

## The Start of a Biblical Day of the Month and the Sabbath Day by Herb Solinsky (c) April 8, 2014

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## [1] Introduction to the Literal Day in the Tanak

The goal is to explain when the Sabbath day begins and ends, and more generally, to explain when any biblical numbered day of the biblical month begins and ends. This is not necessarily equivalent to explaining the literal meaning of the word “day” in general, because it will be seen that the general use of the word “day” is ambiguous. This presents some problems because translations are quite inconsistent in how certain Hebrew words are translated. This leads to confusion in the minds of English readers. For this reason the literal translations presented will be consistent in translation and avoid using the same translation for two different Hebrew words of significance for this study. When no specific translation is mentioned, it is by the author. If a specific translation is given, sometimes the prefix “m-” appears before the abbreviation of the translation, such as “m-NKJV”. This means that the NKJV is used with the exception that it is modified in order to hold fast to the concept of consistency of translation, namely always using the same English word for specific Hebrew words that are of significance in this study.

The translation method to be applied in this study would not be practical in general because Hebrew has many synonyms that are not distinguishable by different English words, and many Hebrew words have several different meanings. Such Hebrew

words cannot always be translated with the same English word and still maintain normal sense.

The method of discovery to be employed is to first establish some preliminary approximate findings for some words, and then later return to discuss some of those words again and achieve a more refined understanding, but nothing contradictory. Patience is needed with this approach of letting the context determine the meaning rather than some lexicon or dictionary. All such reference works are modern; there is no known Hebrew dictionary that was made in ancient times.

## [2] The Sabbath Day

In Gen 2:2-3 we read, “And on the seventh day [3117 *yom*] [the] Almighty ended His work which He had done, and He rested [7673 *shabat* (verb)] on the seventh day [*yom*] from all His work which He had done. Then [the] Almighty blessed the seventh day [*yom*] and sanctified it, because in it [He] rested [7673 *shabat* (verb)] from all His work that [the] Almighty created for preparing.” As indicated above, whenever the translation “day” occurs in this study, it will be from *yom*. This passage does not mention the law for human rest, nor the noun “Sabbath” from the Hebrew word *shabat* (Strong's number 7676), yet it does contain the verb *shabat* twice, which has the same three consonants as the noun. Thus it is an obvious reference to the noun Sabbath, and indicates that the meaning of the noun includes the concept of rest.

The significant Hebrew word *shabaton* (Strong's number 7677) is often not translated consistently, but “solemn-rest” will always be used in this study. This word occurs eleven times in the Bible: Ex 16:23; 31:15; 35:2; Lev 16:31; 23:3, 24, 32, 39, 39; 25:4, 5. In Ex 31:15 we read, “Work shall be done [for] six days, but on the seventh day [is] a Sabbath of solemn-rest, holy to YHWH. Whoever does work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.” Comparing this with Gen 2:2-3 it is clear that the seventh day that was blessed and sanctified is named the Sabbath day and is a day of abstaining from work. Ex 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15 corroborates this. Since the Sabbath is called the seventh day and is a contrast to the other six days for work (Ex 20:9-10; 31:15; Deut 5:13-14), the Sabbath is a periodic cycle with six days between each consecutive pair of Sabbaths. There are some exceptional days mentioned in Lev 23 on which no work is to be done, and such exceptional days may occur on the six days between two consecutive seventh day Sabbaths. Other than these explicit exceptions, work is expected to be performed on the six days.

## [3] Day and Night

There are examples in which day and night are opposites. In Jer 36:30 we read, “Therefore thus says YHWH concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: ‘He shall have no one to sit on [the] throne of David and his dead body shall be cast out to [the] heat by day and to [the] frost by night [3915 *lailah*].’” Here day and night are opposites, showing it is cooler at night than during the day. In Gen 31:39 we read, “That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself. You required it from my hand, whether stolen [by] day or stolen [by] night.” Here again is an example where day and night are opposites. Some other corroborating examples of these opposites are in Gen 8:22; I Sam 28:20; I Ki 8:29; Ps 74:16; 88:1; 136:8-9; Eccl 8:16; Isa 27:3; 62:6; Amos 5:8. In these examples “day” refers to the daylight part of a 24-hour day. Explicit discussion of a 24-hour day is discussed next.

#### [4] A 24-Hour Day

As in the English language, Hebrew often has multiple meanings for one word, and it will now become quite clear that this is true for the Hebrew word *yom*.

Before giving a translation of Lev 8:35, note that it contains the Hebrew word *yomam* (Strong's number 3119), which is to be translated “daytime”. This word is a form of *yom* used in a different Hebrew grammatical sense from *yom*. It may be argued that this word should also be translated day, as it usually is, but in order to distinguish between these words in translation, *yomam* is translated “daytime”. Lev 8:35 states, “Therefore you shall abide [at the] door of the tent of meeting daytime [3119 *yomam* (adverb)] and night [for] seven days, and keeping [the] charge of YHWH, so that you may not die; for so I have been commanded.” Here “seven days” refers to seven periods, each of which is a day and a night, so that “day” (used in the plural) here, is a daytime followed by a nighttime, a natural 24-hour period. Est 4:16 states, “Go gather all the Jews present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink [for] three days, night and day. Also I and my maids will fast likewise. And then I will go to the king, which is against [the] law; and if I perish, I perish!” Here “day” (used in the plural) is a nighttime followed by a daytime, a natural 24-hour period. These two examples differ in which comes first; one example has the daytime first in the 24-hour day, while the other has the nighttime first. But neither of these examples involves the Sabbath or a numbered day of the month, the primary focus of this study.

Ps 32:3-4 states, “When I kept silent my bones grew old through my groaning all the day. For daytime and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was turned

into the drought of summer.” Here one day is shown to be a daytime followed by a nighttime, a natural 24-hour day.

Neh 1:6 states (m-NKJV), “please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You this day, daytime and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You.” Here one day is shown to be a daytime (Hebrew *yomam*) followed by a nighttime, a natural 24-hour day.

## [5] Morning, Evening, and On the Morrow

The Hebrew word *boker* (Strong's number 1242) is a significant word, to be translated “morning”. The Hebrew word *erev* (Strong's number 6153) is a significant word, to be translated “evening”. Here are some of the verses that make it clear that morning and evening are time periods of the 24-hour day that are separated from one another. Lev 6:20 states, “This is the offering which Aaron and his sons are to present to YHWH on the day when he is anointed; the tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening.” Deut 28:67 states (NKJV), “In the morning you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Oh, that it were morning!’ because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.” Ps 55:17 states (NKJV), “Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice.” II Chr 31:3 states, “The king also appointed a portion of his possessions for the burnt offerings: for the morning and evening burnt offerings, the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths and the new moons and the set feasts, as it is written in the law of YHWH.”

For the sake of consistency for the reader, the Hebrew phrase *ad erev* will always be translated “until evening” and the Hebrew phrase *ad ha erev* will always be translated “until the evening” in this study. The Hebrew word *ad* is Strong's number 5704, which is a preposition whose meaning varies according to the expression in which it appears. The Hebrew word *ha* means “the”. The presence or absence of the Hebrew word *ha* for “the” in the phrase “until the evening” seems to have no real significance as illustrated in Ex 18:13-14 (m-RSV), “On the morrow Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from morning until the evening. When Moses’ father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, ‘What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?’” Here notice that verse 13 has “until the evening”, while verse 14 merely has “until evening”, yet both refer to the same event. The meaning of “until evening” in Ex 18:13-14 is generalized in Ps 104:23

where we find (m-NKJV), “Man goes out to his work and to his labor until evening.” In an agricultural society where outdoor light is needed for earning a living by most people, this particular context would imply that “until evening” has the approximate sense of “until daylight fades”. Later, more will be said about the phrase “until evening”.

In Ex 18:13 immediately above, the phrase “on the morrow” is a translation of the Hebrew phrase *me macharat* where the flexible preposition *me* is Strong's number 4480 and *macharat* is Strong's number 4283 which means “morrow” and refers to the period of time following the normal sleep pattern. For example, again with the Hebrew phrase *me marharat*, in Gen 19:33-34 we read (JPS17), “And they made their father drink wine that night. And the first-born went in, and lay with her father; and he knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the first-born said unto the younger: ‘Behold, I lay yesternight with my father. Let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.’” The translation “yesternight” is from the Hebrew word *emesh* (Strong's number 570) which also occurs in Gen 31:29, 42. (In the Hebrew, the two words *me macharat* have no space between them, as is typical with many prepositions.) Unfortunately, most translations use the word “day” instead of “morrow” here, which could give the reader the false impression that the Hebrew word *yom* may occur. For the sake of consistency for the reader, the Hebrew phrase *me macharat* will always be translated “on the morrow” in this study. Note that in Gen 19:34 above, the conversation that occurred “on the morrow” followed an event that occurred in the night, so that both the event and the conversation took place within the same sundown to sundown 24-hour period.

## [6] A Numbered Day of the Month

In Ex 12:18-19 we read (NKJV), “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.” The unbroken time interval for eating only unleavened bread is here given a beginning time and an ending time, the whole period of which is stated to be seven days in length. Here “day” (used in the plural) is a 24-hour day, each of which begins “at evening” and ends “at evening”. This context involves a numbered day of the month, a matter of primary interest in this study.

Lev 23:27 states, “Also the tenth of this seventh month shall be the day of atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to YHWH.” This tenth day of the seventh month continues to be discussed down through to Lev 23:32 which states (m-NKJV), “It shall be to you a Sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth of the month at evening, from evening until evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath.” The Sabbath (Hebrew *shabat*) mentioned here twice, is the day of atonement rather than the Sabbath of the seventh day. (*shabat* is also used this way in Lev 16:31.) As in Ex 12:18 above, this verse mentions a numbered day of the month beginning “at evening”. Since an “evening” is mentioned in Lev 23:32 as both the beginning and ending of this day, this is surely a 24-hour day rather than a daytime. Each of the seven days in Ex 12:18 is a 24-hour day also. Thus, as numbered days of the month, we have consistency of Ex 12:18 with Lev 23:32. This also makes the beginning and ending of *shabat* in agreement with the beginning and ending of a numbered day of the month.

## [7] Light and Darkness

In Ps 104:20 we read (NKJV), “You make darkness and it is night, in which all the beasts of the forest creep about.” In Gen 1:4-5 we read, “And the Almighty saw that the light was good; and the Almighty separated the light from the darkness. And the Almighty called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning one day.” In this very first time that the words “day” and “night” occur, they are here defined in the Bible. Here the first use of “day” (Hebrew *yom*) is given the meaning “light”, which obviously concerns its meaning in the sense of the daytime portion of a natural 24-hour day, rather than the 24-hour meaning of “day”. Gen 1:4-5 does not explain how much light is needed at the extremities in order to be considered still day. The word “evening” occurs here for the first time, but is not defined in chapter 1 of Genesis. The possible meaning of the second use of “day” at the end of Gen 1:5 partly depends upon the meaning of “evening”, which we now discuss. From Gen 1:4 we know that night is defined by darkness, except that when heavy rain prevails, daytime may appear dark. We are excluding such exceptions that muddy the water of discussion.

There are two passages of the Bible that demonstrate that evening lasts into the night. We will consistently translate the Hebrew word *neshef* (Strong's number 5399) as twilight. In Job 7:3-4 we read (m-RSV), “... so I am allotted months of emptiness, and nights of misery are apportioned to me. When I lie down I say, ‘When shall I arise?’ But the evening is long, and I am full of tossing til the twilight.” Here many translations give “night” as the meaning of the Hebrew word *erev*. The word

translated “is long” in “the evening is long” is a translation of the Hebrew word *madad* (Strong's number 4058) which also occurs in I Ki 17:21 which reads, “And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to YHWH and said, ‘O YHWH my Almighty, I pray, let this child's soul come back to him.’” Here “stretched himself” is the translation of the Hebrew word *madad*. Job is saying (in Job 7:3-4) that when he lies down, his conscious time in the evening is prolonged due to his physical discomfort.

Concerning the evening lasting into night, the other Scripture to be discussed is Ps 30:5. In order to understand how far “evening” extends here, the key issue is the Hebrew word following *erev*, which is the verb *leen* (Strong's number 3885). In Ps 30:5 we read (m-NKJV), “For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; weeping may endure for an evening, but joy comes in the morning.” Here the Hebrew verb *leen* is translated “may endure”. This Hebrew verb *leen* occurs 85 times in the Old Testament, but it has two categories of meaning that are not related to one another; one is “to remain (or lodge)” and the other is “to murmur (or complain)”. The latter meaning occurs 16 times (if Ps 59:15 is included as “howl” or “growl”), leaving 69 times upon which to decide the implications of *leen*. Of these 69 times, the word “night” is understood from the context or explicitly stated 51 times; for example, Judg 19:7 states (NKJV), “And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again.” Here the NASB has “spent the night” instead of “lodged”. I Ki 19:9 reads, “Then he came to a cave, and lodged there; and behold, the word of YHWH came to him, and He said to him, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’” Here the NKJV has “spent the night” instead of “lodged.” What about the other 18 (= 69 - 51) times, which includes Ps 30:5, our current focus? In all 17 cases (excluding Ps 30:5) the time period is not precise, but understood to be at least a night, and often many years. One highly figurative example in which Job's friends have been provoking him for many days is Job 17:2 in which Job says (NKJV), “Are not mockers with me? And does not my eye dwell on their provocation?” Here “dwell” is used for the Hebrew word *leen*. It thus seems understandable that JPS17, NASB, NKJV, and RSV translate the Hebrew word *erev* in Ps 30:5 as “night,” yet the literal meaning is “evening”. On the basis of the use of *leen* in the rest of the Tanak, it does seem that in Ps 30:5 evening extends into some of the night, perhaps until sleep comes. But in poetic language where there is a scarcity of words, translators often take liberties to capture their own thoughts on the intent of the Hebrew.

Recognizing that the biblical evening extends into the night, we are in a better position to comment on the use of “day” at the end of Gen 1:5, which reads, “And there was evening and there was morning one day.” This must refer to a 24-hour day

rather than a daytime. We can only guess at why there is such brevity in the description of this day as well as the next five days. What happened at the very beginning of the first day? Any answer involves speculation.

## [8] The Stars

Note the words “stars” and “light” in Jer 31:35 where we read, “Thus says YHWH, Who gives the sun for a light by daytime, the ordinances of the moon and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (YHWH of hosts is His name).” The light coming from these heavenly bodies determine or separate daytime and night.

In Ps 136:7-9 we read (NKJV), “To Him who made great lights, for His mercy endures forever, the sun to rule by day, for His mercy endures forever, the moon and stars to rule by night, for His mercy endures forever.” This serves as a commentary to Gen 1:16 which states, “And the Almighty made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; and the stars.” The amount of the night that is ruled by the light of the moon varies greatly during the month, from no rulership at the astronomical new moon to full rulership at the full moon. Gen 1:14 mentions the purpose of defining “years”, so the context of Gen 1:16 indicates general purposes for the sun, moon, planets, comets, and stars, rather than a precise description of what happened on that specific fourth day. Any claim that Gen 1:16 proves that the fourth day was a full moon is reading too much into that verse and ignoring the context of general purposes for the heavenly bodies. The thought of rulership by a heavenly body refers to dominance of its light. Since the moon itself has so much variation in dominance, as a sign for separating daytime from night, the role of the moon is speculative at best. On the other hand, as long as the weather is relatively clear, the stars are an excellent sign for separating daytime from night. Gen 1:14-16 does not mention the words “sun” or “moon”, which puts emphasis on their function to serve as lights.

Sunset is the time when the circle of the sun first disappears over the horizon. After sunset, there is still a period of light from the sun (the sun rules) until the light from the stars begins to rule. The length of this time period, which is most of twilight, varies with the season and the latitude of the observer. At the equator this time is several minutes, but it can last a couple of hours in southern Canada and much longer when approaching the poles of the earth. If there had been a human observer on the earth during the first three days, he would have not been able to see the circle of the sun at all because, according to Gen 1:14, the heavenly lights were not yet “created”. Thus there was no sunset during the first three 24-hour days, yet there were three

periods of dark and light. In order to have consistency in light for rulership during the first three daytimes in comparison to the fourth day and beyond, it would seem that “sunset” is not the precise separator between daytime and night. Before discussing sunset in the Bible, there is another significant Scripture that involves the stars.

The Hebrew word *sachar* (Strong's number 7837) will consistently be translated “dawn”. Neh 4:16 states (RSV), “From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half of them held the spears, shields, bows, and coats of mail; and the leaders stood behind all the house of Judah.” Note that one half of them were defending and one half of them were productive. Neh 4:21 states (RSV), “So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the break of dawn till the stars came out.” The break of dawn is near the start of the twilight of the morning, about the time when stars cease being visible. The defenders were active from about the time of the loss of the visibility of the stars to appearance of the stars. Neh 4:22 states (JPS17), “Likewise at the same time said I unto the people: ‘Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and may labour in the day.’” Thus the defenders were to spend the night sleeping in Jerusalem with the others, but during the “day” defined by the light of the stars at both ends, the defenders were to be active. This is consistent with the concept of the light from the sun ruling the day in the sense that it prevents the stars from being visible. It is consistent with the first three days during which there was no sunset. Thus, daytime is when the stars are not visible. Israel is a land with significant hills and valleys, thus making sunset come at varying times depending on one's physical location. On the other hand, visibility of the stars is more uniform throughout Israel.

## [9] Sunset is Not Technically in the Bible

There is no single Hebrew word for sunset in the Bible. In Josh 10:26-27 we read (m-NASB), “So afterward Joshua struck them and put them to death, and he hanged them on five trees; and they hung on the trees until the evening. And it came about at sunset that Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves, and put large stones over the mouth of the cave, to this very day.” Where this has “sunset”, the margin of the NASB (Reference edition) states that this is literally “the time of the going of the sun”. In this literal statement in the margin, the Hebrew verb *bo* (Strong's number 935) is translated “going” and the Hebrew word *shemesh* (Strong's number 8121) is translated “sun”. There is never a Hebrew word for “down” in any of the 31 contexts of the Hebrew for “goes sun” for an alleged “sunset” in the Bible. These contexts are Gen 15:12, 17; 28:11; Ex 17:12; 22:26; Lev 22:7; Deut 11:30; 16:6; 23:11; 24:13, 15; Josh 1:4; 8:29; 10:13, 27; 23:4; Judg 19:14; II Sam 2:24; 3:35; I Ki 22:36; II Chr

18:34; Ps 51:1; 104:19; 113:3; Eccl 1:5; Isa 60:20; Jer 15:9; Amos 8:9; Micah 3:6; Zech 8:7; Mal 1:11. None of these contexts provides clear visual evidence of what “goes sun” means, but there are significant clues. If we see “sunset” in a translation, we should simply recognize that it is “goes sun”, though the verb tense may vary.

In an Aramaic portion of the Old Testament we find in Dan 6:14 (NKJV), “And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him.” The translation “going down” is from the Aramaic word *mehal* (Strong's number 4606), which only occurs in this place in Scripture. On page 166 of Wood at this verse it states, “literally, ‘going in of the sun’”. Since this Aramaic word only occurs one time and it’s in the context of Babylon with no specific indication of its precise meaning, little can be said of this.

In Jer 6:4 we read (NASB), “Prepare war against her; arise, and let us attack at noon. Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of the evening lengthen.” This indicates that some of the evening occurs when there are long shadows, i.e., before sunset.

There is biblical evidence that “goes sun” is a loose time interval rather than a precise brief time. Deut 16:6 states, “... but at the place where YHWH your Almighty chooses to establish His name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sun-goes, at the time that you came out of Egypt.” If we can determine the time interval for sacrificing the Passover, that should tell us something about the time of “goes sun”. From Jer 6:4 above, we have already seen that “in the evening” includes some time before sunset.

## [10] Sunrise is Opposite to Sunset

Notice the contrast between sunrise and sunset in Ps 50:1, “The Mighty One, the Almighty, YHWH, has spoken, and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.” In Ps 113:3 we read, “From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of YHWH is to be praised”. In Eccl 1:5 we read (NASB), “Also the sun rises and the sun sets; and hastening to its place it rises there again.” This contrast of opposites is also seen in Zech 8:7; Mal 1:11. If we can explain the biblical sunrise, that should help us explain the biblical sunset.

In Ps 104:21-22 we read, “The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their food from the Almighty. When the sun rises they gather together and lie down in their dens.” Mr. Chris McBride spent several years living in the wild, studying the habits

of lions about 350 miles northeast of Johannesburg, South Africa. On page 152 of McBride we find, “From the observations I've made, it appears that temperature plays a tremendously important part in influencing lions' behavior patterns. I have taken the breathing rates of these lions under all sorts of conditions and found that it can vary from 120 times a minute in the heat of the day to about 12 times a minute in the cool of the evening. My belief is that they are mainly nocturnal hunters because it's easier for them to be active when it's cooler. They'll hunt in daylight on the Machaton when it rains, or on an overcast windy day, so it looks as if there's a purely physical explanation behind it.” In relation to Ps 104:21-22 this shows that “when the sun rises” they become inactive because the temperature becomes warm. But when does the temperature become warm? On page 232 of Batton we find: “Minimum temperatures are usually experienced 30 min to an hour after sunrise.” This indicates that biblical sunrise is not the moment when the sun begins to come up over the horizon, but it includes a significant time later when it begins to get warm.

In Nahum 3:17 we read (NKJV), “Your commanders are like swarming locusts, and your generals are like great grasshoppers, which camp on the hedges in a cold day; when the sun rises they flee away, and the place where they are is not known.” Locusts and grasshoppers have similar habits. On page 6 of Dallinger we read, “Grasshoppers are usually quiet at night and active during the day. As with all insects, their bodies must be warm in order for them to be active. During the coolness of night they climb onto plants and rest quietly without moving. When the first rays of sunshine reach them in the morning, they begin to stir. After warming up, they start eating.” Page 207 of Milne states, “Once a locust swarm is airborne, the only thing capable of stopping it is a change of weather. The pests fly on if their food reserves permit, as long as the temperature of day remains between 77 degrees and 104 degrees F., or above 81 degrees at night.” Thus the biblical description of grasshoppers and locusts at sunrise cannot fit the time when the circle of the sun begins to come up over the horizon because at the latter time the temperature is still approaching its coolest time. This indicates that biblical sunrise includes a significant time after sunrise when it begins to get warm.

In Ex 22:2-3 we read (NKJV), “If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed. If the sun has risen on him, there shall be guilt for his bloodshed. He should make full restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.” Here we see the difference between killing a thief before the sun has risen compared to afterward. Before visibility it is not considered murder because one cannot see the nature of the enemy, but after visibility it is murder. Thus, sunrise is associated with visibility, which occurs before the circle of the sun begins to show on the horizon.

The application of the meaning of biblical sunrise to the meaning of biblical sunset is that both are significant time intervals and both occupy a portion of daytime. Biblical sunrise occupies the first portion of daytime, and biblical sunset occupies the last portion of daytime. As indicated above, daytime is when the stars are not visible.

In Deut 24:15 we read, “Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go [down] on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to YHWH, and it be sin to you.” Here the word “down” is not based upon any specific Hebrew word that means “down”. This verse indicates that daytime ends at the end of “the going of the sun” (already shown not to be identified with the circle of the sun going below the horizon).

In II Sam 3:35 we read, “And when all the people came to persuade David to eat food while it was still day, David took an oath saying, ‘The Almighty do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun goes [down].’” Here the word “down” is not based upon any specific Hebrew word that means “down”. This verse indicates that daytime ends at the end of “the going of the sun” (already shown not to be identified with the circle of the sun going below the horizon).

## [11] Between the Two Evenings

The Hebrew expression *ben ha arbayim* means “between the two evenings”; *ben* means “between”, *ha* means “the”, and *arbayim* is the dual plural form of “evening”, meaning “two evenings”. Whenever we encounter this expression, we will consistently translate it “between the two evenings”. This occurs eleven times in the Bible: Ex 12:6; 16:12; 29:39, 41; 30:8; Lev 23:5; Num 9:3, 5, 11; 28:4, 8. In Ex 12:6 we read (m-NKJV), “Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it between the two evenings.” In Lev 23:5 we read, “On the fourteenth of the first month between the two evenings is YHWH's Passover.” If someone should conjecture that “between the two evenings” means any time between the evening on one certain day and the evening on the following day, this could be refuted by going to Deut 16:6 where the time for sacrificing the Passover is when “goes sun”, and certainly this latter expression does not mean a 24-hour day.

In Num 28:3-4 we read, “And you shall say to them, ‘This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to YHWH: two male lambs in their first year without blemish, each day, as a regular burnt offering. The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer between the two evenings.’” (Ex 29:38-39 is

similar.) This sacrifice between the two evenings is called the evening sacrifice in Ezra 9:4-5 as follows, “Then everyone who trembled at the words of the Almighty of Israel assembled to me, because of the transgression of those who had been carried away captive, and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice. At the evening sacrifice I arose from my fasting; and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to YHWH my Almighty.” This evening sacrifice is also mentioned in II Ki 16:15; Ps 141:2; Dan 9:21. It is also mentioned without the word “evening” explicitly stated, but nevertheless understood, in I Ki 18:29, 36. In reading I Ki 18:29-45 it should become obvious that from the time of the first mention of the evening sacrifice until darkness is indicated due to heavy clouds in I Ki 18:45, some hours of daylight must have passed. Thus “between the two evenings” as the time of the evening sacrifice must occupy some hours in the afternoon before the night begins.

Hence the Passover sacrifice must occur during some hours in the afternoon before the night begins, and Deut 16:6 shows this to be called “goes sun” or “sunset” in common translations.

## [12] Conclusion concerning the Sabbath Day and a Numbered Day of the Month

The biblical evidence that a daytime ends when the stars become visible is based upon Jer 31:35; Ps 136:7-9; Gen 1:16; Neh 4:16, 21-22 (see section 8). This evidence along with the evidence of sunrise (from Ps 104:21-22 and Nahum 3:17, discussed in section 10) leads to the conclusion that “the going of the sun” spans a few hours, but it ends with the appearance of the stars. In English usage, the time of “sunset” is brief and precise, but in the Bible the phrase “the going of the sun” lasts some hours and ends when the stars appear. Deut 16:6 says that the sacrifice of the Passover animal occurs during the “going of the sun”. Deut 16:6 also mentions “in the evening”, which is not precise, so Deut 16:6 clarifies this by adding “at the going of the sun”. The phrase “in the evening” can vary from sometime in the afternoon until sometime in the night; the Bible does not state the exact beginning and ending time of “in the evening”.

The expression “between the two evenings” indicates that there are two evenings. Ex 12:18 and Lev 23:32 showed that the Sabbath and a numbered day of the month begin at evening and end at evening (see section 6), but we need to discuss which evening. From Jer 6:4 and I Ki 18 we have seen that one evening begins before sunset. From Job 7:4 and Ps 30:5 we have seen that evening lasts into night. Within the evening there is a transition from daytime to night when the stars become visible.

The biblical word for evening is ambiguous, so the only solution to determining the “evening” that begins a day is a process of logically eliminating all but one rational choice. Several verses above showed that a biblical 24-hour day is either a daytime followed by a night, or a night followed by a daytime. Only the latter choice allows evening to begin and end a 24-hour biblical day, so only this choice is viable to show the boundaries of a day. This is also the only plausible choice to be the start of the second evening, so that Lev 23:32 means the Sabbath is to be kept from the second evening to the second evening. Deut 24:15 and II Sam 3:35 add weight to this. The conclusion is that the Sabbath and a numbered day of the month begin and end at the beginning of night when the stars come out, and that this is also the start of the second evening.

### [13] Context of Ex 16:23 with Explanation

The manna was available for gathering only on six mornings because:

Ex 16:8 “... in the morning bread to the full...”

Ex 16:12 “... in the morning you shall be filled with bread...”

Ex 16:13-14 “... in the morning the dew lay all around the camp. And when the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, fine as frost on the ground.”

Ex 16:19 “... let no one leave any of it till morning.”

Ex 16:21 “So they gathered it every morning...”

On the Sabbath the Israelites were not to go out to gather the manna “in the morning” as they did on the other six mornings. The emphasis is on “morning” because that is the only time of the day that the new manna was first available for gathering.

Note the literal wording in Ex 16:23 “... Morrow [Hebrew *machar*] is a solemn rest of holy Sabbath ... lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until the morning.” Note the contrast between Ex 16:19 above and Ex 16:23 especially at the end concerning leaving the previous mornings’ manna “until the morning”. Ex 16:23 is *not* saying that the Sabbath *begins* in the morning (which does relate to *machar* = morrow), but it refers to the fact that on the Sabbath in the morning, which would otherwise be the normal time for gathering manna, they were not to go and gather it, but instead (contrary to the other six mornings) they were to leave it over and keep it until the morning. When understood in the context relating to activity that takes place in the morning, Ex 16:23 does not say that the Sabbath begins in the morning (*machar* = morrow). In His wisdom, our Father provided the manna at the most convenient time of the day for gathering, cooking, and then eating, all within the

same daylight. In this way the work of gathering would occur in the early morning when it was still cool.

#### [14] The Gift of Leftovers after a Sacrifice is for the Priesthood

Lev 7:28-38 shows that when an animal was to be sacrificed, certain leftovers were to be a gift to the priesthood for their consumption. For different categories the timing is given in Lev 7:15-18. These timings in context do not relate to the Sabbath or a numbered day of the month. In contexts where the Sabbath or a numbered day of the month is not involved and the 24-hour day is indicated, sometimes the Hebrew word *yom* (= day) refers to a night followed by a daytime, and sometimes it refers to a daytime followed by a night.

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