

Jesus the True Passover



by James Rudd

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For James, Joshua and Jude
Good boys who got old enough
to let me finish this book
and
Jean A.
Editor, Friend, Wife
My Stradivarius from God

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Preface

Preface

This book is designed to give an overview of the Passover in the Old and New Testament and its implication for Christians in today's hectic, secular world. It will show that the Passover was very important for God's people during Old and New Testament times and has great importance for Christians today. There is a great deal of controversy about the timing of the Passover among the churches of God. There is also scholarly debate about the nature and timing of the Last Supper. Unfortunately, these controversies have shrouded the spiritual implications of the Passover for many Christians.

The research for this book has involved more than the Holy Scriptures, but they are always this author's most valuable source materials. In scholarly terms they are my primary source material. Unless states otherwise, all scriptures in this book are from the King James version. Research for this book has used a wide variety of lexicons, concordances, and interlinears to supplement various translations because this author has very limited Hebrew and Greek language skills. Various religious commentaries and encyclopedias have also been used, but the major source of extra biblical scholarly material for this work has been theological journal articles. This author lives in the Boston area, which has allowed access to the theological libraries at Harvard, Boston University, and Boston College. A number of church of God (COG) works, with material ranging from Fred Coulter's *The Christian Passover* to information from Bill Dankenbring and Juan Raines has been used to help frame the early versus late 14th argument (which revolves around when the Passover lamb should be killed). Unfortunately, all the COG materials espousing an early 14th Passover discovered by this author have embraced critical scholarship and Wellhausen's heretical Document Theory, whether the authors knew it or not.

This author's thinking process is as an engineer. He graduated from M.I.T. with a degree in Material Science specializing in polymer chemistry and now works as a computer network administrator. This author's jobs have always involved collating vast amounts of information, finding anomalies and patterns and attempting to create a coherent picture that is aimed at solving problems. He also has a degree in theology from a small, liberal arts school, Ambassador College. Theology graduates from this and other schools of theology often teach that only those with an appropriate background, i.e. graduation with a theology degree, can truly understand and teach scripture. They state their education, experience and the laying on of hands gives them the gift of being able to discern knowledge that the laity cannot. After experiencing the educational background that they refer to, this author

most whole heartedly disagrees. A.C. far too often indoctrinated its students rather than teaching them to think and grow.

This author remembers Don Ward, the President of A.C., asking his senior theology class what was the one thing that A. C. could do better. This author's hand was the first one to go up and his lovely wife promptly planted her elbow where this author's arm had been. She whispered, "Put your arm down. What are you going to say?" The first person Dr. Ward called on was this author and I stated that A.C. needed to teach its students to think. That far too often people only regurgitated what they heard in class and never thought about it. Dr. Ward agreed whole heartedly. Ambassador College should have inculcated Christian values and doctrines, giving its graduates the ability to discern and act against heresy. By and large it did not. I hope, pray, and plan that this book will be part of a Christian's arsenal to help them build Christian values and inculcate Christians with the ability to discern and act against heresy.

It is time for Christians to stop being lazy by depending upon teachers and building cults of personality. There are too many bad teachers who have led Christians away from the truth. Heresy of many kinds is still leading Christians away from God, as scripture said it would.

2 Peter 3:16 states, "As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

2 Peter 2:1-3 states, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

John warns in 1 John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

There are good teachers who help students master the subject of Christianity and are not threatened by their students excelling in their certain areas of their expertise. This expertise can only be gained by students doing the homework of living a Christian life. Every Christian must rely upon scripture and must follow what it teaches. We are not allowed to depend upon exegesis by others as our sole means of learning. This author still grieves for friends who stated that they either could not study scripture or that they knew the ministry understood scripture far better than they did, so there was no need to study. These friends have by and large substituted a way of life outlined in the Bible, the manual of life, with a shallow, false imitation of Christianity. If we don't study and grow, we could all fall into the same trap because God tells us that if we do not draw close to him, He will not draw close to us. We must do our part as God tries us because our hearts and words will be made manifest. But we must walk down the path God has set before us with the confidence that God will finish the work he has begun in

us and will not try us beyond what we can endure. This walk must include the study and application of God's word.

Many of the graduates of Ambassador College have taught that each year of A.C. was the equivalent of 10 years of bible study. This supposedly gave 22 year old graduates so much more understanding than the laity that it would be unthinkable to disagree with them. However, an objective examination of a 4-year theology degree from A.C. was probably the equivalent of ten or twelve years of bible study, not forty. And wisdom comes to those who earn it, not those who study it. Those who believe they have wisdom because of some special knowledge often block wisdom with ego. Of course that will vary from student to student. Most 20 year old college students do not possess the motivation to study theology with the same understanding as more mature Christians. This author's perspective as an older, married student at A.C. allowed a discernment of why many in the ministry of the churches of God are so set in their ways. Hopefully the old way of doing things, where 25-year-olds are considered elders and experts in the law, is dying away so that God's people will return to studying His word. The fruit of making 25-year-olds elders has shown itself in the last two decades, when these men didn't know how to stand up for God because their paychecks were on the line. Paul warned against placing 25-year-olds in this position of leadership 2 millennia ago. He wrote in 1 Timothy 3:6 that a bishop must "not (be) a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Far too many of these 25-year-olds are now 55 to 65-year-olds that are locked into one way of doing things, the way they did things at A.C. when they were 20 years old. Hopefully Christians will begin depending upon and studying the word of God rather than upon booklets, teachers, and audio and video tapes.

This author learned long ago if you ignore others' research while trumpeting your own, you are a fool. You can always learn from others, even if you disagree with them. It is also common practice in research to dispel the bad research of a colleague for the sake of the greater good of knowledge. Unfortunately, this is often taken personally because researchers would not publish their ideas unless they believed them to be true. But everyone can get bad data. New techniques come along that allow a different analysis. Sometimes someone may just be wrong. If you have not done a detailed examination of research that disagrees with yours, then you cannot disprove that research. Many teachers in the church of God tradition do not even attempt an examination of opposition research because they lack the technical and spiritual tools for such a job. Fairly standard scholarly practice to take another's research and show where it is inaccurate. This book may have to be updated as others find mistakes and present data that this author had not taken notice of before. It is the intention of this author to give this same kind of input for those mentioned in this book.

The vast majority of church of God works on the Passover, not matter what their stance is on the timing of the Passover, depend upon the fallacy of the "logic of verbosity" and this book has to be large to deal with that type of research. If interested, the reader can request a much shorter book on the Passover if the timing issues of the Passover hold no interest for you.

This book surveys a vast array of information about the Passover. It points out difficulties in interpreting the timing and meaning of the Passover and highlights some of the spiritual im-

plications of the Passover for Christians. Not all of the answers are simple, pat explanations. Many true Christians are used to being spoon-fed information. Far too often they place their favorite teacher and that teacher's Talmud between themselves and God. They have grown to prefer milk to meat. When presenting a fairly comprehensive look at a controversial issue, thus including the strong and weak points of each argument, church of God members have far too often accused this author of not presenting a clear picture of what God wants because they have been trained not discern meat, as Paul writes in Hebrews 5:11-6:3. Some have even balked at the idea of the necessity of writing a book on the subject of the Passover because their favorite teacher has already written about this subject and thus there is nothing more to learn or understand about it from their prospective. However, so much has been written and so many Christians have become so entrenched in their traditions that this author felt the only way to deal with this subject was to write a comprehensive treatise on the subject of the Passover. It is not the job of this author to convince you to accept this author's viewpoint, but it is this author's job to present a viewpoint that gives information for edification. This author has gleaned important information and insight from works that he has totally disagreed with.

The intention of this book is to rouse Christians into thinking and exploring their beliefs, particularly their understanding of Passover. Most importantly, this book's purpose is to help build a closer, more intimate relationship with God by encouraging His children to read His word and drink in His truth. If there are weak points in any argument, they should be brought out, not ignored. Anyone who finds errors or discrepancies in this book is encouraged to send this author corrections. Parts of this book have already been circulated on the internet and the controversy that ensued allowed the focus of this book to be sharpened.

Introduction

Abstract

Jesus the Christ was the lamb of God¹ and is the true Passover.² Once Israel captured the Promised Land, the Passover was performed in the tabernacle and then the temple on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan. The Jews during the second temple period, the time of Jesus the Christ, killed the *Pesah* lambs during the middle of the afternoon on the 14th of Nisan, approximately the same time Jesus Christ died on the cross.³ As will be shown, there is no indication that nation of Israel ever killed the Passover (*pesah*) lambs at any time except during the later portions of the 14th of Nisan.

Trying to harmonize John's gospel with the synoptic gospels leads to controversy about whether the Last Supper of Jesus the Christ was a Passover or not. Scholars pinpoint the type of meal the Last Supper was by placing it either on either the early 14th or the early 15th of Nisan. Scholars outside of the church of God who believe that the Last Supper was a normal Passover meal agree the Last Supper was on the eve of the 15th of Nisan, that the Christ was crucified on Friday, the 15th of Nisan, the first day of Unleavened Bread, and arose on Easter Sunday, the 17th of Nisan. Harmonizing John's gospel with Mark's and Matthew 12:40 disagree with these scholars and supports the premise that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, that the Last Supper took place early on the 14th of Nisan, and Jesus was crucified on the 14th of Nisan.

INTRODUCTION

This book has been written in sections that can be read out of order. Of course, the author recommends reading them in the order they have been written. But it is understandable that a large number of people will want to skip to the section about the Last Supper of Jesus the Christ or other areas. This book has been written to allow such studies.

1 John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

2 1 Cor 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

3 Matt. 27:45-50

Although this author will mention various authors and their research, Mr. Fred Coulter will be mentioned more than any other author not only because he is one of the pre-eminent early 14th proponents, but because his book, *The Christian Passover*, is the most widely used resource to support an early 14th Passover. He also succinctly espouses the doctrine that the Passover is supposedly a yearly renewal of our covenant with God and that if you do not keep the Passover at the right time with the right people in the right manner, you are no longer in covenant with God. The research Mr. Coulter has used to support this thesis and an early 14th Passover will be questioned in detail to show the general arguments used by early 14th proponents. All of the COG materials espousing an early 14th Passover, which hypothesizes the killing of the first Passover lamb in Egypt on the early portions of the 14th of Nisan, discovered by this author embrace critical scholarship and Wellhausen's heretical Document Theory, whether the authors know it or not. This book was written for those with a church of God background because of the overarching effect of leaders who taught the Jews were and are wrong when they believe the Passover lambs should be killed late on the 14th of Nisan. The vast majority of church of God works on the Passover depend upon the fallacy of the logic of verbosity and this book has to be large to deal with that type of research. You can request my much shorter book on the Passover if the timing issues of the Passover hold no interest for you.

God's way is simple.⁴ The fourteen rules of bible study laid out in *The Christian Passover* are a sound basis and this author has followed those guidelines in the creation of the book,⁵ something that was not done in *The Christian Passover*. Each Passover examined in this book displays the same pattern. This should not come as a surprise to Christians because Paul tells us that the annual festivals are "a shadow of the things to come."⁶ The Passover is the preliminary and primary event, thus the corner stone of the annual feasts. The Passover did and does show us a pattern, a picture of the messiah, and his sacrifice.

God always does what is best for us, which is why He gave his only begotten son as the true Passover sacrifice. But God is not stagnate. He changes things, but follows the same general pattern. For example, He changed the priesthood from the first born to the Levities,⁷ then later changed it from the Levities to the order of Melchisedek.⁸ God also changed the high priest and king of Israel from a man to Jesus the Christ.⁹ God also changed the requirement that to be one of His called out people, those who He called to be in covenant with him, men had to be circumcised.¹⁰ This book will also show how God eliminated all domestic sacrifices once the Israelites entered the Promised Land, as written in Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12. Numbers 28:16 verifies the Passover as a temple sacrifice.¹¹

4 Matt. 11:30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

5 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 15-6

6 Col 2:17

7 Numbers 3:12

8 Heb. 7:12

9 Heb. 7 and 8

10 Acts 15:23-29

11 Num. 28:16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the passover of the LORD.

What Christians must realize about the Passover and must teach their children and their household¹² is that the true Passover has been sacrificed and now sits at the right hand of God. God ordered that Israel sacrifice the Passover to protect them from the last of the ten plagues, all of which God used to free the nation of Israel. The results of the Passover sacrifice broke the physical hold of Egypt on God's people, thus allowing them to leave and to begin learning how to serve God. The observance of the ordinance of Passover is still essential for Christians today because it is the physical and spiritual reminder, the anniversary, of the sacrifice of the messiah. The Passover sacrifice of God's only begotten son shows just how much He loves each and everyone one of His children.

There are a few terms that should be introduced to help the reader better understand this book.

Hermeneutic - The rules used for bible study. A standard hermeneutic for Christians is that Jesus is the Messiah, whereas a standard hermeneutic of Jews is that Jesus is not the Messiah.

Exegesis - Delivering teachings and lessons from scripture. Most sermons and teachings are exegesis designed to apply the lessons of scripture to current problems and issues.

Eisegesis - Reading meaning into scripture that is not there to match your personal bias.

A hermeneutic is used to guide a teacher (or student) in their studies so they do not commit eisegesis, but instead deliver a teaching that is exegesis. A classic hermeneutic of the Protestant Reformation was *sola scriptura*, which means scripture only. Protestant teachers rejected the idea of papal decrees superseding what scripture taught. Even if these Protestant teachers often did not follow their own hermeneutic, it was still supposed to be the rule they followed.

One the other hand, a Catholic teacher's hermeneutic would reject the idea of *sola scriptura* and state that Papal decrees do indeed supersede scripture based upon Matthew 16:18-9.¹³

A Catholic teacher would use their hermeneutic when exploring the topic of the Sabbath. This exegesis on the Sabbath could teach that God had set aside the seventh day at creation as a day of rest. This Catholic teacher could state that this principle is still valid today, but that by Papal authority the Sabbath day has been changed to the first day of the week, which Catholic teaching sometimes refers to as the eighth day. Catholic teachers believe businesses should close and people should set Sunday aside to come to church. This Catholic teaching about the Sabbath is consistent with their hermeneutic and many Catholic teachers excoriate Protestant teachers for not following their own hermeneutic when it comes to observing the Sabbath, stating there is no scriptural justification for a Sunday Sabbath outside of Papal decree.

12 Deut. 6:6-7 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

13 Matt. 16:18-9 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Protestant teachers, in an effort to defend their tradition of observing a Sunday Sabbath teach that the conference in Acts 15 not only ended the requirement to be circumcised, but ended Sabbath observance on the seventh day. These teachers generally ignore the idea of doing away with God's creation ordinance, the first lesson He taught the Israelites when they left Egypt, would have been far more contentious than the idea that the gentiles were now being grafted in as God's called out people. These teachers also ignore the Apostles tradition was to observe the seventh day Sabbath throughout scripture. Protestant scholars often turn to four scriptures in an attempt to support a Sunday Sabbath. They are:

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.¹⁴

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.¹⁵

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.¹⁶

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.¹⁷

Paul was teaching on the first day of the week in Acts 20, but scripture shows this was Paul's going away sermon because he was leaving the next day. Paul did ask Christians to lay aside goods for those in need on Sunday, but to insinuate this demonstrates Sunday Sabbath keeping requires great imagination. Incredibly, Protestant teaching is that because Paul wrote not to let people judge you if you kept the Sabbath and holy days, then early Christians were not keeping the seventh day Sabbath. These teachers take the phrase the Lord's Day, which is only used once in scripture in Revelations 1:10, and teach the church fathers in the two and three hundreds A.D. called Sunday the Lord's Day. Therefore John is supposedly writing that he was observing a Sunday Sabbath. Although Revelations is a book of prophecy, these Protestant teachers do not see what John is really writing about is the Day of the Lord, the very last days when the Messiah will rule, which is referred to over twenty times in scripture.¹⁸

An honest student of scripture should examine this example of a Catholic teaching about the Sabbath and realize they have followed their hermeneutic, even though their hermeneutic is based on the false premise that God gave the Pope the power to over rule God's covenant and teachings in scripture, and delivered an exegesis of scripture. However, the protestant teacher used eisegesis to read something into scripture that was not there because their tradition of a Sunday Sabbath is too important for them to follow their own hermeneutic of scripture only. Thus eisegesis is a fallacious tool used to try to give biblical support to a tradition or teaching when there is none, or even worse, when scripture teaches something completely different.

14 Acts 20:7

15 1 Cor. 16:12

16 Col 2:16

17 Rev. 1:10

18 The phrase "the day of the Lord" is used nineteen times in the Old Testament (Isaiah 2:12; 13:6, 9; Ezekiel 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1,11,31; 3:14; Amos 5:18,20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7,14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi. 4:5) and four times in the New Testament (Acts 2:20; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10).

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The Passover in Scripture

CHAPTER

1

If the reader is interested, the vast majority of the scriptures that relate directly to the timing and meaning the Passover have been summarized in Appendix A of this book. Besides reading about the first Passover in Exodus 5-13, this author also suggests reading all of Deuteronomy 12 and 16, Leviticus 17 and 23, Numbers 9, 28-9 and 33, Ezekiel 45, 2 Chronicles 30 and 35, Joshua 5 and Ezra 6. In the New Testament reading the four gospel accounts of “the Last Supper”: Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 13 through the end of John 19 along with 1 Corinthians 5 and chapters 10-11 are suggested. If your eye catches something and is drawn to another subject, realize that it may be the spirit of God guiding you. During this author’s study of the Passover, he was drawn away to other subjects that were very timely, only to return to a quest for the truth about the Passover from the scriptures. As you can tell by the size of this book, this quest was time consuming, but eminently worthwhile.

Teaching scripture used to be done by reading and knowing large chunks of scripture. The bible was not divided into chapters and verses until about 1300 A.D. and before this time teaching via exegesis required the students to know scripture well enough to place it in context. This is how teaching was done during the time of Christ. The bible stresses reading scripture, particularly in Deuteronomy 31:9-11, where the law was to be read to the people every seven years at the Feast of Tabernacles. This is a clear practice followed by very few Christians today, but it is time to start taking the bible at face value when it states that we should do something. It is possible to read too few verses to set the context while seeking godly truth, but it is not possible to read too much scripture. The Bible is a whole and operates as such.

This book has been written for those who have some familiarity with scripture. Scripture will usually expound itself when looked at in context by a student of the Bible with the holy spirit. This author does not believe in the hermeneutic of a little here and a little there (which is not what Isaiah 28:10 advocates), but instead embraces the hermeneutic of a lot here and a lot there. Although the word of God requires harmonizing verses throughout scripture, a hermeneutic of a little here and a little there usually leads to a short-sighted eisegesis which often leads to interpreting a passage in a way that supports one’s own preconceived belief about it.

When studying the Bible, this author often recalls the story of the Ethiopian eunuch to whom Philip expounded the book of Isaiah in Acts 8. It took a teacher of God to expound these

scriptures because the eunuch had reached a stumbling block in his understanding. Once Philip had shed the light of the gospel of Jesus the Christ on the book of Isaiah, the holy spirit not only opened the eunuch's understanding, but compelled Philip to baptize the eunuch on the spot. When the eunuch went on his way, he no longer had a physical teacher, but he did have the spirit of God and the word of God to lead him in his studies. It would be ludicrous to assume that this man, who had been worked with by God in such a powerful manner, would not be able to increase his understanding of scripture any further because he was going to a far country without a teacher. That would totally underestimate the power of God and his spirit. It would be just as ludicrous to ignore the important role that a teacher of the scriptures played in the life of this eunuch and can play in the life of a Christian.

God not only lists teaching as one of the gifts that He gives for the edifying of the body of Christ, but also as a responsibility for all Christians. Matthew 28:19 states, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."¹ Moses wrote, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."² Paul writes, "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach."³ Peter also wrote, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."⁴ The Hebrew word for teach is *yarah*. The Greek word for teach is *didasko*. They both have connotations of throwing knowledge before someone or proclaiming it. So a teacher is someone who does that proclaiming.

The proclamation of Jesus as the Christ, the true Passover lamb, is one of the most important assignments a teacher of scripture has. But teaching anything to Christians who for years were taught repetition is the best means of learning is very difficult. Paul states in Hebrews how teaching should be approached and how it should be used. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again

1 Matt. 28:19

2 Deut. 6:6-9

3 1 Tim. 3:2

4 1 Pet. 4:10

the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit.”⁵

Paul was dealing with Hebrew Christians who had been indoctrinated by years of temple and synagogue worship of YHVH or Jehovah. Although these religious practices and rituals had value, it was now hindering these Christians’ relationship with God. Paul had to explain that although their old method of worship God had value, things had changed because the Messiah had come and was now the high priest. The book of Hebrews is Paul’s proof that faith was always at the center of the worship of God, and this would never change.⁶ However God had changed some of the methods and manners used to worship Him in the course of the Old Covenant and there would be additional changes under the New Covenant. Paul did not ask the Hebrews to put aside their biases and have an open mind, but instead used scripture to prove his points to them.

It would also be ludicrous to ask the reader of this book to put aside their biases and have an open mind. We all have biases, built through time and experience. Many of these biases are the foundation of our beliefs. Many of them are good and true, while some will be erroneous, as is the case with all things. Those who easily put aside their foundation will be blown back and forth by the winds of doctrine, which should not happen to Christians.⁷ Those who easily put their beliefs up on the shelf for another’s view can easily be led into apostasy. On the other hand, Christians who never look at anything from a new angle can easily be devastated when some new thought or religious practice is introduced by a trusted teacher because they will have no experience in dealing with controversial issues. What this author asks is that the reader studies the issue of Passover, including the timing of the Passover, and prays to God for guidance. If we let God guide our path, we will walk towards God in the truth.

Meat is for those that are full of age by use.⁸ That means that you must be studying and inculcating God’s word if you wish to be able to live it or expound it. All Christians who are being lead by Christ and have put in the time and effort can expound scripture. They will not always be right and neither will any human being. But Hebrews 5 and 6 make it clear all mature Christians should be able to expound scripture and have it expounded to them. If a Christian, any Christian, can not expound scripture in some manner, no matter how long they have attended a church, they are still babes in Christ. True Christians will grow and be ready for meat rather than milk.⁹

5 Heb. 5:8-6:3

6 Heb. 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

7 Eph. 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

8 Heb. 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

9 Heb. 5:11-6:3

1 Cor. 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became

Again, this is not to insinuate that there are not teachers. God plainly teaches that He gives some as teachers for the edifying of the body.¹⁰ Christians must use all the resources that God has put at their disposal, as the parable of the talents makes abundantly clear.¹¹ This includes exegesis by various teachers and scholars, but always placing emphasis on the Holy Scriptures. Teachers help build a relationship with God, and in this author's opinion are invaluable in forming that relationship, but each individual must mold that relationship. We are to put on Christ and put off the old man,¹² so the mold will be a little different for every Christian. This author believes God designed it that way. This is not to suggest there is variability in God's way of life, which is reflected in His law. The variability will be in the path each Christian takes toward God. The words of teachers can help guide our path towards God, but should never be the mainstay of a Christian's walk. If we are reading God's word and trying to practice His way of life, as the immortal words of The Who state, we won't get fooled again. And the start of that walk is the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah.

a man, I put away childish things.

10 1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

1 Pet 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11 Matt. 25:14-30

12 Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Eph 4:22-4 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

What is the Passover?

CHAPTER

2

The Passover is an ordinance to be kept by God's people as a memorial of what he has done for us.¹ As discussed later, sometimes the entire time frame around "the spring feast" was referred to as Passover. But these ordinances and this feast point to what the Passover is.

Exodus 12:11 states Israel was to eat the Passover.² Exodus 12:21 states Israel was to kill the Passover.³ Numbers 9:12 states you shall not break a bone nor eat any of the Passover after morning.⁴ 2 Chronicles 30:15 states Israel killed the Passover.⁵ 2 Chronicles 30:18 states you shall eat the Passover.⁶ 2 Chronicles 35:1 states Israel killed the Passover.⁷ 2 Chronicles 35:6-9 states the lamb that was to be sacrificed was the Passover.⁸ 2 Chronicles 35: 11-13 states Israel killed and roasted the Passover.⁹ Ezra 6:20 states the priests killed the Passover for those that

1 Ex. 12:14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

2 Ex. 12:11 And thus shall ye eat it: with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste - it is the LORD'S passover.

3 Ex. 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them: 'Draw out, and take you lambs according to your families, and kill the passover lamb.

4 Num. 9:12 they shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break a bone thereof; according to all the statute of the passover they shall keep it.

5 2 Chron. 30:15 Then they killed the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month; and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought burnt-offerings into the house of the LORD.

6 2 Chron. 30:18 For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it is written. For Hezekiah had prayed for them, saying: 'The good LORD pardon

7 2 Chron. 35:1 And Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem; and they killed the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month.

8 2 Chron. 35:6 And kill the passover lamb, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare for your brethren, to do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.'

9 2 Chron. 35:11 And they killed the passover lamb, and the priests dashed the blood, which they received of their hand, and the Levites flayed them.

were unclean.¹⁰ Luke 22:7 states the Passover was to be killed.¹¹ Luke 22:11 and 15 states that Jesus and the disciples were going to eat the Passover,¹² suggesting the Passover was either the meal or the lamb. Because of the plethora of Old Testament scriptures and Luke 22:7, we can verify what the Passover was. John 18:28 states the Passover was something to be eaten.¹³ And Paul, in 1 Corinthians 5:7, states that Christ was a Passover sacrifice for us.¹⁴ The Passover is the lamb and the true Passover is the lamb of God, not the 14th of Nisan.

The New Testament is replete with scriptures showing one of the most important roles that Jesus the Christ was to fulfill.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.¹⁵

And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!¹⁶

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.¹⁷

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.¹⁸

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.¹⁹

And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.²⁰

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.²¹

10 Ex. 6:20 For the priests and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure; and they killed the passover lamb for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves.

11 Luke 22:7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

12 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

Luke 22:15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

13 John 18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

14 1 Cor. 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

15 John 1:29

16 John 1:36

17 1 Pet. 1:19

18 Rev 5:12

19 Rev 5:13

20 Rev 6:16

21 Rev 7:9

And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.²²

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.²³

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.²⁴

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.²⁵

These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.²⁶

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.²⁷

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.²⁸

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.²⁹

Jesus the Christ was the unblemished lamb of God who was sacrificed from the foundation of the earth. Jesus the Christ was the true Passover. It was his sacrifice that was foreshadowed by the sacrifice of the Passover lamb in Egypt three and a half millennia ago. Thus scripture depicts the Passover (*pesah*) as the lamb (from the sheep or goats) to be sacrificed. As will be shown, Jesus fulfilled the role of both the Passover lamb and the Atonement Goat, but scripture stresses his importance as the lamb.

But what was the purpose of the Passover lamb? Many state it was a sin sacrifice. Some say that it covered the sins of the first born. Some even state the sacrifice of the Passover gave Israel its freedom. However, such statements take the sacrifice of the Passover lamb out of the context of Exodus 5 through 13. They also ignore the meaning and ordinances of the sacrificial system set up by God. Before taking a brief look at the sacrificial system, we will place the Passover lamb in the context that God placed it.

22 Rev 7:14

23 Rev 7:17

24 Rev 12:11

25 Rev 13:8

26 Rev 14:4

27 Rev 17:14

28 Rev 21:14

29 Rev 22:3

The Purpose of the Sacrifice of the Passover Lamb in Egypt

Everyone knows the Passover was the tenth plague brought upon the Egyptians. What was the purpose of those ten plagues?

“And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.³⁰

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.³¹

Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.³²

And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear.³³

And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.³⁴

And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.³⁵

30 Ex. 3:17-22

31 Ex. 5:1

32 Ex. 6:6-7

33 Ex. 7:16 The Nile to blood

34 Ex. 8:1 Frogs

35 Ex. 8:20 Flies

Then the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.³⁶

And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.³⁷

As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?³⁸

And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me.³⁹

And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD. And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you.⁴⁰

But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.⁴¹

And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.⁴²

And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said.⁴³

God brought ten plagues upon Egypt to show his power and to let the world know that He builds up and He tears down. These plagues were aimed at the gods of Egypt, as Table 1 shows.

36 Ex. 9:1 Death of livestock

37 Ex. 9:13 Boils

38 Ex. 9:17 Hail

39 Ex. 10:3 Locusts

40 Ex. 10:8-10

41 Ex. 10:20

42 Ex. 11:1

43 Ex. 12:31

Plagues	References	Possible Egyptian Gods Attacked by the Plagues
1. Nile turned to Blood	Exodus 7:14-25	Hapi, the Bull God, god of the Nile. Isis, goddess of the Nile
2. Frogs	Exodus 8:1-5	Heqet, goddess of birth with Frog head
3. Gnats	Exodus 8:16-9	Set, god of the desert
4. Flies	Exodus 8:20-32	Re, a Sun god; or Uatchit, possibly represented by the fly
5. Death of the Livestock	Exodus 9:1-7	Hathor, Goddess with Cow head; Apis (also called Hapi) the bull god symbol of fertility
6. Boils	Exodus 9:8-12	Sekhmet, goddess with power over disease; Sunu, the pestilence god; Isis, goddess of healing
7. Hail	Exodus 9:13-25	Nut, the sky goddess; Osiris, god of the crops and fertility; Set, god of storms
8. Locusts	Exodus 10:1-20	Nut, the sky goddess; Osiris, god of crops and fertility
9. Darkness	Exodus 10:21-29	Re, the Sun god. Horus, the Sun god; Nut, the sky god
10. Death of the First Born	Exodus 11:1-12:30	Nim, god of reproduction; Heget, goddess who attended women at childbirth; Isis, goddess who protected children; Pharaoh's firstborn son, a god

Table 1-The Ten Plagues of Egypt

However, the scriptures listed earlier show that the ten plagues, cumulating in the tenth, with the death of the first born and the protection afforded to those who followed God's ways, had one ultimate purpose. "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt."⁴⁴

Although there can be no argument that the tenth plague and its results were the fait accompli that allowed Israel to leave Egypt and serve God, the question has to be asked, why did God order this sacrifice? God specifically protected the Israelites from the plague of the flies,⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ex. 13:15-6

⁴⁵ Ex 8:23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be. The 4th plague

death of the livestock,⁴⁶ hail and fire,⁴⁷ and the three days of darkness⁴⁸ without asking for any sacrifice. I, along with most scholars, assume that Israel was also spared from the sixth plague, the boils, and the eighth plague, the locusts. If, as God states in Ex. 8:23, God placed a division between Israel and the Egyptians starting with the fourth plague and maintained that division through the ninth plague without requiring Israel to do anything, why did He order them to make a sacrifice of an unblemished lamb to continue that protection for the tenth and final plague? God had already demonstrated He did not need a sign to make a division between the Israelites and the Egyptians.

After God had worked incredible miracles against the Egyptians and spared the Israelites from the fourth through the ninth plague, He asked the Israelites to do one thing before they were freed from Egypt so they could begin to walk with and serve Him. The Israelites were required to take one action and one action only to maintain God's protection and allow God's plan to come to fruition. The sacrifice of the Passover lamb was Israel's stepping forward and stating with the blood on the doorpost that they were willing to start to know and serve God and were grateful and thankful for all He had done for them. Israel was freed from Egypt, but this was only the means to an end. Those who believe that the sacrifice of Passover was simply a mechanism for freeing Israel ignore that they were freed so they could serve God, something they could not do in Egypt. And the Passover lamb was the mechanism and symbol that God used to allow His called out ones to begin their walk with him.

The Israelites were crying out to the God of their fathers to free them for the tyranny of Egypt. However, they did not know God. From their actions in the wilderness over forty years, this author suggests they would have followed anyone or anything that would give them that freedom. Although they knew a name of their God, they did not understand His ways, as the simple introduction of the creation ordinance of the seventh day Sabbath shows.⁴⁹

The sacrifice of the Passover lamb in Egypt allowed God's called out ones to leave their old world and begin anew as they learned to serve God. The sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah accomplishes the goal of allowing Christians to begin their walk with God, although they do not really know Him or His ways, today. God's plan was never as small as simply giving freedom from tyranny, but instead freedom was given so we, all His called out people, could walk with and serve Him. Just as the Israelites were required to take one action, the sacrifice of the Passover lamb to begin that journey, so are we required to take one action, the acceptance of the shed blood of the true Passover sacrifice, Jesus the Christ. We will have much to learn and will probably undergo many trials as we travel with God, but the journey is all made possible by the sacrifice of true Passover, Jesus the messiah.

(The flies)

46 Ex. 9:6 And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.

47 Ex. 9:26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.

48 Ex 10:23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

49 The story of the manna in Exodus 16

What kind of Sacrifice was the Passover?

What kind of sacrifice was the Passover? To determine this, we need to make a quick summary of the sacrificial system put in place by God, which is described in detail in Leviticus and other portions of scripture. There were four types of blood sacrifices: burnt offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings and peace offerings (there were two types of peace offerings). Table 2 lists the characteristics of these offerings along with the possible sub-divisions inside of each offering type. The grain offerings have been excluded because they are not blood offerings.

Offering Name	Purpose	Sacrifice	God's Portion	Priest's Portion	Portion Eaten by Worshiper
Burnt Offering (<i>'olah</i>) Lev. 1; 6:8-13; 8:18-21; 16:24	Atone for general sin. Allow unholy people to approach a holy God	Unblemished Male: Ox; Sheep; Goat; Dove (according to wealth)	Entire Animal Whole burnt offering	Nothing	Nothing
Sin (<i>hatta't</i>) Lev. 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30; 8:14-7 16:3-22	Atone for specific sin when restitution was not possible	Bullock for congregation of Israel, including priests: He-Goat for rulers: She-Goat for commoner	Fat covering innards, kidneys, liver, caul	Remainder of animal (to be eaten within tabernacle only)	Nothing
Trespass or guilt (<i>'asham</i>) Lev. 5:14-6:7; 7:1-6	Atone for a specific sin when restitution was possible. Repayment required at 20% interest	Ram	Fat covering innards, kidneys, liver, caul	Remainder of animal (to be eaten within tabernacle only)	Nothing
Peace (Votive) (<i>neder</i>) Lev. 7:16	Blessing when vow has been made	Unblemished male or female sheep/goat/ox	Fat covering innards, kidneys, liver, caul	Breast to high priest: Right foreleg to sacrificing priest (to be eaten anywhere)	Remainder of animal (to be eaten within the tabernacle only as a community meal on the first day)
Peace (<i>todah</i>) Lev. 7:12-5			Fat covering innards, kidneys, liver, caul	Breast to high priest: Right foreleg to sacrificing priest (to be eaten anywhere)	Remainder of animal (to be eaten within the tabernacle only as a community meal on the first day)

Table 2- The Blood Sacrifices of God.⁵⁰

50 From <http://www.new-life.net/sacrifice.htm> and Kurtz, J.H., Trans. By James Martin, *Offerings, Sacrifices, and Worship in the Old Testament*, Hendrickson Publishers, 1998.

The worshipper bringing the sacrifice for any of the burnt, sin or trespass offerings did not participate in eating any of the sacrifice. None of the three sin offerings involved communal meals. On the other hand, the Passover involves a communal meal and the worshipper participates in that meal. Thus the Passover does not resemble any of the three generic sin offerings in any way. Kurtz makes the most powerful case for classifying the Passover as closely resembling a peace offering and rejecting the notion that it was a sin offering.

If, then, the sacrificial character of the paschal lamb must be admitted, the question arises, to which of the classes of sacrifice otherwise occurring in the Mosaic economy does it belong? Strictly speaking, to none of them. For the peculiarity belonging to the purpose of its institution gave a perfectly unique character to the many portions of the ritual, with which it was accompanied. It stood nearest, no doubt, to the peace-offerings; and since it has all the characteristic marks by which they were distinguished from the rest of the sacrifices, we feel perfectly justified in following nearly all the commentators, both earlier and later, and placing it among the Shelamin. It not only has the name Zebach (Ex. 12:27, 13:18), which is applied in the Pentateuch exclusively to the peace-offerings, but it has also the sacrificial meal in common with them alone; and the direction of Ex. 12:10, as to what was to be done with the flesh that remained over from the meal, correspond to those given with regard to what remained from the praise-offering, the most important description of peace-offering. In answer to Hengstenberg, who opposes this, and regards it as a sin-offering—in fact, as the foundation, the root, and the centre of all other sin-offering—we have simply to adduce the fact, that of all the distinguishing characteristics of the sin-offering, in name, object, and ritual, not a single feature appears in the case of the paschal lamb; whereas, on the other hand, all the distinctive marks of the peace-offering are impressed upon it. And Harnack's emendation of the prevailing opinion, in which he endeavors to show that it comprised the nature of both sin-offering and thank-offering, is without foundation on the one hand, since the ritual of the Passover was wanting in every distinguishing mark of that of the sin-offering, and unnecessary on the other hand, for the one point which induced him to adopt this view, viz., the expiatory worth of the blood of the Passover, has its analogon, according to Lev. 17:11, in the sprinkling of the blood of the peace-offering.⁵¹

The sacrifice of Jesus the messiah is only compared to two sacrifices in scripture, the Passover in 1 Corinthians 5⁵² and the atonement sacrifice.⁵³ The atonement sacrifice was the ultimate sin sacrifice and Jesus was the ultimate Atonement sacrifice, but the atonement sacrifice was required of those who were in covenant with God. As God teaches His called out people His ways, they were then held responsible for their sins. Hebrews states, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”⁵⁴ As the prophets tell the nation of Israel over and over again, the sacrifices were not for God, but for the people of Israel. The creator God did not have to be bought off like the false gods of the world. The sacrifices were to allow His called out people to approach God and then ask for forgiveness. If they were trying to

51 Kurtz, J.H., Trans. By James Martin, *Offerings, Sacrifices, and Worship in the Old Testament*, Hendrickson Publishers, 1998, pp. 364-5

52 1 Cor. 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

53 Hebrews 9-10

54 Heb. 10:4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

follow God's commands and ways in their daily life, He would forgive them. God said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."⁵⁵ The atonement sacrifice was the vehicle God used to reconcile Himself to His called out people. He forgave all their sins annually on the Day of Atonement, especially their unknown sins. "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD."⁵⁶

The Passover sacrifice occurred long before the people were given the choice of joining into covenant with God. The repeated refrain of "let my people go that they may serve me" leaves little doubt God's intent was to have Israel join Him in covenant, but at the time of the first Passover sacrifice the Israelites had no idea what this would entail. The Passover sacrifice was the pinnacle of God's work to allow His people to leave the slavery of sin and begin to learn His ways, something they could not do in Egypt, either 3,500 years ago or today. The Passover sacrifice most closely resembles a peace offering. A sinful people, not even aware of the magnitude of their sins, thanks God for all He has done for them and by partaking of this sacrifice and being willing to leave and follow God, as Abram did, they can begin to walk with God and learn from Him while under His protection. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."⁵⁷

The ultimate purpose of the Passover sacrifice and why it is distinctly different from the sin sacrifices, in particular the atonement sacrifice, is that it allows a sinful people to thank God for all He has done for them. Then they can commune and walk with God. God is loving⁵⁸ and He wants a relationship with His children. Although the entire universe has been in pain because of sin,⁵⁹ God gives us the hope of redemption and a real relationship with Him. All we are asked to do is accept the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah, and we can begin to walk with God and learn His ways.

Although the Passover most closely resembles a thank offering, it still has some dramatic differences. It was the only sacrifice that the priest did not slay. The priests partook of the sin, trespass, and various thanks and peace offerings, but not of the Passover. All sacrifices had to be prepared and eaten at the sanctuary, except the Passover, which was taken elsewhere and had to be consumed where it was roasted. The ordinances of the Passover sacrifice make it unique in that it is an individual sacrifice rather than a community sacrifice. Similarly, accepting Jesus the Christ as savior and king is an individual rather than community action. The covenant was and

55 2 Chron. 7:14

56 Lev 16:30

57 Rom. 5:6-8

58 John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

59 Rom. 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

always has been with a called out people, but the Passover served as a reminder that you, as an individual, must choose to accept the covenant of life and right over death and wrong. It was to remind each individual that he or she needs to be thankful to God for all that He has done for him or her. The Passover sacrifice was a reminder that a thankful people were individually serving as a priest of the most high God.⁶⁰

PASSOVER-*Pesah* and *Pasah*

Some contend the Passover is about God passing over, thus de-emphasizing the lamb and its sacrifice and ignoring the original language. Mr. Coulter writes,

Some Biblical scholars have cast doubt on the meaning of the name 'Passover'. The authors of one publication have stated, 'One final point, a minor one, concerns the name 'Passover' (Hebrew *pesah*) itself. It has sometimes been thought that the name came from the 'passing over' of the death angel and that this could mean that the entire festival has to be on the 14th. However, the exact origin of the name is disputed by scholars and such etymological arguments can never carry a great weight in any discussion.' (Dr. Robert L. Kuhn and Dr. Lester L Grabbe, *The Passover in the Bible and the Church Today*. p. 14)

That is an unbelievable statement coming from scholars who are supposedly Christian-professing, Bible-believing researchers, and who have undertaken to establish doctrine for a large church of God! But their statement does not mean that we cannot ask and find the answer to the question. What does the word 'passover' mean? Why is the Passover called by this name?

Today, most Jews will say the Passover commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. But is that what the Bible teaches? No, that is not what the Bible teaches!

The Scriptures define the meaning of the word 'passover.' The Passover is named for an event which was executed by God; "...It is the LORD's Passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt in that night, and will smite all the firstborn, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both men and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments; I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I WILL PASS OVER YOU, and there shall no plague be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:11-13, JPS)

The Passover received its name from the night in which God passed over the houses of the children of Israel and spared the first born from the plague of the death, while they were still in their houses in the land of Egypt, before the Exodus took place—not while the Exodus was taking place! The Lord passed over the houses of children of Israel and saw the blood of the Passover lambs on the side posts and lintels of their doors, and He did not kill the firstborn.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Ex. 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

⁶¹ Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover, What Does It Mean? When Should It Be Observed—the 14th or the 15th?* York Publishing Company, 1999, p 17

Just as Mr. Coulter is shocked that some Christian scholars may question the etymology of the word Passover, I am also shocked that Christians would downplay the role of Jesus the Messiah as the Passover. And this is exactly what Mr. Coulter does when he insists that Passover is about the passing over in Egypt and not about the lamb of God. I am also dismayed that Mr. Coulter ignores Rules 3 and 4 of his “14 rules for Bible study” listed just two pages earlier in his book when he makes the unsubstantiated statement that the Passover is about the action of God and not the lamb of God.

Rule 3-Understand the context--the verses before and after, the chapters before and after.
 Rule 4-Understand the original language, Hebrew or Greek. Never try to establish dogmatic doctrine or teachings by using Strong's Concordance.⁶²

Here is the Biblical account, including the context that defines what the Passover (*pesah*) is:

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover (*pesah*).

For I will pass through (*abar*) the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over (*pasah*) you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.⁶³

It is appropriate to first deal with the question of context, as the third of Mr. Coulter's rules for bible study suggests we should. Mr. Coulter has quoted Exodus 12:11 out of context. Verse 3 of Exodus 12 states the people were to gather a lamb on the tenth day. Verse 4 gives instructions on how to share and dine on the lamb. Verse 5 describes how the lamb was to be chosen. Verse 6 describes how to sacrifice the lamb. Verse 7 states what to do with the lamb's blood. Verse 8 gives regulation on the eating and disposal of the lamb. Verse 9 describes how to cook

62 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 15-6

63 Exodus 12:3-14

the lamb. Verse 10 tells the Israelites how to dispose of the lamb. Verse 11 gives the ordinance of how to be dressed while eating the lamb in Egypt and the thought ends by describing the lamb as the Passover, the *pesah*, of the Lord. Translations like the NIV, which display scripture in a paragraph form, start a new paragraph with verse 12. The NIV translators realized that verse 11 ended one thought while verse 12 started another. Von Gall's edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch starts a new paragraph with verse 13. However, the computer version of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia indicates there is a break between verses 21 and 22 and not at verse 12.⁶⁴ The web version of the Lenigrad Cotent agrees with Biblia Stuttgartensia.⁶⁵ Thus these editors disagree with the NIV editors. However, no original-language edition, no translation, and no scholar that this author is aware of has ever connected the last part of verse 11 with the section that begins with verse 12, as Mr. Coulter has done by capitalizing "it" (in "it is the LORD'S Passover") as though this begins a new sentence and thought rather than belonging to verse 11.

Mr. Coulter apparently believes quoting in context means ignoring the context of the first third of the chapter of Exodus 12, as section of scripture devoted to the lamb, then ties the last five words of Exodus 12:11, the last five words of a completely different thought, with a totally separate idea. This is not placing the scripture in context.

According to Mr. Coulter's fourth rule of bible study, if a person tries to create a doctrine out of an English word translated from Hebrew without realizing that it is a translation, they are doing themselves and God a great disservice in their bible study. Unfortunately, Mr. Coulter not only ignores the context of Exodus 12, but immediately breaks his fourth rule of bible study when he examines the meaning of the word translated as Passover. A thorough examination of Exodus 12 with emphasis on the original language shows that anyone who understands Hebrew would never confuse the word translated as Passover, *pesah*, with the words translated passing over, *pasah* or '*abar*.

Exodus 12:3-11 are the ordinances about the Passover (*pesah*) lamb. Verse 12 starts a new thought with the Lord passing or going through Egypt. A standard reference source, the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, coauthored by one of Mr. Coulter's oft quoted sources, Bruce Waltke, reveals some of the dispute over the etymology of the word Passover. It states, "The name 'Passover is derived from pasah, which some think means 'to pass (over)'"⁶⁶

The four verses that are cited are:

- (1) When I see the blood I will 'pass' over (*upasahti*) you. (Ex. 12:13)
- (2) The LORD will 'pass' through ('*abar*)... and the LORD will 'pass' (*upasahh*) over the door (Ex. 12:23)
- (3) It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover (*pesah*) who 'passed' (*pasah*) over the houses of the children of Israel. (Ex. 12:27)
- (4) The LORD of hosts will protect (*ganan*) Jerusalem, he will protect (*ganan*) and deliver (*nasal*) it. He will pass over (*pasah*) and deliver (*malat*) it. (Isa 31:5)...

64 <http://www.tanach.us/Tanach.xml#Ex12:1-12:51>

65 <http://www.tanach.us/Tanach.xml#Ex12:1-12:51>

66 Harris, Laird, Archer, Gleason, and Waltke, Bruce, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2 Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1980 pp. 728-9 (All emphasis are by Harris et. al)

The interpretation of others suggests that *pasah* in the above four passages means not “to pass over” per se, but rather “to defend, protect.” The Lord will protectively cover the houses of the Israelites and will not suffer the destroyer to enter (Ex. 12:23b and cf 1 Cor. 10:10; Heb 11:28). It is the destroyer who seeks to enter their houses and the LORD rebuffs him, standing guard by the houses of the people. The blood is a sign of the LORD. ‘When I see the blood (cf. Gen 9:16, “when I see the rainbow”) I will protect you (not the negative idea, ‘I will pass over/omit you).’”⁶⁷

The two Hebrew words translated as pass over in most English translations are *pasah* and ‘*abar*. It is true that the “verb *upashati* is the verb ‘*pasah*’ – just in the waw (‘u’) consecutive, common form,”⁶⁸ but this verb is also easily distinguishable from *pesah* in the Hebrew. Harris and other linguist have distinguished the verb form *upasah* from *pasah*, but they recognize this is like congeating go to going. The Hebrew word ‘*abar*, translated as pass over in the beginning of Ex. 12:23, means to pass over, as in “till they people pass over [‘*abar*], O LORD, till the people pass over [‘*abar*], which thou has purchased.”⁶⁹ The Hebrew word *pasah*, which is etymologically related to Passover, means to protect and not pass over. The definition of “to protect or defend” or “to cover” is supported by how the language was understood when the Hebrew scribes translated the Septuagint. In Ex. 12:13 and 12:27, they translated *pasha* with the Greek verb *skepazô*, which has the meaning:

skepazôs - V 9-3-6-7-16-41, Ex 2:2, 12:13, 27; 33:22, 40:3 A: *to cover, to hide, to shelter* [*tina*] Ex. 2:2 *to draw over* [*tinis*] Ex. 33:22; id. [*ti*] Ex. 12:27; *to protect, to shelter* [*tina*] Ex. 12:13; *to watch over, to protect* [*tina*] Dt. 32:11 M/P *to shelter oneself* Ps. 60(61), 5.⁷⁰

Exodus 12:13 And the blood shall be for a sign to you on the houses in which ye are, and I will see the blood, and will protect (*skepazô*) you, and there shall not be on you the plague of destruction, when I smite in the land of Egypt.

Exodus 12:27 that ye shall say to them, This passover is a sacrifice to the Lord, as he defended (*skepazô*) the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, but delivered our houses.⁷¹

Therefore, the verb *pasah* means to protect, but what does the Hebrew noun *pesah* mean? It is important to examine other significant verses relating to the first Passover in Exodus 12 to answer this question.

For the LORD will pass through (‘*abar*) to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over

67 Harris, Laird, Archer, Gleason, and Waltke, Bruce, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2 Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1980 pp. 728-9 (All emphasis are by Harris et. al)

68 Anonymous, Selected writing on the Passover, 2010

69 Ex. 15:16

70 Lust, Johan; Eynikel, Erik; Hauspie, Katrin; *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, Deutsch Bibelgesellschaft 1996, p. 427

71 Brenton’s English Translation of The Septuagint

(*pasah*) the door, and will not suffer the destroyer (*shachath*) to come in (*bow*) unto your houses to smite you.⁷²

And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover (*pesah*), who passed over (*pasah*) the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.⁷³

And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover (*pesah*): There shall no stranger eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.⁷⁴

There is a distinct problem with stating that the Lord's Passover is the Lord passing over the Israelites, as Fred Coulter, Frank Nelte and other early 14th proponents do. The noun *pesah* is apparently related to the verb *pasah* semantically, however, the Hebrew verbs *'abar* and *pasah*, along with its variants like *upasahti* are used to show the action God took on that fateful night in Egypt three and half millennia ago. The Passover (*pesah*) is described as being selected, slaughtered, prepared and eaten.⁷⁵ The ordinance of the Passover (*pesah*) was how to select, prepare, and eat the lamb.⁷⁶ It is appropriate to say God protected the Israelites in Egypt by causing the destroyer not to enter their homes. It is also appropriate to state an important part of the Passover was this protection. However, it is not appropriate to define the Passover as the action God took in Egypt. That action is always represented by the verbs *pasah* and *'abar*, not the noun *pesah*. The most likely meaning of these verb *pasah* is to protect. *Pasah* only occurs 4 times in scripture and is translated as pass over in the vast majority of English texts. *Pesah* occurs 48 times and is always translated Passover, not "pass over".

The noun *pesah* had never been translated to anything that could become confused with "passing over" until Tyndale introduced the word "Passover" into the English language. It is interesting to see how Bibles of all other languages translated the word *pesah*. None of the languages that are closely related to English, or influenced the English language at an early stage (German, Dutch, French, Gothic, etc), translated *pesah* to mean anything like--to pass over.--Instead, they all give a transliteration – a word using phonemes of their own language that sounds similar to the word in its original language – of the original Hebrew *pesah* or the Greek *pascha*: *pasah*, *pascha*, *pâque*, *paska*. The Nordic languages (Danish, Norwegian, Swedish) also transliterate the original word: *paske*, *paske*, *pask*. The Latin-language Bibles (Italian, Spanish, Portugese, as well as the Latin itself) also give a transliteration: *pasqua*, *pasqua*, *páscoa*, *phase*. Slavic languages, like Russian, Polish, and Slovakian, also give a transliteration: *pascha*, *pascha*, *pesach*. Even more distant languages, like Hungarian, Finnish or Icelandic, transliterate *pascha*: *paskha*, *pääsiä*, *paska*. So far, no language

72 Ex. 12:23

73 Ex. 12:26-7

74 Ex. 12:43-6

75 Ex 12:3-11

76 Ex. 12:43-6

studied, outside of English, translates the Hebrew *pesah* into a word or expression that has the meaning ‘to pass over.’ This phenomenon appears to be a linguistic faux pas found only in English-language Bibles.

So how did it get into English-language Bibles? The word “Passover” for *pesah* was introduced into the English language in 1530 by Tyndale in his translation, whereby he used *ester* (Easter) in the New Testament, even in John 6:4 (“And *ester* a feast of the [J]ewes was *nye*”).

But before Tyndale, in 1395, Wycliffe had already introduced the idea of connecting *pesah* with the concept of “passing over” into the English-language Bible. He did not translate *pesah* to a word meaning anything like “pass over” – he always transliterated it, writing *fase*, an Anglicization of the Latin transliteration of the Hebrew, *phase*. However, because Wycliffe translated his Old Testament from Latin rather than from Hebrew, he connected *pesah* with the concept of “passing over” by including two additions that Latin Vulgate added to the Hebrew text, in Exodus 12, verses 11 and 27. For Ex. 12:11 the Hebrew (as well as the Greek Septuagint Old Testament) reads “and you shall eat it hastily for it is the *pesah* of the Lord.” Wycliffe’s Ex. 12:11 reads: “...and ye schulen ete hastili; for it is *fase* [*pesah*], that is, the passyng of the Lord.” He was following the Vulgate, which reads “... et comedetis festinanter: est enim *Phase* (id est, transitus) Domini.” The expression “that is, the passing” (id est, transitus) was added in the Vulgate and is not found in the Hebrew (or in the Greek Septuagint). Wycliffe’s Ex. 12:27 also adds words to the original text, reading: “It is the sacrifice of the passyng of the Lord...,” again following the Vulgate, which reads: “Dicetis eis: *Victima transitus Domini est.*” The expression “the passyng of” (*transitus*) is not in the original. (In the New Testament Wycliffe used *paske*, a transliteration of the Greek form for *pesah* (*pascha*): “And the *paske* was ful *niy*, a feeste dai of the Jewis.”)

Tyndale’s coining the term “Passover” to use in place of *Pesah*, or a transliteration of it, was most likely influenced by Wycliffe’s earlier adoption of the Vulgate corruptions, which wrongly made a connection between *pesah* and “passing over.”⁷⁷

The Passover refers to the *pesah* lamb (or kid) and the ordinances surrounding its sacrifice the vast majority of the time. The few times it does not refer to the *pesah* sacrifice, it refers to the season of unleavened bread, but it never refers to the protection God offered Israel in Egypt. The Passover (*pesah*) is a noun and not a verb, thus it cannot be an action that God performed in Egypt. The Passover was a sacrificed lamb that was always meant to point to the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah. Mistaking the *pesah* for God’s protection or His “passing over”, misses this vital point in God’s plan for us. It also leads to the computer problem of “garbage in, garbage out.” If you start with the wrong premise in a proof, the proof will always be erroneous. The first part of the early 14th proponents’ erroneous premise is the belief that the Passover was not the lamb that pointed to Jesus the Messiah, but instead is an action of God that led to Israel’s freedom. The vast majority of Jews concentrate on that freedom during their Passover ceremony, but Christians should know the Passover is the lamb sacrificed from the foundation of the world.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Anonymous, Selected writing on the Passover, 2010

⁷⁸ Rev. 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Passover Timing Overview

There has been a fairly heated and deservedly contentious argument among scholars for hundreds of years about the nature of and timing of “the Last Supper.” This issue will be dealt with when we examine the New Testament scriptures about the Passover. However, outside of the churches of God, the only controversy about the timing of the sacrifice of the Passover in Egypt is how late on the 14th it was sacrificed. The churches of God are the only groups who debate the timing as being early or late on the 14th of Nisan. While the churches of the God have traditionally taught that other scholars share their belief that the Passover lamb should be killed at the very beginning of the 14th of Nisan, they have either misunderstood or misrepresented that scholarship. They are also mistaken when they claim some celebrate the Passover on the 15th of Nisan. Although many people eat a Passover Seder on the early portions of the 15th or list the start of Unleavened Bread as being the start of Passover, which is exactly what Christ and the disciples did, this does not mean they are celebrating Passover on the 15th.¹

There are really five traditional beliefs in the churches of God about how and when to observe the Passover, all revolving around when the lamb was killed in Egypt and what “the Last Supper” signified. Four of these beliefs can be categorized as late 14th and one of them as early 14th.

Four Views of the late 14th Passover

Some believe Christians should perform a traditional Jewish Seder and add messianic overtones to it. They will often even include the cup to Elijah as part of their Seder, even though this tradition was added a century after the crucifixion of Jesus and was used to symbolically show that Jesus was not the Messiah. I strongly disagree with believers using the cup to Elijah because of its history and will discuss this later in this book. These believers hold that the Passover lamb was killed on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan and eaten on the 15th. The Jewish tradition of a Seder on the night of the 15th is observed by this group of believers with the addition of the symbols of the wine and bread and the foot washing. Most of these Christians

¹ Matt. 26:2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.
Matt. 26:17 Now the first *day of the feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?
Luke 22:1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

also believe Jesus was crucified on Friday, the 15th of Nisan and placed in the tomb just before the weekly Sabbath commenced.

The second set of believers is very similar to the first, except they believe the symbols of the wine and bread are really just the Jewish tradition of the Kiddush. These Christians believe it is appropriate to partake of these symbols often during the year and these symbols are not really tied to the Passover ritual. They believe the Passover lamb was killed late on the 14th of Nisan and eaten on the 15th. They also usually believe the Last Supper was a Passover meal, although a small number believe the Last Supper did not occur on the 14th or the 15th of Nisan.

A third set of believers also holds that the Passover lamb was killed on the afternoon of the 14th and eaten on the 15th. However, they do not observe a Seder, but instead partake of the symbols on the afternoon of the 14th or early 15th without a Seder. Usually this group believes the Last Supper was not a Passover meal.

The fourth set of believers also holds that the lamb was sacrificed on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan. However, they observe the symbols of the bread and wine and foot washing on the early 14th, believing they are following Christ's example. They also keep a ceremony they call the Night to be Much Observed on the early part of the 15th of Nisan. Their observance of Passover appears to have very few differences with the early 14th proponents, but that is just appearance. This group appears to have either incorporated something akin to the Jewish practice of performing the Seder on two consecutive nights, which is now tradition, but whose roots lay in an uncertainty of the timing of Passover observances in Jerusalem or they believe Christ instituted a new ritual called the Lord's Supper.

These four different sets of beliefs will be grouped together as late 14th proponents until their differences are explored in the chapters dealing with how we should observe the Passover today because they all believe the Passover was always sacrificed late on the 14th of Nisan.

Early 14th View of the Passover

A final set of believers in the churches of God believe that the Passover lamb was killed early on the 14th of Nisan in Egypt. They believe the Jews lost the correct timing while they were in captivity in Babylon or more recently it has been speculated that it was lost during the Hellenization period. This tradition also held the beliefs the Jews did not know how to count to 50 and therefore created a Monday Pentecost rather than the traditional Sunday or Sivan 6th Pentecost. Scholars outside of the churches of God, and now even in most of the churches of God, would find a Monday Pentecost completely unsupported in scripture. This tradition also held Jews did not understand how to properly observe the days of Unleavened Bread nor did they understand how to properly observe the Feast of Tabernacles. As will be shown, their general belief is that the Jews are untrustworthy in deed, action and theology.

This author has personally heard the leader of the largest sect of the churches of God bellow many times, "These are not the Jews' Holy Days, these are God's Holy Days!" If this leader was not rejecting Jewish knowledge of scripture, he would probably have said, "These are not

just the Jews' Holy Days, but are God's Holy Days." This pattern of dismissing scholarly opinion, especially Jewish scholarly opinion and tradition, by creating new traditions is prevalent among the beliefs of early 14th proponents and their followers.

A traditional early 14th observance of the Passover is kept by those who believe the Passover was killed in Egypt at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan. These believers place emphasis upon the synoptic gospels when harmonizing the accounts of the Last Supper and believe that John's statements about the Jew's Passover shows the vast majority of the Jews at the time of Christ kept the Passover in the wrong manner and at the wrong time. One of the foremost teachers of this viewpoint, Mr. Fred Coulter, who goes so far as to call the Jews the enemies of Christ on numerous tapes and papers.² Early 14th proponents partake of the symbols of the wine and bread and perform a foot washing ceremony at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan in a manner reminiscent of a Catholic mass. They apparently believe Paul eliminated the Passover meal and substituted the symbols of the bread and wine.

Early 14th proponents' perspective is supposedly supported by their belief that the synoptics depict Jesus and the disciples eating a Passover meal early on the 14th of Nisan and that Christ was crucified on the afternoon of the 14th. They believe that when the Jews ate their Passover on the early 15th it was not a valid Passover. This belief system does not seem to allow for comprehension that the controversy surrounding the Last Supper among scholars was the timing of the meal, not if it was a Passover or not. Scholars outside of the churches of God tradition who believe the Last Supper was a normal Passover believe it occurred on the beginning of the 15th of Nisan. Scholars who do not believe the Last Supper was a normal Passover agree it was on the early 14th of Nisan. A few scholars believe that Last Supper occurred on the early 14th of Nisan and was a Passover, but these scholars agree it was not the normal Passover, but some kind of special Passover allowed because Christ would be dead when the normal Passover was to occur. The other theory of a special kind of Passover that has been in vogue for the last fifty years is that Jesus was following a different calendar than the Jewish leadership, thus allowing Jesus to eat the Passover on what he considered to be the early 15th of Nisan even though the standard observed Jewish calendar would have placed the date at the 13th of Nisan.³

These theories will be examined in detail, but rather than advance a theory, then turn to scripture to try to make it fit the theory, this author will examine the clear and simple scriptures about the Passover listed in the Old Testament first. Mr. Coulter's rules of bible study state to start with clear and easily understandable scriptures and use those to help understand less clear scriptures. Even if many teachers do not follow this hermeneutic in their published bible studies, it is a very good rule.

2 Coulter, Fred "The world which rejoiced was not the entire world; rather it was the world of Judaism-the enemies of Jesus Christ!" From a transcript of the tape The Dark Seder

3 Jaubert, Annie, *The Date of the Last Supper*, French orig. 1957 Trans by Rafferty, I, Staten Island, NY, Alba House, 1965. This theory will be examined in more detail in the New Testament portion of this book.

A graphic for Chapter 4. It features a white central rectangle with the title "Israel Observes the Passover" in bold black text. This is flanked by blue vertical bars. On the right blue bar, the word "CHAPTER" is written vertically in white, and a large white number "4" is positioned to its right.

Israel Observes the Passover

CHAPTER

4

Israel in the Promised Land

When and how they observed the Passover

Rule 1 of Mr. Coulter’s “14 points of Bible Study” is to start with scriptures that are easiest to understand. There are only four recorded instances of nation of Israel observing the Passover in the Promised Land in the Old Testament. These observances are: Joshua 5, 2 Chronicles 30, 2 Chronicles 35, and Ezra 6. The Passovers of Joshua and Josiah clearly show the timing of the Passover to be late on the 14th. The Passovers of Hezekiah, Josiah and Ezra clearly show the Passover was at the sanctuary and was not domestic. It is almost certain that the Passover of Joshua 5 was done at the tabernacle and that the Passover Hezekiah and of Ezra 6 was performed late on the 14th, but scripture does not list all the details of those two Passovers. There are no other Passover observances listed for the nation of Israel once they had conquered the Promised Land.

Many critical scholars, those who do not believe in the sanctity of scripture, believe there was no Passover observance before the time of Hezekiah and that the Passover recorded in Joshua 5:10 was added in by redactors (editors) over time. Since this author rejects critical scholarship, this thesis is also rejected. Just as critical scholars erroneously believe there were no Passover observances before the time of Hezekiah, early 14th proponents erroneously believe the Passovers not listed in scripture were on the early 14th and were domestic in nature. They reject the clear timing and manner of these four Passovers because scripture does not agree with their hypothesis. The Passovers of Joshua, Hezekiah, Josiah and Ezra are in the canon for us because they were momentous occasions, showing how people came back to God and learned His ways, starting with the Passover.

The Role of the King in Israel

Before examining the Passover observances of the two righteous kings of Israel, Hezekiah and Josiah, we need to examine the role of the king in Israel. Early 14th proponents have obfuscated how the theocracy of Israel operated by suggesting that the king had nothing to do with the religion of the nation. After Joshua’s generation, which was the one generation of Israel listed

as being righteous before God,¹ the nation of Israel was ruled by judges that God chose when the need arose. After hundreds of years, during the time of the prophet Samuel, the last of the righteous judges to be raised up by God,² the people rejected the idea of a judge in favor of a king. Although Samuel was distraught at the idea of a king ruling over Israel, God said, “Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, where-with they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.”³

The people wanted a king, but God was the one who directly chose the kings of Israel.⁴ It was God who then rejected Saul.⁵ It was God who chose David to replace Saul.⁶ When David was old and gray, he refused to pick a successor. So Joab, the captain of the guard, and Abiathar the priest helped David’s eldest living son, Adonijah, claim the kingship.⁷ Although Joab and Abiathar thought they had chosen wisely, Adonijah was not God’s choice. God chose Solomon.⁸ God controlled who would rule over Israel and although He allowed many evil kings and a few righteous ones, it was God who raised them up and tore them down.

How did Israel observe the feasts under the Kings of Israel?

Fred Coulter writes, “Although many kings had reigned in Israel and Judea, the Passover observance in Hezekiah’s time is the first account of the Passover being kept as a major feast. During Solomon’s reign, the Feast of Tabernacles is recorded as the major feast that was celebrated by the people. During Hezekiah’s reign, the emphasis shifted from the fall festival season to the spring festival season.”⁹

1 Josh. 24:31 And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel

2 1 Sam. 8:1-3 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beersheba. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

3 1 Sam. 8:7-9

4 1 Sam 10:24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people?

5 1 Sam. 15:11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.

6 1 Sam. 16:1 And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

7 1 kings 1

8 1 kings 1:30 Even as I swear unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

9 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 142

Mr. Coulter lists no scriptures to substantiate his theory that there was a shift in emphasis from the Feast of Tabernacles to the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread. It is true that the Feast of Tabernacles is implied as being kept by Judah at the time of Rehoboam, the son of King Solomon when Jeroboam created a false feast that occurred exactly one month later.¹⁰

However, the Feast of Tabernacles is referenced as time frame opposed to Jeroboam's false feast. This false feast would be a sin for Israel for hundreds of years. The only other mention of the Feast of Tabernacles being celebrated is in chapters 5 through 7 of 2 Chronicles. This Feast of Tabernacles celebration is mentioned as a time frame for the historic consecration of the temple. All the listings of the festivals actually being observed throughout the Old Testament are because they marked historically significant events, like entering the Promised Land, the consecration of the temple or the nation of Israel returning to their covenant with God. Therefore it should not be surprising there is no listing of any Passovers from the time of Joshua until the time of Hezekiah because only monumentally important feast observances are listed in scripture.

Rather than recognize that scripture was designed to show the highlights of the covenant with God, Mr. Coulter writes, "As stated earlier, this Passover in the days of King Hezekiah is the first record in Scripture of a Passover being sacrificed at the temple in Jerusalem. Most certainly, the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were kept by David, and by Solomon before he turned bad on God and did evil. Yet the Scriptures do not record any observance of the Passover at the temple during the reigns of David or Solomon. Neither is there any Scriptural record of a Passover being kept at the tabernacle in Shiloh, before the temple was built."¹¹ Although this statement is technically true, it is highly misleading and is attempting to obfuscate what scripture shows. It is true there are no Passovers listed as being performed in the temple until the time of Hezekiah, but this is because there are no Passovers listed as being observed in scripture from the time of Joshua until the time of Hezekiah. Mr. Coulter insinuates that because there are no Passovers listed as being observed from time of Joshua until the time of Hezekiah, they must have been domestic. Of course there is no scriptural proof of how the Passover was observed during those eight hundred years. All a student of scripture can do is determine what the ordinances were that God gave Israel and observe how Israel performed the Passover when they were following God and it is listed in scripture.

10 1 Kings 12:25-33 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan. And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

11 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 146

The absence of observance of Passover or any of the other annual feasts does not mean they were not observed, just that events around their observance were not important enough to be mentioned in the limited space of scripture. God said, “Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which He shall choose; on the feast of unleavened bread, and on the feast of weeks, and on the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty.”¹² Although scripture does not specifically list any of the three feast seasons as being more prominent than another, the Passover was the only time a member of the nation of Israel could perform a sacrifice to God. Thus history records that many Israelites would plan their occasional pilgrimages, often because they were so far from Jerusalem, to be at Passover time.

Many in the churches of God place great emphasis upon the Feast of Tabernacles, often taking off from work for the entire season and often traveling great distances to meet with others. However, they generally do not take off any time for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, except for the first and last days. Apparently because Mr. Coulter is trying to support his traditional observance of God’s feast days, he stipulates that during the time of the united kingdom of Israel (under Saul, David, and Solomon) the Feast of Tabernacles was more important than the feast that foreshadowed the sacrifice of the true pesah, Jesus the Messiah because the feast of Tabernacles is mentioned twice and the Passover is not mentioned. Just because scripture condemns Rehoboam and depicts the inauguration of the temple does not mean the Feast of Tabernacles was more important than the Feast of Passover. When the World Wide Church of God first started keeping the annual feasts, it placed equal emphasis on the feasts of Passover and Tabernacles, observing both of them as pilgrimage feasts. Could it be that the emphasis was switched to observing one feast as a pilgrimage feast in the 1960’s for economic reasons? If the World Wide Church of God could get all of its members to use the so-called second tithe for only one pilgrimage feast a year, while at the same time mandating all second tithe not spent had to be turned into the church, it would receive a great deal more revenue. There is no doubt a major source of income for the churches of God comes from this so-called “excess second tithe.” The World Wide Church of God apparently chose the fall feast days because conditions are generally more amenable at this time, and perhaps because the Jews place more emphasis upon Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Besides the emphasis on certain holy days, Mr. Coulter also states, “As we learn how the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were celebrated in the days of King Hezekiah, we will notice some significant changes from the ordinances that God had delivered at Israel’s first Passover.”¹³ Of course this statement is true, but Mr. Coulter pre-supposes these changes occurred at the time of Hezekiah and not with the creation of the Tabernacle in the wilderness almost eight hundred years earlier. As will be shown, there were many changes made as early as the second Passover after leaving Egypt, including no destroyer to kill the first born, no need for blood on the door posts, and the institution of a second Passover, on the 15th day of the second month, if someone legitimately could not partake of the first Passover.

12 Deut. 16:16

13 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 142

The role of the King in Israel, cont.

Attempting to greatly diminish the role of the king in the affairs of the theocratic state of Israel, even though God chose the king, Mr. Coulter states, “Although David composed many psalms that were sung by the Levites and helped Samuel institute the courses of the priests, he never exerted authority over the priesthood.”¹⁴ Mr. Coulter is incorrect that David helped Samuel institute the courses of the priests. David is recorded as placing the priests in their order without any assistance, thus exercising great authority over them.

Now David was old and full of days; and he made Solomon his son king over Israel. And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites. And the Levites were numbered from thirty years old and upward; and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand. Of these, twenty and four thousand were to oversee the work of the house of the LORD; and six thousand were officers and judges; and four thousand were doorkeepers; and four thousand praised the LORD ‘with the instruments which I made to praise therewith.’ And David divided them into courses according to the sons of Levi.¹⁵

Samuel could not have helped with the institution of the courses because he had died decades earlier, while Saul was still king. “Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that divined by a ghost or a familiar spirit out of the land.”¹⁶ It is true that Saul saw at least an image of Samuel later, conjured up by the witch of Endor.¹⁷ Hopefully Mr. Coulter is not suggesting David would have followed this example of Saul and conjured up Samuel.

It is most probable that Mr. Coulter’s errant suggestion that David had nothing to do with the operation of the priesthood was advanced to show if the king exercised authority over the priests and the religion of Israel, he was acting contrary to God’s ways. Mr. Coulter writes that Hezekiah laid, “the groundwork for changes in the observance of the Passover... Ezra’s statement makes it clear that the king was in charge of this undertaking. Although the Scriptures make provision for observing the Passover in the second month, the emphasis is that it would be observed ‘according the commandment of the king.’”¹⁸ Mr. Coulter’s suggestion is that anything by the command of the king can be ignored because it supposedly does not express God’s will.

Scripture made provision for the second Passover, but Mr. Coulter tries to dismiss the scriptural example of righteous king Hezekiah, most likely because Hezekiah’s example clearly shows the Passover occurring on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan in the temple. The king, who was appointed by God, often exercised authority in the theocracy of Israel. It was David who commanded the courses of the priest and Samuel had nothing to do with it. It was David who ordered

14 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 142

15 1Chron. 23:1-6, JPS

16 1 Sam. 28:3

17 1 Sam. 28:7-22

18 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 143

the ark of the covenant be moved to Jerusalem.¹⁹ It was David who, “offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offering and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.”²⁰ David was not the only king to actively exercise his authority over the priesthood. At the sanctification of the Solomon’s temple, “Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the LORD on the altar of the LORD, which he had built before the porch, Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles. And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: the porters also by their courses at every gate: for so had David the man of God commanded. And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures. Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the LORD, and until it was finished. So the house of the LORD was perfected.”²¹ Solomon not only built the temple, but he commanded the priests and the Levites according to the ways of God. Mr. Coulter is fond of pointing out that the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah were by command of the king, insinuating and often stating that God may have allowed such commands, but they were incorrect and certainly not binding. Yet in 2 Chronicles 8:13-5 we read that the commandments of Moses were equivalent to the commandment of the king, in this case the commandment of Solomon.

This is not the only case where the will of God was conveyed as the command of the king. It was by the king’s command that certain stones were laid for the temple.²² Righteous king Hezekiah not only commanded how to keep the Passover, but also how to clean up the temple.²³ Righteous king Josiah not only ordered how the Passover as to be done, but he ordered the high priest, Hilkiah, and his scribes to find out how to return the nation of Israel into a covenant relationship with God.²⁴ It was also by the king’s command, in this case righteous king Josiah, that the priesthood were ordered to clean the temple of God from pagan influences.²⁵

19 2 Sam. 6:1-17

20 2 Sam. 6:17-8

21 2 Chron. 8:12-16

22 1 Kings 5:17 And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, *and* hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.

23 2 Chron. 19:15-36

24 2 Kings 22:11-4 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the Law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king’s servant, saying: ‘Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.’ So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe - now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the second quarter - and they spoke with her. (JPS)

25 2 Kings 23:4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the

God placed the king on his throne and gave righteous kings like David, Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah their authority. Mr. Coulter's attempt to disparage the king's authority in Israel is not justified in scripture.

Mr. Coulter writes about Josiah's Passover, "The phrase 'as it is written in the book of Moses' is not referring to the ordinances for the Passover, but to the ordinances that God established for the peace offerings, which required that the blood of the sacrificial animal be dashed against the altar, and the fat and certain organs be burnt on the alter (Lev. 3)."²⁶ Not understanding that the Passover is the ultimate thanks offering is understandable, but not realizing that the phrase "according to the laws of Moses"²⁷ is harkening back to verse 13 of 2 Chronicles 8 is not.²⁸ Solomon followed the law of Moses when he consecrated the temple and Josiah followed the law of Moses when he returned Israel to covenant with God at his Passover. Mr. Coulter is obviously in error when he states the Kings of Israel never exercised authority over the priesthood before the time of Hezekiah and any insinuation that Hezekiah acted on his own in an unprecedented manner is also in error.²⁹

Mr. Coulter writes, "As we continue to study the account in II Chronicles, we will see that Hezekiah's Passover is the first recorded in scripture of the killing of the lambs at the temple."³⁰ Although this statement is technically correct, it is deceiving. This is made clear when Mr. Coulter writes, "The observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem during Hezekiah's reign was without precedent. This was the first time that the Passover had been kept at the temple!"³¹ However, there are no other Passover observances listed in scripture from the time of Joshua's Passover in Joshua 5 to the time of Hezekiah. Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents believe, "from the time the children of Israel entered the Promised Land until the time they were carried away to the captivity in Babylon, we find only two occurrences in Scriptures of the Passover that was not a domestic observance."³² The fal-

Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. (JPS)

26 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 155

27 2 Chron. 30:16 And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, *which they received* of the hand of the Levites.

28 2 Chon. 8:13 Even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

29 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 142 In the times before Hezekiah, it was the judge or the king who administered the civil affairs, and the priests who administered the religious matters. During the days of Samuel, God combined the office of prophet, priest and judge in one person of Samuel. It was separated again when Saul was made king, with the priests administering the religious matters and the king the civil affairs. The Scriptures show that the prophet and/or chief priest had authority over the king in spiritual matters, as in the case of David and his sin with Bathsheba. The prophet Nathan corrected David for this sins and pronounced the punishment of the Lord against David. Although David composed many psalms that were sung by the Levites, and helped Samuel institute the course of the priests, he never exerted authority over the priesthood.

30 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 143

31 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 147

32 Coulter, *The Christian Passover* p. 149

lacious idea of a domestic Passover is dealt with extensively in other portions of this book, but to suggest because Passover observances were not listed in scripture means they were observed domestically is a use of circular logic which is not supported by scriptural examples.

Hezekiah's Passover

Mr. Coulter states that although Hezekiah was a righteous king, his observance of the Passover at the temple on the late 14th was not an example of how the Passover should be observed. Mr. Coulter writes, "The temple-centered Passovers that were commanded by Hezekiah and Josiah did not abolish the command of God for a domestic observance of the Passover at the beginning of the 14th day."³³ Were Hezekiah and Josiah wrong in the way they observed the Passover?

Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done. He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place. For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel. Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons, be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.³⁴

God gives high praise to Hezekiah. "He did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did."³⁵ He had the temple reopened and had the Levites clean it so he could re-institute the covenant of God with the people of Israel.

Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end. Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof. Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the LORD. Then Hezekiah the

³³ Coulter, *The Christian Passover* p. 158

³⁴ 2 Chron. 29:1-11

³⁵ 2 Kings 18:3

king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the LORD. So they killed the bullocks, and the priests received the blood, and sprinkled it on the altar: likewise, when they had killed the rams, they sprinkled the blood upon the altar: they killed also the lambs, and they sprinkled the blood upon the altar. And they brought forth the he goats for the sin offering before the king and the congregation; and they laid their hands upon them: And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel. And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for so was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets. And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished.³⁶

Scripture states king Hezekiah re-instituted the worship and sacrifices in the right manner, the manner proscribed in Leviticus. It is true some of the Levites had to help with sacrifices, something only the priests were supposed to do, but the people were just beginning to make themselves clean. So the temple was cleansed and ready for use on the 16th of the first month, two days late for the Passover, which had to be sacrificed on the 14th. Hezekiah then invites the people to come and rekindle the covenant of God and under Godly influence, he chooses the Passover as the tool to do this because the Passover sacrifice has always been the lamb that allows a sinful, but thankful, people to begin to walk with a God that loves them, even before they have an understanding of the covenant of God.

And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation. So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God,

36 2 Chron. 29:17-28

that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.³⁷

The invitation is issued to return to God and not be like those who were taken into captivity. Verses 10 through 13 of 2 Chronicles 30 suggest a number of the people laughed at the idea of going to Jerusalem to keep the Passover and return to God's way of life. However, a number of other people came to celebrate and began to practice a covenant that they had not known.

And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron. Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites. For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD.³⁸

The Passover is killed in the temple on the 14th. Verses 16 and 17 of 2 Chronicles 30 shows that the head of each household was supposed to kill the Passover, but the priests were supposed to sprinkle the blood. However, some of those that came were unclean and not allowed to sacrifice the Passover. Since this was already the second Passover, it was not possible to put off the sacrifice of the Passover for another month. So the Levites, who had cleansed themselves, sacrificed the Passover for the people. And in verse 18 Hezekiah prays to God to pardon everyone who had not been prepared for the Passover, but partook of it any way because the people's hearts were with God and they were just learning what that meant. "And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people."³⁹ Then, "Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers."⁴⁰

The people rejoiced and learned of God's ways for seven days and they were so thirsty to continue to learn God's ways that they stayed for another seven days according to verses 23 through 25. "So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem. Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven."⁴¹ The joy was immense and it reached up to heaven because the metaphorical prodigal son had returned. This was a people who had humbled themselves in the sight of the Lord."⁴² He forgave them and rekindled His covenant in their hearts.

37 2 Chron. 30:1-9

38 2 Chron. 30:14-7

39 2 Chron. 30:20

40 2 Chron. 30:22

41 2 Chron 30:26-7

42 2 Chron. 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face,

Scripture states a Passover like this had not occurred since the time of Solomon. Solomon had guided the priesthood to lead the people in the worship of God at the temple when it was consecrated at the time of the feast of Tabernacles and Hezekiah guided the priesthood when they renewed their covenant with God at this joyous Passover. Not only was the joy as it had been in the time of Solomon, but there is nothing in scripture to suggest that there was any difference between the method and manner of Hezekiah's Passover and earlier Passovers because there is no mention of earlier Passovers. There is nothing in scripture to suggest that keeping the Passover in the temple on the later portions of the 14th was an incorrect practice. Scripture does suggest that this was the way it was performed at the time of Solomon.

Josiah's Passover

The only other Old Testament Passover recorded in detail was the Passover of Josiah in 2 Chronicles 35. The Passover of Ezra in chapter 6 is not a detailed description and neither is the Passover of Joshua 5. Josiah began to follow God when he was very young.

“Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images.”⁴³ For the next eighteen years Josiah destroyed the false places of worship of the people.⁴⁴ Verses nine through thirteen depicts Josiah rebuilding the temple of the Lord and then in verse fourteen, “And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found a book of the law of the LORD given by Moses. And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy servants, they do it.”⁴⁵

The re-discovery of the law in the temple inspires the righteous king Josiah to have the law read aloud. The sheer shock of discovering that Israel was being punished for not keeping God's ways inspired Josiah to repent by tearing his clothes and ordering the priests to do all that was written in the book of the law that had been discovered.⁴⁶ Scripture agrees that Josiah was a righteous king who followed in God's ways, just as Hezekiah did. “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned

and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

43 2 Chron. 34:1-3

44 2 Chron. 29:4-8

45 2 Chron. 34:14-16

46 2 Chron. 34:16-21

not aside to the right hand or to the left.⁴⁷ When the king enquires of God what to do, God responds, “Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD. Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again.”⁴⁸

Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD. And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book. And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.⁴⁹

Josiah hears the word of God and begins to seek His ways. God understands the pure heart of Josiah and heeds him. Josiah declares his allegiance to God and commits himself and his people to the covenant of God and they follow it all the days of Josiah’s life. The people were now ready to rekindle the covenant of God and of course God chose the Passover as the time for the re-kindling. Just as Mr. Coulter’s depiction of Hezekiah’s Passover does not match that found in scripture, it is debatable if Mr. Coulter’s description of Josiah’s Passover matches scripture. “As in the time of Hezekiah, Josiah called for a mandatory Passover to be kept at Jerusalem. This was an emergency measure to avert the curses God had pronounced because of the people’s sins.”⁵⁰ Hezekiah’s Passover was by invitation and only a minority of Israelites actually accepted the invitation. Josiah’s Passover might be described as mandatory or as an emergency, but is better described as invitation to come and worship the one true God in the manner He had proscribed.

Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the LORD, And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel, And prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your

47 2 Kings 22:2

48 2 Chron. 34:27-8

49 2 Chron. 34:29-34

50 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 153

courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son. And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the families of the fathers of your brethren the people, and after the division of the families of the Levites. So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance. And his princes gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover offerings two thousand and six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen. Conaniah also, and Shem-aiyah and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave unto the Levites for passover offerings five thousand small cattle, and five hundred oxen. So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their courses, according to the king's commandment. And they killed the passover, and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them. And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. And so did they with the oxen. And they roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people. And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron were busied in offering of burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron. And the singers the sons of Asaph were in their place, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer; and the porters waited at every gate; they might not depart from their service; for their brethren the Levites prepared for them.

So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah. And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.⁵¹

As in the time of Hezekiah and as Clarke points out, "The people themselves might slay their own paschal lambs, and then present the blood to the priests, that they might sprinkle it before the altar; and the Levites flayed them, and made them ready for dressing."⁵² Many commentaries conclude it was the Levites who performed the sacrifice of the Passover, but the pronoun they in verse 11 could be referring to either the Israelites, as Clarke suggests, or to the Levites. At the time of Hezekiah's Passover Levites killed the lambs for the unclean, but they sprinkled the blood on the altar for all the Israelites. There is no doubt it was the Levites who sprinkled the blood on the altar at Josiah's Passover and this author agrees with Clarke's assertion that it was the Israelites and not the Levites who performed the Passover sacrifice.

⁵¹ 2 Chron 35: 1-19

⁵² Clarke, Adam, *Adam's Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*, E-sword commentary on 2 Chronicles 35:11

Again the Passover was the tool used to re-institute the covenant of God with his called out people by a righteous king. Again God's people have humbled themselves and repented in the sight of the Lord.

Hezekiah's and Josiah's Passovers were sacrificed in the temple and according to the law of Moses.⁵³ It is true the Passover of Hezekiah was a second Passover, but it occurred late on the 14th and matches the pattern of the Passover of Josiah, except that it occurred in the second month. When and where were the lambs killed by these righteous kings returning their people to God's way of life through his covenant? Even Mr. Coulter acknowledges, "When we examine the full account of Hezekiah's Passover, we find no indication that the Passover lambs were killed at the beginning of the 14th."⁵⁴ He also writes, "The following verses (Josiah's Passover recorded in 2 Chron. 35) indicate that the account is describing an observance on the daytime portion of the 14th."⁵⁵ Mr. Coulter correctly describes how the Passover was observed at the temple. "Here is the procedure that was carried out at the temple for the sacrifice of the Passover lambs: The man who brought the lamb to the temple would himself kill the lamb by slitting its throat. The Levites in attendance would catch the blood in bowl and pass it to the priest, who would dash it against the base of the altar of the burnt offerings. This was the usual procedure for the temple sacrifice of the Passover lambs, as verified by historical records of the temple service."⁵⁶

"A later statement in the Scriptural account shows that the sacrifices were not eaten until the night of the 15th. The account tells us that the priests had so many sacrifices to prepare that they 'were busied in offering the portions that were burnt and the fat until night.' (2 Chron. 35:14, JPSA). The fact the sacrifices were not completed until night shows that the people did not eat them on the portion of the 14th, but on the night of the 15th."⁵⁷ Mr. Coulter rejects how Israel, under two righteous kings who were returning the people to God's covenant, observed the Passover because it does not match his early 14th hypothesis and in so doing has rejected easy to understand scriptures, his first rule of bible study. But even he admits these two Passovers took place in the temple on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan and he never attempts to explain why these two righteous kings would keep the Passover at the supposedly wrong time.

Mr. Coulter does speculate, "Although Hezekiah and Josiah had the most urgent and compelling reason to centralize the Passover at the temple in Jerusalem, it is important to remember that these temple observances did not conform to the commands of God in Exodus 12. These Passover were observed at the temple **"according to the commandment of the king."** The fact that God accepted these Passovers does not mean, by any stretch of the imagination, that He rescinded His ordinances for the Passover, which required the killing of the lambs by the head of each household 'between the two evenings,' or *ben ha arbayim*. **God's command for the domestic sacrifice of the Passover lambs at the beginning of the 14th was not nullified by**

53 2 Chron. 30:16

54 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 144

55 *Ibid*, p. 153

56 *Ibid*, p. 145

57 *Ibid*, p. 154

the command of the king!⁵⁸ Mr. Coulter bases his speculation about a domestic Passover, again without any speculation on why these two righteous kings would change the timing of the Passover, on a verse from 2 Kings 23. “And the king commanded all the people, saying: ‘Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant.’ There was not kept such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah was this passover kept to the LORD in Jerusalem.”⁵⁹

Although we have examined what scripture means when it describes the commands of a righteous king, we need to note why Josiah’s Passover was like no other Passover before it, dating clear back to the time of the judges, according to scripture.⁶⁰ Early 14th proponents often contend this means Josiah’s Passover was not kept in the same manner nor at the same time as other Passovers. But of course, it was kept in the same manner and time as Hezekiah’s Passover. So when scripture states Josiah’s Passover was like none before it, it cannot mean this was the only time the Passover was kept in the manner and at this time. Letting scripture interpret itself reveals what was so special about Josiah’s Passover.

Nehemiah used the feast of Tabernacles as time to help an ignorant remnant of Israel renew their covenant with God. “All the people gathered themselves together as one man into the broad place that was before the water gate; and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the Law before the congregation, both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the broad place that was before the water gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, and of those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the Law.”⁶¹

The people stayed and learned of God and His ways for the next two weeks. When the time for the feast of Tabernacles arrived, “All the congregation of them that were come back out of the captivity made booths, and dwelt in the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.”⁶²

Of course Feast of Tabernacles celebrations had occurred between the time of Joshua and Nehemiah. Although scripture lists only one observance, in 2 Chronicles 7, there should be no doubt this observance at the dedication of the temple was performed according to the command of king Solomon and according to the will of God. Although Solomon’s celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles was grand, scripture suggests Nehemiah’s celebration was even more

58 Coulter, p. 156-7, emphasis by Mr. Coulter

59 2 Kings 23:21-23

60 2 Chron. 35:18 And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

61 Neh. 8:1-3

62 Neh. 8:17

joyful. So joyful that it harkened back to the days of the nation of Israel actually capturing the Promised Land. In like manner, Josiah's Passover was different because it also conformed to God's will in a way that even Hezekiah's Passover could not match.

The Passover of Ezra

Although the Passover of Ezra is not written with as much detail as the ones of Hezekiah and Josiah, it is a temple centered Passover and appears to match the general pattern of Hezekiah's and Josiah's Passover. The exiles return to the Promised Land under Ezra, often referred to as "the second Moses." Verses 3 through 16 of chapter 6 of Ezra detail how he began the construction and cleansing of a new temple. Verses 17 through 18 depict the dedication of the temple. Then, "the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the LORD God of Israel, did eat, And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel."⁶³

As we have shown, Mr. Coulter agrees with scholars that the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah took place in the temple on the later portions of the 14th. Just as in the time of Hezekiah and Josiah, the first event after the cleansing of Ezra's temple is the Passover, the sacrifice that God uses to allow a sinful, but thankful people, to begin to walk with Him and learn His ways so they can enter into covenant with Him. Just as in the time of Hezekiah, the people were not clean, so temple officials killed the lambs for those that were unclean. Just as in the time of Hezekiah and Josiah, there can be no doubt that Passover was temple-centered. The timing of the Passover sacrifice, as in all scriptural accounts, occurred on the 14th of Nisan.

Even Mr. Coulter agrees three of the four Passovers recorded in scripture after God's sanctuary was built were temple centered. The fourth, the Passover of Joshua 5, only mentions that the Passover was killed at the evening, *ba erev*, of the 14th without any other details. Scripture depicts three of these four Passover occurring late on the 14th. The fourth, the Passover of Ezra 6, only mentions that the Passover was killed on the 14th and the assumption of scholars is that it occurred at *ben ha arbayim*. Why would the very clear location and timing of the Passover sacrifice during the reign of the two righteous kings of Judah, Hezekiah and Josiah, be rejected? Why would the location of the Ezra's Passover be rejected as also being against God's scriptural ordinances? Ezra is commonly depicted as the editor of Chronicles and thus we can assume since he followed the pattern of the temple sacrifice of the Passover of the righteous kings he had chronicled, he also followed their timing. Why are these very clear and easy to understand examples rejected by early 14th proponents? Mr. Coulter writes:

63 Ezra 6:19-22

When we understand the idolatrous history of Israel and Judah, it is evident that Hezekiah instituted the temple-centered Passover because the people could not be trusted to keep the Passover at home. They had strayed far from God and had rejected His commandments and laws, and they were so steeped in Baal and Asherah worship that it was not feasible to allow them to keep a domestic Passover. The only place that could be trusted to keep the Passover to honor God, and not pollute it with Baal and Asherah worship was in Jerusalem under the strict supervision of the king, the priests and the Levites. Although this temple-centered Passover did not conform to the Passover commands in Exodus 12, it was necessary for the children of Israel and Judah to keep the Passover in this manner to ensure the worship of the true God and to prevent the Passover from being polluted by pagan practices.⁶⁴

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many in Israel “laughed them to scorn, and mocked them,”⁶⁵ when king Hezekiah’s messengers invited the Israelites to a Passover ceremony. But there was a remnant that sought to follow God and heeded the king’s call. The people who responded to a call to return to God are the people Mr. Coulter believes could not be trusted to follow God. Those who were trying to return to God were supposedly instructed to keep the Passover in the wrong manner at the wrong time by a righteous king who followed God as his father David had. Mr. Coulter goes on to state,

It was the people’s long history of idolatry and rebellion against God that led to the changes in the Old Testament Passover ceremony during the days of Hezekiah and Josiah. These two kings of Judah made a temple-centered Passover mandatory because the people had forsaken God and gone whoring after other gods. Because they could not be trusted to sacrifice the Passover at their own houses, they were commanded to come to the temple, where the ceremony was supervised by the priests and Levites. Although these centralized observances were contrary to God’s ordinances for the Passover, He acknowledged these temple-centered Passovers because the people were repenting and worshipping Him instead of pagan gods of the nations around them. His acceptance of these Passovers does not mean the temple observance of the Passover had replaced the ordinances that are recorded in Exodus 12.⁶⁶

After rejecting the plain example presented by Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s Passover, Mr. Coulter makes this remarkable statement. “The book of Ezra records the first Passover to be observed after the dedication of the second temple. Although the Passover was centered at the temple, the lambs were slain at the beginning of the 14th and eaten on the night of the 14th (Ezra 6:19-21).”⁶⁷ However, scripture states that Ezra kept the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, without mentioning the timing as being at *ben ha arbayim* or at evening or at any other specific time. There are also no internal time references, as there were in the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah. Mr. Coulter has assumed Ezra’s Passover occurred early on the 14th because it fits his early 14th hypothesis, not because there is any scriptural evidence to support it.

64 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 147

65 2 Chron. 30:10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.

66 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 157

67 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 206

Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents reject the temple-centered location of the Passovers of Hezekiah, Josiah and Ezra as being incorrect because it disagrees with their interpretation of the first Passover in Egypt, even though there were many changes made in the worship of God when the tabernacle was completed and, as will be shown, even more were made when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. Mr. Coulter even adds the incorrect statement that Hezekiah ordered the temple-centered Passover, but the 29th and 30th chapter of second Chronicles makes clear Hezekiah invited, not ordered, the nation of Judah to come to the feast of Passover and many people rejected this invitation. Early 14th proponents suggest the people of Israel were so evil and corrupt that the righteous kings and leaders who were re-introducing the covenant to God's people had to teach them the wrong way to observe the Passover, supposedly because they could not be trusted. Of course there is no suggestion of this lack of trust in any of the three Passover observances that occurred in the Promised Land that are listed in scripture. But many early 14th proponents, and especially Mr. Coulter in many of his writings and sermons, believe the Jews are not to be trusted in general.

Josiah, who said, "Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this book,"⁶⁸ supposedly taught the people the wrong thing because they could not be trusted. Josiah, whose love for God is unquestioned in scripture, "went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD. And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book."⁶⁹ Early 14th proponents teach that righteous king Josiah then turned around and sacrificed the Passover in the wrong location and at the wrong time because it was different than the Egyptian Passover.

Early 14th proponents never really deal with the fact that the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah take place late on the 14th. Instead early 14th proponents try to misdirect the reader's attention to a supposedly domestic Passover. This author agrees with conservative scholars that Ezra, Josiah and Hezekiah were following the ordinance to kill the Passover at *ben ha arbayim*. This author also agrees with conservative scholars and rejects liberal scholars who state that the origins of the Passover sacrifice was a domestic Passover to clan gods in the hill that had nothing to do with the Exodus from Egypt. This author agrees with conservative scholars that once God had placed His name upon the tabernacle and later the temple, and certainly once Israel crossed the Jordon and conquered the Promised Land, in accordance with the scriptures listed in Leviticus 17, Deuteronomy 12 and Numbers 28:16, that all domestic sacrifices, including the Passover, were outlawed for all of God's called out people.

68 2 Chron. 34:21

69 2 Chron. 34:30-1

Old Testament Passover Timing Review

Righteous Kings and Priests Teach the Wrong Things in Scripture?

Early 14th proponents admit that the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah occurred late on the 14th and were temple-centered. These early 14th proponents stress the reason the Passovers were temple-centered was because the Israelites were so evil the kings could not allow the people to keep a supposed domestic Passover.¹ But they never explain why Hezekiah and Josiah kept the Passover on the later portions of the 14th rather than the early portions of the 14th. The priests and Levites could have easily been prepared to be at the temple on the early 14th of Nisan under Josiah, as could the people and the princes.² The nation of Israel who responded to a call to repentance could have been at the temple on the early 14th of Iyar, the second month of the year, under Hezekiah, yet they did not perform the Passover sacrifice until the end of the 14th.³ The only viable answer as to why these Passovers were performed late on the 14th was because this is the correct time for the sacrifice to occur.

Even if early 14th proponents were right about the temple-centered sacrifice of the Passover being against God's will (which they are not), but were somehow required to purge pagan influences from the Passover, they do not explain why the righteous kings, the priests and the Levites all taught the wrong time to keep the Passover. Mr. Coulter spends three pages of *The Christian Passover* trying to explain how the Hellenization of the Jews lead them to change the timing of the Passover,⁴ but Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents fail to mention that the Hellenization was at the time of Ezra, hundreds of years after the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah. It appears early 14th proponents concentrate on how the Passovers of Josiah and Hezekiah, righteous leaders of Israel, were not domestic Passovers to obfuscate the reason for the supposed change in the timing of the Passover sacrifice.

1 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 155-7

2 2 Chron. 34:32 And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand *to it*. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

3 2 Chron. 30:13-4

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 206-9

Mr. Coulter's suggestion that Ezra's Passover occurred early on the 14th of Nisan is errant for two reasons. The first is that there are no references to the timing of the Passover sacrifice in Ezra 6, therefore you must look at the pattern of all of scripture to determine when it occurred. The second reason it is in error, even according to Mr. Coulter's study if he followed his own hermeneutic, is there is no mention of *ben ha arbayim* in Ezra 6. Ezra's Passover was temple-centered, just as was Hezekiah's and Josiah's, which is mandated by Deuteronomy 12, Leviticus 17 and Numbers 28:16. It is only logical to assume that since Ezra followed the pattern of Hezekiah and Josiah in location and manner of the Passover, he also followed their timing for the Passover sacrifice. Even Mr. Coulter writes that Ezra recorded Hezekiah's and Josiah's Passover in scripture.⁵

Early 14th proponents, as exemplified by Mr. Coulter, try to explain away the Passover being sacrificed on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan as anomalies that should be ignored because the nation of Israel was so evil their righteous leaders could not trust the Israelites to repent and return to God, even though scripture shows that is exactly what that people who attended these Passovers did. Hezekiah and Josiah, two kings who followed in the way of David, and Ezra the prophet, often referred to as the second Moses, supposedly chose to teach the people the wrong way to follow God. Early 14th proponents apparently decided to ignore the manner in which God teaches His people, as exemplified in Exodus 16 and Deuteronomy 31. It is logically inconsistent to reject the temple-centered aspect of Ezra's Passover, then state it occurred on the early 14th, even though there is no mention of *ben ha arbayim* or any other time frame in Ezra 6 if you completely reject the Passovers of Josiah and Hezekiah for being temple-centered and not mentioning of *ben ha arbayim* because there is no doubt those two Passovers took place late on the 14th.

Before examining the first Passover in Egypt, it is essential to dismiss two of the arguments raised against the Passovers of the righteous kings of Hezekiah and Josiah being proper Passovers. Mr. Coulter rejects Josiah's Passover because, "as in the account of Hezekiah's Passover, we again find that 'they killed the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month.' And, as in the first account of the centralized Passover, the phrase *ben ha arbayim*, or 'between the evenings,' is not included."⁶ It is true that the first Passover was ordered to be sacrificed at *ben ha arbayim* and the exact meaning of this phrase will be examined in detail later, but neither Joshua 5:10 nor Ezra 6:19 mention the Israelites sacrificing the Passover at *ben ha arbayim*. As a matter of fact, Joshua 5:10 states Israel kept the Passover at *ba erev* on the 14th. Yet somehow early 14th proponents believe and teach that Joshua and Ezra kept the Passover early on the 14th without the mention of the phrase *ben ha arbayim*. Thus suggesting the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah were illegitimate because they do not mention the term *ben ha arbayim* is not born out if Joshua's and Ezra's Passover were legitimate and they did not mention the term *ben ha arbayim*. This author believes every Passover written about in scripture occurred at *ben ha arbayim*. This includes the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah, which occurred late on the 14th, as well as Ezra's because all true servant's of God would follow His ordinances and sacrifice that Passover at *ben ha arbayim*.

⁵ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 186-7

⁶ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 153

As partially covered in chapter four of this book, the second issue raised about the Passovers of the two righteous kings of Israel, Hezekiah and Josiah, is who ordered them. Mr. Coulter writes, “Faced with these circumstances, Josiah chose the same solution that Hezekiah had chosen—a temple-centered Passover with the priests and Levites officiating in the sacrificing. The Scriptures clearly show that, in both cases, these Passovers were ‘according to the command of the king, and NOT ACCORDING TO THE COMMAND OF GOD.’”⁷ Mr. Coulter has not only capitalized part of his statement to emphasize it, but he has placed the phrase *according to the command of the king* in quotes. What is Mr. Coulter quoting? Perhaps he is quoting second Kings 23:21, which states, “And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto Jehovah your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant.”⁸ However, this would only apply to Josiah’s Passover and could not apply to Hezekiah’s or Ezra’s Passovers. Even though Hezekiah and Josiah were righteous kings following the will of God in calling the people to repent and return to the covenant of God, their actions are dismissed as being allowed, but not ordained by God according to early 14th proponents.

However, Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents do not follow the same logic with the first Passover in Egypt. God ordered, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”⁹ God never states when or how the people were to leave their abodes. Because it is essential to an early 14th hypothesis that the Israelites not leave their houses until sunrise, Mr. Coulter states, “God clearly commanded the children of Israel NOT to leave their houses until daybreak, or sunrise.”¹⁰ However, it was not God but Moses who ordered, “And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.”¹¹ Moses gave this command and no place in scripture does it state that God commanded the children of Israel to stay in their abodes or that He told Moses to give this order to the Israelites.

My friend Russell used an expression that is essential to sound theological research. The phrase was, “If you can’t be right, at least be consistent.” Logical consistency would dictate that true servants of the creator God, like Moses and the righteous kings of Judah, spoke with His authority both when Moses ordered the people to stay in their homes and when the righteous kings ordered them to observe the Passover at the temple on the later portions of the 14th. Or Moses, Hezekiah and Josiah all spoke according to their own commands when we do not read the phrase, “And the Lord said” before a statement delivered by the righteous servants of God.

7 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 156

8 2 Kings 23:21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto Jehovah your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. (ASV)

9 Ex. 12:12-3

10 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 58

11 Ex. 12:22

It is completely inconsistent to maintain when one of God's righteous servants, Moses, spoke a command that supposedly supports your theology about staying in their abodes, and in that case it was a command spoken by God, but when the righteous kings of Israel gave a command that disagrees with your theology about Passover timing, then it was only spoken by a man and not by God. Consistency is important and this author believes that Moses and the righteous kings of Judah spoke with God's authority and will as they led God's called out people out of their old life and into a path that would lead to a covenant with God.

No Passover like it

Some early 14th proponents write that 2 Chronicles 35:18 supports Josiah's Passover being different from all other Passovers. This supposedly supports their claim that although God allowed this Passover, it was not according to the regulations of scripture. Chapter 35 of 2 Chronicles states,

So all the service of Jehovah was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of Jehovah, according to the commandment of king Josiah. And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did any of the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.¹²

How unusual is this statement? Even a cursory examination of scripture reveals similar descriptions of other extraordinary events and people in scripture which are often called hyperbole. 2 Kings 18:25 states about Hezekiah, "He trusted in Jehovah, the God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among them that were before him."¹³ Yet scripture states about David, "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not whole with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father."¹⁴ In 1 Samuel 13:14, God tells Samuel that David is a man after God's own heart.¹⁵ Is 2 Kings 18:25 suggesting that Hezekiah was closer to God than David or is this statement showing how close Hezekiah was to God? The answer is obvious when 2 Kings 23:25, written about Josiah is examined in context. "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to Jehovah with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him."¹⁶ How could Josiah, who came after Hezekiah, be like no king before him when Hezekiah has the

12 2 Chron. 35:16-9

13 2 Kings 18:25

14 1 Kings 11:4

15 1 Sam. 13:14 But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him *to be* captain over his people, because thou hast not kept *that* which the LORD commanded thee

16 2 Kings 23:25 And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there *any* like him.

same kind of statement made about him? The obvious answer is these statements are hyperbole. These statements are true, but are not literal. They were designed to show the godly character of the kings and were not intended to be a specific comparison with other people and events.

The Passover of Hezekiah is also described as a Passover like none before it back to the time of Solomon.¹⁷ Of course liberal scholars suggest there was no Passover ceremony before the time of Hezekiah, just shepherds in the hills killing sheep at the same time farmers in the valley were keeping unleavened bread. Although these liberal scholars are often embraced in part or in whole by early 14th proponents, this author rejects what is often called liberal scholarship.

Why was Josiah's Passover different from those of earlier kings? "That which distinguished this passover from all the former was,' says Calmet, "the great liberality of Josiah, who distributed to his people a greater number of victims than either David or Solomon had done."¹⁸ Other scholars agree that Josiah's Passover was extravagant and Josiah was exceedingly generous, but believe 2 Chronicles 35:18 is describing the manner and method of the Passover. "One feature by which this passover was distinguished was the liberality of Josiah. But what distinguished it above all preceding solemnities was, not the imposing grandeur of the ceremonies, nor the immensity of the assembled concourse of worshippers; for these, with the exception of a few from the kingdom of Israel, were confined to two tribes; but it was the ardent devotion of the king and people, the disregard of purely traditional customs, and the unusually strict adherence, even in the smallest minutiae, to the forms of observance prescribed in the book of the law, the discovery of an original copy of which had produced so great a sensation."¹⁹ Thus Hezekiah's Passover is set apart because of the joy of the select few who came to renew their covenant with God. Josiah's Passover is set apart because it strictly followed all of the ordinances of the Passover according to the law of Moses. And early 14th proponents admit Josiah's Passover was on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan in the Temple. Thus scholars agree that Josiah and Hezekiah were following the ordinances of the Passover outlined in scripture when they ordered the Passover to be sacrificed late on the 14th in the temple.

17 2 Chron. 30:26 So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel *there was not the like in Jerusalem.*

18 Clark, from e-sword, 2 Chron. 35:18

19 JFB, 2 Chron. 35:18

The First Passover

CHAPTER

6

The sacrifice of the Passover lamb foreshadowed the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Christ. The emphasis of chapter 12 of Exodus is how, through the last of the ten plagues, God was going to free His still sinful people in order to walk with Him and learn His ways. God protected the people of Israel from plagues four through nine without their having to take any actions. But to be protected from the final, freeing, tenth plague, Israel had to do one thing only. They had to sacrifice this perfect, innocent lamb or goat while they were still sinners. The *Pesah* (Passover) lamb is central to the Passover and is defined as the Passover in scripture. Confusing the *pesah* with *pasah*, the protection that God gave or with *'abar* or *upasah*, the manner in which God caused the destroyer to pass over shows a distinct lack of understanding of the original language. This confusion also denigrates how important the sacrifice of the lamb of God is in our journey with God.

The Passover of Exodus 12

The nation of Israel was ordered by God to select a lamb for every household on the tenth day of the first month. If the household was too small, they were supposed to share the lamb with their neighbors.¹ The lamb was to be an unblemished male of either the sheep or the goats.² Each head of household was supposed to kill the Passover at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th of the first month.³ They were supposed to put the blood of the lamb on the entrance of the home where they were to eat the Passover.⁴ They were to roast the lamb whole over the fire and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. If anything was left the next morning, it was to be burned in the fire.⁵ The Israelites were to eat the Passover while they were dressed to travel.⁶ God was going to use the destroyer as His instrument to kill all of the first born where there was no blood on the door. God would force the destroyer to pass over (*'abar*) all of the homes He was protecting (*pasah*), those households which were marked with the blood of the lamb on the entrance of the house.⁷

1 Ex 12:3-4

2 Ex. 12:5

3 Ex. 12:6

4 Ex. 12:7

5 Ex. 12:8-10

6 Ex. 12:11

7 Ex. 12:12-13, 23

Many early 14th proponents repeat the mantra that, “the Passover is on the 14th, the Passover is on the 14th.” They mistakenly ask how all of the Passover ordinances listed in Exodus 12 can be accomplished on the 14th of Nisan if the Passover sacrifice did not occur until the later portions of the 14th. The obvious answer is not all the Passover ordinances of Exodus 12 occurred on the later portions of the 14th, but scripture never mandates or suggests all of these event must occur on the 14th of Nisan. The vast majority of early 14th proponents also cling to the definition of the Passover being a day long period, the 14th of Nisan, and in so doing they fail to fully recognize the importance God placed on the sacrifice of the Passover (*pesah*) lamb of God. Early 14th proponents also fail to recognize the time frame for the Passover (*pesah*) mandated by God was not on the 14th, but on the 14th at *ben ha arbayim*. This ordinance states the Passover (*pesah*), all of the Passover, must be initiated and completed during *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th. Of course the lamb must be roasted after the sacrifice, but it does not say the roasting must be concluded on the 14th and the roasting of the lamb could not have been completed during *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th. Of course the blood must be put on the door post after the sacrifice of the Passover, but the only time frame mentioned for completing this task was before the middle of the night after the sacrifice. Of course the leftovers of the *pesah* had to be burned up in the fire the morning after sacrifice, but scripture never mandates or suggests that morning was part of the 14th of Nisan. This is because everything revolves around the sacrifice of the *pesah* because that was the most important part of the Exodus 12 ordinances, just as today everything revolves around the sacrifice of the true *pesah*, Jesus the Messiah.

The Israelites were to keep this feast as a memorial by eating Unleavened Bread for seven days, with the first and last days to be holy convocations.⁸ Moses ordered the people to use hyssop to spread the blood of the sacrificed lamb on the door posts to protect the people from the effects of the destroyer. Notice that Moses added using hyssop to spread the blood and adds that no one was to leave their home until morning.⁹ Moses tells the people they will mark this as a memorial and tell their children this is how God freed them from Egypt.¹⁰ The nation of Israel followed the commands that God had given Moses and Aaron.¹¹ During the middle of the night all of the first born not symbolically marked by the blood of the Passover lamb were killed.¹² Moses and Aaron were called by Pharaoh in the night and told to leave with all their animals and the bounty of Egypt and they left.¹³ The Israelites, along with a mixed multitude, left Israel after having been there 430 years.¹⁴ The ordinance of the Passover was to be a night of watching forever. Every member of Israel, and only Israel, was to take part in the Passover. The Passover was to have no broken bones and it was to be eaten in one spot.¹⁵

8 Ex. 12:14-20

9 Ex. 12:21-23

10 Ex. 12:24-7

11 Ex. 12:28

12 Ex. 12:29-30

13 Ex. 12:30-6

14 Ex. 12:37-41

15 Ex. 12:42-51

Elements of the First Passover

An unblemished goat or lamb was to be selected on the 10th day of the first month.

A lamb was supposed to feed 10 to 20 people. Smaller households were to combine together.

On the 14th day of the first month, at *ben ha arbayim*, the head of each household sacrificed the lamb.

The blood of the lamb was to be spread on the doorway with hyssop to mark the house so that God would protect the inhabitants, specifically the first born, from the destroyer in the middle of the night.

The lamb was to be roasted whole and eaten in the home with the people prepared to travel.

The lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The remains of the lamb were to be burned up the morning after they were eaten, just before the Israelites left Egypt.

Moses ordered the people to stay in their houses until morning. During the night, some time after the firstborn were killed, Pharaoh ordered Israel to take everything with them and leave.

Are There Changes in Later Passovers according to Scripture?

Some changes had to occur by the very nature of the first Passover and some were mandated by scripture. The most glaring of the natural changes was the death of the first born, which was not in effect at later Passovers. There also would have been no requirement to stay indoors during the middle of the night. The question also arises did the blood have to be put on the door posts each Passover after the Egyptian Passover? Scripture never states that the blood did not have to be placed on the door post, but the children of Israel understood they no longer had to carry out this portion of the ordinance because they were told that future Passovers were a memorial to the first one and this memorial centered on the *pesah* (Passover) lamb. There is no indication that the Israelites continued to put the blood of the Passover on the door of their abodes after the first Passover and it was not required because the Destroyer was not threatening the life of the first born.

Another natural change was that the people did not have to eat the Passover with their shoes and clothes on, ready to travel. They also would not have eaten later Passovers in trepidation because the destruction of the first born was no longer occurring. Because the Passover became a memorial, they could simply remember they were ready to travel and they did not actually have to be dressed to travel.

Another natural change was that every Israelite had to partake of the first Passover in Egypt, no matter what their knowledge or their state of ceremonial cleanness. According to Numbers 9, God ordained through Moses that if anyone were unclean or on a far journey, they would be prohibited from partaking of the Passover on the 14th day of the first month, but they would be permitted to perform the Passover sacrifice on the 14th day of the second month, as Hezekiah did.¹⁶ Therefore God ordained changes of which Israelites and when they could partake of the Passover.

¹⁶ Numbers 9:9-11

Examples of how God Ordained Changes

Sometimes God changes the way His institutions are run. “But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.”¹⁷ God allowed the change to be made from judges to kings.

God also changed the membership of the priesthood not once, but twice. Numbers 3:12 shows that God claimed the Levites to be His rather than the first born that He had protected in Egypt, most likely because of the incident of the golden calf in Exodus 32 when Moses said, “Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.”¹⁸ And in verse 28 it was the children of Levi that followed the will of God on that horrible day. Later God changes the priesthood from Levi to the order of the priesthood of Melchisedec.¹⁹

Sometimes God even destroys instruments that He has used powerfully. Hezekiah, one of the two righteous kings of Judah who lead them back to covenant with God with the Passover, “brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.”²⁰ God ordered the destruction of an instrument that depicted how his only son, the Messiah, would be sacrificed.²¹ God even destroyed the temple built by Solomon because the people of Israel had substituted temple services for services to God.²²

Biblical Changes in the Sacrifices

Sometimes God does mandate changes in scripture. He eliminated all domestic sacrifices with the decrees in Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12. Domestic sacrifices refer to any sacrifice performed at home and not at the Tabernacle and later the Temple.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them; This is the thing which the

17 1 Sam. 8:6-9

18 Ex. 32:27

19 Hebrews 7

20 2 Kings 18:4

21 John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up

22 Jeremiah 7

LORD hath commanded, saying, What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people: To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD. And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD. And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.²³

Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 eliminate all domestic sacrifices of any kind. Keil and Delitzsch quote Baumgarten's as to why all domestic sacrifice were to be eliminated. "Israel is not to walk in the way of the heathen and of the Canaanites, but in the ordinances of Jehovah."²⁴ They "were to offer all their burnt-offerings or slain-offerings before the door of the tabernacle...Vers. 8, 9 contain the command, that whoever offered a burnt-offering or slain-offering, and did not bring it to the tabernacle to prepare it for Jehovah there, was to be exterminated; a command which involved the prohibition of sacrifice in any other place whatever, and was given, as the further extension of this law in Deut 12 clearly proves, for the purpose of suppressing the disposition to offer sacrifice to other gods, as well as in other places."²⁵ To keep Israel from worshipping other gods, the Father ordered them to make every sacrifice where He had placed His name. This ordinance was taken so seriously by the nation of Israel at the time of Joshua, Israel was going to wipe out Ruben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh for building an altar, but it turned out it was not really an altar.²⁶

23 Lev. 17:1-14

24 Keil, C. F. and Delitzsch, F., Trans. by Martin, James, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, The Pentateuch, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1989, p. 407

25 *Ibid*, p. 409

26 Josh. 22:10-31

There is an emphasis placed on the blood of the slain animal in Lev. 17. The nation of Israel was not to eat the blood of any animal they had slain. It is made clear that if an animal is killed for food, it was to be bled before being eaten, but any animal sacrifice that involved the shedding of blood had to be brought to the place where God had placed His name.

Moses tells the people of Israel they were supposed to destroy all of the altars to the false gods of the people who currently occupied the Promised Land. He emphasizes that Israel was not to follow in their ways. Then,

But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety; Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD: And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you. Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest: But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

Notwithstanding thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roebuck, and as of the hart. Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.²⁷

Keil and Delitzsch write:

The laws relating to the worship of the Israelites commence with a command to destroy and annihilate all places and memorials of the Canaanitish worship (vers. 2-4), and then lay it down as an established rule, that the Israelites were to worship the Lord their God with sacrifices and gifts, only in the place which He Himself should choose (vers. 5-14), On the other hand, in the land of Canaan cattle might be slain for eating and the flesh itself be consumed in any place; though sacrificial meals could only be celebrated in the place of the sanctuary appointed by the Lord (vers. 15-19).²⁸

²⁷ Deut 12:4-16

²⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, Sec. 2, p. 353

They go on to state:

The command to bring the firstlings of the sacrificial animal, like all the rest of the sacrifices, to the place of His sanctuary which the Lord would choose, and to hold sacrificial meals there with the tithes of corn, new wine, and oil, and also with the firstlings of the flocks, and herds, is given not merely to the laity of Israel, but to the whole of the people, including the priests and Levites, without the distinction between the tribe of Levi and the other tribes, established in the earlier laws, being even altered, much less abrogated. The Israelites were to bring all their sacrificial gifts to the place of the sanctuary to be chosen by the Lord, and there, not in all their towns, they were to eat their votive and free-will offerings in sacrificial meals. This, and only this, is what Moses commands the people both here in 7 and 17, 18 and also in chapter 14:22 and chapter 15:19...

The reason for these instructions is given in vers. 8, 9, namely, that this had not hitherto taken place, but that up to this day every one had done what he thought right, because they had not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord was about to give them. The phrase, "whatsoever is right in his own eyes," is applied to actions performed according to a man's own judgment, rather than according to the standard of objective right and the law of God (cf. Judg. 17:6, 21:25). The reference is probably not so much to open idolatry, which was actually practised, according to Lev. 17:7, Num. 25:1, Eze 20:16-7, Amos 5:25-6, as to acts of illegality, for which some excuse might be found in the circumstances in which they were placed when wandering through the desert, - such, for example, as the omission of the daily sacrifice when the tabernacle was not set up, and others of a similar kind...

In vers. 13, 14, Moses concludes by once more summing up these instructions in the admonition to beware of offering sacrifices in every place that they might choose, the burnt-offering, as the leading sacrifice, being mentioned *instar omnium*.²⁹

The reason for the elimination of all domestic sacrifices of any kind by the Israelites was ordained by God and the Israelites were not to do what was right in their own eyes. Once they entered the Promised Land, they were no longer allowed to perform domestic sacrifices of any kind so that they would not be like the heathens who had dwelt in the Promised Land before them.

Some early 14th proponents have written that the Passover lamb is not specifically mentioned in Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12 and therefore is exempt from this change. Technically, the Passover is not mentioned in these verses. However, there are many of the specific sacrifices not mentioned in these verses, such as the thank offerings, the daily sacrifice, the new moon offerings and even the atonement offering. Instead Moses wrote in Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12 about all tithes and offerings, with an emphasis upon an offering that required the shedding of blood. Many of the specific temple offerings are listed in the book of Leviticus and in Numbers 28-9. The Passover lamb definitely fulfills the generic description of all the blood sacrifices listed in Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17, but it is also specifically mentioned as a temple sacrifice in Numbers 28:16.

Numbers 28:16-Should the Passover be excluded from the Temple Sacrifices?

²⁹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, Sec. 2, p. 358, 359, 360

The Passover is specifically mentioned as being one of the temple sacrifices in Numbers 28:16. “And in the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the passover (*pesah*) of the LORD.”³⁰ Mr. Coulter goes out of his way to obfuscate this fact under the sub-title, *the Commanded times for the Tabernacle Sacrifices*. Mr. Coulter lists the sacrifices in Numbers 28 through 29. He writes about how God lists all the portions of the daily sacrifice in Numbers 28:1-8. Then Mr. Coulter writes about the Sabbath offerings listed in Num. 28:11-15. He then offers this list of the Holy Day offerings.

- 1) The seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nu. 28:17-25)
- 2) The Feast of the Firstfruits, or Pentecost (Num. 28:26-31)
- 3) The Feast of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month (Num. 29:1-6)
- 4) The Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month, in addition to the special sacrifices that are recorded in Leviticus 16, which were performed by the high priest (Num. 29:7-11)
- 5) The Feast of Tabernacles, the 15th-21st of the seventh month, on each of the seven days. Thirteen bullocks were offered on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the number decreased each day through the seventh day (Num. 29:12-34)
- 6) The Last Great Day, the 22nd day of the seventh month, immediately following the Feast of Tabernacles (Num. 29:35-38).³¹

Conspicuous by its absence is verse 16 of Numbers 28, in the midst of all the sacrifices ordered to be done in the temple, is the sacrifice of the *pesah*. Mr. Coulter states, “This completes the list of sacrifices to be offered at the tabernacle. **Notice that no instruction for the Passover sacrifice are listed among these sacrifices.** Nowhere in Numbers 28 or 29 do we find any mention of the Passover sacrifice in the temple. Since these chapters list the sacrifices that were offered at the tabernacle on every day of the year, every weekly Sabbath, every new moon, and every annual feast day, it is reasonable to expect that if a Passover sacrifice was required at the tabernacle, instructions for this sacrifice would also be included. Although Numbers 28 makes reference to the Passover day, we find no instructions for the sacrifice at the tabernacle. The verse simply states, ‘And in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, is the LORD’s Passover’ (Num. 28:16 JPSA).”³²

If there are temple sacrifices above verse 16 and temple sacrifices below verse 16 and temple sacrifices all around verse 16 in Numbers 28 and 29, how can the *pesah* listed in Numbers 28:16 supposedly not be a temple sacrifice? Because Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents have defined *pesah* as the passing over and not as the lamb of God. They ignore that the *pesah* is clearly listed as a temple sacrifice to be done on the 14th day of the first month in Numbers 28:16. Notice how Lev. 23:5 mirrors Num. 28:16, as shown below.

30 Num. 28:16

31 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 108-9

32 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 109 (emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

Numbers 28:16 and Leviticus 23:5

Leviticus 23:5 is one of the eleven verses in the bible with the phrase *ben ha arbayim*. There should be no doubt that Lev. 23:5 is ordering when the *pesah* lamb is to be sacrificed. Below shows a comparison of the Passover sacrifice of Leviticus 23:5 with the Passover sacrifice in Numbers 28:16.

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at dusk, is the LORD'S
passover.³³
And in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, is the LORD'S
passover.³⁴

Leviticus 23:5 is the ordinance to sacrifice the Passover on the 14th at *ben ha arbayim*, which is translated as at dusk in the JPS. It does not contain any of the words commonly used for sacrifices when it refers to the *pesah*. Numbers 28:16 also refers to the Passover sacrifice, missing only the exact time of the sacrifice, at *ben ha arbayim*, and with the addition of the Hebrew conjunction *waw*, translated as "and." Yet Mr. Coulter attempts to dismiss Numbers 28:16 as not being a clear reference to the temple sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb because none of the words commonly used to describe a sacrifice modify it. The Passover sacrifice is not modified by any of the generic terms for a sacrifice because, although the Passover comes closest to resembling a thank offering, it actually fits none of the standard categories given for sacrifices. This is fitting, given its importance in foreshadowing the sacrifice of the true *pesah* lamb, Jesus the Christ, who was sacrificed from the foundations of the world.³⁵

The listing of the *pesah* in Numbers 28:16 matches the listing of the *pesah* sacrifice of Leviticus 23:5. The temple sacrifice on Numbers 28:16 agrees with example given in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35, as well as the Passover of Ezra 6, the only three Passovers listed in scriptures once the nation of Israel had captured the Promised Land. The *pesah*, the Passover lamb or goat, must be sacrificed at the sanctuary of God, along with every other sacrifice to God. Numbers 28:16 also matches the description of how the Passover was to be sacrificed according the Deuteronomy 16:1-8, which will be examined in detail later.

The reason some in the churches of God are reluctant to admit that the very clear commands of Leviticus 17, Deuteronomy 12 and Numbers 28-9 outlaw all domestic sacrifices, including the Passover, is because this gust of scriptural truth blows over the house of cards built to support the supposed early 14th Passover. If there were no domestic Passovers, and once the Israelites captured the Promised Land there were none, then the only way Jesus and the disciples could have been eating a Passover meal at the Last Supper was if the Passover was killed in the temple. And even ardent early 14th proponents know there is no way they can create any support for sacrificing the Passover in the temple on the early 14th. So they teach the clear or-

33 Lev. 23:5 JPS

34 Num. 28:16 JPS

35 Rev. 13:8

dinances of Leviticus 17, Deuteronomy 12 and Num. 28:16 do not apply to the Passover sacrifice while denigrating the Passovers of Ezra, Josiah, and Hezekiah as being incorrectly done.

Ben Ha Arbayim

CHAPTER

7

The importance of *Ben ha Arbayim* for the Early 14th Hypothesis

The one major question raised by early 14th proponents that has not been answered about the first Passover is exactly when was the first Passover killed? There is even some disagreement among serious scholars about the exact meaning of *ben ha arbayim*. Exodus. 12:6 states, “And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.” The phrase “in the evening” is translated from the Hebrew idiom *ben ha arbayim*, which has variously been translated as between the evenings, twilight or evening, depending upon translation. An examination of *ben ha arbayim* reveals it is only used in the Pentateuch, the inspired writings of Moses.

The phrase “between the evenings” stirs much passion and debate in the churches of God. It has even been called the key to the Passover.¹ Again, this author’s main hermeneutic is that scripture operates as a whole and must be examined as a whole. The premise that one phrase or one fact is the key to the Passover is objectionable to this author. The Passover always pointed to Jesus the Christ and if there is one key to the Passover, it must be Jesus. Never-the-less, we will examine the phrase *ben ha arbayim* in detail because it is so important in the early 14th argument.

This entire chapter is devoted to the phrase *ben ha arbayim*, or between the evenings, because this expression acts as lynch pin for much of the early 14th proponents’ arguments. Far too many people have based their entire observance of Passover on a definition of this phrase, a mistaken interpretation of Deuteronomy 16:1, and a very bad eisegesis of the gospels. God is apparently rectifying this situation in the churches of God today. *Ben ha arbayim* is translated twilight or dusk in the English, but we must remember to use Mr. Coulter’s fourth rule of bible study, which states more than a Strong’s definition needs to be used to set doctrine.

What does the Idiom *Ben ha Arbayim* mean

Scripture shows that between the evenings (*ben ha arbayim*) is a time reference, but exactly what time is being referenced? *The Tanak*, the Jewish Publication Society English translation of the scriptures of the Old Testament, translates *ben ha arbayim* as twilight, although there

¹ Coulter, Fred, Tape one of the *Biblical Basis for Passover*

should be no doubt that all of these Jewish translators believe in a late 14th Passover sacrifice with the lamb eaten on the 15th of Nisan. It would be illogical to assume they would make a translation that disagreed with one of their most important theological doctrines, so their definition of twilight must justify a late 14th Passover in their minds.

It is essential to look at the entirety of Passover and its meaning if we are to discern what the phrase *ben ha arbayim* means. Unfortunately, rather than looking at the global picture of Passover and trying to place the pieces together, early 14th proponents have attempted to define the Hebrew idiom *ben ha arbayim* from one usage and then use this definition as a prism from which to view all of scripture.² Ignoring how *ben ha arbayim* is used in defining the timing for the second portion of the daily sacrifice and stating the practices of the righteous kings and prophets of Israel was not what God wanted creates a myopic effect. A more accurate ground work for the timing of the first Passover will be laid by examining the phrase *ben ha arbayim* in context.

The Elephant and the Six Blind Men³

Long ago six old men lived in a village in India. Each was born blind. The other villagers loved the old men and kept them away from harm. Since the blind men could not see the world for themselves, they had to imagine many of its wonders. They listened carefully to the stories told by travelers to learn what they could about life outside the village.

The men were curious about many of the stories they heard, but they were most curious about elephants. They were told that elephants could trample forests, carry huge burdens, and frighten young and old with their loud trumpet calls. But they also knew that the Rajah's daughter rode an elephant when she traveled in her father's kingdom. Would the Rajah let his daughter get near such a dangerous creature?

The old men argued day and night about elephants. "An elephant must be a powerful giant," claimed the first blind man. He had heard stories about elephants being used to clear forests and build roads.

"No, you must be wrong," argued the second blind man. "An elephant must be graceful and gentle if a princess is to ride on its back."

"You're wrong! I have heard that an elephant can pierce a man's heart with its terrible horn," said the third blind man.

"Please," said the fourth blind man. "You are all mistaken. An elephant is nothing more than a large sort of cow. You know how people exaggerate."

"I am sure that an elephant is something magical," said the fifth blind man. "That would explain why the Rajah's daughter can travel safely throughout the kingdom."

"I don't believe elephants exist at all," declared the sixth blind man. "I think we are the victims of a cruel joke."

Finally, the villagers grew tired of all the arguments, and they arranged for the curious men to visit the palace of the Rajah to learn the truth about elephants. A young boy from their village was selected to guide the blind men on their journey. The smallest man put his hand on the boy's shoulder. The second blind man put his hand on his friend's shoulder, and so on until all six men were ready to walk safely behind the boy who would lead them to the Rajah's magnificent palace.

2 Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, p. 41 "Exodus 16 unlocks the meaning of *ben ha arbayim*"

3 As retold by Donelle Blubaugh at <http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.jsp?articleId=281474976747670>

When the blind men reached the palace, they were greeted by an old friend from their village who worked as a gardener on the palace grounds. Their friend led them to the courtyard. There stood an elephant. The blind men stepped forward to touch the creature that was the subject of so many arguments.

The first blind man reached out and touched the side of the huge animal. "An elephant is smooth and solid like a wall!" he declared. "It must be very powerful."

The second blind man put his hand on the elephant's limber trunk. "An elephant is like a giant snake," he announced.

The third blind man felt the elephant's pointed tusk. "I was right," he decided. "This creature is as sharp and deadly as a spear."

The fourth blind man touched one of the elephant's four legs. "What we have here," he said, "is an extremely large cow."

The fifth blind man felt the elephant's giant ear. "I believe an elephant is like a huge fan or maybe a magic carpet that can fly over mountains and treetops," he said.

The sixth blind man gave a tug on the elephant's fuzzy tail. "Why, this is nothing more than a piece of old rope. Dangerous, indeed," he scoffed.

The gardener led his friends to the shade of a tree. "Sit here and rest for the long journey home," he said. "I will bring you some water to drink."

While they waited, the six blind men talked about the elephant.

"An elephant is like a wall," said the first blind man. "Surely we can finally agree on that."

"A wall? An elephant is a giant snake!" answered the second blind man.

"It's a spear, I tell you," insisted the third blind man.

"I'm certain it's a giant cow," said the fourth blind man.

"Magic carpet. There's no doubt," said the fifth blind man.

"Don't you see?" pleaded the sixth blind man. "Someone used a rope to trick us."

Their argument continued and their shouts grew louder and louder.

"Wall!" "Snake!" "Spear!" "Cow!" "Carpet!" "Rope!"

"STOP SHOUTING!" called a very angry voice.

It was the Rajah, awakened from his nap by the noisy argument.

"How can each of you be so certain you are right?" asked the ruler.

The six blind men considered the question. And then, knowing the Rajah to be a very wise man, they decided to say nothing at all.

"The elephant is a very large animal," said the Rajah kindly. "Each man touched only one part. Perhaps if you put the parts together, you will see the truth. Now, let me finish my nap in peace."

When their friend returned to the garden with the cool water, the six men rested quietly in the shade, thinking about the Rajah's advice.

"He is right," said the first blind man. "To learn the truth, we must put all the parts together. Let's discuss this on the journey home."

The first blind man put his hand on the shoulder of the young boy who would guide them home. The second blind man put a hand on his friend's shoulder, and so on until all six men were ready to travel together.

This story has been told during theological debates for decades, but the moral of the story is profound. If you get caught up on your one little point and do not look at the whole, you will miss the big picture.

Possible Meanings of *Ben Ha Arbayim*

There are four possible definitions of *ben ha arbayim*, “between the two settings,” extant in the churches of God today. They are:

Possibility 1: *Ben ha arbayim* goes from one evening to next evening. It could mean any time during that 24 hour period.

Possibility 2: Between the two settings, as *ben ha arbayim* is sometimes translated, refers to when the sun first begins to set in the sky, just after noon. As the sun begins to go down, the shadows lengthen. The second setting is when the sun sets or darkness falls, depending upon when the scholar believes the day ends. So between the evenings would be defined as afternoon. Many Christian scholars try to pinpoint the time to 3 PM because that is when Jesus died on the cross.

Possibility 3: It is the time from sunset until dark at the end of the day. This would make it a period somewhat longer than an hour at the end of the day. This definition is very dependent upon when the day ends.

Possibility 4: It is the time from sunset until dark at the beginning of the day. This would make it a period somewhat longer than an hour at the beginning of the day. This definition is very dependent upon when the day ends.

Possibilities 3 and 4 may appear similar at first glance, but possibility 3 places *ben ha arbayim* a day later than possibility 4. An examination of the definition of *ben ha arbayim* has to begin with all eleven scriptures where *ben ha arbayim* is used in the Pentateuch. The first six verses are of very little help in determining a definition of *ben ha arbayim*. These verses are:

And ye shall keep it (*the pesah lamb*) up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening (*ben ha arbayim*).⁴

And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even (*ben ha arbayim*), he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.⁵

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) is the LORD'S passover (*pesah*).⁶

Let the children of Israel also keep the passover (*pesah*) at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even (*ben ha arbayim*), ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.⁷

4 Ex. 12:6

5 Ex. 30:8

6 Lev. 23:5

7 Num. 9:2-3

And they kept the passover (*pesah*) on the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.⁸

The fourteenth day of the second month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) they shall keep it (*the passover*), and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.⁹

These six verses cannot be used to help define the meaning of *ben ha arbayim* because there are no internal time references. Being told that Thanksgiving is on Thanksgiving Day is an example of a statement with no internal time references, whereas stating Thanksgiving falls on the 4th Thursday in November contains an internal time reference. Some have contended that the lighting of the lamp in Exodus 30 has a time reference because the candle is being lighted. This ceremony is considered a meal at the altar, the tamid.¹⁰ However, because the lighting of the lampstand was ceremonial, like the lighting of the incense, and because it would have been much darker in the Tabernacle than it was outside, this lighting of the candle cannot be used to illuminate the nature of *ben ha arbayim*.

This leaves five verses that do have internal time references. These five verses will be examined in detail. These verses are:

The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)¹¹

And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*), and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.¹²

The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)¹³

And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*): as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.¹⁴

I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even (*ben ha arbayim*) ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.¹⁵

These verses will be examined in detail in up coming chapters, but they should be examined together and as a whole because that is how the Bible was written.

8 Num. 9:5

9 Num. 9:11

10 Benno, Jacob, Walter, trans. *The second Book of the Bible.: Exodus*, KTAV Pub. Hoboken, NJ. 1992, p. 303

11 Ex. 29:39

12 Ex. 29:41

13 Num. 28:4

14 Num. 28:8

15 Ex. 16:12

Ben Ha Arbayim as a 24 Hour Period

Possibility 1: *Ben ha Arbayim* as a 24 hour period

A strong proponent for *ben ha arbayim* being defined as a 24 hour period is Mr. Bill Hillbrenner. Mr. Hillbrenner states, “The Key to the Passover Puzzle proves that the Passover timing as taught by Herbert Armstrong is correct. ... The Passover and exodus timing taught by Herbert Armstrong is thorough and correct. Only his use of the later Jewish idiomatic meaning of “between the evenings” is herein questioned.”¹ Mr. Hillbrenner’s definition of the *ben ha arbayim* as being the equivalent of the Hebrew word *yom*, usually translated as day, appears to have been created to uphold his belief when Jesus was crucified as the true Passover, that he was crucified at *ben ha arbayim*, but also supports the belief that the when Passover lamb was killed in Egypt on the early 14th it was also sacrificed at *ben ha arbayim*.

The daily sacrifices

“And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning (*boker*), and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)...And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)...: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.”² God’s command was for there to be one daily sacrifice consisting of two distinct parts, just as the atonement sacrifice had two distinct parts. The first part of the daily sacrifice was sacrificed in the morning, the Hebrew term *boker*, and the second part was sacrificed at even, the Hebrew term *ben ha arbayim*. It does not take a linguist to ascertain that these are two distinctly different time frames that occurred each and every day.

Chapter 29 of Exodus also lists the daily sacrifice as one sacrifice with two parts which was to be sacrificed at distinctly different times. “Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning (*boker*); and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)...And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*), and shalt do thereto according to the

1 Hillbrenner, Bill *The Passover Puzzle, Assembling all the Pieces*, electronic form, pp. 1,2)

2 Num. 28:3-4, 8

meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.”³ One of the times listed for one part of the sacrifice was morning, the Hebrew word *boker*, and the second portion of the daily sacrifice was to be performed at *ben ha arbayim*.

Scholarly sources agree with the general time frame outlined for the daily sacrifices in Ederseim’s *The Temple*.⁴ *The Temple* has a very thorough description of the morning and evening sacrifices and agrees that the sacrifices occurred around 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Every translation of the Bible this author has read depicts the daily sacrifices being offered at two distinctly different times, morning and evening.

Most early 14th proponents, who usually embrace a definition of *ben ha arbayim* being a period a little over an hour long at the beginning of the day, believe the Jewish priests lost the correct timing for the daily sacrifices when they returned from the Babylonian exile, just as they supposedly lost the proper timing for the Passover. These early 14th proponents use their faulty eisegesis of Exodus 16, which is examined in detail in this book, to define *ben ha arbayim* and then use the prism of this definition when examining the timing of the daily sacrifices. This eisegesis leads early 14th proponents to state the daily sacrifices should have been at sunrise and just after sunset and the sacrifice at sunset comes before sunrise, even though it is not listed in that order in scripture. The hypothesis that *ben ha arbayim* is a 24 hour period ignores the distinct timing of the daily sacrifices listed in Exodus 29 and Numbers 28.

Can *ben ha arbayim* be justified as a 24 hour period?

In an attempt to continue observing a traditional early 14th Passover while believing the timing of Christ’s sacrifice to be of great importance, the theory that *ben ha arbayim* is a day-long period has been advanced by Mr. Hillbrenner. Mr. Hillbrenner writes, “There are only two sacrifices which I could find that had to be offered at a specific time, the Passover and the morning/evening sacrifice. Did God plan that Jesus would exactly and legally fulfill the morning AND evening sacrifice? I believe he did. To fulfill the morning sacrifice according to the Genesis 1 definition discussed above of the morning being the whole light part of the day, The Christ would have had to die during the daylight. He did! To fulfill the evening sacrifice he would have had to die when God said the evening sacrifice should be... THE EVENING OFFERING COULD LEGALLY BE OFFERED ANYTIME BETWEEN THE TWO SUN-DOWNS THAT FORM THE LEGAL DAY.”⁵

Therefore Mr. Hillbrenner’s theory states that the morning portion of the daily sacrifice could be done during any of the daylight portion of a day and the afternoon portion of the sacrifice

³ Ex. 29:38-9, 41-2

⁴ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services*, Updated Edition, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, p. 108-133

⁵ Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p. 24, Mr. Hillbrenner’s emphasis

at *ben ha arbayim* could be done any time during a 24 hour period. Although Colossians 2:16-7 states that the Sabbaths foreshadowed Christ's sacrifice,⁶ they do not state Jesus' sacrifice took the place of the morning and evening sacrifice, especially when Jesus was crucified in the afternoon. Not only does Mr. Hillbrenner's theory lack scriptural support, its faulty reasoning actually does great damage to the actual practice of the daily sacrifice.

Mr. Hillbrenner's theory apparently arises from an eisegesis of Genesis 1.⁷ The explanation of what morning and evening are, according to scripture, will be examined shortly, but Mr. Hillbrenner's thesis that Christ's sacrifice occurred in the morning displays a massive inconsistency. Mr. Hillbrenner goes to great pains to try to show how morning is daylight, then ignores that definition by stating Christ died in the evening, a time different from morning, yet perplexing the same because for some unknown reason the term *ben ha arbayim* is used in the context of certain sacrifices rather than the perfectly good Hebrew term for day, the word *yom*. Mr. Hillbrenner's hypothesis suggests the word *yom* and the term *ben ha arbayim* are interchangeable, yet the scriptural usage of the term *ben ha arbayim* does not substantiate this. Stating that the afternoon sacrifice of Jesus Christ is the same as the morning sacrifice because it occurred during the daylight portion of a day makes no sense. Unfortunately Mr. Hillbrenner's theory not only has perplexing and twisted logic, but also has some very bad research.

Quartodeciman Controversy was not about 14th versus 15th

Mr. Hillbrenner's misunderstanding of what the quartodeciman controversy was shows how poor some of his scholarship is. He writes,

The Pascal Controversy generally refers to the controversy that entered the early church over whether Passover or Easter should be kept by Christendom. The decision to keep Easter was made for the evident church at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD. Yet another controversy preceded this controversy and appears to have fostered it. It has continued for centuries; the "Quartodeciman Controversy."

Quartodeciman means fourteener and labels the controversy over whether the passover is 14 Nisan or 15 Nisan. Actually, it centers on which night the passover was eaten, since most agree that the passover was to be killed on 14 Nisan. Some thought the passover was to be killed at the beginning of 14 Nisan and eaten in the night of 14 Nisan. Others thought that the passover was to be killed at the end of 14 Nisan and eaten in the night of 15 Nisan which immediately followed. Most of the Jews were doing the latter in Christ's day. The quartodeciman controversy entered early in the history of the church. It likely became a distinguishing mark between the Jews and Christians in the synagogues of the early church. While early Christians and Samaritans kept (ate) the Passover on 14 Nisan, the greater part of Judaism kept (ate) Passover on 15 Nisan. It appears the Jews began forcing this issue as a division between Jews and Christians.⁸

⁶ Col. 2:16-7 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

⁷ Hillbrenner, p. 13-16

⁸ Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p. 2

Mr. Hillbrenner has created a fiction from Schaff's religious encyclopedia because he did not understand how the heretical Document theory was being used to explain the origin of Passover. When Mr. Hillbrenner states that the Quartodeciman controversy is different from the Easter versus Passover controversy, he is mistaken. Mr. Hillbrenner also shows how he deals with languages when he writes, "Quartodeciman means fourteener"⁹ and then mistakenly labels the controversy as supposedly being over whether the Passover is the 14th or the 15th of Nisan. This is the same kind of verbal gymnastics he plays with the term *ben ha arbayim*. Mr. Hillbrenner has created a meaning for quartodeciman based upon his understanding of semantics rather than upon usage, both historical and scriptural. Scholarly sources agree that the quartodeciman controversy was about observing Passover on the 14th of Nisan as opposed to observing Easter on Sunday and not about having Passover on the 14th or the 15th of Nisan, as will be shown shortly. There is no historic reference to a controversy about keeping a Passover on the early 14th because this controversy appears to have come into existence in the 20th century.

Mr. Hillbrenner goes on to state that, "the Passover Puzzle and the Quartodeciman Controversy"¹⁰ are solved by "using the biblical interpretation of 'between the two evenings' as 'between the two sundowns' and the passover of Deuteronomy 16 as the days of unleavened bread after the passover ordinance on 14 Nisan."¹¹

What was the real Quartodeciman Controversy?

The Quartodeciman controversy revolved around two issues, neither of which dealt with the date of the Passover. The first issue raised was whether to celebrate Passover at the same time as the Jews or to keep what would become Easter Sunday. The second issue revolved around the fast associated with either Passover or Easter. There was never any Pascal controversy that was separate and different from the Quartodeciman controversy. The chapter on Easter versus Passover in the New Testament section of this book deals with this issue in detail and the reader may wish to skip forward to that chapter to verify this author's rather strong statements about Mr. Hillbrenner's errant theories and his inadequate research.

Mr. Hillbrenner agrees with most early 14th proponents' interpretation that Passover means the entire 14th day of the first month, not the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb. The scriptures most often quoted to support this theory are listed below.

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) is the LORD'S passover.¹²

And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.¹³

9 Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p. 2

10 Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p. 23

11 Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p. 23

12 Lev. 23:5

13 Num. 9:5

And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.¹⁴

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.¹⁵

And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month.¹⁶

In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.¹⁷

The word translated Passover in all of the above scriptures is the *pesah*, the sacrificed lamb, a fact Mr. Hillbrenner misses and most early 14th proponents apparently miss. Mr. Hillbrenner writes, “For the passover this means essentially the whole day; 14 Nisan. This is the biblical interpretation, not a Jewish community one. Also, we must remember that on a sabbath the whole 24 hours are sabbath. In the case of the Passover, God only requires that all the rites fall sometime on that 14th day. (Additionally, the eating must take place in the night (darkness) of Nisan 14).”¹⁸ This definition not only ignores the importance of the lamb as the *pesah*, but ignores that the entirety of the *pesah* occurs at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th.

Summary: The flaws that *ben ha arbayim* is a 24 hour period

Attempting to define the idiom *ben ha arbayim* as a twenty-four hour period displays flawed reasoning, loses sight of the importance of Christ as the true *pesah*, and is scripturally inaccurate. Mr. Hillbrenner states the rites of Passover, particularly the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, can occur anytime during the 14th, which logically suggests it could occur at the very end of the 14th of Nisan. If the lamb was killed at the end of the 14th of Nisan, then Exodus 12:10, which states, “And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire,” could and should mean that none of the Passover sacrifice could remain until the morning of the 15th of Nisan. There is never any suggestion made in scripture that the remains had to be burned on the 14th of Nisan, thus many ardent early 14th proponents also reject Mr. Hillbrenner’s theory that *ben ha arbayim* is the equivalent of *yom* because this theory would dictate the *pesah* could have been killed late on the 14th.

However, in Mr. Hillbrenner’s perplexing logic, he states the eating of the lamb must occur during the beginning of the 14th, apparently because of his traditional understanding that the lamb had to be sacrificed at the early part of the 14th of Nisan and because of his traditional understanding that Exodus 12:10 states the remains of the *pesah* lamb must be burned on the 14th, even if scripture does not state that. Mr. Hillbrenner apparently could not understand how the Passover was similar to the wave sheaf offering in that they both occur on a day, but do not have to be a day (24 hours) long.

14 Num. 28:16

15 Josh. 5:10

16 Ezra 6:19

17 Ezek. 45:21

18 Hillbrenner, *The Passover Puzzle*, p 17

The Passover was kept by sacrificing the Passover at *ben ha arbayim*, roasting it as prescribed, eating it as prescribed and burning its remains as prescribed. The wavesheaf was another sacrifice that was to occur during the spring-time festival. Leviticus 23:10-4 states, "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings."¹⁹ The wavesheaf was a ritual that occurred on a specific day, the day after the Sabbath. The wavesheaf involved many rites and ordinances that the people had to follow, but the wavesheaf was a sacrifice on a day, not a period of time 24 hours long. The Passover was also not a day, but a ritual that occurs on a certain day, the 14th of the first month, at a certain time, *ben ha arbayim*.

Attempting to harmonize his belief that Christ died as the true *pesah* lamb on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, Mr. Hillbrenner has presented reasoning so twisted that the morning sacrifice could be done any time during the daylight portion of the day and the afternoon, or *ben ha arbayim*, sacrifice could be done at any time of the day. The poor priests that got up well before dawn for over a thousand years to perform the morning sacrifices by mid-morning never realized they could have slept in and just done them both together in the afternoon if Mr. Hillbrenner's errant hypothesis were actually correct. As an engineer from M.I.T. and as a graduate of Ambassador College, I find the reasoning and scholarship presented by a fellow graduate of A.C. and fellow engineer to be entirely lacking in logic and value. Mr. Hillbrenner also displays distorted linguistic skills because Exodus 29 and Numbers 28 confirm the daily sacrifice had two parts designated to be done at two different, pre-designated times, something Mr. Hillbrenner's theory disavows. Again, not understanding what the *pesah* is and what its purpose was seems to cloud understanding.

Moses' instructions were to sacrifice the *pesah*, the Passover lamb or goat, during *ben ha arbayim*, not at the beginning or end of that time frame, but during it. *Ben ha arbayim* is the same time frame now as it was at Christ's crucifixion and during the Exodus. If *ben ha arbayim* were a 24 hour period (which this author has shown it not to be) from the end of the 13th to the end of 14th, than any Israelite who sacrificed the *pesah* at 3:00 or 4:00 or 5:00 on the afternoon of the 14th did it during *ben ha arbayim*. Those who believe *ben ha arbayim* is a 24 hour period cannot argue this point because they believe Jesus, who died at 3 in the afternoon, died during *ben ha arbayim*. Exodus 12:13 states, "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall

19 Lev. 23:10-4

not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”²⁰ So if the theory that *ben ha arbayim* is a 24 hour period were correct, according to scripture a theoretical Israelite could have sacrificed the *pesah* any time during the 24 hour period of Nisan 14, even late on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan and followed all of the Passover ordinances and thus been protected from the destroyer. Therefore the definition that *ben ha arbayim* as a 24 hour time frame would dictate the destroyer killed the first born not protected by God during the middle of the night on the 15th of Nisan. Mr. Hillbrenner and others who believe *ben ha arbayim* was a 24 hour period would reject this reasoning, but logic dictates they would be incorrect. Mr. Hillbrenner’s reasoning supposedly shows that an early 14th sacrifice of the lamb in Egypt occurred at the same time as a late 14th crucifixion of Jesus. As will be shown, Jesus did die at the same time the Passover was supposed to be sacrificed. However, scripture depicts Jesus the Messiah fulfilling not just the Passover sacrifice, but also the atonement sacrifice²¹ and he obviously was not crucified at the same time the atonement sacrifice was offered, the 10th day of Tishri. Thus scripture was almost assuredly referring to the fact that Jesus’ sacrifice would perform the same function as the Passover and the Atonement sacrifices and was not necessarily referring to the symbolic timing of the sacrifice.

The definition that *ben ha arbayim* is a 24 hour period has so many flaws and weaknesses that it has no viability. It swept through the churches of God during the decade of the 90’s and some still hold onto this construct, but thankfully this theory was quickly relegated to where it belongs. It is a theological construct intended to harmonize the certain timing of Christ’s crucifixion, around 3 o’clock, with a tradition of holding a Passover quasi-mass service on the early part of the 14th of Nisan. This theory is so seriously flawed as to render it useless for any serious discussion.

20 Ex.. 12:13

21 Hebrews 9-10

Ben Ha Arbayim Beginning or Ending the Day?

Possibilities 3 and 4: *Ben ha arbayim* is an Hour Long Period

Chapter Eight of this book dismissed the premise that the Hebrew term *ben ha arbayim* is the same as the Hebrew term *yom*, one of the most used words in the Old Testament scriptures. This chapter will examine the possibility that *ben ha arbayim* is a period somewhat longer than an hour at the end of the day or that it is a period somewhat longer than an hour at the beginning of the day. These two definitions will be examined at the same time because they are obviously related.

The only group of peoples that this author has found that embrace the supposedly special knowledge that *ben ha arbayim* is period at the start of the day are various church of God splinter groups. There is no indication that any Jewish, Catholic, Protestant or any other scholarly source has defined *ben ha arbayim* as an hour long period at the start of a day. However, the definition of *ben ha arbayim* as a period somewhat longer than an hour at the end of the day was and is used by the Samaritans when they sacrifice the pesah at Mt. Gerizim today. It is also the definition that many current Christian and Jewish scholars have embraced.

Are early 14th Proponents Misquoting Scholars?

This author wrote to Everett Fox, the author of *The Schocken Bible*, at Clark University and asked him to define *ben ha arbayim* after reading his Schocken Bible. Mr. Fox graciously responded to this e-mail on August 15th of 2006. He wrote, "I, like most scholars today, believe *ben ha arbayim* was a time frame from sunset to dark at the end of the day." This author wrote back, asking Mr. Fox his opinion of scholarship presenting *ben ha arbayim* as a time period at the beginning of the day to support a Passover observance at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan. Mr. Fox responded that he did not get involved in theological disputes, which is his right. However, this respected scholar and major source for Mr. Coulter's argument that *ben ha arbayim* occurs at the beginning of the day disagrees with Mr. Coulter. Mr. Fox defines *ben ha arbayim* as the period between sunset and dark at the end of the day and any attempt to use his scholarship to support *ben ha arbayim* as being a time frame at the beginning of the 14th would be in error according to Mr. Fox.

In the March-April 1996 issue of the *Global Church News*, Raymond McNair quotes another scholarly source, the *Soncino Commentary*, on the definition of *ben ha arbayim*, between the evenings. He writes, "It is a period of approximately one-and-a-third hours between sunset and the disappearance of the light which subsequently penetrates through the clouds."¹ *The Soncino Talmud* is a commentary on the Bible by different Jewish sages. Raymond McNair is quoting Abraham Ibn Ezra, designated by an (E) after the quote. However, Ezra's is a minority interpretation. Rashi (R) and Nachmanides (N) disagree with (E). The entire quote is, "at dusk. lit. 'between the two darknesses,' that is to say, between the darkness of the day and the darkness of the night, viz. noon and the beginning of the night, a period of six hours, reckoning the duration of the day from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. (R). It is a period of approximately one and a third hours between sunset and the disappearance of light which subsequently penetrates through the cloud (E). N opposes E's view and approximates to R's explanation."² Although the definition of *ben ha arbayim* as the last hour of the day is the minority opinion among the rabbis who wrote the Talmud, it bears examination.

Abraham Ibn Ezra's opinion of what night and day was should have been examined to determine why he felt that *ben ha arbayim* was approximately an hour long period between sunset and dark. Ezra expresses his opinion of what day and night are in the same Soncino commentary in Genesis 1:5 "Evening...morning (boker). Ereb (from arab 'to mingle') is so called because the qualities of day and night are mingled therein, the evening being neither quite day or night. Boker (from bakker 'to search, examine') is the reverse of erev, being the time when it is possible to distinguish the exact quantity which characterizes it, viz. daylight.' Ezra also agrees with Rashi's definition that God divided light and dark, "appointing day for the former and night for the later."³ Ezra believed that a new day started with the darkness of night, not sunset. Therefore Ezra Ibn Abraham believed the pesah should be sacrificed the very end of the 14th of Nisan, the last hour of the day, after sunset and before dark. As stated earlier, among Jewish scholars, this is the minority opinion, with many Jewish and even a number of Christian scholars believing the Passover could be sacrificed during the last 6 hours of the 14th of Nisan. But none of these scholars believe the Passover could be sacrificed at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan, supposedly between sunset at the end of the 13th and before the darkness of night at the beginning of the 14th. Raymond McNair has misquoted Abraham Ibn Ezra and misinterpreted what he taught.

Clear as Day and Night?

As stated in Chapter 8, the verses referring to the daily sacrifices in Exodus 29 and Numbers 28 contain the phrase *ben ha arbayim* four times. The daily sacrifice was to be offered in the morning and at *ben ha arbayim*. A logical juxtaposition against morning is afternoon or evening. We know that the second portion of daily sacrifice was offered in the temple in the middle of

1 McNair, Raymond, *The Global Church News*, March-April, 1996

2 Cohen, Abraham, ed. *The Soncino Chumash*, The Bible, 5 Books of Moses with Haphtaroth, Soncino, London, 1966 p. 387

3 *The Soncino Chumash*, p. 2

the afternoon during the second temple period.⁴ A more complete examination of the daily sacrifices will be made in chapter 12, but before a complete exposition of *ben ha arbayim* can be undertaken, an examination of both how the day was measured and time was generally viewed in scripture needs to be made.

The first mention of days and times are in the beginning, Genesis 1. “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.”⁵ Some scholars have tried combining this verse with 1 Kings 18:26, in which the prophets of Baal, “called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon,” in a vain attempt to force a biblical interpretation that evening starts at noon.⁶ The argument is made that we know that morning is from sunrise to noon, so the rest of the 24 hour day, a time span of approximately 18 hours, must be evening.

Combining 1 Kings 18:26 with Genesis 1 to create a definition of morning is very inadvisable because morning is presented as a different time span than “until noon.” In the beginning, God divided a day into two parts, the light of day and the darkness of night.⁷ God also divided a 24 hour period into two portions, morning and evening. A possible juxtaposition equates morning with the light of day and evening with the darkness of night in Genesis 1. However, this juxtaposition probably oversteps the bounds of what Genesis is stating. Genesis 1 was a poem about the creation. Unlike today, three thousand years ago the most important writing was presented as poems rather than prose so they could be easily remembered. Even today, certain phrases, like, “in the beginning” and, “two all beef patties, special sauce,” help the hearer of the phrase remember the rest of the phrase. This method of teaching and learning would have been even more important when most people learned by oral history rather than written documents.

Thus the usage of certain phrases in a poem can, and often is, different than in prose. Therefore trying to prove from Genesis 1 that morning is always the daylight portion or that even is the dark portion of the day is inadvisable because it does not always match the rest of scripture. An examination of the entirety of the Bible is required before trying to create such definitions. We must also realize that language is often imprecise, especially when it is translated. Morning may be the entire daylight period in Genesis 1, but one usage or set of usages does not a definition make. A word can often have more than one definition, depending upon the context. As will be shown, what must be realized is that the Bible often did not place tight constraints on time. The use of Genesis 1 and 1 Kings 18 to define “morning is from daybreak until noon”⁸ is not justified because there is a preconceived notion of what morning is without letting the Bible interpret itself. Dogmatically applying a perceived notion of one verse throughout the entirety of the Bible, especially one as tentative as how the Bible dealt with time, is inadvisable.

4 Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple and its Ministry*, p. 108-135

5 Gen. 1:3-5

6 Raines, Juan, *What you should know about the Passover*, p. 13-6

7 Gen 1:4

8 Raines, p. 14

Ba Erev-At Even

Leviticus 23 lists all of God's feasts and the ordinances about them. Leviticus 23:27 states, "Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD." There can be no doubt that atonement occurs on the 10th day of the 7th month. Leviticus 23:32 defines when the Day of Atonement starts and ends. "It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath."⁹ Leviticus 23:32 portrays evening, *ba erev*, as the end of one day and the start of another. Fred Coulter and other early 14th proponents have stated that the Hebrew term *ba erev* means sunset and sunset only, although there has been some softening of that stance with the Passover of Joshua 5. Unfortunately many followers of the early 14th hypothesis still believe the errant notion that *ba erev* is sunset and sunset only because this error was forcefully taught for decades. However, both Joshua 5 and Deuteronomy 16:6, which states, "But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even (*ba erev*), at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt," show if *ba erev* is sunset and sunset only, then the Passover occurs at the end of the day. Deuteronomy 16:6 will be covered in detail later, but it is important to remember scripture must be harmonized. If it is harmonized and *ba erev* is sunset and sunset only, Deuteronomy 16:6 proves that Passover was sacrificed at sunset at the end the 14th of Nisan unless the sixteenth chapter of Deuteronomy is twisted and turned even more perversely than the Passovers of Hezekiah, Josiah and Ezra. Thus, as will be shown, if Mr. Coulter were consistent with his definition of *ba erev*, Deuteronomy 16:6 would again end the argument about the timing of the Passover sacrifice in Egypt.

How we define *ba erev* often displays our approach to God's word about the Day of Atonement. Should we try to determine exactly the last moment we can eat or drink something before our day long-fast begins? Far too many Christians take that approach to everything in their Christian lives. What God reveals to His people in Leviticus 23:32 is that by the time the 10th of Tishri starts, we should already have ceased all work and begun to fast. This is not advocating a two day fast or even a 25 hour fast (well, maybe it is advocating a 25 hour fast). This author believes Leviticus 23 shows not only the law of God, but the attitude His people should have about the law. We should welcome the Sabbath and annual feasts as a special time to rest and commune with God. We should welcome, and not dread, Atonement.

Just as Atonement commences on the 9th at even (*ba erev*), so too the *Pesah* sacrifice occurs on the 14th at even. As will be shown, Leviticus 23:5-6 taken together with Joshua 5:10 and Deuteronomy 16:6 describes a general time frame for the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb, just as does Exodus 12:6.

⁹ Lev. 23:32

Building fences around the law

The Talmudic practices of the Jewish Rabbis had the effect of placing fences around the law. This author whole heartedly disagrees with this practice, although earlier statements about atonement may appear to support this practice. Because scripture contains contradictory indications about the day starting at either sunset or darkness, Jewish Rabbis teach that the Sabbath that starts 18 minutes before sunset and ends after dark, when three stars become visible in the sky. This Rabbinical practice of placing fences around the law leads to a 25 hour, or more, Sabbath every week to supposedly prevent the profaning of the Sabbath because of the uncertainty surrounding the start of the day.

The Sabbath is a day and days are very close to 24 hours long. Rabbinical Judaism uses the controversy about when the day starts to build this Pharisaical fence around the law, thus preventing its followers from exercising Godly judgment on an individual basis. Karaite Judaism teaches exercising this kind of judgment should be encouraged among believers. Therefore, if a believer is convinced the Sabbath is from sunset to sunset, and there is biblical support for this stance, then they should observe the Sabbath from sunset to sunset. If a believer is convinced the Sabbath is from darkness to darkness, and there is also biblical support for this stance as well, then they should observe the Sabbath from dark to dark. This is only a 4% difference in time. Teachers who build fences around the law would do well to read and understand the verses of Romans 14 that are about tolerance and love for individuals with slight differences. Of course, some church of God teachers so pervert the truth of the gospel they have used Romans 14 to teach vegetarians they were weak in the faith because they did not eat meat. Romans 14 should be used to tear down fences around the law, not build them up and impose them on believers. Therefore when this book advocates that all eating and working should be done before atonement commences, it is advocating a Christian attitude of not stuffing your face up till the last possible moment you can. We should not be clock watchers trying to get around the law, but we should be doers of the law with our whole heart.

If God requires us to afflict our souls for the Day of Atonement, why not fast for two or three days? Because one day is sufficient for God's purposes according to scripture. Mandating and teaching that a longer fast somehow pleases God more leads to an attitude of earning righteousness. In like manner, those who want to build walls around the Sabbath could make the Sabbath into a two or three day occurrence every week. This is not as far fetched as it might seem, as the monastic movement has shown.

Building walls has a tendency to create Pharisaism with a dogmatic interpretation of all scripture. Conversely, not taking the law as a manual of life, the will of God for us, leads to anti-nomianism. This is always a tightrope for any Christian, and especially any teacher of the law, to walk. Christ said the path was narrow,¹⁰ but the reward for following that path is becoming closer to God, which leads to life and life more abundant.

¹⁰ Matt. 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Can *Ba Erev* be Precisely Determined?

This author does not agree *ba erav* can be determined dogmatically and exactly. Far too often we try to place our western ideas of time and culture into contexts in which they do not belong. Even today, Middle Eastern culture is far less concerned with time than we are. The setting of exact times to start or complete a task would have been even more fluid in a time without watches, electricity, or urban sprawl. Of course *ba erav* means evening, which is often sunset,¹¹ but does it also have other meanings? In scripture, it does. As stated earlier, Jewish tradition keeps the Sabbath from 18 minutes before sunset Friday till the first three stars on Saturday night can be observed because of the uncertainty of when the day ends. When Mr. Coulter dogmatically defines *ba erav* and sunset and sunset only, he, like too many theologians, falls into the trap that any one who disagrees with his interpretation does not understand scripture and can therefore be ignored. Mr. Coulter takes this even further by stating there is no controversy about the timing of when evening starts, even though one clearly exists.

Applying human logic to Leviticus 23:32 while ignoring the overwhelming weight of translations and scholarly evidence by giving a terrible eisegesis of Genesis 1:5 is not sound theology. Mr. Coulter goes so far as to suggest that Everett Fox's translation of Genesis 1:5 gives weight to his argument that there are not two time frames shown in Genesis 1:5, but 4 with their order being sunset-darkness-sunrise-daylight.¹² Yet as quoted earlier, Mr. Fox believes the day starts and ends at darkness and not sunset. So again Mr. Coulter has misquoted and misunderstood his source. Mr. Coulter has stated he does not care if 10,000 scholars disagree with his assessment of *ba erav*, yet he has no compelling scriptural evidence to support him, especially when he states his grasp of Hebrew is very limited.¹³ And the fact that Mr. Fox is one of those 10,000 scholars who disagrees suggests that Mr. Coulter should not be using him to support his hypothesis. The Jewish Encyclopedia states,

The Rabbis considered it doubtful whether twilight belongs to the day or the night (Shab. 34b); consequently they treat it as a safeguard against encroachment upon either—for example, the twilight of Friday is reckoned as Sabbath even and that of Saturday as Sabbath day; and the same rule applies for the festival days... The Rabbis differ as to the duration of twilight. They all agree the dawn ends when the upper limb of the sun appears (henez has-hammah), and the twilight begins when the same limb sinks below the horizon ("sheki'at ha-hammah") "Twilight begins with sunset and last as long as there remains a glowing reflection in the east: when the lower part of the heavens becomes pale and the upper part is still aglow it is twilight; and when the upper part likewise becomes pale it is night. Twilight is indicated also by the appearance of stars: If only one star is seen, it is day; if two are visible, the time is doubtful; when three stars appear, it is night."¹⁴

11 *Jewish Encyclopedia Sun, Rising and Setting of the*, 1906 Vol. 11, p. 591

12 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 398-400

13 Coulter, *Tape 1 Passover*

14 *Jewish Encyclopedia, Sun, Rising and Setting of the*, Vol. 11 p. 591

No matter what the definition of *ba erev* is, there is controversy surrounding it. Of course we should always look for scriptural evidence above tradition, especially after what Jesus said about traditions in Matt. 15.¹⁵ There is substantial evidence that *ba erev* can and should be translated sunset in certain verses of scripture. Besides the scriptures listed earlier, Deut. 23:11 states, “But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again.” Although some have insisted this scripture places the timing of *ba erev* before sunset because the washing has to take place before entering the camp, they are mistaken because the timing only mentions when he can enter the camp. It does not pinpoint the washing. The man can not enter the camp before sunset, but he could enter the camp hours after sunset. He also had to wash himself before he entered the camp, so he could wash himself before sunset, at sunset or hours after sunset. The man can not enter the camp until *ba erev*, which is most likely sunset in this instance.

Verses about Evening

However, there are also a number of verses that present evening as something other than sunset. That is why the general time frame around the start of evening is called twilight. Twilight is defined as “dusk, when the evening breeze prevails, dark, dawning of the day (morning), night twilight.”¹⁶ According to this definition, twilight is a generic period of time around evening or morning when the wind blows. When the wind blows qualifies as a non-dogmatic, non-exact definition of a time if there ever was one. Genesis 3:8 states, “And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day:¹⁷ and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.”¹⁸ Here twilight time is presented as the cool of day when the evening wind blows. It is not an exact time, but when the heat of the day begins to dissipate and night has not yet arrived. Proverbs 7:9 agrees by having evening occur after twilight. “In the twilight, in the evening (*erev*), in the black and dark night.”¹⁹ Some may contend Proverbs 7:9 is not sequential in time. If it isn’t, then twilight is the same as evening which is the same as dark of night, which is simply not logical. Therefore Proverbs 7:9 is sequential with twilight occurring before evening in this verse.

1 Samuel 17:16 states, “And the Philistine drew near morning (*shakam*) and evening (*erev*), and presented himself forty days.” Evening must be part of the day in 1 Sam. 17:16 because there was enough light for the Israelites to see the challenge of Goliath and respond. Evening may have been close to sunset here, but it is highly unlikely Goliath would issue a challenge just before it was too dark to fight. Not only would this be nonsensical, but such a challenge

15 Matt. 15:2-6 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

16 Strong’s, p. 107 definition 5399, Gesenius, *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 571

17 Strong’s 7307, Breath of the air

18 Gen. 3:8

19 Prov. 7:9

would lose its psychological edge if Israelites did not have time to realize their cowardliness. Therefore 1 Samuel 17:6 depicts evening (*erev*) as well before sunset and twilight.

Zechariah 14:7 states “But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time (*erev*) it shall be light.” Zechariah 14:7 implies that there would normally be no real light during the evening, but in the future even evening will be so lighted by God’s glory it will be a time of brightness. Therefore the definition of evening in Zechariah 14:7 is the time when it is normally dark.

Jeremiah 6:4-5 states “Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening (*erev*) are stretched out. Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.” The shadows of evening, *erev*, are stretching out as they go to war after noon in Jeremiah 6. These shadows of evening must occur before sunset because the sun is still casting shadows. Thus the best definition for evening (*erev*) in Jeremiah 6:5 is afternoon.

Yet Joshua 10:26-7 has yet another definition of even. “And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening (*erev*). And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave’s mouth, which remain until this very day.” The best definition of evening (*erev*) in Joshua 10:27 is sunset.

The fact that *erev* is not an exact time does not suggest that the Bible has discrepancies about the definition of *erev*. Instead the scriptural definition of *erev* must be defined as a broad period of time around sunset and around twilight and around the time the sun goes down and darkness settles in, equivalent to our word evening. The reason the translators choose to translate *erev* as evening is because the definition of the two words is very similar. The contention of many early 14th proponents that *ba erev* always means sunset is not born out in scripture.

An exegesis of Genesis 1:3-5, Leviticus 23 and the verses in this chapter shows the best translation of *erev* is evening, not sunset. Some times when *ba erev* is used it does mean sunset, but it can also be the general time frame either before or after sunset. The days of Genesis 1 were divided into two parts, morning (*boker*) and evening (*erev*). Trying to pinpoint the definition of a word to one exact one time frame in the Bible leads to myopia because time was not measured as precisely two or three millennia ago in a different culture as we measure it today. *Erev* means evening according to many scholarly sources.²⁰ Depending upon the context, *erev* might be sunset, but it also might be the last part of the day, the first part of the night, the early darkness of night, or any combination therein.

20 Laird et al, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, p. 694, Strong’s number 6153

Ba Erev is Evening

CHAPTER

10

***Ba erev* is Evening, Not Sunset**

The Shocken Bible has been used as evidence that the Hebrew phrase *ba erev* is always sunset by Mr. Fred Coulter.¹ Mr. Coulter has gone so far as to say that one of the things he looks for in a translation of the Bible is if *ba erev* is translated sunset.² Mr. Coulter has stated numerous times that when *ba* modifies *erev*, it can only be sunset, thus differentiating it from *erev*. It is only in the second edition of *The Christian Passover* that he introduces some doubt about this statement and then only when *ba erev* is given as the time frame for the Passover on the 14th in Joshua 5:10. This author believes it is appropriate to depend upon more than one translation to define a word. It is also imperative to do a scholarly analysis of the word in its original language, something Mr. Coulter supposedly agrees with according to his own fourth rule of bible study, but he seems not to follow this practice. Far too many Christians depend upon Strong's alone, while others also use only Gesenius, to define Greek and Hebrew words. This is equivalent to using a dictionary to do research for a term paper. Students, and all Christians publish a teaching, either by word or writing, should at least use an encyclopedia for researching a paper. This author believes Strong's and Gesenius must be used with more scholarly works, using something akin to Harris' *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament* and Brown or Kittel for the New Testament. Examining such sources reveals *erev* is used over 100 times in the Old Testament. It is modified by *ba* 26 times. All of the scriptures containing *ba erev* are listed below.

Genesis 19:1, 29:23, 30:16; Exodus 12:18, 16:8, 16:13; Leviticus 6:20, 23:32; Numbers 9:15, 19 Deuteronomy 16:4, 6, 28:67, Joshua 5:10; Judges 19:16, 2 Samuel 11:13; 1 Kings 17:6, 22:35; Ezekiel 12:4,7, 24:18, 33:22; Zephaniah 2:7, Psalms 30:5, Proverbs 7:9, Esther 2:14, 2 Chronicles 13:11.

A brief sampling of these verses shows how *ba erev* is used in context. The very first usage of *ba erev* is Gen. 19:1 "And there came two angels to Sodom at even (*ba erev*); and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground." This is typical of the usage of *ba erev*. There are no internal time references, thus it is impossible to determine what time frame is being referenced by *ba erev* and the

1 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 49 "Only by acknowledging the Scriptural meaning of *ba erev*—'at sunset'"

2 Coulter, *Tape One, Passover*

vast majority of the 26 scriptures also have no internal time references. Again, you cannot pin point when Christmas is by stating it is on Christmas day, but you can if you state Christmas is December 25th. Even when there are internal time references it is difficult to determine exactly what time frame *ba erev* is, as Genesis 30:16 demonstrates. “And Jacob came out of the field in the evening (*ba erev*), and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son’s mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.” We can determine that *ba erev* occurred before night in Genesis 20:16, but there is no indication that *ba erev* is specific time frame.

There are two sets of verses that bear greater examination while seeking the definition of the phrase *ba erev*. The first is Esther 2:14. “In the evening (*ba erev*) she went, and on the morrow (*ba baquor*) she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king’s chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.”³ Esther spent the night with the king. However, Esther not only went in at evening, *ba erev*, but she returned at morning, *ba baquor*.

Early 14th proponents state that when the Hebrew word *erev* is modified by the Hebrew word *ba*, it must mean sunset and sunset only.⁴ Using the same flawed logic, when *ba* modifies the Hebrew word *baquor*, it should supposedly mean sunrise and sunrise only. Many early 14th proponents have written they do not care what the definition of *baquor* is, whether it is modified by *ba* or not because it has nothing to do with the definition of *ba erev*. Such statements show a flagrant disregard for the Russell hermeneutic of, “If you can’t be right, at least be consistent.” Ignoring data that disagrees with your hypothesis is systematic of practitioners of logic by verbosity. Using early 14th proponents definition of *ba erev* with their flawed logic, Esther 2:14 is supposedly stating Esther went to see the king at sunset and left the king at exactly sunrise to go the second house of women. It is highly unlikely the author of Esther meant that Esther joined the king at exactly sunset and left at exactly sunrise and an examination of scripture shows this exactness of time was not meant or implied, yet this is one of the most specific usages of the term *ba erev* in scripture.

We need to examine the usage of *baquor* to determine what Esther 2:14 was stating. *Baquor* is used over 200 times in the Old Testament and *ba* modifies it over 60 times. However, *ba baquor* as it is used in Esther 2:14 is only used 6 times in scripture. These scriptures are: Exodus 16:12, 13; Isaiah 17:11; Ps. 88:13; Esther 2:14, 5:14. Isaiah 17:11 states, “In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.”⁵ It is highly unlikely the usage of *ba baquor* in Isaiah 17:11 was meant to suggest that God would cause the plants to flourish at sunrise and sunrise only, so *ba baquor* appears as a generic time frame called morning.

Esther 5:14 states, “Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him: ‘Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) speak thou unto the king that Mor-

3 Est. 2:14

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 49 “only by acknowledging the Scriptural meaning of *ba erev*—‘at sunset’

5 Is. 17:11

decai may be hanged thereon; then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet.’ And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.”⁶ Perhaps Haman was meeting the king at exactly sunrise, but again this is highly doubtful and does not seem to be the intent of scripture. Again the time frame of *ba baquor* appears to be a general time at the start of the day, not sun rise and sun rise only. Appointments are not usually made for sunrise, especially in the Middle East two and half millennia ago. Therefore *ba baquor*, which is translated as morning in Esther 2:14, should not be defined as sunrise and sunrise only.

The idea of *ba baquor* being sunrise is not born out by scripture. If *ba baquor* does not mean sunrise in Esther 2:14, then *ba erev* does not mean sunset in Esther 2:14. Therefore *ba erev* should not be defined as sunset, but as evening.

6 Est. 5:14 JPS

The Sabbath and Exodus 16

Exodus 16 in the Context of the Sabbath

Earlier chapters of this book have examined the term *ben ha arbayim* with an emphasis placed on the verses where they are internal time references. The final of these scriptures is Exodus 16:12, which early 14th proponents used to define *ben ha arbayim* as a twilight period at the beginning of the day. Early 14th proponents' argument hinges on the meaning of *ben ha arbayim* being defined as twilight at the start of a day in Exodus 16:12.

Traditionally and historically, the scriptural interpretation of *ben ha arbayim* is as twilight or afternoon, but always at the end of a day. The only adherents of *ben ha arbayim* being at that start of the day are early 14th proponents from various splinter groups associated with the World Wide Church of God. The foremost of these adherent's, Mr. Coulter, eisegesis of Exodus 16 states, **“With this understanding, we will be able to determine the true meaning of *ben ha arbayim* as used by God in His inspired Word.”**¹ Mr. Coulter implies that he has special understanding that Old Testament Israel lacked, even in revival times when God worked with kings and prophets to bring his nation closer to him.

This special understanding given to the early 14th proponents revolves around the coming of the quail in Exodus 16 and is summed up by Mr. Coulter:

There are three key factors in the timing of this miracle [*ed. note: of the quail*]:

- 1) The promise of the quail was given on the fifteenth day of the second month. The context reveals that this day was a weekly Sabbath.
- 2) God said that the people that they would begin to EAT the quail during *ben ha arbayim* – “between the two evenings” or “between the setting times.”
- 3) God did not send the quail until the Sabbath day had ended “at sunset” or *ba erev*. The key chronological facts are clearly documented in the scriptural account. There can be no doubt whatsoever concerning their Scriptural accuracy.²

We will examine each of these three points to determine if there is any doubt concerning their spiritual accuracy. Mr. Coulter's first point consists of two facts. Scripture does indeed state

1 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*. p. 46 All emphasis by Mr. Coulter

2 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 48

God made the promise of the manna and quail coming on the 15th day of the second month.³ However, Mr. Coulter's statement that context of Exodus 16 shows the 15th day of the second month was a weekly Sabbath is not born out by scripture.

Was the 15th day of the second month a Sabbath?

A month after leaving Egypt, the nation of Israel, "took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt."⁴ This seems to imply that they arrived in the Wilderness of Sin on the 15th day of the second month after departing Elim. Mr. Coulter expresses the early 14th viewpoint that the children of Israel were not traveling on the 15th because, "it is foolish to use this phrase (ed. note-*on the 15th*) to argue that the fifteenth day of the second month was not a weekly Sabbath when the events that are recorded in Exodus 16 offer conclusive evidence it was."⁵ Perhaps the Israelites were traveling on the 15th day of the second month and perhaps they were not, and at this point, there are no internal time references to see if the 15th was or was not a Sabbath. As will be shown, the importance of the Sabbath was shown by the manna, not by traveling or the arrival of the quail. What is theologically notable about Exodus 16:1 is that months and days were referred to by number and not by name. This is the pattern for the entirety of the Pentateuch. Any student who has done a study on time in the scriptures should be aware of this fact. Mr. Coulter's conclusive evidence is not so conclusive when this fact is understood.

Early 14th proponents teach you can conclusively show the 15th day of the second month was six days before the first double portion of manna was to be gathered. In other words, they teach scripture conclusively reveals the 15th day of the second month was a Sabbath.⁶ This is simply not correct if the sixth day in Exodus 16 refers to day number 6, the preparation day, which we call Friday.

Although the phrase "sixth day", from the Hebrew term *shishiy yom*, can be used to count time, as it is used in the eleven day dedication of the Tabernacles in Numbers 7,⁷ that is not how it is used in Exodus 16. As Mr. Coulter wrote, and most Sabbath keepers agree, the context of Exodus 16 is God teaching His called out people the importance of His Sabbath.⁸

3 Ex. 16: 1 And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

4 Ex. 16:1

5 Coulter, p. 43

6 Coulter, p. 43-5

7 Num. 7:42 On the sixth day Eliasaph the son of Deuel, prince of the children of Gad, *offered*:

8 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 46 "The miracles of the manna—and the events that are recorded in Exodus 16—illustrate the high value that God places on His holy Sabbath."

Here are the scriptures where is the phrase “sixth day” is used in the Pentateuch, the books of Moses:

And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.⁹

And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.¹⁰

And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.¹¹

See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.¹²

God created the sixth day, the preparation day, the day before the Sabbath, in Genesis 1:31. Exodus 16:5, 16:22 and 16:29 state on the preparation day, the sixth day, the Israelites were to gather twice as much manna so they would not have to work on the Sabbath. Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents teach this ordinance about the preparation day was carried out for the first time six days after the Israelites were promised the manna and the quail because they do not understand that God’s usage of the term the sixth day is synonymous with the preparation day, which we call Friday. If the reader substitutes “Friday” for “the sixth day” in Exodus 16:5, 22, and 29, which is how the Israelites would have understood it, the supposedly conclusive evidence that the 15th day of the second month was a Sabbath becomes completely inconclusive. In particular, Exodus 16:29 directly links the sixth day to the Sabbath. A double portion of manna will be gathered on every sixth day (*Friday*) so that they could eat on every Sabbath while in the wilderness without profaning the Sabbath. Exodus 16 does not conclusively show the 15th day of the second month after the nation of Israel left Egypt was a Sabbath.

The only day the quail could not have come on was a Friday evening. Moses tells the complaining people of Israel that God will again show his power, both in the evening and again the next morning in Exodus 16:6-7. Moses explains to the people they will see God’s power by getting flesh in the evening and then getting bread in the morning in Exodus 16:8. Exodus 16:13 states God gave the children of Israel meat at even and when they got up the next morning, there was manna, the bread from heaven, on the ground. Moses told the people in Exodus 16:5 to prepare twice as much manna on the sixth day and he tells the Israelites in Exodus 16:22-26, there would be no manna on morning of Sabbath, the seventh day. So the context of Exodus 16 shows the only day the quail could not have come was at the end of the 6th day because there would have been no bread that next morning, the 7th day Sabbath.

The Manna showed How to Observe the Sabbath

When the Israelites complained about the lack of food, probably because their provisions from Egypt were running low, “Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from

9 Gen. 1:21

10 Ex. 16:5

11 Ex. 16:22

12 Ex. 16:29

heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”¹³ Although we know God gave this promise on the 15th day of the second month, there is no suggestion as to what day of the week this is, but it does say He used this gift to teach and test the Israelites. But this test was supposed to be an easy one. He was giving a day of rest to a nation that was used to working seven days a week under the harsh task masters of Egypt. The manna, the bread of life which had not yet fallen, gathering on the sixth day was to be different so the people would treat the seventh day as a day set aside for rest and to allow a deeper understanding of God and His ways.

Exodus 16:6-7 states the people would see the power of God both in the evening and in the morning. Verse 8 continues, “And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full.”¹⁴ Moses wrote that God sanctified the seventh day of the week in Genesis 2, which is synonymous to saying God sanctified the Sabbath.¹⁵ God gave the manna to His called out people to show they must use the sixth day to prepare for the Sabbath because the Sabbath is the day of rest and also how we honor God by observing his Sabbath. Contentions that the sixth day in Exodus 16 is counted from a certain day, any day, and the sixth day just happens to be the preparation day are equivalent to saying the seventh day in Genesis 1 just happens to be the Sabbath. This kind of teaching ignores biblical precedent and understanding to advance a theological point. If Christians were more familiar with scripture, they would know that days and months were only referred by numbers in the Pentateuch, with the exception that the seventh day is often also called the Sabbath. Unfamiliarity of the scriptures by the people of God has allowed teachers to advance these false ideas.

God used the manna to teach and test Israel about the weekly Sabbath. There is no indication in Exodus 16 that the quail had anything to do with Sabbath observances. Any attempt to fix the day of the week on which the quail came in Exodus 16 will end in futility because the quail were given as a gift, not as a test. Exodus 16 does not state that six days transpired from when the first manna first fell to the first Sabbath without manna. The Bible does not delineate the first day the manna fell because this is an unimportant detail. What mattered was the weekly Sabbath and the preparation day, or sixth day, that came before it.

Flesh at *ba erev*, Bread at *ba baquor*

Early 14th proponents completely distort the lesson of Exodus 16, the raining of the manna, to help support their theory, which acts as a prism which distorts the timing and meaning of

13 Ex. 16:4-5

14 Ex. 16:8 And Moses said, *This shall be*, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what *are* we? your murmurings *are* not against us, but against the LORD.

15 Gen 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

the Passover. As we saw in Chapter 10, the Hebrew term *ba baquor* was juxtaposed with *ba erev* in Esther 2:14.¹⁶ Exodus 16 contains the second set of verses where *ba erev* and *ba baquor* are found together. Exodus 16:8 states, “And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening (*ba erev*) flesh to eat, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) bread to the full.” This juxtaposition is repeated in Exodus 16:12 when God states, “I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even (*ben ha arbayim*) ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.”¹⁷ Early 14th proponents define *ben ha arbayim* as twilight following *ba erev* because the Israelites were told they would have flesh to eat at *ben ha arbayim*.¹⁸ Many current scholars, like Edward Fox, agree that *ben ha arbayim* is twilight, but not that it follows *ba erev*. Early 14th proponents define *ben ha arbayim* as being at the start of the day rather than the end of the day because they define *ba erev* as sunset and sunset only in their strange eisegesis of Exodus 16. Mr. Fox and other current scholars who define *ben ha arbayim* as twilight between sunset and dark believe the day ends with darkness and not sunset. Thus Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents are mistaken when they use Mr. Fox’s *Shocken Bible*¹⁹ or the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* to define *ben ha arbayim* as an hour long period at the beginning of the day because these scholarly sources are defining *ben ha arbayim* to be an hour long period at the end of the day.

Having the manna by *ba baquor*

Exodus 16:13 helps to substantiate that time was a generic thing that flowed rather than being an exact quantity to be measured in the times of Moses. “And it came to pass, that at even (*ba erev*) the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning (*ba baquor*) the dew lay round about the host.”²⁰ God had promised the Israelites they would have bread at morning, *ba baquor*, yet Numbers 11:9 states, “And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.”²¹ So the “bread came early in the morning, actually during the night.”²² If the time frame defined as *ba* modifying *erev* must mean sunset and sunset only, then *ba* modifying *baquor* must mean sunrise and sunrise only. And while scripture states the manna would be there at morning, it also states that God actually sent the manna during the night for the Israelites to gather in the morning. God also promised Israel they would have the meat at even, God stated the people would be eating th quail at *ben ha arbayim* and Israel had the quail at

16 Est 2:14 In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king’s chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

17 Ex. 12:16 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God.

18 Ex. 12:16

19 Coulter, p. 52 “In translating *ben ha arbayim* as ‘between the setting-times,’ Fox specifies that this expression refers to the twilight of the day. His precise translation and additional clarifications of the phrase *ben ha arbayim* show that he fully understand the scriptural meaning of this term.”

20 Ex. 16:13

21 Num. 11:9

22 Walvoord, John R. and Zuck, Roy, B. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Victor Press, USA, 1988 p. 134

even, *ba erev*.²³ Thus if the argument that *ba erev* is sunset and sunset only, then the only logical way to harmonize scripture is to define *ben ha arbayim* as occurring after *ba erev*, as Mr. Coulter and early 14th proponents do.

However this author has shown that *ba* modifying *erev* or *baquor* does not mean exactly sunset or sunrise. The Bible does not pin down an exact time of day as we try to do in our western society. Just as 4 a.m. might be late at night for a New Yorker leaving a night club, it also might be early in the morning for a farmer in upstate New York. The harmonization of Numbers 11:9 with Exodus 16:13 shows that the best translation of *ba baquor* should not be sunrise and sunrise only. Similarly, any logical and fair minded examination of *ba erev* should leave no doubt that *ba erev* means evening, a generic time frame at the end of the day and the beginning of the night, not sunset and sunset only, not only because of usage, but because of its juxtaposition with *ba baquor* in scripture. Exodus 16 does not depict the 15th day of the second month being conclusively defined as the Sabbath. Even if it happened to be the Sabbath, which is possible, the events of Exodus 16 are in no way related to the 15th day of the second month, but to the 6th and 7th day of the week.

The Coming of the Quails-An Exegesis of Exodus 16

Exodus 16:12 is used as supposed definitive proof that *ben ha arbayim* is an hour long period, from sunset to dark at the beginning of a day by early 14th proponents. Mr. Coulter writes:

“Exodus 16 unlocks the meaning of Ben Ha Arbayim... The events that are recorded in Exodus 16 give us a Scriptural key that will help us unlock the true meaning of ben ha arbayim... The events that are recorded in Exodus 16 will enable us to determine the true, Scriptural meaning of ben ha arbayim. As we study the following events in Exodus 16, we will see that they give us a clear-cut chronological framework that reveals the exact time of day at which ben ha arbayim begins. The account of these events shows that the 15th day of the second month was, in fact, a weekly Sabbath. The chapter covers a whole week—from the Sabbath through the next Sabbath. As we read the account, we will see that on the morning of the following day—the 16th—the manna appeared for the first time and it continued to appear each morning for a total of six days. No manna appeared on the seventh day because it was God’s holy Sabbath. Counting back from the Sabbath, we can determine that the day the manna was promised, the 15th day of the second month, was also a weekly Sabbath.”²⁴

However, even those that believe the coming of the quail is the key to the meaning of *ben ha arbayim* in Exodus 16 must admit that these verses are not as definitive as other areas of scripture such as 1 John 3:4 for instance, in which we are told “sin is the transgression of the law.”²⁵ Anyone yearning for a clear exegesis of Exodus 16 should start by reading the entirety of Exodus 16, without depending on outside commentary. After reading the entire chapter, then come back and examine this and other reference works. Such an examination will prove Mr.

23 Ex. 16:12-3

24 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 41-2

25 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

Coulter may be correct when he states the events of Exodus 16 took place during a one week period, but his suggestion that the sixth day, the preparation day, Friday, came six days after the 15th of the second month is not only unverifiable, it does damage to the important theological lesson of Exodus 16 – that of God’s Sabbath.

Exodus 16 is a fairly straightforward set of verses with a profound lesson. Following Mr. Coulter’s “14 rules of Bible Study” suggests that an examination of the daily sacrifices should be done before examining the term *ben ha arbayim* in Exodus 16 because they are the “easy to understand”²⁶ scriptures. The verses on the daily sacrifices depict a two-part sacrifice being performed at two distinct times on the same day. The sacrifice to be performed in the afternoon, at *ben ha arbayim*, is done during the later part of the day. We must let the Bible interpret the Bible according to the second of Mr. Coulter’s bible study rules. The third, fifth, and sixth of Mr. Coulter’s rules for bible study state we must look at all the verses where *ben ha arbayim* is used to define it, not just one verse, while we must examine what Exodus 16 clearly states and does not state in context.

The story of God revealing the truth about His Sabbath continues with Exodus 16:6-7. “And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, (*ba erev*) then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: And in the morning (*ba baquor*), then ye shall see the glory of the LORD.”²⁷ God is going to show his power and majesty to the nation of Israel yet again, as He did with the ten plagues and the parting of the Red Sea, both in the evening and in the morning. “And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening (*ba erev*) flesh to eat, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmuring which ye murmur against him.”²⁸ God states they would have bread to eat by the morning, *ba baquor*, and flesh to eat by that evening, *ba erev*. The Lord tells Moses, “I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even (*ben ha arbayim*) ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning (*ba baquor*) ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.”²⁹ Again we see the juxtaposition of *ba baquor*, morning, with *ben ha arbayim* and *ba erev*. And we know that the manna actually came during the night so that the nation of Israel would have it in the morning.

Early 14th proponents insist that *ba erev* is a specific time frame that occurs before *ben ha arbayim*. Mr. Coulter writes, “only by acknowledging the Scriptural meaning of *ba erev*—‘at sunset’—can we unlock the true meaning of *ben ha arbayim*. The use of *ba erev* in the sequence of events in Exodus 16 makes it absolutely clear that *ben ha arbayim* **does not occur in the afternoon.**”³⁰ Although Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents may be correct about *ben ha arbayim* being a generic time frame referred to as twilight, often considered the time between sunset and dark, their support for *ben ha arbayim* being at the beginning of the day rather than at the end

26 Coulter, Rule 1 from “Fourteen Rules for Bible Study”; *The Christian Passover*, p 15.

27 Exodus 16:6-7

28 Ex. 16:8-9

29 Ex. 16:12

30 Coulter, p. 49

of the day is that God supposedly would not have sent the quail on the Sabbath day, which they believe was the 15th day of the second month.

***Ben ha Arbayim* and Exodus 16**

The coming of the quail in Exodus 16 does not define the timing of *ben ha arbayim*. Not only are early 14th proponents mistaken about Exodus 16 defining the time frame of *ben ha arbayim*, but the hypothesis actually changes the theological meaning of Exodus 16. Their early 14th theory has God using the quail to teach the Israelites about the seventh day Sabbath before the manna came and have thus misrepresented the meaning of the manna of God. In so doing, they run the risk of also missing the meaning of the true manna.³¹

The emphasis of Exodus 16 was God teaching the children of Israel about the seventh day Sabbath and then testing them to see if they would keep it. The instrument used to teach the nation of Israel about the Sabbath was the manna, not the quails. The day that the quail were given appears to be of very little importance to Moses as he wrote the story of Exodus 16. The quail were a gift given to an ungrateful people to show the power and majesty of God. They were the meat given the evening before the first bread from heaven fell. God often gives us gifts that we do not deserve just to let us know how much He cares for us to get our attention so we will want to treat him like a loving father.

Trying to create a justification for an early 14th Passover in the Old Testament has forced early 14th proponents into performing this strange eisegesis of Exodus 16. This unfortunate eisegesis unwittingly overlooks the importance of the Sabbath and how the manna was used to show the day of rest as a gift from God to mankind. This eisegesis has even stated, “God did not want the people to transgress the Sabbath day by gathering the quail. Neither did He want them doing the work involved in killing, cleaning, and roasting the quail on the Sabbath.”³² The emphasis has been placed on the quail rather than the manna and the Sabbath to support their early 14th hypothesis.

Even the idea that God would not allow food preparation of the quail on the Sabbath goes against how God taught Israel in Exodus 16 and throughout the Bible. In Exodus 16:4, God states that He wants to, “prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.”³³ In verse 20 the people show that they were not ready to follow God because some let the manna last until morning, even though they were told not to.³⁴ So God allowed them to break His law in this test. God also allowed some of the people to go out on the seventh day to seek manna when

31 John 6:32-5 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

32 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 47

33 Ex. 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

34 Ex. 16:20 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

there was none to be found.³⁵ Yet early 14th proponents propose that God would not test the people with quail preparation if the quail came near the end of the Sabbath. The idea that the quail came just after the Sabbath so the people would not break the Sabbath goes against the pattern of testing depicted throughout Exodus 16, but has been proposed to advance the hypothesis of an early 14th Passover because it is the only way they can support *ben ha arbayim* as occurring at the beginning of the day. Scripture shows that the sacrifices that were to be performed at *ben ha arbayim* were performed late in the day, yet early 14th proponents state these scriptural examples show God's called out people doing the wrong thing because of their eisegesis of Exodus 16.

One of the author's favorite scriptures is Deuteronomy 30:19, which states, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and they seed may live." God teaches us His way, than He gives us the opportunity to obey or not to obey, all the while wanting us to choose His way. If we follow the faulty logic of early 14th proponents about the quail supposedly not coming until after the weekly Sabbath, God would have made the manna disappear overnight rather than have it rot so Israel could not break his law. Of course, this would not have been much of a test.

Exodus 16 is the main proof text for *ben ha arbayim* supposedly being the first hour of the day after sunset for early 14th proponents. This supposed key to the timing of Passover has been shown not just to be incorrect, but totally misses how God the Father works with His called out people and also yet again misses the importance of Jesus the Messiah as the true manna showing God's way of life.

Thus early 14th proponents have misinterpreted how God works with mankind in order to advance their mistaken hypothesis. This misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Exodus 16 leads to erroneous conclusions. They have completely misunderstood and misstated that other scholars, like Mr. Fox, support their premise when they do not.

A straightforward exegesis of Exodus 16 shows Mr. Coulter's statements about Exodus 16 are absolutely incorrect.

1. The promise of the quail was given on the 15th day of the second month, but there is no way to determine what day of the week it was. If it was the weekly Sabbath, the nation of Israel had already done far more work by marching than preparing the small birds God would rain from heaven.
2. There is no indication that God rained manna for exactly five days before Israel gathered a double portion of manna on the preparation day. Early 14th eisegesis states the 6th day, the preparation day, just happened to be six days after God spoke to Moses, but that is not what scripture depicts.
3. It is true God told the nation of Israel they would eat the quail at *ben ha arbayim*. The quail came at *ba erev* and that people had the quail at *ba erev*. As will be shown in the next section,

³⁵ Ex. 16:27-8 And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

the use of the term *ben ha arbayim* usually involves the preparation and eating of a meal that starts on one day and extends into the next. It is also commonly believed among many scholars today to be a time frame from sunset to dark at the end of the day, but never at the beginning of the day.

The Prism of the Quails

Early and late 14th proponents agree the important message of Exodus 16 is God teaching His called out people about His Sabbath.³⁶ Mr. Coulter writes, “It is imperative that we understand the events of Exodus 16 in context.”³⁷ Context is always essential, but especially important when studying God’s word. Exodus 16 is the only area of scripture with internal time references where *ben ha arbayim* is not clearly shown to occur late in the day. This is because *ben ha arbayim* is not clearly shown to be any time frame in Exodus 16. *Ben ha arbayim* does occur near the time frame of *ba erev*, but can only be clearly defined when harmonizing it with the verses about the daily sacrifice and with the others verses in scripture that clearly depict the Passover sacrifice being done late in day.

If the pattern of the coming of the manna, which is clearly shown in scripture, matches the pattern of the coming of the quail, then *ben ha arbayim* occurs late in the afternoon. However, this may not be the case because the emphasis of Exodus 16 was upon the Sabbath and the manna, not the quail. Thankfully there are other areas of scripture that are easy to understand that allow us to have a general idea about when *ben ha arbayim* occurred.

Early 14th proponents eisegesis of Exodus 16 places emphasis upon the quails to supposedly show the importance of the Hebrew phrase *ben ha arbayim* and to reveal the seventh day Sabbath. However scripture shows it was the manna that taught the important lesson of Sabbath and the coming of the manna occurred after the coming of the quail. Mr. Coulter and early 14th proponents use Exodus 16 to claim Hezekiah and Josiah kept the Passover at the wrong time. They use Exodus 16 to teach that God’s formal suzerain treaty as recorded in Deuteronomy excluded any mention the Passover from His three annual feast seasons. They use Exodus 16 to teach the afternoon sacrifices were being done at the wrong time, a fairly important mistake that the Messiah never corrected. Their eisegesis of Exodus 16 is used to teach that Joshua kept the Passover early on the 14th although scripture states, “And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even (*ba erev*) in the plains of Jericho.”³⁸ When scripture is examined as an integrated whole instead of through the prism of eisegesis of one set of scriptures, the fallacy of Exodus 16 being “the key to the Passover” is clearly exposed, as subsequent chapters of this book show.

36 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 46 “The miracles of the manna—and the events that are recorded in Exodus 16—illustrate the high value that God places on His holy Sabbath.”

37 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 46

38 Joshua 5:10

The Daily Sacrifices

CHAPTER

12

Ben Ha Arbayim and the Daily Sacrifices

Chapter 11 of this book showed early 14th proponents terrible eisegesis of Exodus 16, which depends upon *ba erev* being sunset and sunset only and a total misunderstanding of the preparation day, to define the Hebrew idiom *ben ha arbayim* as the twilight at the beginning of the day. Although many scholars, like Mr. Fox, agree *ben ha arbayim* is twilight, they believe it is at the end of the day with the new day starting at darkness. Scholars and 14th proponents early agree that the portion of the daily sacrifice which was to be performed at *ben ha arbayim*¹ was done in the middle of the afternoon at the temple during the time of Christ. They also agree the timing of the Passover sacrifice during the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah occurred during the afternoon of the 14th day of the month. Mr. Coulter devotes appendix L of *The Christian Passover* to explain his understanding of the Hebrew word *waw* as it applies to the daily sacrifice in Numbers 28. An acquaintance from Ambassador College, who is one of the few people in the churches of God that possesses superior linguistic skills, offered this analysis of Mr. Coulter's use of the Hebrew term *waw*.²

Mr. Coulter is correct when writing about Numbers 28:4 that the use of *waw* does not express a chronological succession. The relationship that the *waw* expresses here is “non-sequential,” meaning it does not express anything about the sequence.

Where Mr. Coulter's understanding of Hebrew fails him – and where he wrongly implies that Hebrew scholar Bruce Waltke somehow supports him – is when he claims that this indicates that the events are “out of chronological order.” (*The Christian Passover*, pp. 418-19) Not understanding the rules of Hebrew grammar, he writes: “According to the rules of Hebrew grammar, because the *waw* (‘and’) in Numbers 28:4 is disjunctive, it signals that the evening sacrifice is being named out of chronological order.” (Ibid, p. 419)

The role of the disjunctive *waw* is simply to express some relationship other than chronological. It is not concerned at all with the sequence; showing the chronological sequence is not its grammatical function. That is, the disjunctive *waw* is neutral toward the chronology. Yet Coulter claims that the disjunctive *waw*'s role is concerned with the chronology – that the sequence is reversed, with the first event following the second event. The disjunctive *waw* in no way implies this!

1 Num. 28:4 The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even (*ben ha arbayim*)

2 The author of this analysis asked that his name not be used, but this persons linguistic and editorial advice have been invaluable in the creation of this book.

Mr. Coulter quotes a couple of sentences from Bruce Waltke, which he imagines support his error, but does not quote Waltke's explanation of the disjunctive *waw*: "There are two common types of disjunction. One type involves a continuity of scene and participants, but a change of action, while the other is used where the scene or participants shift." (*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 650)

Numbers 28:4 is an example of the latter type: the action remains the same in both clauses (a lamb is sacrificed), but the participants change (first lamb to second lamb). Again, the disjunctive *waw* is neutral concerning the chronological sequence – it in no way indicates that the clauses are "out of chronological order," as Mr. Coulter asserts.

A second and equally significant error on the same page (*The Christian Passover*, p. 419) stems from Mr. Coulter's apparent inability to read Hebrew. He writes: "The *waw* is prefixed to the word 'other'." Here he must be relying on the English word order. The word Mr. Coulter sees next to the *waw* is only the untranslated particle *'et* (*tae*). The word that the KJV translates as "other" follows after the word for "lamb" in the Hebrew text. The significance of this error lies not in its effect on Mr. Coulter's argument, but in its demonstration of his willingness to assert for fact something that he himself does not understand.

Had he examined the word translated "other" in the KJV, Coulter might have recognized that this word, *shēnî*, is an ordinal number: "second." Ordinal numbers designate "the place (as first, second, or third) occupied by an item in an ordered sequence." (*Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary*, 11th Edition)

Translations like Young's Literal Translation more accurately reflect the meaning of the Hebrew: "the one lamb thou preparest in the morning, and the second lamb thou preparest between the evenings." The lamb sacrificed "between the evenings" is the second of the two daily lambs sacrificed on a given day.³

Does Morning Occur before *ben ha arbayim*?

The scriptural ordinances referring to the daily sacrifice were examined in Chapter 1. However, we have not examined how early 14th proponents dismiss yet another example, a sacrifice that was to be done at *ben ha arbayim* actually being performed late in the day. Exodus 29 and Numbers 28 describe the how the daily sacrifice had two parts, one to be sacrificed in the morning and the other at *ben ha arbayim*, with the afternoon sacrifice, the one at *ben ha arbayim*, listed as occurring after the morning sacrifice. Mr. Coulter makes the early 14th case by writing the "Hebrew *waw* (translated 'and') between the two sacrifices does not express a consecutive order of events"⁴ when it modifies the daily sacrifice, but when the same Hebrew term *waw* is used in Joshua 10:5 he claims it must show a chronological order.⁵ Yet another example of how Mr. Coulter is completely inconsistent with his supporting theology for his early 14th hypothesis.

The Bible states the daily sacrifices were performed in the morning and at *ben ha arbayim*, a daily occurrence. Since the Hebrew day started at evening, a chronological ordering of the sac-

3 Anonymous, Selected writings on the topic of Passover, with particular interest in Hebrew and Greek usage in Mr. Fred Coulter's *The Christian Passover*.

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 418

5 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 423-8

rifices in Ex. 29 and Numbers 28 would place the morning sacrifice before the sacrifice at *ben ha arbayim* on any day. The sacrifices at *ben ha arbayim* could have occurred during the period of sunset to dark, but only if the day ends at darkness and not sunset.

Did the Priesthood Lose the Proper Timing for the Daily Sacrifice?

There should be no doubt that the temple sacrifices were done at mid-morning and mid-afternoon during the second temple period.⁶ Early 14th proponents have made the suggestion that the Levites lost the proper timing of the daily sacrifice, just as they supposedly lost the correct timing for the Passover sacrifice, when they were supposedly Hellenized.⁷ However, there is no evidence to suggest either of these are the case.

Jesus overturned the money changers in the temple and condemned the Pharisees for their hypocrisy, but he never condemned the leaders of the Jews for making the daily sacrifice to God at the wrong time, nor did he assail them for the timing or manner of any of the sacrifices done in the temple. The most obvious reason for not correcting them about this timing is because although their hearts were far from God, they were performing these sacrifices correctly. We see Jesus assail the Jewish leaders for not being close enough to God and for substituting traditions of men for the true worship of God. But we never see him attacking the manner of temple worship or the timing of the annual feasts kept by the Jews of his time. This evidence supports the contention that the priesthood was performing the daily sacrifices at the correct time. Arguing from silence is not the strongest of positions, but everything about Christ's life was not explained in detail in the New Testament.⁸

Not only does the historical evidence show that the portion of the daily sacrifice done at *ben ha arbayim* was done in the afternoon, there is also internal scriptural evidence supporting this timing, long before the Babylonian captivity or the supposed Hellenization of the Jews. An examination of Deut. 16:6 later in this book shows that *ben ha arbayim* occurred "at even, at the going down of the sun."⁹ This pattern agrees with the timing the pesah sacrifices in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35. In 1 Chronicles 16:40 the priests were to "offer burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning (*baquor*) and evening (*erev*), and to do according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel."¹⁰ One lamb for the daily sacrifice was killed in the morning and the other lamb was sacrificed at either *erev* or *ben ha arbayim*, depending which verse is examined. As in Joshua 5, the terms *ben ha arbayim* and *ba erev* are often used interchangeably. Thus the second lamb, which along with the lamb sacrificed in the morning constituted one daily sacrifice, was killed during the later portions of the day.

6 Edersheim, *The Temple* p. 108-9, ISBE , vol. 4, Q-Z Bromely, G.W. *Sacrifices in the OT.* , p. 268

7 Coulter, *The Christian Passover* p. 174-184

8 John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

9 Deut. 16:6

10 1 Chron. 16:40 To offer burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning and evening, and *to do* according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel

1 Kings 18 also helps define the time frame of *ben ha arbayim*. “And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. ...And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.”¹¹ The morning sacrifice must have already occurred on this day because it was already past noon.¹² Elijah, the powerful prophet of God, performed a sacrifice at the same time the evening sacrifice was being performed, at *ben ha arbayim*, sometime well before sunset because after fire rained from heaven, Elijah had time to order the Israelites to kill the prophets of Baal at the brook Kishon¹³ and to tell King Ahab to eat and drink.¹⁴ Then Elijah prayed and had his servant go look towards the sea seven distinct times.¹⁵ The killing of the prophets of Baal, along with the Elijah’s statement to Ahab must have taken at least half an hour and more likely at least an hour and a half (This is purely conjecture, but a reasonable one considering the confusion that must have ensued with the miracle of God raining fire from heaven). Another hour and a half must have elapsed during Elijah’s seven prayers and his servant’s seven journeys. This would only allow approximately ten minutes for each prayer and journey combined. Even after all this time had elapsed, there was still enough light to see a little cloud rise up out of the sea. These events mandate that the evening sacrifice, which occurs at *ben ha arbayim*, occurs late in the day, not at the start of the day, and had to be significantly before sunset at the time of Elijah. Therefore the evening sacrifices occurred during the afternoon, a few hours after the morning sacrifices and on the same day.

Some early 14th proponents have complained that the sacrifices were being done at the wrong time during Elijah’s life time, but the events of 1 Kings 18 occur more than two centuries before the Babylonian captivity and long before the period of Hellenization. So early 14th proponents again say the Jews just had it wrong, although there is no real theory on how Elijah got it wrong, unlike righteous kings Hezekiah and Josiah who supposedly got it wrong because the nation of Israel was so evil.

1 Kings 18, combined with many other scriptures, depicts the second half of the daily sacrifice, which occurred at *ben ha arbayim* according to scripture, as being performed late in the day. But the sacrifices at *ben ha arbayim* had to be done on the same day as the morning sacrifice because it was one sacrifice with two parts done each and every day. Stating that the Jews had the timing of the afternoon sacrifices wrong or that we have to assume some kind of chronology different than the Bible’s is an attempt to explain away clear verses about the timing of the afternoon sacrifice to justify a mistaken interpretation of Exodus 16 to support an errant early 14th Passover hypothesis.

11 1Kings 18:29, 36

12 1Kings. 18:2

13 1Kings 18:40

14 1Kings 18:41

15 1Kings 18:43 And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, *There is nothing.* And he said, Go again seven times.

The Feast of Passover

CHAPTER

13

The Feast of Passover

Over time the term *pesah* began to be used in a more general context than just the ordinances concerning the sacrificial lamb. The nation of Israel began to call the entire feast of Unleavened Bread “the Passover” and even the time around this feast “the Passover”. Some early 14th critics have condemned the Israelites for doing this without accounting for the fact that not only did the apostolic writers do exactly the same thing,¹ but even Jesus referred to general time of the spring feast as the Passover.² John, the beloved disciple, wrote, “now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.”³ Such generalizations are common, both in other languages and in the American English vocabulary. The context of the verse must be examined as well as what the intent of the original writer was, which can obviously lead to debate.

Often a member of the churches of God will ask another member where they went for the feast. It is taken for granted that they are talking about the Feast of Tabernacles, although the bible also lists the Feasts of First Fruits, Unleavened Bread, the weekly Sabbath, and others as the feasts of God.⁴ “The feast” is simply the vernacular. A common response to the question of where you went for the feast might be, “I went to England, met for services in the Channel Islands, and then visited France before coming home.” Those who are familiar with the terminology know that the person attended the Feast of Tabernacles services on the Channel Islands. This person visited England before and France after the feast, but it was all around feast time. Assailing someone’s knowledge of how the Feast of Tabernacles should be referred to because they used a vernacular expression would be foolish. “The feast” is simply a phrase that encompasses more for those who use this terminology, just as the phrase “the Passover” did for the disciples and Jesus and the nation of Israel.

1 Mark 14:1 After two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

Luke 2:41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

Luke 22:1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 Matt. 26:2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3 John 19:14

4 Lev. 23

Passover is used as both the time for the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb (or goat) and a general time frame around the feast of Unleavened Bread according to scripture. The apostles often referred to the festival of Unleavened Bread as the Passover.⁵ This practice may have originated with the Exodus 12 account. God gives the nation of Israel instructions on how to prepare and eat the *pesah* of YHVH in Exodus 12:3-10, then states, “And you shall eat it this way: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you eat it in haste. It is the Passover (*pesah*) to Jehovah.”⁶ The context of Exodus 12 shows the LORD’S Passover as the *pesah* lamb. Even Josephus wrote “Whence it is that we do still offer this sacrifice in like manner to this day, and call this festival Pascha {*ed. note-As will be shown in the New Testament examination, Pascha is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word Pesah*} which signifies the feast of passover: because on that day God passed us over.”⁷ Josephus, who was a Pharisee, wrote the Passover sacrifice was made on the same day that God passed over Israel in Egypt to emphasize God’s protection of Israel and to minimize any foreshadowing of the sacrifice of the Messiah as the true Passover. Neither of these ideas should be surprising because Josephus knew the correct time for the Passover sacrifice, as did all of Israel. He also did not realize, as was also true for most of Israel, that the messiah would also be a Passover sacrifice.

Josephus was not mistaken by his Passover references, whether it be the passing over of the destroyer, the protection of the Lord, the first Exodus, the 14th of Nisan, the feast of Unleavened Bread or the entire time around the spring feast, being the Passover. Two thousand years ago in the nation of Israel, the Passover had become a generic phrase, just as generic as “the feast” is for those in the churches of God today. However, the Hebrew word *pesah* originally referred to the ordinances around the actual slaying of the lamb. It is *pesah*, not *pasah*, that is used to encompass all of the events of the springtime annual feasts. The importance of the slain lamb is magnified when we know that *pesah* is also the word used to signify the entire spring festival season, just as Tabernacles is often used to signify the fall festival season. The use of the term Passover (*pesah*) to reference the season of the Exodus also lends credence to the definition of *pasah* being to protect, not to pass over. “The preposition ‘al occurs in the three Ex. passages and this usually means stationary position upon or at, rather than movement over or across.”⁸ The Pesah Haggadah “is the narrative of Israel’s redemption from Egypt, not merely exemption from the tenth plague. This would encourage the view that the word itself (*pasah*) meant transition.”⁹ So not only does Passover (*pesah*) refer to the lamb, but pass over (*pasah*) does not mean to pass over, but to protect. This is important because the word used for Passover throughout the Old Testament is Pesah, not pasah. Therefore, although God protected Israel from the death of the first born in Egypt, the ordinance and memorial occurring on the 14th of Nisan, just before Unleavened Bread commences, has everything to do with the *pesah* lamb

5 Matt. 26:2, Mark 14:1, Luke 2:41, Luke 22:1, John 19:14

6 Ex. 12:11 Green, Jay P. *The Interlinear Hebrew-Aramaic Old Testament*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1985, p. 171

7 Josephus, *The Antiquity of the Jews*, book 2, chapter 14

8 Glasson, T. Francis, *The Passover’, a misnomer: The meaning of the word Pasach*, Journal of Theological studies, N.S. vol 10, part 1, April 1959, p. 80

9 Glasson, p. 82

and is only cursorily about the protection God gave or the ensuing freedom this protection brought.

As a final example of how a season of time can be referred to by the important event it contains is the phrase “It’s Christmas time.” This is a time of joy for most of the western world. Both joy and dread are clearly shown in two classics of English literature, Dicken’s *A Christmas Tale* with Scrooge and Dr. Seuss’ *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. No matter what your view of Christmas, everyone knows that Christmas time is not simply December 25th, but is the season around December 25th. Christmas has a lot of things associated with it. A few of them are: family time; eggnog; snow; gifts; Santa Claus; etc. But the center of Christmas is supposed to be the birth of Jesus (which actually occurred months earlier). In like manner, the Passover has many things associated with it, like green ears of barley, unleavened bread, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, leaving Egypt, and the sacrifice of a little lamb (or goat). But the Passover was and should be centered on the sacrifice of the true *pesah*, Jesus the Messiah.

When did the Lord Pass Over?

CHAPTER

14

When did the Lord Pass Over (*'abar and pasah*) Israel?

The bible is specific about the time frame of God's passing over (*pasah*), but does not specify a date. Exodus 12:29 states "And it came to pass, that at midnight (*chetsiy*) the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle." A better definition of *chetsiy*, translated midnight in the King James in Ex. 12:29, is the "middle of the night" continuing the biblical notion that time was not measured in minutes and seconds in the Middle East three and a half millennia ago. Therefore God passed over (*pasah*) Israel in the middle of the night.

Nowhere in the entirety of the scripture does it state whether the destroyer (*shachath*) killed the first born while the LORD passed over (*pasah*) Israel on the 14th or the 15th of Nisan. It must be inferred. Of course, there are numerous instances of the Bible referring to the 14th of Nisan as the Passover, but this is always the *pesah*, not the *pasah* or any other verb.¹ The Bible states the Lord passed over (*pasah*) on the night that the Israelites ate the Lord's *Pesah*. We do know that the eating of the Lord's *Pesah* was to be a feast forever.² The Exodus account states,:

And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S Passover (*pesah*). For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.³

1 Lev. 23:5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover (*pesah*).

Num. 28:16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover (*pesah*) of the LORD.

2 Ex. 12:42-50

3 Ex. 12:11-5

The context of Exodus 12 suggests one possibility of how and why the nation of Israel began to refer to all seven days of unleavened bread and the preparation day before it⁴ as the Passover. The Israelites were told to eat the *pesah* as the destroyer killed the first born and the Lord passed over (*abar* or *pasah*) them. They are told the night they ate *pesah* was to be a memorial feast that must be kept forever. This feast or *chag* was to be kept for seven days with unleavened bread. Because the sacrifice of the Passover was being memorialized, referring to this seven day memorial feast (*chag*) as Passover (*pesah*) seems fitting.

The Destroyer

Some have suggested Exodus 12:23 contradicts Exodus 12:29. Exodus 12:23 states “For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.” Exodus 12:29 states “And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.” Exodus 12:29 states the LORD smote the first born in Egypt, yet Exodus 12:23 states the destroyer did the killing while the Lord protected His people. These two statements seem to appear to contradict each other, but become clearer when we place God on his throne.

God rules the Universe and beyond. He is responsible for everything. This destroyer, whether it was an angel or a demon, was operating on behalf of God. So God destroyed the first born, but He chose or allowed this instrument to do it. Thus He did it because He is responsible for it.

This is not a game of semantics. If a manager ordered a subordinate to fire an employee, it was the subordinate that actually did the firing. However, the manager would be the one who fired the employee because they caused it to happen. God chose to use an agent to kill the first born in Egypt, but it was still God who did it.

Consistency in Interpretation

When did the Israelites leave their Homes?

Early 14th proponents stress that God ordered the people not to leave their houses until morning, but is this true? God tells Moses in Exodus 12:12, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.” God never tells Moses that the people of Israel were not to leave their homes until morning. It is Moses who states, “and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.”⁵ This seems like a

4 John 19:14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

5 Ex 12:22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

picayune point and it is. Moses was God's servant. Moses gave this order to the elders as the representative of God. But early 14th proponents dismiss similar actions by the righteous kings of Israel during the Passovers of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 as being allowed by God, but not what God wanted.⁶ Yet because it is essential to their theology that Israel was supposedly not allowed to leave their homes until sunrise, they ignore the fact that Moses, also a righteous servant of God like Hezekiah and Josiah, gave the order that Israel stay in their homes until sunrise, not God. This is a prime example of picking and choosing interpretations of scripture to match a pre-conceived theology. Consistency is important in biblical interpretation. You cannot have it both ways and be intellectually honest.

Consistency dictates one of two scenarios occurs when God's servants give orders to His people without a direct command from God to do so. The first scenario has Moses relaying God's order that Israel stay in their homes until morning (*baquor*), even though scripture does not record this order as originating with God. In this scenario, the kings of Israel were also following God's order about how to observe Passover in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35. If this is the case, then there could be no controversy about this timing of Passover because God ordered Hezekiah and Josiah to sacrifice the Passover (*pesah*) in the temple on the late 14th. This order would eliminate early 14th proponents hypothesis that there are two different times and manners for the sacrifice of the Passover in scripture. They could no longer ignore the Passovers that clearly took place in the temple on the afternoon of the 14th.

The other scenario portrays Israel keeping the Passover at the wrong time and in the wrong manner during the Passovers of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35. These Passovers were something God allowed, but did not really want.⁷ It is stressed that righteous kings gave the orders on how to keep the Passover and not God in order to avoid a scenario where God supposedly ordered a late 14th Passover at the temple. Consistency would dictate in this second scenario that Moses' order to the Israelites to stay in their abodes until morning was not mandated by God. But the early 14th hypothesis requires not only that Moses' orders in Exodus 12:22 must have been an order from God that could not be disobeyed under penalty of death, but that morning (*baquor*) must be defined as sunrise, just as evening (*erev*) must be defined as sunset.

Although consistency is essential in theology, neither of the above scenarios is correct because scripture shows that God has always followed the same pattern in the Passover and that pattern does not show God dictating timing down to the second or minute. The second scenario, where the orders of God's servants are merely suggestions is not supported by scripture, but to require that the Israelites must have stayed in their houses until after sunrise and that the Passovers of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 were not ordained by God is intellectually dishonest because of the inherent inconsistency.

6 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 124-140

7 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 138-158

The Roasting of the *Pesah* Lamb

The general timing of the preparation of the *pesah* lamb was important during that first Passover in Egypt. Whether the Israelites were living in tents or homes, the lamb could not have been cooked indoors. Slaughtering was a messy proposition at best. Cooking it indoors was next to impossible. The *pesah* had to be roasted in one piece⁸ and this could have only happened outside during the first Passover in Egypt. Even in today's opulent society, there are very few fireplaces that could cook a whole lamb, with its legs, head, and body all together on one skewer. The houses of that time did not have fireplaces in general, but instead had fire pits to provide warmth.⁹ Scripture shows boiling seems to have been the usual method of preparing meat in biblical times, although roasting over an open fire is also mentioned.¹⁰ Ventilation in tents and homes was so poor they would have had trouble properly venting the smoke from even small fires, which would dictate that the vast majority of the Israelites prepared the Passover outside.

Regardless of when it was killed, the lamb would have cooked outside for 3 to 6 hours. Sunset was around 6 p.m., so the lamb may not have been ready to eat until right around midnight if it was killed near sunset.¹¹ The Israelites knew the destroyer would pass over Egypt during the middle of the night, not midnight exactly.¹² The Israelites would have been outside their abode to tend to the cooking lamb and away from the protection signified by the bloody door frame. The timetable for the Israelites to cook the *pesah* and to return to the protection of their abode before the destroyer passed over could have been dangerously close, considering their only clock would have been the moon and stars, if a large *pesah* lamb or goat was not killed until 6 p.m.. As a firstborn, this author would not want to be outside, with the uncertainty as to what the exact time frame the middle of the night was, while waiting for the lamb to finish cooking. It is probable a large percentage of the Israelites could have finished cooking the *pesah* lambs outside and retreated to the safety of their abodes where God passed over (*pasah*) or protected them before the middle of the night came if they did not kill the lamb until sunset, but a significant portion may have finished cooking the *pesah* just about the time the destroyer began to do his work. Thus the protection of God would have been even more dramatic than as depicted in the movie *The Ten Commandments*.

8 Ex. 12:8-9

9 *Harper's Encyclopedia of Bible Life*, page 37

10 Ex. 16:3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

11 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 58-9

12 Ex. 11:4-5 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

The Passover Meal in Egypt

The Israelites ate the *pesah* lamb or goat with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Why did they have to eat unleavened bread with the Passover? Of course God commanded it, but why did He command it? Exodus 12:5-25 gives the simple explanation. Israel was still in Egypt. They had already kept the *pesah* for 4 days. They had plenty of time to leaven their bread in preparation for the Exodus. But God had ordained that the Exodus would occur during the time of Unleavened Bread. God ordered all leaven to be put out for 7 days, starting just before the 15th of Nisan. The meal with the *pesah* or goat would be at the start of the exodus, which was also the start of Unleavened Bread.

The question that must be asked of the early 14th proponents is why they have unleavened bread at the beginning of the 14th since the 14th is not required to be unleavened? What purpose did it serve three and half millennia ago? And why do they currently have unleavened bread with a glass of wine on the early part of the 14th today and then return to leavened bread for almost twenty four hours, only to return to unleavened bread for another seven days? This issue will be raised again when we examine the Passover in the New Testament. Scripture states for the nation of Israel, eating the Passover lamb on the 15th after they sacrificed it late on the 14th of Nisan was to be a memorial for God watching over them. God required them to eat it with unleavened bread in Exodus 12:8¹³ because the Passover was eaten on the first day of Unleavened Bread.

13 Ex. 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

Until the 14th of Nisan

On and Until the 14th of Nisan

What is Logic by Verbosity

There are many ways to fallaciously reason, but from this author's experience at Ambassador College and from having read many church of God works, the most common way to practice flawed logic among the churches of God is logic by verbosity. "Argumentum verbosium is also known as Proof by Intimidation, or Proof by Verbosity. It refers to an argument that is so complex, so long-winded and so poorly presented by the arguer that you are obliged to accept it."¹ Wikipedia states "[Proof by verbosity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fallacies#Verbal_fallacies), sometimes colloquially referred to as *argumentum verbosium* - a rhetorical technique that tries to persuade by overwhelming those considering an argument with such a volume of material that the argument sounds plausible, superficially appears to be well-researched, and it is so laborious to untangle and check supporting facts that the argument might be allowed to slide by unchallenged."² Although the majority of *The Christian Passover* is built upon the errant logic of verbosity, one of the most egregious examples of this is Mr. Coulter's use of the Hebrew word 'ad, usually translated as until in English, to attempt to support an early 14th Passover hypothesis.

Keeping the Lamb until the 14th of Nisan

Exodus 12:6 states, "And ye shall keep it up until ('ad) the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening."³ Mr. Coulter states Exodus 12:6 makes it clear that the *pesah* had to be killed as soon as the 14th starts because it could only be kept right until the 14th started.⁴ This entire supposition is erroneous and shows the pattern of scholarship displayed by Mr. Coulter in *The Christian Passover* and by many early 14th proponents. Early 14th proponents often state God is an exacting God and therefore we must determine exactly what God meant down to the last minutia. This pharisaical, gnostic approach to Exodus 12:6 states:

1 <http://www.heavingdeadcats.com/tag/proof-by-verbosity>

2 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fallacies#Verbal_fallacies

3 Ex. 12:6

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, page 56

They were to keep the lambs **unto**, or **until** as in the KJV, the fourteenth day of the first month. The Hebrew word translated unto, or until, is *ad*, which limits the times to a specific point, not through and beyond that point. *Ad* means "...the limit of time itself" (Gesenius, Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament). The Hebrew preposition limits the time for the slaying the lambs to a specific point, and does not allow movement through and beyond that point. The use of the preposition *ad* in God's command makes it clear that the lambs were to be kept only to **the point in time at which the fourteenth began—not beyond that point.**⁵

If the reader has access to Gesenius' Lexicon, this author strongly suggests the reader turn to the Hebrew word *'ad* on page 606.

(1) While so long as...i.e. meanwhile, gradually, little by little... during a moment...
 (2) to, even to some certain limit...The particle 'ad and this differ properly in this respect: that 'ad (the adverb) signifies nothing but motion and direction towards some limit. 'ad (the particle) on the contrary implies an actual arrival quite to such a limit;...but this distinction is not always observed, as is clearly shown by the phrase to attend to in Job 32:12...(b) of time... even unto this day, i.e. (the limit being included)
 (2) until, so long as, used of a limit of time...The limit of time itself (not the interval of time up to that limit)⁶

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines the Hebrew word *'ad* as, "5704 - as far (or long, or much) as, whether of space (even unto) or time (during while, until) or degree (equal with),- against, and as, at before, by (that), even (to) for (-as much as), [hither-] to, +how long, into as long (much) as, (so) that, till, toward, until, when, while, (+as) yet."⁷

Young's Literal Concordance lists two main definitions. They are: "Till, up to, during and Till that."⁸

The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament states about the Hebrew term *'ad*:

It should be noted that there is no general word for time in Hebrew, neither are there special terms for the past, present, future, and eternity. The word *'olim* should be compared, with special attention given to the nineteen times when these words (*'olim* and *'ad*) are used together. *'ad*, like *'olim*, is used only in connection with prepositions, as an adverbial accusative or as a genitive in the construct sense. This word is used temporally to indicate a continuation of an event from a point in the past to the present (Gen 19:37, 83) It can be used of an event clearly in the past (Gen 8:7) and also of an event in the future (Gen 3:19, Deut 7:20, 23) As a conjunction it can refer to action which has already happened (Deut, 2:14) or one which has not yet been completed at the time of the writing (2 Sam. 17:13).⁹

5 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, page 56(All emphasis by Fred Coulter)

6 Gesenius, H.W.F., *Gesenius' Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*: Baker Books, Grand Rapids MI, 1979, p. 606

7 Strong, James, *Abingdon's Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary of the Old Testament*. p. 112

8 Young, Robert, *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Hendrickson Publishers, p. 987

9 Harris, Archer, and Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. 2, pp. 645-6

The Hebrew word *'ad* has many meanings and it is often translated until. It is not tied to an exact time. As Laird *et. al* state, time should not be linked to Hebrew words the way we try to link time with events today. The Hebrew language just did not do that. Any scholar who has looked at how time was used and viewed by the nation of Israel in scripture should know they did not pin point exact times of the day. Trying to tie a preposition used in scripture to an exact time sequence is not only unadvisable, it shows a distinct lack of genuine scholarship. Additionally, Genenius' definition as quoted by Mr. Coulter is clearly out of context. The definition in parenthesis which follows Mr. Coulter's quote makes it clear that the definition of *'ad* is the reaching of a result, not the process used to reach it. Genenius uses 1 Samuel 1:22 to define the limit of time, which he quotes as "until the child be weaned [then] I will bring him." The time limit that is set is when the child is weaned. This is not an exact interval of time, but the time it takes to get the required result.

Eat Leavened Bread on the Seventh Day?

Consistency is an essential hermeneutic in bible study. Sometimes words can mean different things in different areas of the Bible, but the Hebrew word *'ad*, translated until, in Exodus 12:6 is used in Exodus 12:15. Exodus 12:15 states, "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until (*'ad*) the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel."¹⁰ If Mr. Coulter were consistent with the definition of the Hebrew word *'ad* used in Exodus 12:6 supposedly meaning to "**the point in time at which the fourteenth began—not beyond that point.**"¹¹ "then surely it must also mean until the beginning of the seventh day in Exodus 12:15. If Mr. Coulter were consistent with his usage of the word *'ad*, he would be teaching that people were to eat unleavened bread until the very beginning of the seventh day.

This author knows that Exodus 12:15, combined with Leviticus 23:6, shows unleavened bread was to be eaten from the beginning of the fifteenth day of the first month until the end of twenty first day of the first month.¹² Thus Mr. Coulter's understanding of the Hebrew word *'ad* is applied in an inconsistent manner and is clearly erroneous.

Until the 14th or Until *Ben ha Arbayim*

When was the Passover lamb to be killed? In Exodus 12:6, the Hebrew word *'ad* refers to the Hebrew phrase *ben ha arbayim* and not to "the 14th." The Israelites were to keep the Passover lamb (or goat) until they sacrificed it at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th of Nisan, not simply until the 14th of Nisan. So even if the word *'ad* was until a time limit, as early 14th proponents erroneously claim, it would be until *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th on Nisan. This usage could not and should not define when *ben ha arbayim* occurs on the 14th.

¹⁰ Ex. 12:15

¹¹ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, page 56(All emphasis by Fred Coulter)

¹² Lev. 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

The process of debunking this distorted reasoning and word play starts by examining Exodus 12:3, just three verses before Exodus 12:6. “In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.”¹³ The nation of Israel was told to select the lamb on the 10th day of Nisan. It is possible that a number of Israelites gathered the lamb into their home on the evening of the 10th, just after the 9th had ended. But it is just as probable that a number of them did not select the lamb until the daylight portion of the 10th because it would have been easier to identify a lamb without blemish in the daylight. We are simply not told exactly when the lamb was brought into the house in scripture. We can speculate, but we should not build doctrine upon such speculation. When we speculate we must realize that exactly when the lamb (or goat) was brought into the Israelites’ abodes was not important because the concept of time is far more dynamic and flexible for Israelites of 3,500 hundred years ago than it is for us today. All we know for sure is the lamb was brought in sometime during the approximate 24 hour period on 10th day of Nisan.

Scholarship that attempts to use the Hebrew word *‘ad* as it is used in Exodus 12:6 to support an early 14th Passover is reminiscent of the debate in the United States of the definition of what the word “is” is. Playing games with language to support an untenable position is nothing more than a distraction from the heart of the matter. It is equivalent to the magician’s trick of diverting the audience’s attention away from what is important by creating a plausible diversion.

The following analogy shows how attempting to use the word until to define an “unknown” time frame is very poor scholarship. If you have until the 15th of April at midnight to pay your taxes, does that mean midnight is right at the start the 15th of April? Far too many tax payers are trying to locate an open post office at midnight on the very end of the 15th of April to try to substantiate that the phrase “until the 15th” means the very beginning of the 15th.

Trying to stress the word “until” must place any event it modifies as the beginning of that time frame is not only ludicrous, it is dangerous because of how it twists words to substantiate a pre-conceived idea. Another analogy about how until (*‘ad*) is used in Ex. 12:6 would be trying to determine when you are paid if you are not being paid until the 14th. Does the word until mandate that you are paid at 12:01 a.m., or in the morning, or the afternoon, or late at night on the 14th? It depends upon the method and normal time of payment. If you have direct deposit, you may be paid at 12:01 am. However, someone else may be paid when they receive their pay envelope in the morning while another will receive their pay envelope in the afternoon. A late shift worker may not get their envelope until just before midnight at the end of the 14th. They all received payment on the 14th and they were not paid until the 14th. The English word until does not mean right at the beginning of the time frame it is modifying and neither does the Hebrew word *‘ad*. Again, trying to build doctrine from one little word translated from the Hebrew instead of looking at the big picture can lead to a distorted picture. Keeping the lamb until the 14th of Nisan until it was to be sacrificed at *ben ha arbayim* simply means that the Israelites kept the lamb for four days, from the 10th until the appointed time to sacrifice the *pesah*. The appointed time to sacrifice the *pesah* cannot and should not be inferred from the word until.

13 Ex. 12:3

On the 14th of Nisan-Is Passover a day long Period?

There are some early 14th proponents who follow a similar pattern of logic by stating over and over the Passover was on the 14th of Nisan. They often quote a number of the verses listed below:

In the fourteenth *day* of the first month at even *is* the LORD'S passover.¹⁴

And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.¹⁵

And in the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the passover of the LORD.¹⁶

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.¹⁷

In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.¹⁸

And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth *day* of the first month.¹⁹

Early 14th proponents will emphasize that the Passover is a day long, that it is on the 14th day of the first month, and all the events of Passover have to occur on the 14th day of the first month. Unfortunately their logic is invalidated by the very first verse they often quote, Leviticus 23:5, which shows the Passover occurs at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th, not on the 14th. Believing their logic to show the Passover is a day long period, these early 14th proponents go to Exodus 12 and try to prove all of the ordinances of the Passover must occur on the 14th of Nisan. For them, this includes not just the sacrifice of the Passover, but putting the blood on the doorframe²⁰ and roasting the lamb,²¹ but also burning all the remains of Passover before morning.²² These early 14th proponents have not let scripture define what the Passover is. Exodus 12:3-11 defines the Passover as the lamb to be sacrificed, as is shown in other portions of this book. But even some the verses used by early 14th proponents show that keeping the Passover is not the spreading of the blood, which was only done once, nor is it the roasting the lamb nor is it the burning of its remains in the morning. These verses include:

14 Lev. 23:5

15 Num. 9:5

16 Num. 28:16

17 Josh. 5:10

18 Ezek.. 45:21

19 Ezra 6:19

20 Ex. 12:7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

21 Ex. 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

22 Ex. 12:10 And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD.²³

Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.²⁴

How did the nation of Israel keep the Passover on the 14th of Nisan? They kept it until *ben ha arbayim* by sacrificing the Passover. An examination of keeping the Day of Atonement on the 10th day of the seventh month shows how similar it is to keeping the Passover on the 14th day of the first month. The atonement sacrifice consisted of two parts, similar to the daily sacrifice. The first part was sacrificed as a burnt offering²⁵ and the second part was brought into the wilderness.²⁶ But there were many other ordinances that had to be followed to keep atonement. The high priest had to have special washings and put on special clothing.²⁷ He had to offer a bull for himself and his family before he could make the atonement offering.²⁸ To choose which goat would be sacrificed and which would be lead into the wilderness, the high priest had to cast lots.²⁹ The high priest had to bring incense into the holy of holies before he could sprinkle the blood of the bull to cleanse the holy seat.³⁰ Then he took the blood of the atonement sacrifice and sprinkled it to atone for the sins of the people.³¹ During all of this, no one could be in the tabernacle or temple.³² After following other ordinances, the high priest confessed the sins of the people on the second portion of the atonement offering.³³ After all of

23 2 Chron. 30:15

24 2 Chron. 35:1

25 Lev. 16:5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

26 Lev. 16:10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, *and* to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

27 Lev. 16:4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these *are* holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and *so* put them on.

28 Lev. 16:6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

29 Lev. 16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat.

30 Lev. 16:12-14 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the vail: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not: And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

31 Lev 16:15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

32 Lev. 16: 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

33 Lev. 16:21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

this, the high priest had to change and clean up and the sacrificed portion of the atonement offering had to be totally burned up outside of the camp.³⁴

Although there were many ordinances associated with the atonement sacrifice, this author has never read or heard of anyone confusing these ordinances as being the atonement, although there is no doubt all of these ordinances had to be completed. The atonement was the two goats, one of which was sacrificed as a sin sacrifice, which is what a burnt offering was, and the other was lead off into the wilderness. The burning of the sacrificed goat was an absolute requirement for atonement, but it was not the atonement sacrifice.

Was the blood put on the door posts at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th day of the first month? Perhaps it was put on at that time and perhaps it was not. Scripture does not enlighten us because the exact timing was unimportant, as long as the blood was on the door post before the destroyer came in the middle of the night. Was the lamb roasted at *ben ha arbayim*? It most certainly was not. No matter what definition of *ben ha arbayim* is used, even if the roasting process began at *ben ha arbayim*, the roasting had to finish after *ben ha arbayim*. And the remains of the Passover were most certainly not burnt at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th day of the first month.

Unfortunately, early 14th proponents who emphasize the remnants of the Passover being burned have confused this ordinance about the Passover as being the actual Passover when it is not. When scripture states the Passover was on the 14th it does not always state it had to be done at *ben ha arbayim* because the time of the sacrifice was specified in other parts of scripture, but when scripture states the Passover was on the 14th, it is always referring to the sacrifice of the lamb (or goat) at its appointed time. The entirety of the Passover had to occur at *ben ha arbayim* according to Exodus 12:6 and Leviticus 23:5.³⁵ Christians should recognize the Passover sacrifice foreshadowed the sacrifice of the true *pesah* sacrifice, Jesus the Messiah.

Therefore early 14th proponents who repeat over and over again that Passover is on the 14th, which it most certainly is, are trying to prove that Passover was a day-long period with all the ordinances of the Passover occurring on the 14th by presupposing the Passover was a day-long period. This exercise in circular logic can only stop spinning round and round if people are willing to look to scripture to see that the Passover was the lamb (or goat) and that the true Passover was the lamb sacrificed from the foundations of this world,³⁶ and not a 24-hour period.

34 Lev. 16:23-8

35 Ex. 12:6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening (*ben ha arbayim*).
Lev. 23:5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) is the LORD'S passover.

36 Rev. 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Living in Egypt

CHAPTER

16

Where and how the Israelites abode in Egypt

The question arises where the Passover lamb would be kept and what was the Israelites abode in Egypt. The King James translates the Hebrew word *bayith* as house. It means house, household, home, place, temple or family.¹ The Israelites had lived in Egypt for a few hundred years, but they had been slaves for a considerable portion of that time. A number of Israelites may have lived in houses, but it is also probable that a number of them lived in tents. That is how their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived and it is how they lived for the next 40 years in the desert. Slaves in Egypt, who were persecuted to the extent that Pharaoh wanted to kill off all the young boys, would have had a hard time coming up with the time and material to build houses. The Egyptians would not have wanted their slaves to live in luxury. Some of the Israelites may have been in tents when the LORD passed over, just as some of them would have been in houses. Translating the Hebrew word *bayith* in Exodus as a home or household, not simply a house, is correct. Again, trying to pigeon hole the meaning of a translated word to support a doctrine is not advisable, especially when experts in the Hebrew language disagree with such dogmatic interpretations. The reason *bayith* is best translated as abode or home and not house is the same reason home does not always mean house in English. This author's home for ten years was a trailer, a mobile home. It was not a house, but it was my home.

The Israelites were all in their abodes with their household and their neighbors when they ate the *pesah*. A mammoth effort has been made by early 14th proponents to show that the Israelites had to stay in their houses the entire night of the Passover and that it must have been houses they were in, not tents. This scenario was built to combat a misconception in Josephus' writings. Josephus states, "Accordingly, he (Moses) having got the Hebrews ready for their departure, and having sorted the people into tribes, he gathered them all in one place."² Some late 14th proponents examine this statement by Josephus in *Antiquities* and contend Moses gathered all the Israelites together in tents outside the city of Rameses or even worse, gathered them in the city of Rameses, before the 14th of Nisan. These late 14th proponents apparently feel this would allow the Israelites to begin their trek out of Egypt on the night portion of the

1 Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, p. 105

2 Josephus, *The works of Josephus, The Antiquities of the Jews*, William Whiston, Trans., Hendrickson, Publishers, 1987, Book 2 Chapter 14, section 6, p. 74

15th of Nisan, after the destroyer had passed over, but before dawn. These late 14th proponents have created this scenario to combat early 14th proponents usage of Deuteronomy 16:1 to supposedly prove the Israelites began the exodus at night. These late 14th proponents argue that Moses' statement to remain in their abodes until morning³ can be harmonized with supposedly leaving by night, according to Deuteronomy 16:1, by having the Israelites begin the Exodus at 3 or 4 o'clock on the 15th, thus supposedly leaving by night supposedly staying in their abodes until morning.

Just as many late 14th proponents mistakenly try to create a scenario to harmonize a mistaken understanding of Deut. 16:1, early 14th proponents mistakenly insist *bayith* must be translated house because they speculate the Israelites could not have left their houses until after dawn on the 14th. The Israelites then supposedly spoiled the Egyptians, gathered in the city of Rameses and left Egypt on the night of the 15th of Nisan.⁴ Although many late 14th proponents misunderstand Deuteronomy 16:1, Mr. Coulter's early 14th scenario is fraught with even more problems. How could hundreds of thousands of Israelites with all their possessions and cattle gather in a city and spoil it? Not only would it be a logistical nightmare if the city were large enough to hold all these people, but history dictates this is not even a possibility. The largest cities at the time of the exodus were 100,000 people, at most. So early 14th proponents who state the Israelites gathered in the city of Rameses can not be correct. Obviously if the Israelites were already gathered together outside the city of Rameses in tents, this scenario of gathering in the city would not be required. To battle the concept of Israel being gathered in tents on the night of the 14th, Josephus has been called a liar by Fred Coulter because he also misunderstands what Josephus wrote.⁵ After building a straw man that does not agree with what any reasonable scholar writes about Josephus, Mr. Coulter writes about Josephus' statement that Moses gathered the Israelites together in one place, "WHAT FOLLY! What foolishness to accept a traditional belief that directly conflicts with the truth of God's Word and to use interpretations of Scripture that promote the false ideas of men! No wonder God says that He entraps the intelligent in the foolishness of their own human wisdom."⁶ Rather than looking at the context, Mr. Coulter simply calls Josephus a liar to bolster his argument. Unfortunately, Mr. Coulter shows a dogged inconsistency when he accepts Josephus' totally exaggerated number of *pesah* lambs killed at the temple in 70 A.D. Again, Mr. Coulter rejects Josephus as a liar when Mr. Coulter believes Josephus disagrees with his early 14th hypothesis, yet accepts total exaggeration from Josephus, as will be shown when we look at the Passover in the New Testament, when he feels Josephus supports his theory.

3 Ex. 12:22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is* in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 66-86

5 Coulter, *The biblical truth about Passover*, Tape 1; Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 60-1

6 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 61 As is Mr. Coulter's pattern, any time scholarship, reason and logic would dictate his hypothesis to be in error, he asks if you would rather believe God, supposedly speaking through Mr. Coulter's work, or would you rather believe men who make sense.

Josephus wrote the Israelites were gathered together out of Egypt and returned to their ancestral homes in Goshen for the Passover. Exodus 8:22 and the 47th chapter of Genesis state the homes of the Israelites were in Goshen.⁷ Exodus 12:37 and Numbers 33:3 inform us that the Israelites began their trek out of Egypt when they left Rameses on the 15th day of Nisan.⁸ But a scripture that has often been overlooked is Gen. 47:11 “And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.”⁹ Sarna writes “‘the region of Goshen’, a phrase that is synonymous with ‘the region of Rameses’, where the Israelites lived.”¹⁰

Josephus did not write the Israelites were gathered together in tents outside the city of Rameses. The Israelites were slaves and probably served the Egyptians throughout the nation of Egypt. The Israelites may have been slaves, but after the ravages of the first 9 plagues, it was most probable the Egyptians allowed the Israelites to return to their ancestral Egyptian homes for Passover night. After all, it was this area that had been spared from the 9th plague, the plague of darkness.¹¹ The Egyptians had already allowed the Israelites to “borrow” gold and silver.¹² Therefore, what Josephus almost certainly meant when he wrote the Israelites were gathered at Rameses was that Moses gathered the Israelites back to their ancestral homes, where they would naturally have been sorted by tribes, to await God’s deliverance on the Passover.

As a reminder to the reader, Moses wrote the books of Genesis, Exodus and Numbers, as well as the rest of the Pentateuch, under the inspiration of God. The Bible testifies to this fact in Deuteronomy 31:9.¹³ Tradition has it that Genesis and Exodus were written at the same time.¹⁴ The contention that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible under the direct inspiration of God has been under attack for over 200 years. Wellhausen, a noted theologian who is credited with much of the current critical understanding of the Pentateuch, advanced the Document Theory about the books of Moses. This author believes the Document Theory is heretical because it interprets of the religious history of Israel as a syncretic religion from its inception and theorizes that the Bible is a syncretic book. “Syncretism is the attempt to reconcile disparate or

7 Ex. 8:22 And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of *flies* shall be there; to the end thou mayest know that I *am* the LORD in the midst of the earth.

Gen. 47:11 Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they *are* in the land of Goshen.

8 Ex. 12:37 And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children.

Num. 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

9 Gen. 47:11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

10 Sarna, Nahum Ed. *JPS Commentary: Exodus*, Jewish Publication Society, New York, NY 1991, p. 6

11 Ex. 10:23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

12 Ex. 11:2-3

13 Deut. 31:9 And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

14 Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 1, The Pentateuch*, Hendricks Pub. 1986, p. 24

contrary beliefs, often while melding practices of various schools of thought. The term means ‘combining,’...Syncretism may involve attempts to merge and analogise several originally discrete traditions, especially in the theology and mythology of religion.”¹⁵ Most Wellhausenian scholars have serious doubts about scripture being the inspired revelation of the one true God. The fact that many of those who believe in an early 14th Passover have embraced this theory and that Mr. Coulter almost exclusively attempts to use Wellhausenian scholars to support his hypothesis will be examined at great detail at a later point in this book, but this author rejects Wellhausen’s theory. Moses wrote all five books of the Pentateuch, although he very likely wrote Genesis using documents and oral tradition brought out in the Exodus. There were also editors of the sacred scriptures. They have added a few comments over time, such as the comments added about Moses death at the end of Deuteronomy, but Moses was the author of the Pentateuch.

Moses used the terms Rameses and Goshen interchangeably in the Pentateuch. Moses wrote in the Pentateuch that the Israelites were given the land of Rameses in which to dwell and he wrote they left Rameses on the 15th day of Nisan. Moses wrote that the Israelites left their homes in Rameses/Goshen on the day of the 15th of Nisan in Numbers 33:3. His account in Numbers 33 states Israel did not physically leave Egypt until they crossed the Red Sea. A later chapter of this book harmonizes Numbers 33:3 with Deuteronomy 16:1, but that harmonization does not depend upon whether the Israelites began to leave Egypt during daylight or night. It depended upon the power of God as shown in the light of scripture. This harmonization was a turning point for this author in trying to understand not only the timing of the Passover, but its spiritual implications of the Passover sacrifice.

Israel could not gather in the city of Rameses on the 15th day of Nisan. This is logistically impossible. Early 14th proponents theory that Moses’ instructions were for the Israelites to gather near the city of Rameses and then leave from near Rameses is not supported by scripture either. Scriptures states, “And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.”¹⁶ So they departed from Rameses, not near Rameses, according to scripture. The only logically consistent way to understand Numbers 33:3 is that the Rameses the Israelites left from is a region and not a city. Therefore, as they left their abodes sometime on the morning of the 15th of Nisan, the Israelites were already organized in tribal units around the whole region of Rameses, which is also called Goshen. As they marched out of Egypt in the sight of all the Egyptians, they were not following a man, but were following God in the form of a pillar of cloud.

15 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syncretism>

16 Num 33:3

Brought out by Night

CHAPTER

17

Harmonizing Deuteronomy 16:1 with Numbers 33:3

Has Deuteronomy 16 been Tampered with?

Deuteronomy 16:1 sets the scene for the Passover. Moses restates how important it is for the Israelites to remember it was God that brought them out of Egypt. It was God who brought salvation and it was God's power they were to remember and look to, not their own. Nothing has changed in three and a half millennia. Today it is the grace of God that saves, not anything that we have done.¹ God redeemed his people from the destroyer by protecting or watching over them.² It was the power of God as manifest in the 10th and final plague that brought Israel out of Egypt. The entire book of Deuteronomy is replete with phrasing about how God brought Israel out of Egypt with His mighty hand and with His power.

Deuteronomy 16 is also a very interesting chapter. It is universally acknowledged as the restatement of the three pilgrimage feasts in the suzerain treaty God made with Israel. It is also one of the key chapters for scholars who embrace the Wellhausen heresy. As will be explained later in this chapter and in the chapter on supposed scholarly support for an early 14th Passover, liberal scholars believe chapter 16 of Deuteronomy, as well as most of the book of Deuteronomy, was written by a priestly class of writers, which scholars refer to as redactors, between 600 and 500 B.C. to support the power of the priestly class around the time of return from the Babylonian captivity. These same scholars believe the entire Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, is a set of syncretic writings created by four distinctly different sources writing between 1000 and 500 B.C. They believe the Pentateuch, as well as the rest of scripture is a set of myths, folklore, and religious principles used to keep the general populous in line. They believe Moses and the Exodus are nothing but myths created to amalgamate two distinctly different peoples and religions into one. It is liberal scholars who write that Deuteronomy has been edited in an attempt to uphold their hypothesis of the Document Theory.³

1 Romans 3:27-8 Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law
Eph 2:8-9 for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory .

2 Ex. 12:42

3 Liberal scholarship, which embraces the document theory that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses and that scripture is really just a synchronization of myths and legends will be examined in detail later in the book and an article on liberal scholarship can be found at <http://www.keepersoftheyay.org>.

Chapter 16 of Deuteronomy is a corner stone of Wellhuasenian scholars' attempts to show how the priestly cast wanted to gain more control of the religion, thus they created the temple as the center of religious services 500 years after the glory of the Davidic kingdom had faded away. The scholars who use this logic deny the power and glory of God. Those who believe a true servant of God, like Ezra, would change scripture against the expressed will of God are denying the inspiration of scripture, something the vast majority of today's Christian scholars do.

This author believes there were redactors, like Ezra, who did some editing of scripture, but Moses was the author of the first five books of the bible. It was not made up of four differing schools of thought that were intricately tied together from 1000 to 500 BCE, which is what Wellhuasenian scholars believe and teach. Every Christian should be aware of the beliefs of today's liberal Christian scholars because these beliefs are espoused in almost every seminary curriculum and religious class taught around the Christian world today. These teachings are then filtered down through a ministerial/teaching class and through writings like commentaries and journal articles. If all of this is new to you, you may want to examine the chapter on supposed scholarly support of an early 14th Passover later in this book before continuing an exegesis of Deuteronomy 16. However, be forewarned that most of the material is shocking to most Christian believers and often when this material is presented in public the audience is visibly shaken and some have expressed feelings of being sick, usually because they realized that some of their current teachers and religious advisors have espoused this heresy.

Deuteronomy 16:1 is one of the verses used by early 14th proponents to supposedly prove the Israelites left Egypt by night. As will be shown, this verse does not suggest the children of Israel left Egypt by night. However, it is interesting that some early 14th teachers cast a disparaging light on this section of scripture by insinuating that something is just not right with Deut. 16:2-8 when Deut 16:1 is one of the key scriptures they use in their so-called proof of an early 14th Passover because this is the only verse that supposedly proves the Israelites left Egypt by night.⁴

Brought out by Night

Deuteronomy 16:1 states, "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night." When poorly harmonized with Numbers 33:3, the night mentioned in Deut. 16:1 supposedly could only be the night of the 15th, supposedly leaving the evening of the 14th as the time of the eating of the *pesah* and the *pasah* of the Lord.⁵

Mr. Coulter's and other early 14th proponents contend Ezra altered Deut. 16:2-8 to explain the Passover practices of the Jews at his time. How and why would a priest, a true servant of God, alter the scripture to be against God's way? The explanation is that they view Ezra's mission and accomplishments as being similar to that of the righteous kings of Israel. This author agrees that Ezra's mission was the same as the righteous kings of Israel, but disagrees they were doing something that God accepted but were not truly following God's will. But early 14th

4 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 132-172

5 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 174-191

proponents see that mission and those accomplishments as the equivalent of corralling an evil people to make sure they do not violate God's laws. Instead scripture depicts Ezra, Hezekiah and Josiah returning an enthused portion of Israel to a true covenant relationship with God and His way of life via the first step in that journey, the Passover sacrifice.

Mr. Coulter writes about Deuteronomy 16, "The advocates of a 15th Passover claim that the commands of God in Deuteronomy 16 support the temple sacrifice of the Passover lambs. On the surface, it appears that these commands required the sacrificing of the Passover at the temple, and that the Passover and the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread were combined into one feast. This interpretation of Deuteronomy 16 is taught by Jewish and Christian scholars alike. As the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states, "The section in Deut. 16:1-10 was interpreted as an attempt to abolish the private Passover celebrations..." (p. 668).⁶ First, no one this author is aware of advocates a Passover on the 15th. If this disagreement was not a propaganda ploy by early 14th proponents, the argument would be about whether the Passover was sacrificed early or late on the 14th of Nisan. We will examine this quote from *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* in context after we compare Mr. Coulter's opening statement about Deuteronomy 16 with his closing paragraph. Mr. Coulter writes:

In this chapter we have seen overwhelming evidence that the commands in Deuteronomy 16:1-8 are, in fact, instruction for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These instructions, which refer to the Feast of Unleavened Bread as "the Passover," were later applied to the Passover day in an attempt to support and uphold a 15th Passover. Aiding this false view of Deuteronomy 16 was the mistranslation of *bashal* as "roast" instead of "boil." This mistranslation has distorted the true meaning of these commands and helped to perpetuate the controversy over the correct day for the observance of the Passover. Such mistranslations, misrepresentations and misinterpretations are intended to justify the Jews' departure from the domestic observance of the Passover at the beginning of the 14th and their practice of sacrificing the Passover lamb late in the afternoon of the 14th and eating the Passover meal on the night of the 15th, which begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread.⁷

Mr. Coulter starts out by quoting a liberal source that Deuteronomy 16:1-10 was supposedly written to abolish the private, domestic Passover in favor of a temple-centered sacrifice, but ends up writing that Deuteronomy 16:1-8 has nothing to do with the Passover. Supposedly Deuteronomy 16:1-8 is only about the Days of Unleavened Bread. Which is it? The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* obviously believes Deuteronomy 16:1-8 has material related to the Passover. If you cannot be right, at least be consistent.

Before examining Deuteronomy 16 and Numbers 33 in detail, we really need to examine Mr. Coulter's quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Under its Passover article is a section entitled "Current Interpretations." Mr. Coulter's small excerpt from this source has been placed in bold and italicized.

⁶ Coulter, p. 159

⁷ Coulter, p. 173

In II Kings 23:21-23, with respect to the Passover of Josiah, we are told no such Passover “had been kept since the days of the Judges.” In the calendar of the feasts, in Ex. 23:14-7, it is the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not Passover, that is coupled with those of Harvest and Ingathering, while reference to Passover in 34:25 is suspect of being an insertion because of its context. From all this Wellhausen concluded that the coalescence of Passover and Unleavened Bread did not occur until the time of Josiah. The agricultural festival of unleavened bread was kept as a national Israelite feast, he felt, until the days of Josiah. ***The section in Deut. 16:1-10 was interpreted as an attempt to abolish the private Passover celebrations*** and to eliminate the apotropaic rites celebrations of these, therefore Passover was combined with the national feast in Jerusalem, and he felt, the eating of the meal indoors was no longer permitted. The time of the feast was at the new moon of Abib rather than the full moon of Exod. 12 and subsequently.⁸

The issues of how liberal scholarship and its view of the bible have been espoused by most early 14th proponents is dealt with later in this book. Wellhausen believed the origins of the Passover revolved around shepherds killing lambs to their clan gods in the spring and unleavened bread revolved around farmers in the valley keeping unleavened bread to appease their separate clan gods. As the people intermarried, they combined their religions and made up a story about a guy named Moses and a mythical exodus from Egypt. As the quote above shows, Wellhausen believed the feast had been kept on the first day of the first month, not in the middle of the month, and that at the time of Josiah the priestly class began to eliminate some of the worship of the apotropaic, that is to say evil and magical, clan gods. This is the type of material and scholarship that early 14th proponents quote to show that Deuteronomy 16:1-8 does not refer to the Passover at all, only to the feast of Unleavened Bread.

Deuteronomy 16:1 is referring to how the 10th and final plague freed Israel at night and, as was shown in chapter 17, cannot be used to set the time frame for Israel leaving their abodes in Goshen\Rameses. Deuteronomy continues,

Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.⁹

Verses 2-4 refer to the days of unleavened bread, but do they also refer to passover sacrifice? More than just the Pesah lamb was sacrificed during the days of Unleavened Bread.¹⁰ There were grain, cattle, and a goat sacrificed, plus the daily offerings. The sacrifices during unleavened bread were to come from the flocks or the herds. If we examined just the English

8 Buttrick, George A., ed. The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. 3, K-Q, Abingdon, Nashville, Tenn. 1962, p. 668

9 Deut. 16:2-4

10 Numbers 28:19-25

translation of Deuteronomy 16:2, we might be fooled into thinking this verse referred to just the *pesah* sacrifice because lambs come in flocks and goats come in herds. Exodus 12:5 stated that the Passover (*pesah*) sacrifice could be either a lamb or a goat, therefore an examination of just the English translation would appear to leave no doubt that Deuteronomy 16:2 is referring to the Passover sacrifice. But the Hebrew word for flock is *tsone*, which generically means little cows while the word for herd is *baqar*, which means big cows. According to Harris et al., “Baqar is distinguished from the “flock” which denotes small cattle such as sheep and goats. Tsone and baqar often denote all domesticated animals. Behema also refers to livestock generally including sheep and goats.”¹¹ Thus even a cursory examination of Deuteronomy 16:2 in the original language shows that the sacrifices at Passover season must come from the sheep and goats and cows and oxen. Deut. 16:2 and the exegesis of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 by Keil and Delitzsch below leaves little doubt Deuteronomy 16:1-4 is referring to the entire spring festival season, the first of the three pilgrimage feasts, usually called the days of Unleavened Bread

At this feast they were to slay sheep and oxen to the Lord for the Passover, at the place, etc. In ver. 2, as in ver. 1, the word “Passover” is employed in a broader sense, and includes not only the paschal lamb, but the paschal sacrifices generally, which the Rabbins embrace under the common name of chagiga; not the burnt offerings and sin-offerings, however, prescribed in Num. 29:19-26, but all the sacrifices that were slain at the feast of the Passover (i.e. during the seven days of the Mazzoth, which are included under the name of pascha) for the purpose of holding sacrificial meals. This is evident from the expression “of the flock and the herd;” as it expressly laid down, that only a *pesah*, i.e. animal of the sheep or goats, was to be slain for the paschal meal on the fourteenth of the month in the evening, and an ox was never slaughtered in the place of the lamb. But if any doubt could exist upon this point, it would be completely set aside by ver. 3: “Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it: seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith.” As the “therewith” cannot possibly refer to anything else than the “Passover” in ver. 2, it is distinctly stated that the slaughtering and eating of the Passover was to last seven days, whereas the Passover lamb was to be slain and consumed in the evening of the fourteenth of Abib (Ex. 12:10)... On account of the importance of the unleavened bread as a symbolical shadowing forth of the significance of the Passover, as the feast of the renewal and sanctification of the life of Israel, Moses repeats in the ver. 4 two of the points in the law of the feast: first of all the one laid down in Ex. 13:7, that no leaven was to be seen in the land during the seven days; and secondly, the one in Ex. 23:18 and 34:25, that none of the flesh of the paschal lamb was to be left till the next morning, in the order that all corruption might be kept at a distance from the paschal food. ... He then once more fixes the time and place for keeping the Passover (the former according to Ex. 12:6 and Lev. 23:5, etc), and adds in ver. 7 the express regulation, that not only the slaughtering and sacrificing, but the roasting and eating of the paschal lamb were to take place at the sanctuary, and that the next morning they could turn and go back home.”¹²

Scholars agree that Deuteronomy 16:2-4 is referring to the Passover season, the generic time of year the people left Egypt and the general time of the feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread, which encompassed the entirety of the feast season. This would have included choosing the lamb

11 Harris, Laird, Archer, Gleason, and Waltke, Bruce, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, p. 124

12 Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1 The Pentateuch, p. 374-5

on the 10th of Nisan. After referring to the entire feast as the Passover, Deuteronomy 16 continues, “Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast (*bashal*) and eat it in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.”¹³ As Keil and Delitzsch write verses 5-7 can only be referring to the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb.

This rule contains a new feature, which Moses prescribes with reference to the keeping of the Passover in the land of Canaan, and by which he modifies the instructions for the first Passover in Egypt, to suit the altered circumstances. In Egypt, when Israel was not yet raised into the nation of Jehovah, and had as yet no sanctuary and no common altar, the different houses were to cease, and they were both to take place at the sanctuary before the Lord, as was the case with the feast of Passover at Sinai (Num. 9:1-5). Thus the smearing of the door-posts with the blood was tacitly abolished, since the blood was to be sprinkled upon the altar as sacrificial blood, as it had already been at Sinai. The expression ‘to thy tents,’ for going ‘home,’ points to the time when Israel was still dwelling in tents, and had not as yet secured any fixed abodes and houses in Canaan, although this expression was retained at a still later time (e.g. 1 Sam. 13.2, 2 Sam. 19:9, etc.). The going home in the morning after the paschal meal is not to be understood as signifying as return to their homes in the different towns of the land.¹⁴

Keil and Delitzsch accurately discern Deuteronomy 16:5-7 refers to the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb, the Passover. This sacrifice was to be done at the season or general time frame they came forth out of Egypt, the time referred to just six verses earlier in Deuteronomy 16:1, the sacrifice done when God freed Israel by protecting them during the night. There was only one sacrifice in Egypt when Israel was brought out of Egypt and that was the *Pesah* lamb. This continues the pattern of having the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb being tied into the seven days of Unleavened Bread, the exodus from the bondage of Egypt and the sin Egypt theologically represents for Christians today.

The word translated roasted in Deuteronomy 16:7 in the King James is *bashal*, whereas the Hebrew word used for the cooking method for the Passover in Exodus 12:8-9 is *tsaliy*. Early 14th proponents have dwelt on the fact that different words are used in these verses because Deuteronomy 16:6 clearly states this Passover sacrifice has to be made at the end of the 14th. If the *pesah* lamb is being referred to in Deuteronomy 16:5-7, as almost all scholars contend, there could be no doubt the timing of the Passover sacrifice has always been performed late on the 14th of Nisan, flowing into Unleavened Bread on the 15th. This would agree with the pattern of the Passovers of righteous king Hezekiah and righteous king Josiah. Perhaps this is why early 14th proponents write, “However, the word ‘roast’ is not a correct translation of the Hebrew text.”¹⁵ Early 14th proponents have pointed out that *bashal* can be translated as boil and since the *Pesah* lamb or goat must be roasted, they try to explain away Deuteronomy 16:5-

13 Deut. 16:5-7

14 Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1 The Pentateuch, p. 376

15 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 169

7 by stating something like, “Since these sacrifices can be boiled, then all of Deuteronomy 16:1-8 must be referring to Unleavened Bread and never refers to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.” Harris et al. write, “In the more than a dozen places where *bashal* is used to describe the preparation of cakes or animals in the sacrificial system, it can describe any kind of cooking procedure: ‘baking’ (Num. 11:8), ‘roasting’ (Deut 16:7, 2 Chron. 35:13) or ‘boiling’ (Lev 8:31; Ezk 46:20, 24). This does not mean that the word is used indiscriminately. The passover must be roasted (*bashal*) with fire (2 Chron 35:13), but the holy offerings should be boiled (*bashal*) in pots. Even clearer distinction is made in Ex 12:9 where boiling in water (*bashal*) is contrasted with roasting with fire (*sala*), which is required for the Passover.”¹⁶ As Harris points out about Exodus 12:9, *bashal* can be a cooking method with or without water. Therefore the Hebrew word *bashal* means to cook and not simply to boil.

The reasoning behind the negation of Deuteronomy 16 ever referring to the *pesah* lamb by limiting the definition of *bashal* is suspect at best. 2 Chronicles 35:13 states, “And they roasted (*bashal*) the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod (*bashal*) they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people.”¹⁷ The Passover lamb was cooked (*bashal*) one way, but all the other holy day offerings were cooked (*bashal*) in pots and pans so they could be served more quickly. 2 Chronicles 35:13 should leave no doubt that *bashal* should be translated as cooked and not boiled.

However, Mr. Coulter writes “a commentary notation states that *bashal* ‘usually denotes’ cooking. This commentary note cleverly masks the mistranslation of *bashal* as ‘roasts.’ Whether the mistranslation was done deliberately or by oversight gives the appearance that this passage applies to the sacrifice of the Passover lambs.”¹⁸ Again, scholars who understand Hebrew and recognize that scripture defines *bashal* generically as cooking are dismissed as not just being incorrect, but as likely deliberately misleading their readers. The most likely reason for Mr. Coulter dismissing sound scholarship in favor of “special knowledge” is because he wants his readers to believe, “since *bashal*, the Hebrew word for ‘boil,’ is used in Deuteronomy 16:7, the command CANNOT be referring to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.”¹⁹ Apparently, unless you have been bestowed with “special knowledge” that allows you to translate Hebrew without being able to speak the language, *bashal* is not the Hebrew word for boil, but for cooking. Therefore Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents “special knowledge” about *bashal* are simply incorrect when they state Deuteronomy 16:7 cannot be referring to the Passover sacrifice.

As further proof, *bashal* is used in Exodus 12:9 as a prohibited cooking method of the Passover, but what is prohibited is *bashal* in water (*bashal mayim*). Thus you could only cook (*bashal*) the *pesah* lamb over an open fire. Ex. 12:9, where the ordinance of the Passover was first given, agrees with 2 Chronicles 35:13 that the most logical definition of *bashal* is cooking by any method. *Bashal* may refer to boiling, cooking, roasting, or allowing it to ripen. The definition of *bashal* depends on the context of how the food must be prepared. Since scholars agree that

16 Harris, Laird, Archer, Gleason, and Waltke, Bruce, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1, p 124

17 2 Chron. 35:13

18 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 169

19 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 169

the lamb in Deuteronomy 16:5-7 is the *pesah* lamb, they translate the cooking method as roasting. Trying to take a word that means cook and force it to mean boiling and boiling only is very poor scholarship. But Deuteronomy 16:1-8 are very troubling verses for early 14th proponents because they harmonize perfectly with the late 14th Passovers of Joshua, Hezekiah and Josiah. They also harmonize exactly with the temple centered sacrifice of the *pesah* Numbers 28:16, 2 Chronicles 30 and 35, as well as Ezra 6.

Twelve Points why Deuteronomy 16:1-8 does not refer to the Passover?

The premise that *bashal* must mean to boil and can only mean to boil, which scholars and scripture show to be incorrect, is actually the strongest of Mr. Coulter's 12 points on why Deuteronomy 16:1-8 cannot have any reference to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and it is obviously erroneous. Other supposed proofs presented are that the Passover means passing over and not the lamb, therefore Deuteronomy 16:1-8 supposedly cannot be referring to the Passover. As this book has shown, this definition ignores that Passover (*pesah*) is a noun and that pass over is a verb and in the original Hebrew, as well as other languages, you would never confuse pass over (*pasah*) for Passover (*pesah*).²⁰

Another supposed proof, again using circular logic rather than letting scripture interpret itself, is the time for the sacrifice of the Passover in Deuteronomy 16:6 is listed at the end of the day, *ba erev*, yet supposedly *ben ha arbayim* can only be at the beginning of the day. This ignores the fact that Joshua 5:10 agrees with Deut 16:6 that the Passover occurred at *ba erev*. This convoluted, circular logic by early 14th proponents states the Passover had to be at the beginning of the 14th of the first month because of their interpretation of Exodus 16, which allows them to exclude multiple data points that disagrees with their hypothesis.²¹ The intellectually dishonesty of excluding data points that disagree with your hypothesis speaks for itself, especially when those data points are totally integrated. Again, if you let the entirety of scripture define itself, it depicts the Passover (*pesah*) being sacrificed at either *ba erev* or at *ben ha arbayim*, both of which must take place at the end of the day.

Exodus by Night?

Early 14th proponent's scholarship is replete with a pattern of picking one verse upon which to perform an eisegesis in support of their early 14th hypothesis while denigrating clear scriptures from the same passage because it does not agree with their theory. As shown earlier in this chapter, creating a definition of the Hebrew word *bashal* that disagrees with its biblical usage is a prime example of this kind of scholarship. Hopefully Christians will read complete thoughts rather than picking out one scripture here and part of another scripture there and then choosing to accept a definition for a Hebrew word that no other scholar believes is correct. Signs of Christians questioning their teachers when they follow this pattern of supposed scholarship are thankfully beginning to appear. Although teachers who create this type of scholarship may detest this change, it will build an individual's relationship with God because he or she is doing more than paying and obeying.

²⁰ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 166-171

²¹ Ibid.

Mr. Coulter writes about Deuteronomy 16:1-8, “Since this study requires a technical analysis, more than one reading may be required to completely understand the material that is presented, especially if the reader is not familiar with the Old Testament passages that are explained in this chapter.”²² Because Deuteronomy 16:5-7 agrees with Joshua 5:10 and the Passovers of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 that the Passover was sacrificed late on the 14th, Mr. Coulter suggests that “more than one reading may be required to completely understand the material that is presented.”²³ This follows the pattern of early 14th proponents asking their followers to ignore and disregard scriptures that clearly show the timing of the Passover sacrifice occurring late on the 14th in favor of scriptures that can be distorted to supposedly support an early 14th hypothesis.

Every Passover sacrifice depicted in scripture once Israel entered the Promised Land was centered at the sanctuary. Deuteronomy 16:5-7 validates the practice of a late 14th, temple-centered Passover. To combat yet another clear scriptural example of the Passover sacrifice being performed on the later portions of the 14th, early 14th proponents have to take the drastic step teaching that when God, through the hand of Moses, wrote and ratified the suzerain contract of Deuteronomy, He left out any mention of the Passover lamb. Early 14th proponents teach the sacrifice that foreshadowed the Messiah’s sacrifice was not important enough to be mentioned in the official covenant between God and His called out people, but they are mistaken.

Numbers 33:3, Leaving on the 15th

The entire book of Deuteronomy is not just a review of God’s covenant with the nation of Israel but is also an official treaty, in the form of a suzerain treaty, made between a king, in this case YHVH, the suzerain, and his vassals, the Israelites. This treaty defined the responsibilities of both parties. The vassals could accept the contract or not, but they did not have the power to edit or change it. Moses wrote the terms of this contract down and the nation of Israel ratified this contract in Deuteronomy 31. Deuteronomy 16:1-8 reviews the covenant obligations required of the Israelites during Passover season, which obviously included sacrificing the Passover.

In contrast, the early verses of Numbers 33 are also a review, but of the exodus from Egypt. Numbers 33:3 states, “And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.”²⁴ Early 14th proponent’s use this verse to support their theory that the Passover (*pesah* and *pasah*) occurred one full day before the nation of Israel left Egypt. As the reader should suspect, it actually depicts the Israelites starting the Exodus mere hours after the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the protection of God.

Numbers 33 states that the Israelites departed from Rameses on the 15th in the sight of all the Egyptians, while the Egyptians were burying their dead.²⁵ There are also numerous verses that

22 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 159

23 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 159

24 Num. 33:3

25 Num 33:3-5

state the Israelites left Egypt on a day. Some late 14th proponents have used verses like Exodus 12:17, 41, 51, 13:3, and Deuteronomy 16:3 to combat an early 14th interpretation of Deuteronomy 16:1 that supposedly portrays the Israelites leaving Egypt at night. These late 14th proponents mistakenly insist the Israelites left very early on the morning of the 15th while it was still dark.²⁶ *Yom*, the Hebrew word for day, can mean either a 24 hour period or daylight.²⁷ Harris' definition of *yom* shows not only great latitude for how to define *yom*, but gives even more insight into how the Israelites defined time.

Our word (*ed. note, yom*) is the 'most important concept of time in the OT by which a point of time as well as a sphere of time can be expressed.' The word is also common in Ugaritic. It can denote : 1. The period of light as contrasted with the period of darkness.), 2. The period of twenty-four hours, 3. A general vague "time," 4. A point of time, 5. A year (in the plural; 1 Sam 27:7, Ex. 13:10, etc.)²⁸

Although *yom* has many meanings, in the previous verses that state Israel left on the day of the 15th, day is almost certainly referring to an approximate 24 hour period and cannot be used to support an exodus by daylight. However, as will be shown, in like manner, Deuteronomy 16:1 also does not state the Israelites left Egypt during the night. A harmonization of Deuteronomy 16:1 and Numbers 33:3 is required because Numbers 33:3 states Israel departed on the morrow after the Passover while Deuteronomy 16:1 states Israel was brought out of Egypt by night. They also claim the morrow after the Passover in Numbers 33:3 is the night portion of the 15th of Nisan. Early 14th proponents harmonize these scriptures by inserting a twelve hour period of daylight from the time Israel supposedly began to leave their abodes in Egypt until they supposedly marched from the city of Rameses at night. This timing is pivotal for their hypothesis. Early 14th proponents argue that morrow can only mean tomorrow, 24 or more hours later and that the phrase brought out of Egypt means left Egypt, but neither definition is supported in scripture.

Early 14th proponents teach the Passover is a twenty-four hour period and a day-long memorial that proceeds the seven days of Unleavened Bread. They believe the Passover lasts an entire day because they believe the Passover is the action God took to protect Israel while the destroyer killed the first born in Egypt. Their theology make the Passover lamb almost a cursory part of the Passover memorial, although when directly confronted about this, Mr. Coulter says that analysis is inaccurate. Scripture is very clear the destroyer did his work during the middle of the night. Early 14th proponents claim Numbers 33:3 proves the Passover occurred around the middle of the night on the 14th, the day before the Israelites supposedly left. Of course this claim mandates the lamb had to be sacrificed just after the 13th ended and it must therefore have been totally consumed by the morning of the 14th.²⁹ Both early and late 14th proponents have focused on the night in Deuteronomy 16:1 rather than focus on the power of God depicted in this verse. Harmonizing the morrow after the Passover³⁰ and being brought out by night³¹ do not require semantic word play if we allow the bible interpret itself.

26 Raines, Juan, p. 1-2

27 Strong's 3117, Gesenius, *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 341-2

28 Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, *yom*

29 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 17-23

30 Num. 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

31 Deut. 16:1 Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib

Morrow- *mohorat* (Heb), *aurion* (Grk)

Day is an evening and a morning

What does Numbers 33:3 mean by the morrow after the Passover? An examination of what a day entailed for Israel is revealing. Some scholars and recent COG writers contend ancient Israel reckoned days from morning till morning.³² There are numerous verses that disagree with that analysis. Genesis 1 clearly and repeatedly states that a day consisted of an evening and morning, with evening coming before morning.³³ From the beginning of scripture a day was an evening and a morning, with the evening starting the day.

Stephen Hawking explains in *A Brief History of Time* that before there was a physical creation there was no time as we know it or understand it. We are told the first act of God's creation was night and day, which did not exist on the Earth at that time.³⁴ The chronology of days is repeated in Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23 and 31 with the night always proceeding the day. Attempting to use Genesis 1 to claim the starting point for a day in ancient Israel was sunrise ignores the fact that the order in the original Hebrew poem depicts night occurring before daylight on any given day. Remember, as shown earlier, poetry was written to help memorize important events.

Throughout scripture night comes before day, as a harmonization of Exodus 12:18 with Leviticus 23:6 reveals. However liberal scholars disagree because they do not believe scripture is God breathed.³⁵ The feast of Unleavened Bread commenced on the 14th at even and continued until the 21st at even.³⁶ Scripture also states, "And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread."³⁷ A harmonization of these two verses depicts the seven day period of unleavened bread commenced just after the 14th day of Nisan ended and ceased at the end of the 21st day of the first month. The 10th day of the seventh month, Tishri, was the Day of Atonement.³⁸ When does the 10th day commence? Scripture states, "in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath."³⁹ The festival, or fast day, of Atonement, was a day-long period that started just after the daylight portion of the 9th ended God's called out people to afflict their souls until the 11th commenced. Some scholars have tried to contend that the time span for the Day of Atonement does not match the normal pattern of days in scripture, but their arguments are completely unconvincing, especially after examining when the days of Unleavened Bread started.

the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

32 Beckwith, *Days and Times*

33 Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31

34 Gen. 1:5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

35 2 Tim. 3:16 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

36 Ex. 12:18 In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

37 Lev 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

38 Lev. 23:27 Also on the tenth *day* of this seventh month *there shall be* a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

39 Lev. 23:32

The Morrow

Since the day starts and ends at evening, what is the morrow after a day? “The most interesting feature about this feminine noun (*ed. note, mohorat*) is that ‘on the morrow of’ means after (Lev: 23:11, 15, 16; Num. 33:3, Josh 5:11).”⁴⁰ Morrow can simply be the time after something occurred. So the morrow after an evening can be the daylight portion of the same day for the Israelites. This is not to suggest that morrow is always part of the same day. It is true there are many instances of morrow meaning the next day, sometimes 24 or more hours later. Some of the verses where morrow is the next day are:

But if the sacrifice of his offering be a vow, or a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow (*mochorath*) also the remainder of it shall be eaten.⁴¹

And ye shall count unto you from the morrow (*mochorath*) after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow (*mochorath*) after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.⁴²

And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow (*mochorath*), and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.⁴³

And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow (*mochorath*) behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow (*mochorath*) morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.⁴⁴

Therefore the men of Jabesh said, Tomorrow (*machar*) we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you. And it was so on the morrow (*mochorath*), that Saul put the people in three companies; and they came into the midst of the host in the morning watch, and slew the Ammonites until the heat of the day: and it came to pass, that they which remained were scattered, so that two of them were not left together.⁴⁵

And the morrow (*aurion*) after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.⁴⁶

Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. Tomorrow (*aurion*), said he, thou shalt hear him. And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus’ commandment Paul was brought forth.⁴⁷

40 Laird et al, vol 1. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, p. 500

41 Lev. 7:16

42 Lev. 23:15-6

43 Judg. 6:38

44 1 Sam. 5:3-4

45 1 Sam. 11:10-1

46 Acts 10:24

47 Acts 25:22-3

However, morrow can also mean part of the same day when it is already evening and morrow refers to the day light portion of the day following the dark of night. The morrow after a night time event is part of the same day in Numbers 11:32. “And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next (*mochorath*) day (*yom*), and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.”⁴⁸

Morrow being the of the same day after an evening event is also depicted with Lot’s daughters after the destruction of Sodom in Genesis 19. “And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow (*mochorath*) that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight (*‘emesh*) 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.”⁴⁹ The Hebrew word for yesternight is *‘emesh*.⁵⁰ “It denotes the latter part of the previous natural day, not the conventional, i.e. yesterday evening and night; whence it is used to denote evening and night in general, just as words which signify tomorrow are often applied to the morning.”⁵¹ Many heated discussions with early 14th proponents has revealed that they will only accept “the next day, the day after”⁵² as a definition of morrow. However, scripture shows that the morrow (*mochorath*) after an evening event is part of the same day. Early 14th proponents even ignore the fact Gesenius, one of their commonly used theological dictionaries, also states the morrow can and often is part of the same day when it is applied to morning or daylight following night.⁵³ Again, early 14th proponents simply reject any data or scripture that disagrees with their hypothesis.

Other examples of morrow being used as the daylight portion of the same day are:

And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve. And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.⁵⁴

And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.⁵⁵

It was evening and on the morrow after the evening, the daylight portion of the same day, Christ left Bethany. Again, the morning after an evening event is the morrow. Of course Greek words do not authoritatively define the meaning of Hebrew words translated into the same

48 Num. 11:32

49 Gen. 19: 33-4

50 Strong’s 570

51 Gesenius, *Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 62

52 Gesenius, p. 466

53 Gesenius, p. 62

54 Mark 11:11-2

55 Acts 4:3-5

English words. But the Greek does allow us to see that scholars translator the daylight portion after the evening hours of the same day as morrow, just as they did in the Hebrew.

Even Josephus referred to the daylight portion of the day after the Passover was eaten as the next day. “Josephus records the law that the flesh of the Passover (*pesah*) is to be wholly consumed during the night and none of it left till morning (Ex: 12:8-10. 34:25, Dt. 16:4). The way Josephus puts it is that none is left ‘till the next day.’ (Antiquities 3:10:5)”⁵⁶ Beckwith masterfully dispels the scholarly notion that Josephus’ statement supports a theory that Israel started days at sunrise and also shows that it was common to refer to the daylight portion of the 15th of Nisan as the morrow after the Passover, which was eaten on the night portion of the 15th. Josephus believed and wrote that the Passover (*pesah*) was sacrificed late on the 14th, was eaten on the night of the 15th, and the remnants of the lamb or goat had to be burned before the morrow, the daylight portion of the same day that Passover was eaten. Josephus’ definition of morrow after the Passover was the daylight portion of same day the *pesah* was eaten.

A major part of the Passover timing debate in the churches of God is whether the Israelites waited for an entire daylight period to elapse, 12 hours after they had burned the remains of the *Pesah* lamb, before they began their exodus from the vicinity of the city of Rameses or if they left the region of Rameses shortly after the first Passover (*pesah*) lamb was devoured by flame. According to Josephus and to scriptural definition of morrow (*mohorat*), the Israelites did not have to wait 12 hours to leave on the morrow after the Passover. The morrow after the Passover in Numbers 33:3 was the morning after a night time event. Therefore God’s protection of Israel while they ate the *pesah* sacrifice occurred on the evening of the 15th of Nisan because Israel began the Exodus on the 15th of Nisan, the morrow after eating the Passover.⁵⁷

Morrow, *mochorath* in the Hebrew and *aurion* in the Greek, are translated as tomorrow because they match the definition of their English equivalents. The context of how these words are used must be examined to determine exactly what they means. If you were leaving a friend’s house after midnight and you say, “I’ll see you tomorrow,” you are not saying that a complete 24 hour period must pass. You are saying that you will see the person on the daylight portion of the same day. The Passover was a night time event and the daylight portion of the day following it could have been and was the morrow after the Passover. The morrow after the Passover in Numbers 33:3 is the daylight portion of the 15th of Nisan, a few hours after the evening the LORD passed over (*pasah*) Israel, which was the evening when the Israelites ate the *pesah*. Understanding of how important the *pesah* lamb was to God and his plan makes an understanding of the timing of the Passover far easier to grasp. Those who contend the Passover is an action of God to facilitate their early 14th Passover theory rather than using the scriptural definition of the Passover being the sacrifice lamb are truly underestimating the importance of Christ in the plan of God.

So what does Deut. 16:1 mean that God brought Israel out of Egypt by night if Numbers 33:3 states the Exodus started early on the daylight portion of the 15th of Nisan? They must harmonize because scripture states, “If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken.”

⁵⁶ Beckwith, Roger, *The Day, it divisions and limits in Biblical thought*, Evangelical Quarterly Vol. 43, 1971, p. 225

⁵⁷ Num. 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

Brought (*yasa*) out of Egypt by the Mighty Hand of God

A more through examination of Deuteronomy 16:1 shows that Israel was brought out of Egypt by night. It does not state the Israelites started the exodus at night or that they left Egypt at night, as early 14th proponents theorize.⁵⁸ Early 14th proponents miss the meaning of Deuteronomy 16:1, as do many late 14th proponents who theorize that Israel started the Exodus by leaving their abodes shortly before the sunrise of the 15th, while it was supposedly still night.

Attempting to prove their respective points on the timing of the original Passover early and many late 14th proponents have by and large missed the glory of God being revealed in Deuteronomy 16:1. Israel was brought out of Egypt in the middle of the night when the final plague struck down the first born while God protected the Israelites, which caused Pharaoh to finally set them free. Notice how scripture stresses it was God who brought, the Hebrew word *yasa*, the Israelites of Egypt . “Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth (*yasa*) out of Egypt by night.”⁵⁹ Exodus 12:42 agrees when it states, “It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them (*yasa*) out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.” How was the nation of Israel brought out of Egypt? Exodus 13 states, “And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out (*yasa*) from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. . . . And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD’S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out (*yasa*) of Egypt.”⁶⁰ Moses goes on to tell the Israelites “And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out (*yasa*) from Egypt, from the house of bondage: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out (*yasa*) of Egypt.”⁶¹ The Israelites were brought out of Egypt by God by night when the destroyer passed over (*‘abar*) over Egypt and the Eternal protected (*pasah*) Israel. This is confirmed by the definition of Hebrew word *yasa*⁶² and its usage throughout the exodus account in scripture. As with most verbs, *yasa* can have a multitude of meanings. Harris states,

Yasa appears over a thousand times in the Qal and Hiphil, but only 5 times in the Hophal. The Hiphil has the usual causative meaning “cause to go out, bring out, lead out.” ASV and RSV are similar.

58 Deut. 16:1 Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

59 Deut. 16:1

60 Ex. 13:3, 9

61 Ex 13:14-6

62 Strong’s 3318

The basic notion of *yasa* is “to go out,” it is used literally of going out from a particular locality or from the presence of a person. It is used of nature, i.e. water out of a rock, sun rising out of the east, etc. For our purposes we shall note the great exodus event which forms the major focus of the theological attention in the OT. The Hiphil with its causative form is used extensively. Moses is the human element in bringing the people of God out of Egypt (e.g. Ex 3:10ff.; 14:11) Aaron is mentioned with Moses in Ex. 6:13, 26f. But far greater emphasis is given to Yahweh, the Lord God who is involved in the great act of redemption from Egypt. Moses himself puts the emphasis on God’s work in Ex. 13:3 as he addresses the people of God on the memorable day, “Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the Lord brought you out from this place.” The historical event was recorded in 12:50f. Moses reiterates four times the mighty power of God in the exodus redemption so as to underline the revelation which this great miracle proclaimed. (Cf. 13:3, 9, 14, 16) Both the consecration of the first born and the passover feast will serve as constant reminders. Further, in the inscription of the Sinaitic covenant, all that need be said by way of historical prologue to identify the benevolent activity of the great King is to refer to this saving action: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”⁶³

The book of Deuteronomy stresses that what is to be much observed at Passover time is not how or when Israel marched out of Egypt, but is saving power of God. The miracle being memorialized was God bringing (*yasa*) the nation of Israel out of Egypt, cumulating with the 10th and final plague. This miracle was symbolized and to be memorialized through the ages with the sacrifice of an unblemished lamb, followed by seven days of unleavened bread. This lamb and this miracle pointed to the real *pesah*, Jesus the Messiah, and the miracle of being able to walk with God and later being able to enter into covenant with Him.

Deuteronomy was both a review of God’s redemption and a call to covenant with the creator of the universe. God ordered Moses to write down and have this teaching, this treaty between God and His people, read to the nation of Israel every seven years.⁶⁴ After being freed from Egypt, the Israelites worshiped false Gods at the base of Sinai and perhaps in the desert.⁶⁵ They didn’t even circumcise their children while they marched through the desert for 40 years.⁶⁶ The context of Deuteronomy 16 is a contractual review of the three annual pilgrimage feasts of God. Deuteronomy 16:1-8 lists a general overview of the entire season of Passover because the details are recorded in other places.⁶⁷ God’s protection, his *pasah*, came at night when God redeemed the first born of Israel. The Passover sacrifice, the 10th and final plague, was the instrument God used to free Israel and they began their exodus from Egypt on the 15th of Nisan, the morrow after the Passover.⁶⁸ The Israelites may have left their houses at 3 or 4 in the morn-

63 Harris, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, *yasa*

64 Deut. 31:9-10

65 Acts 7:40-43

66 Joshua 5:5-7 And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way

67 Ex. 12, Lev. 23, Num 28, etc.

68 Num 33:3

ing or at 6 or 7 a.m. The Bible states Moses told the Israelites not to leave their abode until morning, well after the destroyer had finished his work, which they knew would occur during the middle of the night.⁶⁹ The exact timing of when the Israelites left their abodes in Egypt can be debated, but Deuteronomy 16:1 has nothing to do with that timing and any attempt to force this verse to have something to do with the timing of the Exodus misses the whole point of Deuteronomy 16:1. Deuteronomy 16:1 refers to God's power, His gift of protection from the 10th and final plague. It is not about the nation of Israel leaving the country of Egypt.

A word study of the Hebrew word *yasa*, often translated brought out, shows the general meaning is to bring out or deliver. Included below are a few of the scriptures delineating how God brought Israel out of Egypt by night.

Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.⁷⁰

Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was shown, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him. Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he showed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out (*yasa*) in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt.⁷¹

I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.⁷²

And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out (*yasa*) thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.⁷³

Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.⁷⁴

Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the LORD brought us out (*yasa*) of Egypt with a mighty hand: And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes.⁷⁵

The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out (*yasa*): so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.⁷⁶

69 Ex. 11:4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

70 Ps. 89:13

71 Deut. 4:34-7

72 Deut. 5:6

73 Deut. 5:15

74 Deut. 6:12

75 Deut. 6:21-2

76 Deut. 7:19

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.⁷⁷

I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out (*yasa*) of Egypt with a mighty hand.⁷⁸

Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out (*yasa*) by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm.⁷⁹

And know ye this day: for I speak not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his stretched out arm, And his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land.⁸⁰

And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.⁸¹

And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, which brought thee out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.⁸²

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out (*yasa*) of Egypt by night.⁸³

Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.⁸⁴

But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out (*yasa*) of Egypt.⁸⁵

And the LORD brought us forth out (*yasa*) of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders.⁸⁶

Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt.⁸⁷

77 Deut. 8:14

78 Deut. 9:26

79 Deut. 9:29

80 Deut. 11:2-3 Showing it was God's great hand that brought Israel out, not their own power

81 Deut. 13:5

82 Deut. 13:10

83 Deut. 16:1

84 Deut. 16:3

85 Deut. 16:6

86 Deut. 26:8

87 Deut. 29:25

I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out (*yasa*) of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.⁸⁸

Deuteronomy reminds the Israelites over and over again that God brought them out of Egypt. Deut. 16:1 is just part of the pattern of Moses, and thus God, reminding the Israelites to respect God's power, which through the 10th and final plague freed them from Egypt so they could walk with God and later enter His covenant. Deuteronomy 16:1 is not about when the Israelites began walking. God killed the first born of Egypt by using the destroyer and He protected (*pasah*) the first born of Israel at night. God brought Israel out of Egypt with His might, His outstretched arm, at night. Because Israel had seen the power of the living God and agreed to follow Him when He brought them out, Moses again reminds the nation that they must observe the three pilgrimage feasts described in Deuteronomy 16. The idea that the Passover lamb is not mentioned in this covenant treaty is absurd.

The Passover (*pesah*) sacrifice is placed at the center of the Passover season by Moses when he writes, "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. And thou shalt roast and eat *it* in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents."⁸⁹ Because the timing and location of the Passover (*pesah*) sacrifice mentioned in Deuteronomy 16:5-7 disagrees with the early 14th proponents hypothesis, they create their errant private translation of scripture, which inadvertently teach that the Passover lamb is not an active part of the suzerain covenant between God and Israel. By stressing that the Passover is not the lamb and the Passover sacrifice is not a vital part of the suzerain covenant between God and Israel, early 14th proponents have inadvertently vastly diminished the importance of the Passover sacrifice, which also diminishes the significance of the sacrifice of the true *pesah* and its role in the New Covenant between us and God.

Did Israel leave in Haste?

The Bible does not insinuate the Israelites congregated in or near the city of Rameses to gather the spoils of Egypt and get organized so they could march out the next day by night. The bible states Israel ate the *pesah* in haste and they were dressed to travel.⁹⁰ The Egyptians were panicking and doing all they could to get the Israelites to leave as soon as possible.⁹¹ The Israelites had already spoiled the Egyptians.⁹² Most modern translations have the spoiling of Exodus 12:35

88 Exod. 20:2

89 Deut. 16:5-7

90 Ex. 12:11

91 Ex. 12:33-4

92 Exod. 3:21-2 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty: But every woman shall borrow of her neighbor, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

Ex. 11:2-3 Now speak in the ears of the people, and let them ask, each man from his neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold. And Jehovah gave favor in the eyes of the Egyptians toward the people. And the man Moses was

being done in the past tense, but it is possible that as the Israelites marched out of Egypt, they gathered even more material goods.

However, the Israelites had been preparing for the exodus for months while the first nine plagues ravaged Egypt. We know for certain God told Moses and Aaron how to prepare the *pesah* lamb at the beginning of Nisan, two weeks before Passover. Josephus states the Israelites used these two weeks to prepare in *Antiquities*.⁹³ Moses told the elders to spread the word to the people about the Passover and they did. The lamb was taken into the house on the 10th day of the first month, four days before it was sacrificed. Egypt was in ruins from the previous nine plagues and the Israelites were all congregated in their homes in their Egyptian homeland of Goshen, which was also called Rameses. The Israelites may not have had much faith, but they had seen miracles enough through the nine plagues to bolster anyone's faith.

The Israelites left Rameses/Goshen in an immense hurry. The thousand upon thousands of people that began their trek out of Egypt on the 15th of Nisan would not have gathered in the city of Rameses. Exactly how Israel was organized during the initial Exodus is not described in the Bible. They probably left in tribes and clans, which would have been how their ancestral homes in Egypt were organized, but who led these tribes and how is not described because it is not important. We do know that they were not officially organized into captains of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens until weeks after they left Egypt.⁹⁴ We also know that the order of the camp and how to march was not set until more than a year later.⁹⁵

It may be interesting to speculate exactly how Israel was organized when they left Egypt, but it is not appropriate to build doctrine upon speculation that has no biblical basis. It is just as inappropriate to add extra time to the Exodus account for the organizing of the people that is not mentioned in the bible nor in extra-biblical sources. The hypothesis put forward by early 14th proponents that the Israelites spent an entire day organizing does not properly take into account the scriptural account of Israel's exodus from Egypt. As shocking as this may sound to those that still envision a Charlton Heston-like Moses, it was not Moses that led the Israelites out of Egypt. God led them out with the pillar of cloud during the day and the pillar of fire at night.⁹⁶ The people were to keep their eyes upon and follow God, not any man, as they marched out of Egypt towards the Promised Land. There is not much organization needed to follow the pillar of God away from an enemy that has enslaved you. Three and a half millennia later we are still supposed to keep our eyes upon God as He guides us to the promised rest, even if we have to trek through the wilderness to get there.

very great in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of the servants of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of the people.

93 Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 2 Chapter 14, section 6

94 Ex 18:21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

95 Numbers 2

96 Ex. 13:21-2 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

The theory that Israel spent a whole day spoiling the Egyptians and getting organized just so they could start their journey at night is not logical because the Bible builds a sense of urgency around the Exodus from Egypt, only to supposedly have the Israelites wait in Egypt for a day while they were organizing and ignoring pillar of cloud waiting to lead them. Given the number of times Pharaoh had changed his mind in the past, it would be illogical and even stupid for the Israelites to wait around Egypt for even a second after Pharaoh ordered them to leave. They were dressed and ready to leave Egypt while they ate the Passover.⁹⁷ The Egyptians were forcing them to leave as quickly as possible.⁹⁸ Starting the Exodus at night would also have made the logistics harder than starting by day. Even though there was a full moon at the time of the Exodus, would a great general like Moses, the conqueror of Ethiopia, start a forced march with hundreds of thousands of untrained civilians at night, even if they were following a pillar of fire? Of course the wisdom of God can seem like foolishness to man,⁹⁹ but scripture does not reveal any spiritual reason for the Exodus to begin under the adverse conditions of night nor does it depict such an exodus.

If the Passover did follow the early 14th scenario, a theory that is not substantiated by scripture, the Israelites would also have gone 36 hours without sleep as they began the exodus at night. They would not have been able to rest during the day because they were supposedly spoiling the Egyptians and getting organized.¹⁰⁰ Early 14th proponents answer to this problem is simply stating that God strengthened the Israelites so they could undergo this forced march with out sleep, a premise that is extra-biblical. Although scripture probably shows the Israelites underwent a number of forced marches that first week, this author doubts the wisdom of starting the Exodus with a force march.

Delaying the Israelites exodus from Egypt even raises serious theological issues. Christ is our Passover.¹⁰¹ The *pesab* lamb foreshadowed Jesus the Christ for the nation of Israel. The blood of both was shed as a sign by and for God's called out people. The Israelites shed the *pesab's* blood with their own hands and we have figuratively shed the blood of the messiah. Egypt literally held the nation of Israel in bondage and Egypt is used to symbolize the bondage of sin that Christians toil in before they are called. God used the first nine plagues, and His protection of Israel from the 4th through the 9th plague, to separate the people He was calling out.¹⁰² He did wonderful things for Israel, even if they did not understand Him or His ways yet.

The Israelites were told to stay in their homes, giving thanks while symbolically covered by the blood of the lamb, while death passed them by because of God's protection and redemption.

97 Ex. 12:11 And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it *is* the LORD'S passover.

98 Ex. 12:33 And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We *be* all dead *men*.

99 1 Cor. 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.
1 Cor. 1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

100 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, page 76-86

101 1 Cor. 5:7

102 Ex. 8:23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.

Each and every Christian is now covered by the blood of the lamb sacrificed from the foundation of the world, the ultimate thanks offering to God, and God protects and guides us. When God's deliverance came for Israel and for each of us, whether literally for Israel or for each individual Christian today, we are to accept that sacrifice and leave the life of bondage in Egypt. Israel knew they were being worked with and separated from the world around them, just as Christians know they are being called today. As Christians, once we have accepted Christ's shed blood and giving the proper thanks to God, we are not supposed to continue wallowing in sin, even to get organized. We are a new creature, following where God leads.¹⁰³ We are supposed to count the cost before taking the plunge into a new life,¹⁰⁴ just as Israel counted the cost through the plagues. The theory that Israel stayed in Egypt one minute longer than required is not only erroneous according to scripture, but hides the true meaning of the Exodus.

For Israel the exodus was not supposed to be centered on freedom from Egypt. Far more important than freedom, Israel was invited on a journey that would lead to a covenant of life and obedience with the God of creation. To facilitate this relationship, God led His called out people through the wilderness and to the Promised Land. A Christian's exodus from sin shows they have accepted the shed blood of their *pesah*, Jesus the Christ. This blood is the first, but crucial and thankful, step that allows Christians to begin their walk with God and to eventually enter into a covenant with God. This covenant mandates a walk with and towards God and the Promised Land of rest that is waiting for all of God's called out ones.¹⁰⁵ The Passover is not an action of God, but is the sacrificed lamb. Missing this point deeply diminishes the significance of Christ as our Passover. In like manner, building in extra time to leave Egypt diminishes how important it is to start on our path towards a covenant relationship with God as soon as God opens that opportunity to us.

The Exodus gave Israel freedom, but this was not the ends, only the means. Judaism today celebrates that freedom from Egypt at the Passover Seder, but it has by and large lost sight of God's purpose in granting that freedom. Being a special, called out people was not the purpose, but was the mechanism used to allow the people to serve God and their fellow man. The Exodus was supposed to lead the nation of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, but Israel fought God in the wilderness and refused to enter the Promised Land. We are supposed to leave the sin pictured by Egypt and enter into the Promised Land of a restful relationship with God, even if we must also pass through a wilderness first. Freedom from Egypt was required to be able to walk with and towards God for the nation of Israel. Similarly, we have been set free from our bondage to sin so we can now truly have a relationship with God. This relationship required the nation of Israel to honor the covenant they made with God once they were taught by Him and it requires us to honor our covenant with God. Staying in Egypt to supposedly get organized while making God wait in a pillar of cloud is not how God would have wanted to start that relationship and that is not how it happened.

103 2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

104 Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

105 Hebrews 3:18-4:11

The Passover of Exodus 12

The Passover of Exodus 12, an Exegesis

And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.¹

God is ordaining some general rules for a calendar, a method of time keeping for the nation of Israel. Egypt observed a solar calendar, thus God had to re-introduce a different way to keep track of time. The destruction of Egypt by wave after wave of plagues revealed the powerful hand of God not only to His called out people, but the entire world.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth. As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?²

The final and most powerful plague sent by the only true God was the destruction of the first born in Egypt. God ordered His people to mark themselves with the blood of a *pesah* lamb (or goat). The narrative of exodus 12 is centered on the lamb of God.

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening (*ben ha arbayim*).³

1 Ex. 12:1-2

2 Ex. 9:13-7

3 Ex. 12:3-6

The selection of the lamb is very important because the *pesah* foreshadowed Jesus the messiah. Some have overlooked the importance of the fact that the *pesah* could be a lamb or a goat. This is especially true among Christians who are familiar with the separation of the lamb and the goats depicted in Matthew 25.⁴ The reader must remember that analogies and metaphors were used to stress a point, but were not always taken literally. Goats are not intrinsically evil and unusable by God or they could not have been used as the *pesah* or the atonement sacrifice.

And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.⁵

The blood on the door posts did not save the first born of Israel. God did. He asked those whom He had separated and protected for months to make one sacrifice of thanks. He asked them to symbolically mark themselves with the blood and He protected those that followed His instructions.

And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S Passover (*pesah*).⁶

The instructions on how to prepare the Passover lamb (the *pesah*) were very specific. Not a single bone of the sacrifice was to be broken, again foreshadowing the true *pesah*, Jesus the Messiah. The sacrifice involved both the blood and the body of the lamb. It was to be roasted whole and not boiled. The lamb must also be completely consumed before morning, thus the sacrifice was whole and complete. A year old lamb would weigh between 50 and 60 pounds, which would yield approximately 25 pounds of meat. Thus each Israelite would have feasted upon one to two pounds of lamb during the Passover meal. God ordered the *pesah* to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Eating unleavened bread represents us putting on the perfection of the messiah. The sacrifice of the *pesah* and seven days of unleavened bread are tied together. Early 14th proponents miss this essential point of the Passover when they separate Passover from Unleavened Bread. Accepting God at his word requires each and every one of us to realize not only that we shed the blood of the true *pesah*, but that we must do our part when we choose to covenant with God. Only the blood and body of the *pesah* allows us to begin our walk with God and, if we choose, to later join in a covenant with Him, the basis of a true relationship with the God of creation. To separate the sacrifice of the *pesah* from unleavened bread ignores that scripture has symbolically tied them together at the *pesah* meal.

The Israelites were dressed to begin their exodus while they ate the *pesah*. They were told to be ready to leave as soon as God's act of salvation was complete. They could not leave Egypt on their own. They had to wait for God to open that door, but as soon as that door was open, they

4 Matt. 25:31-46

5 Ex. 12:7

6 Ex 12:8-11

were supposed to step through it and never look back.⁷ In today's crazy, hectic world we must realize that God has freed us from the sin that Egypt represents and we must not look back or we could face a fate worse than Lot's wife.⁸

The Israelites ate the pesah lamb in haste, yet they did not leave their abodes until morning. Therefore they had six to eight hours to eat this meal. A six to eight hour feast does not seem to be a meal eaten with great speed or haste. The Hebrew word translated haste in Exodus 12:11 is *chippazown*. "A technical term of uncertain meaning which describes the manner in which the Hebrews were to eat the first Passover (Ex. 12:11) and the manner in which they left Egypt (Deut 16:3). In these contexts either 'in haste' or 'in fear' is possible."⁹ Although this meal was a feast, it was not supposed to be a party while the first born of Egypt were dying around them. There was to be a sense of awe, fear and thankfulness associated with this meal. The Israelites needed to remember that it was the grace of God which redeemed them while ignorant innocents along with the true villains of Egypt died to fulfill God's plan. Unfortunately, the memorial feast of the Passover today often only includes the sense of fear and awe and thankfulness has been swallowed up in ceremony. The Passover ceremony should be just the opposite, with great joy and thankfulness, tempered with the proper respect and awe for what God had done for us.

For I will pass through (*'abar*) the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over (*pasah*) you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.¹⁰

God states the blood is a token or a sign. God did not need signs to protect the Israelites from the 4th through the 9th plagues. This makes it most probable that the blood was a sign for the Israelites, not for God. God protected those who took this sign upon themselves. Israelites, those who were called to leave Egypt, even though they had been supernaturally protected from earlier plagues, who did not perform God's command to mark their door with the *pesah's* blood, were not protected from this plague. Even if we have been chosen and protected in the past, God may not protect us if we are not thankful to Him and instead show disregard and disdain for Him and His commands.

God stated in Exodus 12:23 that wherever the blood was upon the lintel, the destroyer would not enter into that house.¹¹ Knowing that a mixed multitude left with the Israelites,¹² it is conceivable

7 Gen. 19:17, 26 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.... But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

8 Luke 9:62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

9 Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 708a p. 310

10 Ex. 12:12

11 Ex. 12:23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite *you*.

12 Ex. 12:38 And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle.

some Egyptians or slaves other than the Israelites performed the ordinances of the *pesah* sacrifice. If they did, God also protected (*pasah*) or passed over them. God has always honored faith in Him, even in those who did not have real knowledge of Him. Not only do we have the faith hall of fame in Hebrews 11, but we have the Samaritan leper who was cleansed in Luke 17;¹³ the Samaritan women at the well in John 4;¹⁴ the woman whose daughter was made well in Matthew 15;¹⁵ the centurion of Matthew 8;¹⁶ Naaman being healed in 2 Kings 5;¹⁷ and so many others. God's grace is not now, nor has it ever been limited by race or even knowledge, but by faith.

And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel¹⁸

The Israelites ate the *pesah* meal with reverence and thankfulness, ready to leave Egypt as soon as God had completed His work of redemption. Throughout their generations, they were supposed to keep the feast of Passover as a memorial, much as Americans keep the fourth of July in America today. They were supposed to keep this memorial by not eating any leavened bread for a full seven days. When God states that the leaven was put out by the first day, there is no reason, outside of early 14th proponents eisegesis of scripture, for us not to believe this was inclusive because the leaven had to be put out before the 15th of Nisan commenced, as Exodus 12:18 and Lev 23:6 state.¹⁹ The day before the first day of Unleavened Bread, the day on which the Passover lamb was sacrificed, the 14th of Nisan, was a preparation day, to be used to prepare for the seven days of unleavened bread.

And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.²⁰

Holy convocations were ordered on the first and last day of this seven day celebration. God's called out people are to celebrate a memorial feast of unleavened bread for seven days forever, to remember it was God who brought them out of Egypt. He brought them out on the very

13 Luke 17:12-9

14 John 4:7-42

15 Matt. 15:22-8

16 Matt. 8:5-13

17 2 Kings 5:1-16

18 Ex. 12:14-5

19 Ex. 12:18 In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even
Lev. 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

20 Ex. 12:16-7

day that unleavened bread starts and He brought them out by the power of His hand as revealed in the 10th and last plague upon Egypt.

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.²¹

Some early 14th proponents have become confused when examining this verse and have stated Unleavened Bread starts at the beginning of the 14th, the same time they believe the Passover lamb was killed. However, a harmonization of Leviticus 23:6-7 with Exodus 12:18, as shown earlier, makes it clear the 14th at even is at the very end of the 14th.

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.²²

Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.²³

So from the very start of the 15th through the end of the 21st of Nisan, no leaven was to be found in the homes of God's called out people.

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, 'Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover (*pesah*).²⁴

"Kill the Passover." Scripture defines the Passover as the *pesah* lamb (or goat). Its blood and its body were the final tools used by God to allow Israel to begin their journey with Him. Early 14th proponents have stated all the ordinances of the Passover, the killing, eating, burning of the remains, etc. had to occur on the 14th of Nisan. This again shows that early 14th proponents lack of understanding of what the *Pesah* lamb was and it apparently limits their understanding of how God works. This thought will be examined in detail during the New Testament portion of this book. The Passover was the sacrificed lamb or goat, not the roasting or eating or burning of the remains because Jesus was the true Passover (*pesah*) lamb sacrificed for us, not eaten or burned, and the *pesah* foreshadowed this ultimate act of love by our Father for us.

And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.²⁵

21 Ex. 12:18

22 Lev. 23:6-7

23 Ex. 12:19-20

24 Ex. 12:21

25 Ex. 12:22-3

There were ordinances associated with the first Passover, only some of which were ordered to be continued throughout the years by subsequent generations of Israelites and some were not. Only the first Passover required blood spread upon the door posts and after the first Passover God did not have to protect (*pasah*) His people while the destroyer killed the first born. The atonement sacrifice, like the Passover sacrifice, also consisted of more than the sacrifice of one goat and exile of the other according to Leviticus 16. However, these other essential requirements, like the cleansing of the high priest before making the sacrifice and the cleansing of the holy of holies, would never be confused with the atonement sacrifice, the only other sacrifice to which the Messiah's was compared. Like the Atonement ordinance that required the strong man who carried the scapegoat into the wilderness to wash his clothes before re-entering the camp would not be confused as the Atonement sacrifice.²⁶ The burning of the *pesah* lamb should also not be confused as being part of the Passover sacrifice.

And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.²⁷

There are some among the churches of God and some among the current day Samaritans who believe that Exodus 12:24 mandates that blood of a lamb must still be put upon the door posts every year at Passover. Verse 24 of Exodus 12 is certainly referring to verses 21-23. However, does the destroyer still kill the first born in every house where there is no blood upon the door posts? It should be apparent the ordinance God is referring to in verse 24 is the sacrifice of the Passover, the *pesah* lamb. The *pesah* is the center of the Passover. Spreading the blood on the door post only had to be done once because Israel didn't have to be protected from the 10th plague each year at the Passover memorial. God's called out people only had to remember what the blood's original purpose was when they sacrificed the Passover each year.

And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover (*pesah*), who passed over (*pasah*) the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.²⁸

The actual Passover service observed when Israel entered the Promised Land entailed more than the ceremony in Egypt. One of those changes introduced by God was that parents were now supposed to teach their children about the *pesah* lamb.²⁹ They were to teach them the lamb (or goat) they were eating was God's and that they had spread its blood on the doorway in Egypt so that God would protect (*pasah*) them.

26 Lev. 16:26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

27 Ex. 12:24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

28 Ex. 12:25-7

29 Ex. 12: 26-7 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.³⁰

The Egyptians were apparently scared to death that the death angel might come back for them. If the Almighty God, the creator of the universe, could kill every first born who had not followed His orders, maybe He would come back and kill every second born. If that didn't work, maybe He would come back and kill every third born and continue the cycle until the Israelites were the only ones left. The Egyptians had had enough. Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron to come by night. It does not say that they came, although the Exodus narrative suggests they did hear Pharaoh's pronouncement, thus it appears they might have returned to Pharaoh's place. It is true that Moses stated he would never see that Pharaoh again.³¹ It is also true that it was Moses who told the people to stay in their abodes until morning, not God. So it is possible that Moses and his brother left to see Pharaoh during the night. Neither Moses nor Aaron was a first born, so they had nothing to fear from the destroyer.

Some early 14th proponents have argued that none of the Israelites, including Moses and Aaron could have left their abodes until sunrise because of God's statement that all of Israel was His firstborn. God said, "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."³² Some early 14th proponents have erroneously tried to use this generic, metaphorical statement to support their contention that not one Israelite ventured outside their abode until sunrise because of their mistaken belief that Deuteronomy 16:1 supports the nation of Israel leaving Egypt at night. Even if this belief were not in error, which it certainly is, scripture shows God stuck down the firstborn of man and beast not protected symbolically by the blood of the Passover sacrifice. This did not include all of the Israelites, only the firstborn Israelite and firstborn animals. "And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine; Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD."³³ God said He claimed all those who were the firstborn among Israelites, those spared from the tenth plague, not all the Israelites, and this can be ascertained for certain because He goes on to state these firstborn became His when He killed all the firstborn in Egypt. Obviously Exodus 4:22-3

30 Ex. 12:28-32

31 Ex. 10:29 And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.

32 Ex. 4:22-3

33 Num. 3:12-3

was designed to let Pharaoh know the nation of Israel was now God's prized child. It should not be used to support a hypothesis that no Israelite, no matter what their birth order, could leave their abodes until sunrise. It is silly to assume God would strike down a second or third born Israelite outside of their home, but He spared second or third born Egyptian not marked by the blood of the lamb. This willingness to twist scripture with the logic of verbosity is clearly displayed by introducing Exodus 4:22-3 into the early 14th argument hoping to support the idea that Deuteronomy 16:1 depicts the Israelites leaving Egypt on the night of the 15th.

If Moses and Aaron did leave to see Pharaoh, the Pharaoh they saw was most probably not the Pharaoh of the first nine plagues. Pharaoh was usually a first born and if the Pharaoh of the first nine plagues was a firstborn, he would have died on that fateful night thirty five hundred years ago. This may explain why Pharaoh changed his mind and came after the Israelites shortly after he released them. A new Pharaoh just taking power would have been more pliable, but would shortly realize he needed his slaves back to rebuild his empire. After all, he may have reasoned, it was his older brother or uncle or father that YHVH, the God of the Israelites was angry with, not him. The speculation that the Pharaoh of the first nine plagues died with the rest of the Egyptian first born is just speculation and should be taken as such. However, whoever gave the order to Moses to leave allowed the Israelites to leave and take all their riches with them. They took possessions they had "borrowed" from the Egyptians, but more importantly they took their flocks and their herds, the true source of wealth in the Middle East at that time, with them.

Moses had told Pharaoh that he would never see him again in Exodus 10:29. Although this author believes Moses did see a new pharaoh, this is by no means a certainty. A messenger could have carried not just message of Exodus 12:31 to Moses, but the authority to execute it. After all, the destroyer actually killed the all the firstborn, but scripture states it was God who did it in Exodus 12:29. So the pattern had already been set in scripture to have a proxy carrying out a deed being the same as the master performing it.

And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste (*mahar*); for they said, We be all dead men. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.³⁴

Again scripture stresses that everyone wanted the Israelites out of Egypt as quickly as possible. The Hebrew word *mahar* is translated as in haste in Exodus 12:33, which is different than the kind of haste (*chippazown*) the Israelites showed in eating the Passover meal.³⁵

And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.³⁶

34 Ex. 12:33-4

35 From Strong's 4116 A primitive root; properly to *be liquid* or *flow* easily, that is, (by implication); to *hurry* (in a good or bad sense); often used (with another verb) adverbially *promptly*: - be carried headlong, fearful, (cause to make, in, make) haste (-n, -ily, (be) hasty

36 Ex. 12:35-6

The use of the word borrowed in Exodus 12:35 is quite ironic. The Hebrew word translated borrowed in Ex 12:36 is *shaal*. “The KJV unfortunately translated this word as ‘borrow’ in Ex. 3:22, 11:2, and 12:35. But the word does not usually connote repayment and did not in this context.”³⁷ The Israelites demanded the Egyptians give them the riches of Egypt and they took them. It is highly unlikely the people went into the cities of Egypt and stripped them bare, but they likely demanded the Egyptians give them whatever struck their fancy as they prepared to leave Egypt.

And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.³⁸

As will be discussed during our examination of Genesis 15, it is possible that the Israelites had increased in number from seventy³⁹ to over two million in 400 years. But this is unlikely. These numbers are repeated in the first and second chapter of Numbers. However, an army of 600,000 men should have had no problem dealing with any city or army of that time. Jericho was a city of less than 10,000 when it fell. The exact number of people who left in the Exodus has no real bearing on the Passover of 3,500 years ago, outside of the fact it is far easier to move a few hundred thousand people than a few million, nor should it affect our Passover memorial today. But the reader should be aware this number has been questioned and there are other explanations about what this verse means.

And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.⁴⁰

A large number of non-Israelites left with Israel. This number must have included non-Israelite slaves serving in Egypt who had a chance for freedom, but it could have included a number of Egyptians. The Egyptians had seen what the God of Israel had done to Egypt. Egypt itself lay in shambles. We know that God is not a respecter of persons, so there was large number of non-Israelites that left to follow YHVH, the God of Israel. (Although this author loved Edgar G. Robinson’s portrayal in the movie, it is unlikely there were many bad eggs in this mixed multitude. It is far more likely they would have been fairly indistinguishable from the Israelites.)

And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.⁴¹

Again the haste with which the people left is stressed.

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years,

³⁷ Harris, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2303a, p. 891

³⁸ Ex. 12:37

³⁹ Ex. 1:5 And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *already*.

⁴⁰ Ex. 12:38

⁴¹ Ex. 12:39

even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.⁴²

Exactly what leaving on the selfsame day and how this relates to Genesis 15 means will be examined in detail in a later chapter. But there is an interesting statement in Genesis 15:13 “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.” God states that the people will be afflicted for 400 years, yet they were in Egypt for 430 years. This verse suggests God’s plans can change for our good and that appears to be what transpired to the Israelites in Egypt.

A possible explanation of this difference of thirty years lies near the end of the Israelites sojourn in Egypt. Everyone knows the story of Moses being divinely delivered into the court of Pharaoh. God placed him in this position for a reason.

And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown up, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he smote the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. And he went out the second day, and, behold, two men of the Hebrews were striving together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Thinkest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely the thing is known.⁴³

Moses was a prince and judge in Egypt. God had placed him in that position. It is even possible the Israelites were looking for their redeemer. Many would have known of the story given to father Abraham of their redemption after 400 years.

Similarly, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Ezra, and Nehemiah show Israel was waiting for the 70 years of Babylonian captivity to end and the freedom that was to follow.⁴⁴ The nation of Israel also looked for the messiah to come almost 500 years after the prophecy of Daniel.⁴⁵ History records a sort of messianic fervor at that time of Jesus the Messiah. This pattern makes it possible to envision that the slaves in Egypt were looking to be freed because their forefather had not only prophesied about the slavery, but also the time frame when they would be released from that slavery. Lo and behold, one of them shows up as a prince in the court of Pharaoh at just the right time. This same prince, who has obviously discovered his Hebrew roots, takes a huge chance to help them out. How do his fellow Israelites greet him? “Who made thee a prince and

42 Ex. 12:40-1

43 Ex. 2:11-4

44 Jer. 25:12-3 And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Jer. 29:10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

45 Dan. 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

a judge over us?"⁴⁶ This would have been the 390th year of captivity. Moses, the conqueror of Ethiopia, was 40 years old. Stephen gives us an account of Moses life in Acts 7:

And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works. But when he was well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, smiting the Egyptian: and he supposed that his brethren understood that God by his hand was giving them deliverance; but they understood not.⁴⁷

Moses realized why he was a Hebrew in the court of Pharaoh, but his people refused to accept him. So he had to flee to wilderness. He was not ready to lead, but he had another ten years to be prepared if the prophecy of Genesis 15:13 was to come to pass. But more importantly the people were not ready to be set free from Egypt and rejected the redeemer God had sent. Steven's narrative continues,

And the day following he appeared unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wouldest thou kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian yesterday? And Moses fled at this saying, and became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. And when forty years were fulfilled, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. And when Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold, there came a voice of the Lord, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. And Moses trembled, and durst not behold. And the Lord said unto him, Loose the shoes from thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I have surely seen the affliction of my people that is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I am come down to deliver them: and now come, I will send thee into Egypt. This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? him hath God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush.⁴⁸

Acts 7 paints a picture of a people not ready to be freed, so God did not free them. When they were finally ready, God did send His promised deliverer. He may have been late by some people's counting, but prophecy has been given to provide encouragement and bring repentance, not to set exact times.⁴⁹ God always does what is best for us. God set a time of 400 years, but the people refused to allow it to happen, so God apparently changed the timetable. It is ironic that God used the same person to accomplish the same things in the same manner, but He waited until the people He was calling out of Egypt were ready to be called out. Thus because they were not ready, the Israelites had to spend an extra thirty years in slavery according to this author's theory. We need to be constantly looking towards our redeemer and our God or we may spend extra time in slavery that God had not planned. God's plan will still be

46 Ex. 2:14

47 Act 7:22-5

48 Acts 7:26-35

49 Matt. 24:36 But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

accomplished, even if we are not ready, but think of all the wasted time and wasted effort if we are not ready to follow God where He leads us.⁵⁰

God was going to lead the nation of Israel into the Promised Land. This was promised when Israel left Egypt and this was accomplished, but again Israel waited much longer, 40 years longer than was necessary because the people were not ready. Many individuals died who could have gone into the Promised Land, but God still fulfilled his promise in His way. That Promised Land also waits for us. Hebrews states “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”⁵¹ The question remains, are we going to be those who die in the strife of Egyptian bondage or perhaps in the wilderness or will we enter into the Promised Land? The choice, as it always was, is ours to make.⁵²

It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations. And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover (*pesah*): There shall no stranger eat thereof: But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover (*pesah*) to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.⁵³

These verses obviously harken back to Exodus 12:24-7. “And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as He hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you: What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say: ‘It is the sacrifice of the LORD’S passover, for that He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.’ And the people bowed the head and worshipped.”⁵⁴

The Passover, with all the ordinances of *pesah* lamb, is a memorial to mark how God brought His chosen people out of Egypt. Every Israelite was to take part in the Passover, whatever their age. The symbols of the wine and the bread and the foot washing are examined in the New Testament accounts of the Passover, but the Passover was and is a family time that reminds us that God so loved the world He sacrificed His only son as the true Passover lamb. We can only

50 Est. 4:14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?

51 Hebrews 4:9-11

52 Deut. 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live

53 Ex. 12:42-9

54 Ex. 12:24-7, JPS

begin to walk with Him through the shed blood of the true *pesah*, Jesus, our Lord and Savior. This journey is designed to end in a covenant relationship between us and the creator God, but the journey starts with the shed blood of the Messiah. We need to always remember to be thankful for what He has done for us. For 1500 years there was no doubt the Passover ceremony was centered on the *pesah* lamb. It should still be centered on the true *pesah* lamb, Jesus the Messiah.

Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies.⁵⁵

Again, the selfsame day will be examined in detail in the chapter dealing with Genesis 15, but it is just another way of saying all of the events of the Passover from Exodus 12:29 through 12:51 happened on one day.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out in the month Abib.⁵⁶

That fateful day in the month of Abib 3,500 years ago, when Israel left the bondage of Egypt, was to be remembered by sanctifying all of the firstborn to God. The day Israel left Egypt was the same day the firstborn of the Israelites were spared while the firstborn of the Egyptians died. This is the same day they began to eat unleavened bread. The context of Exodus 12 shows the day the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, the 15th of Nisan⁵⁷, was the same day the firstborn were protected and the day when the people were to begin to eat unleavened bread.

And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.⁵⁸

If verses 5-10 of Exodus 13 are read out of context they can be forced to give the impression the ordinances the Israelites were supposed to keep from year to year were the seven days of Un-

55 Ex. 12:50-1

56 Exod. 13:1-4

57 Num. 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

58 Ex. 13:5-10

leavened Bread. However, there were no verse or chapter breaks in the scriptures originally. The ordinance that was to be kept year to year was the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb and the seven days of unleavened bread. These two are tied together and have been from the start. The sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb is the foundation of a covenant walk with God. The shed blood of the *pesah* was the instrument God used to mark His called out people to escape the 10th and final plague for the purpose of serving God. Of course their path led through the desert, the wilderness, where they and we learn to become dependant upon God and enter into a real relationship with Him. The ordinances of the Passover were to be performed to remind God's people it was not by their power or by their own two feet they exited Egypt. It was God's mighty hand that brought them out of Egypt.

And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the LORD'S. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem. And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.⁵⁹

God goes back and re-emphasizes that it is the death of the firstborn that revealed the ultimate strength of the hand of YHVH that brought them forth out of Egypt. It is the *pesah* lamb and the death of the first born that we are supposed to remember for seven days of unleavened bread. These two events were tied together at the first Passover and they are tied together today. Those who put artificial boundaries between the two downplay the importance of the *pesah*. The blood of the true *Pesah* lamb, our older brother and Lord, allowed us to begin our journey with God, although we were still in a state of sin, so we could learn to walk an unleavened life with our Creator. That blood has been shed once for all mankind.

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.⁶⁰

59 Ex. 13:11-6

60 Heb. 9:12-5

The Definition of Passover

The Definition of *Ben ha Arbayim*

There is no biblical evidence to support the contention *ben ha arbayim* is the time from sunset until dark at the beginning of the day. There is also no extra-biblical evidence, like tradition or pseudepigraphic literature, to support this contention either. All biblical and extra-biblical evidence supports *ben ha arbayim* occurring at the end of the day, not the beginning. There is even a small sect, the Samaritans, that still practices the slaughtering of the Passover lamb between sunset and dark at the end of the 14th day of Nisan.

2 Chronicles 30 and 35, Joshua 5:10, Deut. 16:6, Exodus 29 and Numbers 28 have clear time references showing the *pesah* lamb, or *ben ha arbayim*, the time the Passover was to be sacrificed, occurred on the later portion of the 14th of Nisan. After it was slaughtered, the *pesah* was roasted over a fire. During the first Passover, the destroyer killed the first born in Egypt during the middle of the night while God protected (*pasah*) Israel by forcing the destroyer to pass over (*abar* or *pasah*). The Israelites would have wanted to roast the lamb and get indoors as soon as possible to avoid the destroyer. But there must have been some diversity as to the timing of the sacrifice in each household. The timing of the slaughter and the amount of time to roast the lamb would vary from household to household depending upon when the lamb was sacrificed, how long it took the family to bleed and skin the *pesah* and the weight of the *pesah*. Claims that the first *pesah* had to be sacrificed at 3 p.m. on the 14th of the first month or that it could only be sacrificed at the very end of the day, between sunset and dark of the 14th and the 15th are unverifiable because performing tasks to a split second time table were not part of middle eastern culture 3,500 years ago nor are they today. Additionally, there is evidence sacrifices that were supposed to be done at *ben ha arbayim* were performed both during the mid-afternoon and at twilight.

All we can know for certain about the timing of the sacrifice of the first *pesah* lamb was it was performed during the later portions of the 14th of Nisan and before the darkness of the 15th came upon Egypt. After it was sacrificed, the first *pesah* was roasted outdoors for 3 to 6 hours, then brought indoors and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. There is some small chance some Israelites started this meal before the 15th began, but this is highly unlikely given the time required to sacrifice and roast the *pesah*. However, the entire nation of Israel continued this meal on this night of much watching, the first day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan, almost 3,500 years ago. This is the pattern that is depicted elsewhere in the Old and,

as will be shown, in the New Testament. This is the pattern followed with the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ, the Lord and Savior, the true *pesah*.

Scripture seems to indicate that the Hebrew idiom *ben ha arbayim* is a general period of time, just like *ba erev*, *erev*, *baquor* and *ba baquor*. Many scholars believe *ben ha arbayim* is twilight at the end of the day. Yet we also have the *pesah* sacrifice and the second half of the daily sacrifice, both of which God commanded to be performed at *ben ha arbayim*, were performed at mid afternoon in the time of Elijah, Hezekiah, Josiah, and even during Jesus lifetime. A possible and coherent definition of *ben ha arbayim* embraced by this author comes from Benno Jacob, a German Jewish scholar who rejects Wellhausen's document theory (which will be discussed in detail later).¹ He writes,

As *ben ha-ar-ba-yim* described a span of time, it could not have been used to introduce a particular moment of time; therefore, *ben ha-ar-ba-yim* (16:12) had to be followed by *va-y'hi va-e-rev*. The span of time of *ben ha-ar-ba-yim* was anything indicated in the accompanying statements. If other acts were designated by *ba-e-erev*, they could have been performed later (Pes 58b f)... When the ritual in the *miq-dash* began with the morning *ta-mid*, it did not involve an older method of reckoning this day; the sacrificial service merely paralleled the working day which began in the morning.

This designation for a time span is seldom attested, as its use was limited to matters which belonged to two days. It appears in connection with the *ta-mid*, although the evening sacrifice paralleled that of the morning, but was to be continued through it without extinguishing the fire (6. 5)... The manna would not only satisfy its consumer in the evening, but enough would remain for breakfast. (*ed. note-I believe Mr. Jacob was referring to the manna being unspoiled on the Sabbath*) Here the *Pesah* served as the transition between yesterday's slavery and tomorrow's freedom. For this reason we find the terms *ben ha-ar-ba-yim*, *b'e-rev* and *ba-lai-lah* designating everything which occurred before the morning. ... It (the 14th of Nisan) marked the last day of bondage, Israel's farewell to Egypt while the fifteenth was the first day of freedom.²

Mr. Jacob's hypothesis is *ben ha arbayim* is not a specific time frame, but instead defines an action that starts on one day and continues into the night of the next day. This action is always associated with food that began to be prepared on one day and feasted on into the evening of the next day. The Passover was killed late on the 14th and was eaten on the 15th. The quails came at the end of the 15th of the second month and were eaten on the 16th. The second portion of the daily sacrifice was sacrificed late in the day, but eaten by the priests a few hours later, the following evening. As was pointed out, the lighting of the incense was a *tamid*, a meal at the alter that started at the end of one day and continued into the next. This author agrees with Mr. Jacob that the most reasonable definition of *ben ha arbayim* is not as a time frame per se, but as the time frame associated with meal where the sacrifice was made late on one day and was consumed on the next day, thus the combined action of sacrificing and eating occurred between two evenings.

1 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benno_Jacob-“Jacob is linked with [Umberto Cassuto](#) as one of the great twentieth-century opponents of the Documentary Hypothesis.”

2 Jacob, Benno, Trans. Jacob, Walter, *The second book of the Bible: Exodus*, KTAV, Publishers, Hoboken, NJ 1992, p. 303-4

The Night to be Much Observed?

The Night to be Much Observed?

Part of ancient Israel's covenant with God required them to keep a memorial, "a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."¹ Early 14th proponents claim this night to be much observed on the 15th of Nisan "is the feast that God established to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt."² However, when multiple translations and other scholastic opinions on these verses are examined, they show an emphasis on the Lord God keeping watch, not on the Exodus from Egypt. Various translations of Exodus 12:42 are:

On that night the LORD kept watch for them, and on this same night each year Israel will always keep watch in honor of the LORD.³

It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.⁴

It was a night when the LORD kept watch to bring them out of Egypt; this same night is dedicated to the LORD for all time to come as a night when the Israelites must keep watch.⁵

A night of watchings it is to Jehovah, to bring them out from the land of Egypt; it is this night to Jehovah of watchings to all the sons of Israel to their generations.⁶

Because the LORD kept vigil that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the LORD for the generations to come.⁷

1 Ex. 12:42 KJV

2 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 88

3 Ex. 12:42 Contemporary English Version

4 Ex. 12:42 English Standard Version

5 Ex. 12:42 Good News Translation

6 Ex. 12:42 Young's Literal Translation)

7 Ex. 12:42 New International Version

It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.⁸

It was a night of watching unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt; this same night is a night of watching unto the LORD for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.⁹

Keil and Delitzsch wrote “*This same night is (consecrated) to the Lord as a preservation for all children of Israel in their families.*” Because Jehovah had preserved the children of Israel that night from the destroyer, it was to be holy to them, i.e., to be kept by them in all future ages to the glory of the Lord, as a preservation.”¹⁰ Exodus 12:42 states because God watched over and protected the children of Israel from the destroyer on this special night, so they were to observe a night of watching God throughout their generations. Early 14th proponents mistakenly teach their “night to be much observed” celebration on the early 15th of Nisan is about Israel leaving Egypt and is not about God protecting the Israelites from the destroyer. Their attempt to support their errant early 14th hypothesis results in exalting Israel’s actions and Israel’s freedom above the mighty hand and the salvation of God. The result of early 14th theology is the demotion of the sacrifice of the *pesah* of God below the freedom this sacrifice gave. Unlike early 14th theology, scripture shows that God gave protection and freedom was the result of that protection. A late 14th Passover leading directly into the days of Unleavened Bread facilitate this plan and is supported throughout scripture, including by Exodus 12:42. A late Passover has the sacrifice of the *pesah* flowing into the seven days of Unleavened Bread like a hand in a glove.

Exodus 12:41-2 states, “And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the host of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt; this same night is a night of watching unto the LORD for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.”¹¹ God ordained a memorial to commemorate the protection He had given Israel. The shed blood of the *pesah* lamb symbolically marked the Israelites for God’s protection. This protection freed them to take the first step in their trip towards a covenant relationship and the Promised Land. This is a Godly pattern. He gives a great gift just to introduce Himself to us, a gift that we do not deserve. But this gift is supposed to show us that YHVH is God and more importantly abba, the Aramaic word for father. Verses 43 through 49 of Exodus 12 go on to describe the ordinances of the Passover.¹² Those who believe that the Passover was killed late on the 14th and eaten at the very end of the 14th or, more likely, the beginning of the 15th of Nisan believe “the night to be much observed” is the night the first Passover was eaten and the night the God observed or watched over Israel. Late 14th proponents examine the Gospel of John and

8 Ex. 12:42 Revised Standard Version

9 Ex. 12:42 Jewish Publication Society

10 Keil and Delitzsch, E-sword, Ex. 12:42

11 Ex 12:42 JPS

12 Ex. 12:43-9

1 Corinthians 5:7 and practice a memorial, a remembrance or anniversary,¹³ for their savior, Jesus the Christ. This is the same pattern Israel followed for 1500 years before the sacrifice of the messiah on the cross. The night of watching or observing is an evening of celebration, but it is still a day of watching, remembrance and reflection. The United States of America observes V.E., V.J. and Veteran's Day in the same manner.

Early 14th proponents believe the *pesah* lamb was killed just after the sunset of the 13th of Nisan and eaten shortly thereafter early on the night of the 14th. Why would the proponents of an early 14th Passover have a large celebratory meal on the evening of the 15th? The 15th was a night of travel for the nation of Israel 3,500 years ago according to early 14th proponents. It was also a time of the scattering of the disciples of Christ 2,000 years ago. There has never been a formal, fancy meal recorded in scripture on the night of the 15th according to the theology of early 14th proponents. The ordinance of Exodus 12:42 does not mention a meal if you believe the "night to be much observed" or "the night of watching" is not the same night the Lord protected Israel and ate the Passover.¹⁴ Early 14th proponents observe the Feast of Atonement without a fancy meal, so why do they add a meal to their observance when according to them none is listed in scripture? The only answer appears to be that it is their tradition and they are upholding the traditions of men, the tradition of their teachers, rather than following scripture.

The creation of a "Night to be Much Observed" ceremonial meal separate from a Passover memorial service appears to be about a century old. Early 14th proponents teach they are observing the Israelites' freedom supposedly gained by marching out of Egypt with a high hand at their early 15th meal. However, scripture shows it was God's high hand and His protection that we should be observing on the 15th of Nisan. Scripture mandates that the meal on the early 15th honors God for protecting or watching out for Israel. Scripture never states Israel was supposed to honor the freedom God's protection provided.

Late 14th proponents know the meal they eat on the early 15th was associated with observation and protection God provided and is the Passover meal that for 1500 years was prepared from the *pesah* sacrificed during the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan. Exodus 12:42 told the nation of Israel because God was looking out for them and brought them out of Egypt, they needed to look to him on the night of the 15th. For Christians today, God is looking out for us when He calls us out of this world of sin using the shed blood of His only begotten son, the true *pesah* sacrificed from the foundations of the world. He still wants His called out people to set aside the evening of the 15th of Nisan to look to Him and the sacrifice of the true *pesah*.

13 1 Cor. 11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

14 Ex. 12:42 *It is* a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this *is* that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

The Abrahamic Covenant

CHAPTER 21

The Abrahamic Covenant Genesis 15

There is no biblical evidence of a Passover being observed before the Exodus, although early 14th proponents like Mr. Coulter claim the first Passover occurred in Genesis 15, even though the first recorded instance of scriptural ordinances for the Passover were more than four centuries in the future. Mr. Coulter also claims the Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 15 occurred exactly 430 years, to the day, before the Passover of Exodus 12. Of course these claims are made to support their early 14th hypothesis. The re-confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 15 is so important and so misunderstood by early 14th proponents that it must be included in any treatise on the meaning and timing of Passover. Genesis 22 has additional bearing on the meaning of the Passover and will be examined in the New Testament portion of this book.

Genesis 15:1 states, “After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”¹ Abram had just defeated the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and given a tenth of the spoils of war to Melchizedek, the king of Salem. Abram was already a wealthy and powerful man. “With the formula ‘after these things’ there is introduced a new revelation of the Lord to Abram, which differs from the previous ones in the form and substance, and constitutes a new turning point in his life.”²

The turning point in Genesis 15 began in Genesis 12 when God called Abram to leave his home and begin to walk with Him, a journey which would offer Abram the chance to covenant with God. “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”³ Many evangelical Christians, including many messianic Jews, believe this is an unconditional covenant, just as the Noahic covenant of Genesis 9:11-17 was an unconditional covenant to never destroy the world by flood again, but they are mistaken.

1 Gen 15:1

2 Keil and Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch*, p. 209

3 Gen. 12:1-3, KJV

After God had destroyed almost the entire world with water He made a covenant with all living things.⁴ A covenant is just a contract or a treaty with two or more parties agreeing to its terms. The two sides of the covenant of Genesis 9 were God and all living things. Unlike most contracts or covenants, the stipulations of this one called for only one party, the God of creation and the bringer of the flood, to do His part, which was never to destroy the world with a flood again. Because only one party in this contract had an obligation to perform, it is known as an unconditional covenant. The other party has no responsibilities or conditions to fulfill whereas a normal contract has stipulations for both sides to fulfill or the contract could be voided.

However, the covenant of Genesis 12 is not an unconditional covenant. Evangelical Christians disagree. Most would agree with a treatise delivered by Boaz Michael in 1997 during *First Fruits of Zion's* Jars of Clay conference. Mr. Michael was asked by this author why he taught the covenant of Genesis 12 was unconditional. He answered was no "if" between Genesis 12:1 and 2, therefore it was unconditional.⁵ When asked what would have happened if Abram had not left his country and kindred, Michael responded that God would have still made Abram a great nation because God had promised it in Genesis 12:2-3. This evangelical view of covenants is only concerned with God portion of the contract and ignores the stipulations of the contract. Abram did follow God in Genesis 12:4-5.⁶ If Abram had not followed God, this author believes there would be no story of Abram in scripture and God would have worked out his plan with someone else. But Abram fulfilled his part of the covenant and became a blessing for all nations because he was a friend of God.

Although Abram was faithful in following God, he was not faultless. Pharaoh was justifiably upset with the mistake Abram made by lying to him about Sarai and causing a plague to come upon Egypt at the end of Genesis 12.⁷ Conversely, Abram did the right and godly thing when he separated from his nephew Lot in Genesis 13.⁸ God confirmed Abram did the right thing at the end of Genesis 13.⁹ After Abram helped the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah while rescuing his nephew Lot in Genesis 14, we read in chapter 15:

4 Gen 9:9-11 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

5 Gen. 12:1-2 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

6 Gen. 12:4-5 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

7 Gen. 12:17-9 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife? saidst thou, She *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way.

8 Gen. 13:9 *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

9 Gen. 12:14-7

And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.¹⁰

Abram knows God has blessed him. He is a wealthy man with a wonderful wife. He cares for his neighbors and lives a righteous life. But he wants to pass his wealth and his way of life onto a son rather than to his trusted foreman. God calms Abram's fears and promises him an heir in verse 5.

And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.¹¹

The events of verse five obviously occur at night time because the stars are visible. Afterwards God reassures Abram by adding stipulations to the covenant He had already confirmed with Abram.

And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.¹²

This is the famous cutting of a covenant. "God then directed him to 'fetch a heifer of three years old,' etc.; and Abram fetched the animals required, and arranged them (as we may certainly suppose, though it is not expressly stated) as God commanded him. But this readiness to perform what God commanded him, Abram gave a practical proof that he believed Jehovah; and what God did with the animals so arranged was a practical declaration of the part of Jehovah, that He reckoned this faith to Abram as righteousness."¹³ There was no Passover lamb or goat less than a year old nor were these animals were not sacrificed. Instead their blood was used to sign a covenant. God then gives Abram a vision.

And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.¹⁴

God showed Abram the stars at night and the next day told him to cut the animals he had gathered in two, except for the birds. The animals were laid out and then Abram waited. And waited. As he waited, he had to chase away some birds of prey. Then God reveals the future to Abram.

And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred

¹⁰ Gen 15:2-4, KJV

¹¹ Gen 15:5

¹² Gen 15:6-10

¹³ Keil and Delitzsch, p. 212

¹⁴ Gen 15:11-2

years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.¹⁵

God has already promised the land to Abram, but He reconfirms that the land and the other promises will be passed on to Abram's seed, his son, and not through a good and trusted friend like Eliezer. It grew dark and the sun went down and God, in the semblance of a burning lamp, passes through the midst of the halved animals without Abram. Abram not passing through signified he had performed his part of the covenant. God's passing through implies He would be cut in two, just like these animals, if He did not uphold His portion of the covenant, that Abram would have a son to carry on the promises. As God passing through the halved animals, He informs Abram that his offspring will go through hard times, but God will watch out for them.

This powerful reconfirmation of the covenant is fairly straight forward, but Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents find these verses anything but straight forward. Mr. Coulter writes:

Notice the phrase, '**the selfsame day** (Ex. 12:41).' This phrase refers to **a specific day exactly four hundred and thirty years before the Exodus**. What day was this? The Scriptures reveal that it was the day that God established His covenant with Abraham. On that day, God promised that He would bring his descendants out of bondage with great substance. The words of the apostle Paul clearly link that four hundred and thirty years to God covenant with Abraham. "Now this I say, *that the* covenant—ratified beforehand by God to Christ [Abraham's true Heir]—the law [the physical requirements of the Old Covenant], which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul, so as to make the promise of no effect' (Gal. 3:17, AT).

As Paul shows, God established His covenant with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the Old Covenant, which he established with the children of Israel after bringing them out of Egypt. The account of their Exodus shows that they began to leave Egypt on **the same day** that God made the covenant with Abraham. **Four hundred and thirty years later, ON "THE SELFSAME DAY" THAT GOD COVENANTED WITH ABRAHAM, GOD BROUGHT THE CHILDREN OF THE ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT.**

The Scriptures pinpoint the 15th day of the first month as the day God established His covenant with Abraham. On the 15th day of the first month, God passed between the parts of the covenant sacrifice. The promises, which were given to Abraham on the previous day, were spoken by the God on the night of the 14th. In the morning of the 14th, God gave Abraham instruction of the covenant sacrifice, and Abraham prepared the animals on the same day. After the sun had set and the 15th day had begun, God walked between the parts. On the selfsame day—four hundred and thirty years later—He fulfilled this part of the covenant by bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt."¹⁶

15 Gen 15:13-18

16 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 273-4 (emphasis by Fred Coulter)

Although there are many other problems and mistakes with this eisegesis of Genesis 15, one of the most egregious is that Paul never insinuates in any manner that God gave His promise to Abram on exactly the same day Israel was freed. Paul's statement in Galatians 3:17 is that God is faithful. God promised Abram his descendents would be in captivity 400 years, yet Israel was in captivity 430 years. Today people might cry, "God lied," but Paul's point is that God is faithful and will not break His promise, but an exact time table was never part of God's promises, just as He only prophesied to destroy Nineveh, not promise. Mr. Coulter's mistaken eisegesis attempts to use verses that have nothing to do with the timing of Passover to supposedly clearly pinpoint a timing that matches Mr. Coulter's early 14th hypothesis. And even if Mr. Coulter's suggestion were correct, as will be shown, these verses do not support the timing of an early 14th Passover.

Mr. Coulter continually insists that God confirmed his covenant with Abraham exactly 430 years before the exodus in *The Christian Passover*. Although this theory is interesting, it does not confirm an early 14th Passover theory. It must be understood that God was reconfirming His covenant with Abram in Genesis 15, not establishing it. This is important because Sarai had convinced Abram that the portion of the covenant pertaining to who would carry on Abram's line could be served by procreating Ishmael through Hagar, as shown in Genesis 16.¹⁷ However, God corrected Sarai's and Abram misunderstanding of Genesis 15 with another restatement of the covenant in Genesis 17, where scripture states,

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant. And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.¹⁸

17 Gen. 16:1-4

18 Gen 17:2-16

Both Abram and Sarai had misunderstood the covenant made in Genesis 12 and God clarified that covenant in Genesis 15 by using a ceremony that promised Abram that if God did not make him a father of many nations, then God was a liar and would take the death penalty upon Himself. In Genesis 17 God further clarifies the covenant of Genesis 12 while changing their names to Abraham and Sarah. God even first mentions circumcision in Genesis 17:11, a major sign of the covenant of God for close to two millennia. Early 14th proponents have grasped onto the reconfirmation of the covenant in Genesis 15 because the events of that reconfirmation occur on two consecutive nights and because the term *same* is used in Genesis 15:18 while the term *selfsame day* is used in Exodus 12:41. But the covenant was given in Genesis 12, not Genesis 15, and it was sealed in Genesis 22 with clarifications being given in between.

The word translated “in the same day” in Genesis 15:18 is *hû’ hîy’*,¹⁹ a third person pronoun in the feminine form that means same, this or that. “Selfsame” from Ex. 12:41 (and other verses shown below) is translated from the Hebrew word *zeh*.²⁰ It is a masculine pronoun meaning this or that. It is followed by the Hebrew word for day in Ex. 12:41, which is *yom*.²¹ An examination of the original language shows that these two terms should not be confused with each other.

The reconfirmation of the covenant in Genesis 15 states that the nation of Israel would be in bondage for 400 years, yet Exodus 12:41, the verse Mr. Coulter suggests parallels the timing of the re-confirmation of Genesis 15, states the Israelites were in bondage for 430 years. Surely if God was going to make sure the events of the Gen. 15 were exactly paralleled on the night of the Exodus, He could have at least gotten the number of years of bondage to match.

The term selfsame day, *zeh yom*, is not a specific time, which is not surprising given how time is used in scripture. Genesis 7:13 states, “In the selfsame day (*zeh yom*) entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark.” The context shows that Noah and his family entered into the ark on the 17th day of the second month of the 600th year of Noah’s life, the same day the event of the fountains of the deep breaking open occurred. Unfortunately Mr. Coulter mistakenly tries to force the term *zeh yom* in Ex. 12:41 is harkening back to exactly the same day as Genesis 15:18.

Scripture confirms that the phrase selfsame day is when an event occurs with the ordinance of the wavesheaf offering in Lev. 23:14 states, “And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day (*zeh yom*) that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” You were not allowed to eat barley until the selfsame day, the day the event of the wavesheaf was offered.

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- 19 Strong’s 1931 The second form is the feminine beyond the Pentateuch; a primitive word, the third person pronoun singular, *he* (*she* or *it*); only expressed when emphatic or without a verb; also (intensively) *self*, or (especially with the article) the *same*; sometimes (as demonstrative) *this* or *that*; occasionally (instead of copula) *as* or *are*: - he, as for her, him (-self), it, the same, she (herself), such, that (. . . it), these, they, this, those, which (is), who.
- 20 Strong’s 2088 A primitive word; the masculine demonstrative pronoun, *this* or *that*: - he, X hence, X here, it (-self), X now, X of him, the one . . . the other, X than the other, (X out of) the (self) same, such (an one) that, these, this (hath, man), on this side . . . on that side, X thus, very, which. Compare [H2063](#), [H2090](#), [H2097](#), [H2098](#).
- 21 Strong’s 3117 From an unused root meaning to *be hot*; a *day* (as the *warm* hours), whether literally (from sunrise to sunset, or from one sunset to the next), or figuratively (a space of time defined by an associated term), (often used adverbially): - age, + always, + chronicles, continually (-ance), daily, ([birth-], each, to) day, (now a, two) days (agone), + elder, X end, + evening, + (for) ever (-lasting, -more), X full, life, as (so) long as (. . . live), (even) now, + old, + out-lived, + perpetually, presently, + remaineth, X required, season, X since, space, then, (process of) time, + as at other times, + in trouble, weather, (as) when, (a, the, within a) while (that), X whole (+ age), (full) year (-ly), + younger.

Moses spoke the covenant of Deuteronomy to the nation of Israel and on the same day (*zeh yom*) he finished speaking, God ordered him to leave the people of Israel and go to Mount Nebo. “And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day (*zeh yom*), saying, Get thee up into this mountain Abram, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession.”²²

Ezek. 40:1 states, “In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the selfsame day (*zeh yom*) the hand of the LORD was upon me, and brought me thither.” The usage of *zeh yom* here refers the day the city was destroyed and God brought him out, the tenth day of Nisan.

The term selfsame day (*zeh yom*) is used at yet another reconfirmation of the Abrahamic covenant in Gen. 17:23. “And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day (*zeh yom*), as God had said unto him.”²³ Again the use of the Hebrew term *zeh yom*, or selfsame day, is simply used to emphasize the event that had occurred. Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents are incorrect that the Hebrew term *zeh yom* (selfsame day) harkens back to the re-confirmation of the covenant in Genesis 15 because it refers to an event that happened in present, on that very same day.

The term *zeh yom* is used in Exodus 12:17 and 51 to reveal the God would and did fulfill His promise by passing over (*pasah*) and protecting the Israelites while they ate the *pesah* (Passover). Exodus 12:42 states God watched over the Israelites that selfsame day God delivered them from the land of Egypt and in the future the Israelites be required to watch out for God on this selfsame day, the 15th of Nisan.

Although selfsame day (*zeh yom*) in Exodus 12 does not refer back to the events of Genesis 15, there are scholars who speculate God cut the covenant with Abram on the 14th of Nisan in Genesis 15. But even if Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents were correct about Genesis 15 occurring on the 14th and 15th of Nisan, this scenario still does not support an early 14th Passover.

Genesis 15:1-5 depicts God using the stars in the sky during the evening to expound His promises and informing Abram he is in covenant with the God of creation. Abram is complemented for his faith in verses 6-8. The next day, the daylight portion of the same day where God showed Abram the stars, God informs Abram to gather the animals to cut the covenant in verses 9-10. If God “cut of the covenant” with Abram by walking through the midst of the halved animal on the evening the 15th of Nisan, then Abram was asked to prepare the animals on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, not the very beginning of the 14th of Nisan. This is obvious because just a few hours after Abram prepare the animals, early on the next evening Abram had a vision about the hardship his offspring would endure. God then reconfirms the covenant by appearing as burning pot at night and shows that He is the God of creation that can be trusted. If Mr. Coulter is right, which scripture does not mandate, than the timing of the sacrifices of Genesis 15

²² Deut. 32:48-9, KJV

²³ Gen. 17:23, KJV

matches the timing of the Passover sacrifices made by Hezekiah and Josiah. It matches the timing of the Passover sacrifice in the temple at the time of Christ. If Mr. Coulter is correct, God tells Abram He will protect and renew His covenant with Abram's offspring during the night of the 15th. This matches the timing of God's watching out for and protecting of the Israelites in Egypt, as Exodus 12:42 shows. If Mr. Coulter is correct that the sacrifices for the cutting of the covenant in Genesis 15 occurred on the afternoon of the. Even if Mr. Coulter is right that Genesis 15 occurred on the 14th and 15th of Nisan, his theory of a late 14th Passover.

Mr. Coulter responded by e-mail to an early copy of this manuscript, "I also do not see anything in your Table of Contents which shows about the first real Passover between God and Abraham in Genesis 15." Although Mr. Coulter obviously did not examine the table of contents of the book very carefully, Mr. Coulter's contention that the cutting of the covenant in Genesis 15 is actually the first Passover is quit enlightening. As shown earlier in this chapter, there is no sacrifice associated with this event, simply the slaughter of three year old male and female goats, along with a three year old heifer, a turtle dove and a pigeon to confirm to Abram that the covenant would continue with his progeny and not Eliezer's.²⁴ There is no mention of the sacrifice of a one year old male lamb or goat in Genesis 15, yet God specifically states the Passover sacrifice must be a male goat or lamb less than a year old,²⁵ which symbolically pointed directly to the His only begotten son.²⁶ Therefore it has to be Mr. Coulter's contention that the sacrifice of the Passover, rather it was a one year old lamb or goat, was not necessary for the Passover. Although I have been informed Mr. Coulter refutes the idea, Mr. Coulter's early 14th theology states the actual Passover sacrifice is not necessary for a Passover, which obviously relegates the importance of the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Christ.

The name of Jesus was almost never mentioned in the World Wide Church of God and early 14th proponents have actually institutionalized this practice into their beliefs, even if this was not intentional. For them, the Passover ceremony on the early 14th is not about the Passover lamb because the Passover is supposedly, "the night in which God passed over the houses of the children of Israel and spared the first born from the plague of the death, while they were still in their houses in the land of Egypt, before the Exodus took place—not while the Exodus was taking place! The Lord passed over the houses of children of Israel and saw the blood of the Passover lambs on the side posts and lintels of their doors, and He did not kill the firstborn."²⁷ Thus early 14th proponents teach the Passover is about the passing over, not the sacrifice of the Passover. There is obviously no place for the Passover lamb in the "night to be much observed," celebrated by early 14th proponents on the early 15th of Nisan. So although early 14th proponents may state the sacrifice of Jesus is important to their theology, they have done every thing possible to minimize the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, even by excluding it from the supposed first Passover held by Abram. Their theology minimizes the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Christ. As will be shown, Jesus was the true Passover from the foundations of the world. Mr. Coulter is mistaken about the cutting of the covenant in Genesis 15 being a Passover since no Passover lamb was sacrificed.

24 Gen. 15:9

25 Ex. 12:5

26 1 Cor. 5:7

27 Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, p. 17

Other Old Testament Passovers

Other Passovers of the Old Testament

Exodus 34:25

God mentions the ordinance of the Passover in Exodus 34:25 in the midst of His instructions to the nation of Israel on how not to worship Him.¹ He reminds the Israelites that the Passover lamb was to be totally consumed and that whatever was left must be burnt in the fire in the morning. Although there is very little here about the *pesah* (passover), this verse harkens back to Exodus 12:3-10. The Passover is an important part of how to worship God.

Leviticus 23:5

After emphasizing the importance of the weekly Sabbath as a feast to the Lord in earlier verses, Lev. 23:5 states, “In the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*ben ha arbayim*) is the LORD’S Passover (*pesah*).” The King James translates *ben ha arbayim* as “at even.” Because there are no other instructions or inclusive times, the only substantial claim made about the timing of the Passover in Leviticus 23:5 is that it is important and it is the beginning of the cycle of feast days in the calendar. Numbers 28:16 parallels Leviticus 23:5.

Numbers 9-The Second Passover

The timing and the manner of how the Passover was to be performed when the Israelites entered the Promised Land is reviewed by Moses in Numbers 9 and because the Israelites were no longer in Egypt and that there is no destroyer to be protected (*pasah*) from, a stipulation is added to the Passover. Numbers 9 re-iterates that the Passover is at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th of the first month. However, unlike in Egypt, if you were unclean, you were not allowed to partake in this most important of memorials. “And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?”² To this perplexing issue, which shows how the memorial of the Passover changed after the nation of Israel left Egypt, Moses states, “Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.”³

1 Ex. 34:25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.

2 Number 9:6-7

3 Num. 9:8

God's response is a new instruction about the memorial of Passover.

Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD. The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin. And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.⁴

God states that if you are qualified to sacrifice of the Passover at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th day of the first month, you must sacrifice it and observe it in the right manner. However, if you could not sacrifice it during the first month, then you could sacrifice it on the 14th of the second month at *ben ha arbayim* if you were qualified then. It is easy to see how being ceremonial unclean would disqualify you from partaking of the Passover, but if the Passover was domestic, which means it could be sacrificed at home rather than in the temple, why would journeying to a far land keep you from partaking of the Passover? Why could you not partake of it if you were in a far away land? Early 14th proponents reasoning again lacks scriptural support.

Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 outlaw all domestic sacrifices, thus someone on a journey to a far land would not have access to the temple to perform the Passover sacrifice.

But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come; and thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the offering of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill-offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your flock; and there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.⁵ Deut. continues, "When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. Howbeit as the gazelle and as the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat thereof; the unclean and the clean may eat thereof alike. Only be stedfast in not eating the blood; for the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water. Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD. Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt

4 Num. 9:10-4

5 Deut. 12:5-8

take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose; and thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God; and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out against the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh.”⁶

The ordinance of Numbers 9:10 which prohibited sacrifice of the Passover if you were on a journey agrees with the prohibitions of making any sacrifice outside of the tabernacle listed in Deuteronomy 12. It also agrees with the clear examples of a temple centered Passover in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 and Ezra 6. Sacrifices could only be done where God had placed His name. The Passover was the only sacrifice that the priests did not slay, but it still had to be performed in the temple. Therefore scripture mandates the theory a domestic Passover sacrifice was ever performed once Israel reached the Promised Land.

However, the early 14th proponents’ domestic Passover hypothesis suggests a domestic Passover sacrifice should have been allowed by someone on a journey except for the prohibition in Numbers 9. Mr. Coulter’s explanation for the prohibition of Numbers 9 revolves around misquoting a Karaite scholar and accusing the Jews of deliberately lying about the changes they supposedly made 800 years after Numbers 9 was written. Mr. Coulter writes, “When the Jews were in exile during the Babylonian captivity, they could not keep the Passover. This prohibition led to the replacement of the Passover with the Seder Meal on the 15th day of the first month, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. To make their false substitute appear Scriptural, the Jews changed the name of the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread to ‘Passover.’ By changing the name of the feast, the Seder meal on the night of the 15th became the ‘Passover’ for those that were living in exile.”⁷ There is no attempt by early 14th proponents to explain how an Israelite during the reign of David or Solomon would not have been allowed to partake of the Passover if they were traveling to Gaul or Italy. Early 14th scholarship simply denies Deuteronomy 12, Leviticus 17 and Numbers 28:16 prohibit a domestic Passover by claiming the Passover sacrifice is not covered under these ordinances.

Mr. Coulter quotes Karaite scholar Samuel Al-Magrighi to try to explain the prohibition in Numbers 9. This quote is, “Today, however, by reason of our many sins, we are scattered over the four corners of the earth, we are dispersed in the lands of the Gentiles, we are soiled with their ritual uncleanness and unable to reach the House the Lord, and **our status is equivalent to that of the persons ritually unclean or traveling far away. That why this ordinance of the Passover sacrifice no longer applies to us**, and the reason for this is our fathers’ exceeding disobedience to God and our own following in their sinful footsteps.”⁸ Mr. Coulter does not seem to understand that Mr. Al-Magrighi is simply stating that the Israelites do not have access to the House of the Lord, the only place the Passover could be sacrificed, because the Jews had sinned and that sin has separating them from God in the same way ritual uncleanness or a journey to a far land, both valid reasons for not being able to make the sacrifice at the temple, would separate the people from performing the Passover sacrifice. Early 14th proponents have left unanswered why a long journey would prohibit their supposed domestic Passover sacrifice.

⁶ Deut. 12:20-27

⁷ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 203

⁸ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 203 from Nemoj, *Karaite Anthology*, p. 206 (emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

Mr. Coulter assails the idea that the Passover was a temple sacrifice when he writes, “The Jews have always claimed Scriptural support for their humanly devised traditions. But as Jesus warned, these traditions of men are empty and vain, and have no value whatsoever in God’s eyes. In fact, they are dangerous counterfeits that attempt to deceive and draw people away from the true commandments of God. The counterfeit Jewish 15th ‘Passover’ has lured many Christians away from the commanded time for observing the Passover, which is the night of the 14th, the night Jesus was betrayed.”⁹ Mr. Coulter avoids answer the question of why a journey to a far land would disqualify you from observing a supposed domestic Passover by accusing anyone who would ask such a question of trying, “to deceive and draw people away from the true commandments of God.”¹⁰

Mr. Coulter’s attempt to equate the far off journey mentioned in Numbers 9:10 with the Babylonian exile and not simply a journey a far distance from where God would place His name also misses the context of Numbers 9. Just after God gave the ordinance for the second Passover in Numbers 9:1-14, His presence moved into the tabernacle. “And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.”¹¹ This is no coincidence. God was letting the Israelites know that His presence was now with them and their all their sacrifices would have to be done in His presence.

Early 14th proponents have apparently convinced their followers that Israelites on a far journey during the time of Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon or Elijah would have known that the ordinance of Numbers 9:10 prohibiting the sacrifice of the Passover did not apply to them, only to the sinful Jews who would be taken into captivity three, four or six hundred years later. This supposition is so preposterous that it is truly sad that some Christians have accepted it. It is heart wrenching that early 14th supporters have not and will not consider the implications of the second Passover of Numbers 9. The obvious, straight forward exegesis of Numbers 9 is that the Passover, along with all other sacrifices, became tabernacle (and later temple) centered sacrifices that had to be done in the presence of God once the nation of Israel entered the Promised Land.

Joshua 5

The account of the nation of Israel’s first Passover in the Promised Land agrees with all of the other scriptural examples that the Passover was sacrificed late on the 14th. Joshua 5:10 states, “And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover (*pesah*) on the fourteenth day of the month at even (*ba erev*) in the plains of Jericho.” A straight forward reading of Joshua 5:10 shows that its timing agrees with the timing of Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s Passovers, which occurred on the later portion of the 14th of Nisan. Mr. Coulter tries to explain this away with a creative definition of the Hebrew term *waw*, translated as the word “and” in Joshua 5:10-2.

9 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 203

10 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 203

11 Numbers 9:15 And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, *namely*, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.

Joshua 5 is a list of events that occurred as the Israelites prepared to enter the Promised Land that is joined together by the Hebrew conjunction *waw*, translated as the English word and. Mr. Coulter only examines Joshua 5, 10 through 12. He writes, “The events that are recorded in these verses took place during separate and distinct units of time; that is, three separate days.”¹² Mr. Coulter’s is correct that these are separate and distinct events, but the length of each event is not specified or divided into exact units of time in Joshua 5:7-14.

And (*waw*) their children, *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

And (*waw*) it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole.

And (*waw*) the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

And (*waw*) the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

And (*waw*) they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day.

And (*waw*) the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

And (*waw*) it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand:

and (*waw*) Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come.

And (*waw*) Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

And (*waw*) the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.¹³

The Hebrew word *waw* is used to tie together this chronological list, but the time between each event varies. Verse 7 introduces us to nation of Israel being unclean because they were not circumcised.¹⁴ The the Israelites circumcise themselves in verse 8. The Israelites would have required a number of days to heal after they were circumcised. After those days to heal, Joshua 5:9 depicts God cleansing the circumcised Israelites for following His commandments. Because the Israelites were now clean, Joshua 5:10 tells us the nation of Israel was allowed to partake of the Passover at *ba erev*, or evening, on the 14th. Verse 11 describes how the Israelites ate corn (which is actually barley), which they found in the land, the morning after they ate the Passover, not 24 hours later. Verse 12 shows that the following morning, 24 hours later, they found no manna. Some days later, when the Israelites arrived at Jericho, verse 13-5 has Joshua seeing a strange man and walking up to and questioning him. Then in verse 14 Joshua interacts with that strange man, who was actually the captain of the Lord of Hosts. Then in

¹² Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 426

¹³ Joshua 5:7-15

¹⁴ Josh. 5:7 And their children, *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

verse 15, the Captain of God's host orders Joshua to remove his shoes. Joshua 5:7-15 is a list of events in chronological order, but the time elapsed between each event varies and can only be determined by the context of the event.

An acquaintance with linguistic skills was kind enough to do a critique of Mr. Coulter's use of the Hebrew conjunction *waw*, which is listed below.

In his comments on the Passover recorded in Joshua 5:10-12 (*The Christian Passover*, pp. 423-428), Mr. Fred Coulter makes a series of clearly erroneous claims about the Hebrew language involved – apparently in an effort to force the Joshua 5 account of the Passover to fit his view of the Passover's timing.

He first attempts to distinguish the grammatical relationship of verses 10-12 from the relationship of verses 13-15 by claiming that the conjunction *waw* shows chronological succession in verses 10-12 while showing a logical succession in verses 13-15.

The *waw*-imperfect construction can indicate either a chronological succession or a logical succession (among other uses); the most frequent relation is chronological. Mr. Coulter seems to believe that a relative *waw*-imperfect construction that reflects chronological succession must contain a Hebrew term in the text that itself expresses an aspect of time – something he calls a “time element.” He states: “Although an initial time element is expressed in Verse 13, the *waw*-relative clauses that follow are all in logical succession.” The fact that the following *waw*-relative clauses do not contain what he calls a “time element” is totally irrelevant. He fails to see (or admit) that it is simply the grammatical construction of the *waw*-imperfect that signifies the succession and that the context determines whether this successive relationship is chronological or logical (or otherwise). The context of the successive events in Joshua 5:13-15 does not show cause-effect relationships as he claims – the events are simply chronological.

Mr. Coulter cites Bruce Waltke's Hebrew grammar (*Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, p. 547-48.), wrongly implying that it somehow supports his opinions. He quotes Waltke's *waw*-imperfect examples that show logical-succession, but fails to quote Waltke's example that shows chronological-succession: “Adam knew Eve... and she conceived and gave birth to Cain” (Gen 4:1). This example – like the *waw*-imperfect cases in Joshua 5:13-15 – does not contain Coulter's “element of time.” In fact, the context (“knew” – conceived – gave birth) shows a greater logical relationship than any of the statements in Joshua 5:13-15, yet this is the very example Waltke chose to demonstrate a chronological relationship.

Mr. Coulter's error here has little relevance to his opinion of Joshua 5:10-12, but it is yet another example of his authoritatively expressing an opinion on something about which he apparently understands little.

Mr. Coulter writes about Joshua 5:10: “Although the word ‘and’ appears twice in the King James translation, the Hebrew *waw* is used only at the beginning of this verse.” Again, Mr. Coulter is simply wrong. A quick glance at any Hebrew text shows a second *waw* in verse 10, beginning the phrase “and (*waw*) kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.”

Mr. Coulter refers to John Owens' *Analytical Key to the Old Testament* – a study aid designed for those who must rely on the English rather than the original language. Owens' book does not include an “and” before the verse's second phrase in its English text, and this most probably explains Mr. Coulter's claim that there is no second *waw* in the verse. But Owens' English text is nothing more than the RSV Bible's text – which Owens uses consistently throughout his book: “While the people of Israel

were encamped in Gilgal they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho.”

The second *waw* in Joshua 5:10 shows that this “keeping” of the Passover (as will be shown, this “keeping” can only refer to sacrificing the lamb) occurred later than the encamping at Gilgal. Obviously, the Israelites were still encamped when they kept the Passover. So the meaning of the Hebrew text is at least loosely translated by the RSV’s “While...”

Mr. Coulter’s point that the evening of Nisan 14 does not refer to the time the Israelites encamped is correct. However, this is only so – ironically – due to the RSV translators’ knowledge of the verse’s second *waw*, which Mr. Coulter, failing to notice it in the Hebrew text, wrongly asserts does not exist!

In another erroneous claim about Joshua 5:10-12, Mr. Coulter refers to some “units of time.” He writes: “The events that are recorded in these verses took place during separate and distinct units of time, that is, three separate days,” and goes on to say that the “first unit of time” is Nisan 14 (*The Christian Passover*, p. 426).

A unit of time is a measurable length of time, such as a year, month, day, hour, minute, or second. The references to time in these verses do include such time units – that is, days – but the reference is to something that occurred on or within those days; the reference is not to the entire day as a time unit. For example, they ate of the new grain on the day after the Passover, in the morning hours after the Passover celebration. This does not mean they ate during the entire 24-hour time unit – it only means they ate new grain at some time during that day. The reference to time in verse 10 is not to the day of the 14th (as a unit of time), but only to a short span of time within the 14th day – the evening of the 14th.

Mr. Coulter writes “This construction of the text shows that the action is occurring at the time indicated by the preposition *b* [translated “on”]; i.e., Nisan 14” (*The Christian Passover*, p. 426). However, he appears to ignore the fact that reference is further defined, also using the preposition *b*, to indicate that the action is not occurring throughout the day of the 14th, but only “at even” (*ba ʿerev*) of that day.

Mr. Coulter’s implication that “on the fourteenth day of the month” stands on its own, independent of “at even” is misleading. The single Hebrew phrase “on the fourteenth day of the month at even” is identical with the phrase found in Exodus 12:18 “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.” This refers to a span of time at the end of the 14th day – not to the whole 14th day itself.

Note that as seen in Exodus 12:18 this phrase must refer to the end of the 14th, not to its beginning. Mr. Coulter claims that they “kept the Passover entirely ‘on the fourteenth’,” and therefore that it “is clear that *gehrev* in Joshua 5:10 denotes the sunset beginning the 14th day of the month” (*The Christian Passover*, p. 426). He offers no support for his assertion that “on the fourteenth day of the month at even” could mean something other than what is clearly seen in the only other occurrence of the phrase in the Bible – that it definitely refers to the evening that ends Nisan 14.¹⁵

Our linguist points out that Mr. Coulter shows a distinct lack of knowledge of the Hebrew language, yet Mr. Coulter erroneously claims his knowledge of Hebrew grammar reveals that Joshua did not keep the Passover at *ba ʿerev*, as scripture states. Interestingly, in his first edition of *The Christian Passover*, Mr. Coulter wrote, “There is no room for any other interpretation of Leviticus 23:32. Ba ʿerev on the 9th always ENDS the 9th day. Ba ʿerev of any day ENDS

¹⁵ Anonymous, Select writings on Passover

that day!”¹⁶ Mr. Coulter defines *erev* in the second edition of *The Christian Passover*, where he writes, “The author observed the time of *erev*, or sunset, from the point when the sun appeared to touch the horizon until it dropped below the horizon”¹⁷ The vast majority of early 14th proponents believe *ba erev* means sunset and sunset only, yet ignore this definition in Joshua 5:10. Mr. Coulter writes that *ba erev* must mean something different in Joshua 5:10, otherwise Joshua’s Passover occurred late on the 14th. It is intellectually dishonest to dogmatically define a word, that is except where it disagrees with your hypothesis.

A scholar who states, “There is no room for any other interpretation,” then gives another interpretation just six years later as Mr. Coulter does in his two editions of *The Christian Passover* should at least state why he has changed his strongly held beliefs. It is a very bad scholarly practice to state something so emphatically, then just redefine your definition to massage what you perceive to be bad data point. And that appears to be what Mr. Coulter has done with his explanation of Josh. 5:10. Mr. Coulter did not even examine the Passover of Joshua 5:10 in the first edition of *The Christian Passover*. This author’s linguist acquaintance continues:

The time reference in Joshua 5:10 is only to the evening of the 14th, not to the whole day as a unit of time, as Mr. Coulter claims.

The Joshua 5:10 reference to “keeping” the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even cannot refer to the entire Passover observance of sacrificing the lamb, preparing it, roasting it, and eating it. It would have been impossible to do all this in the time stated: “at even.”

Seeing how the word translated “kept” (*āśā*), is used elsewhere can help give a clearer picture of what the Israelites did “at even.” In Numbers 9:5 we see that the Israelites “kept (*āśā*) the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai.” This is the same word translated “kept” in Joshua 5, but here the King James “at even” is translated from the Hebrew expression *bēn hā ‘arbáyim*, meaning “between the evenings” – the time when Israel was commanded to sacrifice the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:6). It appears that the Israelites did in Gilgal “at even” the same as they had done in Sinai during the “between the evenings” span of time--sacrificed the Passover lamb.

In both cases – “at even” and “between the evenings” – there was not enough time to sacrifice, prepare, roast, and eat the lamb. The lamb was merely sacrificed at this time, as per the original instruction. Deuteronomy 16:4 is a clear example that the term “at even” was also used to refer to the time of the Passover sacrifice: “And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.”

Mr. Coulter writes: “The Hebrew text clearly contradicts the claim that the eating of the lambs took place on Nisan 15. The phrase ‘on the morrow after’ does not include any period of time on which the Passover was kept. Every act related to keeping the Passover -- including eating the lambs was completed on the preceding day, Nisan 14.”

The Hebrew text does no such thing. The text only says that the action intended by the word translated “kept”, *āśā*, which the Israelites undertook “at even,” was done

16 Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, York Publishing, 1993, p. 33, emphasis his (*ed. note*, this is the first edition of *The Christian Passover*, not the second)

17 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 51

at even on Nisan 14. Because it is impossible that the Israelites could have sacrificed, prepared, roasted, and eaten the lamb “at even,” Mr. Coulter’s assertion is erroneous. Pesah refers often to the actual sacrificing of the lambs, and even to the lamb itself. The “morrow after” in Joshua 5:11 refers to the morrow, or morning, after the Passover was sacrificed.¹⁸

Trying to create a chronological list with a sentence structure similar to Joshua 5:7-15 in English would look like the phrase below.

And he went to the store.
 And he picked up milk.
 And he paid for it at the counter.
 And he went home and ate dinner.
 And he rented a car on the next day.
 And he then drove across the United States.
 And then he arrived at his mother’s house.
 And then he got out of the car and knocked on the door.
 And when the door opened, he hugged and kissed his mother hello.

There is no way to determine exactly how much time expired between each event in the statement above. We can know for sure that the milk was procured and paid for on the same day, but the journey to his home could have been the same day or the next day, after nightfall. We know the car was rented the day after dinner was eaten, but we don’t know whether it was in the morning or afternoon. We don’t know whether he departed the day he rented the car or just packed his car on that day and left the following day. We know it took days to drive across the country, but not how many days. We know that arriving at his mother’s house, knocking on the door and kissing his mother hello happened in a matter of minutes. The context does not state how long it was between each event. The word “and” is simple a conjunction used to tie thoughts together with a general chronological order. And that is what the word *waw* does in the Hebrew.

If Mr. Coulter’s emphatic definition of *ba erev* from the first edition of *The Christian Passover*, the definition his followers still emphatically believe is the only possible definition, is applied to Joshua 5:10, then there is no doubt the Passover at the Jordan River occurred at the very end of the 14th of Nisan. There is no other valid explanation if Mr. Coulter’s dogmatically held definition of the Hebrew term *ba erev* is correct. This author is currently awaiting Mr. Waltke’s (who Mr. Coulter used for his eisegesis of *waw* in Josh. 5:10) input on Mr. Coulter’s usage of the Hebrew term *waw* in Joshua 5:10, but this author believes it is highly likely Mr. Waltke will rebuke Mr. Coulter in the same manner Mr. Everett Fox did.

Ezekiel 45:21

Ezekiel 45:21 states, “In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.” Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents believe, “This verse is another Scriptural example of the later terminology that

¹⁸ Anonymous, Select writings on Passover

was used at the time of Ezra. But the fact that the Scriptures use this terminology does not nullify or alter the Passover commands of God in Exodus 12, Numbers 9 and Leviticus 23.”¹⁹ Again, Mr. Coulter is saying that you should ignore scripture because it disagrees with his early 14th Passover theory. What Ezekiel wrote agrees with Josephus’ writings the *pesah* (Passover) sacrifice was performed on the afternoon of the 14th leading into seven day observance of Unleavened Bread, which is referred to as the Passover in both the Old and New Testament. Therefore Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents dismiss this scriptural fact by suggesting that these prophets of God are simply stating the incorrect practices of the Jews. Early 14th proponents try to build a straw man by stating **“THE SCRIPTURES DO NOT COMMAND A 15TH PASSOVER. THIS IS A TRADITION OF THE JEWS!”**²⁰ This screaming in print is nothing more than Early 14th propaganda. No one believes in a 15th Passover because scripture clearly depicts the Passover occurring on the 14th. The germane way to present the question of when the Passover was sacrificed without prejudice is finding out if scripture describe the Passover as being the 24 hour period of time on the 14th of Nisan, with the lamb sacrificed at the beginning of the day, followed by the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Or does scripture proscribe the sacrifice of the Passover (*pesah*) being performed on the later part of the 14th of Nisan as a sort of preparation for the seven days of Unleavened Bread to follow.

Early 14th proponents try to state that if you believe the *pesah* was sacrificed on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan, then you believe in a 15th Passover. Again, this is nothing more than propaganda attempting to paint opponents with a brush of deliberate falsity. If you believe the *pesah* was the lamb, which foreshadowed the sacrifice of the true lamb of God, and that it should not be defined as the verbs *‘abar* or *pasah*, then it is easy to see that scripture commands a late 14th Passover and not a so-called 15th Passover, even if the *pesah* lamb was eaten early on the 15th. Early 14th proponents presentation of those who believe that the lamb was killed on the later portions 14th as proponents of a 15th Passover are simply trying to avoid the real debate. That debate is are the vast array of historians and scholars who teach that the Passovers of Joshua and Hezekaih and Josiah and Ezra, which were sacrificed in the tabernacle\temple on the later portions of the 14th performed correctly according to scripture or, as 14th proponents teach, are all these Passovers in scripture to show us how wrong and bad the Jews when it came to sacrificing the Passover (*pesah*) lamb even though these teachings are based upon private translations of the scriptures?

19 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 172

20 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 172 (all emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

The Samaritan Passover

The Samaritan Passover

Early 14th proponents, and particularly Mr. Coulter, have suggested the Samaritan Passover supports their hypothesis. However, they have again misconstrued what scholars have written both the manner of the Samaritan sacrifice and its timing. Mr. Coulter writes,

To this day, the members of the Samaritan religion keep their Passover at the beginning of the 14th, in the same manner as their ancestors. The fact that this Jewish/Samaritan sect has always observed a domestic Passover indicates that the temple sacrifice of the Passover lambs was not the practice in Jerusalem when the religion was founded. The following description of their Passover confirms that it has not changed from the original domestic observance:

They, therefore, observe Pesach **exactly as it was observed two or three thousand years ago** [emphasis added]...Modern historical research has proved that the Samaritans are not descendants of the heathen colonists settled in the northern kingdom by the conquerors of Samaria, as were once assumed...Actually the Samaritans of today are a small and poor remnant of an **old and great Jewish sect**...The only religious books they possess, however, are the Pentateuch and Joshua...these two hundred [remnant] Samaritans observed Pesach to this day on Mount Gerizim, in the manner of the other Jews ceased practicing thousands of years ago. The custom of offering sacrifices has died with the Samaritans, except **on the fourteenth day of Nisan, when they offer the ceremonial Pesach sacrifice.**' (Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals*, pp. 60-1)¹

Mr. Schauss' book *The Jewish Festivals* is examined in detail in the next chapter, but even this reference to Mr. Schauss book clearly depicts that the Samaritan Passover is not a domestic Passover, but takes place at Mt. Gerazim, the site of the Samaritan temple. Mr. Schauss agrees with Reinhard Pummer, who did research on the Samaritans from 1977 to 1984 and even spent two Passovers with the Samaritans, that the Samaritan Passover had to take place at the site of the temple, where God had supposedly placed his name.² Mr. Pummer's research found that the population of Samaritans had increased from about 150 at the time of Mr. Schauss to about 500 in 1984, with about half of them living in Nablus and half living in Holon.

1 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 181-2 [emphasis added by Mr. Coulter]

2 Pummer, Reinhard, *The Samaritans*, Iconography of Religions XXIII, Judaism, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1987

Mr. Pummer writes, “The belief that Mt. Gerizim is the place which God has chosen is the cardinal tenet that separates Samaritans from Jews.”³ The Samaritans leave their homes in Nablus and Holon and go to where they believe God has placed his name, which both Mr. Pummer and Mr. Schauss point out, is Mount Gerizim. Therefore Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents are incorrect when they state the Samaritans kept and keep a domestic Passover. The Samaritans have read and understood the ordinances of Deuteronomy 12, Leviticus 17 and Numbers 28:16 prohibiting any domestic sacrifice, including the Passover, which is why they carry out the Passover sacrifice where they believe God has placed His name, which is at Mount Gerizim. Mr. Pummer writes:

One of the most pronounced differences between post-biblical Judaism and Samaritanism is the modus of the Passover celebration in the two traditions. The Samaritans follow, up to this day, the biblical injunctions of Exod. 12 and slaughter lambs that are chosen in accordance with the rules laid down there...An important place in the liturgy of Passover is occupied by the reading of the biblical passages that deal with sacrifice. These readings and the prayers are led by the high priest. The act of slaughtering takes place when Exod. 12:6 is read. This occurs normally at sunset of Nisan 14. But should this day be a Sabbath, the fire in the “ovens” as well as that of the altar is started only after sunset, i.e. immediately before the slaughtering of the animals. This delays, of course the fleecing of the sheep for which boiling water is needed. If the 15th of Nisan is a Sabbath, the sacrifice takes place in the afternoon of the 14th. After the sheep have been fleeced, they are hung up by their hind legs, inspected as to possible defects, put on spits, salted, and thus made ready for roasting. In the meantime further reading from the Torah and recitations of hymns take place. The marking of the door posts and the lintel of the houses with blood as prescribed in Exod. 12:7 and 22, may or may not take place. It has rarely been observed. What can still be seen is blood smeared on the forehead of children, the first born son above all, but also on others...The ovens are sealed and the lambs roast from about 8:00 P.M. to midnight. At midnight, they are taken out and eaten in the houses. After the Passover meal, everything that is left over is burned, i.e. meat not eaten, bones, massot, wool, hooves, and horns.⁴

Samaritans believe that they must kill the pesah lamb at *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th of Nisan at Mount Gerizim, where they believe God has placed His name. They believe *ben ha arbayim* is a period from sunset to dark at the very end of the day, thus they agree with a number of Jewish and Christian scholars that the day starts and ends at darkness, not sunset.

Mr. Coulter apparently did not realize that Mr. Schauss was stating that the Samaritans continue to sacrifice the *pesah* lamb late on the 14th of Nisan at their temple, just as their Samaritan ancestors did, whereas the Jews do not perform a Passover sacrifice any more. Mr. Coulter also quotes Mr. Schauss as stating the Samaritans, “observe Pesach exactly as it was observed two or three thousand years ago.”⁵ Mr. Pummer, who is obviously one of the world’s foremost experts on the Samaritan’s Passover, writes that the Samaritans slaughter the *pesah* at the very end of the 14th of Nisan as Exodus 12:6 is read and that this sacrifice can only take place where the Samaritan temple should stand. Again, early 14th proponents are mistaken that other Passover traditions have a domestic element or occur early on the 14th of Nisan.

3 Pummer, *The Samaritans*, p. 8

4 Pummer, *The Samaritans*, p. 22

5 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 181-2

What Do Scholarly Sources Really Say?

CHAPTER

24

Lack of Scholar Support for the Early 14th Hypothesis

Near the end of Chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*, Mr. Coulter states:

Of the dozens of papers written on the Passover that the author has read and studied, all supporting a 15th Passover, not one addresses the Scriptural and historical evidence that is presented in this chapter. Some scholars who have published papers and books about the Passover have completely ignored the historical records of the original observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This glaring oversight raises questions about the motives of those who present their ‘final solutions for the 15th Passover.’ Such negligence must be attributed either to a lack of thorough research or to deliberate censorship by these biased scholars, who appear to hold their personal beliefs in higher esteem than the true facts of history, as many Jews hold their tradition in higher esteem than the Word of God.¹

This rebuttal of chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* was circulated on the internet and sent to Mr. Coulter directly, but Mr. Coulter has chosen not to reply to this rebuttal. This was not the first rebuttal of supposed scholarly support for an early 14th hypothesis this author has written to Mr. Coulter. The first was sent to Mr. Coulter after the first edition of *The Christian Passover* was published. Mr. Coulter did not respond except shortly thereafter by removing this author from his mailing and tape lists. Therefore the charge that no one has addressed the scriptural and historical evidence presented in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is incorrect. Mr. Coulter’s lack of response to scholarly criticism was one of the primary motives for writing this book. Mr. Coulter has written that he is preparing a third edition of *The Christian Passover*, incorporating his personal translation of scripture. This author hopes that the third edition of *The Christian Passover* does not contain a passage stating that no one has ever challenged Mr. Coulter’s supposed scholarly support for an early 14th Passover, but I am not optimistic this will happen.

This rebuttal will examine the veracity and quality of the scholarship that Mr. Coulter uses to support his hypothesis of an early 14th Passover in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*. An examination of Mr. Coulter’s scholarship will ask does Mr. Coulter follow his own “14 rules

¹ Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, p. 122

of Bible Study” he has published?² Is his research lacking the thoroughness he has accused others of? Should the negligence shown in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* be attributed to a lack of thorough research or to deliberate censorship? This rebuttal will also show a pattern of censorship and the use of scholars who are biased against the sanctity of the bible as inspired scripture, often known as critical scholars by Mr. Coulter.

Readers may ask what is the difference between traditional, also known as conservative, scholarship and critical, also known as liberal, scholarship? Traditional scholars believe that the bible is God breathed and divinely inspired.³ Traditional scholars believe Moses wrote the first five books of the bible, often called the Pentateuch. Traditional scholars believe there was an exodus from Egypt lead by Moses at either 1440 BC or 1250 BC (there is a disagreement on the timing of the Exodus in traditional circles). On the other hand, critical scholars believe the bible is a set of legends, fables and morals that have been syncretized together. Critical scholars believe that the story of the Exodus and Moses are fables and legends, at best. Critical scholars believe the first five books of the bible were pieced together between 1,000 and 500 BC and had nothing to do with Moses. An examination of traditional versus critical scholarship is required before an in depth analysis of chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* can proceed because Mr. Coulter relies heavily upon critical scholarship to support his hypothesis.

Traditional Scholarship

Scholars define traditional scholarship as:

For some true believers today, the Bible is the Revealed Word of God, and nothing else need be said about its authorship... (*For traditional scholars*), the first five books of the Hebrew Bible were conveyed in their entirety ‘from the mouth of God to the hand of Moses,’ according to the prayerful words still recited in synagogues today. The remaining sacred books of the Bible, according to tradition, were authored by various prophets and kings: Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel, for example, are thought to be the authors of the books that bear their names; King Solomon wrote the Song of Songs; David wrote the Psalms; and so on.⁴

The traditional view of the Pentateuch is in the most striking and most extreme contrast to the critical theories adumbrated above. Whereas the critical theory depends upon the assumption that the Pentateuch (in particular) is a composite work consisting of different documents, composed at different times and edited into a composite whole, the traditional view is fundamentally based upon the belief that the whole of the Pentateuch, the *Torah proper, is a unitary document, divinely revealed, and entirely written by Moses with the exception of the last eight verses of Deuteronomy, which record the death of Moses and, according to one opinion, were written by Joshua (BB 15a: according to the other they were written by Moses at the dictation of God ‘with tears’ (dema), but Elijah Gaon of Vilna renders the word ‘mixed up’).

2 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 15-6

3 2 Tim. 3: 16 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

4 Kirsch, Jonathan, *The Harlot by the Side of the Road: Forbidden Tales of the Bible*, Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1997, p. 315

In other words, on the death of Moses the whole of the Pentateuch was complete, having been divinely revealed. Nor can any rigid doctrine be laid down as to the exact manner of communication of this revelation. ... This implies our belief that the whole of the Torah found in our hands this day is the Torah that was handed down by Moses and that is all of divine origin. By this I mean that the whole of the Torah came to him from before God in a manner which is metaphorically called 'speaking'; but the real nature of the communication is unknown to everybody except to Moses to whom it came. In handing down the Torah, Moses was like a scribe writing from dictation the whole of it, its chronicles, its narratives, and its precepts."⁵

Critical Scholarship

Scholars define critical scholarship as:

Today, the Bible is regarded by most scholars and critics as a patchwork of legend, lore, and law that was created over a thousand years or so in distant antiquity by countless unknown chroniclers and lawgivers and storytellers, collected and compiled and corrected by generation after generation of editors (or "redactors"), and canonized by the ancient rabbis only toward the end of the biblical era."⁶

Among biblical scholars, the dominant view is that the Pentateuch is a composite work in which several major traditions have been blended together. According to this hypothesis, which rests on the critical labors of more than two centuries of intensive study, there are four main literary strands, to which are assigned the symbols, J, E, D, and P. J, the earliest source, comes from the time of the early monarchy, perhaps about 950 B.C.; E, a closely related source, comes from the Northern Kingdom and is usually dated about 750 B.C.; D, which is best represented in the book of Deuteronomy, comes from the Southern Kingdom about 650 B.C.; and P, so designated because of its priestly interests, comes from the period after the fall of the nation in 587 B.C. These strands were woven together in various stages until the Pentateuch assumed its final form in about 400 B.C."⁷

By the seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes, in his *Leviathan* (1651), was trying to prove that the Pentateuch had been written after the time of Moses. In 1753, the French Catholic physician and scholar Jean Astruc advanced the theory that there were multiple sources behind the books of Genesis and Exodus, and that they could be distinguished by whether they referred to God as Yahweh (God's special name, revealed only to Israel) or simply as God (for which the Hebrew word is *elohim*). This proposal was expanded and refined in the nineteenth century by K. H. Graf (1865) and J. Wellhausen (1878), so that there emerged a widely held theory that there are four literary strands behind the Pentateuch in its present form: J (Yahwist; abbreviated as J. rather than Y. following the German Jahwist), E (Elohlist), P (Priestly), and D (Deuteronomist). The last two strands represent respectively the priestly and the legal revisionist reworking of the Pentateuchal traditions in the period during or just after the exile in Babylon. The first two strands J and E, are the oldest strata of the tradition. Also in the nineteenth century, scholars sought to show that the earlier

5 Roth, Cecil, *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 13, Pentateuch, pp. 261-2

6 Kirsch, Jonathan, *The Harlot by the Side of the Road: Forbidden Tales of the Bible*, Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1997, p. 315

7 Anderson, Bernhard W. *Understanding the Old Testament*, Second Ed. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966, p. 16-7

prophetic utterances had been worked over, expanded, supplemented, and otherwise edited at the end or after, Israel's return from exile, and only then achieved the form that we now possess."⁸

According to Wellhausen's synthesis, first proposed in 1878, the Books of Genesis through Deuteronomy are based upon four documents. Documents J (which uses the divine name Yahweh) and E (which uses 'elohim) were written during the monarchy (tenth to eighth centuries B.C.E.) when Israelites sacrificed at local sanctuaries. This type of religion is implied in these documents and in the Books of Samuel. Deuteronomy (D) is associated with Josiah's reformation in the late seventh century. The reform closed all the sanctuaries save for that in Jerusalem and reformulated some of the laws in J and E in the light of the centralization of sacrifice and worship in Jerusalem. The document containing the priestly traditions (P) was written during and after the exile in the sixth to fifth centuries B.C.E. Its stress on the details of ritual and sacrifice developed what had begun with Deuteronomy, when the first attempts were made to regulate the free and spontaneous worship implied in J and E. Wellhausen's synthesis, called the documentary hypothesis, begged many questions.⁹

THE CRITICAL VIEW

In the Book of Joshua it is possible to discern the sources found in the Pentateuch, i.e., J, E, P, and D (see below), thus this book might be seen as the direct continuation of the Five Books of Moses...

Date and Composition. The pentateuchal literature originated no earlier than the period of the Monarchy. This can be learned from a number of allusions found in different places in the Pentateuch, e.g., Genesis 36:31 (a king in Israel), Exodus 15:17 (Temple), Numbers 24:7 (Agag; cf. 24: 20-21). These allusions are doubly significant since they are interspersed, especially the two latter, in poetical pieces which are accepted as being more ancient than the prose sections....

SOURCES-The opinion accepted in contemporary biblical research is that the pentateuchal literature is composed of four major sources: J, E, P, and D....The basis of this division into sources is literary-critical, i.e., it is based on topical and stylistic-linguistic distinctions.¹⁰

Wellhausen's View. J. Wellhausen held that the Jewish religion underwent a development from a religion rooted in the life of nature to a religion divorced from nature and that the P source embodied the peak of this development. According to Wellhausen, it was the rule of the hierarchy of the Second Temple period that was reflected in the Priestly Code. His view may be summarized as follows:

(1) P assumed the centralization of the cult as a self-evident fact. The worship of God is indeed linked in this source to the Tent of Meeting, which is an exclusive cultic institution.

(2) In the period preceding the reform of Josiah, cultic activities were conducted everywhere, and people who were not priests served in the various temples and altars (see Ex. 20:24-26 [21-23]). With the centralization of the cult by Josiah the provincial cultic places were abolished and the Temple in Jerusalem became the exclusive temple in which only priests from the house of Zadok officiated; the priests who served in the high places and provincial temples became, in the course of time, secondary cultic officials (cf. Ezek. 44:9ff.), and these were the levites of P. According

8 Kee, Howard, Meyers, Eric, Rogerson, John, Saldarini, Anthony, *The Cambridge companion to the Bible*, Cambridge University Press 1997, p. 13-4

9 *The Cambridge Companion to the Bible*, p. 36

10 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 13, Pentateuch, p. 233-4

to Wellhausen, the high priest found in P is a reflection of the head of the religious community in the Second Temple period....

(6) The festivals which were connected with the agricultural seasons in Palestine became historical festivals given specified times and stripped of the agricultural milieu, which by its very nature could not be bound by a strict chronological framework. During this period two festivals came into being: Rosh Ha-Shanah and the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23: 17ff; 23: 23-32; Num. 29:1-11) which have no connection with the natural-agricultural life of the people and which express the supreme spirituality of Second Temple Judaism and the sense of sin inherent in it.

(7) The Tent of Meeting, described in detail in P (Ex. 25-30; 35-40; Num. 1-4; 7-8), is a fictional creation of the Jerusalem priesthood of the Second Temple period and is only a reflection of the Temple of Jerusalem. All the ancient history related in P underwent, in effect, schematic editing in accordance with the religious reality of the Second Temple.”¹¹

Critical scholars believe that the annual Sabbaths listed in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16 were agricultural festivals celebrated by a people that had nothing to do with the worship of YHVH or the Exodus. These critical scholars believe the Bible is made up to justify some kind of homogenization or syncretization of religions between Canaanite farmers and mountain shepherds. Critical scholars believe the priests who supposedly wrote large chunks of the Pentateuch invented the feasts of Trumpets and Atonement at about 650 B.C. because they wanted holidays that had no relationship to nature. It is likely that these critical scholars have studied how the Catholic Church’s belief system was syncretized over a millennia and have used this process to create the Document theory, something that traditional scholars reject.

The difference between traditional and critical scholarship is important for Christians to understand so they know the perspective of the teaching they are studying. The difference between critical and traditional scholarship is essential in understanding the flow of chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*. Under the scholarly doctrine of fair use (with the exception of page 115, which is simply a recap of Mr. Coulter’s thesis to that point) the entirety of the 10th chapter of *The Christian Passover* will be quoted. Mr. Coulter’s text will be placed in Times New Roman font and single spaced. Mr. Coulter’s source material will be extensively quoted to show the proper context of his quotes to assuage readers that this author has not followed the same pattern of misquoting scholars extant in *The Christian Passover*. An analysis of the scholarship displayed in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* will be presented at the end of this chapter.

Word for Word Examination of Chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*

Mr. Coulter writes:

This comparison enables us to clearly see how human misinterpretations and alterations of God’s commands have significantly changed the observance of the Old Testament Passover. In this chapter, we will read historical evidence of changes in the Jewish observance of the Passover which led to the elimination of the 14th as the Passover day. We will also see what a leading Biblical dictionary reveals about these changes in the Passover observance.

¹¹ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Vol. 13, Pentateuch, pp. 239-40

PASSOVER AND FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD ORIGINALLY WERE SEPARATE FEASTS--NOT ONE COMBINED FEAST.

The commands of God in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23 make it undeniably clear that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were to be observed as two separate feasts, one following the other. But today the Jewish practice is to keep the Passover on the 15th day of the first month, combined with the first night of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The modern Jewish calendar designates the 15th as the Passover day, and the Jewish Passover meal, called the Seder, is eaten on the 15th. This practice clearly conflicts with the Scriptural commands to observe the Passover on the 14th day of the month.¹²

Adherents of Judaism and Jewish scholars agree that the Passover was sacrificed on the later portions of the 14th of the first month, also known as Nisan or Abib, and the meal was eaten on the early 15th. They agree a real Passover cannot be observed because the temple is not standing, so they eat a Seder meal at the same time they believe they would have eaten a Passover meal if the temple was standing. Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 state all sacrifices have to be done where God placed his name once the people entered the Promised Land. Numbers 28 and 29 list some of those temple sacrifices and the Passover is included among them in Numbers 28:16. However, since there is no altar to perform any sacrifice today, the Jews believe they cannot practicing a full Passover observance. Whether this tradition is correct or not is beyond the scope of this book, but there is substantial scholarship to verify they believe they are eating the Seder meal at the same time the Passover meal was always eaten. Therefore, Mr. Fred Coulter's claim that certain Jewish designations of the 15th of Nisan on some calendars as the Passover shows that Jews know they have changed the day of the Passover observance is unfounded. However, as Shlomo Riskin writes (he is quoted at the end of chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*), if the temple sacrifices were to be re-instituted, then Jews in Israel would return to the observance of a late 14th Passover with a Seder on the 15th rather than just a Seder meal early on the 15th of Nisan. Mr. Coulter writes,

As we have learned, this change in the observance of the Passover was justified by misinterpreting the term *ben ha arbayim* as the afternoon of the 14th, rather than the beginning of the day, as the Scriptures define it. Choosing to follow their own interpretation of *ben ha arbayim*, the Jews killed their Passover lambs late on the 14th and ate the Passover meal on the night of the 15th.

The Jews admit that their practice of combining the Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread deviates from the original observance of the two feasts. The Jewish Encyclopedia states, 'Comparison of the successive strata of the Pentateuchal laws bearing on the festival makes it plain that the institution, as developed, is really of composite character. TWO FESTIVALS ORIGINALLY DISTINCT HAVE BECOME MERGED...' (Vol. IX, "Passover," emphasis added).

Jewish authorities understand and acknowledge that originally there were two distinct and separate feasts: 1) the Passover, commemorating the passing over in Egypt; and 2) the Feast of Unleavened Bread, commemorating the Exodus. The Passover day preceded the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was observed for seven days. The entire spring festival lasted a total of eight days--not seven days, as the Jews now celebrate.¹³

¹² Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, York Publishing, 1999, p. 116

¹³ Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, York Publishing, 1999, p. 116

The passage from *The Jewish Encyclopedia* quoted by Mr. Coulter was written by critical Jewish scholars who believe the Old Testament is myth and legend. The claim that a supposed change in Passover timing has to do with misinterpreting the term *ben ha arbayim* is pure conjecture on Mr. Coulter's part and is never mentioned in this or any of the other source material found in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*. Most conservative Jewish scholars would contend they are following Mr. Coulter's "14 rules of Bible study"¹⁴ when they set the time for the Passover sacrifice. They begin with rule number one, which states begin with scriptures that are easy to understand. Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 state the manner and method of sacrifice would change when the Israelites entered the Promised Land, thus domestic sacrifices would no longer be allowed. Numbers 28:16 confirms this includes the Passover.¹⁵ These scholars would examine the only three Passovers in the Promised Land that are recorded in scripture, those of the righteous kings Hezekiah and Josiah¹⁶ and the Passover of Ezra 6. They would state they are following the clear pattern outlined in Old Testament scriptures. Mr. Coulter acknowledges all three Passovers were centered at the temple and were not domestic. Mr. Coulter acknowledges that the two Passovers of 2 Chron. 30 and 35 occurred on the later part of the 14th in the temple (Hezekiah's was the second Passover during the second month). To state that the Jews changed the timing of Passover based upon a misinterpretation of the Hebrew phrase *ben ha arbayim* (between the evenings or twilight) is incorrect according to any of the material quoted in the 10th chapter of *The Christian Passover*.

An examination of what was merged, according to the liberal scholars quoted in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, is very different from the interpretation given in *The Christian Passover*. As a side note, it is often difficult to find Mr. Coulter's quotes because he does not list page numbers nor does he list his references in any standard manner. The source material that Mr. Coulter quoted has been placed in bold. Because Mr. Coulter often quotes small portions of larger passages, his portion of the quote will continue to be placed in bold throughout this chapter to show the pattern of scholarship used by Mr. Coulter.

Critical View: Comparison of the successive strata of the Pentateuchal laws bearing on the festival makes it plain that the institution as developed is really of a composite character. Two festivals, originally distinct, have become merged, their underlying ideas reappearing both in the legend associated with the holy days as its assumed historical setting and occasion, and in the ritual. The name *pesah* must be taken to be derived from that meaning of the root which designated the 'skipping,' 'dancing' motions of the young lamb (Toy, in 'Jour. Bib. Lit' 1897), only secondarily connoting 'passing over' in the sense of 'sparing.' *Pesah*, thus explained, is connected with pastoral life; it is the festival celebrated in the early spring by the shepherds before setting out for the new pastures, in Ex. xii. The primitive manner of preparing the lamb for the family feast is still apparent. Such a family feast, naturally, was in the nature of a sacrifice, the gods of the clan being supposed to partake of it as well the human members. There is a strong presumption that the skipping motions of the lamb were imitated by the participants, who in this wise 'danced' around the sacrificial offering, and that explains the designation of both the feast and the lamb.

14 found at http://www.cbcb.org/14rules_booklet.htm

15 Num. 28:16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month *is* the passover of the LORD.

16 2 Chron. 30 and 35

This pastoral Pesah was originally distinct from the mazzot festival, but it merged all the more readily with it because both occurred in the spring, about the time of the vernal equinox. The Mazzot feast is distinctly agricultural, the mazzot cakes being both the natural offering from the newly gathered barley to the gods that had allowed the crop to ripen, and then staple food of the harvesters. Offering and food are nearly always identical in the concepts and practices of primitive races. The difficulty of finding an adequate historical explanation for the mazzot is apparent even in the account of Ex. xii., which would make them emblematic of the hurry of the deliverance from Egypt, though it was the supposition that the mazzot had been used at the Passover meal before the Exodus.

The agricultural character the Passover (or Mazzot) festival is evidenced by the fact that it is one the three pilgrim, or season, festivals. Of course, when the pastoral Pesah and the agricultural Mazzot came to be merged can not be determined definitely, but one is safe in saying that it must have been shortly after the occupation of Palestine, the tradition about the Pesah observed by Joshua at Gilgal (see Biblical Data) suggesting and confirming this assumption.

The relation of circumcision to Pesah is explained when the original pastoral and propitiatory character of the latter is remembered. The pastoral clan would naturally exclude all that were not the clan from the meal at which it trusted with its protecting god (that being the original significance of every solemn meal) and disarmed his jealousy. Circumcision itself was a rite of propitiation, like the lamb at Pesah, possibly a substitute for human sacrifice. (See the legend of Cain and Abel for the bearing of circumcision, on human sacrifice.) A good case may be made out in favor of the theory that, for this reason, Pesah, was at one time the festival of the circumcision, all that had attained the proper age during the year being circumcised on the one and the same day, namely, at Pesah.”¹⁷

The article quoted by Mr. Coulter is a review of Passover from the critical prospective and is labeled as such in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*. As a reminder, the critical perspective believes Moses and the exodus were myths made up to allow two divergent religious groups to join together, which is the merging they are referring to. Critical scholarship believes in the Document theory. This article from *The Jewish Encyclopedia* displays critical scholarship’s hypothesis about how the Passover supposedly merged with Unleavened Bread. This article states:

- The Passover was originally kept by shepherds who killed a lamb to appease their god, not YHVH. This lamb may have taken the place of a human sacrifice they previously used to offer to their god.
- The Passover may have also been the one time a year that these ancient people circumcised members of their tribe, thus suggesting critical scholarship believes Genesis 17:12 was also a fable created to justify circumcision practices.
- The word Passover means to skip or dance the way a lamb does, showing its pastoral roots.
- Unleavened Bread was an agricultural feast kept by a different group of people to honor a different clan god.
- According to this critical scholarship, why this different group of people ate unleavened bread is unknown, as is shown by the supposedly flimsy reason given for eating it in Exodus 12.
- These critical scholars don’t know how, but over time these shepherds supposedly got together with farmers who were keeping a feast of unleavened bread to their god at the same time the shepherds were sacrificing a lamb to their god.

¹⁷ Singer, Isidore, ed. *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Funk and Wagnall’s, NY, NY, 1905, p. 554-5

- Critical scholars believe mazzot may be called the bread of affliction because it harkens back to the time when the tribe afflicted itself with circumcision.
- Critical scholars believe over time these two different peoples worshipping different gods in different ways made up a story about a guy named Moses leading people out of Egypt as a way to combine their religions together.

Critical scholars make no mention of Jehovah (YHVH) as the god of the Passover in this article. The only mention of the exodus from Egypt is as a vehicle to tie together two feasts that had previously had nothing to do with each other in a supposedly mythical thread. The author of *The Christian Passover* has taken a passage that states Unleavened Bread and Passover were combined together by making up a legend about Moses and the Exodus to support his thesis. Therefore Mr. Coulter's statement that Jewish scholars understand and acknowledge the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread were two distinct and separate feasts is incorrect.

The Christian Passover continues;

JOSEPHUS RECORDS EIGHT-DAY FESTIVALS IN HIS TIME

As Josephus shows, the transition from eight days to seven days was not yet complete in New Testament times. In the late first century, Josephus recorded his understanding of the number of days included in the observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread: "...We keep a feast **for eight days**, which is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread" (Antiquities of the Jews, Bk. II, Ch. 15, Sec. 1, emphasis added).

There is no question that the Jews in Josephus' lifetime observed a full eight days for the spring festival, exactly as they did for the fall festival, which includes the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days and the Last Great Day, making a total of eight days. Notice Josephus' statement concerning the observance of this fall festival: "Upon the fifteenth day of the same month [the seventh month], when the season of the year is changing for winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of year...and **keep a festival for eight days**...on the eighth day all work was laid aside, and then as we said before, they sacrificed to God..." (Antiquities of the Jews, Bk. III, Ch. 10, Sec. 4, emphasis added).

Josephus' statement shows that the Jews of the late first century were still observing the Scriptural commands to keep the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days and the Last Great Day which follows, making eight days (Lev. 23:33-44). They understood that these eight days were whole days, calculated from sunset to sunset. There can be no doubt that it was the same for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Jews of Josephus' day were observing the Passover day, the 14th day of the first month, in addition to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins on the 15th and lasts for seven days, making a total of eight days (Lev. 23:4-8).¹⁸

Josephus is definitely not a critical scholar. However, Josephus' statement bears absolutely no resemblance to Mr. Coulter's interpretation. It is imperative that source material be looked at in context. Apples should be compared with apples, not pineapples. Josephus writes, again with Mr. Coulter's portion of the quote bolded,

¹⁸ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 116-7

So the Hebrews went out of Egypt, while the Egyptians wept, and repented that they had treated them so hardly—Now they took their journey by Letopolis, a place at that time deserted, but where Babylon was built afterwards, when Cambyses laid Egypt waste: but as they went away hastily, on the third day they came to a place called Beelzephon, on the Red Sea; and when they had no food out of the land, because it was a desert, they eat of loaves kneaded of flour, only warmed by a gentle heat; and this food they made use of for thirty days; for what they brought with them out of Egypt would not suffice them any longer time; and this only while they dispensed it to each person, to use so much only as would serve for necessity, but not for satiety. Whence it is that, in memory of the want we were then in, **we keep a feast for eight days, which is called the feast of unleavened bread.**¹⁹

There is absolutely no mention of the Passover in this section of Josephus. Josephus states the entire eight day period was known as the feast of unleavened bread, just as today people often refer to the Feast of Tabernacles as an eight day period, even though the last day is not really a part of the feast of Tabernacles. Mr. Coulter has added his interpretation that Josephus taught the Passover was a full day long. However, when Josephus is allowed to interpret himself, the meaning is very different than Mr. Coulter's interpretation. Josephus states, with Mr. Coulter's portion of the quote in bold,

Upon the 15th of the same month, when the season of the year is changing for winter, the law enjoins us to pitch tabernacles in every one of our houses, so that we preserve ourselves from the cold of that time of the year; as also that when we should arrive at our own country, and come to that city which we should have then for our metropolis, because of the temple therein to be built, **and keep a festival for eight days,** and offer burnt offerings, and sacrifice thank-offerings, that we should then carry in our hands a branch of myrtle, and willow, and a bough of the palm-tree, with the addition of the pome citron: That the burnt-offering on the first of those days was to be a sacrifice of thirteen bulls, and fourteen lambs, and fifteen rams, with the addition of a kid of the goats, as an expiation for sins; and on the following days the same number of lambs, and of rams, with the kids of the goats; but abating one of the bulls every day till they amounted to seven only. **On the eighth day all work was laid aside, and then, as we said before, they sacrificed to God** a bullock, a ram, and seven lambs, with a kid of the goats, for an expiation of sins. And this is the accustomed solemnity of the Hebrews, when they pitch their tabernacles.²⁰

But when God had signified, that with one plague he would compel the Egyptians to let Hebrews go, he commanded Moses to tell the people that they should have a sacrifice ready, and they should prepare themselves on the tenth day of the month Xanthicus, against the fourteenth, (which month is called by the Egyptians Pharmuth, Nisan by the Hebrews; but the Macedonians call it Xanthicus,) and that he should carry the Hebrews with all they had. Accordingly, he having got the Hebrews ready for their departure, and having sorted the people into tribes, he kept them together in one place: but when the fourteenth day was come, and all were ready to depart they offered the sacrifice, and purified their houses with the blood, using bunches of hyssop for that purpose; and when they had supped, they burnt the remainder of the flesh, as just ready to depart. Whence it is that we do still offer this sacrifice in like manner to this day, and call this festival *Pascha* which signifies

19 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Bk. II, Ch. 15, Sec. 1

20 Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book 3, Chapter 10, section 4

*the feast of the passover; because on that day God passed us over, and sent the plague upon the Egyptians; for the destruction of the first-born came upon the Egyptians that night, so that many of the Egyptians who lived near the king's palace, persuaded Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go.*²¹

Josephus does state the feast of tabernacles is eight days long. Rather than go to a completely different area of Josephus' manuscript to define how long Josephus believed the Feast of Unleavened Bread lasted, as Mr. Coulter does, it is preferable to examine the very next paragraph of Chapter 10 of Book 3 of *Antiquities*, the paragraph after the one partially quoted above in *The Christian Passover*, to determine what Josephus believed the Passover was and how long it lasted.

“In the month of Xanthicus, which is by us called Nisan, and is the beginning of our year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the Passover; and so we do celebrate this passover in companies, leaving nothing of what we sacrifice till the day following. The feast of unleavened bread succeeds that of the passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days, wherein they feed on unleavened bread; on every one of which days two bulls are killed, and one ram, and seven lambs.”²²

Josephus also defined when the Passover was sacrificed when he wrote, “So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh, but so that a company not less than ten belong to every sacrifice, (for it is not lawful for them to feast singly by themselves.”²³

Josephus states the Passover lambs were killed in the temple on the afternoon of the 14th between 3 and 5 P.M. for the feast of Passover. Josephus states the Passover lamb was killed and eaten by companies of between 10 and 20 in size. Josephus states this was when the Passover was sacrificed in Egypt. The only way to harmonize Josephus' statement about Unleavened Bread being an eight day period with the Passover lambs being killed on the afternoon of the 14th is that the eight day period started on the afternoon of the 14th and lasted until the end of the 21st of Nisan. This is eight days, although one of them is a partial day. According to Josephus this period was known as both the feast of Unleavened Bread and as the feast of the Passover. Clearly Josephus' quote has been pulled out of context. Placing Josephus views of Passover and Unleavened Bread in context shows that Mr. Coulter's interpretation in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is clearly erroneous. Using Josephus to try to establish an early 14th Passover is incorrect and shows an inability to correctly interpret original source material in context.

The Christian Passover continues:

THE JEWS LATER COMBINED THE PASSOVER AND THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD, MAKING A SEVEN-DAY FEAST

21 Josephus, *The Antiquity of the Jews*, book 2 chapter 14

22 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 10, section 5

23 Josephus, *The War of the Jews*, Book 6, chapter 9

The combining of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which reduced the eight-day festival to a seven-day feast, has been well documented. The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible confirms this change in the observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

“In contemporary Judaism the word Pesh, or ‘Passover,’ is used to refer to a whole range of observances related to the season. This usage has been customary since ca. the second century of the Christian era....As the employment of the one title, Passover, indicates, the Mishna, like Josephus, treated all the observances as parts of a single integrated feast. **This has not always been so.**”

“This indicates a recollection that there were two separable units or feasts in the single complex of observances. But this distinction was not carefully kept....Amid all the uncertainty about the Passover and Unleavened Bread in Israel there is general agreement on two points: the feast contains **two originally separate components**” (Vol. III, s. v. “Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread,” emphasis added).²⁴

A reference is best examined in context. Mr. Coulter continue a pattern of removing important sections of the quoted material to allow a completely inaccurate interpretation of the text in this quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary*. A much larger portion of the above quoted article is listed below, again with Mr. Coulter's partial quotes being bolded. This clearly shows that material supporting a late 14th Passover has been removed, as well as removing data displaying the liberal, critical bias of this article.

In contemporary Judaism the word Pesah, or ‘Passover’ is used to refer to the whole range of observances related to the season. This usage has been customary since ca. the second century of the Christian era. The tractate Pesahim (plural of Pesah, probably with reference (to the individual sacrificial lambs; cf. II Chr. 35:7) in the Mishna both exemplifies and serves as basis for this custom. The single term serves as the title for all the festivities including those observances which relate to unleavened bread to which indeed, the first three chapters of the tractate are devoted. Josephus refers to the “feast of unleavened bread” as the proper title for the whole; but in two places he adds the clause ‘which is called Passover’ as if to indicate popular usage (Jos. War II.xiv.3; VI.ix.3; Antiq. XVII.ix.3; XX.v 3).

As the employment of the one title Passover indicates the Mishna like Josephus treated all the observances as parts of a single integrated feast. This had not always been so. Earlier in the OT, and into the NT as well ‘Passover’ and ‘feast of Unleavened Bread’ (Mark 14:1) were both used with reference to the rites. Now one and now the other covered the entire sequence. But basically the Passover referred to the eve of the first day the fourteenth day of the month (Lev. 23:5 etc.) on which the sacrifice of the Passover lamb took place while the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev. 23:6 etc.) applied to the seven days following. **This indicates a recollection that there were two separable units or feasts in the single complex of observances. But this distinction was not carefully kept** (cf. Luke 22:7). Because the two observances fell at the same time and also because Passover proper lasted only a single night this was almost impossible. E.g. the removal of leaven had to be completed before the slaying of the Passover sacrifice took place (Deut. 16:4; Pes. 1.1-4) so that the Passover meal itself was also a meal of unleavened bread (Exod. 12:8); and the term ‘Passover’ was used for all the festal days (Deut. 16:2-3; Ezek. 45:2 1-25).

²⁴ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 117 (emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

Exod. 23:15 a part of what is probably the oldest extant liturgical calendar of Israel, speaks of the ‘feast of unleavened bread’ (cf. Deut. 16:16). This statement has been pivotal in all research and discussion about the history of Israel’s culture. The issue at stake is whether at the time of the framing of this calendar assigned to the Yahwistic editor and placed in the early period of the monarchy the Passover sacrifice was a part of the cultus of the community of Israel as a whole and whether indeed it had ever been such. Beginning with Wellhausen the widely accepted view has been that until the reformation of Josiah and the Deuteronomic legislation related to it Passover as distinct from Unleavened Bread was a domestic observance rather than a rite serving as a celebration of Israel’s national history. This view interprets II Kings 21-23 to mean that Passover was not nationally celebrated in the monarchic period and questions the historical tenability of the implication that there were such national celebrations in the days of the judges. It also holds that a clause such as Exod. 34:25b represents a later interpolation into old accounts. This well-established view of the history of Passover is sharply challenged today as will be shown below.

Amid all the uncertainty about the history of Passover and Unleavened Bread in Israel there is general agreement on two points: the feast contains two originally separate components; and both of these have a pre-Israelite history, Passover as a nomadic shepherds’ rite and Unleavened Bread as a Canaanite agricultural feast. On the latter point scripture itself seems to substantiate this view at least with respect to Passover. Moses asked the Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go so that they might keep a feast to the Lord in the wilderness (Exod. 5:1; 10:9). The plausible hypothesis derived from these statements is that this “feast” was the pre-Israelite form of Passover probably a shepherds’ festival. Thus Wellhausen made the statement that ‘the exodus is not the occasion of the festival, but the festival the occasion, if only a pretended one, of the exodus.’ The subsequent analysis of the history of the forms of the Israelite cultus has confirmed this view that Passover and also Unleavened Bread had a long history as cult forms before being adopted as such by Israel to serve in the celebration of Israel’s historic deliverance from Egypt. All accounts of both as pre-Israelite rites must however in the nature of the case be hypothetical reconstructions based on their form in Israel and on our knowledge of analogous observances in ancient Semitic culture.”²⁵

How bad is this misrepresentation of this passage from *The Interpreter’s Dictionary* in *The Christian Passover*? The continuation of Mr. Coulter’s quote, which he stopped in mid-sentence states “**Amid all the uncertainty about the history of Passover and Unleavened Bread in Israel there is general agreement on two points: the feast contains two originally separate components;** both of these have a pre-Israelite history, Passover as a nomadic shepherds’ rite and Unleavened Bread as a Canaanite agricultural feast.”²⁶ To interpret this quote as stating that the Passover and Unleavened Bread were separate feasts and the Jews combined them in an ungodly manner by removing the connotation that those separate feasts were the classical critical view of Canaanite farmers keeping one feast and nomadic shepherds keeping another is simply unpardonably bad scholarship. The obfuscation of stopping in mid-sentence speaks for itself.

This article in *The Interpreter’s Dictionary* present standard critical scholars viewpoint that the reason why Passover observances are not recorded as taking place in the Promised Land until the

25 Buttrick, G.A., ed, *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 3, Abingdon, Nashville, TN, 1980, pp. 663-4

26 Buttrick, *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 664, bold portion quoted in Chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*

time of Hezekiah is because the Passover was not celebrated by Israel under the United Kingdom during the time of David and Solomon. This article from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* suggests the story of the Passover was made up at the time of the Hezekiah and that is when it was first observed. This source states before that time it is likely some shepherds in the hills did keep a domestic sacrifice of a lamb to their clan god, from which part of the Passover was derived.

Scripture shows it has been the custom since before the time of Jesus to refer to the entire time around the first feast period of the year, occurring during the middle of Nisan, as the days of Unleavened bread or the Passover, interchangeably. Luke 22:21 confirms this custom.²⁷ Members of the churches of God do the same thing with the feast of Tabernacles today. The majority of Christianity does the same thing by calling the events and timing around Dec. 25 as Christmas time. There is obviously nothing wrong with this tradition since scripture shows such usage.

Mr. Coulter's contention that the Passover is a day long is incorrect according to *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. "But basically the Passover referred to the eve of the first day the fourteenth day of the month (*Lev. 23:5 etc.*) on which the sacrifice of the Passover lamb took place."²⁸ The Passover was sacrifice on the eve of the 14th and that it lasted only one night.

The Interpreter's Dictionary states Passover was followed by seven days of Unleavened Bread. Definitely not two separate feasts, one a day long followed by another seven days long. *The Interpreter's Dictionary* goes on to mention a Yahistic editor writing scripture about the Passover in the period of the monarchy. Thus there is no doubt this article was written from a critical scholastic stand point. There is no other explanation for stating that Exodus 23:15 was written at the end of Monarchy period, about 700 B.C. and was not written by Moses.

Both the feast of Unleavened Bread and the Passover existed before Israel existed according to this article. The early part of this article states Unleavened Bread was practiced by farmers while a Passover like ceremony was practiced by shepherds. When these two groups got together to form the nation of Israel, they combined their religions by making up the story of Moses and the Exodus.

Wellhausen's quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary*, which deserves to be repeated, is "the exodus is not the occasion of the festival but the festival the occasion, if only a pretended one of the exodus."²⁹ Wellhausen believed the story of the Exodus was made up to merge a feast of shepherds in the hills with Canaanite agricultural feast previously observed in the valleys. This theory is what is being espoused in this quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. This passage from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* gives no scholarly support to an early 14th Passover. This critical scholarship not only does support the idea of a domestic Passover by Israel, but instead refers to a sacrifice performed by shepherds in the hills in a time before Israel became a nation. However, even this critical scholarship states the time for this supposed sacrifice was late on the 14th of Nisan, not early.

27 Luke 22:21 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

28 Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 663

29 Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 663

Chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* has systematically and strategically removed parts of this quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* because the full quote lends no support to either a domestic or early 14th Passover. The entire quote, taken in context, never suggest any sacrifice occurred on the early 14th. Although these critical scholars believe the supposed pre-cursor to the Passover sacrifice was a domestic sacrifice, that sacrifice was performed by shepherds in the mountains who later joined with farmers in the valleys and created a legend, a fable, a lie, according to them, about a guy named Moses and a supposed Exodus to combine their two feasts and their two religions together. Mr. Coulter writes:

Much has been written concerning the history of the Passover and the changes that occurred in its observance. These historical records clearly attest to the fact that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which were originally observed as two separate feasts, were combined by the Jews. The domestic sacrifice of the Passover lambs at the beginning of the 14th was replaced by the temple sacrifice of the lambs in the late afternoon and a Passover meal on the night of the 15th, which begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Those who understand the Scriptural account in Exodus 12 can readily see the contrast between the original domestic observance of the Passover and the later temple practice of the Jews.³⁰

Mr. Coulter is correct when he writes much has been written about the Passover and Unleavened Bread being two separate feasts, but Mr. Coulter is mistaken that these feasts were combined by the Jews and his supporting reference material does not support his belief when examined in context. The domestic sacrifice of the Passover in Egypt was replaced by the centralized sacrifice of the Passover (*pesah*) because of the scriptural ordinances given by God which are listed in Deut. 12, Lev. 17 and Numbers 28:16 and not because the Jews mistakenly changed these ordinances. All the sources Mr. Coulter depicts as supporting a supposed domestic Passover present the critical viewpoint that Passover and Unleavened Bread existed long before Israel became a nation. These sources contend Israel became a nation when two groups syncretized their religions, not when Israel marched out of Egypt, which they believe is a myth likely created by priests in the time period of 1000 to 500 BC. *The Christian Passover's* interpretation of this critical scholarship is incorrect and does not support an early 14th hypothesis. It also never suggests that the domestic Passover sacrifice these critical scholars envision being done by shepherds in the hills was performed at any time other than the later part of the 14th of Nisan.

Mr. Coulter writes those who understand the timing and manner of the Passover of Exodus 12 will realize that it is different than the Passovers recorded in the Promised Land in 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 and Ezra 6. Mr. Coulter is correct that the manner of the sacrifice in Egypt is different than the manner of Passover sacrifice in the Promised Land, but that is because the entire sacrificial system was changed with the creation of the tabernacle and was modified even further when the Israelites entered the Promised Land. However, Mr. Coulter's attempt to show the *pesah* sacrifice in Egypt occurred early on the 14th, based upon his definition of *ben ha arbayim* and the Hebrew word *pesah*, has been shown to be in error. *The Christian Passover* continues:

30 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 117-8

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible points out this marked change in the observance of the Passover: "In many respects the observance [of the Passover at the beginning of the 14th by the Jewish Samaritans] corresponds more closely to the scriptural prescriptions, notably those of Exod. 12, than the true observance in Jerusalem in the days of Jesus--a reminder, among other things, that in its three thousand years or more of history as an Israelite observance, Passover has never ceased to change, however imperceptibly."³¹

Again, it is appropriate to place Mr. Coulter's quote in the context from which it was removed, especially since he has parenthetically added his incorrect statement about the Samaritan Passover. Again the portion of the quote Mr. Coulter chose to use has been placed in bold type in context in the quote below. However, it is important to realize that the original source material quoted deals with the typical Passover at the temple.

With the destruction of the temple, Passover ceased as a sacrificial rite; as a sacred commemoration of God's redemption it has continued. The sacrifice still survives in the dwindling Samaritan community at Nablus Jordan. This schismatic Jewish group separated from the temple in Jerusalem in ca. the fourth century B.C. Its observance of both the sacrifice and the communal meal in all probability preserves forms that antedate those described above. The slaughter is made at the foot of Mount Gerizim precisely at sunset rather than earlier (Exod. 12:6). Instead of the chanting of psalms, the reading of Exod. 12 accompanies it. The actual communal eating of the sacrifice does not occur until after midnight and is done in great haste (cf. Exod. 12:11-29). Unleavened cakes are used and bitter herbs. But there is no wine or choroses. **In many respects the observance corresponds more closely to the scriptural prescriptions, notably those of Exod. 12 than was true of the observed in Jerusalem in the days of Jesus--a reminder of other things, that in its three thousand year or more of history as an Israelite observance Passover has never ceased to change, however imperceptibly.** In NT times the agricultural side of the feast particularly as illustrated in the ceremony of the sheaf (see below; see also WEEKS, FEAST OF), seems to have played an insignificant role. It is a facet of the feast which has enjoyed a revival in the state of Israel in recent times.³²

Even without knowledge of Mr. Pummer's work on the Samaritan Passover, when placed in context this quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* shows that Mr. Coulter has misstated the correct timing of the Samaritan Passover. The entire quote shows the Samaritan Passover occurs at sunset at the end of the 14th, a few hours after the Passover sacrifice in the temple. Mr. Coulter insertion of a parenthetical statement "[of the Passover at the beginning of the 14th by the Jewish Samaritans.]"³³ is incorrect and totally misleading.

The Samaritans still eat the Passover in haste after midnight on the 15th of Nisan, which *The Interpreter's Dictionary* states "in many respects the observance corresponds more closely to the scriptural prescriptions, notably those of Exodus 12 than was true of the observed in Jerusalem in the days of Jesus."³⁴ Therefore *The Interpreter's Dictionary* states that their understanding of

31 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 118

32 Buttrick, G.A., ed, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 665

33 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 118

34 Buttrick, G.A., ed, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 665

Exodus 12 is that the lamb was sacrificed at the end of the 14th on Nisan and eaten around midnight on the 15th of Nisan, which again disagrees with an early 14th hypothesis. Again, this portion of the quote was again removed by the author of *The Christian Passover*.

Mr. Coulter quotes critical scholars who believe that Passover is a changing ceremony. What is left out is what these critical scholars believe has changed is the agricultural nature of the Passover ceremony, particularly the wave sheaf offering. They believe this agricultural facet of the observance is undergoing a revival in Israel. This change has nothing to do with supposedly early versus late 14th observance of the Passover, but with the agricultural portions and rites of the feast. This is important to critical scholars because they believe the origins of Passover and Unleavened Bread were pastoral and agricultural, not biblical.

Therefore Mr. Coulter's source material, although critical in nature, again states that the Passover was killed on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan and eaten on early part of the 15th of Nisan. Mr. Coulter's own source material states this is the way it was done in antiquity. Again Mr. Coulter has taken a snippet from a quote by critical scholars, who doubts the sanity of scripture, that maintains that the Passover was on the late 14th and transformed it into a quote that supposedly supports the early 14th hypothesis. This pattern of obfuscating the original intent of his source so he can transfigure their writing into something that supports an early 14th Passover sacrifice is repeated over and over again not only in chapter 10, but throughout *The Christian Passover*. Mr. Coulter continues:

The largest block of material in the O.T. dealing with Passover and Unleavened Bread is found in Exod. 12:1-13:16. It occurs as a part of the narrative of the slaying of the first-born of the Egyptians and of the ensuing departure of the Israelites. The object of the narrators is to associate both observances with the historical deliverance of Israel. They do this by stressing that both were established in Egypt....

'He [H.G. May] feels that [Exodus] 12:1-28 as a whole associates the feast with Jewish life in the Diaspora: 'the representation,' he says, 'is consistently that of a simple, private home celebration with the sacrificial animal a sheep.'"³⁵

Again, to understand what the quoted scholar intended to write, this quote will be placed in context with the portion of the quote used by the 10th chapter of *The Christian Passover* in bold. The reader should begin to notice a pattern by the author of *The Christian Passover* in the way he treats quotes and removes large portions that totally disagree with his early 14th premise.

The largest block of material in the O T dealing with Passover and Unleavened Bread is found in Exod. 12:1 - 13:16. It occurs as a part of the narrative of the slaying of the first-born of the Egyptians and of the ensuing departure of the Israelites. The object of the narrators is to associate both observances with the historical deliverance of Israel. They do this by stressing that both were established in Egypt and kept at the very time of the tenth plague and of Israel's departure, on that night (Exod. 12:12; cf. I OCR. 11:23) and on this very day (Exod. 12:17; 13:3-4).

35 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 118

The composition of most of this section, as we now have it, probably occurred in the Exile or in the post-exilic period. Documentary source criticism traditionally assigned Exod. 12:1-20, 28, 40-13:2, to the priestly writing. 12:24-27; 13:3-16 were considered the work of a Deuteronomic editor. Insofar as the narrative deals with the feast, this left only the brief section 12:21-23 to represent a pre-exilic source (J); and it gives no positive evidence that Passover was a national observance celebrating Israel's history. This account of the literary history has not materially changed. H.G. May has rejected the notion that 12:21-28 must be early because it features a blood rite presumably not practiced in later Israel. He treats the entire unit 12:1-28 as a part of P also associating it with Lev. 23:4 ff. **He feels that 12:1-28 as a whole associates the feast with Jewish life in the Diaspora; "the representation" he says "is consistently that of a simple private home celebration with the sacrificial animal a sheep.** Not only do the early legislators Deuteronomy and Ezekiel ignore these particular blood rites but they have no place in their ordinances where such a celebration could have been performed" (JBL, LV [1936] 72). May's significant effort to tie the entire section more closely to later Jewish practice is matched by the persuasive observation of Kraus that all of it both J and P, is archaic in quality and harks back to pre-Israelite elements. Both emphases are well founded. By giving both equally serious attention the full import of this section for our understanding of the history of the observances is best realized. i.e. the section seems to illustrate in a remarkable way both the tenacious persistence of the cultic forms and the constant, though sometimes imperceptible, changes of emphasis in the manner of observance of the feast."³⁶

What is the true intent of this article from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*? What was obfuscated or left out of this quote in *The Christian Passover*? *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states the Passover lamb was killed on the same night the nation of Israel left Egypt. Mr. Coulter left off, "and kept at the very time of the tenth plague and of Israel's departure, on that night."³⁷ So the critical scholars of *The Interpreters Dictionary* are stating the narrators of the Exodus 12, the supposed J and P authors, were stressing that the nation of Israel left on the same night the 10th and final plague occurred, something Mr. Coulter leaves out, almost certainly because it destroys the premise of his early 14th theory. Although critical scholars do not believe there was an Exodus, they believe Exodus story depicts Israel leaving Egypt on the same night the tenth plague struck Egypt. So again the critical source material quoted by Mr. Coulter does not agree with his early 14th Passover hypothesis.

Mr. Coulter's quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states Exodus 12 was written during the exile, approximately a millennium after the time of the Exodus according to conservative scholars. Thus there is no way Moses could have written Exodus 12 according to this article in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. This article is critical, liberal scholarship. This article states Mr. May wrote that J did not write Exodus 12:21-3 around 750 B.C., but that all of Exodus 12 was written by P, sometime around 600 B.C. This is important to Mr. May because he is trying to prove that although blood rites were not performed at home in the time frame of 600 B.C., P still wrote about them, recalling their historical value. This is the Document Theory in action.

³⁶ Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 666

³⁷ Ibid, p. 666

When *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states, “and it gives no positive evidence that Passover was a national observance celebrating Israel’s history,”³⁸ it insinuates that Passover and unleavened bread were not observed by the nation of Israel at the time of the united kingdom under David and Solomon because those ordinances had not yet been written by the authors of the bible, who were not Moses or YHVH. Although scripture states all of God’s people would observe the Passover, the scholars quoted by Mr. Coulter in this article in *The Interpreter's Dictionary* believe that the Exodus and the Passover sacrifice were a fable made up around 500 B.C.

The kind of constant, imperceptible change *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* is referring to is their belief the Passover changed from an ancient, agricultural rite to some unknown god into a modern day religion with its current observance of Passover and Unleavened Bread. This has nothing to do with a supposed change from an early 14th Passover to a late 14th Passover. Mr. Coulter writes,

“The fact that it [the account in Ex. 12:1-28] is given a wholly domestic setting and lacks a temple ceremony is its most important distinction in relation to all other accounts (Ibid.).”³⁹

Mr. Coulter has taken two quotes that are actually two pages apart from each other in *The Interpreter's Dictionary* and made it appear they were referring to the same subject. Mr. Coulter’s practice of not listing page numbers in his quotes obfuscated this practice. I need to quote a large portion of the original source material to allay possible suspicions that I might be following Mr. Coulter’s practice of misquoting and misrepresenting original source material. This large quote is also useful because a portion of this quote is also used by Mr. Coulter later in this chapter. The portion of the quote that Mr. Coulter used above has again been bolded.

The most striking difference between this priestly account and the later practice however is that the observance though obviously sacrificial in character, was entirely a domestic affair. There is no clear reference to a shrine; and instead of being dashed against an altar there is the application of “some of the blood” (Exod. 12:7; cf vs. 22) to the doorposts and lintel of each house in which the celebration occurs. Exod. 12:21-23 parallels vs. 6-7, 12-13, but may represent an older version of the matter. The word translated as “basin” also means “threshold” or “sill.” This leads to the very plausible proposal: that the slaughter occurred in the doorway of the house and that the blood was a means by which a house entered into a covenant with the Lord and served apotropaically to ward off evil. The directions in vs. 21-23, especially carry all an awesome aspect: the preparation is for a dreadful night: no one “shall go out of the door of his house until the morning”; at sight of the blood the Lord passing through will exempt the marked homes and restrain the destroyer. The rite seems to serve both as a sign for the Lord and as a protection against a nocturnal demon. This is not just a simple domestic celebration; it is a most solemn observance. It is generally agreed too that this form of Passover incorporated some ancient rite of protection through a blood sign perhaps originally practiced by shepherd wanderers and employed at a crucial season or in a night of evil.

The far-reaching implications of the account in Exod. 12:1-13:16 can now be summarized. Its strongly sacramental interpretation of the role of the Passover rite points

38 Ibid, p 665

39 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 118

to a predominantly priestly origin. The large measure of agreement between this account of the feast and later practices especially as recorded in the Mishna indicates that it had wide influence. **The fact that it is given a wholly domestic setting and lacks a temple ceremony---its most important distinction in relation to all other accounts---**may point to an exilic origin. The account may represent practices begun or revised in Babylon; that its exilic origin would have made it readily usable by the subsequent Diaspora as may be stressed is easy to understand. The adaptation of the feast to a setting that lacked a temple may have involved the revival of some very old forms—e.g. the striking of the blood on the doorposts and lintel that focuses upon the pre-Israelite apotropaic or blood-covenant components reinterpreted in the observance. The offering of the first-born may also have pre-Israelite roots. If as seems probable it was in origin a Passover sacrifice one feels that reference to it here in a predominantly Deuteronomic account of the Feast of Unleavened Bread may indicate that it formed a central factor in the pre-exilic observance of Passover. It likewise seems to bespeak a pre-exilic coalescence of some rites of the two originally separate ‘feasts.’”⁴⁰

This quote from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* states that the Passover observance probably did not start until the Babylonian exile. It states that the domestic Passover depicted in Exodus 12 was an invention of Priestly or Deuteronomic writers around 600 B.C. so the Jews in Babylon would feel comfortable with a domestic Passover being in their past. This article suggests this was done because the temple had been destroyed and the people were in exile. This article from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* states the practice of killing a lamb in the spring may date back to some ancient rite of shepherds up in the mountains who used it to ward off demons. According to this article this supposed precursor of the Passover sacrifice performed by the peoples who would later become Israel may have been them offering their first born children to an unknown God, but as time passed and they became more civilized, they may have made up the Passover sacrifice to take the place of the sacrifice of the first born child. There is no mention of the Exodus being associated with Passover in the section of *The Interpreter's Dictionary* because, as Wellhausen stated, it was just a made up story any way. So the domestic setting that Mr. Coulter has quoted has nothing to do with a domestic Passover being observed, but with some priestly writer who supposedly doctored (redacted is the scholarly term) scripture 2,500 years ago, trying to create a religious story to help his exiled people. This is classic critical scholarship. It has nothing to do with an early 14th Passover and it definitely does not support a supposed domestic Passover after the Israelites entered the Promised Land. *The Christian Passover* states:

Although the observance of the Passover shifted to a temple sacrifice, the domestic killing of the Passover lambs was not wholly supplanted by the temple practice. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia reveals that many of the Sadducees—which included the high priests' families--retained the practice of the domestic Passover at the beginning of the 14th. This fact is quite surprising. We would expect the high priests to observe the temple sacrifice of the Passover on the afternoon of the 14th, since they were in charge of the temple. But such was not the case. Notice: ‘This story of the first paschal lamb, as related in the Bible, became the pattern for the observance of the Passover during the period of the Temple, but with a few modifications. Thus the sacrifice took place in the sanctuary and the blood was sprinkled upon the altar.

40 Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary* pp. 666-7

The Pharisees and Sadducees had a dispute as to the time when the slaughtering should take place; the former held it should be in the last three hours before sunset, the latter, **BETWEEN SUNSET AND NIGHTFALL**” (p. 406).

This record of the dispute between the Pharisees and the Sadducees shows that two separate Passover observances continued side by side. The Jews did not universally embrace the temple sacrifice of the Passover. As the historical documentation shows, the Pharisees changed from the domestic sacrifice of the lambs to a temple sacrifice late on the 14th and a Passover meal on the 15th. The Sadducees, including some high priests and their families, continued to practice the domestic killing of the Passover lambs at the beginning of the 14th. The following comparison shows the great difference between the domestic observance, as commanded in Exodus 12, and the temple practice of New Testament times.⁴¹

Mr. Coulter’s quote from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* is placed in context below, again with Mr. Coulter’s portion of the quote being bolded.

“The story of the first paschal lamb, as related in the Bible, became the pattern for the observance of Passover during the period of the Temple, but with a few modifications. Thus the sacrifice took place in the sanctuary and the blood was sprinkled upon the alter. The Pharisees and Sadducees had a dispute as to the time when the slaughtering should take place; the former held it should be in the last three hours before sunset, the latter, between sunset and nightfall. While the sacrifices were being made, the Levites sang Hallel Psalms: these psalms were later sung by the participants in the paschal meal, and many of them glorified the Exodus and the significance of the festival. With the destruction of the Second Temple the Jews ceased to sacrifice the paschal lamb, and only the lamb-bone of the Seder table recalls it; the Samaritans have retained the ancient rite to the present day. Bible scholars regard the offering of the paschal lamb as probably being the recasting of an ancient feast of the first-born.”⁴²

What is this quote from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* really stating and what is it not stating? First and foremost there is never any mention of two different Passover sacrifices with one supposedly being a domestic Passover. If there were a domestic Passover being performed, why would the destruction of the second temple cause a cessation of the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, as this article states? That portion of the quote about the Passover ceasing was left out of *The Christian Passover*. In context *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states that a domestic Passover was not possible, thus Mr. Coulter’s own source states Mr. Coulter’s domestic Passover hypothesis is incorrect.

The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia states the pattern of Passover observance as depicted in scripture became the pattern for the Temple Passover with some changes. This critical scholarship states that the origins of the Passover sacrifice came from a people who became the Israelites originally sacrificing their first born children. Over time, these people began to sacrifice a lamb rather than their first born and then when the temple was built they moved the sacrifice of

41 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 118-9

42 Landman, Isaac, ed. *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia in Ten Volumes. An Authoritative and Popular Presentation of Jews and Judaism sin the Earliest Times*, 1943, Volume 8: *Paschal Lamb*, p. 406

the lamb from their homes to the temple. That is why the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states, “Bible scholars regard the offering of the paschal lamb as probably being the recasting of an ancient feast of the first-born.”⁴³ This passage states that Passover had the imagery of the Exodus added to it when it moved from being a domestic sacrifice to a temple sacrifice because there was no such thing as the exodus according to these scholars.

The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia states that the Samaritans practice the Passover today as they did in ancient days. There is no doubt the Samaritans currently sacrifice the Passover lamb at the very end of the 14th and eat it at midnight of the 15th.⁴⁴

According to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* the Sadducees believed the passover should be killed between sunset and dark at the end of the 14th while the Pharisees believed the lamb should be sacrificed in the last three hours before sunset. We know the Sadducees ran the temple and performed that sacrifices in the afternoon rather than the last hour of the day. It is never insinuated the Sadducees believed the lambs should be killed almost a day earlier than the Pharisees did. There has always been an argument about when the day should end in the annals of Israel because the bible is not clear, no matter what Mr. Coulter writes on the subject. It takes an absurd twisting of this article from the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* to supposedly have the Sadducees sacrificing of the *pesah* in their homes 21 hours before they performed helped perform this sacrifice in the temple just so they could please the Pharisees, their political enemies. Apparently this mentions the Samaritans because they supposedly kept the Passover at the same time as the Sadducees would have if they hadn't been following the Pharisees instructions. And that was near sunset at the end of the 14th.

Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 state there were to be no more domestic sacrifices of any kind once the people entered the Promised Land. Numbers 28:16 lists the Passover as one of the temple sacrifices. Therefore *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* is stating that the Sadducees believed that the Passover lambs should be killed in the temple between sunset and dark at the end of the 14th of Nisan, but they killed them earlier because they could not kill all the lambs in the allotted time period. The Pharisees reckoned time differently and believed the Passover sacrifice could be done any time on the afternoon of the 14th. It is therefore incorrect to state that Sadducees, who ran temple and who guarded its institution because of the power it gave them, killed the Passover lamb at a different place. In context, this quote does not suggest the Sadducees or the high priest actually sacrificed the Passover at different time. This article is theorizing if there had been fewer Passover lambs to sacrifice, the Sadducees would have killed the *pesah* lamb at the very end of the 14th of Nisan in the temple, not that the Sadducees or the high priest actually performed such a sacrifice.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover*:

In relation to the Passover of the NT period this section disclosed both similarities and differences. There is the same concern for a family arrangement of the feast; though instead of stating that the minimum size of a ‘family’ is ten, it insists that a man must join with ‘his neighbor’ (Ex. 12:4) so that his group may be large enough to consume the lamb. The ordering seems to have been done more in terms of natural family units

43 Ibid, p. 406

44 Pummer, Reinhard *The Samaritans*, Iconography of Religions XXIII, 5, E.J. Brill, 1987, p. 22

than by means of the ‘companies’ of the era of the Mishna. Moreover there is **no hint here** [in the account in Exodus 12] **that Passover was a pilgrim feast**, nor even of any common shrine for several families....There is **no explicit reference to priestly or Levitical assistance** at the slaughter; **the Mishna obviously CHANGES THE ORIGINAL MEANING** of the phrase ‘the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel’ (Exod. 12:6) by **treating it as a warrant for the three courses** needed to accommodate all the temple sacrifice (Pes. 5:5). The counsel [in Exodus 12] to kill the lambs ‘in the evening’ is more literally followed by the Samaritan rite; **the Hebrew is PROPERLY INTERPRETED AS DUSK and cannot be fully reconciled with the later practice of making the sacrifice in the late afternoon....**The most striking difference between this priestly account and the later practice, however, is that the observance, though obviously sacrificial in character, **was entirely a DOMESTIC affair**. There is no clear reference to a shrine; and, instead of being dashed against an altar, there is the application of ‘some of the blood’ (Exod. 12:7; cf. vs. 22) to the door-posts and lintel of each house in which the celebration occurs....This is not just a simple domestic celebration; it is a most solemn observance” (*Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III, s.v. “Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread,” emphasis added).⁴⁵

The entire quote, without contradictory evidence removed to obfuscate the meaning of the passage, is fully quoted below with portions quoted from *The Christian Passover* in bold.

In relation to the Passover of the NT period this section disclosed both similarities and differences There is the same concern for a family arrangement of the feast; though instead of stating that the minimum size of a “family” is ten, it insists that a man must join with “his neighbor” (Exod 12:4) so that his group may be large enough to consume the lamb. The ordering seems to have been done more in terms of natural family units than by means of the “companies” of the era of the Mishna. Moreover there is no hint here that Passover was a pilgrim feast nor even of any common shrine for the several families. As in the time of the NT the victim must be a male sheep or goat and without blemish; in both cases too the rite occurs on the fourteenth though in later accounts one misses the prescription about the selection of the victim on the tenth of the month. **There is no explicit reference to priestly or Levitical assistance at the slaughter; the Mishna obviously changes the original meaning of the phrase “the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel” (Exod :f 12:6) by treating it as a warrant for the three courses needed to accommodate all for the temple sacrifice (Pcs. 5.5). The counsel to kill the lambs “in the evening” is more literally followed in the Samaritan rite; the Hebrew is properly interpreted as dusk and cannot be fully reconciled with the later practice of making the sacrifice in the late afternoon;** it also seems probable that as with the Samaritans the communal meal was about midnight rather than the evening, as was later true in Jerusalem.

The most striking difference between this priestly account and the later practice however is that the observance though obviously sacrificial in character, was entirely a domestic affair. There is no clear reference to a shrine; and instead of being dashed against an altar there is the application of “some of the blood” (Exod. 12:7; cf vs. 22) to the doorposts and lintel of each house in which the celebration occurs. Exod. 12:21-23 parallels vss. 6-7, 12-13, but may represent an older version of the matter. The word translated as “basin” also means “threshold” or “sill.” This leads to the very plausible proposal: that the slaughter occurred in the doorway of the house and that the blood was a means by which a house entered into a covenant with the Lord and served apotropically to ward off evil. The directions

45 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 119

in vss. 21-23, especially carry all an awesome aspect: the preparation is for a dreadful night: no one “shall I go out of the door of his house until the morning”; at sight of the blood the Lord passing through will exempt the marked homes and restrain the destroyer. The rite seems to serve both as a sign for the Lord and as a protection against a nocturnal demon. **This is not just a simple domestic celebration; it is a most solemn observance.** It is generally agreed too that this form of Passover incorporated some ancient rite of protection through a blood sign perhaps originally practiced by shepherd wanderers and employed at a crucial season or in a night of evil.⁴⁶

Taken in context, without obfuscation by selectively quoting small portions of this Passover article from the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, this article states:

- In both cases, the supposed earlier domestic and the later temple sacrifices, the sacrifice was done at the same time, late on the day of 14th of Nisan.
- This article from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states that the clearest difference between later Passover observances and the Passover of Exodus 12 is that there is no shrine mentioned for killing the lambs in Ex. 12. For traditional scholars, this is obvious because the tabernacle did not exist. However, for the liberal scholars who wrote this article, this quote emphasizes the domestic aspect of the Exodus 12 because when the priest who supposedly wrote this portion of Exodus 12 between 600 and 500 B.C. was creating the story of the Exodus story to make the exiled nation of Judah feel more comfortable without a temple.
- One of the accounts, the one that supposedly was used for the temple sacrifice, did not have the lamb being chosen on the 10th day. This again shows the critical theological process of the bible not operating as whole nor being inspired by God.
- Again the Samaritans eat the Passover at midnight, somewhat later than the Jews would have, but both would have eaten the pesah lamb on the early part of the 15th of Nisan. Mr. Coulter’s misrepresentation of his source by leaving off the phrase, “it also seems probable that as with the Samaritans the communal meal was about midnight rather than the evening, as was later true in Jerusalem”⁴⁷ is no doubt misleading and something a reputable scholar should not do.
- The *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states Verses 21-3 of Exodus 12 are older than verses 6-7 and 12-3 of Chapter 12. Can there be any doubt this is the critical Document theory stating that Moses did not write the Pentateuch and the bible is a bunch of myths and legends that has been compiled together?
- The *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states whoever wrote this section of scripture made sure to use word for doorpost that was the same as basin.
- This article from the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states the original domestic sacrifice that evolved into the Passover came from a ceremony performed by shepherds to ward off “nocturnal demons.” For the editors of this section of the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, Passover is about demons and shepherds, not about the Exodus nor Moses and certainly not about a creator God.

At best, Mr. Coulter’s supposed proof of the Sadducees performing a different Passover for themselves because of their differences with the Pharisees on the timing of the sacrifice from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* would suggest that they desired to kill the lambs for themselves after they finished presiding over the Passover sacrifice for the nation of Israel at the

⁴⁶ *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 666

⁴⁷ *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 666

temple. This quote could even be construed as suggesting the Sadducees killed the *pesah* in the temple between sunset and dark at the end of the 14th, although such sacrifices would have drawn attention and should have been recorded by the Pharisees in the Talmud. However, there is no mention of such sacrifice. *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* confirms that no domestic Passover sacrifice could have occurred from the time of Hezekiah and certainly not at that time of Christ, thus Mr. Coulter's source material destroys his early 14th theory. *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* suggests the Sadducees believed the first Passover occurred between sunset and dark at the end of the 14th of Nisan, but because of the practical difficulties arising from God's ordinance that the lambs were to be sacrificed at the temple at *ben ha arbayim*, the very the end of the day, they moved the sacrifice to the afternoon because they understood *ben ha arbayim* was not an exact time frame.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover* continues:

This comparison of the Scriptural commands and the later practices of the Jews shows some of the misinterpretations that were applied to Exodus 12 to justify changing the Passover to a temple sacrifice. As *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states, three courses of priests and Levites were needed for the temple sacrifice of the Passover, due to the large number of lambs. Each course was allotted one and a half hours, making a total of four and a half hours for the temple sacrifice of the lambs. It was impossible to fit all the sacrificing into *ben ha arbayim*--"between sunset and nightfall"--which lasts only one to one and a half hours. The problem was circumvented by moving the slaying of the lambs to the afternoon of the day. By the time the lambs were roasted and the Passover meal was ready, the sun had set, ending the Passover day and beginning the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Thus the Passover was combined with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the original observance of eight days--composed of two separate feasts--became a combined feast of only seven days. For Talmudic records of the schedule for the temple sacrifice of the Passover, and the rabbinical interpretations which were used to justify the afternoon sacrifice, see Appendix S.⁴⁸

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible states three courses were required to perform all of the Passover sacrifices. Other scholars agree with this assessment. Mr. Coulter contends this practice was incorrect because the Passover must be sacrificed at *ben ha arbayim*, between the evenings. Even if *ben ha arbayim* was a time from sunset to evening, scholars such as Mr. Coulter's oft quoted Everett Fox agree this would be at the end of the day, with the day ending at dark, and not at the beginning of the day. Mr. Fox's e-mail address was readily available at Clark University and he responded to this author's e-mail on August 15th of 2006 that, "I, like most scholars today, believe *ben ha arbayim* was a time frame from sunset to dark at the end of the day." When this author responded by asking him what he thought of scholarship that stated that *ben ha arbayim* was at the beginning of the day and was being used to support a Passover observance at the beginning of the 14th, he responded that he did not get involved in theological disputes, which is his right. But even one of Mr. Coulter's favorite scholarly sources that supposedly support his early 14th hypothesis, Prof. Everett Fox, disagrees with Mr. Coulter's interpretation of *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* and disagrees with Mr. Coulter's interpretation of Mr. Fox's writings. The fact the Sadducees practiced an afternoon sacrifice of

48 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 119-20

the Passover while agreeing with Mr. Fox that it was originally sacrificed during the last hour of the day suggests the Sadducees understood God's view of time as not being as exacting as the Pharisees or as exacting as in Western society today.

This article from *The Interpreter's Dictionary* is simply re-stating the standard critical theological view that somehow a shepherd's feast got combined with an agricultural feast. The standard critical explanation for this theory is that they were combined using the vehicle of a fairy tale about an exodus from Egypt. *The Interpreter's Dictionary* goes on to state there is some divergent views as to whether the Exodus story was made up around 600 B.C. or if it came from an earlier legend. And the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states there was a dispute between the Sadducees and Pharisees as to whether the killing of the Passover lamb sacrifice occurred during the last five hours of the day rather than during the last hour and half of the day. The disagreement over the Passover sacrifice being performed on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan was because of expediency (the Sadducean view) or because any time late in the day was satisfactory (the Pharisaic view). There is scholastic agreement that the Passover sacrifices at the time of Christ were performed in the temple late on the 14th of Nisan. The *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* agrees with this fact.⁴⁹ To suggest that the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* or *The Interpreter's Dictionary* suggests otherwise is an egregious case of eisegesis and is incorrect.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover*:

The *Encyclopedia Judaica*, a leading authority in the history of Jewish practices, acknowledges that **the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were originally observed as two separate and distinct feasts**: "The Feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. **Originally both parts existed separately, but at the beginning of the Exile [in Babylon 603-585 BC] they were combined.**

Passover was originally not a pilgrimage feast, but a domestic ceremony consisting of the slaughtering and eating of the paschal animal. This animal according to Exodus 12:21 was a sheep or goat, according to Deut. 16:2 [this verse does not refer to the sacrifice of the Passover] either a sheep or bovine animal....

Originally the Passover was celebrated among the families (Ex. 12:21 [J]) in tents, after the territorial occupation, in houses. After the cultic centralization of King Josiah, the celebration of the Passover was transferred to the central Sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut. 16:2, 7; II Kings 23:21-23). The requirement that the slaughtering, preparing, and eating of the paschal animals was to take place in the forecourts of the Temple was maintained after the Exile (II Chron. 30:1-5, 35:13-14; Jub. 49:12, 20). Later, because of the large numbers of participants, the paschal animal was killed at the Temple..., but **boiled** and eaten in the houses of Jerusalem (e.g. Pes. 5:10; 7:12). The transfer of the Passover feast to the Temple entailed the end of the rite of blood [which was sprinkled on the door posts and lintel]; the blood of the paschal animals was, like other sacrificial blood, now poured on the base of the altar (II Chron. 30:16; 35:11)" (Vol. 13, s.v. "Passover," emphasis added).

The combining of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread reduced the observance of the two feasts from eight days to seven days: "To fix a common date for the Jews in Babylonia the mazzot [unleavened bread] feast after 587 B.C.E. was given a fixed date, the 15th to the 21st of the first month, and thus connected with the Passover..." (Ibid.). The entire seven-day festival was renamed "Passover: "Passover, a spring festival, beginning on the 15th day of Nisan, lasting seven days in Israel..."⁵⁰

49 *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 666

50 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 120

Mr. Coulter has quoted two divergent passages from a very large article in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. It is indeed an authoritative source of Jewish history and practice. This author has previously used quotes from the *Encyclopedia Judaica* to distinguish critical from traditional scholarship. A complete portion of the article from the *Encyclopedia Judaica* in context reveals that all of Mr. Coulter's quote comes from a portion of this article labeled as the critical view of Passover. Again, Mr. Coulter's portion of the quote of liberal scholarship has been bolded.

“Critical View. The feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Originally both parts existed separately; but at the beginning of the Exile they were combined.

Passover was originally not a pilgrimage feast but a domestic ceremony consisting of the slaughtering and eating of the paschal animal This animal--according to Exodus 12:21 (J) a sheep or a goat, according to Deuteronomy 16:2, either a sheep or a bovine animal, according to Exodus 12:5(P; cf. IIChron.35:7) a year-old lamb or kid ---was killed in accordance with later texts (Ex. 12:6; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3-5; 28:16 (33:3); Josh. 5:10; Ezek. 45:21; Ezra 6:19; 11 Chron. 35:1) on the 14th of the first month (i.e. the 14th of Nisan March/April) “between the evenings” (Ex.12:6b; Lev.23:5; Num. 9:3, 5; 11, 28:4,8) i.e. at the setting of the sun. The early texts Exodus 23:15 and 34:18 however place the Festival of Unleavened Bread in “the season of the hodesh of Abib since it was at the hodesh of Abib that you went free from Egypt” and Deuteronomy 16:1ff. places the slaughtering of the Passover sacrifice in “the hodesh of Abib seeing that it was in this hodesh of Abib that you went free from Egypt at night . . . so that you may remember the day you went free from Egypt”; and it has been argued that the last cited passage in particular makes poor sense unless hodesh designates not a 30-day period (“month”) but a single day i.e. the New Moon. (Both senses of hodesh are well attested; which is intended in this case can be confirmed only from the context.) The rite of touching the lintel and the doorposts of the house (formerly the tent) with blood from the paschal animal was connected with the slaughter (Ex. 12:7 13 (P), 22 [J]). The flesh of the animal was boiled according to Deuteronomy 16:7; but later---by II Chronicles 35:13a-this was interpreted in light of the P (Ex. 12:8-9) to mean broiling (cf. LXX Deut. 16:7) and this is the rabbinic halakhah (Pes. 5: 10). The flesh was then eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8b; cf. Deut. 16:3a) during the night (Ex. 12:8a) in a community meal in which the whole family or a combination of families (Ex. 12:4) but no uncircumcised persons (Ex. 12:48b cf. 12:44-45 48a [P]) took part. No flesh was allowed to remain until the next day (Deut. 16:4b).

Nothing is found in the Bible about the original meaning of the Passover rite. There is no clue in the name “Passover” (Heb. pesah) because its etymology is uncertain. The assumption that the Passover was originally a sacrifice of the firstborn (G. Beer and others) is incorrect (1) because according to Exodus 22:28 29 and Leviticus 22:27 the firstborn of the sheep, ox, and goat was to be offered on the eighth day (2) because according to P (Ex. 12:5) the Passover animal had to be a year old and (3) because the regulations about the firstborn in Exodus 34 :19 20a and 13 :11-13 are connected with the eating of mazzot (Ex. [34:18]; 13:3-10) but not with the Passover (Ex. [34: 25]; 12:24-27a; Kutsch Segal).

Originally the Passover was celebrated by transient breeders of sheep and goats, later by the Israelites to secure protection for their flocks prior to leaving the desert winter pasture for cultivated regions (Rost). The rite of the blood (see above) as well as the regulation which was later still in force (Ex. 12:46b; cf. Num. 9:12) whereby no bone of the Passover animal was to be broken had an apotropaic significance. The oldest literary record in Exodus 12:21 (J) already presupposes the Passover. Hence the old nomadic custom is “historicized” by being connected with the main event

in the Israelite salvation history, the Exodus. The reason for this connection was from a traditional-historical standpoint the situation of departure which belonged also to the Passover. Moreover the rite of the blood made it possible to connect the Passover with the story of the killing of the Egyptian firstborn (Ex. 12:23) which was also inserted into the tradition of the Exodus as the reason why the Pharaoh let the Israelites go (Ex. 11:4ad-8; Kutsch). This “historicization” has determined the character of the Passover it became the feast commemorating the Exodus (cf. Ex. 12: 11- 14aalP]; Deut. 16:1 3). **Originally the Passover was celebrated among the families (Ex. 12:21 [J]) in tents, after the territorial occupation, in houses. After the cultic centralization of King Josiah, the celebration of the Passover was transferred to the central Sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut. 16: 2, 7; II Kings 23: 21-23). The requirement that the slaughtering, preparing, and eating of the paschal animals was to take place in the forecourts of the Temple was maintained after the Exile (II Chron. 30:1-5; 35:13-14; Jub. 49:16, 21)). Later, because of the large numbers of participants, the paschal animal was killed at the Temple place, but boiled and eaten in the houses of Jerusalem (e.g., Pes. 5:10; 7:12). The transfer of the Passover feast to the Temple entailed the end of the rite of blood; the blood of the paschal animals was, like other sacrificial blood, now poured on the base of the altar (II Chron. 30: 16; 35: 11).’’⁵¹**

Again, an examination of this critical section of the *Encyclopedia Judaica* in context reveals Mr. Coulter’s interpretation bares no resemblance to what the article is actually stating.

An embrace of Document theory as factual is displayed in the article above by labeling various verses from scripture as [J], [P], and [D]. This is not surprising because the entire portion of this Passover article quoted by Mr. Coulter above has been labeled as the critical view. This quote stresses that certain parts of Exodus, written by J, are far older than the areas written by P, thus arguing that none of them were written by Moses.

This article from *Encyclopedia Judaica* states that the ordinance for Deuteronomy 16 allowed for the boiling of the Passover lamb, but that Exodus 12 was written later and stated the lamb had to be roasted and that the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah reveal this change (“The flesh of the animal was boiled according to Deuteronomy 16:7; but later---by II Chronicles 35:13a---this was interpreted in light of the P (Ex. 12:8-9) to mean broiling (cf. LXX Deut. 16:7)”) ⁵² Embracing this clearly labeled critical scholarship as authoritative suggests Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents believe critical scholarship that denies Moses’ authorship of the Pentateuch and embrace the idea of Passover being an amalgamation of a shepherd’s rites in the hills with a farmers rite in the valleys instituted by creating a fable of an exodus from Egypt. Although they deny it, early 14th theology is directly tied to critical, liberal scholarship.

Scripture reveals nothing about the origin of the Passover rite according to this critical source. However, for conservative Christian and Jewish scholars the origin of the Passover is clearly shown with the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb and the death of the firstborn, the last of 10 plagues. Exodus reveals this sacrifice brought Israel out of Egypt and eventually allowed them to enter into covenant with God. This feast foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Jesus the Christ for Christians.

51 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 13, Passover, 1971. pp. 169-70

52 *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 13, Passover, 1971. pp. 169

This critical portion of *Encyclopedia Judaica* states the nomadic custom of slaughtering a lamb in the spring of the year has been “historicized” in the Exodus account. This historicization is critical scholars writing the story of the Exodus was made up to help people take an old rite of sacrifice and modernize it. This critical portion of *Encyclopedia Judaica* states that these nomads originally kept this lamb sacrifice as a domestic rite. But as time went on, the priests made up the story about the Exodus to give them grounds to move the rite to the temple. The sacrifice of the lamb in spring was a blood sacrifice, thus it facilitated the acceptance of the “Exodus story” or fable.

This critical article of *Encyclopedia Judaica* quoted by Mr. Coulter states, “To fix a common date for the Jews in Babylonia the mazzot [unleavened bread] feast after 587 B.C.E. was given a fixed date, the 15th to the 21st of the first month.”⁵³ Perhaps Mr. Coulter believes the suggestion that the days of Unleavened Bread did not have a fixed date before the Babylonian exile, as these critical scholars believe, but traditional, conservative scholarship would vehemently disagree with this theory and would state that the fixed dates of the days of Unleavened Bread dates back to almost a millennium earlier when Moses wrote the Pentateuch after the nation of Israel’s exodus from Egypt, something this critical portion of *Encyclopedia Judaica* denies.

Traditional scholars reject the kind of scholarship presented in this portion of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. However, even the critical view of the Passover from the *Encyclopedia Judaica* does not state that Passover was a one day celebration followed by a seven day celebration of Unleavened Bread. It is stating that Passover used to be a domestic sacrifice of a lamb that got combined with a totally separate ceremony of Unleavened bread, neither of which had anything to do with the Exodus from Egypt. The Exodus was simply a device that allowed priests around 500 BC to combined two springtime feasts and the blood sacrifice of the lamb made it easy for these writers of the bible to make up the story about the blood sacrifice of the lamb in Egypt. When these two religious events were supposedly historicized together, they also set the time of Unleavened Bread to fall between the 15th and the 21st of Nisan. The critical scholars who wrote this section of this article about Passover believe Passover and Unleavened Bread became Israelite holidays the same way the Catholic Church took Saturnalia, the holiday about the re-birth of the sun and converted it into the birth of the son of God. The *Encyclopedia Judaica’s* critical sections are written by scholars who believe the Old Testament is nothing but a syncretism of legends and myths and their scholarship has to be viewed in that light. It does not support the hypothesized early 14th Passover nor does it support the kind of domestic Passover sacrifice Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents theorize.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover*:

After discussing the findings of various authorities, the *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* relates the following concerning the combining of the two feasts: “From all this Wellhausen concluded that **the coalescence of Passover and Unleavened Bread did not occur until the time of Josiah**. The agricultural festival of unleavened bread was kept as such as a national Israelite feast, he felt, until the days of Josiah. The section in **Deut. 16:1-10 was interpreted as an attempt to abolish the private Passover celebrations** [We will thoroughly study Deuteronomy 16 in Chapter Fourteen.] and to eliminate the apotropaic rites [the sprinkling of the blood on the door posts and lintel] characteristic of these [the domestic observance of the Passover]; **therefore the Passover was combined with the national feast** [of unleavened bread] in Jerusalem” (Vol. III, s.v. “Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread,” emphasis added).” ...⁵⁴

⁵³ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 120

⁵⁴ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 120

Wellhausen was the father of document theory and a leading liberal scholar. He brought the Document theory into the mainstream of theology, as quoted from various sources earlier. Therefore the reader should realize this quote about critical scholarship is from one of its fathers. This entire quote is listed below, again with Mr. Coulter's portion of the quote in bold.

The current debate about the history of the Passover feast relates to the interpretation of the earlier references to it. In II Kings 23:21-23, with respect to the Passover of Josiah, we are told that no such Passover "had been kept since the days of the judges." In the calendar of feasts, in Exod. 23:14-17, it is the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not Passover, that is coupled with those of Harvest and Ingathering, while the reference to Passover in 34:25 is suspect of being an insertion because of its context. **From all this Wellhausen concluded that the coalescence of Passover and Unleavened Bread did not occur until the time of Josiah. The agricultural festival of unleavened bread was kept as such as a national Israelite feast, he felt, until the days of Josiah. The section in Deut. 16:1-10 was interpreted as an attempt to abolish the private Passover celebrations and to eliminate the apotropaic rites characteristic of these; therefore, Passover was combined with the national feast in Jerusalem,** and, so he felt, the eating of the meal indoors was no longer permitted. The time of the feast was at the new moon of Abib rather than at the full moon as in Exod. 12 and subsequently.

Whereas Wellhausen held that the coalescence of the two facets of the feast in a national observance occurred for the first time under Josiah, furthering their "historification," recent interpreters, notably Joachim Kraus, hold that what Josiah effected was a re-establishment. He argues that Passover, though once a clan rite, was indeed celebrated at a central shrine of Israel in the days of the judges. Moreover, he maintains that the rites of Unleavened Bread entered the Passover observance even before that time; this view can claim some support from the fact that in all biblical records the use of unleavened bread with the Passover sacrifice is stressed.

Kraus's reinterpretation of the matter is predicated upon the well-known and widely accepted thesis that from its beginning Israel was an amphictyonic confederacy of tribes held together by a common religious tradition and a unifying cultus. The entire community would gather at some shrine center annually, or more frequently, to renew the covenant bonds of the confederacy and celebrate the common tradition. At this stage in Israel's history and in this manner, rather than much later, the assimilation of the Canaanite agricultural feasts of Booths and Unleavened Bread occurred, the former at Shiloh, the latter at Gilgal...

However, the form and emphasis strongly reflect the priestly tradition. It must also be pointed out that Kraus's view that this process of integrating Passover and Unleavened Bread by assimilating them to Israel's faith began very early, at Gilgal, depends both on the amphictyonic hypothesis and on the tenability of the results of his tradition criticism.⁵⁵

What does this article from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* actually state in context?

- Wellhausen theorized that Josiah changed the domestic slaughtering of a lamb in honor of a clan god to a centralized Passover. Wellhausen also theorized the timing of this sacrifice to the clan god originally occurred during the new moon, but was later changed to the full moon when the sacrifice was moved to the temple. Scripture clearly states the Passover is on the 14th, around the time of the full moon, and it also states Josiah was a righteous king, but Wellhausen did

55 Buttrick, *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 668

not care about the specifics of scripture. He thought all of scripture was legend and fable. He stated the tradition of Passover was created at the time of Josiah by combining the feast of the shepherds and their lambs with the feast of the farmers and their unleavened bread by creating the story of the Exodus and stating that the combined feasts now had to be at the temple.

- Unleavened Bread was described in scripture in Ex. 23:14-7, but long after the agricultural feast was observed and written about, some redactor (editor) came along and added Ex. 34:25, with its reference to the Passover according to this section of *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.
- Whereas Wellhausen believed the story of the Exodus was made up at the time of Josiah to coalesce Passover and Unleavened Bread into one rite, Kraus believes Josiah was simple re-instituting an old clan ritual from the time of the Judges. Kraus uses 2 Kings 23:21-3 as a basis for this belief.
- Kraus also believes the shepherds killing the lamb in the hills and Canaanite farmers keeping the agricultural feast of Unleavened Bread occurred separately, but he believes these two religions were combined at the time of the judges, not at the time of Josiah.
- Kraus believes the standard critical theory that Israel was not descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Kraus believed there were twelve tribes that were joined together over time, thus joining their religions at the time of the Judges and were not descended from twelve brothers. Wellhausen would agree with Kraus that Israel did not descend from twelve brothers, but would disagree with the timing of twelve different tribes coming together during Judges in favor of around the time of Josiah.
- Kraus believes a priestly writer wrote Josh. 4:19-23 and 5:10-12 around 600 B.C.
- Unleavened Bread was "reoriented" from an agricultural feast to one that had to be about the Exodus, either at the time of Josiah according to Wellhausen or around the time of the Judges according to Kraus. Both agree Passover and Unleavened Bread did not originate during the Exodus from Egypt because the Exodus was a fairy tale.

The Interpreter's Dictionary ends this article by observing that Kraus has made some inroads against the standard Document theory taught by Wellhausen by placing the timing when Canaanite farmers got together with the shepherds at the time of the Judges rather than at the time of Josiah, but they all critical scholars believe there was no such thing as an Exodus, that Moses did not write the Pentateuch and that the feasts of the Bible are syncretized from very old feasts having nothing to do with the creator God of the universe. The "coalescence of Passover and Unleavened Bread"⁵⁶ taught by *The Interpreter's Dictionary* restates the standard critical theory that two ancient and separate rites that had nothing to do with the Exodus were syncretized together by the fable of the Exodus. It does not support the hypothesis of an early 14th Passover.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover*:

In his book *The Jewish Festivals--From Their Beginnings to Our Own Day*, Hayyim Schauss explains the changes in the observance of the Passover that were instituted at the time of Josiah's reform: "It was in this way that Pesach [Passover] and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were joined, and the two distinct spring festivals became one historical holiday, a symbol of the striving of the people toward national freedom. But, since the festival was still bound up with the family, or, at most, the village community, it could not yet become a great national holiday. It was only later, when Pesach was observed by all Jews in one place, in one great sanctuary, that it gained national importance.

⁵⁶ Buttrick, *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 668

This happened in the last few decades before the destruction of the first Temple, in the time of Josiah, King of Judah. Israel, the great Jewish kingdom of the north, was no more. [It is incorrect to describe the northern ten-tribed kingdom of Israel as Jewish. The Jews dwelt only in the southern kingdom of Judah]. All that remained was Judah, the smaller kingdom of the south. In the reign of Josiah there was a strong progressive party, seeking to reconstruct Jewish national life and establish it on a new basis of justice and right. Sweeping reforms were instituted. One of the most outstanding was the elimination of all the 'high places' because Jerusalem was declared the only sanctuary for all Jews. Sacrifices were forbidden anywhere else and only Jerusalem was to be the goal of the pilgrimages made at holiday time. The Festivals, therefore, lost their local character and became national observances that united all Jews in the one holy place, the Temple in Jerusalem.

Through this reform the Pesach ceremonial [observance] took on almost a new character. Since it was forbidden to make the Paschal sacrifice anywhere but in the Temple at Jerusalem, it was impossible to smear the blood of the sacrificial lamb upon the doorposts of the houses. In general, the observance lost its ancient weird character. The Book of Kings tells us truly that such a Pesach as [the temple-centered observance] was observed in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the year in which the reform was instituted, had not been celebrated [in that manner] since the Jews settled in Palestine. We cannot be certain how long a time passed before the Jews accepted these reforms in practice and ceased to offer the Pesach sacrifice in their homes. Nor can we be certain how long it took for Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread to become as one festival. But we do know that the importance of the festival grew and that it became, in time, the greatest Jewish national holiday" (pp. 44-46, emphasis added).⁵⁷

Thankfully this is one the few quotes where Mr. Coulter has actually listed the page numbers of his source material. His quotation of Hayyim Schauss is also an exception because he quotes a large, contiguous passage. Unfortunately, he does not quote enough of this passage because the section leading up to Mr. Coulter's quote is quite informative and defines what Mr. Schauss is actually stating. Mr. Schauss believed the two feasts that existed were the same two feasts all critical scholars believe existed. He details them very thoroughly. Again, Mr. Coulter's portion of the quote from this critical scholarship has again been bolded.

Introduction. . . Pesach, usually called Passover, is first in the calendar of Jewish festivals. . . In addition, Pesach is the oldest of Jewish festivals. Jews observed it in the most ancient of times, in the days when they were still nomadic shepherds in the wilderness...

A Festival of the Shepherds... Pesach was not always the holiday that we know today. Generation after generation came and went, epoch upon epoch of Jewish life passed by, and each contributed its strivings and ideals, its hopes and emotions to the festival before it became the great holiday of deliverance and freedom.

Festivals change and develop in accordance with various modes of life and periods of history. Holidays usually start as nature festivals and are observed in that season of the year when nature itself changes, and the ceremonies attending the holiday grow out of these manifestations of nature. Later, however, when men reach a higher cultural level, they give a deeper spiritual meaning to the festival and the old ceremonies assume a new symbolic significance.

It is, therefore, true that a holiday is always older than the interpretation which is given to it. First comes the custom, the ceremony, the observance, no interpretation for them is needed or sought. The ceremony explains itself. Later, after a long time

57 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 121

passes, need is found for an interpretation of the festival and its rites. So, Pesach was originally a nature festival, an observance of the coming of spring. Later, as time went on, it became a historic and national holiday, the festival of the deliverance from Egypt, and it thus assumed a newer and higher meaning.

Pesach as a spring festival is very old. Jews observed a spring festival long before the deliverance from Egypt. The beginnings of Pesach carry us back to those pre-historic days when Jews were still tribes of shepherds wandering in the desert. Wherever they found pasturage for their herds, they pitched their tents and grazed their flocks. In the month when the kids and lambs were born, the month that ushered in spring, they observed a festival at full moon (the fourteenth to the fifteenth day of the month). Every member of the family took part in the observance of this festival, which was featured by the sacrifice of a sheep or goat from the flock. The sacrifice occurred just before nightfall, after which the Animal was roasted whole and all members of the family made a hasty meal in the middle of the night. It was forbidden to break any of the bones of the sacrificial animal or leave uneaten any part of it by the time daybreak came. One of the chief ceremonies attendant upon the festival was the daubing of the tent-posts with the blood of the slain animal. It was clear to these primitive shepherds why certain ceremonies were commanded and other practices forbidden. They knew that observance was an antidote to plagues, misfortunes, and illnesses, and that it was an assurance of good luck and safety for the coming year. Similar beliefs, customs, and fetishes were prevalent amongst other peoples, too.

These primitive nomads knew why the sacrifice that was so hastily eaten and the festival with which it was connected were called Pesach. It was not till a long time later that the meaning of the word was lost and a new interpretation given to it. To this day we cannot be certain what the word meant originally; neither can we be certain of the details of the ceremonies and rites that accompanied the observance. We do know, however, that the celebration was held at night and that morning brought with it the end of the festival. We also know that the ceremony was not tied up with any sanctuary or priesthood; it was a family festival, conducted by the head of the family.

A time came when the Jews ceased to be nomads and settled in Palestine. But even then they did not forego observing the spring festival of the shepherds which they had brought with them from the desert. It was observed, naturally, in the rural districts only, in those sections where there were still shepherds who made a living from their flocks. There were more shepherds in Judah, in the south, than in Israel, where the land was more fertile and the inhabitants gained their main livelihood from tilling the soil...

An agricultural Festival. . . The Jewish peasants of Palestine, those who lived by tilling the soil, had another form of spring festival, one related to the cutting of the grain, which they called "The Festival of Matsos" (Unleavened Bread)... We cannot know for certain, by now, what was the origin of the removing of all sour dough and the eating of unleavened bread. It was probably regarded as a safeguard against an unproductive year. In later years the Jews created a new interpretation for this old custom, just as they evolved a new meaning for the Pesach eve ceremonies.

The real importance of the holiday, however, centered in the ceremony of the omer, the first sheaf of newly cut barley that was offered to the priest on the first day of the harvest as a sacrifice, as a gift to God. For, all people, in those days, had the belief that everything that man used belonged to the gods and they must, therefore, offer the best of everything, the very first, to these gods as a gift....

We must thus bear in mind that Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were originally two distinct festivals, observed at the same time. Pesach was the older holiday, the one the Jews brought with them from the desert; the Feast of Unleavened Bread was newer, instituted only after the Jews had settled in Palestine and become

farmers. Both were spring festivals, but the Feast of Unleavened Bread was observed by the entire community gathered in a holy place, while Pesach was celebrated in the home as a family festival....

This has happened with all festivals, ceremonies, and customs, as it happened to Pesach. Jewish culture and Jewish life evolved and changed during the early centuries that the Jews spent in Palestine. Newer and higher conceptions and ideals arose and, in time, the Jews forgot the meaning and spirit of the old customs and ceremonies of Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Above all, the idea of observing nature and the harvest festivals ceased to appeal to the Jews. They had a much greater desire to observe, in the spring of the year, a holiday with a historic background, a festival that would represent symbolically the social and spiritual strivings and ideals of the day. In answer to this desire they began to emphasize Pesach as the festival of the deliverance from Egypt.

This transition came very easily. The memory of the exodus from Egypt burned brightly in the minds of the Jews, and with it the memory that it was in the first spring month of the year that they had left the land of the Pharaohs. The re-living of that great event in the dawn of Jewish history became the chief motive for the celebration of the spring festival. Spring, the time of liberation for nature, and the idea of human freedom seemed to fit very well together; in this way Pesach became the festival of the freedom of the Jewish people, its deliverance from slavery, and its awakening to a new life.

All the customs and ceremonies which were bound up with Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were then re-interpreted and became associated with the deliverance from Egypt. Pesach, for instance, was declared to mean "passing by or over"; and the holiday was called by that name because God passed over the Jewish homes when he slew the first-born of Egypt. The quickly baked matsos, according to the new interpretation, were eaten because the Jews were in such a hurry to get out of Egypt that they had no time to leaven their bread and bake it properly. The bitter herbs eaten on Pesach eve were declared to be reminders of the bitterness of the Jewish lot in Egypt. Even the fruit salad of the Pesach night, the charoses, was in later times bound up with the deliverance; it was considered symbolic of the mortar mixed by the Jews when they were slaves in Egypt.

These new interpretations were intended for a new generation, to whom the old ceremonies lacked meaning. And one of the foremost problems in those days of change was that of enlightening the new generation, making clear to the young son the symbolic meanings which the old ceremonies had assumed, for the children were entirely strangers to the customs handed down from the old days. "And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' that thou shalt say unto him: 'By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.'"

It was in this way that Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were joined together, and two distinct spring festivals became one historical holiday, a symbol of the striving of the people toward national freedom. But, since the festival was still bound up with the family, or, at most, the village community, it could not yet become a great national holiday. It was only later, when Pesach was observed by all Jews in one place, in one great sanctuary, that it gained national importance.

This happened in the last few decades before the destruction of the first Temple, in the time of Josiah, King of Judah. Israel, the great Jewish kingdom of the north, was no more. All that remained was Judah, the smaller kingdom of the south. In the reign of Josiah there was a strong progressive party, seeking to reconstruct Jewish national life and establish it on a new basis of justice and right. Sweeping reforms were instituted. One of the most outstanding was the elimination of all the "high places"

because Jerusalem was declared the one sanctuary for all the Jews. Sacrifices were forbidden anywhere else and only Jerusalem was to be the goal of the pilgrimages made at holiday time. The festivals therefore, lost their local character and became national observances that united all Jews in the one holy place, the Temple in Jerusalem.

Through this reform, the Pesach ceremonial took on almost a new character. Since it was forbidden to make the Paschal sacrifice anywhere but in the Temple at Jerusalem it was impossible to smear the blood of the sacrificial lamb upon the doorposts of the houses. In general, the observance lost its ancient weird character. The Book of Kings tells us truly that such a Pesach as was observed in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, the year in which the reform was instituted, had not been celebrated since the Jews settled in Palestine.

We cannot be certain how long a time passed before the Jews accepted these reforms in practice and ceased to offer the Pesach sacrifice in their own homes. Nor can we be certain how long it took for Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread to become as one festival. But we do know that the importance of the festival grew and that it became, in time, the greatest Jewish national holiday. Sukkos remained the most festive and most joyous of the holidays, but Pesach attained the greatest national importance.”⁵⁸

Hayyim Schauss states there were two distinct festivals that became one over time. He states there was an ancient festival of shepherds, older than the feast of Unleavened Bread, in which shepherds killed a young lamb at the time of the full moon in the spring. Some of these shepherds may have actually been slaves that managed to revolt and leave Egypt in the past, which is where the supposed fable of the Exodus originated. They would kill the lamb at the very end of the 14th and would have eaten all of it by the morning of 15th according to Mr. Schauss. Again, even those who believe in a critical domestic Passover believe it occurred at the end of the 14th of Nisan, not the beginning. It is the oldest of the all the Israelite festivals according to Mr. Schauss and was used to ward off plagues and ask the gods for blessings. There was also another festival kept by another group of people, not a pastoral festival, but an agricultural festival, kept by farmers in the hills of Canaan. Over time, these two festivals combined. To quote Mr. Schauss:

In the course of time when the life of the people changes, then the festivals of that people also change and assume a new character. The ceremonies and rites, to a great extent, remain but they take on new meaning. They are interpreted differently, given symbolic values, and in this way become something almost entirely new.

This has happened with all festivals, ceremonies, and customs, as it happened to Pesach. Jewish culture and Jewish life evolved and changed during the early centuries that the Jews spent in Palestine. Newer and higher conceptions and ideals arose and, in time, the Jews forgot the meaning and spirit of the old customs and ceremonies of Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread... All the customs and ceremonies which were bound up with Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were then re-interpreted and became associated with the deliverance from Egypt.⁵⁹

Mr. Schauss is a critical scholar presenting a theology which envisions two ancient peoples with two different religious ceremonies in the distant past. As these two groups get together, they

58 Hayyim, Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals: A Guide to their History and Observance*, Schocken Books, NY, 1996, pp. 38-46

59 Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals* p.43-4

merge their religions. They did this by fabricating the story of the Exodus as a glorious past. Mr. Schauss envisions a priesthood of reformers at the time of Josiah substituting symbols and stories of the fable of the Exodus, which “burned brightly in the minds of the Jews,”⁶⁰ for agricultural symbols. Of course it takes time for the people to stop celebrating their own individual feast in the old ways according to Mr. Schauss. But over time, these two diverse religions finally amalgamate. This is the picture drawn by Mr. Schauss. It is a picture that disagrees with scripture. However, it is the common critical view of Passover. It is also the view quoted by and used by Mr. Coulter. And although it does support a domestic sacrifice by shepherds in the hills, it does not support the kind of domestic Passover Mr. Coulter has theorized. It also does not support an early 14th Passover. It does support the idea that the bible is nothing but fairy tales.

Mr. Coulter writes:

There is ample evidence in both Scripture and history of the changes that occurred in the observance of the Passover during Old Testament times. None can deny that the temple sacrifice of the lambs differed greatly from the domestic Passover that is recorded in Exodus 12. It is impossible to reconcile the temple sacrifice of the lambs with the domestic sacrifice that God commanded. They are two different practices. The domestic Passover was instituted by God. The later temple practice was instituted by men. It was men who changed the Passover from a domestic sacrifice at the beginning of the 14th to a temple sacrifice on the afternoon of the 14th and a Passover meal on the night of the 15th. This man-made institution, which became a national tradition of the Jews, is the basis of many arguments for a 15th Passover.⁶¹

The first Passover in Egypt was domestic, unless you are a critical scholar, who doubt this original Passover sacrifice ever occurred because there was no Exodus. Scripture states there was no tabernacle until the second Passover. There is ample evidence of domestic sacrifices before Hezekiah’s time only if you are a critical scholars who rejects the authority of scripture rather than a traditional scholar and Mr. Coulter writes he believes in a domestic Passover. Even Mr. Coulter acknowledges in chapters 12 through 14 of *The Christian Passover* that there are no specific Passover observances mentioned in Promised Land until the Passovers of the two righteous kings of 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 and again in chapter 6 of Ezra.⁶² Even Mr. Coulter agrees that there is no doubt scripture depicts these Passovers as occurring at the temple and even he agrees the Passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah were on the afternoon of the 14th. Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 forbid all sacrifices unless they were where God would place His name once Israel entered the Promised Land. Numbers 28:16 lists the Passover as one of the temple sacrifices. Traditional scholars teach that other changes in the Passover occurred, such as not having to put blood on the door because the death angel not passing over at midnight. Scripture states God changed His Passover ordinances in Numbers 9 to accommodate uncleanness and absence from where God had placed His name. Therefore Mr. Coulter’s domestic Passover is a the real fable that is not supported unless you through out the sanctity of scripture as liberal scholars do.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 121-2

⁶² Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 138-158

All of the historical evidence for a domestic Passover in the Promised Land is from critical scholars who do not believe the rites of the Passover sacrifice and Unleavened Bread were given to the nation of Israel by God through Moses. Even these critical scholars believe their domestic pre-passover sacrifice that supposedly became the Passover sacrifice at the time of Hezekiah occurred late on the 14th, not early. Thus Mr. Coulter is wrong when he states there is ample historic and scriptural evidence of the Jews changing both the timing and the manner of the Passover sacrifice. God changed the manner of the Passover and all other sacrifices in Leviticus 17 and Deuteronomy 12, as confirmed by the ordinances of the second Passover in Numbers 9 and the list of temple sacrifices in Numbers 28 and 29. Mr. Coulter has presented scholarly support of domestic sacrifice that became the Passover only if you accept critical theology and reject that scripture is inspired by God.⁶³ Mr. Coulter has presented no evidence in chapter 10 to support a change in the timing of the Passover sacrifice from the early to the later portions of the 14th of Nisan.

Mr. Coulter continues in *The Christian Passover*:

As we have seen, the 14th/15th Passover controversy is a result of the attempts of men to distort the Scriptures in order to justify their chosen tradition. Instead of submitting to the commands of God, they claim that their tradition holds the same status as the commands of God. That can never be! No tradition of men can ever have the force of a commandment of God.

Of the dozens of papers written on the Passover that the author has read and studied, all supporting a 15th Passover, not one addresses the Scriptural and historical evidence that is presented in this chapter. Some scholars who have published papers and books about the Passover have completely ignored the historical records of the original observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This glaring oversight raises questions about the motives of those who present their “final solutions for the 15th Passover.” Such negligence must be attributed either to a lack of thorough research or to deliberate censorship by these biased scholars, who appear to hold their personal beliefs in higher esteem than the true facts of history, as many Jews hold their tradition in higher esteem than the Word of God.

These scholars may refuse to acknowledge the truth, but the evidence is undeniable. The records of history conclusively show that the Passover changed from a domestic observance at the beginning of the 14th day of the first month to a temple sacrifice in the afternoon of the 14th and a Passover meal on the 15th, merging the Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As Schauss described, “...the observance lost its ancient weird [in his opinion--not God’s] character...” and “...took on almost a new character.” This “new character” was the later practice of sacrificing the lambs at the temple at the end of the 14th day, which is the basis of the traditional 15th Passover that the Jews observe today. Before we study the introduction of the temple sacrifice, and the reasons for this change, let’s look at a leading rabbi’s thoughts about the Passover issue.”⁶⁴

No tradition of man should supersede the commands of God. We must look at scripture to determine what those commands are. Scholarship can help in some areas, but only if it is taken in context. Pulling two lines out of a scholarly work to support your hypothesis when that work, taken as a whole disputes your hypothesis is not good scholarship. Mr. Coulter suggests those who distort scripture about the Passover are not submitting to the commands of God to fol-

63 2 Tim. 3:16

64 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 122

low their tradition and he is correct. Mr. Coulter states those who distort and ignore scholarly evidence raise questions about their motives and when they deliberately censor material and present only biased scholars they are esteeming their personal beliefs higher than the facts of history. Mr. Coulter's statement here is not only correct, but backed fully by this author. But as has been shown, Mr. Coulter continues a pattern of presenting biased scholars out of context and ignoring scriptural and scholarly evidence that disagrees with his early 14th hypothesis. As the old saying goes, "If the shoe fits, wear it."

Mr. Coulter asked that an examination of the scholarship presented in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* be made. This author's examination found the scholarship in chapter 10 to be severely lacking. The bias of Mr. Coulter is quite evident as he mis-characterizes and mis-quotes scholarly material that actually disagrees with his early 14th Passover theory into a form that supposedly supports his theory. An abbreviated version of this examination of supposed scholarly support for an early 14th Passover was sent to Mr. Coulter after the publication of the first edition of *The Christian Passover* and that work agrees with this more detailed examination. Chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* embraces critical scholarship. This examination has shown how these critical sources have been taken out of context, probably because the recognition that the concept of two different feasts, one of shepherds killing a lamb and another of Canaanite farmers eating Unleavened Bread being combined into one feast at the time of Josiah, does not support the thesis of an early 14th domestic Passover. Even the critical scholarship that has been extensively misquoted by Mr. Coulter in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* does not support an early 14th Passover, but instead supports a late 14th domestic pre-passover sacrifice observed by shepherds honoring the god of their clans. Mr. Coulter's claims that scholars are substituting their traditions for biblical truth when they show the Passover sacrifice was mandated to occur where God had placed His name and on the later portions of the 14th are not supported by the misquotations and misinterpretations of various critical scholars in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover*. Nor should Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents misinterpretation of Josephus be taken as support for either a domestic or an early 14th Passover.

Mr. Coulter writes in *The Christian Passover*:

SOME RABBIS ARE RETHINKING THE 14TH-15TH PROBLEMS

As the Jews anticipate the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, some rabbis are re-examining their traditional beliefs concerning the Passover. While it does not appear likely that they will return to the original Passover as established by God in Exodus 12, they are nevertheless rethinking their traditional views concerning the sacrificing of the lamb and the meaning of the Passover day. Some rabbis are beginning to realize that the 14th, the Passover day, differs in meaning from the 15th, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They are beginning to recognize that the Passover was instituted to commemorate God's passing over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt-- not the Exodus from Egypt.

The following excerpts show that this Scriptural fact is being discussed among Jewish rabbis today. These statements were made by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, chief rabbi of the city of Efrat and dean of Ohr Torah Institution of Israel, in an article in his “Shabbat Shalom” column under the pen name “Bo,” as published in Canada in the Jewish Western Bulletin. (Please note: In this article Rabbi Riskin writes the word God as G-d, which reflects the Jewish prohibition against pronouncing the name of God lest one take God’s name in vain.)

Rabbi Riskin writes, “And it’s not just the obvious fact that in the Diaspora, they celebrate an extra day at the end [of the seven-day Passover week], but surprisingly enough, an extra day at the beginning of the festival for us here in Israel.

“In Bo, the Passover sequence begins with the command for the Israelites to sacrifice the paschal lamb that must be eaten in haste, and we are told how **G-d will pass through Egypt** and kill every first born, and that the **blood of the slaughtered lamb is to be placed on the door posts** as a sign for G-d” (emphasis added).

He then discusses the difference of opinion about which day was to be remembered, the 14th or the 15th, or the entire seven-day festival. Next, he writes, “The consequence of this difference of opinion leads to the speculation that we’re really talking about **two festivals** whose distinct characteristics contain a subtle difference for the Israeli and the Diaspora Jewries. **The 14th day of Nisan is the one-day festival of the Passover sacrifice**, the paschal lamb; **the 15th day commences a seven-day festival of Matzot and redemption**....In fact, when the paschal lamb sacrifice will eventually be revived on the 14th of Nisan, it will only take place here in Israel. In the Diaspora, there is no possibility of a paschal lamb sacrifice, and there never will be. The closest we’ll ever come to [it] there, is a shank bone on a Seder plate. And in Israel, may the paschal lamb take the place of so many of our best and brightest for the eventuality of ultimate sacrifice, so that they may truly taste the matzot of redemption and peace” (emphasis added).

These statements by Rabbi Riskin show that rabbis today are aware of the separate and distinct meanings of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, although the two feasts have for centuries been observed as a single festival. While some rabbis may be opening their eyes to the meaning of the Passover, they still do not recognize the true Paschal Lamb--Jesus Christ, Whose blood alone can bring redemption to the world.

In this chapter we have read statements from both Christian and Jewish sources which acknowledge that the Passover observance was changed from the ordinances and statutes that were instituted by God. In the next chapter, we will examine the Scriptures to learn the circumstances that led to this change in the observance of the Passover.”⁶⁵

Although this author spent much time trying to find Shlomo Riskin’s exact quote, this author was unsuccessful because of Mr. Coulter’s repeated pattern of not properly quoting his sources so they could be easily reviewed. Neither the date of the article nor even the name of the article can be found anywhere in *The Christian Passover*. Shlomo Riskin writes a column called Shabbat Shalom in The Jerusalem Post every Friday. His current work can be found online at <http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/index.htm>. In his Shabbat Shalom articles, Mr. Riskin discusses how the torah and half-torah portions that are read that week can be applied to daily living. Mr. Riskin is not using the pen name Bo, as Mr. Coulter mistakenly claims. Mr. Coulter’s quote has Mr. Riskin is examining the section of Torah and half-Torah labeled Bo. Mr. Coulter’s skills as an investigative scholar are clearly shown when he confuse the source material of an article about the Torah with a pen name.

⁶⁵ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 122-3

After an extensive examination of every article that Shlomo Riskin wrote for the Jerusalem Post from Nov. of 1990 to the end of 1991 and reviewing many of his online articles, it is most likely that Mr. Coulter has quoted something that Mr. Riskin wrote about the Parshat Terumah. An ongoing attempt continues to be made to find the exact article that was quoted. If Mr. Coulter or one his followers would enlighten me about the exact nature of this, it would be appreciated, but given Mr. Coulter's pattern of mis-quoting and mis-characterization of scholars, it is likely he has twisted Mr. Riskin's writing to match his early 14th theory when in context, they clearly would not.

Mr. Coulter has quoted Mr. Riskin as stating the Passover feast is a feast that is not really observed by Jews today, whereas the feast of Unleavened Bread is a seven day feast observed by observant Jews. This is a common belief among all Jews, not just Jewish scholars. Mr. Riskin believes when the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb is re-instituted, it will be on the 14th of Nisan and only the Jews in Israel will be able to keep it. Why is that? "In fact, when the paschal lamb sacrifice will eventually be revived on the 14th of Nisan, it will only take place here in Israel. In the Diaspora, there is no possibility of a paschal lamb sacrifice, and there never will be."⁶⁶ Mr. Coulter has suggested the reason the Diaspora can not partake of the Passover where they are is because of sin, but has presented no evidence that supports his hypothesis. The real reason Mr. Riskin writes there is no possibility of the Diaspora taking part in the Passover rite on the 14th is because the Passover sacrifice can only happen where God has placed his name, supposedly at the temple in Israel. Again Mr. Coulter's scholarly sources actually disagree with his hypothesis of a domestic Passover sacrifice. Mr. Riskin knows that scripture outlaws all domestic sacrifices. The Diaspora will have to continue to use the shank bone at the meal while the Jews in Israel will be able to sacrifice and eat the *pesah* lamb. Shlomo Riskin believes that meal will be eaten by all Jews on the night of the 15th, not the night of the 14th. Shlomo Riskin is an Orthodox Jewish Rabbi writing for a conservative Jewish paper and is not advocating all Jews around the world are wrong when they know that the Passover can not be domestic and will always take place late on the 14th of Nisan. So this Rabbi is not rethinking the early versus late 14th Passover issue, but is simply writing that domestic Passover sacrifices are forbidden, but when the temple is re-instituted, the Passover lambs will be sacrificed late on the of 14th Nisan.

Of course the Jews recognize they do not keep the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb today. They believe they cannot because there is no temple to make the sacrifice in. Shlomo Riskin's view and hope is when the temple sacrifices are reinstated that the Passover lamb will again take its place in the rites of Passover.

A review of the first two versions of *The Christian Passover*, as well as examinations of major portions of other works by Mr. Coulter, and a review of the source material used for chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* leave three possibilities that can describe Mr. Coulter's pattern of scholarship in *The Christian Passover*, especially in chapter 10, and his support of an early 14th Passover theory. The chart on the next page gives a summary of how early 14th theology with its inherent "special knowledge, often referred to as gnosticism, versus straight forward exegesis of these scriptures.

66 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 123 from Riskin, Shabbat Shalom

Subject	Early 14th belief	Factually Supported Evidence
Definition of Passover	Passover is the verb <i>pasah</i>	Passover is the noun <i>pesah</i> pointing to the true lamb
Passover	Is a day long	Is a sacrifice performed on the 14 th
Hezekiah's Passover Josiah's Passover	Both late on the 14 th at the temple, but were not performed properly because Israel was so evil	Both late on the 14 th with righteous kings leading Israel back into covenant by teaching them God's truth
Ezra's Passover	Occurred in the temple because Israel was so evil, but occurred early on the 14 th	Occurred in the temple without mention of the exact time, but almost certain performed at <i>ben ha abayim</i> late on the 14th
<i>Ba Erev</i>	Is always sunset, except in Joshua 5:10	Is evening
Joshua 5:10	The Passover was not late in the day.	Israel "kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even (<i>ba erev</i>) in the plains of Jericho."
Ex. 16	Quail pointed to the Sabbath. 6th day is from the 15th of the second month	Manna pointed to the Sabbath 6th day is the preparation day used to help teach about the Sabbath
Lev. 17, Deut. 12 and Num. 28:16	These verse do not refer to the Passover sacrifice	Scripture shows these verses do refer to the Passover sacrifice
The verb <i>bashal</i>	defined as boiling only	real definition is to cook
Samaritan Passover	Is Domestic Takes place early on the 14 th	Occurs where their temple stood. Takes place late on the 14th
<i>Ben ha Arbayim</i>	Mr. Everett Fox believes it is the first hour of the day	Mr. Everett Fox believes it is the last hour of the day
Daily Sacrifice	Is not in chronological order	Is in chronological order
Deut. 16:1-8	Has no mention of the Passover sacrifice, but is somehow used to combine Passover with Unleavened Bread	Deut. 16:1-4, 8 are about Unleavened Bread. Deut. 16:4f-7 are about the Passover sacrifice
Until, Hebrew word <i>'ad</i>	Means very start of day in Ex. 12:6 with Passover. Does not mean until the begin of seventh day to eat unleavened bread in Ex. 12:15	Should be translated as until with time frame determined by context
Domestic Passover	Must be kept by Israel because God never changed anything about the sacrifices. Supported by scholars.	Outlawed in scripture. Only supported by liberal scholars who believe the Exodus was a fable. Even they believe pre-Passover sacrifice was late on the 14 th

Table 3-Listing of early 14th beliefs versus Scriptural statements and Scholarly belief

Possibility 1. Mr. Coulter accepts critical scholarship. He does not believe the bible is God-breathed. He does not believe Moses wrote the Pentateuch. He does not believe there was literal Exodus. Because every single scholarly source quoted by Mr. Coulter in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* was a critical source, with the exception of Shlomo Riskin and Josephus, it would not be far fetched to envision that Mr. Coulter embraces liberal, critical scholarship.

It is understandable how a “preacher” or “teacher” or “minister” may not announce themselves as a proponent of the critical Documents theory. This kind of theological belief may be acceptable for academics, but most Christians believe in their Bible and would find these critical beliefs to be insulting. A minister who accepted critical scholarship as valid may find his role as spiritual guide and recipient of tithes and offerings threatened by a traditional following.

Critical scholarship of both the Old and New Testament has the effect of removing God from the scriptures. The Bible becomes a story of nice myths and fables. It has the same effect that evolution has on creation and was probably advanced for the same reason, to remove God from the scene. Critical scholarship and evolution allows man to not only interpret things in his image, but set his own rules to live by.

Mr. Coulter states he does not accept the general premise of critical scholarship. Mr. Coulter has often stated scripture is God-breathed. Mr. Coulter continually stresses how important doctrine is and that doctrine can only be determined by scripture. Mr. Coulter chose to use obviously critical scholarship, often labeled as “*Critical*” to support his early 14th hypothesis. This author believes any reasonable person looking at this critical source material should recognize what it was and what it espoused. It is highly unlikely that someone who has accepted critical scholarship but would prefer that belief to remain secret would not have been more effectively obfuscated this belief. For this and other reasons, it is doubtful that Mr. Coulter accepts critical scholarship. However, even if Mr. Coulter did accept critical scholarship, his pattern of taking quotes out of context for everyone from Josephus to the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, including his misunderstanding of Shlomo Riskin, is shamefully inadequate for a teacher of scripture. His selective use of small portions of quotations from various references and the pattern of removing portions of quotes that diametrically oppose his hypothesis is highly questionable. Unfortunately, this is a practice followed by far too many theological scholars today but at least they usually only quote sources that generally agree with them. Recognized scholars rarely misquote sources that disagree with them in a vain attempt at building supposedly scholarly support because of peer review. Mr. Coulter most likely misquoted these critical scholars, who actually do not support an early 14th hypothesis, simply because Mr. Coulter could not find real scholarly support for his early 14th Passover hypothesis.

Possibility 2. The second possibility for the incredibly poor scholarship displayed in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is that Mr. Coulter has gone through these critical sources, with the exception of his misquotes of Josephus and Shlomo Riskin, and gleaned out references attempting to prove his point without realizing or knowing what critical scholarship is. The material quoted is so obviously critical in nature and so easily discerned as having nothing to do with an early 14th Passover that it is doubtful any one who was trying to perform a subterfuge would use it. Of course the material does deal with a domestic Passover, but only from a critical

stand point of shepherds in a field sacrificing a lamb in the spring being the pre-cursor to the Passover. The references to the Passover obviously had nothing to do the exodus according to Mr. Coulter's scholarly sources and not a single source quoted supported an early 14th Passover.

Possibility 3. The third possibility, that Mr. Coulter understands what critical scholarship is and deliberately obfuscated his quotes from critical scholarly sources to support his early 14th hypothesis, is the most likely explanation. Mr. Coulter's pattern of not properly referencing his quoted material and his pattern of removing large chunks of these quotes that do not agree with his hypothesis is incredibly poor scholarship. It is also negligent because Mr. Coulter introduced critical scholarship as fact when it is nothing more than heretical fiction that dispels the sanctity of the bible. When scholarship is clearly labeled as critical, a traditional teacher should explain their use of this scholarship and not misquote it in an attempt to support a hypothesis that even said critical scholarship does not support.

Unfortunately, far too many followers of early 14th proponents espouse this critical scholarship as if it were valid without realizing they are misquoting scholars who do not believe the Bible is the word of God. Stating that the bible is a bunch of fairy tales and myths is heresy, with this author defining heresy as a teaching that can and will drive you away from your relationship with God.

Conclusion about the scholarly support of an early 14th Passover

The scholarship displayed by Mr. Coulter throughout the entirety of chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is incredibly poor because of its negligent misuse of critical scholarship. Every scholarly source Mr. Coulter listed, with the exception of his misrepresentation of quotes from Josephus and Shlomo Riskin, clearly stated it was theorizing about shepherds in a field killing a lamb at spring time combining their religion with Canaanite framers who kept a feast of Unleavened Bread in the spring time. Most of these scholarly sources referred to the "historicization" of the Passover in regards to the Exodus and they defined that historicization as making up the Exodus story as an excuse to combine these two ancient festivals. Not a single quoted source supports an early 14th Passover and most explicitly state that the Passover lamb or its supposed precursor was always killed on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan.

Mr. Coulter quoted Wellhausen as a source for his beliefs. "From all this Wellhausen concluded that the coalescence of Passover and Unleavened Bread did not occur until the time of Josiah."⁶⁷ Wellhausen is very well known among theologians. To not recognize who and what Wellhausen stood for shows either an incredible lack of research on Mr. Coulter's part or show a willingness to misquote critical scholars to advance his early 14th hypothesis.

Mr. Coulter's pattern of obfuscating and self-serving scholarship was fully displayed when he pulled a quote from Josephus about 8 days of Unleavened and compared it to a quote about 8 days of Tabernacles in a completely different area of *Antiquities of the Jews* while ignoring a quote about the 7 days of Unleavened Bread right next to the quote about the 8 days of Tab-

67 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 120

ernacles. He also totally ignored that Josephus wrote that the Passover was sacrificed from 3 to 5 p.m. on the afternoon of the 14th and had always been killed on the afternoon of the 14th in context with Josephus' statement about the 8 days of Unleavened Bread.

Mr. Coulter's pattern of scholarship as displayed in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is to misquote a small portion of a reference in a vain attempt to support his theological beliefs. This quoted material taken as a whole and in context disproves his early 14th Passover hypothesis. Many of his quoted sources do profess to believe in a domestic pre-cursor to the Passover sacrifice, but always on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan and always as a shepherd rite in the hills that has nothing to do with the exodus from Egypt. This practice of pulling small quotes from source materials that supposedly support church doctrine, even if the material did not support it, was something that was allowed and encouraged at Ambassador College, from which Mr. Coulter and this author both matriculated, but this has no place in real scholarship and is something that would not have been allowed to continue unabated at other institutions of higher learning. Peer review would have lambasted chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* as completely unprofessional and without scholarly merit.

Such poor scholarship should not be allowed to continue unchallenged, but seems to be the norm among teachers of the churches of God tradition. It is time for people to realize what they are reading. This author knows people that support Fred Coulter, which is their prerogative. However, they hold up *The Christian Passover* as a work of true scholarship because Fred Coulter describes it as such when it is nothing more than an exercise in the logic of verbosity. These people generally reject the idea that Mr. Coulter may be mistaken and almost always refrain from any theological discussion of Passover. Often these people state Passover timing has already been decided or they believe they do not understand enough of the Bible to question the "special knowledge" of an early 14th Passover. This author does not believe this is the Christian attitude depicted in scripture.

The tenth chapter of *The Christian Passover* is an example of terrible scholarship that defies Mr. Coulter's "14 rules for bible study," which he even placed in chapter one of *The Christian Passover*. It is an egregious example of misquoting sources out of context and then creating terrible eisegesis about these misquotes. There should be no doubt that this chapter shows the scholarly support that Mr. Coulter claims for an early 14th Passover in chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* is nothing more than terrible eisegesis of critical scholarship that is substituting men's traditions for biblical scholarship. Therefore Mr. Coulter has displayed absolutely no scholarly support for an early 14th Passover. The only support for a domestic Passover Mr. Coulter has presented in chapter 10 is from liberal scholars who deny the Passover had anything to do with the Exodus because they believe the Exodus is nothing more than a fable. Therefore chapter 10 of *The Christian Passover* gives absolutely no scholarly support to an early 14th Passover.

The Old Testament Passover: Conclusions

The Old Testament Passover-Conclusion

The only argument about the timing of the Passover sacrifice outside of the churches of God is how late on the 14th of Nisan it could take place. Many Christian scholars, including Everett Fox, as well as the Samaritans and apparently the Sadducees believed that *ben ha arbayim* is an hour long period at the end of the day, with the day ending at dark. The Pharisees, with the acquiescence of the Sadducees, believed *ben ha arbayim* occurred any time during the later portion of the day, a time we refer to as afternoon. A study of time in scripture has left this author with the belief, shared by many scholars, that time keeping and time frames were not precise in scripture and any attempt to instill a western idea of time onto an eastern framework millennia old is simply foolishness.

Scholarly sources outside of the churches of God agree the Passover lamb was sacrificed late on the 14th of Nisan. The Passovers of Joshua 5, 2 Chronicles 30 and 35, and the instruction in Deuteronomy 16:6 all agree that Passover was killed late on the 14th of Nisan. Attempts to explain away these clear verses should be unacceptable if you believe scripture is God-breathed.

The proposition that the second part of the daily sacrifice, which occurred at *ben ha arbayim*, did not follow the morning sacrifice, but preceded it because of the use of the Hebrew word *waw*, usually translated and, is incredibly lacking in scholastic support, especially when the use of *ben ha arbayim* in Exodus 16 is far less clear. Mr. Coulter's eisegesis of Exodus 16 not only misinterprets the sixth day as being something other than the preparation day, which we call Friday, but also destroys the importance of the manna of God teaching the Israelites about the seventh day Sabbath. The attempt to show that the 15th day of the second month was a weekly Sabbath is unsubstantiated in Exodus 16. Early 14th proponents teach God tested the Israelites to see if they would follow His Sabbath ordinances by either gathering or not gathering manna in the proper way. However, God supposedly forced the Israelites to obey these Sabbath ordinances when it came to the quail gathering in Exodus 16, thus the early 14th theory repudiates the pattern of teaching and testing that God displays throughout scripture.

Early 14th proponents demand that timing be precise. Although there are numerous scriptural examples of evening, the Hebrew word *erev*, both with and without *ba* modifying it, being a time frame from early afternoon to sunset to darkness, they demand the word can mean sunset

and sunset only, except in Joshua 5:10. In the first edition of *The Christian Passover*, Mr. Coulter contended that *ba erev* must be sunset and that sunset marked the end of the day. Early 14th proponents also require that the Hebrew word *'ad*, usually translated until, must put any event it modifies at the very beginning of that time frame, but this is just not supported in scripture.

Early 14th proponents require the Passover to be a domestic sacrifice. They claim Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 do not apply to the Passover sacrifice. Although the *pesah* is clearly listed as a temple sacrifice in Num. 28:16, early 14th proponents redefine the meaning of *pesah* in an attempt to obfuscate that it is a sacrifice and state Numbers 28:16 is only referring to the day of the Passover.

The *pesah* is sacrificed in the temple during the Passovers of Hezekiah, Josiah, and Ezra in scripture. Mr. Coulter contends these Passovers did not follow scriptural regulations because they were not domestic. The only sources listed by Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents who contend that the Passover was a domestic sacrifice are critical scholars who believe the story of Moses and the Exodus were created to allow shepherds from the hills to combine their religion with farmers from the plains of Canaan.

The theory of an early 14th, domestic Passover is not born out by scripture. Of course the Passover was a domestic sacrifice in Egypt, but God gave ordinances that instituted the sacrificial systems and those ordinances forbade all domestic sacrifices. The one thing that separated the sacrifice of the *pesah* from all other sacrifices was that the head of the household who brought the *pesah* did the sacrifice while all other sacrifices were performed by the priests.

The Passover sacrifice, the *pesah*, was not a sin or burnt sacrifice. It did not match any of the characteristics of these sacrifices. Although the characteristics of *pesah* sacrifice came closest to matching that of a thank offering, it is unique among the sacrifices. This is most likely because the *pesah* was special, set apart from all other sacrifices. It foreshadowed the most special sacrifice of all time, the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah. But its resemblance to a thank offering is there because God's called out people were supposed to remember to be thankful that God did wonders and miracles to free a sinful people, a people who had not learned to properly walk with or keep covenant with God. As will be shown in our examination of the New Testament Passover, Christ's sacrifice is only compared to the Passover, something akin to thank offering, and the Atonement offering, which was the ultimate sin offering that was used to allow a covenant people to be washed clean of all their sins.

Israel was still in its sins when they offered the *pesah* to God. It was the final step the nation had to take in being called out from Egypt after God had used the nine previous plagues to separate them out from the Egyptians. Mistaking the Passover as a sin offering for the first born, which is often used as an analogy for Israel or the church, misses that point God is willing to work with us and begin to walk with us even before we know His ways as long as we show we are thankful to Him for all He has done for us. Of course we must learn His ways if we are to continue to walk with Him because He requires us to take part in His covenant, but it all starts with a thanks to God for what He has done.

Jesus, the True Passover

Jesus the Christ is the True Passover (*pesah*) Lamb

Paul states, “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”¹ Paul stresses that Jesus the Christ was the Passover sacrifice. Paul also compares the sacrifice of Jesus to the atonement sacrifice in chapters 9 and 10 of the book of Hebrews. These are the only two sacrifices that are directly compared to Jesus’ sacrifice. Jesus’ sacrifice was the ultimate sin sacrifice (atonement), but His sacrifice was also the ultimate thank offering, the sacrifice that allowed, and still allows, God’s called out people to begin to walk with and learn to serve God. Scripture states, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”² Humankind has by and large rejected this love, but the Father still loves His children.

Christ’s sacrifice superseded the sacrifice of the atonement goats and the importance of him being the ultimate sin sacrifice cannot be overstated. But Jesus the Messiah is almost always compared to a lamb in scripture. That lamb would be the Passover lamb and not the atonement goat because scripture portrays Jesus fulfilling only two sacrificial roles (As will be shown, his shed blood was also used to ratify the New Covenant). The symbol of the lamb is used twenty five times in Revelation.³ Twenty-four of these times this lamb is the Christ.⁴ Revelation 5:6 states, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.”⁵ Revelation 5:12-3 states, “Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I

1 1 Cor. 5:7

2 John 3:16

3 Other verses in Revelations that show Christ being the lamb are: Rev 6:1 Rev 6:16; Rev 7:9-17; Rev 12:10-12; Rev 13:4-9; Rev 14:4-10; Rev 15:1-4; Rev 19:7-17; Rev 21:14; Rev 21:22-22:5.

4 Once, in Revelation 13:11, the lamb is a symbol of the false Christ. Rev. 13:11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

5 Rev. 5:6

saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”⁶ The lamb that was slain and is worthy to receive that kingdom is Jesus the Christ. We are told Christ was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world and that everyone whose name is not written in the book of life by his shed blood will worship the beast.⁷ Scripture seems to stress Jesus’ role as a lamb, which would be the Passover sacrifice, over that of the atonement sacrifice, although He fulfills both.

The apostle Peter writes we are redeemed by, “the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”⁸ The apostle John introduces his readers to Jesus as the Logos, but most often presents him as the lamb. “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”⁹

When Phillip wanted to introduce the concept of Jesus as the messiah in Acts 8, he turned to what is commonly called the servant’s song in Isaiah 53.

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify

6 Rev. 5:12-3

7 Rev. 13:6

8 1 Pet 1:19

9 John 1:29-36

many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.¹⁰

The sacrifice of the Christ is outlined in Isaiah 53, but his sacrifice had been foreshadowed by the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb for almost 1,500 years before the crucifixion. Exodus 12:3 states, “Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.” The *pesah* lamb in Egypt was chosen before hand. So was the true pesah. “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”¹¹

The Passover (*pesah*) lamb (or goat) was to “be without blemish, a male of the first year.”¹² Christ was also called “a lamb without blemish and without spot.”¹³ The nation of Israel was to kill the *pesah* themselves. “And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening (*ben ha arbayim*).”¹⁴ The nation of Israel did not totally understand what they were doing, but they followed the plan of God. They had suffered through the first three plagues and were then spared the next six as God began to work with and separate the people He would call out. Christ was slain by our hands according to the plan of God, both literally and figuratively. Although the Romans actually crucified Jesus at the urging of the Jewish leadership, all of mankind actually delivered the Christ, “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”¹⁵

The importance of the Passover to Israel and to God throughout history should not be understated. But how do we honor and give thanks to God for the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah? If Jesus is our Passover and our Atonement, do we need to honor these memorials? Many who advocate a Christian life and who state they have accepted Jesus as their savior are re-examining scripture to find the answer to this question and more and more of them are finding the answer is yes.

Although there is no real controversy about the general timing of the sacrifice of the Passover lamb outside of the churches of God, there is real controversy among scholars about how the Last Supper relates to the Passover. Was it a Passover meal? Was a new ceremony added by the Christ? The synoptic Gospels appear to depict the Last Supper as Passover meal. The gospel of John states that the Passover meal would occur the evening after Jesus’ crucifixion, thus the Last Supper is depicted as not being a Passover meal in John’s account. An examination of these

10 Is. 53:3-12

11 Rev. 13:8

12 Ex. 12:5

13 1 Pet. 1:19

14 Ex. 12:6

15 Acts 2:23

supposedly contradictory viewpoints will be undertaken in the New Testament portion of this book with the intent of helping Christians become closer to the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah and his Father.

The Passover Season

The Passover Season

Scripture and tradition verify that long before the time of Jesus the Christ, the Jews referred to the entire time frame around the 14th of Nisan and the seven days of Unleavened Bread as the Passover. Ezekiel 45:21 states, “In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.” Luke 22:1 parallels this when it states, “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.” Mark 14:1 agrees with Luke when it states, “After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.” Mark continues in 14:12, “And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?”

There is no question that the Passover (*pesah*) lamb was killed on the 14th of Nisan¹ and the first day of Unleavened Bread was the 15th of Nisan.² Although the gospel may appear to contradict this, scripture shows going back to the time of Ezekiel and Ezra and most probably before then, the entire time frame around the days of Unleavened Bread had become known as both the Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread, most likely because the slaying of the *pesah* lamb was the central event of this festival. The *pesah* was the only sacrifice that the head of household was not just allowed, but ordered, to sacrifice where God had placed His name (as explained earlier with the exegesis of Deuteronomy 12, Leviticus 17, and Numbers 28:16). Many Jews planned the pilgrimage to Jerusalem at least once in their life so they could perform this sacrifice. The vast majority of the time the Gospels use the term Passover referring to the entire time frame around Unleavened Bread and not a specific day or even the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. All of the New Testament verses where Passover is used are listed below.

- Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.³

1 Lev. 23:5 In the fourteenth *day* of the first month at even *is* the LORD’S passover.

2 Lev. 23:6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

3 Matt. 26:2

- Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the Passover.⁴
- After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.⁵
- And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?⁶
- And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?⁷
- And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.⁸
- Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.⁹
- Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.¹⁰
- Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.¹¹
- And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.¹²
- And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?¹³
- And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.¹⁴
- And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.¹⁵
- And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.¹⁶

4 Matt. 26:17-19

5 Mark 14:1

6 Mark 14:12

7 Mark 14:14

8 Mark 14:16

9 Luke 2:41

10 Luke 22:1

11 Luke 22:7

12 Luke 22:8

13 Luke 22:11

14 Luke 22:13

15 Luke 22:15

16 John 2:13

- Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.¹⁷
- And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.¹⁸
- And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.¹⁹
- Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.²⁰
- Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.²¹
- Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?²²
- And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!²³

An examination of the above verses shows that the Passover was used as a generic time frame, except for Luke 22:15 and John 18:28. These two verses seem to contradict each other, but before we attempt to harmonize them, we will examine other verses that some have suggested show the timing for the Passover.

John 13:1-2 states that it was before the feast of Passover and supper had just been served.²⁴ This would seem to be very strong support that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal. However, in context, verse 1 of chapter 13 appears to be a prologue stating that it was before the start of the Passover season when Jesus knew his crucifixion would occur and he would die. This is followed by a new thought, that the Last supper was being served. Therefore John 13:1 should not be used as proof that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal.

Luke 22:11-13 states that Christ sent the disciples to the master of the upper room and they told this master that Jesus would be eating the Passover there, which the master must surely have assumed meant the pesah lamb.²⁵ Then the disciples went and found that room and made ready for the Passover.

17 John 2:23

18 John 6:4

19 John 11:55

20 John 12:1

21 John 13:1

22 John 18:28-9

23 John 19:14

24 John 13:1-2 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

25 Luke 22:11-3 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

If the Last Supper was a Passover meal, Luke 22:11, Matthew 26:17 and Mark 14:12 are self explanatory. As additional support for the premise that the Last Supper was a Passover, some have contended that if the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, then Jesus was either lying to his disciples or he did not know he would not be eating the Passover, but scripture suggests a third possibility. Jesus was aware the plan of God called for him to be crucified as the true Passover.²⁶ He had been preaching this for years, but his disciples still did not understand or believe him on this point. Although Jesus knew God's plan was that he be sacrificed, he still prayed in earnest in the garden of Gethsemane for the crucifixion to pass him by three different times. If Jesus thought it possible that the cup his father had prepared for him could be passed, as his prays suggest, then surely he would have wanted to have upper room ready for a Passover meal the next evening if the Last Supper was not a Passover meal. Therefore Luke 22:11, where Jesus told the disciples to go prepare the upper room so that they could eat the Passover there, could be generic instruction to prepare for the entire feast of Unleavened Bread, which of course would have included the Passover meal. The question yet to be answered is does Luke 22:15 depict the Last Supper as that Passover meal or does John 18:28 show that the Last Supper was not the Passover, a meal that Jesus greatly desired to have with disciples, but could not. Just as John 13:1-2 should not be used to support the premise of the Last Supper not being a Passover meal, Luke 22:11 should not be used to support the premise that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.

Comparing Luke 22:13 with Luke 22:1, which states, "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" also shows that the disciples prepared the upper room for the entire Unleavened Bread season, which is called the Passover. Therefore although Luke 22:15 apparently does support the premise that the Last Supper was a Passover meal, Luke 22:11 and 13 do not, just as John 13:1 should not be used to support the premise that the Last Supper was not a Passover meal.

Again, the only two verses in the gospels that directly refer to the Passover sacrifice and meal are Luke 22:15 and John 18:28. All of the other verses about the last Passover of Jesus' human life are referring to the general time and general events associated with the feast of Unleavened Bread, which was often called the Passover.

Matt. 26:17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

26 Matthew 26:10-12

The Timing of the Crucifixion

The Timing of the Crucifixion

The day and date of the crucifixion can and should be debated because the harmonization of the synoptic gospels with the gospel of John is not seamless. However, some have even debated the timing of the crucifixion. Mark writes that Jesus was crucified at about the third hour.¹ However, John writes that Jesus was not condemned until the sixth hour.² How could Jesus have been crucified three hours before he was condemned? A very small number of scholars have tried to insert an entire day from the time Jesus was condemned until he was crucified, just as Jaubert does when she contends the Last Supper was on Tuesday evening and the crucifixion was Friday afternoon.³ However, scripture depicts the capture, trial, crucifixion and burial of Jesus as an incredibly rushed procedure, all happening in less than a day.

So how can both Mark and John be correct, as they must be if scripture is the inspired word of God?⁴ An examination of time in the book of John can and should be used to shine the light of truth on this issue. John writes, “He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.”⁵ Barnes correctly notes, “The Jews divided their day into twelve equal parts, beginning at sunrise. If John used their mode of computation, this was about four o’clock P.M. The Romans divided time as we do, beginning at midnight. If John used their mode, it was about ten o’clock in the forenoon.”⁶ Walker writes, “Jewish reckoning makes this 4 P.M., an unusual time to begin a day’s stay. But modern reckoning makes this 10 A.M., a quite satisfactory hour.”⁷ This suggests that John was using modern time.

1 Mark 15:25

2 John 14:14

3 Anne Jaubert theory that Jesus observed the Jubilees calendar will be examined in a later chapter.

4 John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken

5 John 1:39

6 Barnes, Albert, Barnes Notes on the Bible, e-sword commentary on John 1:39

7 Walker, Norman, The Reckoning of hours in the Forth Gospel, *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. 4, Oct. 1960, p. 70

The second use of time in John is, “Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.”⁸ Most modern commentaries suggest John was using Jewish time in this verse, thus making it noon time, “an unsuitable hour for the events mentioned. But the modern reckoning makes this 6 P.M., a natural and customary time of day for such events.”⁹ Although this author agrees with Walker that John was using modern time, rendering days as two twelve hour segments from midnight to noon and noon to midnight, this verse is inconclusive because either Jewish or modern time could be used and there are no internal time references to help us pin point which was used in this case.

The third use of time in John is, “Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”¹⁰ Walker makes the convincing argument for use of modern time in this verse, shortly removed from the incidents of the well at Samaria. “Jewish reckoning makes this 1 P.M., an unlikely time of day, and difficult to fit in the nobleman’s arrival home the following day. But modern reckoning makes this 7 P.M., a more likely time of arrival at Cana of Galilee from Capernaum, twenty miles journey, and then, after rest for man and beast, of return to Capernaum the following day.”¹¹ Thus it is likely that John was using modern time.

The fourth usage of time is John 14:14, placing the judgment of Jesus at noon using Jewish time, but at 6 A.M. using modern time. A harmonization of the gospel accounts shows, along with the other uses of time in John, that John was using modern time. Matthew, Mark and Luke all agree that there was darkness over the land for three hours, from the sixth to the ninth hour.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.¹²
 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.¹³
 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.¹⁴

Reconciling with Mark’s statement that Jesus was crucified at the third hour would mean Jesus was on the cross from 9 A.M. to noon, then a darkness settled over the land from noon until 3 P.M., when Jesus died. Therefore when John writes, “And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King”¹⁵ John was using modern time.

8 John 4:6

9 Walker, *The Reckoning of hours in the Forth Gospel*, pp. 69-70

10 John 4:52

11 Walker, *The Reckoning of hours in the Forth Gospel*, p. 70

12 Matt. 27:45

13 Luke 23:44

14 Mark 15:33

15 John 19:14

“Now the Fourth Gospel differs from the other three in its purpose. For whereas the latter were written primarily for the edification of the faithful, the former was written primarily for the conversion of the Greek-speaking to Jews of the Diaspora, as J.A.T. Robinson has recently shown.”¹⁶ Not only was the purpose of the fourth gospel different from the synoptics, its timing and location were also very different. “St. John, in using what is the modern reckoning, followed the practice of the province in which he was living, and for which he was writing.’ One may add that is antecedently probable that John would and did in the point vary from the rest of the N.T. writers, because he was under no obligation to follow in their footsteps, and because he was writing for a different sort of reader.”¹⁷

Although harmonizing the day and date of the crucifixion is much debated for good reason, a harmonization of the timing of the crucifixion is fairly straight forward. Shortly after sunset Jesus and the disciples partook of the Last Supper. Jesus went to Mount of Olives to pray, where he was captured. During the night he was shuttled back and forth between the Sanhedrin and Pilate. At 6 A.M., Pilate sentenced Jesus. At 9 A.M., he was placed on the cross. At noon a great darkness came over the land. Around 3 P.M., Jesus said his last words on the cross and died. He was in a new tomb by 6 P.M. Although most of the rest of this book will be examining the day and date on which Jesus died, as well as the symbols delivered at the Last Supper, there should be no real controversy surrounding actual timing of the crucifixion. The few teachers in the churches of God who try to show the Last Supper was not on the 14th nor on the 15th of Nisan do so because they reject the idea of the Last Supper being a Passover meal served on the 15th, but they also try to dissuade people from keeping a Lord’s Supper on the 14th. They are in the minority opinion and will not be examined in great detail because the vast majority of scholars agree the Last Supper occurred on either the 14th or the 15th of Nisan.

16 Walker, *The Reckoning of hours in the Forth Gospel*, p. 72

17 Walker, pp. 72-3

Harmonizing John 18:28 with Luke 22:15

Harmonizing John 18:28 with Luke 22:15

Harmonizing is simply the process of trying to derive the big picture from a multitude of details. This chapter will examine how John 18:28 and Luke 22:15 can be harmonized, even though they appear to be contradictory. As simplistic as it sounds, many ministers have compared the account of the Last Supper in the three synoptic gospels to John's and stated, "It's three to one, so three wins. Therefore the Last Supper was a Passover." This author has also seen ministers hold up Fred Coulter's *The Christian Passover* in one hand and a number of papers supporting a late 14th Passover in the other and stated because Mr. Coulter's book is so large, "The weight of evidence is in that the Last Supper was a Passover." Unfortunately far too many Christians allow their teachers to get away with such absurd statements. There are really five alternative outcomes when Luke 22:15 is harmonized with John 18:28.

Alternative 1: It is simple not possible to harmonize these two verses.

Alternative 2: The Last Supper was did not take place on the early portion of Nisan 15 according to the observed Jewish calendar, but was a Passover meal for the disciples and Jesus because they were observing a different calendar, most likely the Qumran calendar of Jubilees.

Alternative 3: The disciples observed a Passover with Jesus on the early 14th, which was the correct time for the Passover, while the Jews were mistakenly keeping a late 14th Passover.

Alternative 4: The Last Supper was Passover meal that occurred on the early 15th, as the synoptics appear to depict and John 18:28 is not referring to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.

Alternative 5: The Last Supper was not Passover meal, as John seems to depict. Therefore it took place on the early 14th and Luke 22:15 is not stating that Jesus ate the Passover meal.

Alternative 1: No Harmonization is Possible

The option of not being able to harmonize these verses is something a number of scholars have embraced. These generally liberal scholars believe that the three synoptic gospels are based upon a document that had the sayings of Jesus, often referred to as the Q. These scholars believe the first of the synoptic gospels was written in the 80's and was Mark, not Matthew as the early church fathers record. They believe the last of the synoptics was written between 120 and 130 A.D. They believe these gospels were written by various church areas, often called schools. They teach John's gospel was written between 150 and 180 A.D., thus it could not have been

written by an apostle but by a school of gentiles who disliked and fought with the other schools, who were mostly Jewish by decent. They believe John's gospel was written with an anti-Semitic slant. Scholars such as Mr. Casey embrace this hypothesis. They do not embrace the hermeneutic of 2 Timothy 3:16, which states, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." These scholars generally believe scripture is a compilation of myths and legends and thus there is no reason to try to harmonize these supposed myths. This author has read liberal scholarship and even accepted some of their conclusions on perplexing problems, but would never accept their life view because the Bible is God's manual of life. Scripture holds the key to a covenant relationship with God the Father by the gift of the sacrifice of His only begotten son. Therefore this book rejects the idea that scripture cannot be harmonized.

Alternative 2: Jesus and the Disciples were observing a Different Calendar

The idea that Jesus and the disciples were observing a Passover on the early 14th has also been embraced in the last fifty years by a number of scholars who know the normal timing for eating a Passover meal is on the 15th. Some of them believe Jesus was following a Talmudic injunction that if you knew you would be dead before the next Passover, you could partake of the Passover early. However Jesus said, "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye."¹

Scripture states the Passover lamb was to be killed on the 14th of Nisan at *ben ha arbayim*.² If you were unclean or could not be at the temple on the 14th of Nisan, you could partake of all the Passover ordinances on the 14th day of the second month. There are no other scriptural ordinances about partaking of the Passover at any other time for any other reason. Therefore if you did partake of the Passover at any other time for any reason, you were following a tradition of man that violated the commands of God, something Jesus would never have done. Therefore Jesus did not partake of the Passover meal a day early because he knew he would be the true Passover sacrifice the next day.

1 Mark 7:5-13

2 Lev. 23:5

Although Jesus would not violate the commandments of God to follow a tradition of man, recent scholars have also suggested he was following a calendar different than the observed calendar used by the Jews of that time. Attempting to harmonize John 18:28 to Luke 22:15 by stating Jesus was observing a different calendar ignores the fact that there is no indication of differing calendars anywhere in gospel accounts. A number of scholars, and even the Pope in 2007, suggested that Jesus might have been Essene. This theory ignores the fact that the doctrine of the Essenes varied fairly dramatically from the Messiah's teachings on a number of topics and concentrates on the areas their teachings had in common. Jaubert in *The Date of the Last Supper* wrote that Jesus was following the 360 day solar calendar found in the book of Jubilees. The calendar of Jubilees, which was discovered at Qumran, mandated all of the feast days always occurred on the same day of the week. This would mandate a Tuesday night Passover meal, thus Jaubert supposes that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.³ However, this theory contends that the crucifixion did not occur until Friday afternoon. This gap of time is not present in the gospel accounts, and thus this author believes it is untenable. As will be shown, Beckwith also dismisses Jaubert's theory quite convincingly because the calendar of Jubilees is an impractical theological construct. Therefore this author rejects a harmonization of the gospel accounts accomplished by the use of different calendars.

Alternative 3-5 will be examined in separate chapters because of the complexity of their arguments.

3 Jaubert, Annie, *The Date of the Last Supper*, French orig. 1957 Trans by Rafferty, I, Staten Island, NY, Alba House, 1965

Did the Jews Keep the Wrong Passover?

CHAPTER

30

Alternative Three-The Last Supper was a Passover on the early 14th?

Early 14th proponents teach that the Last Supper was a Passover on the early 14th.¹ They believe Jesus and the disciples performed a domestic sacrifice of the Passover (*pesah*) lamb just after the sunset at the end of the 13th of Nisan. This theory requires that domestic Passovers were allowed, that the Passover should be sacrificed at the very beginning of the 14th of Nisan, and that all the Jews observing the Passover by sacrificing the *pesah* on the afternoon of the 14th in the temple were performing the wrong sacrifice to God at the wrong time.

Did the Jews keep the Passover at the Wrong Time?

Early 14th proponents claim the Jews lost the correct timing for the Passover during the Babylonian captivity or perhaps during the period of Hellenization and Jesus simply set the timing straight by observing the Passover a day earlier than the rest of the Jewish population. This author believes the most probable origination of the early 14th hypothesis was in the late 1800's by a church of God theologian harmonizing the accounts of the Last Supper in the three synoptics to set the type of meal, then using John's timing to "prove" the Jew were wrong about the Old Testament Passover timing. Anti-Semitism was running rampant a century ago, which led to Czarist Russia exiling millions of Jews and eventually led to the Holocaust.

The idea that the Jews were wrong about most things, and were probably even evil (as Mr. Coulter is so fond of saying, the Jews are the enemy of Jesus), apparently led to the belief that John's usage of the term "Jews" was designed to make all Jews, not the majority of the Jewish leadership which John was referring to, seem to be against Jesus. This agrees with a number of the Anti-Nicene fathers, who were so anti-Semitic they would have had Himmler and Hitler cheering. The anti-semitic idea that the Jews needed to suffer because they rejected and killed the Messiah ignores Jesus' own words, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."² Even when the Messiah was captured, he could have avoided the penalty of death

¹ Please note that early 14th proponents are defined as believing the Passover sacrifice was on the early 14th of Nisan.

² John 10:17-8

if he so desired, but he chose to fulfill prophecy and follow the will of his Father. “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?”³ Therefore the idea that the Jews in general had to be punished for killing Jesus is unscriptural.

Who are *the Jews* in the book of John?

The word Jews is used 68 times in 65 verses in the gospel of John. A sampling of these verses are listed below:

- And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?⁴
- And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.⁵
- And the Jews’ passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.⁶
- There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.⁷
- Then there arose a question between *some* of John’s disciples and the Jews about purifying.⁸
- The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.⁹
- The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.¹⁰
- And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.¹¹
- Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.¹²
- Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.¹³
- And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?¹⁴
- Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.¹⁵
- And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.¹⁶

3 Matt. 26:53-4

4 John 1:19

5 John 2:6

6 John 2:13

7 John 3:1

8 John 3:25

9 John 5:10

10 John 5:15-6

11 John 6:4

12 John 7:2

13 John 7:13

14 John 7:15

15 John 8:31

16 John 11:19

- And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.¹⁷
- Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.¹⁸

The gospel of John was actually written a full generation after the temple had been destroyed.¹⁹ Gnosticism, which had been an issue while the temple stood, was now flourishing. The character of the church had changed because it now included large numbers of gentiles. John even used Roman time in his gospel, most likely because that was the time commonly used by the expected readership of his gospel, unlike the three synoptic gospels. The gentiles and Jews in the church were taught to obey the commandments of God and Jesus, but the entire sacrificial system was gone. The Jews power to do anything in Jerusalem was greatly diminished compared to Jesus' time. The reign and control of the Jewish religion by the Pharisees and Sadducees was over because the Sadducees were killed in 70 A.D. with the destruction of the temple and the Pharisees had just begun to reestablish control from Jamnia. In this environment, John's gospel often uses the term "Jews" to generically refer to Jewish practices, as in the Passover in John 6:4 and the Feast of Tabernacles in John 7:2. In these cases John is filling in details for the Jewish and gentile church about how the feasts were conducted when the temple stood, like when he gives the detail of purification associated with the Passover season in John 11:55.²⁰ To emphasize how the temple and the feasts' observances influenced the early church, and most probably to stress Jesus' role as the true Passover, John even built the flow of his gospel around three Passovers. The first Passover season lasts from the John 2 through John 5. The second is John 6. The third is John 11 through 22.

John also commonly uses the term "Jews" to refer to the Jewish leadership, which is often negative, but was not anti-Semitic. After all, Jesus was a Jew. That John also often used the term "Jews" to refer to the Jewish leadership and not all Jews is made clear by examining John 3:1, when the Jewish Pharisee Nicodemus is referred to as a leader of the Jews.²¹ In John 1:19 priests are sent to examine John the Baptist by "the Jews."²² Therefore the term "the Jews" in John often means the leadership of the Jewish nation of Israel at that time.

Early 14th proponent's Views of *the Jews*

Those who believe in an early 14th Lord Supper and late 14th Passover are not defined as early 14th proponents by this author because they know the Passover lamb was killed in Egypt on

17 John 11:55

18 John 18:14

19 The temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. Non-liberal scholars place the writing of the gospel of John at approximately 90 A.D.

20 John 11:55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

21 John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews

22 John 1:19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

the later portions of the 14th of Nisan. Their interpretation of scripture is that Jesus instituted a new ceremony called the Lord's Supper. However, early 14th Passover proponents stress that the Last Supper was a Passover meal and that Christ died before the Jews ate their Passover meal at the wrong time. Although early 14th proponents inadequately try to explain that Hezekiah, Josiah and Ezra sacrificed the Passover lamb in the temple because the Jews were so evil that they could not be trusted to keep the Passover in the right manner, they never attempt to explain why these righteous servants of God sacrificed the Passover at the supposedly wrong time, on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, the same time it was being kept by the Jewish people at the time of Christ. They create convoluted explanations of Joshua 5:10 and Deut. 16:1-8 because these verses also depict the Passover being sacrificed at the end of the 14th day of the first month. The hypothesis that the *pesah* was killed early on the 14th of Nisan in Egypt has been dispelled by the Old Testament portion of this book but is taught by early 14th proponents.

The Church of God 7th Day continues to perform a Lord's Supper on the early 14th of Nisan today, even though they generally disavow observing the scriptural holy days. How the leadership of a major branch of the churches of God went from performing the foot washing and partaking of the symbols of the bread and wine on the early 14th to believing they were performing a Passover ceremony on the early 14th and that the Jews had not messed up so many things, including the timing of the Passover, is a question that history has not yet revealed.

However, the anti-Semitism behind the current belief in an early 14th Passover is clearly expressed in Fred Coulter's *The Christian Passover* and other works. One example of such thoughts is listed below.

Judaism is paganism...When you hear these tapes, be prepared for a very depressing day because you will understand the hatred Judaism has for Jesus Christ. Utterly contemptible, vehement, implacable hatred and will do anything to tear down Christians to the point of even being nice, kind, but to change your thoughts, your ideas and rob you. And I sit here 50,000 dollars ripped off by a Jew who attended temple and synagogue and did that very thing to me. That was some years ago. The media powers are controlled by the Jews...How many of you have heard of the Jesus seminar up in Santa Rosa? That is run by a Jew whose name is funk or fink (*ed. note-Robert Funk*), I forget which it is. Funded by the Rockefellers to get Christ out of the New Testament...Who are some of the leading magicians of the world? Need to think about it. Need to think about it.²³

Are You an Enemy of Christ if you Celebrate Passover on the Late 14th?

Mr. Coulter has put out a large number of tapes about the Passover and has spoken at great length on the evils of keeping a late 14th Passover, which he calls "an early 15th" Passover. Although using the term early 15th Passover may be a nice propaganda tool, no one practices an 15th Passover. Jews who today eat their Seder meal on the early 15th and Christians who eat a Passover meal on the early 15th believe the Passover sacrifice was on the late 14th of Nisan and the meal obviously was eaten after the sacrifice. Below is partial transcript from one of Mr. Coulter's tapes espousing the evils of what he refers to as an early 15th Passover.

23 Coulter, Fred, *A Wake Up Call*, Transcript from tape

The world which rejoiced was not the entire world; rather it was the world of Judaism-the enemies of Jesus Christ! They would rejoice over the crucifixion, death and burial of Jesus Christ. Jesus died in the late afternoon of the day portion of the 14th of Nisan. He was in the tomb on the 15th of Nisan. The disciples grieved and lamented that Jesus had died. I am sure that [they] thought, "How can this be? How could he have died such a horrible, cruel death? He was the Son of God--the Messiah--wasn't He? But He is dead! He is dead! How terrible! How awful! What will we do?"

But the world of Judaism, their reaction was totally the opposite. On the night of Nisan 15, while Jesus Christ was dead in the tomb, at their Passover, the high priests and the leaders of Judaism-during the Passover of the Jews-were rejoicing in the death of Jesus Christ and celebrating that they had finally done it! They had finally killed Him! They had finally rid themselves of Him-so they thought! And he was in the grave! Much to their further grief, Christ was raised from the dead. Then the apostles and disciples rejoiced!

However, that night of the 15th, the character of the 15th Passover was further changed unto this very day! For that night they rejoiced in the death of Jesus Christ-their bitter enemy! They are still the enemies of Jesus Christ! In drinking the cup of wine to Elijah during the 15th Seder meal, all the goyim, Christians and all other nations are pledged to the wrath of God!

What does that mean for us today? It means that those who are deceived into observing a 15th Passover are in effect rejoicing with the enemies of Jesus Christ and they don't even realize it! But it is impossible to honor Christ when one celebrates the Passover on the wrong day, at the wrong time, in the wrong manner and rejoices with the enemies of God!

So we need to understand that if anyone keeps a Passover late on the afternoon of the 14th or on the night of the 15th of Nisan, they are leaving the true New Covenant Passover and are joining the enemies of Jesus Christ.²⁴

This type of message, which Mr. Coulter maintains is not anti-Semitic, but which this author and others view as anti-Semitic, is well known to those who follow Mr. Fred Coulter, whether they reject or embrace his theology. As the Old Testament portion of this book has shown in detail, the evidence for an early 14th sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb is built upon the fallacy of the logic of verbosity and terrible scholarship that misquotes other scholarship and ignores simple rules of Bible study. However, those who stop following the errant, man-made tradition of an early 14th Passover are no longer Christians according to Mr. Coulter because they are now following Judaism. Mr. Coulter explains his stance on Judaism this way:

On the other hand, most true Christians understand the truth about the pagan religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, etc. And they have been taught about the paganism of Catholicism and Protestantism, but only a few understand nor have been taught about the paganism of Judaism, particularly mystic Judaism. Which by the way is the most demonic and most Babylonian of any. But if you don't believe this statement, watch all of the movies, watch the astrology, watch the magic, watch the demonism, read the credits, who produced it. Read the credits. But since Juda-

24 Coulter, Fred, Transcript from the tape *The Dark Seder*

ism claims to understand the law and the Sabbath and the holy days, few ministers actually realize Judaism is vehemently, and as I said earlier, implacably anti Christ. To complicate matters even more since WW2 and the holocaust, the whole world, especially the United States, has been intimidated into believing if anyone says anything against the Jews, he or she is an anti-Semite. Or an anti-semitic. I have been accused of that. I am not.

So powerfully has this propaganda been instilled into the minds of most people, that they automatically react in this manner to any criticism against the Jews. This has been so successful that Judaism has been able to remove nearly every vestige of Jesus Christ from public life and no one dares to publicly denounce this outrage for fear of being labeled an anti-Semitic or risk being destroyed by the powerful religious, civic and political forces of Judaism. As a result, if any one, rather in the church of God or not, teaches the truth about from the word of God about Judaism and the lies and evils of Judaism together with it contemptible hatred of Jesus Christ, and everything call Christian, he is in danger of being labeled as anti-Semitic. By applying the same criteria to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul, they would have to be labeled as anti-Semitic, as well. And that is what they have done. That's what Judaism has done.²⁵

Mr. Coulter makes many charges against Judaism, most of which are based on personal bias and prejudice. He even brings up the 18 benedictions said by Jews. "There are 18 benedictions to be said every day against Christians which curse them and denounce them."²⁶ Mr. Coulter is mistaken when he states 18 benedictions curse Christians. One of the benedictions, the 12th, does curse Christians. This hateful practice was added after the time of Jesus, but it is just one of the 18, so Mr. Coulter's scholarship is again mistaken.

Anti-Christianity among the Jews-Are They really the Enemy of Christ?

As Kittel and others agree, the twelfth benediction was added to the daily prayers to drive the Christians from the synagogue.

The ref is certainly to heretics ("there are minim among the Gentile nations," bChul., 13b) and primarily it is to Jewish Christians. In the oldest Palestinian version of the 12th benediction of the Prayer of Eighteen Benedictions, now known to us through the findings in the Cairo Geniza, Nazarenes and minim are mentioned together: "May the Nazarenes (Christians) and heretics perish in a moment, be blotted out of the book of life, and not be written with the just." The introduction of the benediction into the Shmone 'Esre and therewith into the liturgy by R. Gamaliel II c. 90 A.D. carried with it the definitive breach between the Chr. Church and Judaism. From then on cursing the Nazarenes became an integral part of the synagogue worship and the daily prayer of every Jew. Precisely in the benediction very gt. Care was taken to see that the cursing of the minim was done correctly and with abbreviation. Attending the synagogue and taking part in its worship thus became impossible for Christians. Complete separation resulted.²⁷

25 Coulter, Fred, transcript from the tape *A Wake up Call*

26 Coulter, Fred, transcript from the tape, *A Wake up Call*

27 Kittel, Gerhard, Friedrich, Gerhard, Bromiley, Geoffrey William, Pitkin, Ronald E., Translated by Bromiley, Geoffrey William, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1971, p. 850

The early followers of Jesus the Messiah were often referred to as Nazarenes in early writings because the Messiah was also known as Jesus of Nazareth. Thus Christians were forced to curse themselves if they attended the synagogue after 90 A.D. where the 18 benedictions were recited. It was the Jewish leadership, then almost exclusively Pharisaic, that forced this separation. This is the time frame in which the book of John was written. The Jewish leaders of that time worked to completely reject anyone who would accept Jesus as the messiah.

There was a lot of hate to go around during the early years of Christianity. Many of the anti-Nicene fathers had absolutely hateful things to say about the Jews. However, a summary of the Talmudic sayings about Jesus are listed below, with Klinghoffer analysis stating these hateful sayings, which have been hidden away from many Talmudic translations for centuries, are actually parodies. Although Klinghoffer is most probably correct, they are hateful parodies that Jewish leaders of two millennia ago created because of their prejudice against Jesus as the Christ. To imply that Jews and even the Jewish leadership of today still holds such hateful attitudes is simply incorrect, although there should be no doubt many Jewish leaders reject Christianity in a very negative and some times hateful manner. But these attitudes are similarly mirrored in the anti-Semitism of the anti-Nicene fathers and appear to be reflected by at least a number of early 14th Passover proponents. The vast majority of Christians are not anti-Semitic, just as the vast majority of Jews are not anti-Christian. Both sides simply believe the other is wrong. Sometimes a few bad apples can label an entire forest. Some of the Jewish diatribes against Jesus as Christ and Christians are listed below.

According to the Talmud, Yeshu was the son of a Jewish woman named Miriam who was betrothed to a carpenter. "Betrothed" means she was legally married to him, but she was not yet living with him or having sexual relations with him. The story says that Miriam was either raped by or voluntarily slept with Pandeira, a Greek or Roman soldier. Miriam then gave birth to Yeshu, who was considered a "mamzer" (bastard), a product of an adulterous relationship. The Talmud describes Yeshu as a heretic who dabbled in sorcery and lead the people astray. Later, the Sanhedrin (the Jewish "Supreme Court") ordered Yeshu stoned to death and his dead body was hung from a tree until nightfall after his death, in accordance with the ancient Jewish punishment for heretics.²⁸

Schaefer, who heads up Princeton's Judaic studies program, has collected and analyzed all the passages in the Talmud that apparently refer to the founder of Christianity, texts that were previously censored from Talmud editions for centuries. In his book he argues—against other scholars—that the scandalous passages indeed refer not to some other figure of ancient times but to the famous Jesus of Nazareth.

What exactly is so scandalous? How about Jesus punished in Hell for eternity by being made to sit in a cauldron of boiling excrement? That image appears in early manuscripts of the Babylonian Talmud, as does a brief account of Jesus' trial and execution—not by the Romans but by the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. The Jewish community, to the extent Jews were even aware of these excised texts, has been content to let them remain obscure and unknown.

Schaefer, a distinguished German-born Christian scholar who describes classical rabbinic literature as "my first love," has now definitively let the cat out of the bag. This undermines a widespread assumption that, of Judaism's and Christianity's re-

28 URL- <http://judaism.about.com/od/beliefs/a/jesus.htm>

spective sacred texts, only the Christian Gospels go out of their way to assail the rival faith, whereas Judaism's classical texts refrain from similar attacks.

It seems fair to say now, however, that the Talmud is every bit as offensive to Christians as the Gospels are to Jews.

The Talmud's scattered portrait of Jesus unapologetically mocks Christian doctrines including the virgin birth and the resurrection. Which isn't to say that the rabbinic invective is meant simply to insult. In his book, the author calls the Talmud's assault on Christian claims "devastating."

"It is a very serious argument," said Schaefer, who emphasizes that the rabbis' stories about Jesus were never intended as an attempt at historically accurate narrative. Rather, in the classic Talmudic style, they encode legal and theological argumentation in the form of sometimes-imaginative storytelling.

One naturally wonders, when *Jesus in the Talmud* is published, what the results will be for Jewish-Christian relations. "I certainly don't want to harm Jewish-Christian dialogue. God forbid," Schaefer said. But dialogue requires honesty, and "I'm trying to be honest."²⁹

The truth is only useful if it is properly applied. The truth is that the split between Judaism and Christianity was nasty with the Jewish leadership of the time doing all they could to dispel the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. The twelfth benediction was added to drive Jewish Christians from the synagogue. But this was two millennia ago and attitudes and actions have changed. Besides, Christians have been directly challenged by Jesus to turn the other cheek³⁰ and offer forgiveness.³¹

Did Jesus follow any of the Jewish Traditions?

Is a late 14th Passover an errant Jewish Tradition?

There should be no doubt that even as anti-Semitism exists and is reflected in theological beliefs, Judaism also has its own brand of nasty, hateful prejudice, as is shown in Schaefer's work. But prejudice and hate should not influence our reading of scripture, God's manual of life. However, as history has shown, it usually does. Is Mr. Coulter correct when he states:

The Gospel accounts make it clear that Jesus did not follow the traditions of men. Jesus strongly denounced the traditions of the Jews—ALL OF THEM! Speaking to the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus condemned them for rejecting the commandments of God in order to keep their traditions. He said, '...**Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?**...This people draws near to Me with their mouth, and with their lips they honor Me, but their hearts are far away from Me.' But they worship Me in vain, teaching as doctrine the commandments of men." (Mat. 15: 3, 8-9 AT)

Let's take a close look at these words of Jesus. Jesus emphatically declared to the leaders of Judaism that in keeping their own traditions, they were **transgressing the**

29 from Klinghoffer, David, *What the Talmud Really Says about Jesus*, Princeton University Press, 2007 from the review at <http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6411679.html>

30 Matt. 5:29 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

31 Matt. 18:22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

commandments of God. In short, such behavior is SIN. Worship that it based on traditions of men is vain, empty and useless—just so much sanctimonious pretense. Yes, with their mouths and lips they professed to serve God, but their hearts were far from Him.³²

Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents contend that a late 14th Passover is a Jewish tradition and Jesus condemned all Jewish traditions. Did Jesus condemn all Jewish traditions? Scripture states, “And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch.”³³ It is possible that the feast of dedication, often referred to as Hanukkah, is just used as time marker in John 10, but Clarke states, “This was a feast instituted by Judas Maccabeus, in commemoration of his purifying the temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes. This feast began on the twenty-fifth of the month Cisleu, (which answers to the eighteenth of our December), and continued for eight days.”³⁴

The Feast of Dedication was the equivalent of independence day for Israel and Jesus was at temple during this time. This would be a little like stating George Washington was in New York city, the capital of the United States at the time, on the 4th of July and walked in the halls of the capital building, yet he did not observe the fourth of July as a holiday because it was a tradition of the nation. Does John 10:22 require that Jesus took part in this Jewish custom? No, but the evidence of scripture suggests he did and he is definitely not recorded as condemning this traditional holiday, thus Mr. Coulter appears to be incorrect when he states Jesus did not take part in any of the celebrations of the Jews and is definitely incorrect when he states Jesus denounced all of the traditions of the Jews.

Luke 2:41 also states, “Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the pass-over.” Clarke states, “His parents went-every year-This was their constant custom, because positively enjoined by the law, Ex. 23:17.”³⁵ Mr. Coulter contends the Jews kept the Passover at the wrong time and in the wrong manner, thus it was an errant tradition, yet here is Jesus and His family participating in this tradition and he is certainly not denouncing this tradition, although he had the perfect opportunity to do so when he was teaching the elders about the way of God in Luke 2:46-50.³⁶ Again, Mr. Coulter is incorrect when he states, “Jesus strongly denounced the traditions of the Jews—ALL OF THEM!”³⁷

32 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 222

33 John 10:22-3

34 Clarke, Adam, *Commentary on the New Testament*, e-sword for John 10:22

35 Clarke, Adam, *Commentary on the New Testament*, e-sword for Luke 2:41

36 Luke 2:46-50 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

37 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 222

Mr. Coulter states, “Here is plain evidence that in the New Testament that Jesus never observed the traditional Jewish 14/15 Passover. Had he done so, He would have been placing the traditions of men above the commandments of God.”³⁸ Mr. Coulter then spends three pages explaining that the Messiah was special and was trained by God and not the Jewish rabbis. Mr. Coulter’s supposed “plain evidence” that the Jesus did not partake of the “Jewish 14/15 Passover” is the Jews are wrong. Of course Jesus took part in the Jewish tradition of observing the Feast of Tabernacles without placing the traditions of men above the commands of God because there was nothing wrong with keeping this traditional observance.³⁹ Mr. Coulter’s evidence that Jesus observed an early 14th Passover is, “In chapter Four through Eight of this book, we studied the command of God to kill the Passover lamb on the 14th day of the first month at ben ha arbayim, ‘between the evenings,’ and we saw that the Scriptures define this Hebrew term as the beginning of the 14th, after ba erev or sunset of the 13th. There is no question about the proper time for killing the Passover lambs according to the commands of God.”⁴⁰ Therefore Mr. Coulter’s “evidence” that the Messiah kept an early 14th Passover is nothing more than his faulty eisegesis of the Passover in the Old Testament while taking the gospel accounts out of context.

Mr. Coulter states, “In the Gospel the apostle John uses different terminology to distinguish between the observance of the Passover as commanded by God and its observance as practiced by the Jews who followed the Pharisaic tradition.”⁴¹ To support his circular logic, Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents believe John’s comments about the Jew’s Passover lends supports for the late 14th Passover being an errant, man-made tradition. Of course early 14th proponents ignore that John also wrote it was, “the Jews’ feast of Tabernacles,”⁴² without insinuating the Jews had also messed up this festival observance. Mr. Coulter writes, “The Gospel of John makes a clear distinction between the Passover of the Jews and the passover that Jesus kept. The sequence of events that John records conclusively shows Jesus did not observe the Passover at the traditional time.”⁴³ This statement is erroneous because the easiest exegesis of John’s gospel is that the Last Supper was not a Passover. Mr. Coulter’s faulty reasoning is based upon his fallacy of “proving” the early 14th Passover by unconvincingly twisting Old Testament scriptures in his book, then using portions of John out of context to try to prove the Jews kept the Passover at the wrong time. Ignoring John’s depiction of the Last Supper as not being a Passover meal is yet another regretful short coming displayed by early 14th proponents.

Early 14th proponents fallacious reasoning completely ignores an examination of John’s gospel concentrates on the synoptics to supposedly show the Last Supper was a Passover, which is the most logical conclusion to draw if you ignore the gospel of John. Only after they have done this do they examine portions of John’s gospel to discern the date of the Last Supper, while ignoring John’s depiction of the Last Supper as not being a Passover meal. This is the logic and the proof

38 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 222

39 John 7:2-10

40 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 226

41 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 224

42 John 7:2

43 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 232

they used to reach the conclusion the Jews are wrong about the timing of Passover. This is an exercise in circular logic that even ignores the evidence of Mark 14:16-7 that if the Last Supper was a Passover meal, then the preparation, which is supposedly the sacrificing the lamb, began on the afternoon and the Last Supper occurred some hours later, at the start of the next day. This of course disproves the early 14th theory. But Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents simply ignore Mark 14:17 when they perform their eisegesis of scripture.

When Do the Synoptics depict the Passover being Killed?

Mr. Coulter presents the classic early 14th arguments when he states, “As we learned in the previous chapter, Mark and Luke both record that Jesus observed the Passover on the day the lambs were sacrificed.”⁴⁴ This is simply not correct. As discussed in the chapter of this book devoted to evidence that the Last Supper was a Passover meal (something this author does not concur with), Maurice Casey writes that Jesus and the disciples are supposedly killing the Passover lamb in Mark 14:12.⁴⁵ Mr. Coulter concurs with Casey that the 14th chapter of Mark shows that the slaying of the lamb is occurring during the narrative and is not an inserted general clause.⁴⁶ Mr. Coulter writes, “Mark’s use of the Greek verb *ethuon* shows that THE LAMBS WERE BEING KILLED AT THE THAT VERY MOMENT AS JESUS SENT HIS DISCIPLES TO PREPARE THE PASSOVER! Mark is not referring to the temple sacrifice of the Passover lambs, which traditionally took place in the afternoon of Nisan 14. Since Jesus ate the Passover the night before the traditional observance, Mark can only be referring to **the domestic sacrifice of the lambs at the beginning of Nisan 14.**”⁴⁷ As will be shown, Mr. Casey disputes Mr. Coulter’s eisegesis and places the events of Mark 14:12 at the Temple on the late 14th. The main reason early 14th proponents insist the Passover must be a domestic sacrifice, which is outlawed by Deut. 12 and Lev. 17, is because there is no way a temple sacrificed Passover would be available if the Last Supper took place on the early 14th.

Mr. Coulter’s exposition of Mark 14 and the Greek verb *ethuon* switches to Luke’s and Matthew’s account and omits Mark 14:17 from his depiction of the timing of the Last Supper. The context of Mark’s gospel reveals that if Mr. Coulter and Mr. Casey are correct that the Greek verb *ethuon* depicts the Passover was being sacrificed during the narrative of Mark 14:12, then the gospel of Mark shows the Passover lamb was not sacrificed on the same day the Last Supper was eaten, contrary to Mr. Coulter’s statement otherwise. Mr. Coulter’s examination of the narrative in Mark 14 again leaves out a large portion of the text, just as he leaves out large portions of Josephus, Zeitlin, Philo and others, most likely because taken in context, these writings disprove an early 14th, domestic Passover. Mark 14:12, 16-7 proves Mr. Coulter is incorrect with either his early 14th domestic Passover hypothesis or his statement that the Passover was observed on the same day it was sacrificed. All Christians who believe in the early 14th hypothesis should do a careful re-examination of Mark 14 in context to draw their own conclusions and to determine if either of Mr. Coulter’s theories are correct.

44 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 232

45 Casey, Maurice, *Is John’s Gospel True?* Routledge, NY, New York, 1996, pp. 15-6

46 Casey, *Is John’s Gospel True*, pp. 15-6

47 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*; p. 238, emphasis by Mr. Coulter

As Casey shows, if the Last Supper was a Passover meal, then the disciples and the Messiah killed the lamb in the afternoon.⁴⁸ Two disciples, who were not part of the twelve apostles, were then sent off and found the master of the upper room carrying water.⁴⁹ The three of them went to the upper room and completed the preparations for the meal.⁵⁰ After all of these events, “in the evening,”⁵¹ Jesus came to the upper room with the disciples. Matt. 26:20 agrees that Jesus and the apostles did not arrive at the upper room until evening, the first part of the next day.⁵² Clearly Mr. Coulter is incorrect when he states the supposed killing of the Passover occurred on the same day as the Last Supper.

If Mr. Coulter were correct about the usage of the Greek verb *ethuon*, which he is not, it would leave no doubt that Mark 14 depicts the Last Supper as a Passover that occurred on the early 15th of Nisan with the Passover lamb being sacrificed on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan in the Temple, which is the scenario Casey paints.⁵³ Early 14th proponents’ terrible eisegesis of the Old Testament Passover is not even consistent with the narrative of Mark 14.

Is the 14th of Nisan Called the First Day of Unleavened Bread in the Gospels?

Early 14th proponents often take simple, clear verses and build straw men around them just to blow them down to try to justify their hypothesis. Matthew 26:17, Mark 14:12, and Luke 22:7 all agree that the passover lamb was to be killed on the first day of Unleavened Bread.⁵⁴ There is agreement that Jewish tradition had the last of the leaven being removed from all the Israelites’ houses by mid-morning of the 14th of Nisan, at the latest. Scripture stated that all leaven must be removed before the 15th of Nisan started.⁵⁵ Therefore it is only logical to conclude that the 14th of Nisan was treated like a preparation day for Unleavened Bread by removing all leaven. But early 14th proponents build a straw man, stating if, “Jesus had eaten the Passover on the night of the 15th, then the priests and religious leaders, who ate their Passover on the night after Jesus and the disciples did, would have eaten their Passover on the night of the 16th... **THE EVENTS DID NOT TRANSPIRE THAT WAY!** These imaginary scenarios show the

48 Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

49 Mark 14:13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

50 Mark 14:16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

51 Mark 14:17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

52 Matt. 26:20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

53 Casey, Maurice, *Is John’s Gospel True?* p. 15-6

54 Matt. 26:17 Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

Mark 14:12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

Luke 22:7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

55 Ex. 12:15, 19, 13:7

absolute fallacy in claiming that Jesus and His disciples observed the traditional late 14/early 15 Passover of the Jews.”⁵⁶

Rather than explain that the first day of unleavened bread, when the lambs were killed, was actually the 14th, the first partial day when leaven was removed, Mr. Coulter creates his straw man argument about an early 16th Passover. Why would he create such an obvious red herring? Because if the Passover were sacrificed on a day that was known as the first of the unleavens because that is the day leaven had to be removed and if the Passover had to be sacrificed on the 14th of Nisan, which it did, that would again prove the Passover was sacrificed late on the 14th. Scholars agree if Jesus and the disciples ate a Passover on the early 15th, then John 18:28 refers to the sacrifices offered on the first day of Unleavened Bread and the priests would have eaten the Passover at the time of the Last Supper and not at some imaginary 16th Seder.

Mr. Coulter also refuses to accept that scriptures present that the 14th day of Nisan, the day the Passover lambs were killed, came to be known as the first day of Unleavened Bread, most likely because it was the preparation for Unleavened Bread. The common understanding, as shown in all three synoptic gospels, is that the 14th was called the first of the unleavens because, by God’s command, it was the day by which all unleavened bread had to be removed because there could be no leaven in their homes when the 15th of Nisan commenced.⁵⁷ The gospel writers fully understood that the feast of Unleavened Bread did not start until the beginning of the 15th, but they also clearly present the tradition, which was accepted by Jesus, that the 14th of Nisan was called the first of the unleavens because it was the first day leaven was to be removed. This tradition also almost certainly came about because it was the day the *pesah* was killed, the most important part of the preparation for the days of Unleavened Bread.

However, early 14th proponents do not believe the 14th of Nisan was viewed as a preparation day, the first of the unleavens. They state, “The use of the Greek word *dei* in Luke’s account confirms that ‘the day of the unleavens’ is referring the 14th day of the first month, which was the day commanded by God for killing the lambs.”⁵⁸ This is correct. But they go on to state, “According to God’s command, the lambs were to be kept until the 14th. The specific point at which the 14th began was sunset, or *ba erev*, of the 13th.”⁵⁹ As was shown earlier in the book, this is simply incorrect because the lambs were not to be kept until the 14th, but were to be kept until *ben ha arbayim* on the 14th. Early 14th proponents try to obfuscate this by attempting to distract the reader into believing the word Hebrew word *ad*, translated as until modifies 14th rather than *ben ha arbayim*. They then go on to state, “When we understand the full meaning of Luke’s account, it is clear that it was the beginning of the 14th, immediately after the sun had set, when Jesus’ disciples asked Him where they should prepare the Passover. The time of this event is conclusively established by the chronological details that are recorded in the Gospel of John.”⁶⁰ A simple harmonization of Mark with Luke, without even examining John, reveals

⁵⁶ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 228, emphasis by Mr. Coulter

⁵⁷ Deut. 16:4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there *any thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

⁵⁸ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 231

⁵⁹ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 231

⁶⁰ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 231

Mr. Coulter is again incorrect in his time frame of the events in Luke. There is no doubt that all four gospel accounts agree Jesus was crucified the day after the Last Supper, but Mr. Coulter does nothing to try to prove from New Testament scriptures that the Passover in Luke was on the early 14th because there is no clear cut internal time in any of the synoptic accounts. That is why there has been a long standing dispute among scholars about how to harmonize John with the synoptics. The reason scholars are split on whether or not the Last Supper was a Passover is because they realize domestic sacrifices, including the Passover, were outlawed by God in scripture and Jesus would have sinned if he either sacrificed or caused a domestic sacrifice to take place. Therefore, if the Last Supper was a Passover, it had to take place after the lamb was sacrificed in the temple late on the 14th of Nisan.

Is there Scholarly Support for an early 14th Domestic Passover?

Early 14th proponents state, “The records of history verify that the domestic Passover was widely observed at that time. The great multitude of Jews who assembled in Jerusalem each year to keep the Passover made the domestic sacrifice of the lambs an absolute necessity... Those Jews who practiced the teachings of the Pharisees took their lambs to the temple, but the majority of Jews killed their lambs at houses and inns in Jerusalem and other cities within the greater festival area.”⁶¹ Yet Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents cannot quote a single scholar who agrees this, yet his followers take his word that history does indeed verify this.

Did the Jews lose the correct timing of the Passover Sacrifice?

How did the supposed erroneous Jews’ Passover become transformed from early 14th domestic Passover to late 14th temple centered Passover according to early 14th proponents? Their standard explanation had been Israel lost the timing for the Passover during the Babylonian exile. There is no evidence to support this theory and Mr. Coulter has explored a second theory. Mr. Coulter supposes, “Among the religious practices that the Jews adopted during the Egyptian domination was the change in the timing of the Passover observance. This change was introduced because the Egyptian calendar, which is based strictly on the solar cycle, begins the day with sunrise—unlike the Hebrew calendar, which begins the day at sunset.”⁶² He even suggests, “Solomon Zeitlin acknowledges that the Jews have not been consistent in their method of calculating the days ‘to ascertain when the Jewish day began we must clear up various matters about Jewish calendar. If the calendar were solar [as it was during the Egyptian domination], the day began with dawn; the year began with the spring or after the winter equinox. If the calendar was lunar, the day began either when the sun set or when the stars became visible’ (*The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1946, pp. 403-4).”⁶³ Mr. Coulter places the Egyptian domination between 301 and 198 B.C.⁶⁴ Mr. Coulter has parenthetically inserted the phrase, *as it was during the Egyptian domination*. The very next sentence in Mr. Zeitlin’s article clearly shows this phrase was incorrectly inserted and completely distorts Mr. Zeitlin’s premise.

61 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 239

62 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 208

63 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 208

64 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 207

The next two sentences Mr. Zeitlin writes in his article are, “The calendar used in the Pentateuch was solar, as I had occasion elsewhere to demonstrate. Thus the day began with the morning.”⁶⁵ Mr. Zeitlin’s theory is that the nation of Israel followed the solar calendar from the time it left Egypt (Egypt was one of the few nations that followed a solar rather than an observed lunar calendar) around 1450 B.C. until the restoration, which is generally considered from the time of Ezra forward, around 500 B.C., the complete opposite of Mr. Coulter’s theory. To misinterpret another’s scholarship with shoddy eisegesis is far too common among ministers in sermons, but to insert a parenthetical statement into another’s scholarship to make that scholarship appear to mean something completely different than its original intent is indefensible for a scholar.

Does Philo present evidence of a domestic Passover?

Mr. Coulter unsuccessfully tries to use Philo and Josephus to support his unscriptural domestic Passover. He quotes Philo as writing, “the day called by the Hebrews in their own tongue, the Pasch [Passover], on the which the **whole people sacrifice, every member of them, WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE PRIESTS**, because the law has granted to the whole nation for one special day in every year the right of priesthood and of performing the sacrifice themselves...Ignoring the evidence of history, some claim that there was no domestic observance of the Passover in the New Testament times. But Philo could not have described the domestic observance of the Passover if he had not seen it being practiced by the Jews of his day.”⁶⁶ Mr. Coulter should be aware Philo is not describing a domestic Passover. Mr. Coulter even quotes a description of the temple sacrifice of the Passover from Edersheim’s *The Temple*, which states, “All along the Court up to the altar of burnt-offering priests stood in two rows, the one holding golden, the other the silver bowls. In these the blood of the Paschal lambs, which each Israelite slew for himself.”⁶⁷ Although Edersheim’s description of the Passover sacrifice being performed without the priests help matches Philo’s, Mr. Coulter does not recognize this, most likely because of his ardent support of an early 14th domestic Passover. Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents attempts to misinterpret Philo’s description of the Pasch (the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb) as a domestic sacrifice is obviously in error.

Josephus’ Account of the Last Temple Passover

Early 14th proponents place great faith in Josephus’ estimate that at the start of the Roman siege there were over 250,000 Passover lambs killed in Jerusalem, although they believe Josephus to be untruthful about when and where the Passover was killed in Egypt and also mistrust his exegesis of the Exodus where he states that the Passover was sacrificed between 3 and 5 P.M. Exactly the opposite view is held by most scholars. Generally scholars conclude that Josephus’ histories are by and large accurate, but anytime he mentions numbers, he is not to be trusted.

65 Zeitlin, Solomon, *The Beginning of the Jewish Day during the Second Commonwealth*, The Jewish Quarterly Review, 1946, p. 404

66 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 209-10, emphasis added by Mr. Coulter

67 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 215

Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents seem to accept as accurate Joachim Jeremias' calculation for the number of lambs that could be killed at the temple. Mr. Jeremias' is a leading authority on the Passover and his *Eucharistic Words of Jesus* and *Jerusalem in the Times of Jesus* are standard scholarly resources. Even those that disagree with Jeremias' view that the Last Supper was a Passover meal that took place on the early 15th of Nisan, leading to a date of the 15th of Nisan for the crucifixion of Jesus, must deal with Mr. Jeremias' substantial scholarship.

Mr. Coulter states, "Jeremias' estimate that 18,000 Passover lambs were slain at the temple is reasonably accurate, but he erred in using this figure as a basis for determining that total number of Passover participants. Assuming that all the Passover lambs were slain at the temple, he allowed ten persons per lamb. The resulting figure of 180,000 participants in the Passover does not include the large number of people in Jerusalem who were observing the domestic Passover on the 14th."⁶⁸

Mr. Coulter believes Jeremias is incorrect about the number of people who observed the Passover in Jerusalem because he latches onto the astronomical number of Passover lambs Josephus claims were killed at the last Passover in the temple as being reasonably accurate. Mr. Coulter writes,

In his account, Josephus records that total number of lambs that were sacrificed for the Passover in A.D. 70: 'So these high priests did so upon the arrival of their feast which is called the Passover. On this day they slay their sacrifices from the ninth hour until the eleventh, with a company of not less than ten belonging to every sacrifice...found the number of the sacrifices was two hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred; which, if we assume no more than ten feasted together, amounts to two million seven hundred thousand and two hundred persons; but this counted only those that were pure and holy' (War of the Jews, Bk. VI, Ch. IX, Sec. 3)

Josephus states that 256,500 lambs were killed for the Passover that year. **To kill 256,500 Passover lambs at the temple, 85,500 lambs would have to be slain in each of the three courses.** But the size of the sacrificial area limited the number of lambs in each course to less than 6,500. The number lambs that Josephus records is **thirteen times the maximum number that could have been killed in the three courses.**

Some believe that Josephus has exaggerated the number of Passover lambs that were slain in A.D. 70. If we cut Josephus' figure in half and estimate that only 128,250 lambs were killed, we are still confronted with the fact that this huge number of Passover lambs could not possibly have been sacrificed at the temple during the three courses. With the three courses filled to maximum capacity, it would have taken SEVEN DAYS to kill even **half** the number lambs that Josephus records. On the other hand, if the number of lambs recorded by Josephus is correct, it would have taken TWO WEEKS to kill even half the number lambs that Josephus records. These mathematical facts show how absurd it is to claim that all Passover lambs were slain in the temple! **In the time it would have taken to kill all those lambs, the entire Feast of Unleavened Bread would have been past! The Jews would have been eating the Passover lambs after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, instead of beforehand, as God had commanded.**

68 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 218

WE CAN CONCLUDE THE FOLLOWING: Far more lambs were sacrifice for the Passover than could possibly have been slain at the temple during the allotted courses. The only logical explanation is **that most of the lambs were not slain at the temple!**⁶⁹

Mr. Coulter's conclusion is illogical given Mr. Coulter's general distrust of Josephus' writings, especially when Mr. Coulter has conveniently left out a few words in this quote of Josephus. Logic would dictate that Josephus' numbers were not to be trusted if you did not trust his writing in general. Mr. Coulter's obvious obfuscation of the number of lambs sacrificed at the temple according to Josephus is apparent when you notice the portion of the quote Mr. Coulter has conveniently left out. The whole quote by Josephus, with the portion that Mr. Coulter removed in bold, is,

So these high priests did so upon the arrival of their feast which is called the Passover. On this day they slay their sacrifices from the ninth hour until the eleventh, with a company [*phatria*] of not less than ten belonging to every sacrifice -- **for it is not lawful for them to have the feast singly by themselves -- and many of us are twenty in a company. These priests** found the number of the sacrifices was two hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred; which, if we assume no more than ten feasted together, amounts to two million seven hundred thousand and two hundred persons; but this counted only those that were pure and holy.⁷⁰

Mr. Coulter removed, "These priests," from his quote of Josephus. Josephus obviously wrote that the priests counted the number of lambs they killed at the temple between 3 and 5 pm and that number was about a quarter of a million. Josephus is certainly not writing the priests verified an additional 220,000 domestic Passover sacrifices took place. Mr. Coulter has obviously obfuscated this fact in an attempt to convince his followers that a domestic Passover must have taken place, even it is was outlawed by Lev. 17 and Deut. 12. Therefore Josephus' wrote that a quarter of a million Passover lambs were killed in the temple on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan in 70 A.D. and this statement is obviously erroneous, as most scholars agree.

Mr. Coulter has graciously decided to agree with Josephus that a quarter of a million, or at least one hundred twenty five thousand, lambs were slain in 70 A.D., because this supports a supposed domestic Passover. As Mr. Coulter has stated, and scholars agree, the number of lambs that could be killed at the temple would be less than twenty thousand. Thus Josephus greatly exaggerated, by at least an order of magnitude, the number of lambs killed at the Passover of 70 A.D. Rather than realize Josephus was exaggerating, Mr. Coulter altered Josephus' quote to make it appear he supported a domestic Passover when Josephus did not. This continues the pattern of scholarship Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents present to support their hypothesis.

Mr. Coulter gives some acknowledgement to the notion that scholars generally place no reliance on Josephus' numbers when Mr. Coulter off-handedly offers to cut Josephus' numbers in half rather than by the order of magnitude other scholars accept. Unsurprisingly, when Josephus' writing can not be twisted to support an early 14th Passover, Mr. Coulter denigrates

⁶⁹ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, pp. 218-9 (emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

⁷⁰ Josephus, *War of the Jews*, Bk. VI, Ch. IX, Sec. 3

those writing. “The Jewish historian Josephus was a staunch supporter of the traditional belief in a Passover at Rameses. This was the Pharisaical view, and Josephus was a Pharisee... While Josephus’ works are excellent sources of historical information, we should always be mindful and aware that Josephus’ writings are NOT Scripture. Josephus was a historical revisionist, portraying only the Pharisaic version of history. He presents the facts from this biased point of view.”⁷¹ Mr. Coulter has even called Josephus a liar on tape when Josephus’ writings disagree with an early 14th hypothesis. Therefore the pattern of scholarship displayed by Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponent is to reject as fallacious what most scholars accept as fact and to accept as fact what most scholars know is fiction. Josephus was a Jewish and a Pharisaic apologist, which is the most likely explanation for his greatly exaggerated numbers, but his accurate representation of Jewish beliefs.

Could 250,000 Passover lambs be sacrificed in Jerusalem in 70 A.D.?

Given Mr. Coulter’s general level of discomfort with Josephus as an accurate historian, we should further examine if it was even possible to sacrifice a quarter of a million lambs in Jerusalem for Passover for two and a half million Jews in 70 A.D. First, Josephus had been a captive of the Romans for three years when the Passover occurred in 70 A.D. If Josephus was a captive and less than 20,000 *pesah* lambs were usually sacrificed in the temple, how could he have even remotely estimated the number of lambs killed in 70 A.D.? Also, the war with Rome had been raging for 3 years and on April 14th, 70 A.D., during Passover, Titus laid siege to Jerusalem. So with the Roman armies advancing, two and a half million Jews were supposedly in the area of Jerusalem according to Josephus and early 14th proponents.

It is easy to overlook that fact that populations were much smaller two millennia ago than they are today. What was the population of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.? “By the time of the Roman destruction of the city in A.D. 70, its area had grown to about 425 acres and its population had peaked at about 60,000, a level not exceeded for more than 1,800 years.”⁷² A number of other scholars agree.⁷³ How does this compare to other cities in the Roman empire? “By around 70 A.D., there were almost a million inhabitants in Rome, which was nearly twice the population of Alexandria, the next largest city in the Roman empire.”⁷⁴ *Biblical Archeological Review* and *The Cambridge Ancient History: The High Empire* both agree that the population of the entire Roman empire in 70 A.D. was between 10 and 20 million people.⁷⁵ What was the Jewish population of the Roman empire in 70 A.D.? “By some estimates, e.g. Paul Johnson in his *A History of the Jews* [Harper Perennial, 1988], Jews constituted as much as 10% of the population of the Roman Empire... So this ‘10%’ seems like a gravely inflated figure, though we may

71 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 60

72 <http://en.allexperts.com/q/Asian-Middle-Eastern-671/Population-Jerusalem.htm>

73 http://www.welcometohosanna.com/JERUSALEM_TOUR/firstrevolt.htm

74 <http://www.synthreal.com/Colosseum.htm>

75 Bowman, Alan K., Garnsey, Peter, Rathbone, Dominic, Eiddon, Iorwerth Edwards, Stephen, Boardman, John, Hammond, N. G., Lewis, L., D. M., Walbank, F. W., Astin, A. E., Crook, J. A., Lintott, Andrew, Ward-Perkins, Bryan, Cameron, Averil, Bowman, Alan K., Whitby, Michael, Garnsey, Peter *The Cambridge Ancient History: The High Empire, A.D. 70-192*, Edition: 3 Cambridge University Press, 2000 p. 812-5

never have a really accurate one.”⁷⁶ Others state, “Jews accounted for 10 percent of the total of the population of the Roman Empire.”⁷⁷

Therefore early 14th proponents suggest that there were twice as many Jews in the city of Jerusalem then there were in the entire Roman Empire at 70 A.D. And the mighty Roman army that defeated this mass of Jewish humanity was how large? “Titus was thirty years of age when, in 70 A.D., he appeared before the walls of Jerusalem with a might army consisting of the Fifth Legion, the Tenth, the Twelfth, and the Fifteenth, accompanied by the usual cavalry and the auxiliary troop—a total force of between 60,000 and 80,000 men.”⁷⁸ How could less than 100,000 men, even well equipped and well trained men, defeat a force of more than two million behind Jerusalem’s fortified walls? The most reasonable answer is that Josephus, a captive of the Romans, was trying to advance the image of the Jews and the Pharisees in particular, so he greatly exaggerated the number of lambs killed at the Passover in 70 A.D., just as he exaggerated the number of Israelites killed and injured during the siege of Jerusalem. Conder writes:

A Roman legion at this period of history answered to a division, consisting of 5,000 to 6,000 regular infantry with the same number of auxiliaries and 300 cavalry. In addition to a force of at least 40,000 men, Titus had also a number of native allies. The Arabs sent 5,000 archers and 1,000 horsemen and Agrippa—who joined the army in Galilee—brought 1,000 foot and 1,000 horses. Thus Josephus is probably right in estimating the total at about 60,000 in all. This army indeed represented a very moderate force for the reduction of the whole country and for the conquest of the difficult mountain region round Jerusalem, though the Crusaders afterwards took the city with 40,000 men. It is very important, not only for the Flavian family, but for the peace of the world that there should be no further defeat of Rome, and a margin of safety was desirable. The fighting force in Jerusalem did not probably exceed 20,000 in all, and though a proportion of three to one was barely sufficient for the besiegers of so strong a fortress, the Romans were far superior in discipline and in the use of engines of war.⁷⁹

So military experts estimate you need at least three times the number of men behind fortified walls to successfully take it. If Josephus’ number were close to accurate, then Titan should not have had a chance and yet Jerusalem fell. That is because in 70 A.D., the population of Jerusalem was perhaps 20,000 people. There was usually an influx of pilgrims that could increase the population of Jerusalem to perhaps 100,000 at the time of the Passover, but that number would have been severely limited during the three years of war with Rome. Thus the 2,500,000 pilgrims that Josephus and early 14th proponents propose were at Jerusalem is a ridiculously high number.

76 Bowman, Alan K., Garnsey, Peter, Rathbone, Dominic, Eiddon, Iorwerth Edwards, Stephen, Boardman, John, Hammond, N. G., Lewis, L., D. M., Walbank, F. W., Astin, A. E., Crook, J. A., Lintott, Andrew, Ward-Perkins, Bryan, Cameron, Averil, Bowman, Alan K., Whitby, Michael, Garnsey, Peter *The Cambridge Ancient History: The High Empire, A.D. 70-192*, Edition: 3 Cambridge University Press, 2000, 27 BC-1453 A.D.

77 Carroll, James, *Constantine’s sword: the church and the Jews : a history* Edition: reprint, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002. p. 26

78 Morton, H. V. *In the Steps of the Master*, Da Capo Press, 2002, p. 25

79 Conder, Colonel C.R., *The City of Jerusalem*, Kessinger Press, 2004, p. 174

Even an examination of the size of Jerusalem, without relying on estimates of population, shows there is no doubt that Josephus' numbers are exaggerated by at least an order of magnitude. It is a fact that at the time of the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the city took up an area of 450 acres.⁸⁰ One acre is equal to 43, 560 square feet. So the total area of Jerusalem was 19,602,000 square feet. If there were two and half million people at Jerusalem at the feast when the Roman siege started, there would have been less than 8 square feet per person to stand in if they wanted to be behind the fortification in Jerusalem. This is less than one square yard, thus the people would have had to stand shoulder to shoulder day and night while trying to fight the Roman army. This does not account for walls, housing and animals. Although Josephus did not list the size of the Roman army, his account would have us believe that an army of 60,000 attacked a heavily fortified city and killed more than 1.1 million people and injured another 100,000.

This author agrees with the vast majority of scholars that there is no choice but to reject Josephus' quantity of lambs being sacrificed at the temple in 70 A.D. as being at least an order of magnitude too large. Mr. Coulter has already accepted Jeremias' numbers for the Passover sacrifice in the temple being around 20,000, which is ample quantity without depending upon some mythical domestic Passover which was outlawed according to scripture. Josephus' account does not give any credence to the necessity for a domestic Passover nor should it be interpreted as giving credence. Josephus greatly exaggerated numbers and populations in his histories and scholars reject those numbers as astronomically inflated.

Early 14th Proponents View of 1 Corinthians 11

Mr. Coulter writes that one of the major errors in understanding how we should observe the Passover is misunderstanding the difference between the Old and New Covenant.

The New Testament does not teach that the commandments of God in the Old Testament have all been abolished by Jesus Christ. In fact, Jesus forbids us to let this thought even enter our minds. At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus proclaimed, **'DO NOT THINK THAT I COME TO ABOLISH THE LAW or the Prophets; I DID NOT COME TO ABOLISH, BUT TO FULFILL.** For truly I say to you, **until the heaven and earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law** until everything has been fulfilled' (Mat. 5:17-8, AT) These words of Jesus are a direct reference to the books of the Old Testament, which were grouped into three main divisions: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. Since heaven and earth have not passed away and all the prophecies in the Old Testament have not been fulfilled, the Law and the Prophets are still in effect. Anyone who claims otherwise is opposing and contradicting the words of Jesus Christ.⁸¹

Mr. Coulter also writes:

Few professing Christians ever stop to question the traditional beliefs and practices of their chosen denominations. They are firmly convinced that their religious leaders are teaching the true doctrines of Jesus Christ. They place their faith in their minister or

⁸⁰ http://www.welcometohosanna.com/JERUSALEM_TOUR/firstrevolt.htm

⁸¹ Coulter, *The Christian Passover*; p. 249 (emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

priest and forget that every Christian has a personal responsibility to ‘prove all things’ by diligently searching the Scriptures. (1 Thes. 5:21, Acts 17:11) As a result, the vast majority of Christians today, like many early believers of the apostolic church, have been deceived into accepting a counterfeit theology—‘another gospel.’⁸²

Although Mr. Coulter writes about the dangers of a counterfeit theology displacing the message of the true Gospel, he shows he is far more interested in continuing to follow the traditions of his church by ignoring Jesus’ admonition about not doing away with even the smallest portions of the law of God when he uses 1 Corinthians 11 to support an early 14th Passover service without a meal. As with most of Paul’s epistles, 1 Corinthians was written to correct specific problems in specific churches. There are great and important lessons in abundance in the Pauline epistles, but we must understand the context in which they were written to successfully apply them today. The Corinthians had a plethora of spiritual gifts⁸³ and Paul writes about them, “Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.”⁸⁴ Yet Paul also writes stinging corrections to them for showing a horrendous lack of judgment⁸⁵ and for their selfishness.⁸⁶ He also has to correct them when they assembled together to worship God because of their thoughtlessness. There are real debates whether the Lord’s Supper referred to in 1 Corinthians 11:20 is the Passover or a communion (a potluck by today’s standard) or a new, special sacrament added by Christ, but Mr. Coulter’s description does not match any of these scenarios.⁸⁷

Mr. Coulter creates this scenario in *The Christian Passover*:

What a stern condemnation of the practices of the Corinthian church! Paul rebukes the Corinthians for their practices and even calls them heresies...One of the heresies that had taken root in the Corinthian church was the practice of eating the Old Testament Passover in conjunction with the New Testament ceremony that Jesus had instituted.”⁸⁸

However, Paul is not condemning the Corinthians for eating the Lord’s Supper, but for their bad behavior while supposedly eating, which he states is not the Lord’s Supper. “For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.”⁸⁹

82 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 252

83 1 Cor. 12

84 1 Cor. 11:2

85 1 Cor. 5

86 1 Cor. 11

87 1 Cor. 11:20 When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord’s supper.

88 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 253

89 1 Cor. 11:21-2

Paul tells the Corinthians if they want to be gluttons and drunks, then they need to eat and drink at home before coming to church. As with most of Paul's corrections, these instructions were meant to correct actions in a local church and were not meant as a commandment from a Pope. Paul continues, "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come."⁹⁰ So the Corinthians were supposed to wait for each other before they ate their Supper to the Lord and everything else Paul would set in order when he arrived. Paul did not teach them to do away with the Passover meal that God commanded His called out people to keep throughout their generations⁹¹ in 1 Corinthians 11 because it is a very important "jot or tittle" that pointed to the sacrifice of the messiah.

Mr. Coulter's teaching is, "Paul is telling the Corinthians that **there is no such reality as eating 'the Lord's Supper' because Jesus never instituted this practice. Jesus did not command His followers to observe the Old Testament Passover supper. Since the Christian Passover does not include the Old Testament Passover supper, this ceremony should never be called the Lord's Supper.**"⁹² There can be no question there was a meal involved when Jesus gave the symbols of the foot washing, wine and bread. Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents contend this meal, the Last Supper, was the Old Testament Passover meal. Jesus never teaches or insinuates that the Passover meal has been eliminated in scripture. Mr. Coulter has mistakenly implied not only that Paul had the power to remove the meal from the Passover ceremony, but that he had actually issued such a command. Even if Paul had the equivalent of papal authority, which he did not, he did not teach anything about some New Testament Passover taking the place of the Old Testament Passover meal is 1 Corinthians 11. In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul is simply condemning people acting badly at a meal, whatever meal that was (This issue will be examined later). To insinuate Paul had the power to eliminate the meal portion of the Old Testament Passover means a jot or tittle has been changed, so Mr. Coulter is apparently paying lip service when he contends he does not pick and choose which portions of the scripture he will accept as authoritative. Thus Mr. Coulter's stance appears to be that the symbols superseded the Passover ordinances of scripture. A reading of 1 Corinthians 11 in context, as will be presented later, shows Mr. Coulter's belief is in error.

When harmonizing Luke 22:15 with John 18:28, alternative three, that the Jews were keeping the Passover at the wrong time, is not substantiated by New Testament scriptures nor by the historical references used by early 14th proponents. Even the idea of an elimination of the Passover meal is not scripturally supported. Although this is the most popular belief among the churches of God, this account has no support from the Old Testament, the New Testament, from history nor from scholars. Thus this author firmly rejects it as a possible method to harmonize Luke 22:15 with John 18:28.

90 1 Cor. 11:33-4

91 Ex. 12:14, 17

92 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 253(emphasis by Mr. Coulter)

Passover as Covenant Renewal?

Passover as Covenant Renewal?

Early 14th proponents ignore the gospel of John in favor of the syoptics when determining what type of meal the Last Supper was, then only use the gospel of John to set the time of the Last Supper. But even worse, they place a disproportional doctrinal emphasis upon when and how Christians observe the Passover. The “special knowledge” that leads to the doctrinal distinctive of an early 14th Passover requires the Jews and vast majority of scholars around the world to be wrong while the churches of god are supposedly right about when the Passover was sacrificed in Egypt. Many early 14th teachers have issued edicts stating that the issue of the early 14th Passover has already been decided and there is no reason this should be discussed again among their followers. This seems to contradict 1 Peter 3:15, which states, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”¹ Early 14th teachers have transformed the Passover from a feast of thanksgiving into a control mechanism that can not be questioned by their followers. The control was and is exercised by of the leadership in the churches of god by excluding nonconforming followers from the early 14th Passover ceremonial service, supposedly ending your covenant with God unless you repented and followed the leadership’s commands. Mr. Coulter expresses the general view of early 14th proponents about their Passover ceremony.

By partaking of the bread and the wine during the Christian Passover ceremony, true Christians are commemorating the death of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice that sealed the New Covenant, which offers forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. Each Christian who takes part in this ceremony is confirming his or her acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and is renewing his or her commitment to live by the words of the New Covenant. The New Covenant can only be renewed at the time and in the manner that Jesus Christ instituted.²

The words of Jesus Christ, which He received from the Father, are the foundation of the New Covenant. Anyone who rejects the words of Jesus Christ cannot be in covenant with God the Father. **The covenant relationship is not open to those who vainly worship God with humanly devised tradition of a 15th Passover, or the Eucharist, or Communion, or the Lord’s Supper.** The New Covenant relationship is offered only to those who love Jesus Christ and God the Father and are keeping their commandments.

1 1 Pet. 3:15

2 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 385

The New Covenant relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father must be renewed each year by participating in the Christian Passover. The true observance of the Christian Passover involves far more than understanding the time and manner that Jesus commanded. It extends far beyond doctrinal disputes and differing opinions of Bible students, ministers and theologians. It transcends all religious arguments and strife over words. The Christian Passover is the foundation of God's plan for those whom He calls—now and for eternity.”³

The Passover is the ultimate thank offering and was the final tool in the arsenal God used to allow His called out people to begin walking out of the slavery of Egypt by following Him, without even requiring an understanding God's ways. When the Passover was sacrificed, the chance to be in covenant with God was still two arduous months away. The idea of using God's instrument which granted freedom to a sinful people so they could learn how to thank God and begin to walk with Him and learn His ways as a mechanism to supposedly control access to God is not just unscriptural, but is heretical.⁴ The Passover is not a sin sacrifice.⁵ As shown in the Old Testament portion of this book, Christ's sacrifice was the ultimate fulfillment of both the Passover, the ultimate thank offering, and the Atonement, the ultimate sin sacrifice. The third and final reason for Jesus' sacrifice was that his blood was used to ratify the New Covenant. Jesus said “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”⁶ The shedding of his blood led to the rending of the veil around the holy of holies, thus allowing the New Covenant to commence and allowing unfettered access to God for all of mankind.⁷ Just as Moses needed the blood of a sacrifice to ratify the Old Covenant,⁸ the blood of Jesus the Christ was required by God to ratify the New Covenant.

Confusing the purpose of the Passover with the purpose of the Atonement sacrifice and ratification of the covenant has caused a distorted view of God for the vast majority of those who call themselves Christians. God the Father granted His called out children, the Israelites the gift of protection from the fourth through the ninth plague because He loved them and wanted to show that love, even though these children did not know how to behave. The Passover was God teaching His children how to return that love by saying thank you. Two months later the relationship between God and His people was taken to a new level with the ratification of the covenant, which required blood. This new relationship also required a method for an imperfect people to know they would be forgiven if they worked to maintain a covenant relationship, but were not perfect. The atonement sacrifice fulfilled this role as the ultimate sin offering, as will be shown.

3 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 392

4 In scriptural times, heresies were simple different teachings without the extreme negative connotations associated with it today. This author agrees with a current definition of heretical teachings as doctrines that lead people directly away from God and His way of life.

5 As will be shown, one of the three functions of Christ's sacrifice was as the ultimate sin offering, but that is not the role of the Passover nor is it the initial role of Jesus when calling God's people.

6 Matt. 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

7 Matt. 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent

8 Ex. 24:8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

The Passover is not a sin offering. The nation of Israel, and by extension you and I today, was not required to be in covenant with God when they ate the first Passover. It is true that after the first Passover, you had to be part of the covenant to partake of it.⁹ But during Old Testament times, the only way to be part of the covenant with God was to be a part of the nation of Israel, thus you were joined to the covenant by your parents' and your parents parents' action. Under the New Covenant, each person chooses to covenant with God, thus accepting Jesus as the Passover sacrifice which is the equivalent of the nation of Israel choosing to sacrifice the first Passover in Egypt.

After God has separated His called out with the fourth through the ninth plague, God asks a people who were not in covenant with Him and who did not understand what sin was to accept the marking of the blood of an innocent sacrifice upon themselves. Only then could they begin to walk with and learn to serve God. There is no requirement from God the Father to have a sin sacrifice to begin that walk with His as a called out people, again showing He is not Jupiter or Zeus, but Dad. The very idea of using the Passover to supposedly control access to God because you have been too sinful to supposedly renew your covenant is anathema because the Passover was the vehicle chosen to allow a sinful people to begin walking with and learning from the Dad of creation.

Transforming the Passover offering into the gate keeper of the covenant rather than a road to the covenant is a gigantic theological mistake. Making the Passover a yearly renewal of the covenant is heresy because it changes our covenant relationship with God from a marriage to the equivalent of living together. This portrays God as someone who does not love His metaphorical mate as much as a human man is supposed to love his wife. Making the Passover into a renewal of the covenant is akin to saying if you do not observe your anniversary in the right manner at the right time, then you are no longer married. This belief ignores the love God shows for His chosen people in Ezekiel 16. The idea of a yearly covenant renewal also negates the covenant of Deuteronomy 30:19, which states, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."¹⁰ The nation of Israel was God's chosen people and when they were asked to enter what has come to be known as the Old Covenant, they did it for not just themselves, but their children and their children's children after them. They did not renew it each year. And we are told the promises of the New Covenant are greater than those of the Old Covenant.¹¹ Yet early 14th proponents teach the New Covenant has to be renewed every year. The idea of requiring such a renewal clearly displays an understanding of the creator God who only cares about Himself by building a relationship that automatically triggers a divorce if His metaphorical mate, His church, comes up short in their covenant relationship.

Early 14th proponents continue to preach the idea that "the government of God on Earth" would decide if you had followed it well enough to be able to partake of the Passover. Even the Jews, who follow the unacceptable Talmudic practice of building walls around the law, understand atonement is used for atoning and the Passover is used for praise and thanks in

⁹ Ex. 12:43-9

¹⁰ Deut. 30:19

¹¹ Heb. 8:6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

God's plan. Rather than condemning the practice of building a wall around the law, The World Wide Church of God built their own walls based upon their own Talmud which differed from the Jewish Talmud and rejected almost everything Jewish. This dogmatic rejection of anything Jewish smacks of the anti-Semitism that caused the Catholic church to officially declare if the Easter and Passover happened to fall on the same Sunday, then Easter would be delayed a week because Christians should not be celebrating at the same time as the Jews.

The Talmud is a codification of Pharisaical teachings gathered together over the last 2,500 years. This codification became the controlling document for the Jewish religion when the Sadducees were killed at the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. By 150 A.D. almost all dissent to Rabbinic rulership of the Jewish religion was put down by ex-communication or "disfellowshipping" those who held on to the old ways. The codification found in the Talmud is the kind of teaching that Jesus rejected, but we should not throw out the baby with the bath water. All Jewish writings dating back over the last two millennia agree that the Passover lamb was killed at the end of the 14th of Nisan and the only disagreement was whether it should be killed in the last hour, the last three hours or any time on the afternoon of the 14th Nisan. These writings do not show the Passover as a renewal of the covenant.

Mr. Coulter rejects the Passovers performed by Israel under Hezekiah, Josiah, and Ezra, even though they were a first step to re-kindling the covenant with God, because they were supposedly allowed by God, but not what God wanted because the Israelites were so evil. How "evil" were the Israelites that worshipped the golden calf less than 2 months after leaving Egypt? Yet God accepted their Passover. Unlike the Israelites who left Egypt, 2 Chronicles 30 and 35 depict the nation of Israel recommitting to their covenant with God with Passover performed in the temple at the end of the 14th of Nisan. This is not a renewal of the covenant. Instead it shows a people ignorant of God's way who were already in covenant with Him because of their parents' commitment coming to learn about and say thank you to God. Mr. Coulter's statements about how to "renew" our covenant with God does not match scripture, even in the special cases of Hezekiah's and Josiah's Passover.

Early 14th Rejection of the Passover Pointing to the Lamb of God

Mr. Coulter has stated:

The Gospel of John shows how far the Jews had strayed from the worship that God desired...John tells us that this event occurred as the Jews were preparing for their traditional observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which he calls '**the Passover of the Jews.**' Notice that John did not simply write 'the Passover,' or 'the feast of the Lord' as he would have done if the Jews had been observing the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread according to the commands of God. Nowhere does John's account indicate that God approved of the manner in which the Jews were observing the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In fact, John shows quite the opposite!...These two conclusions can be drawn from John's account: 1) The fact that the observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called 'the Passover of the Jews' shows that the Jews were improperly observing these feasts days. 2) John's statement about the nature of man shows why Jesus had to be taught by God the father and not by man.¹²

¹² Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, p. 225

It should not be surprising that Mr. Coulter again creates reasons to reject scriptural instances of the Passover where the method, manner and timing disagrees with an early 14th hypothesis. His use of the term “of the Jews” transforms John’s description of how the feast were observed by the Jews while the temple stood into an anti-Semitic diatribe worthy of Martin Luther.

To elaborate, early 14th proponents seem to ignore that John referred to a number of things associated with the temple, items and instances which had nothing to do with Passover, as being of “the Jews.” John states, “Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.”¹³ Do Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents also believe the Jews were keeping the feast of Tabernacles in the wrong time and in the wrong way? This is highly unlikely. When John speaks of “the Jews”, he is almost universally describing how the Jewish leadership at the temple acted while the temple still stood. The context determines if that is positive, negative or simply descriptive.

Mr. Coulter is correct that the Jewish leadership, referred to as “the Jews” in John 2, were profaning the temple and not following God’s ways. Jesus stated, “And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandise.”¹⁴ However, Mr. Coulter insists, “John’s repeated use of this terminology (the Passover of the Jews) makes it clear that the Jews were not keeping these feast days as God intended them to be kept.”¹⁵ Yet John writes in John 2, “Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.”¹⁶ At the time of the Passover feast Jesus was teaching at the temple and making disciples. John does not refer to this Passover as “the Jews” Passover. As shown earlier in the book, the term Jews is a descriptor, much as we would use Jewish today. “The Jews” as used by John is not denouncing all of the traditions of the Jews, again showing another of Mr. Coulter’s conclusions to be in error.

Who are the Enemies of Christ?

A child of God who has never been called into covenant by God, which is a description not only of most Jews, but of most of mankind, is not an enemy of Jesus. Jesus the Christ was Jewish and so was the vast majority of the early church. His sacrifice was for all mankind, which definitely includes the Jews. People who make statements like “the Jews are the enemies of Jesus”¹⁷ should have their motives and scholarship examined because of the extreme bias being displayed, which is one of the primary purposes of this book. Christ’s enemies were not those that kept the traditions of men because they did not know any better. Teachers and leaders, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, who should have known better because they said they studied and even taught scripture in the name of the true God, but were only interested in power and money are the ones assailed by Jesus. Only Satan is referred to as the enemy of the Father’s and the Christ’s,¹⁸

13 John 7:2

14 John 2:16

15 Coulter, Fred, *The Christian Passover*, p. 225

16 John 2:23

17 Coulter, Fred, Transcript from the tape *The Dark Seder*

18 1 Pet. 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom

although he can be assisted by teachers who elevate their traditions above God's ways or who let their prejudices blind them to the love and grace of God. Teachers who elevate their personal teachings above the teachings of scripture will be judged very harshly according to scripture.¹⁹

A Night of Watching

Early 14th proponents vehemently hold the belief that those celebrating the Passover on the late 14th or eating a Seder-like meal on the early 15th of Nisan are celebrating with the supposed enemies of Christ, the Jews.²⁰ However early 14th proponent also celebrate on the early portions of the 15th of Nisan with a large, celebratory meal similar to a Seder. They can call it a night to be much observed rather than a Passover meal, but they are still celebrating on the same night the Jews celebrate the Passover and in a manner similar to how scripture depicts the Passover being observed. Such celebrations actually cast them as enemies of Christ if Mr. Coulter and other early 14th proponents were consistent with their theology, but, as the pattern of early 14th scholarship clearly displays, they are not.

As ludicrous as it may sound, the reason most often given by the ministry of the churches of God for observing a large, celebratory meal on the early part of the 15th of Nisan is something like, "since we have to eat a meal anyway, why not have a fancy one?" Not exactly great theology. A juxtaposition of the early 14th proponents formal mass-like ritual, practiced on the early part of the 14th of Nisan, which does not bear a resemblance to the Passover described in scripture and their early 15th practice of a big family meal, which does resemble the Passover of scripture, reveals severe inconsistencies in early 14th proponents theology and practice.

Early 14th proponents teach about two memorial feasts. Mr. Coulter writes, "God did not establish the Passover day as a memorial of the Exodus! The Scriptures clearly teach that the Passover day commemorated the **passing over** of the houses of the children of Israel. The Passover day, the fourteenth day of the first month, DOES NOT COMMEMORATE OR CELEBRATE THE EXODUS. The Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins on the following day, the fifteenth day of the first month, is the feast that God established to commemorate the Exodus from Egypt. This Feast, which immediately follows the Passover day, and lasts for seven days, makes a total festival season of eight days, according to the commands of God."²¹ Again the reader should notice the *pesah* lamb plays no real role in either of the memorials of early 14th proponents. Their two memorials honor the passing over and the exodus.

Having a lavish meal on the early part of the 15th Nisan and not having a meal on early part of the 14th is really nothing but a tradition without scriptural basis for early 14th proponents. Holding a vigil on the early part of the 15th to memorialize Israel's exodus from Egypt and Christ's death could be understandable for early 14th proponents' theology, but a feast contradicts many of the theological aspects of their belief. Any fair minded person should examine this practice and at least be consistent.

he may devour

19 James 3:1 Be not many *of you* teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.

20 Coulter, Fred, Transcript from the tape *The Dark Seder*

21 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 88, emphasis by Mr. Coulter

A Mystical, Gnostic Renewal of the Covenant

Although early 14th proponents do not believe in transubstantiation, they do place a mystical importance on renewing the covenant every year. This mystical, unscriptural renewal is only takes place if you allow the “priesthood of Mechizedek” to preside over a quasi-mass and then consume wine and bread that have been gnostically blessed by this priesthood. As shown above, such reasoning not only is a profound eisegesis of 1 Corinthians 11, but appears to give Paul papal power to remove an ordinance of the Passover meal God, something that is completely unscriptural. Many early 14th proponents stress they are following the example of Jesus when they partake of the Lord’s Supper, but it makes no sense to state they must follow the example of Christ during the Last Supper and then turn around and disregard the supper that was served at the Last Supper, especially if they believe that meal was a Passover.

How does Jesus’ Sacrifice align with the Atonement Offering?

Jesus was the true Passover, but he also fulfills the role of the Atonement sacrifice according the Hebrews 6-10. The atonement sacrifice was used by God to let His covenant people know all of their sins were forgiven as long as they were actively seeking God and His ways.²² The Atonement sacrifice consisted of two parts, but with many ordinances.²³ The ordinances required the ritual cleaning of the high priest before he began the Atonement sacrifice.²⁴ After he was ritually clean, he could begin the Atonement sacrifice. He sacrificed, “the goat of the sin offering, that *is* for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.”²⁵ The high priest then cleansed the tabernacle because of the uncleanness of the people.²⁶ After the tabernacle was ritually cleansed, the high priest confessed the sins of the nation over a second goat and that goat was lead away into the wilderness, symbolizing God forgiving, thus putting away, the sins of the nation of Israel.²⁷

David wrote about the kind of forgiveness God grants in Psalms 103. “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”²⁸ In the time of Solomon, God repeated His desire to forgive His people if they were leading a covenant life style, which includes

22 Lev. 16:30 For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

23 Lev. 16:2-34

24 Lev. 16:6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which *is* for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house.

25 Lev. 16:15-6

26 (Lev. 16:17-20)

27 Lev. 16:21-2

28 Ps. 103:11-2

repentance for sins. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."²⁹ Therefore the Atonement sacrifice showed the people their sins were completely forgiven by God if they repented of the sins they knew about and God would take care of the unknown sins.

The book of Hebrews elaborates how under the New Covenant the Atonement sacrifice is available to God's called out people every day and not just one day out of the year.³⁰ Unlike the high priests of Israel, Jesus did not have to offer up a sacrifice to cleanse himself.³¹ Jesus became the mediator of the New Covenant when he was resurrected.³² Under the Old Covenant, the physical temple had to be cleansed once a year, but under the New Covenant the blood of Jesus the Messiah, the new high priest, cleansed the spiritual temple.³³ Jesus' sacrifice then served as the ultimate Atonement sacrifice, once for all. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."³⁴ Although this blood was offered for all, it is possible to walk away from our covenant with God if we reject the atoning blood of Christ,³⁵ but you have to be in covenant with God before you can claim the forgiveness of God.

The Passover is not a sin offering. Using the Passover as a control mechanism is one of the most shameful things a Christian teacher can do because it totally distorts what our covenant relationship with God the Father is. Jesus does fulfill the role of the ultimate sin sacrifice by replacing the Atonement sacrifice. But the Passover is a completely different sacrifice whose purpose parallels the thank offering, not a sin offering. The New Covenant is a marriage covenant and is not renewed every year at the Passover. The idea of this supposed yearly renewal is an unscriptural control mechanism that should be rejected by every Christian.

29 2 Chron. 7:14

30 Heb. 9-10

31 Heb. 7:22-8:5

32 Heb. 8:6-13

33 Heb. 9:11-4

34 Heb. 9:24-8

35 1 John 5:16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.
Heb. 10:26-29 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Easter versus Passover

Easter versus Passover

The last major issue raised by early 14th Passover proponents dealt with by this book is that a debate about early versus late 14th Passover observance has supposedly raged for two millennia. Early 14th proponents mistakenly look to the Quarto-deciman controversy for proof that some Christians, the Quarto-decimans, supposedly observed a Passover on the early 14th, while other Christians supposedly kept it on the early 15th. Early 14th proponents examination of the Quarto-deciman controversy has the same scholarly aplomb they displayed in depicting the Samaritan Passover as being on the early 14th of Nisan, which it wasn't and isn't, that Philo was describing a domestic Passover, which he didn't, and that Josephus' account of the last Passover sacrifice in 70 A.D. was proof of a domestic Passover, which it also most emphatically was not. The Quarto-deciman controversy has always revolved around whether Christians should observe Passover at the same time as the Jews or if they should they observe Easter instead. The Quarto-decimans argued that Christians should reject Easter because of its pagan origins and continue to observe the scripturally mandated Passover observance.

The term Easter was derived from the Anglo-Saxon 'Eostre,' the name of the goddess of spring. In her honor sacrifices are offered at the time of the vernal equinox. By the 8th cent. The term came to be applied to the anniversary of the Christ's resurrection. The date of the celebrations of the Resurrection was the subject of extensive disagreement for centuries. Among early Jewish Christians the time of the observance was determined by the date of the Hebrew Passover festival (Heb. pesah), which began on the 14th day of Nisan. Gentile Christians, however, tended to celebrate the Resurrection on a Sunday. ...Steps toward settlement of the disagreement were taken at the Council of Nicea (C.E. 325). Although Syrian leaders argued for Easter according to the Jewish Passover, the Council unanimously decided that the Resurrection was to be celebrated in all churches on the same Sunday. No fixed rule was established for deciding which Sunday was to be observed. Instead, it was left for the church leaders of Alexandria to determine every year. Disagreement continued to surround the matter. Some, who were called 'Quarto-decimans,' persisted in relating Easter to the 14th of Nisan.¹

The above quoted article is from the ISBE, an authoritative source for and by current theologians, which means that it has a liberal bias that places as much emphasis on secular sources as it does on

1 Bromley, G.W., ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, vol. 2, p.6

the Holy Scriptures. The ISBE trace the origins of Easter to a non-Christian practice that pre-dates Jesus. They also write that the Quarto-deciman controversy was about the observance of Easter, not the timing of Passover. A more conservative source, *The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition* states:

There is no indication of the observance of the Easter festival in the New Testament or the writing of the apostolic Fathers. The sanctity of special times was an idea absent from the minds of the first Christians....The ecclesiastical historian Socrates (Hist. Eccl. V. 22) states, with perfect truth, that neither the Lord nor his apostles enjoined the keeping of this or any other festival. He says: "The apostles had no thought of appointing festival days, but of promoting a life of blamelessness and piety"; and he attributes the observance of Easter by the church to the perpetuation of old usage, "just as many other customs have been established."²

This is doubtless an accurate statement of the case. The first Christians continued to observe the Jewish festivals, though in a new spirit, as commemorations of events which those festivals had foreshadowed. Thus the Passover, with the new concept that Jesus the Christ was the true Pesah lamb and the first fruits from the dead, continued to be observed. The Britannica scholars in the article below refer both the observance of an Easter Sunday and a Passover memorial, which occurred at the same time and had many of the same ordinances as had been practiced in Israel for 1,500 years, as celebrating Easter on the 14th after the new moon.

Although the observance of Easter was at a very early period the practice of the Christian church, a serious difference as the day for its observance soon arose between the Christians of Jewish and those of Gentile descent, which led to a long and bitter controversy. The point at issue was when the Paschal fast was reckoned as ending. With the Jewish Christians, whose leading thought was the death of Christ as the Paschal Lamb, the fast ended at the same time as that as that of the Jews, on the fourteenth day of the moon at evening, and the Easter festival immediately followed, without regard to the day of the week (*ed. note-What Britannica's scholars are calling the Easter festival was Passover*). The Gentile Christians, on the other hand, unfettered by Jewish traditions, identified the first day of the week with the Resurrection, and kept the preceding Friday as the commemoration of the crucifixion, irrespective of the day of the month. With the one the observance of the day of the month (*ed. note-those that followed the Jewish practice of Passover occurring on the 14th of Nisan*), with the other the observance of the day of the week, was the guiding principle.

Generally speaking, the Western churches kept Easter on the first day of the week, while the Eastern churches followed the Jewish rule, and kept Easter on the fourteenth day. (*ed. note-Again, it must be remembered that this source has just stated they fasted through the 14th and at the end of the 14th they had the Passover meal, which this source calls the Easter meal*) St. Polycarp, the disciple of St. John the Evangelist and bishop of Smyrna, visited Rome in 159 to confer with Anicetus, the bishop of that see, on the subject; and urged the tradition which he had received from the apostle, of observing the fourteenth day. Anicetus, however, declined to admit the Jewish custom in the churches under his jurisdiction, but readily communicated with Polycarp and those who followed it. About forty years later (197) the question was discussed in a very different spirit between Victor, bishop of Rome, and Polycrates, metropolitan of proconsular Asia. That province was the only portion of Christendom which still adhered to the Jewish usage, and Victor proceeded to

² Encyclopedia Britannica, eleventh edition, Vol. 8, New York, The Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1910, pp. 828

excommunicate Polycrates and the Christians who continued the Easter usage. He was, however, restrained from actually proceeding to enforce the decree of excommunication, owing to the remonstrance of Irenaeus and the bishops of Gaul. Peace was thus maintained, and the Asiatic churches retained their usage unmolested (Euseb H.E. 23-5). We find the Jewish usage from time to time reasserting itself after this, but it never prevailed to any large extent.

A final settlement of the dispute was one among the other reasons which lead Constantine to summon the council of Nicaea in 325. At that time the Syrians and Antiochenese were the solitary champions of the observance of the fourteenth day. The decision of the council was unanimous that Easter was to be kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world, and “that none should hereafter follow the blindness of the Jews” (Socrates, H.E. i. 9) The correct date of the Easter festival was to be calculated at Alexandria, the home of astronomical science, and the bishop of that see was to announce it yearly to the churches under his jurisdiction, and also to the occupant of the Roman see, by whom it was to be communicated to the Western churches. The few who afterwards separated the fourteenth day, were name Quarto-decimani, and the dispute itself is known as the Quarto-decimal controversy.³

The Christian church celebrated Jesus’ death and resurrection from its inception, according to both the ISBE and Britannica, but there were differences in the manner and timing of that observance. The method of Good Friday and Easter Sunday observance began to be practiced by the gentile Christians between 70 and 135 A.D. The practice of observing Easter rather than Passover became law with the council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. Nicaea also outlawed the observation of Easter on the same day as Passover. “The Nicaea ruling contains one other provision that is extremely important for the Orthodox churches. It states that Easter should not be celebrated ‘with’ (Greek ‘meta’) the Jews. Today’s theologians are no longer entirely certain what was meant by this, but Orthodox Easter still cannot fall on the same day as Passover. If it does, it is postponed by a week.”⁴ However, the earliest practice of the Christian church was to continue to observe the Passover and days of Unleavened Bread, as outlined in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16, but with the understanding that the true Passover sacrifice was Jesus the Christ.

The primary source for most of the information about the Quarto-deciman controversy is from Constantine’s biographer and historian, Eusebius Pamphilus, who wrote in the early to mid 300’s A.D. Eusebius wrote:

A question of no small importance arose at that time. For the parishes of all Asia, as from an older tradition, held that the fourteenth day of the moon, on which day the Jews were commanded to sacrifice the lamb, should be observed as the feast of the Savior’s passover. It was therefore necessary to end their fast on that day, whatever day of the week it should happen to be. But it was not the custom of the churches in the rest of the world to end it at this time, as they observed the practice which, from apostolic tradition, has prevailed to the present time, of terminating the fast on no other day than on that of the resurrection of our Savior.”⁵

³ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition, Vol. 8., pp. 828-9

⁴ <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-date-of-easter.html>

⁵ Eusebius, Pamphilus, Cruse, C.F. *Trans. Ecclesiastical History*, 1998, p. 386

There appears to be little doubt that the argument at Nicea was two-fold. First, the controversy entailed whether a Passover observance was to be held on the 14th of Nisan or if Christians should substitute Easter Sunday for Passover. The second part of the argument involved when and how long to fast, with those Christians who observed Passover starting a fast at the beginning of the 14th and ending their fast at the end of the 14th while those that kept Easter started the fast on the end of good Friday and broke their fast on the morning of Easter Sunday. Eusebius goes on to describe a theological blood-letting that ensued between Polycrates of Asia, who kept the Passover, and Victor of Rome, who followed the tradition of Easter Sunday.

But the bishops of Asia, led by Polycrates, decided to hold to the old custom handed down to them. He himself, in a letter which he addressed to Victor and the church of Rome, set forth in the following words the tradition which had come down to him: "We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord's coming, when he shall come with glory from heaven, and shall seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who fell asleep in Hierapolis; and his two aged virgin daughters, and another daughter, who lived in the Holy Spirit and now rests at Ephesus; and, moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. He fell asleep at Ephesus. And Polycarp in Smyrna, who was a bishop and martyr; and Thraseas, bishop and martyr from Eumenia, who fell asleep in Smyrna. Why need I mention the bishop and martyr Sagaris who fell asleep in Laodicea, or the blessed Papius, or Melito, the Eunuch who lived altogether in the Holy Spirit, and who lies in Sardis, awaiting the episcopate from heaven, when he shall rise from the dead? All these observed the fourteenth day of the passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, do according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have closely followed. For seven of my relatives were bishops; and I am the eighth. And my relatives always observed the day when the people put away the leaven. I, therefore, brethren, who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not affrighted by terrifying words. For those greater than I have said 'We ought to obey God rather than man.'⁶

These strong words from Polycrates drove Victor to try to excommunicate the entire Asian church that refused to give up the practice of Passover in favor of Easter Sunday. Victor wrote letters directing when and how this excommunication should take place, but a number of the other bishops, including Irenaeus, disagreed and caused Victor to back down. Irenaeus wrote to Victor and told him this issue had reared its ugly head in the past when Polycarp, the Asian bishop who observed Passover, clashed with Anicetus, the Roman bishop who observed Easter. Irenaeus wrote that Polycarp's and Anicetus' disagreement did not lead to excommunication and he felt this example should still be followed. Irenaeus also wrote, "For the controversy is not only concerning the day, but also concerning the very manner of the fast. For some think that they should fast one day, others two, yet others more; some, moreover, count their day as consisting of forty hours day and night. And this variety in its observance has not originated in our time; but long before in that of our ancestors. It is likely that they did not hold to strict accuracy, and thus formed a custom for their posterity according to their own simplicity and

⁶ Eusebius, p. 388

peculiar mode. Yet all of these lived none the less in peace, and we also live in peace with one another; and the disagreement in regard to the fast confirms the agreement in the faith.”⁷

Irenaeus’ words still have wisdom for the church today. There still swirls a storm of controversy over how to celebrate Passover and a little patience and love will go a long way towards allowing God to open His people’s minds and hearts so they can follow Him more closely. This advice is needed most by early 14th proponents, who use the unscriptural concept of an early 14th Passover as a line in the sand for separation and ideological purity by using Passover as a control mechanism. Patience and brotherly love should also be practiced by late 14th Passover proponents.

Eusebius noted a custom among those early Christians who were the first born to fast on the 14th of Nisan. This is most probably a continuation of the practice of the firstborn Jews fasting on the 14th. These Christians broke their fast with the Passover meal at the end of the 14th of Nisan. Those who observed Easter fasted from the end of “Good Friday” until morning of Easter Sunday, approximately a 40-hour period. Although the two observances had common roots, the divergent timing led to great animosity between the two sides. It is also clear that Christians could not have observed an early 14th Passover if a large segment of them were fasting.

Eusebius goes on to state,

BUT before this time another most virulent disorder had existed, and long afflicted the Church; I mean the difference respecting the salutary feast of Easter. For while one party asserted that the Jewish custom should be adhered to, the other affirmed that the exact recurrence of the period should be observed without following the authority of those who were in error, and strangers to gospel grace.

Accordingly, the people being thus in every place divided in respect of this, and the sacred observances of religion confounded for a long period (insomuch that the diversity of judgment in regard to the time for celebrating one and the same feast caused the greatest disagreement between those who kept it, some afflicting themselves with fastings and austerities, while others devoted their time to festive relaxation), no one appeared who was capable of devising a remedy for the evil, because the controversy continued equally balanced between both parties.⁸

The animosity that Eusebius observed seems to be derived at least as much from anti-Semitism as it is from a wish to honor the resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. Those who observed Passover saw no reason to change the biblical ordinances while those who kept Easter seem to have no desire to be associated with any thing Jewish. These church leaders rejected Jewish scholarship on the unscriptural grounds that the Jews supposed killed the Messiah. This bias and prejudice is also very evident with their mandate that Christians should not celebrate at the same time as the Jews, which is just what early 14th proponents write. Of course this author hopes and believes that Christians today should not fall into this anti-Semitic trap because Jesus was a Jew who followed all the ordinances outlined in scripture and the New Testament shows these ordinances were practiced by the early Christian church. One of the final letters in Eusebius’s

7 Eusebius, p. 389

8 Eusebius, p. 387

Ecclesiastical History makes clear the depth of the this hatred for the Jews, and thus everything that was associated with the Jews, including the Old Testament and the Godly ordinances He gave mankind. Eusebius wrote:

At this meeting the question concerning the most holy day of Easter was discussed, and it was resolved by the united judgment of all present, that this feast ought to be kept by all and in every place on one and the same day. For what can be more becoming or honorable to us than that this feast from which we date our hopes of immortality, should be observed unflinching by all alike, according to one ascertained order and arrangement? And first of all, it appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. For we have it in our power, if we abandon their custom, to prolong the due observance of this ordinance to future ages, by a truer order, which we have preserved from the very day of the passion until the present time. Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd; for we have received from our Savior a different way. A course at once legitimate and honorable lies open to our most holy religion. Beloved brethren, let us with one consent adopt this course, and withdraw ourselves from all participation in their baseness. For their boast is absurd indeed, that it is not in our power without instruction from them to observe these things. For how should they be capable of forming a sound judgment, who, since their parricidal guilt in slaying their Lord, have been subject to the direction, not of reason, but of ungoverned passion, and are swayed by every impulse of the mad spirit that is in them? Hence it is that on this point as well as others they have no perception of the truth, so that, being altogether ignorant of the true adjustment of this question, they sometimes celebrate Easter twice in the same year. Why then should we follow those who are confessedly in grievous error? Surely we shall never consent to keep this feast a second time in the same year. But supposing these reasons were not of sufficient weight, still it would be incumbent on your Sagacities to strive and pray continually that the purity of your souls may not seem in anything to be sullied by fellowship with the customs of these most wicked men.⁹

For those unfamiliar with the calendars used in the third and fourth century, Eusebius' writings might seem rather puzzling. The boasting of the Jews that Eusebius mentions is that Christians could not declare a date for Easter until the Jews had declared a date for Passover on the observed calendar into which leap years were inserted if it was still winter in Jerusalem. That meant that the dates for Passover could come one month later than normally expected.¹⁰ Thus the Jews were apparently boasting the Christians could not declare the date of Easter until the Jews declared the date of Passover.

Eusebius' declaration that the Jews might have two Passovers in a single year might also seem strange indeed if the reader did not understand the start of the year on the Julian calendar was April 1, not January 1, as it currently is on the Gregorian calendar. This change occurred in 1582. Therefore Eusebius wrote that the Jews might declare a date for the first of Nisan that coincided with March 26th on the Julian calendar, thus the 14th of Nisan would fall on the 8th of April. The next year they might declare a date for the first of Nisan that coincided with the 16th

⁹ Eusebius p. 915

¹⁰ This commonly understood principle is summarized in the author's book on the calendar.

of March (The first day of the year on the Jewish calendar did not have to fall after the spring equinox then). Thus the 14th of Nisan would fall on March 29th. Therefore two Passovers, which Eusebius refers to as Easter, could occur during the same Julian year. The Jews would not believe they were keeping two Passovers in the same year, but gentiles who only observed the Julian calendar would believe that was the case.

Eusebius' examination of the Quarto-deciman controversy actually does drive yet another nail into the coffin of early 14th Passover proponent's hypothesis. Part of the controversy revolved around whether first born Christians should fast on the 14th of Nisan and break the fast with the Passover meal eaten at the same time the Jews ate it, on the early 15th of Nisan, or whether they should fast from the time Christ was supposedly crucified on Friday and break that fast with a meal on Easter Sunday morning, a meal still practiced by the Orthodox churches of the world. The Quarto-deciman could not have practiced an early 14th Passover because they would have been fasting on the entire day of the 14th of Nisan and would not have broken that fast until the Passover meal on the early 15th. There obviously is no record of an early 14th Passover in any of these writings, nor of any other primary source so far located. When Gentile influences began to change the days the church observed from Passover to Easter and do away with the fast altogether, the Quarto-deciman controversy ensued. It had absolutely nothing to do with an early versus late 14th Passover because there was agreement among Christians and Jews of that time that the Passover occurred late on the 14th going into the 15th of Nisan.

An accumulation of errors-The early 14th Passover hypothesis

It must stressed that early 14th proponents are defined as those who believe the vast majority of scholars in the world are incorrect and are even liars supposedly trying to protect Jewish belief that the *pesah* lamb was killed on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan in Egypt. They believe that although scripture outlawed all domestic sacrifices, including the Passover, the Passover was a domestic sacrifice. They claim Everett Fox's scholarship proves *ben ha arbayim* is the first hour of the day, yet Mr. Fox writes it is the last hour of the day. Early 14th proponents claim the Samaritans keep a domestic Passover on the early 14th, yet the Samaritan Passover is on the last hour of the 14th at the site of their temple, Mt. Gerizim.

Early 14th proponents misrepresent Philo's writings about the temple Passover service, claiming it proves a domestic Passover, when it does not. Early 14th proponents claim Josephus supports an eight day feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread when his writings actually support a seven day feast of unleavened bread with the Passover acting as a preparation day for the feast of Unleavened Bread to allow unleavening and the sacrifice of the Passover lamb late on the 14th. Early 14th proponents also claim Josephus is not just in error, but a liar about how Israel left Egypt and about the timing and date of the Passover sacrifice, but readily accept his astronomically high number of lambs killed at the last temple Passover, which scholars agree are erroneous. They even obfuscate that fact that Josephus wrote that his quarter of million lambs were sacrificed at the temple to try to support a domestic Passover sacrifice.

Early 14th proponents used to claimed the Hebrews phrase *ba erev* could mean sunset and sunset only at the end of the day, but apparently when it was pointed out that Joshua 5 has

the Passover occurring on the 14th at *ba erev*, early 14th proponents changed their definition to allow the Hebrew term *waw*, translated as and, to determine if *ba erev* was at the beginning or the end of the day and miraculously *waw* morphs the term *ba erev* and *ben ha arbayim* to always support an early 14th Passover in their theology. The majority of early 14th proponents are so inculcated with the supposed fact that *ba erev* can only be sunset at the end of a day that they did not and do not even raise question the Passover of Joshua 5:10.

Early 14th proponents reject the clear examples of Hezekiah and Josiah calling people who may have been part of the covenant by birth, but who had never personally accepted that covenant, into covenant with God with a journey that began with a Passover sacrifice at the temple on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan. This rejection is supposedly based on the facts that the Jews were so evil as not to be trusted to even be taught the right way to keep the Passover.

In the New Testament, early 14th proponents state the Greek verb *ethoun* supposedly proves a domestic Passover sacrifice was performed on the same day the disciples ate the Last Supper,¹¹ yet scripture shows if the verb *ethoun* does depict a Passover sacrifice occurring during Mark 14:12, then the Last Supper was actually on the next day. There are numerous additional examples of poor, distorted, and errant scholarship throughout early 14th Passover theology as it relates to both the Old and New Testament. This author believes the most likely explanation for the creation of the early 14th hypothesis is an understanding of the synoptics depiction of the Last Supper as a Passover meal and the unfortunate misunderstanding of John as anti-Semitic, a theory that is back in vogue with scholars like Casey, which allowed a truly dreadful harmonization of the timing of the Last Supper based on the Jews being wrong about almost everything. This led to the exclusion of clear, easy to understand scriptures so that other, less clear scriptures could be twisted by creative eisegesis. Therefore a clear rejection of early 14th proponent's hypothesis from a New Testament perspective is demanded because it follows the same pattern of the poor scholarship and obfuscation of scripture and external sources found in the Old Testament portion of this book.

This author objects most strenuously to early 14th proponents belief that the Passover is a yearly renewal of the covenant because it smacks of a whiff of gnosticism akin to the transubstantiation of the Eucharist. Just as the Eucharist has historically been used to uphold the power of a priestly class with the supposed power of eternal life and death over the laity in the Catholic church, so has the Passover been transformed from a gateway leading to our Father into a mechanism to control and corral God's called out people. The way may be narrow and the path may be straight, but God's people should not be corralled to sustain any group with their tithes and offerings when their purpose is to find rest so they can serve God in the Promised Land ruled by the Messiah.

11 Coulter, *The Christian Passover*, p. 238

Harmonizing the Gospels

CHAPTER

33

Harmonization of the Gospel accounts

Roger Beckwith is an Anglican scholar noted for his contributions to the study of worship in the early church and how it is related to its Jewish roots. He has written a number of books and articles on how time was used and viewed in the times of Jesus the Christ. He succinctly states why we must harmonize the gospel accounts if we are to understand the timing and meaning of The Last Supper.

If one is not content to posit a contradiction between John and Synoptists (a position which has its own difficulties, not the least of them being the indications that John himself knows, and sometimes follows, the Synoptic chronology), various possible ways of reconciling them are worthy of consideration. One way, which is much in vogue at present time, is that of rival calendars. This takes various forms. Occasionally it has been maintained, on the grounds of a misunderstanding of the rabbinical evidence, that some Jews sacrifice the Passover lamb on Nisan 13, not Nisan 14. This would be contrary to the express command of Exod. 12:6; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3, 28:16. Occasionally again, it has been conjectured that the Sadducees or Boethusians (related groups, if not the same) had a controversy with the Pharisees over the date of the Passover, just as they did over the date of Pentecost. However, this is pure conjecture, and since the voluminous rabbinical literature so often specifies matters on which these rival groups contended, including of course the date of Pentecost, it would be strange for it to say nothing about a controversy over the date of the still more important festival of the Passover. What the rabbinical literature does tell us (and Josephus, quite independently, supports this) is that in practice the Sadducees gave way to the Pharisees; and if so, such a controversy could hardly have any bearing on the date of the Last Supper. We can scarcely think Jesus as the one *Sadducee* who had the courage of his convictions.

Then again, an explanation of the discrepancy between the Gospels has occasionally been sought in the fact that some Jews reckoned the 24-hour day from nightfall and other from daybreak; or, so to speak more accurately, that some *preferred* one reckoning to the other, for they were not treated as mutually exclusive. The fallacy here is that it would only have led to a difference in the dating of the night and not the day. Since (except on rare occasions like the Passover meal) all activity took place in the daytime, it is the day which would be dated, and the night—whether the night preceding or the night following—would take its date from the day. Especially would this have to be so if both reckonings were used, as they were, by the same people. Since the Pentateuch required that the lamb should be slain on the 14th and eaten

the following night (Exod. 12:6-10), and since the slaying had, by the first century, been moved forward from the evening of the 14th into the afternoon of that day (Philo, *Specialibus legibus* 2:145, 149: *Questiones et Solutiones in Exodum* 1:11; Josephus, *War* 6:9:3, or 6:423; M. Pesahim 5:1), it would make no difference in practice whether the following night was reckoned part of the 14th or part of the 15th, for it would still be the night after the day which, on both reckonings, was called the 14th, and on which the Passover was slain.

These conjectural differences of calendar have now been pushed into the background by demonstration of the real difference of the calendar between the predominant Jewish schools of thought and the Essenes. The cry for demonstrating this belongs mainly to Mlle. Annie Jaubert. In her book *La date de la cène* (Paris, Gabalda, 1957) and various related articles she has proved, to the satisfaction of most scholars, that the solar calendar expounded in 1 Enoch and the Book of Jubilees, and actually practiced at Qumran, assigned exactly 52 weeks (or 364 days) to the year, and that its new year's day was a Wednesday. A consequence is that the 14th day of its first month, when the Passover lambs were due to be slain, was Tuesday, and Mlle. Jaubert tries to use this fact to explain the difference between the Synoptists and John by suggesting that Jesus followed the Essene calendar and his opponents the standard lunar one.

Unfortunately, this ingenious proposal proves to be open to very weighty objections. First, though many events follow hard upon one another between the Last Supper and the death of Jesus, all the Gospels place his death on a Friday (Matt 27:62, 28:1, Mark 15:42, Luke 23:54, John 19:31, 42 (*ed. note this is Mr. Beckwith's belief, not mine*)) and they all imply that the Last Supper took place the night before, not three nights before.

Secondarily, the links between primitive Christianity and Essenism, though interesting, are relatively few, and Jesus' own links with Essenism do not appear to be any stronger. In particular, on the many occasions when he goes up to Jerusalem for the feasts (as J. T. Milik points out) he always goes up with the festival-crowds, and not at some unusual time. Thirdly, it is very questionable whether the Essenes did not go up to Jerusalem for the feasts, or whether Jesus, had he shared their views, would have done so. The Essenes followed the beliefs expressed in the older sections of the Book of Enoch, where the sacrifices offered in the Second Temple are described as 'polluted and not pure', and the seer is unable to tell whether God's people enter Jerusalem any more (1 Enoch 89:67, 73). The Temple authorities, for their part excommunicated the Essenes, and this may well have happened before the time of Jesus' ministry. Fourthly, the assumption of Mlle. Jaubert that, though the Essenes held the Passover on a different day from other Jews, they would have held it in the same week, is quite gratuitous, and in all probability wrong. It is based on the supposition that the Jews of our Lord's day had the same proficiency as some of their neighbors abroad in astronomical science, and so would have been well aware that the true length of the solar year was not 364 days. As we have seen, such a supposition is not in the accordance with the unsophisticated and pragmatic approach to the calendar which most Jewish evidence from the first few centuries A.D. actually reflects, nor is it in accordance with the dogmatic assertions of the Essenes that their 364-day year is exact. Without intercalation, however, the Essene calendar would rapidly have diverged from the seasons; and since it is first found in the oldest section of 1 Enoch, and so dates back to the third century B.C., the idea that it would still have been sufficiently in line with the seasons by the time of the Last Supper for it to have placed the Passover in the same week as that of other Jews, is in the highest degree improbable.

But if the hypothesis that rival calendars are the clue to reconciling the chronology of the Passion-week finally breaks down, one is thrown back upon the old solution that the Synoptists really agree with John, or that John really agrees with the Synoptists.¹

Beckwith's astute analysis shows that although various scholars have supported different and unique ways to avoid harmonizing the synoptics with the gospel of John, they are all in error. Beckwith disposed of our first three alternatives in harmonizing Luke 22:15 with John 18:28. We are therefore left with the centuries old issue of harmonizing John to the synoptics or the synoptics to John. This means that either the Passover mentioned in John 18:28 was not the sacrifice of the *pesah* lamb, which places the crucifixion of Jesus on Friday, the 15th of Nisan or the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, placing the crucifixion on the 14th of Nisan.

1 Beckwith, Roger T., *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian: Biblical, Intertestamental and Patristic Studies*, Edition: illustrated, Brill, 2001 pp. 290-92

Supporting the Last Supper as Passover Meal

Alternative 4-Evidence the Last Supper was a Passover meal

The Last Supper occurred about fifteen hours before Jesus was crucified, but was the Last Supper a Passover or not? The clearest evidence that the Last Supper was a Passover meal is Luke 22:15, which states, “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.”¹ Scholars agree the most likely translation of this verse is that Jesus wanted to eat the Passover with his disciples and he did. Therefore when the disciples told the master of the upper room that Jesus was going to have the Passover in the upper room in Matthew and Mark, which they obviously thought he would, they would have been correct.

The classic case for the Last Supper being a Passover meal was done by Joachim Jeremias in 1966 and has been built upon by Maurice Casey in *Is John's Gospel True?*² Casey is a liberal scholar who believes the Gospel of John was written by the Johannine community in the late second century. He does not believe in the historicity of John's gospel and rejects evangelical scholars like Morris and Carson, who “have continued to maintain that John's Gospel is literally and historically true in every detail.”³ He believes the gospel of John, “is vigorously anti-Jewish.”⁴ Although this author whole heartedly disagrees with Mr. Casey's opinions and agrees with more traditional scholars like Morris and Carson about the gospel of John, this author has chosen Mr. Casey's argument that the Last Supper was a Passover meal because Mr. Casey does an excellent job of expounding the case that was advanced so well by Jeremias. Jeremias' thesis will be examined in detail later in this book.

Mark's account of the preparations for the meal begins, ‘And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they were sacrificing the Passover’ (Mark 14:12). It was therefore Thursday afternoon, 14 Nisan. Mark has described as ‘the first day of Unleavened Bread’ the day when leavened bread had to be removed from the house (so Jos. B.J V, 99; cf. A.J. II 317; IX, 271). The content of the second phrase is of primary importance. These few words, ‘when they were sacrificing the Passover’, tell us where Jesus and his disciples were, and what they were doing. With that informa-

1 Luke 22:15

2 Casey, Maurice, *Is John's Gospel True*, Routledge, 1996

3 Casey, *Is John's Gospel True?* p. 1

4 Ibid, p.1

tion, all Jewish Christians, that is, all the earliest Christians, will have known at once that Jesus and his disciples were in the Temple. There Jesus slit the throat of a 1-year-old lamb or goat, known as the pasha, an Aramaic word found in Mark's Greek text and generally translated 'Passover.' Jesus drained the blood from this animal into a bowl held by a priest. Many other victims were being slaughtered at the same time, to the accompaniment of the Hallel psalms (Pss 113-8).

After being slaughtered, animals were taken to somewhere else in Jerusalem to be roasted and so on. Mark's narrative continues in the most natural way possible. 'His disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go to prepare for you that you may eat the Passover?' The word 'Passover' refers again to the actual victim. We should picture them standing besides Jesus in a packed and noisy crowd of people, all with dead lambs or goats. They assumed that he had made arrangements which they would carry out. He sent two of them, enough to carry the dead animal comfortably, and to split up if anything went wrong. Their ignorance of the arrangements, the intention to prepare for 'you' rather than for 'us' to eat the Passover, the fact that they went away and prepared the Passover while Jesus came in the evening 'with the twelve' (14:17), all these points combine to show that these two disciples were not two of the twelve. They recognized the prearranged signal of man carrying a water-pot. The man will have been recognizable because waterpots were normally carried by women, on the assumptions which our author took for granted. The nature of these arrangements surely implies that they were a mode of escaping detection. This also applies to the description 'teacher', translating the conventional 'rabbi', rather than any clear identification of Jesus. Their password is also significant because it again mentions the Passover: 'the rabbi says, 'Where is my guest-room, where I will eat the Passover with my disciples. (Mk. 14:14)?

At verse 15, the large upper room makes good sense only if they were to be lots of people there. At verse 17, Jesus comes with the twelve, making fifteen people mentioned... The women are not mentioned because the presence of the women at Jesus' final Passover too obvious to be worthy of mention. Women were generally present at Passover. Jesus was not likely to have excluded some of his most faithful followers from his final Passover... It follows that we do not know how big the company was. If we imagine thirty, we have a margin error, but the conventional thirteen is simply wrong.

Verse 16 records the success of the arrangements, ending with the preparation of the Passover. By this stage, it should be blindingly obvious to any reader of Mark that Jesus and disciples are going to a Passover meal. The narrative also contains a number of pieces of circumstantial evidence that this was a Passover meal, and it begins with two of them. At verse 17, Jesus comes with the twelve 'when it was evening'. The Passover meal had to be eaten after dark, when the 15 Nisan began. Secondly, the company reclined to eat, as Jews did at Passover, to symbolize that they were free people, no longer enslaved in Egypt.⁵

Besides Casey's argument, Michael Welker summarizes Jeremias's argument in his book *What Happens in Holy Communion?*

1. According to Mark 14:17; Matthew 26:20, and also according to 1 Corinthians 11:23 and John 13:30, Jesus' last meal was held "when it was evening" or at night. Apart from Matthew 14:15, where the feeding of the five thousand explicitly takes

⁵ Casey, *Is John's Gospel True?* p. 15-6

place after the mealtime had already passed by, a normal meal was never held at a nighttime hour. Only festival meals could stretch into the night. But “from its inception the passover meal was eaten at night.”

((Jeremias, Joachim, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Perrin, Norman, The New Testament Library London: SMC, 1966, pp. 46))

2. The synoptic writers are in agreement (Mk. 14:18; Mt. 26:20); Lk. 22:14; but also Jn 13:12, 23, 25, 28) that Jesus reclined at the table with his disciples at the last meal. This, too, by no means follows as a matter of course. According to Jeremias, it can be explained only on the basis of the ritual form of the Passover Meal. (Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, p. 48-9)

3. According to Mark 14:18-22 and Matthew 26:21-6, Jesus breaks bread only in the course of the meal. According to Jeremias, “that is remarkable, because the ordinary meals began with the breaking of bread.” By contrast, one of the children’s questions that introduced the Passover devotion is, “How is that on every other evening we dip bread into the dish but on this evening we simply dip (without bread) into the dish?” Jeremias gives that following commentary: “This children’s question shows conclusively that the passover meal was the only family meal in the year at which the serving of a dish (Mk. 14:20) preceded the breaking of bread. (Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, p. 49-50)

4. Finally, along with some other perspectives that argue for a Passover meal, Jeremias claims that the words with which Jesus gives the bread and wine, and his—as Jeremias says—“altogether extraordinary manner of announcing his passion,” can only be explained by the fact that Jesus picked up and transformed the established interpretation of the particular elements of the meal in the Passover ritual. “The ritual interpretation of the special elements of the passover meal which we have described was the occasion for the interpretation which Jesus gave to the bread and wine at the Last Supper. That means: structurally Jesus modeled his saying upon the ritual interpretation of the passover. (Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, p. 56, 60-1 Cf. Stuhlmacher, Peter, *Das neustestamentliche Zeugnis vom Herrenmahl*” in Stuhlmacher, P. *Jesus von Nazareth—Christus des Glaubens* (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1988) pp. 70ff.)⁶

The *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* shines the light of scholarship on the issue of what kind of bread was eaten at the Last Supper.

A number of scholars who contend the Last Supper could not have been a passover meal because the Greek word used ‘for ‘bread’ in the account is *artos*, the usual word for leavened bread, which could not be used to designate unleavened bread... This is simply not substantiated by scripture. ‘As for the statement that *artos* could not be used to designate that unleavened bread of the Passover, this is simply incorrect. The general term for ‘bread’, whether the Greek *artos* or the Hebrew *lehem*, was always used in the OT, the LXX, the Mishnah and the Targums to describe the showbread, which consisted of unleavened bread.”⁷

Although Casey does not care what the gospel of John claims about the timing for the Last Supper, Jeremias and Welker certainly do. John 18:28 states, “Then led they Jesus from Caia-

6 Welker, Michael, *What Happens in Holy Communion*, trans., Hoffmeyer, John F, Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing, 2000, pp. 49-50

7 Green , Joel B., McKnight , Scot, I. Marshall ,Howard, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, InterVarsity Press, 1992, p. 446

phas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.”⁸ Those who believe that Last Supper was a Passover meal explain that John 18:28 must be referring to the offerings made on the first day of Unleavened Bread. “The Synoptic Gospels are correct. The Last Supper was a Passover meal. The term Passover in John 18:28 does not refer to the Passover lamb but to later feasts and sacrifices associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.”⁹

These sacrifices are described by Derek Leman in *Passover, Last Supper, and the Calendar*.

Yet, this is not the only possibility or even the most likely possibility for what the priests mean. There is also the matter of the Khagigah sacrifice for Passover. You won't find the word khagigah in the Bible. It is the name of the egg on the Seder plate at Passover. It is a rabbinic word from the Hebrew word for any festival, *khag*. It means the festival sacrifice. It refers to the special sacrifices offered at the festivals above the regular daily sacrifices.

There is a khagigah for Passover and it is offered on Nisan 15, at the same time Yeshua was crucified! read about the Passover khagigah in Leviticus 23:8 and in Numbers 28:18-22. On the first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. 19 ‘You shall present an offering by fire, a burnt offering to the LORD: two bulls and one ram and seven male lambs on year old, having them without defect. 20 “For their grain offering , you shall offer fine flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah for a bull and two-tenths for the ram. 21 ‘A tenth of an ephah you shall offer for each of the seven lambs; 22 and one male goat for a sin offering to make atonement for you. It is an offering of two bulls, one ram, seven lambs, and a male goat for a sin offering, plus the grain offering that accompanies them.

When Caiphas and Annas the high priests said they would not enter Pilate's hall lest they be defiled and not be able to eat the Passover, this is the Passover they meant. This is a far more likely reference since the High Priest was the one who offered the Khagigah personally and not another priest. This was the special duty that Caiphas and Annas had for the Passover. The lambs slaughtered for Nisan 14 were the work of all the priests. The Khagigah was the particular work of the High Priest.¹⁰

If the Last supper was a Passover meal, John 18:28 is conceivably referring to the Khagigah because if the High Priest had become unclean on the morning of the 14th of Nisan, he could have at least partaken of the Passover lamb at the traditional Seder because he could have cleansed himself and after sunset, he would have been considered clean. Thus alternative 4 suggests the method to harmonize Luke 22:15 with John 18:28 is that the Last Supper was a Passover meal and John 18:28 is referring to the Khagigah sacrifices.

8 John 18:28

9 Green , Joel B., McKnight , Scot, I. Marshall ,Howard, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, InterVarsity Press, 1992, p. 446

10 Leman, Derek, *Passover, Last Supper, and the Calendar* from URL- <http://derek4messiah.wordpress.com/2007/02/06/passover-last-supper-and-the-calendar-pt-3>

Harmonizing John with the Synoptics

CHAPTER

35

Harmonizing John with the synoptic accounts of the Last Supper

An Examination of Joachim Jeremias' Arguments

As has been shown, there are only two viable explanations as to the nature of the Last Supper. Either it was a Passover meal that took place on the evening of the 15th of Nisan (alternative 4) or it was not a Passover meal and took place on the early 14th of Nisan (alternative 5). There has been some speculation that the Last Supper could have occurred two or three days before the crucifixion, as both Jaubert and Dankenbring have speculated, but such speculation has been shown to be in error. Although this author believes the abundance of evidence points to an early 14th Last Supper with Jesus the Christ dying on the cross at the same time the Passover lambs were sacrificed, there is theological justification for hypothesizing that the Last Supper was a Passover meal on the early 15th.

As Beckwith rightly points out, Jeremias' attempt to use astronomy and the calendar to support his hypothesis of the Last Supper being a Passover meal is somewhat amateurish, but the rest of the argument presented by Jeremias for his hypothesis of the Last supper being a Passover meal is still the standard used by scholars today to support the Last Supper being a Passover meal because it is so concise and scholastically accurate and verifiable.¹ Therefore the case for the Last Supper being a Passover meal, with its strengths and conclusions, will be presented in this chapter, with the weaknesses of Jeremias' argument being examined in the next chapter.

Jeremias' first argument is that all four gospel accounts agree the Last Supper took place in Jerusalem. Both Jeremias and *Biblical Archeological Review* agree that the standard population of Jerusalem was 15 to 25 thousand people, but during the Passover season the population would explode with up to 100 thousand pilgrims.² Even though the nights were cold,³ "during his last stay in Jerusalem Jesus regularly left the holy city in the evening and went to Bethany (Luke: the Mount of Olives). Why then did he, contrary to this custom, remain in the overcrowded

1 Jeremias, Joachim, trans. Norman Perrin *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 1966; reprinted, 1977, pp.3. 6-41

2 Jeremias, pp. 42-3

3 Mark 14:54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

city for the Last Supper?"⁴ Jeremias' answer is because the lamb had to be eaten in Jerusalem,⁵ thus his contention is that the Passover lamb was eaten at the Last Supper.

Jeremias' second point, which even he admits, "is too much coloured by legend to form the basis for any certain conclusions,"⁶ is that the low key approach to making a room available for the Last Supper makes it possible that the owner of the upper room was simply following the tradition of not charging pilgrims for use of space in which to consume the Passover meal.

Jeremias' third point, that any supper being held at night was an unusual event, is much stronger than his second point. "It was customary to have two meals a day: a very simple breakfast between 10 and 11 a.m. and the main meal in the late afternoon."⁷ The only other meal recorded in scripture as being at night is the feeding of the 5,000, but Jeremias contends Matt. 14:15 states that time for supper was already past and he is most probably correct.⁸ "In the light of this it is certain that the *hour of the Last Supper is not in accordance with the general custom*. How does it come about that this meal begins 'in the evening' and lasts 'into the night'? I see only one answer: *from its inception the Passover meal was eaten at night.*"⁹

Jeremias' fourth point concerns who was at that Last Supper with Jesus. Jeremias agrees with Casey that just because the women were not mentioned being at the Last Supper, "in Eastern texts the argument from silence is inadmissible."¹⁰ Therefore although there may have been as few as 13 at the Last Supper, there may have been twenty or even thirty persons present. Whether there were 13 or 25 people at the Last Supper, for Jesus to be eating with such a small number of people was highly unusual. Scripture is replete with examples of Jesus being so closely surrounded by crowds of followers that he could not even eat.¹¹ Therefore, "because of this limitation of table companions of Jesus to a narrow circle is striking. Is it chance that the small group in some way corresponds to the Passover practice? The Passover haburah had to consist of at least ten persons, and this was the average number, as it was assumed that a one-year-old lamb would provide sufficient food for about ten people. None the less the number could exceed the minimum."¹²

Jeremias points out that all four gospels agree that Jesus and his disciples reclined at the table for the Last Supper. Just as having an evening meal was unusual, reclining at the meal should not "be taken as a matter of course."¹³ Jeremias dismisses the fact that Jesus and the disciples are

4 Jeremias, p. 43

5 Deut. 16:5-7

6 Jeremias, p. 44

7 Jeremias, pp. 44-5

8 Jeremias, p. 44

9 Jeremias, p. 46, emphasis by Jeremias

10 Jeremias, p. 46

11 Jeremias, p. 47

12 Jeremias, p. 47

13 Jeremias, p. 48

recorded as reclining at other meals because these would have been outdoor meals or a royal feast or a wedding, all of which would have been unusual meals.¹⁴ Jeremias contends it would have been impossible for them to be reclining at a normal meal and states, “There can be only one answer: at the Passover meal it was a ritual duty to recline at the table as a symbol of freedom.”¹⁵

Jeremias contends that John 13:10 shows that the disciples had bathed to be in a state of levitical purity to partake of the Passover and that this was a requirement for partaking of the Passover lamb.¹⁶ However both the contention that you had to be in a state of levitical purity to partake of the lamb and that the disciples were actually in such a state is greatly debated.¹⁷

Jeremias’ seventh point is that breaking the bread during the meal was highly unusual, especially when the breaking of the bread followed serving of a dish.¹⁸ One of the questions that children are supposed to ask at the Passover meal is about dipping the bread into a dish. Jeremias states, “*This children’s question shows conclusively that the Passover meal was the only family meal in the year at which the serving of a dish (Mar, 14:20) preceded the breaking of the bread (Mark 14:22).*”¹⁹

The eighth point that Jeremias brings out in support of the Last supper being a Passover meal is how unusual it was for wine to be served with a meal. “It was customary to serve wine in the house of the bereaved during the seven days of mourning. Secondarily the annual festivals provided an occasion for the drinking of wine, especially the three pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles); the drinking of the wine was prescribed as part of the Passover and Purim, and was customary at the meals for the ‘sanctification’ and the dismissal’ of the Sabbath.”²⁰ Jeremias contends rightly that it is, “quite out of the question that Jesus and his disciples should have drunk wine with their daily meals...How is it then that at the Last Supper wine is drunk? The answer is: at the Passover meal it was the duty of every participant to take wine, according to Pes. 10.1 at least four cups.”²¹

14 Jeremias, pp. 48-9

15 Jeremias, p. 49

16 Jeremias, p. 49

17 Barnes, Albert, Barnes Notes on the New Testament, From E-Sword notes on John 13:10 This is a difficult passage, and interpreters have been divided about its meaning. Some have supposed that it was customary to bathe before eating the paschal supper, and that the apostles did it; Jesus having said, “he that hath bathed his body is clean except in regard to his feet - to the dirt contracted in returning from the bath, and that there was need only that the feet should be washed in order to prepare them properly to receive the supper.” They suppose, also, that the lesson which Jesus meant to teach was that they were really pure [Joh 15:3](#); that they were qualified to partake of the ordinances of religion, and needed only to be purified from occasional blemishes and impurities (Grotius). Others say that there is not evidence that the Jews bathed before partaking of the Paschal Supper, but that reference is made to the custom of washing their hands and their face. It is known that this was practiced.

18 Jeremias, p. 50

19 Jeremias, p. 50, emphasis by Jeremias

20 Jeremias, p. 50-1

21 Jeremias, p. 52

Not only did the disciples drink wine, but it was red wine. Jeremias believes that R. Judah's requirement that red wine be drunk with the Passover, which was made around 150 A.D., shows an older tradition, again suggesting that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.

Jeremias contends that Judas' mission of John 13:29 would have necessitated the Last Supper being a Passover meal because the full ordinances of the holy day, the first day of Unleavened Bread, would have come into full effect on the morning of the fifteenth and the sixteenth would have been a weekly Sabbath. Although Jeremias' contention about Judas' mission will be examined in full detail later, this argument is unconvincing and almost certainly in error.

John 13:29 states, "For some of some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor."²² Jeremias contends that giving something to the poor was not just some thing that could have been done, but was customarily done on the night of Passover.²³ John writes that the disciples were unclear about what Judas' mission was. Fifty years after the Last Supper, John wrote that the disciples thought Judas may have left in the middle of the meal, which is not a likely scenario if the Last Supper was a Passover meal.

Jeremias' thirteenth point is that Jesus did not return to Bethany the night of the Last Supper. Instead he went to the Mount of Olives. The Passover ordinance stated that the night of Passover had to be spent in Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives was considered to be in the city of Jerusalem because the city district was expanded to include Bethphage during the time of Passover. However, Bethany was outside of the expanded city limits.²⁴

Jeremias fourteenth and last observation about the Last Supper is for him the most convincing reason why the Last Supper was a Passover meal. The Passover haggadah was the fixed order by which Passover was observed. The bread held special importance as the bread of affliction.²⁵ There was a long standing tradition of expounding upon the meaning of the bread served at the Passover with different interpretations, as both Philo and Gamaliel I are shown to have done.²⁶ "When we add that Jesus' interpretation of the bread 'this is my body' bears a formal likeness to the ancient Aramaic interpretation of the unleavened bread 'this is the bread of affliction' (ha lahma 'anya) quoted above, we must conclude that the ritual interpretation of the special elements of the Passover meal which we have described was the occasion for the interpretation which Jesus gave the bread and the wine at the Last Supper."²⁷

22 John 13:29

23 Jeremias, p. 54

24 Jeremias, p. 55

25 Deut. 16:3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, *even* the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

26 Jeremias, pp. 56-60

27 Jeremias, pp. 60-61

Timing of the Crucifixion

If the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, the most likely time for the Last Supper would agree with Jaubert's speculation of Tuesday evening, but for completely different reasons, although Wednesday evening could also be theoretically possible. However, if the Last Supper was a Passover meal, the timing of the meal and crucifixion is set in stone. John writes, "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away."²⁸

If the Last Supper was a Passover meal, then Jesus was crucified on the day portion of 15th of Nisan because the Passover meal was always served the night before. The Christ would have died on first day of Unleavened Bread, one of the seven annual Sabbaths. The next day had to be a weekly Sabbath according to John 19:31 if Christ was crucified on the fifteenth of Nisan. Therefore if the Last Supper was a Passover meal, then it was eaten Thursday night at the beginning of the 15th of Nisan, Jesus was crucified, died and was put in the tomb on Friday, the 15th of Nisan and he arose long before sunrise on the 17th of Nisan. No other chronology works if the Last Supper was a Passover.

Tradition holds that Christ was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday. The great musical Fiddler on the Roof portrays traditions as wonderful things. While Jesus was on earth he often attacked tradition as being ungodly. But traditions are neither wonderful nor bad by themselves, but must be taken in context. Jesus did not attack all tradition, just those that perverted the will of God by twisting and turning and building walls around the law of God. Although the Good Friday, Easter Sunday tradition does go back hundreds and hundreds of years, as will be shown, this chronology does not seem to match the chronology nor the prophecies in scripture.

Three against One

If the gospel of John had never been written, it is highly unlikely that there would be any question raised about the Last Supper being a Passover meal. The synoptics, taken as a whole, would focus the rest of the events of the Old and New Testament through the prism of the Last Supper as the Passover. Many critics have focused on three witnesses versus one, the synoptics versus John. However, even this simplistic analysis fails when all four gospels accounts are harmonized against each other, as will be shown.

28 John 19:31

The Last Supper was not a Passover

CHAPTER

36

The Last Supper was not a Passover Meal

The gospels refer to the Passover twenty times during the last week of Jesus' life. Although the vast majority of these references are to the generic time frame of Unleavened Bread, supporters of the Last Supper being a Passover meal continue to point at the volume of references, not what was actually being referenced. This leads to all kinds of additional assumptions. There is no mention of a lamb during the Last Supper, but if it was a Passover meal it had to be present. Although Casey assumes the women would be present at the Last Supper if it were a Passover meal, they are never mentioned as being present in any of the gospel accounts, as Welker points out.

- b. The Passover meal is a familial celebration, while at Jesus' meal "the women who followed him to Jerusalem are not present."
- c. John and Paul support a chronology according to which "Jesus died on Friday, 14 Nisan, before the beginning of the feast of the Passover (at sundown)".
- d. Most importantly, Theisen and Merz name a multitude of indices for the (pre-) Markan passion story which point to Jesus' condemnation and death before the festival. For example:
 - Mark 14:1-2: It was the will of Jesus' opponents that he die before the festival;
 - Mark 15:6: The Passover amnesty for Barabbas;
 - Mark 15:42: The dating of the crucifixion on a "day of preparation": i.e., the day before the Sabbath;
 - Mark 15:46: Joseph of Arimathea bought a linen cloth in order to bury Jesus, which would hardly have been possible on the Sabbath.¹

Green et. al. list other objections to the Last supper being a Passover. "First, no mention is made of the Passover lamb. Second, the word used for 'bread' in the account is *artos*, the usual word for leavened bread, which could not be used to designate unleavened bread. Third, the four cups used in the traditional Jewish celebration of the Passover are not mentioned."² We know that Green et. al. reject the argument that *artos* (bread) had to be leavened bread, as well they should, but if the bread had been referred to as matzos then there would be very little doubt

1 Welker, Michael, *What Happens in Holy Communion*, trans., Hoffmeyer, John F, Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing, 2000, p. 50

2 Green, Joel B., McKnight, Scot, I. Marshall, Howard, *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, p. 446

that this Last Supper was a Passover meal. *Artos* could have been leavened, unleavened or even raisin bread because *artos* is the generic term for bread in Greek and the context must determine what kind of bread it is referring to. If the Last Supper was a Passover meal, then the *artos* was unleavened, as scripture dictates.³ If it was not a Passover meal, it may or may not have been leavened bread because unleavened bread was served with meals, as was leavened bread.

If the issue of what kind of bread was eaten with the Last Supper is to remain unsettled, and scripture dictates it must because the context of the meal is all that can determine what kind of bread was eaten, then perhaps a look at why the priests were afraid of contamination can help with a harmonization of these two scriptures.

It was a danger of the priesthood that they might incur ritual contamination too close to an important ceremony to be able to purify themselves again and preside over the ceremony. Most types of impurity required waiting until sundown to return to purity. It would seem the chief priests were concerned about entering a Gentile barracks where they might encounter a number of causes of impurity, possibly even a corpse.

The time was in the morning and the priests would be offering “the passover” that afternoon. There would be no intervening sundown to give time for a return to purity. And should the cause of impurity be contamination by a corpse, the period to wait for purity would be seven days, even if there was no direct contact but only proximity under the same roof (Num. 19).

The problem this causes for the idea of the Last Supper being a Passover Seder is obvious. The apparent meaning of John 18:28 is that the lambs for the Passover Seder had not yet been slaughtered and that the priests wanted to keep themselves pure for the Seder (but see Part 3 in which I explain this conundrum). If that is the meaning of John 18:28, then the Last Supper either could not be a Passover Seder or Yeshua and the disciples had to be on a different calendar than the temple officials.⁴

The Passover was the most important sacrifice of the year and high priest and his son-in-law had reputations to uphold. Even if the ritual impurity the priests were afraid of would have ended at sunset, think of the indignity of taking part in a Passover, the most important sacrifice of the year, the only sacrifice that an individual could perform, and these priests would have to eat a Passover lamb that someone else had sacrificed. They would have to eat this Passover, not killed with their own hands, because they were working with gentile occupiers to kill a man many, even in the Sanhedrin, considered to be a prophet, although like most prophets before him, a man they viewed as dangerous to the current order of things. This author believes it was far more important for Annas and Caiaphas to take part in the Passover, with a sacrifice that they had killed with their own hands, then to take part in the sacrifices on the first day of Unleavened Bread. Although this is not the strongest point for the Last Supper not being a Passover meal, it begins to lay the groundwork.

3 Ex. 12:8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it.

4 Leman, Derek, Passover and the last supper, part 2, URL- <http://derek4messiah.wordpress.com/2009/03/10/pass-over-and-the-last-supper-part-2/>

Harmonizing the Synoptics with John

CHAPTER

37

Harmonizing the Synoptics with John

Problems with Jeremias' hypothesis

A complete analysis of Joachim Jeremias' hypothesis that the Last supper was a Passover meal is listed in chapter 36. Although Mr. Jeremias's research is sound and is almost always cited by scholars who believe the Last Supper was a Passover meal, the vast majority of the evidence is circumstantial. Rebuttals of his fourteen points are listed below.

The Last Supper did take place in Jerusalem, as all four gospel accounts confirm. It took place in the upper room where the disciples were told to make ready for the upcoming Passover.¹ As Jeremias correctly points out,² the Passover had to be consumed in Jerusalem. If the Last Supper was a good bye meal served the day before the Passover meal, it would have taken place in the same room where the disciples believed the Passover would be consumed the next evening. This was the room that had been prepared for the entire feast season, including the day before the Passover, so the location of the Last Supper does not reveal it had to be a Passover.

Even Jeremias states that the room being readily available is inconclusive evidence.³ Although Mr. Jeremias is no doubt correct that meals were generally not eaten at night,⁴ this does not mandate the Last Supper being a Passover meal because there is another reason the Last Supper was eaten at night. Casey correctly points out the secrecy involved in locating the upper room, most probably because of all the excitement caused by the death and resurrection of Lazarus and Jesus' dramatic entry into Jerusalem a few days before.⁵ Jesus and his disciples deliberately arrived in Jerusalem just before the Last Supper, whether it was a Passover or not, to keep their location hidden from the Jewish leadership. So although Mr. Jeremias has a valid point that the timing of the Last Supper was most unusual if it was not a Passover meal, he is not correct when he states that the only answer for the late timing of the meal is that it must have been a Passover.

1 Mark 14:15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.
Luke 22:12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

2 Jeremias, p. 43

3 Jeremias, p. 44

4 Jeremias, p. 45

5 John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Jeremias' contention that the meager size of the gathering at the Last Supper, although mimicking the size that should be gathered for Passover, must make it a Passover meal is debatable when we remember that Jesus knew this would be his last meal on earth. He knew he had essential instructions to pass onto his closest disciples and friends.⁶ As Jeremias shows,⁷ Jesus often could not even eat because of the crowds, so it should not be surprising that Jesus would chose to have his last supper with a small group of close associates for privacy he needed.

Although Jeremias is almost certainly correct that the Passover would have required its participants to recline,⁸ even he lists numerous instances when Jesus and the other disciples ate meals while they were reclined.⁹ There were numerous festival meals, like weddings or the annual feasts as well as meals served in the open. Another reason for eating the last supper in a reclining position if the Last Supper were not a Passover meal is they were eating it in the upper room which would have been prepared for the Passover meal the next evening. Therefore eating the Last Supper while reclining was not as unusual as Mr. Jeremias concludes because there is no doubt the Last Supper was a special meal that occurred in a room prepared for the Passover meal.

Mr. Jeremias most grievous mistake in his analysis of the Last Supper was to take Jesus' words about the importance of serving one another, which he exemplified by the foot washing ceremony,¹⁰ and to extrapolate those sayings into the disciples being in a state of levitical cleanness is. Other scholars, like Gill and Barnes doubt that Passover observance required levitical cleanliness.¹¹ Even if levitical cleanliness was a traditional requirement to partake of the Passover at the time of Jesus, Jesus had already condemned this Pharisaical practice. Matthew wrote, "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?"¹² This very weak point can and should be dismissed from the analysis of what the Last Supper was because Jesus had already rejected it.

The breaking of the bread during the meal was indeed unusual, but the entirety of the Last Supper was unusual. Jesus is again talking about his disciples partaking of his body. When he had explained about the bread and wine being his blood and body that must be partaken of a year earlier in Capernaum many of his disciples were offended¹³ and said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?"¹⁴ Jesus is again telling them that he is going to die and they need to be prepared for that, but again they did not understand what he was saying to them.¹⁵ Therefore

6 John 15:12-17

7 Jeremias, p. 47

8 Jeremias, pp. 48-9

9 Jeremias, pp. 48-9

10 John 13:4-17

11 Barnes, Albert, Barnes Notes on the New Testament, From E-Sword notes on John 13:10

12 Matt. 15:2-3

13 John 6:35-52

14 John 6:60

15 John 16:1-8, Matt 26:31-5

having Jesus orchestrate yet another unusual event to get his disciples attention should be a possible explanation for having the bread broken at an unusual time during the meal.

According to Jeremias drinking wine was reserved for special occasions in the Middle East at the time of Christ and this author concurs.¹⁶ However, this was a special occasion. Deuteronomy 12:13-8 shows that during the three feast seasons you were supposed to bring your tithe, which specifically included wine,¹⁷ and consume it during the feast season. Anyone who has actually kept these days as a pilgrimage feast would understand that all the meals are special, especially when you share them with friends. Jesus and the disciples would have had their tithe and almost certainly stored it where they were going to eat the Passover.¹⁸ Also, if the Last Supper was not a Passover and Jesus needed to repeat the lesson of John 6 for his disciples, he would have had wine accessible because he knew this was the last meal he would have.

Jeremias' contention that white and black wine would have been more common than red wine may be true,¹⁹ but Jesus knew this would be his last meal with the disciples. He made all the arrangements for this meal, including having red wine ready to go with the meal. Jeremias' earliest evidence that red wine was required at the Passover dates to 150 A.D. and he infers this must come from an earlier tradition.²⁰ However, many, many traditions come into being or changed dramatically, especially with the Passover ceremony, after the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. So the contention that red wine must be served at the Passover at the time of Christ is nothing more than an unsubstantiated tradition. The most likely reason for Jesus having red wine served at the Last Supper was because he knew he was going to teach the disciples about the ordinance of the bread and wine becoming the symbols of his upcoming sacrifice.

Jeremias mistakenly uses one of the strongest points against the Last Supper being a Passover meal as a proof that it was a Passover meal. As shown earlier, Matthew²¹, Mark²² and Luke²³ all depict the disciples being sent to prepare for the feast. Judas' exit from the upper room in John 13:29 raised the question among the disciples whether they had forgotten something they would need or if Judas was just going to give alms to the poor.²⁴ If the Last Supper was a Passover, then this was the biggest night of the year in Jerusalem. It was the one time a year, and for many pilgrims, the one time in their life, that they were able to make a sacrifice to God. Clearly

16 Jeremias, p. 50-1

17 Deut. 12:17 Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand:

18 Matt. 26:17-9, Mark 14:12-4, Luke 22:8-13

19 Jeremias, p. 52

20 Jeremias, p. 53

21 Matt. 26:17-9

22 Mark 14:12-4

23 Luke 22:8-13

24 John 13:29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

the meal was well under way long before Judas left. If the Last Supper was a Passover, the Passover meal would have been well underway for all of Jerusalem. How could Judas be expected to find an open merchant when the Passover meal was being consumed? It may be true that according to Jewish tradition the ordinances for an annual Sabbath did not come into effect until sunrise of the day portion of the 15th of Nisan,²⁵ but that is not what scripture requires. Leviticus states, “In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.”²⁶ The Hebrew word for servile is “*abodah adodah*”, which is Strong’s word 5656.²⁷ As Barnes correctly notes, servile is, “literally, no work of labor, no work that belongs to one’s worldly calling, such as labor in agriculture or handicraft.”²⁸ To insinuate that the disciples thought the Messiah would send one of them out to have a merchant perform servile work on the annual Sabbath should be unthinkable. It is a totally untenable proposition for this author. Yet John writes that some of the disciples thought Judas might be going out to buy supplies, again showing John’s depiction that the Last Supper was not being a Passover meal.

The tradition of giving alms to the poor, especially on Passover, is biblical. But Jeremias’ suggestion that Judas’ departure is evidence that the Last Supper was a Passover is negated because John clearly writes the disciples did not know if Judas was giving alms or sent out to get last minute goods that they may have missed.

Although Jeremias is most certainly correct that the singing of hymns was not common at normal meals, as some scholars have suggested, he never proves that singing a song was common at the end of the Passover meal.²⁹ Therefore this point has absolutely no bearing on the nature of what type of meal the Last Supper was.

It is true that Jesus did not return to Bethany on the night of the Last Supper. The question that should be asked is why he did not return according to the gospel accounts? Jesus did not return because he went to where Judas was going to betray him. It is certainly true that the Mount of Olives is in the extended city of Jerusalem during Passover.³⁰ However going to the Mount of Olives rather than Bethany is simply an absence of proof. If Jesus had returned to Bethany after the Last Supper there would be no doubt the Last Supper was not a Passover meal. But simply because Jesus went to the spot where he knew he would be betrayed and that spot happened to still be in Jerusalem has no real bearing on the what kind of meal the Last Supper was.

Jeremias’ exegesis of the Passover haggadah will be examined in detail with the events of the Last Supper. Jeremias believes this is the strongest point in his argument and this author agrees with him. However, it is again circumstantial evidence and needs to be viewed in that context.

25 Jeremias, p. 54

26 Lev. 23:7

27 Strong’s 5656 From H5647; *work* of any kind: - act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, ministering (-try), office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

28 Barnes Notes on Lev. 23:7 from e-sword

29 Jeremias, p. 55

30 Jeremias, p. 55

Other Objections the to the Last Supper being a Passover

Again, there is no lamb mentioned during the Last Supper. It is true that this is an argument from silence and is thus a weak argument but is nevertheless striking that there is no mention of a Passover lamb by Jesus as he gave his final instruction to his disciples if it was sitting right in front of them. Jesus uses the bread and the wine to represent his upcoming sacrifice. But if the Passover lamb, which foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Messiah for fourteen hundred years, was sitting there on the table and being consumed, it seems odd that Jesus never chose to mention it.

Again, the Passover was a family meal. There are no women mentioned being present, yet Jesus' own mother must have been in the vicinity because she was at the foot of the cross the next afternoon when her son was crucified. It seems very odd that Jesus would exclude his own mother from a meal that was commanded to be a family observance from the beginning.³¹ Again, it is possible that his mother and others may have been at the meal, but there can be no question that their presence was never mentioned.

Three against One?

If the gospel of John did not exist, there would be no doubt that a harmonization of the three synoptic gospels would portray the Last Supper as a Passover meal. In like manner, if the three synoptic gospels did not exist, there would be no doubt that the Last Supper occurred the day before the Passover. It has been assumed the harmonization process will be three to one, but this is not the case when each gospel is examined separately.

A harmonization of Matthew with John leaves questions whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal or not. Clearly a harmonization of Luke with John gives rise to the same problem. However, if Mark is harmonized with John in the absence of Matthew and Luke a different conclusion is reached.

Harmonizing Mark with John

As has been shown earlier in the this book, and as most scholars admit, an examination of John in the absence of the synoptics clearly depicts the Passover occurring the evening after Jesus was crucified. Thus the crucifixion took place on the 14th of Nisan according the gospel of John.

According to John 11:53-57,³² after Jesus had the audacity to resurrect Lazarus, the chief priests and Pharisees wanted to know where Jesus was so they could put him to death as soon as possible. John 12:1 places the time of this agreement between the priests and the Pharisees occur-

31 Ex. 12: 43-7

32 John 11:53-7 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples. And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew *it*, that they might take him.

ring six days before the Passover.³³ However, Jesus stymied their plans by hiding in Ephraim and they could not find him.³⁴ Mark writes, “After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.”³⁵ So during the intervening four days the chief priests and the Pharisees apparently had a change of heart. Although the leaders of the Jewish religion at the time had no qualms about killing an innocent man, they feared the reaction of all the pilgrims in Jerusalem for Passover over putting an innocent man, who was widely perceived to be a great prophet, to death.

Mark was written approximately twenty years after the crucifixion of Jesus. Mark felt it was important to include the fact that the leaders of the Jewish religion did not want to have Jesus crucified during the days of Unleavened Bread. According to the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, “rather, not during the feast; not until the seven days of unleavened bread should be over.”³⁶ Of course the priests were taken by surprise with Judas’ offer to betray Jesus and decide to take him up on his offer and even promised him money for his betrayal of Jesus.³⁷ Nowhere does Mark explain why it was now okay to kill Jesus during the days of Unleavened Bread. When Mark is harmonized with John, the reason for Mark never explaining the why the chief priests apparently changed their minds yet again is because they did not. They had a chance to kill Jesus before the feast and Mark and John’s combined chronology of the last days of Jesus agree that they did kill him before the feast.

Jesus is betrayed shortly after the Last Supper by Judas and is taken away to the high priest during a fairly cold night. When the priests are done with him, they send Jesus to Pilate, according to Mark’s account.³⁸ Pilate is so impressed by Jesus that he apparently tried to have Jesus released as a feast gift to the Jews. Mark records it as, “now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.”³⁹

John records these same events. “Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.”⁴⁰ As has already been argued, although proponents of the Last Supper being a Passover meal portray the sacrifice in John 18:28 as a Khagigah sacrifice, it is far more likely John 18:28 refers to the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.

33 John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

34 John 11:54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

35 Mark 14:1-2

36 Jamieson, Robert, Fausset, A.R., and Brown, David, *Commentary on the New Testament*, Commentary on Mark 14:2, e-sword

37 Mark 14:10-11 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

38 Mark. 14:41-15:5

39 Mark 15:6

40 John 18:28

John continues his recollection of the events depicted in Mark 15 when he writes, “And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.”⁴¹

There is a seamless harmonization of the events surrounding the Last Supper and the crucifixion of Jesus between Mark and John. They write the Last Supper occurred on the early part of the 14th of Nisan, the day before the first day of Unleavened Bread, . The only verse in Mark that at first glance is not in harmonious agreement with John is Mark 14:12. “And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?”⁴² However, the passover was not killed on the first day of Unleavened Bread. So what was Mark trying to convey to his readers?

Because the Passover had to be sacrificed on the 14th of Nisan, Mark 14:12 has to be stating the 13th of Nisan was rapidly drawing to a close and what was commonly referred to as the first day for the feast of Unleavened Bread because it was the preparation for it, was coming upon them. An old A.C acquaintance, a person whose linguistic skills have been very helpful in the completion of this book, wrote to a scholarly resource, B-Greek@lists.ibiblio.org about the correct meaning of the Greek verb *ethuon*, translated as killed in Mark 14:12. His query was, “In Mark 14:12 (*KAI TH PRWTH hHMER A TWN AZUMWN, hOTE TO PASCA ETHUON...*), how certain can we be that ETHUON was meant either as a normal progressive imperfect (‘when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed’) or as a customary, or iterative, imperfect (‘when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb’).” Carl W. Conrad, retired from the Department of Classics at the University of Washington replied, “I would think the sense of customary practice is the only appropriate sense here, ‘when they would sacrifice ...’”⁴³

Thus, fifty years after Jesus was crucified John wrote that the chief priests and the Pharisees were so upset when Jesus resurrected Lazarus that they wanted to kill him right away. Mark, writing twenty to thirty years before John, stated that they had changed their minds during the intervening days and decided to wait until after the feast of Unleavened Bread was finished because they did not want the crowds to riot. But both Mark and John write the Jewish leadership could not turn down the gift of Judas’ betrayal, perhaps afraid he might have a change of heart after the week of Unleavened Bread had elapsed. With Judas’ and Pilate’s assistance the Jewish leadership succeeded in crucifying Jesus and got him off the cross before the Sabbath started.⁴⁴ Jeremias dismisses Mark 14:1-2 with the statement, “how do we know that the deci-

41 John 19:12-16

42 Mark 14:12

43 Conrad, Carl W. e-mail dated, March 19, 2009

44 John 19:31-42

sion of the Sanhedrin was carried out? It was, after all, reached before Judas's offer to play the traitor, which provided an unexpected opportunity to arrest Jesus during the feast."⁴⁵ Jeremias and others who contend that the Last Supper was a Passover miss the fact that all of Mark 14 was written with 20 years of retrospection. Mark and John wrote that number of the disciples knew that the Sanhedrin wanted to kill Jesus when he resurrected Lazarus. The gospel accounts portray the Sanhedrin as wanting to complete their plan as soon as possible.⁴⁶ They didn't think they could kill Jesus before the feast, so they decided to do it as soon as possible after the feast ended.⁴⁷ The gospel accounts of John and Mark reveal that Judas' offer made it possible for them to kill Jesus before the feast and they decided to take advantage of this offer. Both gospels show the Sanhedrin's plan was successful and they removed Jesus from the cross before the first day of Unleavened Bread. Therefore both John and Mark's gospels place the Last Supper on the early 14th.

The release of Barabbas

Jeremias, while playing devil's advocate by portraying the Last Supper as not being a Passover meal, inadvertently clearly and concisely shows another reason why the Last Supper was not a Passover meal. "In favour of the Johannine chronology Pes. 8.6 has been adduced: 'They may slaughter (the Passover lamb)... for one whom they (the authorities) have promised to release from prison.' This regulation has been referred to the Passover amnesty (Mark 15:6 par.; John 18:39), and it has been argued that this amnesty must have come in time for the prisoners to take part in the passover meal. This would support the Johannine chronology, according to which the trial before Pilate took place before the Passover evening, against the synoptic chronology, according to which the Passover meal had already been held on the previous evening. Although this consideration is one that has to be taken seriously, it does have a weak point: it is by no means certain that Pes 8.6 refers to the Roman Passover amnesty."⁴⁸ Even Jeremias admits the granting of the amnesty most likely occurred on daylight portion the 14th of Nisan, before the Passover meal, but after the Last Supper. Again, a harmonization of Mark with John agrees the amnesty that led to the release of Barabbas occurred on the 14th of Nisan. Jeremias contends that this amnesty held only for Jewish prisoners and not for those held in Roman captivity. However, John writes, "But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?"⁴⁹ John definitely makes it appear Pilate is referring to the Jewish custom of Pes. 8:6. If Pilate is following the Passover ordinance of Pes. 8.6, then even Jeremias contends that the Last Supper was most likely not a Passover meal. Of course Jeremias does not believe the release of Barabbas is the fulfillment of the Jewish custom of Pes. 8.6, but what other Jewish custom could Pilate have been referring to? Again both Mark and John depict the crucifixion occurring on the day light portion of the 14th of Nisan.

45 Jeremias, p. 71

46 John 11:47-53

47 Mark 14:1-2

48 Jeremias, p. 73

49 John 18:39

John harmonized with Matthew and Luke

As was shown earlier in this chapter, Mark shamelessly harmonizes with John to depict the Last Supper as not being a Passover meal. Such harmonization is not as easy with Matthew and Luke. To help with this harmonization, we need to put the gospel of John in its proper context.

Although most current scholarship has Mark being written before Matthew and Luke, the early church fathers agreed Matthew was written first and this author's general preference is to agree with the primary sources rather than disregard them simply because these sources disagree with the standard theories about the Q document. Matthew, Mark and Luke were all written between 50 and 65 A.D., about the same time that books began to be the common form of written information rather than scrolls. The book of John was written 20 to 30 years after the last of the synoptic gospels was written. John wrote for a very different audience than the authors of the synoptics not only because Jerusalem had been destroyed, fulfilling many of Jesus' prophecies, but the church now apparently consisted of more gentiles than Jews.

The structure of the gospel of John, after the prologue, is centered on three consecutive Passovers, with the final Passover getting the most attention. The most striking thing about this final Passover, at least for this author, is how it seems to fill in the gaps that the three synoptics omit. All four gospels tell the story of one of the disciples cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant, but only John provides the information that not only was it Peter who did the cutting, but informs the reader that the servant's name is Malchus.⁵⁰ The synoptics concentrate on the meaning of the bread and the wine during the Last Supper, but John does not even mention them in his gospel. John emphasizes the Christ teaching his disciples how to be servants of God with the foot washing ceremony, yet this event is not even mentioned in the synoptics. John is the only one who mentions what the disciples thought when Judas left the Last Supper in John 13:29. All of the synoptics depict the failure of the disciples at the garden while Jesus prayed just they mentioned the wine and bread ceremony, but again an event described in detail in the synoptic is not mentioned in John. Only John depicts Jesus being examined by Annas, yet he barely mentions Jesus' questioning by Caiaphas, again most likely because this interview is covered in detail in the synoptics.⁵¹ Matthew, Mark and Luke all describe the incredible event of the veil being rent, yet John excludes this initiation of the New Covenant, just as he excluded mentioning the symbols of the wine and bread at the Last Supper, again almost certainly because they were so thoroughly covered in the synoptics. John is the only gospel to show how Jesus spent most of the evening of the Last Supper preparing the disciples for the shock of his death. John depicts Christ's outgoing love and friendship as one of his last acts on earth and apparently sees no reason to show the frailty of the disciples, again most likely because the three synoptics had already clearly shown this.

⁵⁰ Matt. 26:51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.

Mark 14:47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Luke 22:50 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

John 18:10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

⁵¹ John 18:12-23, Matt. 26:57-68, Mark 14:53-65, Luke 22:63-65

This author believes the structure of John was chosen to emphasize the importance of the Passover season, thus emphasizing the role of Jesus as the true Passover. The structure of the gospel of John also appears as though it were filling the gaps of information not written in the synoptics, even going so far as to correct mistaken traditions derived from the synoptics. At the very end of the gospel of John, the apostle John corrects a mistaken belief about a saying of Christ delivered to him and Peter. In John 21:20-2, Peter asks the Christ what was going to happen to John and Jesus said it was none of Peter's business if John was to stay alive until his return.⁵² This statement led to the tradition that John would not die before Jesus returned. John corrects this mistaken notion by writing, "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"⁵³ John then finishes his gospel by stating that everything he had written was true and he only chose the highlights for his gospel.⁵⁴ John's gospel also appears to be written to correct the mistaken notion that the Last Supper was a Passover meal, which would mean that Jesus could not have been sacrificed at the same time the Passover lambs were being sacrificed in the temple.

Given the structure of John and how he emphasizes the Passover, it seems highly unlikely that John 19:14 is referring to the preparation for the weekly Sabbath. John wrote, "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!"⁵⁵ Westcott writes, "the Preparation of the Passover *might* mean the *Friday in the Pashal week*; but it seems incredible, if we take into consideration the significance of St. John's dates, that the Evangelist should reckon by the week and not by the symbolic feast, of which he is recording the fulfillment. In connection with the whole narrative, 'the preparation of the Passover' cannot mean anything but 'the Preparation *for* the Passover,' or in other words the 14th Nisan, the eve of the Paschal supper, which was eaten at the beginning of the 15th Nisan, according to the Jewish reckoning, i.e. after sunset of the 14th, according to our own."⁵⁶

Luke 22:15 gives great strength to the theory that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. But even if there were no other evidence of how to harmonize Luke 22:15 with John 18:28, this author would tend to favor John's and Mark's chronology because John was apparently written to fill in gaps and answer questions raised by the three synoptic gospels, but as the next chapter of this book shows, there is even more evidence supporting the contention that the Last Supper was not a Passover Meal.

52 John 21:20-2 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

53 John 21:23

54 John 21:24-5 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

55 John 19:14

56 Westcott, Brooke Foss, *Introduction to the Gospels*, Cambridge, London, England, 1860, p. 315

**Additional
Evidence
for
Harmonization**

CHAPTER
38

Not Just John 18:28 versus Luke 22:15

Christians have one more verse that is essential in helping us harmonize the gospel accounts to determine what the Last Supper was. When the Pharisees asked Jesus for a sign, he said, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 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.”¹ Mark records the same saying when he writes, “the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”²

We know this saying must have been fairly well known to the priests and Pharisees because they distorted it at Jesus’ trial, accusing him of stating he could rebuild the temple in three days.³ John’s depiction of the events of Matthew 12:39-40 makes clear how this distortion came about. When the Pharisees ask for a sign, John writes that Christ answered them by saying, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.”⁴ Thus the three days and three nights of Matthew 12:40 are essential and well known to both the disciples and even the Pharisees and referred to by the generic phrase in or after 3 days.

After Jesus was dead and in the tomb, the Pharisees had a sickening remembrance. The very thing that they had distorted to accuse Jesus of came to their memories. They scuttled back to Pilate. “Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Sir, we remember that deceiver said, while he was yet alive,

1 Matt 12:39-40

2 Mark 8:31

3 Matt. 26:61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.
Matt. 27:40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.
Mark 15:29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

4 John 2:19-22

After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.”⁵ First the Pharisees came to Pilate on the day after the preparation, the day after the crucifixion. They went to ask this favor of their gentile governor on either the first day of Unleavened Bread or the weekly Sabbath, depending upon when Jesus was crucified. They wanted a watch placed on the tomb for 3 days and that watch was there until some time Saturday night when the angel of the lord descended with a great quaking of the earth and lightning. If the Last Supper was a Passover meal, the day after the preparation in Matthew 27:62 was a weekly Sabbath and the Roman guards would have been at the tomb for only a few hours before the resurrection. It is far more likely the Jewish leadership visited Pilate on the 15th of Nisan, two days before the resurrection rather than just a few hours before it. Again, if the day after the crucifixion was a weekly Sabbath, it seems likely Matthew would have written that, but instead he emphasizes the Passover by stating it was the day after the preparation.

Many atheists and apologists have suggested that Jesus’ body was stolen by the disciples rather than be resurrected. Matthew 28:12-5 paints a story of the origins of this story with the Romans guards being part of this plot when they were paid off and protected from Pilate’s wrath. If the Roman guards were at the tomb for only a few hours, it seems ridiculous that a small, cowardly band of rag tag Galileans could have overcome Roman guards and removed a dead body. The scriptural narrative makes far more sense with even the mighty Romans guards being scared out of their senses when God shook the earth and sent his angels to His son’s body.⁶ This author believes it is unlikely the Roman legionnaires would have accepted a cover story of a rag tag Jewish band stealing a body they were ordered to protect only a few hours after they arrived to protect it no matter how scared they were. It is far more likely these proud Roman legionnaires left their post after they were there for two days.

How long was Jesus in the Tomb?

The three day time period was obviously very important, not just because of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 12:40 or because of the watch placed on the tomb, but because there are numerous references to this time frame. The other verses that refer to this three day period are: Matthew 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27: 63, 64; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 13:32; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; John 2:19; Acts 10:40; 1 Corinthians 15:4. Most of these scriptures refer to a generic three day period, so the question most often asked is was Jesus in the tomb three days or three days and three nights?

⁵ Matt. 27:62-66 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, Saying, Sir, we remember that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

⁶ Matt. 28:2-4 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

Jesus said there was just one sign that he would give the Pharisees, but some question the exactness of this sign. This author knows that time was not counted to the second or minute in the Middle East two thousand years ago, thus Jesus did not mean that he would have to be in the grave for exactly 72 hours. That is why scriptural events are said to have occurred during the third hour or the sixth hour, not at 9:38 am. However, does the imprecise nature of Middle Eastern time reckoning two millennia ago allow for three days to mean three partial days? Could one full day (Saturday, both day light and dark portion) and a very short portion of daylight portion of Friday and a short portion of Sunday night, because Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1 and Luke 24:1 all depict Jesus as being risen long before sunrise, count as three days and three nights? Most scholars believe it does. “The *Jerusalem Talmud* quotes Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, who lived around A.D. 100, as saying: A day and night are an Onah [‘a portion of time’] and the portion of an Onah is as the whole of it’ (from *Jerusalem Talmud: Shabbath ix. 3*, as quoted in Hoehner, 1974, pp. 248-249, bracketed comment in orig.). Azariah indicated that a portion of a twenty-four hour period could be considered the same ‘as the whole of it.’ Thus, in Jesus’ time He would have been correct in teaching that His burial would last ‘three days and three nights,’ even though it was not three complete 24-hour days.”⁷

Supposedly complimenting scholarship that proposed that the crucifixion and resurrection occurred three days and three nights apart, but that Jesus was in the tomb from Friday night to Sunday morning is the statement made by Cleopas, the father of the apostle James and Jesus’ uncle through marriage, on the road, to his risen nephew, whom he did not recognize. Cleopas said, “Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.”⁸ Of course, the third day since this happened is a precise time frame like three days and three nights. After reading all four gospel accounts, there should be little doubt that the references to three days sprinkled through the gospel accounts refer to the sign or prophecy that Jesus gave in Matthew 12:40 not just because of the specificity of the sign, but also to the audience to which it was given. Thus Luke account included it to emphasize the three days and three nights mentioned in Jesus’ prophecy in Matthew 12:40.

Although most scholars rely on Azariah’s quote to justify a Good Friday, Easter Sunday scenario, there is a minority of scholars who disagree that Friday evening through early Sunday morning comprises three days and three nights. Scroggie is one of the leading scholars who disagrees with a Good Friday, Easter Sunday scenario when he states, “But when the number ‘nights’ is stated as well as the number ‘days,’ the expression ceases to be an idiom, and becomes

7 <http://www.apologeticspress.org/articles/570> Apologetics Press, Montgomery, Alabama, U.S.A., Hoehner, Harold W (1974), “Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ—Part IV: The Day of Christ’s Crucifixion,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 131:241-264, July

8 Luke 24:18-21

a literal statement of fact, and there were not three ‘nights’ between Friday evening and Sunday morning by any process of reckoning.”⁹ Scroggie continues,

The expression, ‘the third day,’ which occurs twelve times (Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 27: 64; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 9:22; 13:32; 18:33; 24:7, 21, 46; John 2:19; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor 15:4) might be part of three days, including nights, but the expressions ‘after three days,’ which occur five times (Matt. 27: 63; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; John 2:19), and ‘three days and three nights’ (Matt. 12:40), cannot possibly be so reckoned, but must mean three days, each being preceded by a night; and so what our Lord said in Matt. 12:40, cannot be explained by the Jewish use of the word *Onah*, but must mean just what it says, that Jesus was to be in the tomb for three days and three nights, a period which the Friday theory does not allow of.¹⁰

Uses of Three days and Three Nights

Scholars who uphold the Good Friday, Easter Sunday tradition and generally believe the Last Supper was a Passover meal obviously reject the notion that Matt. 12:40 really means three days and three nights. Besides using Eleazar ben Azariah’ quote, they state there are other scriptures with a phrase similar to three days and three nights which referring to parts of days, not complete days. The first example often cited is 1 Sam. 30:12, where a starving Egyptian is given water to drink and fed figs and raisins before he is capable of answering questions. “And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights.”¹¹ There is no indication that this was not a period of three days and three nights. If a normal man had gone without food or water from late Friday evening to early Sunday morning, would they have to be force fed before they could even be questioned, even in desert conditions? This author has fasted for a complete day, without any food or water for close to a 36-hour period (from bedtime on day one until waking on day three to break the fast) and although it is not comfortable, this author did not lose the ability to walk and talk and retrieve my own food. All indications are that the period time in 1 Samuel 30 is significantly longer than 36 hours and can not be used to support the idea that three days and three nights can be a time frame encompassing one full and one partial night.

The second example that is heinously used is the example of Jonah. “And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”¹² There are no other time references mentioned in Jonah. This is the verse the Christ refers to as a sign for himself. To suggest that there is any indication that three days and three nights in Jonah is a thirty hour period should be met with great skepticism, and every indication is it was a period of three full days and three full nights. Not exactly 72 hours, but a span of hours that could have lasted from the mid-sixties to the mid-eighties.

⁹ Scroggie, W. Graham, *A Guide to the Gospels*, Picering and Inglis, Ltd., 1948, p. 570

¹⁰ (Scroggie, p. 570)

¹¹ 1 Sam. 30:12

¹² Jonah 1:13

Esther 4:16 is the verse that is usually used to dismiss three days and three nights in Matthew 12:40 as an idiom, but this ignores the fact that not only is the phrase in a different language and different form, but also shows how little scholars understand about fasting today. Esther 4:16 states, “Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.” The phrasing in Hebrew is three days, night or day, and not three days and three nights as it is in the Greek. Even ignoring this difference, scholars use Esther 4:16 to define the three days and three nights of Matthew 12:40 as partial days because they contend Esther did not fast for three full days and three full night. Scripture states “Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king’s house, over against the king’s house; and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the entrance of the house.”¹³ Many scholars contend since Esther went to beseech the king’s favor on the third day that she must have meant that fasting for three days, night and day, are equivalent to parts of three days and three nights. However, Esther was fasting to humble herself before God and she asked the people of Israel to do the same. On the third day, almost certainly while she was still fasting, she put her life on the line and in the hands of God. To suggest that she and the people of Israel would have stopped fasting before she went to see the king ignores the reason for fasting and the context of the story of Esther. This author has no doubt Esther and all of Israel were still fasting and asking God for His help when she went to the king. Therefore the example of Esther should not be used to dismiss three days and three nights as an idiom.

The idea of three days and three nights being an idiom is unsupported by any of the scriptural examples used by those who support a Good Friday, Easter Sunday scenario. On the other hand, far too often those who reject the Good Friday tradition for the crucifixion of Jesus turn to John 11:9, where Jesus states, “are there not twelve hours in the day?”¹⁴ for justification of their beliefs. This author rejects using John 11:9 because time was not measured that precisely two thousand years ago. Using John 11:9 to support a non-Friday crucifixion can not be done because in John 11:9 Jesus was stating there was time for all things and he was doing what he was supposed to be doing when he was supposed to be doing it. Jesus is not stating that there were exactly twelve hours in a day. Although there are always twelve hours of daylight at the equator, even in Israel the longest days are just over fourteen hours long and the shortest are ten hours long. Therefore a day is not always twelve hours long in Israel and John 11:9 should not be used to try to prove Jesus was in the tomb for 72 hours.

Another reason to reject the Good Friday/ Easter Sunday scenario is that Scroggie also lists twenty items that supposedly took place between three p.m. and six p.m. on Friday afternoon if the Last Supper was a Passover meal on Thursday, the 15th of Nisan, because the weekly Sabbath would have started at almost exactly 6 p.m. during the general time of the spring solstice.

13 Est. 5:1 JPS

14 John 11:9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. The Jews ask Pilate to break the legs because of the upcoming Sabbath | John 19:31 |
| 2. Pilate sends someone from Jerusalem to Golgotha with a message | |
| 3. The soldier break the legs of the two thieves and pierce Jesus' side | John 19:32-4 |
| 4. After this, Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asks for the body | John 19:38
Mark 15:43 |
| 5. Pilate asks the Centurion if Jesus had been dead awhile | Mark 15:44 |
| 6. The Centurion had to find out how long Jesus had been dead,
probably by sending and receiving word from Golgotha | Mark 15:44-5 |
| 7. Joseph went to the market to buy fine linen, something that would
have taken some time just before an upcoming Sabbath, especially
if it was the 15 th , the start of Unleavened Bread | Mark 15:46 |
| 8. Joseph went to Golgotha with the linen and Pilate's permit | Matt. 27:59-60 |
| 9. Joseph and helpers of some kind take the body off the cross
and carries the body to his own tomb | Mark 15:46 |
| 10. Women from Galilee follow after Joseph | Luke 23:55 |
| 11. Joseph, with helpers, cleans up the body and puts it into
a single linen cloth without spices | Matt. 27:59
Mark 15:46
Luke 23:53 |
| 12. The body was laid in Joseph's new tomb | Matt. 27:60
Mark 15:46 |
| 13. The women watched, but did not help | Matt. 27:61 |
| 14. Joseph and others rolled a great stone across the entrance | Matt. 27:60
Mark 16:4 |
| 15. The women return to the city, seeing Jesus was not embalmed | Luke 23:55-6 |
| 16. Nicodemus comes with a great deal of expensive spice after
the women had left | John 19:39 |
| 17. The women bought and prepared embalming spices by grinding
and cooking them | Luke 23:56 |
| 18. Joseph, Nicodemus and others return back to the tomb from
wherever Nicodemus had found them. They roll back the great
stone, unwrap the body from the single linen cloth, then wrap the
body with linen strips and spices. They then wrap the whole body
in the single linen cloth and the head in a separate napkin | John 19:40
John 20:7 |
| 19. They then had to roll the great stone back into place | John 20:7 |
| 20. Very early on the first day of the week the women come to the tomb | Luke 24:1 ¹⁵ |

Besides this extensive list of things that had to be accomplished, Scroggie also finds additional information that suggests instead of the crucifixion occurring on Friday, it actually occurred on Wednesday. He writes,

By this calendar, instead of having three hours only, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, for the twenty events tabulated on p. 572, there were the three hours, from 3 p.m.

15 Scroggie, *A Guide to the Gospels*, pp. 572-3

to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, and the whole of Friday. Thursday and Saturday could not be used, both being Sabbaths.

If this calendar is correct, Joseph hurriedly buried Jesus' body on Wednesday, before 6 p.m., and he, with Nicodemus would embalm it on Friday. The markets being open on the Friday they and the women would be able to buy what spices they wanted.

Remarkable confirmation of their view that embalming was not done at the time the body of Jesus was buried, but much later, is found in the exact use of two words. In the passages which record the taking of the body from the Cross and wrapping it in a "linen cloth," the word, *sindon*, is used, which was once a piece of linen, and not several pieces (Matt. 27:59, Mark 15:46 (twice), 14:51, 52; Luke 23:53; but in the passages which tell of the embalming, the word *othonia* is used, which means a linen bandage, and in each occurrence it is in the plural, 'linen cloths' (*othonia*), and is associated with the aromatic (John 19:40; 20:5,6,7; Luke 24:12). The procedure was as follows:

On Wednesday, Nisan 14th, before 6 p.m., Jesus' body was taken from the Cross, wrapped in a linen sheet, and hastily buried. There it lay throughout Thursday, Nisan 15th, and the Passover Sabbath (*ed. note*-The first day of Unleavened Bread). On Friday, Nisan 16th, Joseph and Nicodemus went to the tomb, removed the *sindon*, and bandaged the limbs and body in linen cloths, *othonia*, with spices, with a separate piece for the head (John 20:6, 7).

Some who reject the Friday theory hold that the crucifixion was on the Thursday, and the Last Supper on the Wednesday. As long as a matter is arguable it should be kept in view and its evidence examined, and not a little can be said for the Thursday view, but the Friday theory cannot be maintained.

It has been well said: 'However the tradition of Good Friday may have arisen, it has been thoroughly proved that it is quite incompatible with a due consideration of the Gospel narratives. Moreover, it provides much capital for many forcible infidel arguments, by introducing many apparent contradictions, the blows from which the traditionalists try to parry by resorting to unsatisfactory shuffling sophisms, which undermine confidence in the solidity of the truth of the Word of God. Therefore those who love the Lord, not only with all their heart, but also, Jesus enjoins (Matt. 22:37, and Mark 12:30), with all their mind and are willing to have expounded unto them the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:26), and thus become enlightened, are compelled by the Spirit of truth (John 16:17) to abandon the tradition of Good Friday being the day on which our Saviour was crucified.'

Of course, what matters first and last is that Jesus died for us, and the day of His death in no way affects its virtue, but as students of and believers in the Scriptures we should endeavour to know the facts of any given matter, especially when a tradition which has been held for centuries exposes the records to the charge of being unreliable."¹⁶

Harold Hoehner's answer for Scroggie's argument is the same summation most scholars use. Hoehner states, "This view has not been widely accepted. It is not as strong as it might appear. First, it is based primarily on one verse of Scripture, namely, Matthew 12:40... Thus, the three days and three nights in Matthew 12:40 is an idiomatic expression."¹⁷ Hoehner mistakenly concludes that those who believe Matthew 12:40 is not idiomatic must believe it is a 72-hour period. Once Hoehner creates that straw man and states this means that Christ would have

¹⁶ Scroggie, *A Guide to the Gospels*, pp. 573

¹⁷ Hoehner, Harold W., *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, Zondervan, 1978, p. 68

been resurrected on the Sabbath, he states it must be wrong because Christ, “would have risen on the fourth day. But Christians celebrate it on the first day of the week (Acts 10:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2) and not on the Sabbath.”¹⁸ To supposedly support his point that the early Christian church observed a Sunday sabbath, Hoehner quotes from Acts 20:7, where Paul taught the disciples on the first day of week. However Acts 20:7 depicts the disciples coming together on that first day because Paul was leaving on the next day, not that they customarily came together on the first day. Paul’s directions to perform the work of placing goods in storage for the poor who needed them in 1 Corinthians 16:2 also does not support the practice of a Sunday sabbath because it is telling the Corinthians to work on that day. Therefore Hoehner has made the obvious scholarly mistake that most of his readers will readily agree with his assessment that Sunday is the Sabbath and thus dismiss Scroggie’s arguments because Scroggie questions the traditional view of Good Friday/Easter Sunday. Hoehner is also not being consistent in his arguments about days. If Wednesday near sunset to Saturday after sunset could be counted as the fourth day, as Hoehner suggests, then Friday near sunset to Saturday after sunset should be counted as the second day. Again, if you cannot be right, at least be consistent. As good a scholar as Hoehner is, and he is an excellent scholar, he lets his prejudice for the traditional view of Good Friday/Easter Sunday blind his judgment on this issue. Hoehner also totally ignores Scroggie’s study of the term cloth versus cloths in the gospel account’s that will be examined below.

As to Scroggie’s contention that there were just too many events to take place in a three hour period, Hoehner’s less than satisfying answer is, “it is true that many events occurred between Christ’s death and burial; but the list is not so great when one examines it, for several things could have been done simultaneously by various people. Also, some things could have been done before he actually died.”¹⁹ But Hoehner does not take into account the general shock of the crucifixion of Jesus. No one except Jesus and the Jewish leadership could have predicted that Jesus would be crucified the day after the Last Supper. Three days after he was laid in the tomb, his uncle still had problems believing Jesus was crucified.²⁰ Only the women and the apostle John are recorded as being at the crucifixion, so apparently the rest of the disciples had fled or were in hiding. Into this confused picture came Joseph and later Nicodemus. Hoehner’s contention that some of the events could have occurred earlier is ridiculous given the abruptness of the crucifixion and general disbelief of the disciples that Jesus would be crucified. And Hoehner’s contention that all of the events could have been done if there were enough people to carry them out is not born out by scripture.

The only mourners at the cross and the tomb were a few women along with John and later Joseph and Nicodemus. Could they have done all of the things listed in just 3 hours? Scroggie’s most logical answer is no. And his supposition is that the women did not know that Jesus was being embalmed by Joseph and Nicodemus, which is why they went to prepare embalming spices, is the first reasonable answer this author has seen to explain this perplexing juxtaposi-

18 Hoehner, p. 67

19 Hoehner, p. 67

20 Luke 24:15-34

tion. Scroggie's answer is that the Christ was crucified on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan and was resurrected at the very end of the 17th of Nisan or the very first part of the 18th of Nisan.

Scroggie is not alone in contending the crucifixion took place on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan. "Pinkston is typical of many Sabbath-keepers, believing Jesus was neither killed on a Friday, nor raised on Sunday. He believes Jesus was actually put to death on a Wednesday, and remained in the grave 72 hours until Saturday evening. When the women came to the tomb early Sunday, they found it empty, indicating Jesus arose prior to their arrival.

Even the late Rev. Jerry Falwell, a Sunday-keeper and chancellor of Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA., agreed with that timetable, telling World Daily Net in 2001, 'I personally believe He was crucified on Wednesday evening ... and rose after 6 p.m. Saturday evening.'²¹

Thursday Crucifixion

Westcott and others also do not believe that a Good Friday, Easter Sunday chronology can coincide with the three days and three nights of Matthew 12:40. But they also do not accept the idea of a Wednesday crucifixion. Westcott finds it very unusual that the chief priests and Pharisees are depicted as going to Pilate on the day after the preparation rather than on the Sabbath, thus he concludes that the Greek suggests it was indeed the annual holy day that had been prepared for, Nisan 15, the first day of Unleavened Bread.²²

Wescott also suggests that the flow of the story of the crucifixion along with Matthew 28:1, where the word Sabbaths is plural, suggests that there were two Sabbaths in a row, the first being the first day of Unleavened Bread followed by the weekly Sabbath. Wescott believed this is confirmed by John 19:31.²³ Hoehner write about a Thursday crucifixion, "The advocates point out that the Passover Sabbath on Friday followed immediately by the regular weekly Sabbath is supported by Matthew 28:1. One will notice in the Greek text that plural form of the word 'Sabbath' is used, and thus it should be translated 'at the end of the Sabbaths.'²⁴

Although a Thursday crucifixion does not fulfill the supposed 72-hour period that some Wednesday crucifixion supporters espouse, it does fulfill three days and three nights because there were two full days, two full nights, one partial day and one partial night.

Although this author has found no evidence of supporters of a Thursday crucifixion embracing Scroggie's list of twenty things that had to be done, they should. The buying of the cloth by Joseph, buying the spices by Nicodemus and the buying and preparation of the spices by the

21 Kovacs, Joe SABBATH VS. SUNDAY: THE REST OF THE STORY 'Deception': Christians war over worship day, Centuries-old clash continues over disputed commandment, World Daily Net, posted March, 16, 2008

22 Wescott, *Introduction to the Gospels*, p. 320

23 John 19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

24 Hoehner, p. 68

women could have taken place on Friday, the 15th of Nisan if Jesus was crucified on Thursday, the 14th. Although no normal work was supposed to take place on the annual Sabbaths, scripture clearly allows far more activities on these days as compared to the weekly Sabbath (with the obvious exception of atonement). The preparation of the dead for burial that Scroggie lists in items 16 to 19 may have occurred on Friday, the 15th of Nisan if Christ was crucified on Thursday.

Day of the crucifixion

This author supports a Wednesday crucifixion along the lines depicted by Scroggie because it seems to fit a harmonization of the gospels better than a Thursday crucifixion. However, this author also believes that a Thursday crucifixion fulfills the sign of Matthew 12:40 and the multiple references to three days. However, a Good Friday/Easter Sunday scenario is not acceptable. The only way the Last Supper could have been a Passover meal was if Christ was crucified on the 15th of Nisan and that 15th had to be a Friday, which makes null and void the sign of Matthew 12:40. Thus the harmonization of John with Mark, Scroggie's list of things that had to be accomplished after the crucifixion, and the sign of Matthew 12:40 leads this author to reject the possibility that the Last Supper was a Passover meal.

The Wine, Bread, and Footwashing

The Last Supper and Symbols

The vast majority of Christianity incorporates the symbols of the bread and the wine into their liturgy. The majority also incorporate the foot washing, although it is often done by an authority figure, like a Catholic priest, rather than the congregation. How should Christians incorporate this ceremony into the liturgy of the church, no matter which church, today?

The question of when and how Christians should partake of the symbols of the Last Supper should never be confused with the believer partaking of Jesus because the symbols are a shadow of what a Christian should be doing.¹ We know, as a Christians journey down the path of life that God has set before them, they will be putting on Christ.² But we also know that God created us as flesh and blood and we were created just the way that He wanted us.³ The creation story tells us that God also set aside physical events to be performed at certain times for the physical beings that He had just created.⁴ When Paul explains to the Colossians that the physical holy days were a shadow of what was to come, he was not stating they were bad things that should be discarded, but that Christians needed to strive to understand a spiritual God through the physical things that He had created and ordained for His physical children. Thus the partaking of the symbols, although a physical act, represent us striving to become closer to God the Father by putting on His son, Jesus the Messiah and Paul reminds us that we need think on the sacrifice of Jesus when we do partake of the symbols.⁵ If there was anything that mankind should be thankful for, it is the sacrifice of God's only begotten son to show us how much our Father in heaven loves us.

1 Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

2 Rom. 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.
Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

3 Gen 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

4 Gen. 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

5 1 Cor. 11:25-6 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

The Symbols

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.⁶

The wine as a symbol of Jesus' shed blood and the bread as a symbol of his broken body is a part of every Christian's life. The ceremony of partaking of the wine and the bread is obviously something that early Christians had inculcated into their liturgy according to the apostle Paul. Although Paul does not refer to the symbol of foot washing, the apostle John thought it important enough to include in the narrative the night the symbols of the wine and bread were explained to the disciples.

Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.⁷

The physical symbols of the bread and the wine were to remind Jesus' disciples throughout time of the sacrifice that he and the Father made for us. We are told the reason for this sacrifice is because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."⁸ Christ himself explains the symbolic washing of feet was not done to clean one another, but to remind them to serve one another.⁹ Christians are supposed to serve each other and those who are in need, just as Jesus served throughout his life and, ultimately, by his death.

6 1 Cor. 11:23-7

7 John 13:3-16

8 John 3:16

9 John 13:13-6

Washing Each Other's Feet

Serving is easy to preach and hard to perform. When do you give money to a beggar on the street and when don't you? When do you correct a neighbor's child and when do you just forgive their errant actions? When do you pick up the hitchhiker and when do you drive by? The obvious answer is you intervene when you can help, when you can serve, and you don't intervene when you would do more harm than good. But judging rightly which action will best serve your neighbor is often difficult and will sometimes lead to mistakes that actually hurt another's walk with God.

Scripture is clear that a Christian's path will involve service to others. Paul writes that as we proceed down that path, we will also symbolically partake of the blood and body of the true *pesah* lamb, Jesus the Christ, who was sacrificed for us from the foundations of the world by partaking of bread and wine.¹⁰ Less clear is if we should also wash each other's feet when we partake of the symbols of Jesus' sacrifice for us, although John stresses this action during the Last Supper.

Even the disciples did not understand how to serve, even though they had been taught first hand by Jesus. When the mother of James and John asked, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."¹¹

Jesus told James and John that they would indeed come under a baptism of fire, just as Jesus did. He told them that they would indeed have to drink the cup of a very nasty death. But through all of it, they would have to serve, just as Jesus served, and that this service would be its own reward.

How and When are we to Drink of the Cup and Eat of the Bread?

Some believe the Last Supper was a Passover meal and the symbols were simply Christ expounding upon the bread and the wine and bitter herbs served at the Passover meal. Although

10 1 Pet. 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

Rev. 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

11 Matt. 20:21-8

Jesus may have been giving additional meaning to the bread and the wine served with the Passover meal at the Last Supper, the premise of this book disagrees with that scenario. However, if the premise of this book is incorrect and the Last Supper was a Passover meal served on Thursday evening, the 15th of Nisan, then the Christ was teaching how to add new meaning to the bread and wine served at future Passover meals. If the Last Supper was on the early 14th, then Jesus could not have been teaching that the symbols were to be incorporated into the Passover meal. Perhaps he was teaching a new meaning for the Jewish practice of the Kiddush, as some have speculated. Related to the Kiddush, it is possible that Jesus instituted a new practice, often called the Eucharist. Jesus also could have been instituting a new ceremony that took place on the early 14th of Nisan, which some call the Lord's Supper. Jesus could also have been explaining how the disciples were supposed to replace the physical sacrifice of the Passover lamb or goat with a ceremony thanking God for the sacrifice of the true Passover. Each of these possibilities will be examined in turn.

Symbols as a part of the Passover

This author believes the overwhelming evidence shows that the Last Supper was not a Passover haggadah. But if this author is mistaken, then Jesus could have been instructing the disciples on how the order and meaning of the celebration of the Passover needed to be changed once he, the true Passover lamb, was sacrificed for all of mankind. Just one year earlier, at the time of the Passover that preceded the Last Supper, Jesus had said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."¹² This saying was too hard for some of Jesus' disciples. The fact that John wrote that Jesus, during a Passover season, told all who wanted to be his disciples that they would have to symbolically partake of his blood and flesh, which depicted the sacrifice of Jesus, if they wanted to be raised at the last trump season appears to be no coincidence.

Does this mean that Christians should participate in a Passover haggadah on the 15th of Nisan, changing the meaning of some of the traditional Jewish rituals to match Christological symbols? Although this author does not condemn such practices in general because any reasonable scholar should realize scripture does not precisely define when and how we should partake of the symbols, there are certain portions of the Jewish Passover haggadah that this author feels Christians should not partake of.

Christians should realize that Jesus was not authorizing a Passover haggadah that was codified 200 years after his death. The Passover haggadah at the time of Jesus did not have many of the symbols at current Jewish Passover ceremonies. The burnt egg, supposedly representing the burnt offerings that were done in the temple, was added to the Passover haggadah long after the temple

¹² John 6:53-8

was destroyed in 70 A.D. The burnt shank bone of a lamb represents the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, something that was done in the temple, and the temple only, until 70 A.D. was obviously added long after the death of Jesus. The Jews know it is impossible to sacrifice a Passover lamb until there is a new temple or at least a new altar, so they do not perform a Passover sacrifice. Christians do not need one because the true Passover has been sacrificed for us. Red wine being drunk at the Passover haggadah is an ordinance instituted over 100 years after the Last Supper. The exact number of cups of wine that would have been consumed during a Passover haggadah at the time of Christ can be speculated about, but there is very little doubt that the cup to Elijah, the 5th cup, was added more than 100 years after the Last Supper and was added for the same reason the 12th of the 18 benedictions was added, to deny that Jesus was the messiah.

The cup to Elijah is the 5th cup poured at a traditional Passover haggadah. Instead of filling the cup of everyone at the table, only one cup is filled and placed at the head of the table to remind those taking part in the haggadah that all the promises made to the Jewish people are not yet fulfilled, especially the promise of the messiah. Jewish “tradition teaches that as history approaches the climactic era of universal peace and brotherhood, it will be Elijah the Prophet who announces the heralding of the messianic era.”¹³ Therefore those who set out the cup to Elijah are proclaiming that the messiah has not come. Many messianic Jews and other feast keepers re-interpret the cup to Elijah as being a cup for Jesus’ second coming. However, should Christians take a ceremony that states Jesus is not the messiah and try to transform it into something it is not just to uphold tradition? This author rejects the idea that the Christians should partake of a haggadah that includes the cup to Elijah.

Jesus talked about how another prophet, Isaiah, would view such traditions like the cup to Elijah in the gospel of Mark. “For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they came from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”¹⁴ It is incumbent for Christians to reject ungodly traditions.

The Talmud is often referred to as the oral law. Upon examination, it is layers of commentary about the Old Testament written by Jewish scholars over the ages. Of course every scholar has prejudices and biases, but the Talmud appears to endorse the biases and prejudices of the Pharisees, with the first portion of the Talmud, often referred to as the Mishna, being sealed around 200 A.D. Jesus had many negative things to say about the Pharisees and Sadducees (the Sadducees ceased to exist as a power after 70 A.D. because of the destruction of the temple, their

13 <http://www.mt.net/~watcher/elijahpassover.html>

14 Mark 7:3-9

base of power, and the execution of many of them by the Romans), but the 23rd chapter of the book of Matthew is often considered the definitive criticism of Pharisaic thought and actions. Although this author believes the Talmud is a very useful tool for doing historical research into scripture, this author does not believe it is any more authoritative than the Catholic Encyclopedia or the works of Luther and is just as biased in its own way. Instead this author has much greater respect for the Karaite version of Judaism. “Karaism is the original form of Judaism as prescribed by God in the Torah. Karaite Judaism rejects later additions to the Tanach (Jewish Bible) such as the Rabbinic Oral Law and places the ultimate responsibility of interpreting the Bible on each individual. Karaism does not reject Biblical interpretation but rather holds every interpretation up to the same objective scrutiny regardless of its source.”¹⁵

This author does not endorse the practice of Christians participating in a Jewish Passover haggadah and believes it is wrong for his family personally because of the Talmudic principles upon which the haggadah is built. Many of the haggadah’s practices were added centuries after Jesus became the true Passover. This author particularly rejects the cup to Elijah because it was added to declare that Jesus was not the messiah. But following the Karaite kerugma that each individual must interpret the bible, it is possible for a Christian to reach the conclusion that Jesus’ instructions about the wine and bread were meant to modify the Passover ceremony as it existed at his time. If a Christian does decide to follow a form of the Passover haggadah, this author would beseech his fellow Christians to examine each step of the haggadah carefully to determine what would Jesus do, especially when it comes the cup to Elijah. Although this author believes the weight of evidence points to a conclusion that the wine, bread and foot washing were not designed to be a part of a Passover haggadah for Christians today, this author and his family do partake of a special Passover meal at the end of the 14th of Nisan and beginning of the 15th of Nisan as a memorial for God watching over and protecting His called out people.

Were the symbols a Kiddush?

Traditionally the head of the house recites the Kiddush over a cup of wine immediately before the Sabbath or holiday meal. Following recitation of the Kiddush, each person sips wine from the Kiddush cup.¹⁶

Some in the churches of God who reject the notion that the Last Supper was a Passover believe it was a Kiddush. William Dankenbring writes,

Jesus gave the disciples bread, representing His body, and wine, representing His blood, that evening, as a special ceremony to do in remembrance of Him. Was this the Passover? No, it was not! This was done *before* the Passover. What was it, then? Modern Jews speak of it as the *Kiddush* or ‘Blessing of the bread and wine.’ It is an ancient tradition observed on Sabbaths and Holy Days, and often partaken of after synagogue services each Sabbath.

In truth, this practice dates back to the time of Abraham and Melchisedek! We read in Genesis 14, ‘And Melchisedek king of Salem brought forth *bread and wine*: and he

15 <http://www.karaite-korner.org>

16 <http://judaism.about.com/od/abcsofjudaism/g/kiddishcup.htm>

was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand' (Gen.14:18-20).

What Jesus did, then, was invest NEW MEANING to these ancient symbols -- this ancient ceremony of the bread and wine!...This 'Kiddush' ceremony is to be observed 'OFTEN' throughout the year. Jesus was not instituting a New 'ordinance' to be performed *annually*, each year. If He was, then He would have made it perfectly clear. He would have left no doubt it was to be an annual observance. However, the apostle Paul, who ought to know, plainly said we are to observe it '*as often as*' we have the opportunity."¹⁷

The belief that the Kiddush was performed on days other than feast days, along with an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:25-6, probably led to the practice of the Catholic practice of the Eucharist, which will be examined shortly. However, current scholars have concluded that the wine and bread ceremony performed by Jesus during the Last Supper could not have been a Kiddush unless it was at the start of the weekly Sabbath or the start of one of the annual feasts. "Those who conclude that the Last Supper was not the Passover have difficulty in trying to identify the meal. There have been two suggestions. First, there is the theory which was made prominent by Box which identifies it with the ceremony known as Kiddush or sanctification. It was a ceremony which pronounced blessings at the commencement of each Sabbath and feast day. This view is untenable for the sanctification of Passover did not occur twenty-four hours before its commencement. Rather at the opening of the Passover meal Kiddush was said over the first cup. Second, Lietzmann suggested that the Last Supper was a haburah meal which was a meal partaken by a small company of like-minded friends. But here is no evidence that Jesus and His followers formed such a group."¹⁸

Barkley agrees and again quotes Jeremias, whose expertise about the Kiddush has not been successfully challenged by current scholars. "Two things have been supposed. First, it has been supposed that there was a Kiddush for the Passover time. Second, it has been supposed that what Jesus and his disciples did was hold, not the Passover, but the Kiddush, while the Passover itself was not due until the next night. Jeremias holds that this involves two impossibilities. 'A separation of the Kiddush...from the sacred day is absolutely unthinkable and without example.' Second, a Kiddush was never held, so to speak, in advance. It was held immediately before the Sabbath began. Even if there was by any chance a Passover Kiddush, it would be immediately before the feast, not on the evening before."¹⁹

Therefore although the ceremony of the bread and the wine rehearsed by Jesus at the Last Supper resembles a Kiddush, it cannot be a Kiddush with all of its ordinances. The idea that a Kiddush could be taken as often as you chose is also in error, but this error is probably millennia old and very probably helped lead to the Eucharist ceremony. Since the only time a Kiddush could be performed was at the start of a weekly or annual Sabbath and because the beginning of the 14th of Nisan was neither of these, the bread and wine ceremony during the Last Supper could not have been a Kiddush.

17 Dankenbring, William, *What Do You Mean, Artos:Seven Proofs the Last Supper was not a Passover Meal*, p. 9 from <http://www.triumphpro.com/artos.pdf>

18 Hoehner, Harold W., *Chronological aspects of the life of Christ*, p. 80

19 Barkley, William, *The Lord's Supper*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky, 2001, p. 29

Background of the Lord's Supper

The conclusion of this book is that the Last Supper occurred on the early 14th of Nisan. Therefore the ceremonies of the washing of the feet and partaking of the bread and wine occurred early on the 14th. Paul wrote that on the night Jesus was betrayed he both broke the bread, which represented his body, and blessed the wine, which represented his blood being used to ratify the new covenant. The name for this supposedly new ceremony comes from 1 Corinthians 11:20, where Paul writes, "When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper."²⁰ In the Greek, eat the Lord's Supper would have been *Kuriakon deipnon phagein* or To the Lord a supper eat. "*Kuriakos*, adjective from *Kurios*, belonging to or pertaining to the Lord, is not just a biblical or ecclesiastical word, for it is found in the inscriptions and papyri in the sense of imperial (Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 358), as imperial finance, imperial treasury. It is possible that here the term applies both to the *Agape* or Love-feast (a sort of church supper or club supper held in connection with, before or after, the Lord's Supper) and the Eucharist or Lord's Supper. *Deipnon*, so common in the Gospels, only here in Paul. The selfish conduct of the Corinthians made it impossible to eat a Lord's Supper at all."²¹ Robertson, along with the vast majority of current theologians, has the pre-conceived notion that a supper to the Lord would have been to Jesus the Christ and not to God the father because Paul did not use the Greek word *theos*. This meal supposedly revolved around the Eucharist, which is the partaking of the bread and the wine. Robertson also introduces the possibility that the Lord's Supper could have been the church's common supper, what we could currently call pot lucks. Such meals are presented elsewhere in scripture in Acts 2:42, Acts 20:7 and Acts 27:35.²² The Essenes also apparently had a practice that each lunch was considered a sacrificial meal. "Each was sent then to his appointed employment at which he worked until the fifth hour, i.e., eleven o'clock, when all assembled and having bathed in water specially exorcised, and clothed themselves in white, they entered the common dining room quietly and silently. Before each of them was placed some bread and a dish of one sort of food. A priest said grace and then, but not before, they might eat. At the end of the repast prayer was again said, their white garments laid aside, and resuming their ordinary attire they worked until evening, when they supped in the same manner. At the noonday meal, which was regarded apparently as a sacrifice feast, being prepared by their priests, no stranger was admitted, but at supper it was otherwise."²³ Therefore special meals that were not a Passover were not unknown to Christians at the time of Paul.

One of the many corrections the apostle Paul gave the Corinthians in his first epistle to them was to change how they acted when they got together. Paul spent many words and much energy explaining to the church that its job is to edify its members and encourage them to walk the walk

20 1 Cor. 11:20

21 Robertson's Word Pictures, e-sword, 1 Cor. 11:20

22 Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
 Acts 20:7 And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.
 Acts 27:35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat.

23 <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05546a.html>

of putting on the character of Jesus. He tells the Corinthians, "But in giving you this charge, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better but for the worse."²⁴ Some Corinthians were finishing their meal while others had not yet eaten and had to go hungry. While some went hungry, others ate like gluttons. To add insult to injury, some were getting drunk on a regular basis as they gathered together to supposedly worship God. Under these circumstances, Paul tells the Corinthians, "it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper... What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."²⁵ What ever the Lord's Supper is, the Corinthians were not practicing it, but 1 Corinthians 11 does show they were partaking of the symbols.

Paul continues his fairly scathing admonition by reminding the Corinthians why they should not be behaving in such an atrocious and unchristian manner. "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged."²⁶

There is very little doubt that the book of Corinthians was written with a Passover theme, most likely because Paul wrote it during Passover or its expected delivery would be at Passover time. When Paul scolded the Corinthians for their abhorrent lack of judgment in 1 Cor. 5, he reminds them, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, even as ye are unleavened. For our passover also hath been sacrificed, *even* Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."²⁷ Paul ties the sacrifice of the Passover lamb to the days of Unleavened Bread. In doing so, Paul first points out their problem, then reminds them of what Jesus had done for them by becoming the Passover sacrifice, then goes on to tell them what they have to do to rectify the problem.

This is the same pattern he follows throughout the book of 1 Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-6 he points out how the Corinthians and the Israelites followed the same pattern when they left their respective Egypts. The idolatry of Israel with the golden calf shortly after they left Egypt, after all of the blessings they had received and all of the miracles they had seen, is well known. Paul tells the Corinthians, "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."²⁸ Paul then warns the

24 1 Cor 11:17

25 1 Cor. 11:20-2 RSV

26 1 Cor. 11:23-31

27 1 Cor 5:6-8

28 1 Cor 10:7

Corinthians not to follow the path of the Israelites, both in idolatry and sexual immorality, something that Corinth was known for throughout the Roman world. After giving a possible solution to the problem, he brings up the cup of the Lord Jesus Christ in 1 Corinthians 10:16-18. Again Paul insinuates how the blood of Jesus made it possible for them to enter into the New Covenant.

The next issue Paul deals with in 1 Corinthians is the proper actions and presentation of Christians who are married. Apparently women were showing up in church in some kind of unbecoming manner. Rather than calling upon Jesus as an example, he calls upon God's creation as a teacher. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonour to him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."²⁹ Again Paul's pattern in 1 Corinthians is to show the problem, show God's example of how things should be, then tell them how to correct the problem.

After dealing with these issues, Paul confronts the issue of the Corinthians gathering together to worship and eat together. Paul continues the same pattern of stating the problem, which was terrible selfishness when they meet to worship and eat together. He forcefully condemns them for believing they are gathering together to eat a supper to the Lord, which must be Jesus the Christ, the true Passover. Again he reminds them that it is the body and blood of Jesus that has been sacrificed to allow them to join the New Covenant. He again gives them a temporary solution to their problem. "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another. If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come."³⁰ Paul writes things had to change when the Corinthians got together for meals to the Lord. That change was they were all supposed to eat at the same time and they were supposed to be light meals, so light that if someone was hungry they should eat at home before getting together. Paul said he would help solve the rest of the issues around this problem when he got there.

Far too often theologians and Christians take a verse or two out of context to support their traditions. It is possible wine and the bread may have had something to do with the supper to the Lord, especially since the cup of the Lord mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:21 is in reference to food offered to idols. However, there should be no question that Paul was using the symbols of the bread and wine to remind the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 10 through 11 that they needed to clean up their act because of the sacrifice Jesus the Christ had made for them. Paul used the symbols as a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus and the thankfulness we are supposed to have for that sacrifice. Although this author also does not believe Paul was giving support to a new ceremony, called the Lord's Supper, on the early 14th of Nisan, at least there is some scriptural support for this idea when 1 Corinthians 11 is harmonized with the four gospel accounts of the Last Supper. However, using 1 Corinthians 11 to support the practice of the Eucharist or a supposed New Testament, often called a Christian, Passover in which the symbols take the place of and supersede the Passover meal is just not supported in scripture.

29 1 Cor 11:14-5

30 1 Cor 11:33-4

The Symbols at The Eucharist or The Lord's Supper

CHAPTER

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The Symbols at The Eucharist or The Lord's Supper

The Eucharist is based upon the idea that Jesus instituted a new ceremony similar to a Kiddush, but that it could be partaken of at any time and not just on feast days. Jeremias believes that is the intent of Christ's words during the Last Supper and his research has proven the symbols of the wine and bread in the Christian liturgy could not have been based upon the Kiddush. A ceremony called the Lord's Supper is based upon similar reasoning, but followers partake of the symbols only at special occasions, some times only at the same time Jesus and the disciples partook of them during the Last Supper, early on the 14th of Nisan.

Church of god members who partake of the Lord's Supper today wash each others feet and partake of the bread and the wine on the early 14th of Nisan in a ceremony that resembles a Catholic mass much more than the Last Supper. Rather than being an intimate setting, which the Last Supper most certainly was, it is often done in large groups. Rather than serving a meal, this multiple hour long ritual involves the ingesting of a thimble full of wine and a small piece of unleavened bread, although the days of Unleavened Bread will not commence for a full day. Like the Last Supper, there are no children present and usually only family baptized members of that church can participate. The reason children are usually excluded is because they supposedly are not part of the church because they have not yet been baptized. While this author agrees that baptism needs to be performed only upon those who understand its meaning, he vehemently disagrees with the idea that children are not part of the called out people of God.

Even the apostle Paul, speaking for himself and not directly from God, said if one mate is a believer and the other is not, this couple should not get divorced because the believer sanctifies the unbeliever. Why is this essential to a child's role in the church? "Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."¹ If the children of a couple where one is a believer and the other is not are holy, set apart for God, then surely the children of a marriage where both mates are believers are holy. How does God say we are to deal with our children, whom He has sanctified?

God wrote about how important it is to teach children His ways in Deuteronomy.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:
And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul,
and with all thy might.

1 1 Cor. 7:14

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:
 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when
 thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest
 down, and when thou risest up.²

This author began to attend the World Wide Church of God when he was fifteen without family support. After attending for a year, it became apparent that this author was not part of the church in the eyes of the members of the church because the young were told over and over again they were not part of the church until they were baptized. This was emphasized when any unbaptized attendee was forbidden from attending the supposed Christian Passover, the supposed renewal of each individual's covenant with God every year on the early 14th of Nisan. Many of the young people who attended church with this author and who even went to school with him at Ambassador College felt they did not have a covenant with God because they were taught by their church, and far too often by their parents, that they did not have a covenant with God. This author knew he had a covenant relationship with God from an early age and was able to ignore the ignorance of this teaching, although such teachings often led to a diminishing of the spirit and joy of God for this author. The emphasis that baptism was the only way to have a real relationship with God, which thus bond the person as a tithe payer, a member of the "one true church," which bond them to the control mechanism of the supposed Christian Passover every year definitely was a contributing factor in 83% of the young people growing up in the World Wide Church of God leaving it when they reached adulthood.

The scriptural ordinance of the Passover was and is a family event. It was ordained by God. But as Numbers 9:6-11 states, there were reasons for not partaking of the Passover. A two-year-old should not be partaking of the bread, which represents the body of Christ broken for them, and the wine, which represents the blood of Christ, shed to ratify the New Covenant. A two-year-old would have no idea what they were doing in this situation. But a two-year-old should not be excluded from the Passover meal or the so-called Lord's Supper any more than they should be excluded from any other important event in the lives of a Christian family. When a child is able to partake of the symbols of the New Covenant is a matter for them and their parents to discern and will almost certainly be different with each child.

The Eucharist

The Eucharist is a distinctly Catholic and Orthodox view of what the symbols are and what they represent. These churches teach that during "the mass, priests allegedly have the power to supernaturally turn the bread and wine into the actual and literal body and blood of Jesus Christ."³ This places great importance on the role of the priests, who have supposedly been granted this supernatural power by having extra amounts of the holy spirit that the laity does not possess. Unfortunately the idea that the priesthood has to intercede between God and His called out people should have ended when the veil was rent and access to the holy of holies was granted to everyone all the time by the sacrifice of God's only begotten son, but this would

2 Deut. 6:4-7

3 Jones, Rick, *Understanding Roman Catholicism*, 1995, Chick Publication, Ontario, CA pp. 83-88

limit the power of the priest to advisor rather than emissary of God. Although the New Covenant requires the leaders of God's called out people to be servants and not masters,⁴ far too many of them want to be masters and one of the ways they do this is by supposedly having special powers that the laity does not.

The council of Trent summarized the Catholic belief of transubstantiation. "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation."⁵ This was in large part to dispute Martin Luther, who rejected the process of transubstantiation, as does Protestantism today.

Transubstantiation is apparently derived from verses 53 and 54 of the sixth chapter of gospel of John.⁶ When taken out of context, it is possible to believe Jesus is teaching a form of cannibalism where people were supposed to eat his flesh and drink his blood, but taken in context, the mystical teaching of transubstantiation can be seen to be in error. John writes in his gospel:

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst... And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven... I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?⁷

4 Matt. 20:25-7 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

5 Jones, p. 85

6 John 6:53-4 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

7 John 6:33-5, 40-1, 48-60

Jesus said if you believe in him, you will have eternal life in verse 40. He was also alive at the time he made these statements about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, so he was surely not suggesting his literal body be eaten at that time. Therefore this must be a metaphor, just as it is a metaphor when Jesus stated the following.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.⁸

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was I am.⁹

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.¹⁰

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.¹¹

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.¹²

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.¹³

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.¹⁴

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.¹⁵

Jesus also often spoke in figurative terms, as shown below.

Ye are the salt of the earth.¹⁶

Ye are the light of the world.¹⁷

Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.¹⁸

Even in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, the disciples mistakenly thought Jesus was referring to literal bread when he was them to avoid the leaven of the Pharisees.¹⁹ It was only after Jesus reminded the disciples about the loaves and fishes that they realized, “how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”²⁰ Christianity, both Protestants and Catholics agree that Luke 22:20 and I Corinthians 11:25 are figurative where Jesus says that the cup is the new covenant. So why do Catholics and Orthodox believe they literally are eating the body and drinking blood of the Messiah whether than do it figuratively?

8 John 8:12

9 John 8:58

10 John 9:5

11 John 10:7

12 John 10:11

13 John 11:25

14 John 14:6

15 John 15:1

16 Matt. 5:13

17 Matt. 5:14

18 Matt. 16:6

19 Matt. 16:7-11

20 Matt. 16:12

Those that believe they are literally drinking the blood of Jesus need to remember that God ordered His called out people not to consume blood, going clear back to the time of Noah. "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."²¹ As part of the Old Covenant He reiterated, "No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off."²²

As for eating the body of Jesus, God even went to so far as limit the kinds of animals that humans should eat in Lev. 11 and Deut. 14 because God's called out people were a holy people, separated to Himself. Even Protestant ministers, such as Joel Osteen have embraced these biblical food laws.²³ The events of the tenth chapter of Acts occurred years after the death of Jesus. When God sends Peter a dream to kill and eat unclean foods, Peter answers, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean."²⁴ Again, the disciples misunderstand a figurative message that God gave them. Peter heard, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."²⁵ It was at this time that the men sent by Cornelius the Centurion, because of a vision sent by God, arrived. When Peter went to see Cornelius, he said, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. . . Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."²⁶ Therefore, God not only ordained that His called out people should not eat blood, but they should even not eat certain kinds of meats and this prohibition has not changed, yet many Christians believe God has ordered them to eat a human being and drink his blood at a weekly worship services.

Besides violating the ordinance against consuming blood, the mystical process of transubstantiation appears to require the sacrifice of Jesus every week. Every time a priest blesses the wine and bread at the mass, Jesus is sacrificed again as portions of him are transubstantiated and consumed. However, Paul wrote, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."²⁷ Although those who believe in transubstantiation would argue the point, it appears that Christ is being sacrificed anew every week. The Protestant practice of partaking of the symbols on a weekly basis is very different because they are memorializing the sacrifice of Jesus, not performing it over and over again.

21 Gen. 9:4

22 Lev. 17:12-4

23 <http://www.christianforums.com/t7271170>

24 Acts 10:14

25 Acts 10:15-6

26 Acts 10:28, 35-6

27 Heb. 9:7

Jesus was the Christ and as such he was the light of the world and the true vine and the good shepherd. All of these metaphorical roles allowed Jesus to bring life to those who believed in his message and entered into the covenant with him and his Father. That is why Christ said when we partake of these symbols, we do it in remembrance of him.²⁸ This author rejects the entire premise of transubstantiation and the Eucharist as unscriptural not just because of the ordinances to not eat blood, but also because it requires a priest to act as intermediary between God and His called out people, something that is not required under the New Covenant.

The Lord's Supper

The partakers of a "Lord's Supper", not those who believe the Passover was always on the early 14th of Nisan and that the Jews are wrong about almost everything, almost universally hold a ceremony on the early 14th in remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ. This practice is currently observed by the Church of God, Seventh Day and offshoots of the Church of God, International. The church gathers together as a large group to wash each others' feet and partake of a little wine and little unleavened bread while hearing about the sacrifice of Jesus on the early portions of the 14th of Nisan. For them, the Lord's Supper is not the Passover, but is a new ceremony instituted by Jesus. They generally state they are following the example of Jesus the Christ by partaking of the symbols at the same time he and the disciples did. Although this ceremony is very different from the Eucharist, it shares its roots as a new ceremony at a new time, instituted by Christ for the express purpose of partaking of the symbols. However, it is not wholly accurate to state that those observing a Lord's Supper on the early 14th of Nisan are following the example of Jesus and the disciples. The Last Supper was a small, intimate affair with the symbols delivered during the course of a meal. If following Jesus' example about when to partake of the symbols is so important, as those who partake of the Lord's Supper on the early 14th maintain, then surely the method and manner of partaking of the symbols should also be important.

There was almost certainly more than one cup of wine given and blessed according to Luke's account of the Last Supper. The three synoptics agree that the explanation of what the symbols were and the partaking of these symbols occurred during an intimate meal. After the meal, Jesus does something even more unusual by washing the feet of the disciples, something that was almost certainly already done when they entered the upper room. Again, Jesus takes the time to explain the symbolic meaning of this foot washing. If Jesus the Christ instituted a new ceremony that was to be added to the Christian liturgy, then that ceremony is what should be followed, including an intimate setting, the delivery of the symbols with the meal, and the foot washing afterwards.

Many proponents of observing the Lord's Supper on the early 14th disregard Christ's example with the rationalization that Christians only need to follow the important parts of the Lord's Supper. Rationalization is simply the process of trying to apply past experiences and teachings to new situations, thus it is not a bad thing. But theologians often build rationalization upon rationalization without regard to the foundation upon which they build. Paul talks about laying the proper foundation in the book of Galatians. He writes, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith

28 1 Cor. 11:25

is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”²⁹ A student learns that two plus two equals four from his schoolmaster. What does Paul say about this law taught by the schoolmaster? “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”³⁰ Although the law is holy and good, it is not enough. “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”³¹ Many evangelical Christians twist Paul's words³² and rationalize not following God's law by stating it has been nailed to the cross³³ and even go so far as to say the law is bad because the law brings death³⁴ and therefore they are now supposedly following God in the spirit. Such rationalization would, and often does, lead a student to state two plus two does not have to equal four because they are now doing algebra or calculus and don't need to worry about trivialities.

Paul taught that Christians must grow up. “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”³⁵ He also taught that Christians were not supposed to be children, pondering the complexities of two plus two equaling four, but were supposed to go on to algebra or even calculus. “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”³⁶ But he never taught the foundations of God's way, the commandments, were bad or wrong. Any student of math should know two plus two should always equal four. The algebra tricks to prove two plus two does not equal four always involve dividing by zero somewhere along the line of reasoning, something that is not allowed because it leads to fallacious answers. Any student of math should know there is something wrong if two plus two does not equal four. However some students of Christianity have not been grounded enough in the basics to understand more complex ideas and relationships, thus their rationalizations are often wrong, which should not be surprising. If inexperienced math students can be fooled into believing that two plus two does not always equal four, then should it be surprising that Christians can be fooled into believing that God's way of life, as expressed in His law, is bad?

29 Gal. 3:24-5

30 Rom. 7:12

31 Gal. 3:11

32 2 Peter 3:16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction

33 Col. 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

34 Gal. 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

35 1 Cor. 13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

36 Heb. 5:11-4

Rationalizing away the example of Jesus giving the symbols as part of an intimate meal is not wrong and this author actually believes no matter what our understanding the meaning of the symbols and how we are to partake of them today, you need to rationalize how those events of two millennia ago are to be observed today. However, those who believe Jesus instituted a new ceremony, called the Lord's Supper, on the night before he was crucified usually state they are simply following the example of Jesus. However, their Lord's Supper ceremony does not follow the example of Jesus and more closely resembles a Catholic Mass. If a Christian states it is important to follow the example of Jesus at the Last Supper, then they should follow the example of Jesus at the Last Supper. However, this author does not believe Jesus was instituting a new ceremony because Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."³⁷

The fifth through the seventh chapter of Matthew, often referred to as the sermon on the mount, depicts Jesus the Messiah amplifying the law to show God's original intent. Jesus supposedly taught something radically different about divorce when he stated, "It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."³⁸ Although God allowed the nation of Israel to practice the legal procedure of divorce, God said through the prophet Malachi, "Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth."³⁹ Solomon wrote, "there is no new thing under the sun."⁴⁰ Many of the world's professing Christians believe that God through the death of His only begotten son set aside the Sabbath, which He made holy at creation, and substituted the first day of the week as a "Lord's Day," a proposition this author rejects because of very clear biblical precepts going back to Genesis 1. In like manner, although this author believes it is possible that Jesus instituted an entirely new practice of an annual Lord's Supper into the Christian liturgy, he does not think it likely because God had already set aside seven days annually as well as the weekly Sabbath, to guide the Christian liturgy. There was already a sacrifice on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan which had foreshadowed the sacrifice of the true *pesah* for 1,500 years. This author believes the symbols of the wine and the bread are directly tied to the days already listed as observances for God's called out people.

37 Matt 5:17-20

38 Matt. 5:31-2

39 Mal. 2:14-5

40 Eccl. 1:9

The New Covenant

CHAPTER

41

The New Covenant

In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul writes, “For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.”¹ As has been shown earlier, Jesus is the true lamb of God, sacrificed from the foundations of this world.² Paul wrote about dramatic changes that even he knew were going to be taking place shortly. “A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”³ He wrote that the Levitical priesthood would be ended and transferred to the order of Melchisedec.⁴ He wrote that the sacrifice of Jesus made the atonement sacrifice superfluous, thus ending the need for a temple to be cleaned on Atonement. Paul left clear examples of why the temple and the sacrificial system were no longer necessary.

Both Paul and Jesus knew that the temple would be destroyed. During the Last Supper Jesus was acutely aware that his days on earth were through and his disciples would need the comfort of not just his words, but of the spirit of God.⁵ Jesus said about the bread and the wine, “Take, eat: this is my body... This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.”⁶ What is the New Testament or covenant that Jesus was referring to? The Greek word translated testament is *diatheke*, which is best translated as a contract. The nation of Israel had been looking for the Messiah to bring this new covenant or contract for over half a millennium, since the time of the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah wrote that in future, God would accept Israel’s repentance and allow them to return to the land. After they had returned and began to follow Him, God would change the way He dealt with His called out people. Jeremiah wrote, “In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.”⁷

1 1 Cor. 5:7

2 Rev. 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

3 Heb. 8:13

4 Heb. 7:1-17

5 Matt. 26:2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

6 Mark 14:22, 24

7 Jer. 31:29-30

In Jeremiah's time, the children of the Israelites complained to God it was not fair they were being punished for not following His ways because their fathers had never taught them about God and His ways. That did not matter because Israel had agreed to teach their children about God's ways over a millennium before when they ratified the Old Covenant.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.⁸

God and Israel signed the first contract, often called the Old Covenant or Testament, with blood at Mount Sinai.⁹ This is the contract that was reconfirmed with the book of Deuteronomy, where God laid out the responsibilities of both parties, including the blessings and cursings, that Israel throughout all of its generations was bound to. Deuteronomy 30 states that when Israel ratified its contract with God, the children were responsible to keep it as well.

And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day...thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.¹⁰

8 Deut. 6:4-7

9 Ex. 24:6-8

10 Deut 30:4-20

The unfortunate history of Israel, as recorded in the book of Judges and in the prophets shows the parents did not teach the children about God, so their children, their seed, did not prosper. At the time of Elijah, the people had so syncretized the true religion of God with the native forms of worship that the Israelites apparently did not know the difference between YHVH and Baal. “And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said: ‘How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD (*ed. note-YHVH*) be God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.’ And the people answered him not a word.”¹¹ It is entirely possible the people did not know the difference between YHVH and Baal because their parents had taught them these were simply two names for the same God. Or perhaps the Israelites had taught their children that Baal and YHVH were simply two different gods, both powerful and both the gods of Israel. Either way, the parents had not taught the children and this led them into a path of worshiping false gods.

Jeremiah writes that under the new contract, the New Covenant, with God things would be different.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.¹²

Paul quotes Jeremiah’s prophecy about a New Covenant in Hebrews 8 and even gives the reason why the New Covenant was necessary. “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.”¹³ There was nothing wrong with the first or Old Covenant except that the people refused to follow it. Under the New Covenant, God stresses that He will be the one to teach everyone and He will no longer rely on the parents to teach the children.

Many have misunderstood both Jeremiah and Paul by teaching that God never intended to write the law on the hearts of the nation of Israel, but scripture does not agree with this statement. “Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons’ sons; Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick

11 1 Kings 18:21, JPS

12 Jer. 31:31-34

13 Heb. 8:7-8

darkness.”¹⁴ The nation of Israel was supposed to make sure it did not lose God’s commandments from their hearts and scripture stresses the covenant required parents to teach their children God’s ways and planting His ways in those hearts.

God’s plan was for the people to have the law written on their hearts and Israel said that is what it wanted. “And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”¹⁵ God said through Moses, “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”¹⁶ Again, the commandments of God were supposed to be written on the Israelites’ hearts and they were ordered to write these righteous ways on their children’s heart.

Israel agreed to fulfill God’s desire to write His law on their hearts. “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD’S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.”¹⁷ Throughout the Old Testament God is recorded as working with the hearts of the nation of Israel. “And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.”¹⁸ Hosea wrote that the Old Covenant was not dependent upon sacrifices to pay for sins, but upon obedience to the covenant. “For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.”¹⁹ It was supposed to be that way from the beginning of the Old Covenant. “For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying: ‘Hearken unto My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.’ But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in their own counsels, even in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward, even since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this

14 Deut. 4:9-11

15 Deut. 5:28-9

16 Deut. 6:5-9

17 Deut 10:12-6

18 Deut. 30:6

19 Hosea 6:6-7

day; and though I have sent unto you all My servants the prophets, sending them daily betimes and often, yet they hearkened not unto Me, nor inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff; they did worse than their fathers. And thou shalt speak all these words unto them, but they will not hearken to thee; thou shalt also call unto them, but they will not answer thee.”²⁰

Why is the New Covenant Misunderstood?

This author believes there are two major reasons why many Christians do not understand that God works with the hearts of His called out people under both the New and the Old Covenant. The first reason is what is commonly known as dispensationalism. Dispensationalism teaches that God works with mankind through drastically different methods and ways, called different dispensations, at different times. Abram was supposedly under one dispensation, the nation of Israel under another with the Old Covenant, and the church took the place of Israel under yet another dispensation. “One of the most important underlying theological concepts for dispensationalists is progressive revelation. While some nondispensationalists start with progressive revelation in the New Testament and refer this revelation back into the Old Testament, dispensationalists begin with progressive revelation in the Old Testament and read forward in a historical sense. Therefore there is an emphasis on a gradually developed unity as seen in the entirety of Scripture. Biblical Covenants are intricately tied to the dispensations. When these Biblical covenants are compared and contrasted, the result is a historical ordering of different dispensations. Also with regard to the different Biblical covenant promises, dispensationalists place emphasis on to whom these promises were written, the original recipients. This has led to certain fundamental dispensational beliefs, such as a distinction between Israel and the church.”²¹

Dispensationalism

Dispensationalism dispenses with the Old Covenant as being inferior, not because God found fault with the people, but because He worked with Israel in an inferior fashion. Supposedly under the Old Covenant, God’s promises were physical and He did not truly begin to work with mankind in a spiritual fashion by circumcising their hearts until the New Covenant.²² However, scripture shows God always worked with those who followed Him in a spiritual fashion, including giving them His spirit.

God Gave the Spirit

God always gave the spirit to those who obeyed Him and sought to follow His ways,²³ even at the beginning of the Old Covenant.

²⁰ Jer. 7:22-27, JPS

²¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dispensationalism>, Concepts

²² Deut. 10:16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.

Deut. 30:6 And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

Jer. 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

²³ Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them! And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.²⁴

Joshua also had the spirit of God indwelling. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him."²⁵ King David knew he had the holy spirit and even realized that his sin of committing adultery with Bathsheba, then murdering Uriah, was so great that if he did not repent God could take that spirit away. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."²⁶

The fruits displayed by the nation of Israel show that the vast majority apparently did not have the indwelling of the holy spirit. They were in covenant with God because their forefathers had agreed to the covenant, but most Israelites completely misunderstood the covenant, as the writings of the prophets show. Jeremiah wrote, "Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."²⁷ David wrote, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart."²⁸ God never wanted to be bought off. He also never sought blind obedience, as if he were Zeus or Jupiter, but He did want His children to obey and follow in His ways because He loved them. If we examine the fruit of those who call themselves Christians today, it is not much different. Most of them have heard of a covenant, but don't know what it is or even how to have a loving relationship with their father.

The New Covenant is different from the Old not because of what was being taught, but how it was being taught. God, through the prophet Isaiah, taught, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring

24 Num. 11:25-30

25 Num. 27:18

26 Ps. 51:10-11

27 Jer. 7:21-3

28 Ps. 40:6-8

forth judgment to the Gentiles.”²⁹ This event made manifest when, “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”³⁰ At the end of Hebrews 9, Paul describes how rending the veil to the holiest of holies opened the path for all men to have reconciliation with God every day, not just the nation of Israel one day a year. The result was that men no longer had to be circumcised to enter into covenant with God, as the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15 depicts.

Circumcision was no longer required because the gentiles were to be grafted into the nation of Israel. “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.”³¹ Circumcision had been the only way to join in covenant as part of the people of God from the time of Abram, but was no longer required. “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”³² Therefore, if we are Christ’s, “then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”³³ The priesthood and the fathers of Israel taught God’s ways under the Old Covenant, but God Himself would teach His ways to the world under the New Covenant.

An interesting side note is the method that God used to teach mankind about Himself. Historians agree that books became common between 0 and 100 A.D., with most pointing to the rise of bound books taking the place of scrolls around 50 A.D. Although hand scribed books may not have been as big a breakthrough as the printing press, which fueled the Protestant Reformation, the ability of the masses to have access to the writings about God and Jesus in the Torah was almost as dramatic because of the great expense of scrolls. Thus God not only gave the message to the world that He loved them so much that He would sacrifice His only begotten son for them, thus fulfilling a millennium old prophecy, but also arranged for a way to teach them about His love and His ways and invite them to covenant with Him. To that method He added a new order of priesthood, replacing the Levites, who were priests because of birthright, with priests of the order of Melchisedec, chosen because they responded to God’s call to covenant. Thus there is a dramatic difference in the way the Old Covenant was taught versus how the New Covenant is taught.

29 Is. 42:1

30 Matt. 27:51

31 Rom. 11:13-9

32 Gal. 3:14

33 Gal. 3:29

Misunderstandings about the Human Soul

The second misunderstanding about what the New Covenant is arises because of a misconception about how the nation of Israel viewed the human condition, which can be discerned by looking through the prism of scripture. The nation of Israel did not believe man had an immortal soul that was distinct and separate from a physical body. The idea of an immortal soul is a distinctly Greek idea that was grafted onto Christianity in the second and third century A.D. The Hebrew idea, as shown in the Old Testament, depicted mankind as a living *nephesh* or soul. “Then the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (*nephesh*).”³⁴ *Nephesh* is the Hebrew word for body, but they believed the body was composed of three components that all acted together to make an individual a living soul. There was the physical body into which God had breathed life and without breath, there was no life.³⁵ But the *nephesh*, the soul, also had a head. This was not the physical head, but was the seat of the intellect and memory of the *nephesh*. The heart, the third piece of a complete soul was not an organ that pumped blood, but was the seat of the character. Therefore God stating that He would circumcise the hearts of His people in Deuteronomy 30:6 as part of the Old Covenant is equivalent to stating He would write it in the hearts in Jeremiah 31:33 and have it inculcated into their character. Under the New Covenant God grafted in the gentiles and taught them His ways, writing His laws into their hearts, which is always part of every covenant God has made with man.

Ordinances of the Covenant

God ratified the first or old covenant with Israel by teaching them what that covenant was and then ratifying it with the blood of oxen. The blood of the Passover had been used two months before as a sign or a token that the people would follow God, but blood was still needed to sign this contract. The blood of the atonement sacrifice would be needed in the future to reconcile Israel to God under the old covenant.

Under the new covenant, the blood of Jesus the messiah has been shed in the past to allow us to walk out of sin with God towards our Sinai. As we walk with God, He teaches us His ways, just as He taught Israel. Jesus tells his disciples, both at the Last Supper and down through time, that his blood is used to ratify the new covenant because, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”³⁶ The sacrifice of the Christ also replaces the blood of the atonement sacrifice in reconciling God’s imperfect, but now covenant keeping, people to the Father. Thus the sacrifice of Jesus allows mankind to know how much God loves us and that He wants us to learn to say thank you with the Passover sacrifice. God provided the blood to ratify our covenant with Him after we began to walk with Him. And He supplied the ultimate sin sacrifice that would allow us to continue to walk with Him. And all three requirements for a covenant relationship were fulfilled once and for all time with the shed blood of the true *peseb*, Jesus the Messiah.

34 Gen. 2:7 JPS

35 Gen. 2:7

36 John 3:16

Jesus' Blood and Body as the Passover

CHAPTER

42

Jesus' Blood and Body as the Passover

Paul tells us Jesus was the Passover sacrificed for us.¹ John also writes that Jesus was the bread of life.² Jesus tells the people what the manna was. “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”³ And the writers of the synoptic gospels tell us that the blood of Jesus was shed to ratify the New Covenant.⁴ How should we respond to this gift of God?

The Passover was a thank offering to God for His protection, His love and His freedom, but unlike spontaneous offerings of thanks, this one was mandated by God. Although some may think mandating thanks is counter intuitive, try interacting with children whose parents have never taken the time or energy to teach their children to say please and thank you. The politeness of saying please and thank you should grow into genuine thanks as the child matures whereas the lack of common manners produces ungrateful, self-centered brats. It should not be surprising that God had to teach His children how to say thank you to Him.

God protected the nation of Israel from plagues four through nine because of His promises to Abraham. He was calling His people out by separating them from the Egyptians,⁵ but He required them to thank Him for this protection and the future He was offering them. Those that would not give the creator of the Universe His proper due paid a terrible price. God mandated that all of His called out people give Him this thank you by performing the Passover sacrifice

1 1 Cor. 5:7 For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us

2 John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

3 John 6:49-51

4 Matt. 26:27-8 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
Mark 14:24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.
Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

5 Ex. 8:23 And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.

throughout the rest of their generations. The Passover sacrifice became “a night of watching unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt; this same night is a night of watching unto the LORD for all the children of Israel throughout their generations. And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron: ‘This is the ordinance of the passover: there shall no alien eat thereof; but every man’s servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land; but no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourned among you.’ Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the selfsame day that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.”⁶

The United States has officially delegated one day a year to thank God for all He has done. God also built an annual thanks into the liturgy, the system of worship He ordained. Although His people were always supposed to be thankful for the blessings God provided, the Passover, the ultimate thank offering, was a reminder one day a year to be thankful. Although all of God’s called out people were priests who were to serve Him,⁷ one day each year they were reminded they were part of the priesthood by sacrificing the Passover. For almost a millennium and a half the head of each household who came to Jerusalem to sacrifice the Passover had a special, glorious meal with family and friends, all the while remembering that it was God who gave this and all blessings to His called out people. The sacrifice of Jesus on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, the same time that the Passover lambs were sacrificed, is something that all His called out people should be thankful for and the best time to emphasize that thankfulness is on the Passover.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel were not always thankful to God. The generation that left Egypt was often unthankful. At the Red Sea, an ungrateful nation said, “Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to bring us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we spoke unto thee in Egypt, saying: Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it were better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.”⁸ Even after seeing the deliverance of God again at the Red Sea, they complained about the bread that God rained down from heaven. When the manna fell, the nation of Israel indignantly asked “what is this stuff?”⁹ They dismissed God’s gift by saying, “Would that we were given flesh to eat! We remember the fish, which we were wont to eat in Egypt for nought; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks,

6 Ex. 12:42-51, JPS

7 Ex. 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.

1 Pet. 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

8 Ex. 14:11-2

9 Ex. 16:15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: ‘What is it?’ - for they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them: ‘It is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all; we have nought save this manna to look to.”¹⁰

The nation of Israel was not grateful or thankful to God while they were in the desert, nor did they trust Him. But their descendents remembered the manna with fondness when they were looking for a sign that Jesus was the Messiah.

They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”¹¹

Jesus emphasized, “I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”¹²

Jesus' flesh, as represented by the bread, and his blood, as represented by the wine, were part of Jesus' mission. They symbolize how he was to give mankind access to eternal life when they were raised at the last day. These symbols were tied to both Jesus and the Passover while he was alive, which should not be surprising when we realize the role of the Passover was to allow people to have the freedom to begin walking with and learning from God so they could ultimately begin covenanting with their Father.

The first thing Joshua had Israel do when they entered the Promised Land was to circumcise themselves, showing they were in covenant with God.¹³ As soon as the nation had healed from both the knife that had circumcised them and the reproach they had carried from Egypt,¹⁴ the nation of Israel, “kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of

10 Num. 11:4-6

11 John 6:30-5

12 John 6:48-58

13 Josh. 5:2-7

14 Josh 5:9

Jericho.”¹⁵ This Passover was instrumental in returning them to God’s ways because it prepared them for their walk with God.

Tom Brokaw famously wrote about the greatest generation in America, and the generation that experienced the Passover in the plains of Jericho was the greatest generation in the history of the nation of Israel. After being raised in the wilderness, they not only captured the Promised Land by following God, but that generation of “Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.”¹⁶ High praise indeed.

The Passover of Hezekiah in 2 Chronicles 30 shows a remnant of Israel truly seeking to return to the God of their Fathers, although the majority of Israel laughed at them and their king for such an inane idea. The Passover was the first step in the path that would allow each individual to covenant with God.

The Passover of Josiah depicted in 2 Chronicles 35 also has the entire nation of Israel coming to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Josiah issued a decree rather than by invitation, as with Hezekiah. Unlike the Passover of Hezekiah, Josiah and the priests were scrupulous in their attention of detail to make sure everything about this Passover was just the way God wanted it.¹⁷ Righteous king Josiah, just like Hezekiah and Joshua, used the Passover as the first step to return his nation to their covenant with God. Although the fathers had agreed to the covenant for all their generations at Mount Sinai, the children were pledging themselves to the covenant. The idea that each head of household acted as the priest for their family once a year during the time of the thanksgiving feast ordained by God was ingrained for 1,500 years. Each time they sacrificed the Passover by slitting its throat, thus spilling its life’s blood, and then consuming its flesh, was a reminder to be thankful to God for all the blessings He had given, dating all the way back to the ten plagues and the chance God had given them to covenant with Him.

The spilling of the blood of the Passover and consuming its flesh was essential in allowing Israel to leave Egypt. The manna was given to help sustain them, and even the ungrateful Israelites realized the gift of bread from heaven was God’s way of keeping them alive from day to day. Each and every human being is responsible for the sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Messiah, because they would not accept God on His terms, that of a loving Father raising children He could be proud of, because mankind did not comprehend the kind of love God has for us. The call of the Passover observance, both 3,500 years ago and today, is to thank a loving Dad for all he had done for us and work to make Him proud of us as we grow in grace and knowledge.

15 Josh 5:10

16 Josh 24:31

17 Jameison, Faussett, and Brown, Commentary on the Old Testament from 2 Chron. 35:18 from e-sword. One feature by which this passover was distinguished was the liberality of Josiah. But what distinguished it above all preceding solemnities was, not the imposing grandeur of the ceremonies, nor the immensity of the assembled concourse of worshippers; for these, with the exception of a few from the kingdom of Israel, were confined to two tribes; but it was the ardent devotion of the king and people, the disregard of purely traditional customs, and the unusually strict adherence, even in the smallest minutiae, to the forms of observance prescribed in the book of the law, the discovery of an original copy of which had produced so great a sensation.

Jesus the True Passover

CHAPTER

43

Jesus the True Passover

Much had been written and preached about the timing of the Passover in the churches of God. This author believes so much emphasis was placed upon keeping Passover at the right time in the right manner with the right people because the Passover was used as a control mechanism, which actually profanes the real meaning of the Passover. Those who used, and still use, the Passover as a control mechanism pointed to it as a sin sacrifice, which it is not. The idea that the Creator of the universe required a sin sacrifice before He could begin to walk with and teach children who had not had the opportunity to know Him suggests a harsh and vengeful god like Zeus or Jupiter, not the loving Father that He is.

During the memorial of the Passover, the physical sacrifice of a goat or lamb on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan reminded every Israelite they were a priest of the most high God and that they needed to thank Him for all the blessing He gave them. The sacrifice of the true Passover, Jesus the Christ, was done to remind all of His called out people they are a kingdom of priests,¹ and they need to be thankful to God for how much He loves them. The Passover was designed to be a thank offering for those who were just beginning to contemplate a relationship with God the Father. The Passover allowed God's called out people to walk with and learn from Him so they could decide if they wanted to share in God's covenant. The sacrifice of God's only begotten son was an invitation to the whole world to begin this walk and ultimately to decide to be in covenant with God. The idea of using this beacon to God as a yearly control mechanism so the leadership of a church could decide if you had followed them well enough to continue your relationship with God is profane to this author. It is a healthy sign that as the spirit of God moves to help rekindle many of the quenched flames of passion, often mistakenly referred to as first love, by the paid ministry of the churches of God, that the idea of using the Passover as a control mechanism is fading away.

For 1,500 years the Passover was sacrificed on the late afternoon of the 14th of Nisan and eaten at the beginning of the 15th of Nisan. When the Messiah gave the symbols to the disciples at

¹ Ex. 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

¹ Pt. 2:9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

the Last Supper he knew the sacrifice of the lamb (or kid) was not only to be superseded, but was to be done away with when the temple was destroyed. So what was the Messiah telling the disciples when he gave them the symbols? Paul wrote, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."² Many Christians have taken this verse out of context and stated that you should take the symbols of the bread and wine often to remember the sacrifice of Jesus. This author believes Christians should remember the sacrifice of Jesus every day, just as we need remember to be thankful to God for all He has done for us everyday. But God only made the 7th day the Sabbath, not every day. God gave us seven annual days to remember different aspects of His work with us, but we don't need to fast every day just to ask for atonement with God.

How often should we partake of the symbols of the wine, bread and foot washing? An acquaintance of ours succinctly analyzed the later portions of 1 Corinthians 11 many years ago with a swimming analogy.³ Her analogy stuck with this author as he examined the timing and the meaning of the Passover. She said Paul was like a swimming coach giving instruction on how to practice swimming. 1 Corinthians 11:20-33 is the equivalent of stating, "Here is how you have to practice your swimming strokes. As often as you practice, you do twenty hard laps of breast stroke, followed by 20 easy laps of side stroke, then 50 hard laps of crawl, followed by 30 hard laps of back stroke and finish up with 4 laps of crawl at a sprint." How often and when was this workout to take place? In this analogy, the coach never states when or how often to practice, only how to practice. The swimmer would know from previous interactions with their coach when and how often they were supposed to practice. The reader of 1 Corinthians 11 also needs to go to a different set of instructions to know when to do their workout because Paul did not write to observe the symbols often, but instead wrote as often as you observe the symbols, do them this way. Students of scripture should know there is a set of instructions for when sacrifices and memorials were to be done located in Leviticus 23 and Deuteronomy 16.

Taking the symbols whenever an individual wants, which is what transforming the symbols into a Kiddush or into a new ordinance like the Eucharist, has no scriptural justification from 1 Corinthians 11. Jeremias convincingly writes that the Kiddush could not be performed in the manner and timing the symbols were given. The mystical idea of the Eucharist, with the bread and wine being transubstantiated into the actual body and blood of Jesus the Christ smacks of Gnosticism and special knowledge, which is not God's way of doing things.⁴ The Eucharist also requires an initiated priesthood with their special, mystical powers be mediators between God the Father and the so-called laity. Even the Levitical priesthood, who mediated certain aspects of the religion of God, were never supposed to stand between God and His children, but were supposed to lead God's children to Him. The priesthood of Melchisedek must be servants and not mediators. The Protestant practice of observing Sunday Communion is obviously based

2 1 Cor. 11:26

3 This author attributed this quote to the person that said it in the original edition of the book before it was edited. The person who gave the idea to the author asked not to be quoted, so her name was removed, but her insight was not.

4 Deut. 30, especially verses 12 through 14 It *is* not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither *is* it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

upon the Catholic Communion and the Eucharist with the mystic power of the priesthood being removed from the ceremony because the Protestant Reformation denied the mystical, infallible powers of the Pope.

The Protestant practice of Communion is just another reminder that the battle cry of *solo scriptura* (scripture only) was really only used to reject papal authority and not unscriptural traditions like observing the first day of the week as the Sabbath. This author believes the daily or weekly or monthly protestant practice of partaking of the bread and wine (often grape juice rather than wine) can easily be traced back to the tradition of the Catholic Eucharist and it should be rejected as without real scriptural basis as easily as keeping the Sabbath on the first day of the week can be rejected if we use scripture as the measure of our practice rather than tradition. Just as most Protestants continue to practice a Sunday Sabbath because it is their tradition rather than scripturally commanded, they also continue to practice their non-Eucharistic Eucharist.

Like the Eucharist and Protestant Communion, the Lord's Supper on the early 14th requires us to accept that Jesus instituted a new ceremony into the Christian liturgy. This author has a very hard time accepting that premise when the liturgy for God's called out people was so carefully laid out and kept for a millennia and a half before the sacrifice of the true Passover by those who were in covenant with God. This liturgy already had two of the three principle functions of the sacrifice of Jesus embedded within it. We are even told that those days were a shadow that pointed to the reality of Jesus as the Messiah.⁵ The atonement sacrifice was required to let a people in covenant with God know He forgave them their sins.⁶ Paul writes in Hebrews 6-10 that Jesus' sacrifice now fulfills the role of the atonement sacrifice, only better.

The Passover, which this book has repeatedly stated, is a thank offering to God the Father for all He has done for us. We are told that we should be thankful to God because of His love for us.⁷ The Passover was designed to remind all of God's people, even if they were not part of the Levitical priesthood or the priesthood of Melchisedek, that they were still called to be priests serving the creator God of the universe.⁸ We are told that Jesus fulfilled the role of the Passover.⁹ The final function of Jesus' sacrifice was to have his blood used to sanctify the New Covenant, which was a one time event that did not need to be part of the liturgy, just as the sanctification at Mt. Sinai was not added to the liturgy.¹⁰ Therefore those who practice a Lord's Supper on the

5 Col. 2:16-7 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

6 Lev. 16 shows the ceremony with the results in Lev. 16:30 For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

7 John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

8 Ex. 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.
1 Pet. 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

9 1 Cor. 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

10 Ex. 24: 6-8 And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

early 14th of Nisan are stating by their practice that God is operating with the church under a different dispensation than He did with Israel. By their practice they state Jesus added a new requirement to the worship of God, a brand new memorial on the early 14th of Nisan. That means that God revealed this new knowledge to the church and not to Israel because Israel was not ready for it. Therefore the church is under a new and different dispensation than the nation of Israel was. This author generally rejects dispensationalism because God is not a respecter of persons and thus rejects the practice of the Lord's Supper on the early 14th of Nisan.

However, if Christians do believe the church is under a new dispensation with a new memorial to honor the sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah, then this author feels strongly these believers should actually follow this memorial as Jesus and the disciples practiced it at the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, the disciples gathered in an intimate group and the symbols of the bread and wine were inculcated into the meal. The foot washing was performed after the meal as a reminder that Christians are supposed to serve each other. If the participants so desire, a separate cup of wine to honor the institution of the New Covenant can be included. If this is a new dispensation with a new memorial, then those who believe they are part of this new dispensation owe it to themselves to follow the entire example of their memorial to Jesus' sacrifice.

Although this author believes the Last Supper was not a Passover meal, it is possible that Jesus' teachings about the wine and the bread and the foot washing were meant to inculcate them into the Passover meal served on the early 15th. There is little doubt that there was some form of Passover haggadah at the time of Jesus, although that haggadah would have had fewer elements and not been as formalized as the haggadah generally practiced today. While the temple still stood, the Passover sacrifice was the yearly reminder that you were a priest of the most high God and was an incredible feast of thanks. There is no doubt in this author's mind the haggadah was far more joyous than its current Jewish incarnation because it was designed to be a thanksgiving feast, something the current Jewish haggadah does not really accomplish. Many Jews have to get something to eat after the haggadah because of its length, scarcity of food and because of all of the rituals that must be performed. The joy of knowing that you are a priest of the most high God also seems to be lacking in many current Passover haggadahs.

Given the fact that the Passover haggadah would have been much different at the time of Jesus, and certainly did not include the cup to Elijah, it is possible that Jesus was redefining the meaning of some of the symbols at the Passover meal. God does change things, like changing the makeup of the priesthood and even doing away with the requirement that to be in covenant with God you had to be circumcised if you were a male. Although adding the symbols to the Passover haggadah may be rationalized from scripture, it seems far more likely to this author

And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

Matt. 26:27-8 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

1 Cor. 11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

that the symbols of the bread, wine and foot washing were designed as a reminder of the Passover sacrifice for God's called out people rather than being an addition to the Passover meal.

How Should We Perform the Passover Today?

Jews dispersed throughout the Roman Empire dreamed and planned for at least one pilgrimage to Jerusalem during their lifetimes so they could perform the Passover sacrifice for themselves and for God. The reality of performing a Passover sacrifice on a lamb or a kid ended in 70 A.D., but this author believes the symbols were given so that God's called out people could memorialize the sacrifice of the true Passover each and every year without requiring a structure where God had placed His name because the blood of the true Passover was shed once for all and now only requires a memorial. The sacrifice of a Passover lamb or goat in the temple was incredibly important, but pales to insignificance compared to God sacrificing His only begotten son for us.

The Passover sacrifice was offered on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan for 1,500 years. This sacrifice involved shedding the blood of the Passover, then consuming its body when it was finished being roasted over an open fire. This seems to fit very well with the description of the symbols in Luke. "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."¹¹ John also describes the meaning of the symbols, although Jesus delivered this meaning a full year before he was crucified. "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."¹²

Not only do the symbols of the bread and wine metaphorically match the Passover sacrifice, but the importance of the Passover sacrifice as a yearly reminder that all of God's called out people that they were part of His holy priesthood suggests to this author that the symbols were designed to memorialize the actual sacrifice of the Passover.

Although the symbols of the bread and wine could not be part of a Kiddush, they may well have been a kind of *todah* sacrifice. "The German biblical scholar Hartmut Gese claimed that the *todah* stands behind what Jesus did at the Last Supper. He goes so far as to argue that Jesus' giving thanks over the bread and wine came in the context of a *todah* sacrifice rather than a Passover meal."¹³ Both Paul and Jesus knew all the sacrifices, including the Passover, would cease with the destruction of the temple. So how would the important reminders of the Pass-

11 Luke 22:17-9

12 John 6:53-6

13 Gray, Tim from <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/apologetics/ap0124.html>

over be carried on by God's called out people? "An old Rabbinic teaching says: "In the coming Messianic age all sacrifices will cease, but the thank offering [*todah*] will never cease."¹⁴

Not only do the meanings of the symbols, as defined by Jesus, generally match the meaning of the Passover sacrifice, but it is striking that Jesus died at the same time as the Passover lambs were being sacrificed in the temple.¹⁵ Jesus said that we were supposed to remember his sacrifice when we drank the wine and ate the bread.¹⁶ What better time to remember the sacrifice of Jesus as the true Passover than at the time he was sacrificed? It is true that Jesus fulfilled the function of the atonement sacrifice while not being sacrificed at the same time as the Atonement, so he could have fulfilled the role of the Passover sacrifice without being sacrificed at the same time as the Passover, but he was. The entire format of the gospel of John, written to fill in the gaps of the synoptics, leads up to Jesus the Messiah being sacrificed as the true Passover for us at the same time the Passover lambs were sacrificed in the temple.

Jesus tells us his role as the good shepherd. "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."¹⁷ Paul points out how important the idea of Jesus being sacrificed as a thank offering and not a sin offering is. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."¹⁸ Jesus died to show us the love the Father while we were still sinners, not to magically transform us from sinners. Once we know the love of the Father, then we can let Him work with us to transform us into the righteous children of the creator God.

14 Gray, Tim from <http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/apologetics/ap0124.html>

15 Matt. 27:45-50 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Mark 15:33-7 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

Luke 23:44-6 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

16 1 Corinthians 11:24-5

17 John 10:14-8

18 Rom. 5:6-8

The only logical way this author can perceive for the symbols to truly continue to serve the same function as the Passover lamb is if they are partaken of at the same time and in remembrance that we sacrificed the true Passover lamb, God's only begotten son. Therefore all of the ordinances of the symbols, including foot washing, should be done on the later portions of the 14th of Nisan with an intimate group that will later eat the Passover feast. Very young children did not partake in the sacrifice of the lamb, but were often present in the temple when it was killed and were always present when it was eaten because the children needed to be taught God's ways in all they do. This author believes the practice of partaking of the symbols should be done in like manner.

The bread, wine and foot washing are incredibly important reminders to Christians that they are part of the priesthood of God and that they need to be thankful for all the blessings God has bestowed upon us. As important as the meaning of the symbols are in the Christian liturgy, we must remember even these are a shadow of what is to come.¹⁹ We must remember it is important that we are to put on the character of our Lord, Jesus the Christ.²⁰ We must remember to show judgment without being judgmental. We must remember except for the grace of God, there go I. God loved each and every human enough to sacrifice His only begotten son. Although this sacrifice fulfilled the threefold purpose of Jesus superseding the Passover and Atonement sacrifices and to sanctify the New Covenant with his blood, its main purpose was to show us God's love. He asks all of those who He is calling now to say thank you by accepting the thank offer of the true Passover and by beginning the walk towards a covenant relationship with Him. Those that are already in the marriage covenant to God should observe the memorial of the Passover because they should be even more thankful and they should realize the blessings and the love this relationship bestows upon them. The symbols are important, and this author believes essential for all Christians, but the reality is Jesus is the Christ and God is our loving Father and the symbols are designed to remind us of these essential facts.

19 Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ

20 Rom. 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.
Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Passover Scriptures

Passover in the Old Testament Scriptures

- And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover (*pesah*). (Exo 12:11)
- Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover (*pesah*). (Exo 12:21)
- That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover (*pesah*), who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. (Exo 12:27)
- And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover (*pesah*): There shall no stranger eat thereof: (Exo 12:43)
- And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover (*pesah*) to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. (Exo 12:48)
- Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover (*pesah*) be left unto the morning. (Exo 34:25)
- In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover (*pesah*). (Lev 23:5)
- Let the children of Israel also keep the passover (*pesah*) at his appointed season. (Num 9:2)
- And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover (*pesah*). (Num 9:4)
- And they kept the passover (*pesah*) on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel. (Num 9:5)
- And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover (*pesah*) on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: (Num 9:6)
- Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD. (Num 9:10)
- They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover (*pesah*) they shall keep it. (Num 9:12)
- But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbearth to keep the passover (*pesah*), even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin. (Num 9:13)

- And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land. (Num 9:14)
- And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover (*pesah*) of the LORD. (Num 28:16)
- And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover (*pesah*) the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. (Num 33:3)
- Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. (Deu 16:1)
- Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there. (Deu 16:2)
- Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: (Deu 16:5)
- But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover (*pesah*) at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. (Deu 16:6)
- And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover (*pesah*) on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. (Jos 5:10)
- And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover (*pesah*), unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. (Jos 5:11)
- And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant. (2Ki 23:21)
- Surely there was not holden such a passover (*pesah*) from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; (2Ki 23:22)
- But in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover (*pesah*) was holden to the LORD in Jerusalem. (2Ki 23:23)
- And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD God of Israel. (2Ch 30:1)
- For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover (*pesah*) in the second month. (2Ch 30:2)
- So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written. (2Ch 30:5)
- Then they killed the passover (*pesah*) on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. (2Ch 30:15)

- For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover (*pesah*) otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one (2Ch 30:18)
- Moreover Josiah kept a passover (*pesah*) unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. (2Ch 35:1)
- So kill the passover (*pesah*), and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses. (2Ch 35:6)
- And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover (*pesah*) offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance. (2Ch 35:7)
- And his princes gave willingly unto the people, to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiyah and Zechariah and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover (*pesah*) offerings two thousand and six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen. (2Ch 35:8)
- Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and Nethaneel, his brethren, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave unto the Levites for passover (*pesah*) offerings five thousand small cattle, and five hundred oxen. (2Ch 35:9)
- And they killed the passover (*pesah*), and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them. (2Ch 35:11)
- And they roasted the passover (*pesah*) with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people. (2Ch 35:13)
- So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover (*pesah*), and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah. (2Ch 35:16)
- And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover (*pesah*) at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. (2Ch 35:17)
- And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. (2Ch 35:18)
- In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover (*pesah*) kept. (2Ch 35:19)
- And the children of the captivity kept the passover (*pesah*) upon the fourteenth day of the first month. (Ezr 6:19)
- For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover (*pesah*) for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. (Ezr 6:20)
- In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover (*pesah*), a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. (Eze 45:21)

Passover in the New Testament Scriptures

- Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. (Mat 26:2)
- Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? (Mat 26:17)
- And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. (Mat 26:18)
- And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. (Mat 26:19)
- After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. (Mar 14:1)
- And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? (Mar 14:12)
- And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? (Mar 14:14)
- And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. (Mar 14:16)
- Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. (Luk 2:41)
- Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. (Luk 22:1)
- Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. (Luk 22:7)
- And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. (Luk 22:8)
- And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? (Luk 22:11)
- And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. (Luk 22:13)
- And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: (Luk 22:15)
- And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, (Joh 2:13)
- Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. (Joh 2:23)
- And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. (Joh 6:4)
- And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves. (Joh 11:55)
- Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. (Joh 12:1)

Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. (Joh 13:1)

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. (Joh 18:28)

But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? (Joh 18:39)

And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! (Joh 19:14)

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: (1Co 5:7)

Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. (Heb 11:28)

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