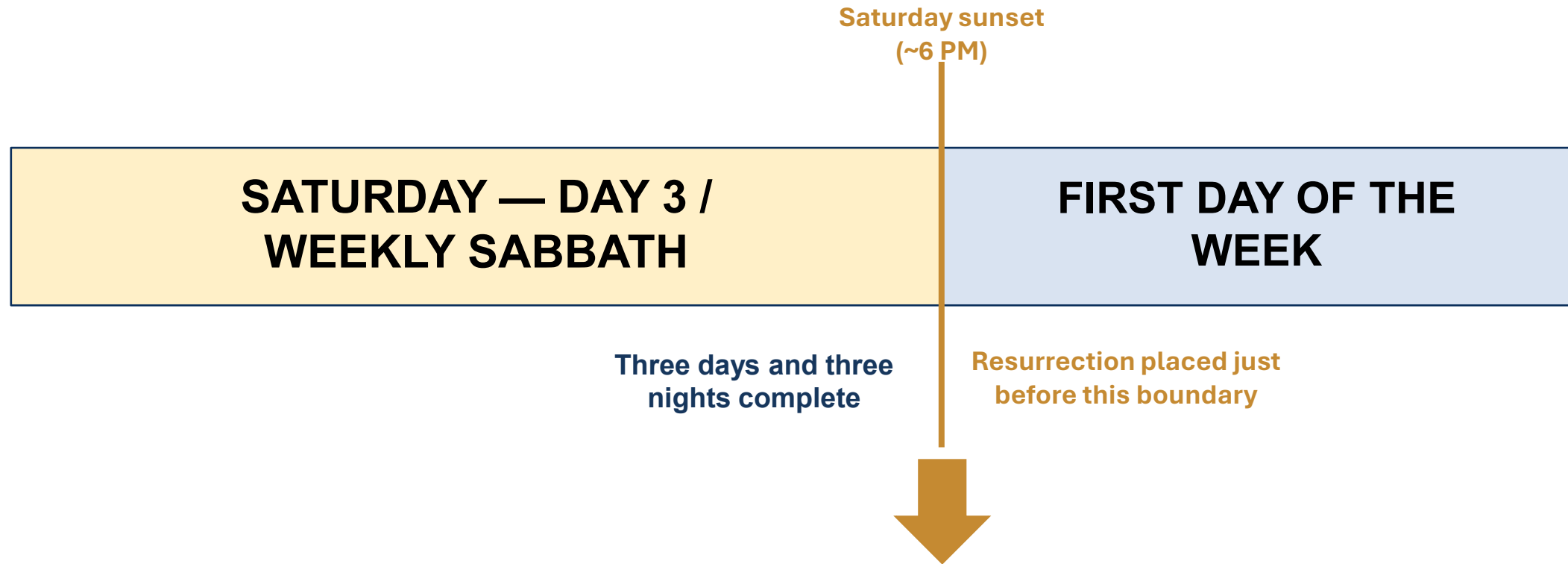
Mark 16:1

“When the sabbath was past,” the women bought spices. This chronology places Friday as the work period between the high Sabbath and the weekly Sabbath.

John 19:31 calls the approaching Sabbath “an high day.” See also Leviticus 23:6–7.

7. Christ rises late on the weekly Sabbath

The resurrection point is just before 6 PM, while the weekly Sabbath is still in progress.



Important distinction

The Gospels do not record the exact moment the resurrection occurred. Just before Sabbath sunset is the placement required by this Wednesday-burial / literal three-days-and-three-nights.

8. Sunday morning is the discovery of the empty tomb

The women arrive after the weekly Sabbath has ended and find that Jesus is already gone.

**FRIDAY SUNSET → SATURDAY
SUNSET**

Weekly Sabbath

The women rest according to the
commandment.



EARLY SUNDAY — “YET DARK”

The tomb is already empty

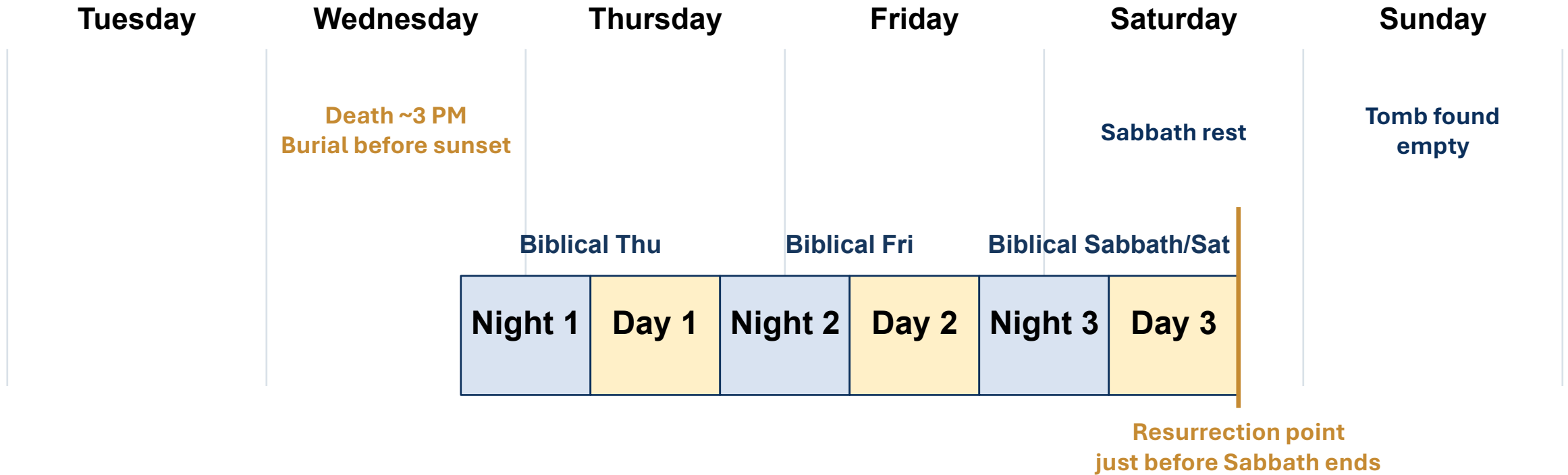
John describes when Mary arrived—not the exact
hour Jesus rose. He had risen before Sabbath sunset.

*“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre,
and seeth the stone taken away...”*

John 20:1

9. The complete Wednesday-crucifixion timeline

Modern calendar names are shown above; biblical day-counting is shown below.



Summary

Wednesday death and burial → three nights and three days → resurrection placed late Saturday before Sabbath sunset → empty tomb discovered Sunday morning.

Bible Verses that Show this Timeline

Use these passages together when studying the chronology.

Genesis 1:5 Evening and morning form the day.

Matthew 12:40 “Three days and three nights.”

John 19:31 The approaching Sabbath was “an high day.”

Luke 23:54–56 Preparation, spices, and Sabbath rest.

Mark 16:1–2 Spices purchased after a Sabbath; women come early first day.

John 20:1 Mary arrives while it is still dark; stone already removed.

Leviticus 23:6–7 Festival day with a holy convocation and no servile work.

Daniel 9:27 “In the midst of the week” the sacrifice and oblation cease. That phrase is understood as Wednesday.