

# The Passover - is it for Christians?

What are the differences between the Passover and the Lord's Supper? The apostle Paul referred to "the last supper" of Jesus Christ as "the Lord's supper" (1 Corinthians 11:20) in teaching Gentile Christians to observe the symbols of Christ's death. WHEN should the Passover, or the "Lord's supper" be observed? At the beginning of the fourteenth of Nisan (Abib); coinciding with Jesus' famous last supper - or at the end of the fourteenth, on the beginning of the fifteenth, when the Jews celebrated the Passover during the time of Christ? Here is the TRUTH about the Passover and the Lord's supper from the pages of your own Bible!

*By Garner Ted Armstrong*

**W**hen God commanded Israel to observe the first Passover it was an utterly unique occasion in all history. The first Passover was a monumental historical occurrence; an absolutely unique event which had never happened previously, and which has never happened since.

For centuries, Israel had been a nation of slaves. Knowledge of annual seasons, the weekly cycle, the seventh day Sabbath had become submerged in a tidal wave of paganism; they were completely ignorant of God's sacred calendar; Almighty God had to reveal to them the months of the year, the annual holy days and their deep significance, as well as the weekly Sabbath.

Notice, "And the Eternal 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." God called the name of the first month "the month of green ears." Its name was Abib (Exodus 13:4) and was later called Nisan (Nehemiah 2:1; Esther 3:7).

This marked the beginning of the sacred year of the Hebrew calendar, commencing with the month of spring harvest.

The Israelites were instructed to single out an unblemished lamb or kid (Exodus 12:3-5) from their flocks, keeping it "...until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Exodus 12:6).

Much controversy has occurred over the meaning of the phrase "in the evening" from a Hebrew expression meaning "between the two evenings." This will be thoroughly explained later.

God instructed "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

"Eat not of it raw, nor sodden [boiled] 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" (Exodus 12:6-10).

Obviously, since they were to eat the flesh "in that night" (that is, the night following the slaying of the lamb "in the evening") the lamb had to be killed a sufficient period of time prior to its actual eating to allow for its preparation according to God's explicit instructions.

God told Moses and Aaron to instruct the Israelites that this unusual meal was to be eaten as if in great haste, with trepidation, as if poised for immediate flight!

It was the usual practice to allow an animal to hang in a cool place after being slaughtered; the aging and then the butchering of the meat perhaps coming several days or even a week or more later depending upon the climate.

Thus, the eating of this lamb (or kid of the goats) within only hours of its slaughtering, was obviously a very hasty meal; something unusual, symbolizing a meal eaten during a time of emergency.

The Israelites were told "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hands; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Eternal's Passover.

"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 Eternal.

"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 the plagues shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:11-13).

The girding of the loins was accomplished by tucking the skirt-like apparel worn during that day into a leathern girdle, or thick belt. It was always done just prior to running, or walking rapidly. It was an unusual command to eat the meal with their "shoes on their feet," for shoes were not generally worn indoors. Such a custom prevails to this day in Middle Eastern and Oriental countries. Foot gear was worn out of doors, but, upon entering a dwelling, was left outside, or in a foyer. As is evidenced in the later custom of "foot washing" (in connection with the celebration of Jesus Christ of His last supper) servants would provide water and wash the feet of important guests, who would then slip their feet into slippers or sandals, or perhaps go barefoot on the skins or carpet on the floor of the domicile.

A staff, cane, or walking stick would normally be left near the door, or perhaps in the foyer. However, they were explicitly commanded to eat this meal one-handed - with their walking staffs in their hands - as a symbol of great haste!

Consider all the elements of this meal: It was to be eaten very soon after the slaughter of the animal (extremely unusual); their canes or walking sticks in their hands (very unusual); and they were not to take time to visit, enjoy a drawn-out meal like a family occasion, but were to eat the food quickly ("ye shall eat it in haste!") all which showed an extremely hastily-eaten meal done as if in trepidation, prior to immediate flight!

As will be seen later, the chronological events leading up to and concluding in the famous "last supper" of the Lord Jesus Christ are positively established. There is no question whatever concerning the time of the "Lord's supper"; its relationship to the Passover, and the time when the paschal lambs were slaughtered.

However, because some have assumed the Israelites did not exit Egypt on the same night of the eating of the paschal meal - after the "passing over" of the death angel - ; because it is further assumed that the Israelites spent the entirety of the following day "spoiling" the Egyptians and it is further falsely assumed that the Exodus commenced the following night, many have become confused about when the Exodus occurred, and when the paschal meal took place.

For example, those who assumed they were partaking of the New Testament symbols of the body and the blood of Jesus Christ (unleavened bread and wine) coincident with the ancient Passover supper began to believe there were eight days of unleavened bread, not seven! Their confusion stems from their assumption that the New Testament observance of Christ - His famous "last supper" - coincided exactly with the ancient Egyptian paschal meal! But, as you shall see clearly, it did not!

Following this assumption, many have partaken of the symbols of unleavened bread and wine on the Passover (Lord's supper), and then wondered about the custom of putting leavening out of their homes on the following day. Having once eaten unleavened bread in connection with the ceremonies commemorating Christ's death, they feel "strange" eating anything leavened on the following daylight part of the fourteenth of Nisan - prior to the actual beginning of the SEVEN days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Some have said, "But it doesn't feel 'right' to eat hotcakes the next morning, or a cheeseburger the next afternoon, after we have already eaten unleavened bread on the night of the Passover!"

Simply because they do not understand the clear difference between the time of celebrating the ancient Passover in Egypt and Christ's last supper - a difference of around seventeen to twenty four hours - a vast difference in ceremony, symbols, and typology, they mistakenly have pangs of conscience from eating anything leavened on the daylight part of the fourteenth of Nisan - hours before God says the Days of Unleavened Bread are to commence.

But God said "seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread!" He further said "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!" (Exodus 12:18). Obviously, if you count inclusively (commencing with the fourteenth day - meaning at its beginning) you are dealing with eight days!

But if you are commencing the eating of unleavened bread "at even on the fourteenth, meaning just before

the going down of the sun; meaning that your meal, while it may have commenced just barely before sunset, continues on into the evening hours, or the BEGINNING of the fifteenth, then there is no problem whatever! You have SEVEN full days and perhaps a couple of hours - not eight days.

The "problem" for many sincere persons was in their misunderstanding of the truly New Testament character of Christ's famous "last supper"!

That there are only seven days of unleavened bread is perfectly clear. (Exodus 12:15, 19).

That the ancient Israelites were to eat the paschal lamb and the unleavened bread "IN THAT NIGHT" (Exodus 12:8), meaning on the beginning of the fifteenth is also clear! To understand the sequence of events on the very first Passover, one has but to read the scriptures carefully, comparing all relevant scriptures, and avoid erroneous assumptions. Now, from the pages of your Bible, let's see what happened during that first Passover; let's come to understand WHEN the exodus occurred!

### ***Between The Two Evenings!***

God instructed the Israelites, "And ye shall keep it [the paschal 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... and they shall eat the flesh in that night..." (Exodus 6-8).

Wide divergencies of opinions have obtained resulting from the use of the Hebrew expression "in the evening" which, technically, means "between the two evenings." Some, including Lightfoot, took the expression to mean after the going down of the sun, but prior to full dark. If they were in error, they had thus placed the slaying of the paschal lamb and the eating of the Passover meal at the close of the thirteenth, and at the beginning of the fourteenth! Remember, God begins the days with sunset. Thus, if they were to kill the paschal lamb on the fourteenth "between the two evenings," and IF "between the two evenings" meant after sunset but prior to full dark, then the paschal lamb would have been eaten in the late evening after the thirteenth, just after the beginning of the fourteenth!

Speaking of the precise meaning of the phrase "between the two evenings," Kitto's Encyclopedia of Biblical Literature says "Tradition... interprets the phrase between the two evenings to mean from afternoon to the disappearing of the sun, the first evening being from the time when the sun begins to decline from its vertical or noontime point toward the west; and the second from its going down and vanishing out of sight which is the reason why the daily sacrifice might be killed at 12:30 p.m. on a Friday (Mishna, Pesachim, v. 1; Maimonides, Hilchoth, Korban, Pesach., 1.4). But as the paschal lamb was slain after the daily sacrifice, it generally took place from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. We should have deemed it superfluous to add, that such faithful followers of Jewish tradition as Sandia, Rashi, Kimchi, Ralbag, etc., espoused this definition of the ancient Jewish canons, were it not for the assertion which is made in some of the best Christian commentaries and which is repeated in the excellent article Passover in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, that 'Jarchi and Kimchi hold that the two evenings were the time immediately before and immediately after sunset so that the point of time at which the sun sets divides them.' Now Rashi most distinctively declares, 'From the sixth hour (12 o'clock) and upwards is called between the two evenings because the sun begins to set for the evening. Hence, it appears to me that the phrase between the two evenings denotes the hours between the evening of the day and the evening of the night. The evening of the day is from the beginning of the seventh hour (immediately after noontime), when the evening shadows begin to lengthen, whilst the evening of the night is the beginning of the night' (Commentary on Exodus 12:6). Kimchi says almost literally the same thing: 'Between the two evenings is from the time when the sun begins to incline towards the west, which is from the sixth hour (12 o'clock) and upwards. It is called between the two evenings because there are two evenings, for from the time that the sun begins to decline is one evening, and the other evening is after the sun has gone down, and it is the space between which is meant by between the two evenings' (Lexicon s. v.)...

"Eustathius, in a note on the seventeenth book of the odyssey, shows that the Greeks too held that there were two evenings, one which they called the latter evening at the close of the day; and the other the former evening, which commenced immediately after noon" (Vid. Bochart Hierozoic, Part I, lib. ii. cap. I, oper., tom. ii. p.559, edit. 1712).

Now, let's examine the irrefutable internal biblical proof about what time of day is meant by the phrase "between the two evenings," translated "in the evening" in Exodus 12:6.

God said, "...and they shall eat the flesh in that night" (Exodus 12:8) proving that the killing of the lamb (or kid) took place a few hours prior to the going down of the sun. The paschal meal was concluded in the early hours of the fifteenth of Nisan (within only a few hours after sunset). "SEVEN DAYS shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day shall ye put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day (obviously counting inclusively; seven days in all), that soul shall be cutoff from Israel" (Exodus 12:15). To embrace only seven days, the Days of Unleavened Bread HAD TO BEGIN ON THE FIFTEENTH, and the process of putting leavening out of their houses had to be completed ON THE FOURTEENTH, prior to the preparation for the paschal meal.

Otherwise, if the original Passover had taken place just after the thirteenth, just at the beginning of the fourteenth, you have EIGHT DAYS of unleavened bread!

But the Bible says there were to be only SEVEN DAYS of Unleavened Bread!

Notice further proof: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month AT EVEN, he shall eat unleavened bread, UNTIL the one and twentieth day of the month at even." If you begin counting WITH the fourteenth or at the end of the thirteenth, including the whole day, look what you have:

**Fourteenth Nisan First Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Fifteenth Nisan Second Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Sixteenth Nisan Third Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Seventeenth Nisan Fourth Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Eighteenth Nisan Fifth Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Nineteenth Nisan Sixth Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Twentieth Nisan Seventh Day of Unleavened Bread**  
**Twenty-first Nisan Eighth Day of Unleavened Bread**

Do you see? It follows that the expression "on the fourteenth day of the month at even" means AT THE END OF THE FOURTEENTH, just as the fifteenth is about to BEGIN, or there would be EIGHT days of Unleavened Bread.

The first Day of Unleavened Bread is the FIFTEENTH, not the fourteenth.

But the paschal meal was to be in preparation, including the putting away of leavening, and the killing of the lamb (or kid) very late on the fourteenth! Therefore, the Israelite's homes would be unleavened for a full SEVEN DAYS, plus only a few hours, late on the fourteenth, prior to the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

God said, "SEVEN DAYS shall there be no leaven found in your houses" (Exodus 6:19).

Notice further proof: "Observe the month of Abib [green ears], and keep the Passover unto the Eternal thy God: for in the month Abib the Eternal thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt BY NIGHT. Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the Passover unto the Eternal thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the Eternal 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:... and there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there anything of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day AT EVEN remain all night until the morning."

Here is further proof that the sacrificing of the lamb was LATE ON THE FOURTEENTH, just before the going down of the sun beginning the fifteenth - which was the first day of seven days of unleavened bread.

Notice, God said nothing should remain of the flesh they had sacrificed - when? After the thirteenth, at the beginning of the fourteenth, perhaps 27 hours BEFORE the fifteenth, or the first day of unleavened bread? NO! - which they had sacrificed, "THE FIRST DAY [OF THE FEAST - OF THE SEVEN!] AT EVEN remain all night until the morning!" (Deuteronomy 16:14).

*When Was The Exodus?*

Much confusion has existed in the minds of many over just when the exodus from Egypt occurred because of a false teaching about the "spoiling" of the Egyptians and a misunderstanding over the command to remain indoors that night of the plague against the firstborn, and the actual passing-over of the death angel.

Various arguments have been presented attempting to justify the position that the original Egyptian Passover was identical in frame of time with the "last supper" observed by Jesus Christ with His disciples, i.e., at the beginning of the FOURTEENTH of Abib!

The Most important arguments set forth to justify this belief are:

(1) The Israelites were told not to go out of their doors "until the morning." Thus, even though the death angel had already passed over the houses of the Israelites at midnight; even though the death angel had already slain countless thousands of the firstborn of Egypt; even though Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, shortly after midnight, and were URGENT upon the Israelites that they leave then, it is believed by some that the Israelites staunchly refused to cross over the thresholds of their doorways until the daylight hours of the following "morning," meaning the daylight part of the FOURTEENTH!

(2) Communication would have been very difficult. Perhaps more than TWO MILLION Israelites would have exited Egypt, on foot. Since no mass communication media existed, it would have been impossible to marshal such a force, scattered as they were throughout the land of Egypt, then commence a forced nighttime march within hours after the slaying of the firstborn.

(3) God prophesied that the Israelitish women would "spoil" (the erroneous phrase "borrow from" appears in the King James version) the Egyptians of jewelry of all sorts, and would therefore "take wages from" or "plunder" the Egyptians. It is argued they scarcely could have done this in haste, only moments after hearing of the death of the firstborn, and that, in any case, Egyptian women would hardly have given away their personal jewelry within moments or hours after the death of their own sons, especially to the very individuals whom they held responsible!

At first blush, these arguments seem cogent.

Especially, if one has reasoned from the obviously unmistakable fact that Jesus Christ of Nazareth observed His last Passover or the "last supper" (referred to by the apostle Paul as "the Lord's supper." 1 Corinthians 11:20) after the going down of the sun on the thirteenth, or at the beginning of the FOURTEENTH!

But this necessitated the assumption that by the time of Christ, the Jews were observing the Passover ON THE WRONG DAY!

However, such a supposition is devastating to arguments set forth by theologians who present a strong case for the weekly Sabbath, offering as supportive evidence the fact that time could not have been "lost," because to the Jews were given the oracles of God, the sacred calendar, and the knowledge of the weekly Sabbath! It is argued that it would have been impossible for a scattered race, numbering into the millions of human beings, to have all "forgotten" the weekly Sabbath or the weekly cycle at the same time!

How ludicrous it would have been for Jesus Christ to have missed the opportunity to straighten out His own disciples, and Christians for all time, on the fact that the Pharisees and Sadducees were observing the Passover on the wrong day! But no, Christ told His disciples that these leaders of the Jewish religious community "sat in Moses' seat" and urged His disciples to obey the theological edicts of such spiritual leaders, even if they did not emulate "their works."

It is true that there were chapters in history when the Israelitish nation, as a whole, abandoned the practice of the observance of God's annual holy days. It is equally true that, upon restoration of such knowledge, they were meticulously careful with regard to the date.

No, the Jews did not forget the correct date for the Passover.

Now, let's investigate each of these arguments in depth.

(I) "The Israelites were told not to go out of their doors 'until the morning,' so even though the death angel had already passed over the houses of the Israelites; even though countless thousands of the firstborn of Egypt had already been slain, the Israelites would have staunchly refused to cross their thresholds until the daylight hours of the following morning." But it is clear that the entire tableau of the paschal supper is rendered completely artificial and unnecessary if this assumption is true.

Remember, the Israelites went out of Egypt BY NIGHT!

"Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover unto the Eternal thy God: for in the month of Abib the Eternal thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night!" (Deuteronomy 16:1).

We know, then, unequivocally and without a shadow of a doubt, that the Israelites first exited their hovels in Goshen to journey from "Rameses to Succoth" (Numbers 33:4, 5) BY NIGHT!

Remember, God begins the days at sunset. Thus, the nighttime portion of a day is the first part of the day, commencing the previous sunset. Now, on what day of the month of Abib did the Israelites depart Rameses?

"And they departed from Rameses in the first month (Abib), 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" (Numbers 33:3).

Thus, it is clear they went out of Egypt ON THE FIFTEENTH, and AT NIGHT! That means they exited Egypt sometime during the nighttime hours of the fifteenth of Abib, "on the morrow" following the passing over of the death angel!

Notice the language of the original Passover instructions: "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 [of the fourteenth!]. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night [AFTER sundown, during the dark hours of the late evening, following the sacrificing, or killing of the lamb 'at even' meaning late on the fourteenth], roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

"Eat not of it raw, nor sodden [boiled] 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 hands; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Eternal's Passover" (Exodus 12:6-11).

To kill, prepare, and eat a hasty dinner of roast lamb would require at least a few hours. It would be difficult for hundreds of thousands to do so in less time, especially when the killing of the paschal lamb involved some degree of ceremony, such as selecting a killing ground, carefully gathering the spilled blood in basins, going through the ritual of dipping branches of hyssop into the basin, carefully painting the door posts and lintels with the blood.

The animals were only to be "field dressed," not completely butchered; notice that they were to be roast with "the head and the purtenance thereof" meaning that the animals were not to have been carefully quartered, or butchered in any fashion, but roast whole.

Since the killing was to take place "in the evening" or the waning hours of the afternoon, and the roasting to begin soon thereafter, it would have been but a matter of a couple of hours or so after starting the roasting fires that the animals would have been ready for hasty consumption.

Here was the enactment of a great emergency! They were to eat (in the case of males who carried walking staffs) with their shoes on their feet, their skirts tucked into their leathern girdles as if ready for instant flight, and to eat one-handed, with their staff in their hand, and partaking of the roast meat with the other hand! They were to eat it in trepidation, in fear, and in great haste!

Notice further, "And it came to pass, that at midnight (on the FIFTEENTH!) the Eternal 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 (note! The death angel had already passed! Now, even though Moses and Aaron had been included in the command that they were not to go out of their doors until 'the morning' following the passing of the death angel to insure they were not themselves slain, Pharaoh calls for these two leaders, as representatives of all the people. They obeyed, for the danger was now passed-over! They exited their homes, and went to Pharaoh's palace!) and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Eternal as you have said.

"Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone, and bless me also.

"And the Egyptians were URGENT upon the people, that they might send them out of the land IN HASTE; for they said, We all be dead men.

"And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

"And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed (had borrowed; see Exodus 3:21-22; 11:2) of the Egyptians' jewels of silver, and jewels of gold and raiment;

"And the Eternal gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians so that they lent (gladly gave) unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.

"And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle.

"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!" (Exodus 12:29-39).

Here was the logical sequence to their enactment of a meal eaten in great trepidation, as if poised for instant flight! For, within a few hours after midnight, they were IN GREAT FLIGHT! Notice the words of the holy scriptures! The Egyptians were "urgent" upon them. They were "thrust out." "Neither could they tarry." "They had prepared themselves no victuals." They were to eat "in haste."

As you can see from this language, it makes no sense whatsoever to insist that the Israelites spent the daylight period following the night of the passing over of the death angel, "spoiling" the Egyptians during a full day and then begin the Exodus the following night!

Almighty God means what He says!

God did not intend that the Israelites "playact" in preparing an extremely hasty meal, eating it with their loins girded as if in preparation for instant flight; virtually eating it with one hand, while the other clutched a walking stick or cane; eating it in trepidation and fear as if they were to leave at any moment - and doing all of this in vain, knowing full well they were going to spend the entire daylight period of the following day, more than twelve long hours, in "spoiling" the Egyptians!

No, the language used in scripture such as being "thrust out," and the Egyptians being "urgent" upon them to leave - the plain fact that they had "prepared themselves no victual" when there would have been plenty of time to do so had they remained alt during the following day, PROVES, conclusively, that the Israelites left Rameses during the early pre-dawn hours of the nighttime on the fifteenth of Abib!

Obviously, the command not to exit their doorways "until the morning" was lifted after the death angel had passed! The plague was now over. Moses and Aaron, as a type of the whole nation of Israel, were hastily summoned to Pharaoh's palace. Though they were indoors, in their own respective homes, having eaten of the paschal lamb as had all the others, with the blood clearly sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of their houses, it was now perfectly safe to exit their homes, since the death angel had now passed over and was gone from the land!

There is a further possibility to be considered. The expression "brought you out" is figurative, rather than literal; metaphorical, rather than chronological. While it is most logical, according to all the language of the Bible, that the initial removal from Rameses to Succoth commenced in the wee hours of the morning, the expression "brought you out" may well have included all of God's miraculous manifestations during the plagues, the death angel, and the whole process of releasing Pharaoh's grip on the Israelites - "bringing them out" from slavery, rather than referring to a narrow time frame.

The language of Numbers 16:1 is illustrative of this: "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover unto the Eternal thy God; for in the month of Abib the Eternal thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night."

Whichever of the two possibilities is true; whether the Israelites were on the move from Rameses to Succoth by 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, or whether they waited until about 5:00 or 5:30 (whenever the first rays of sunlight might have appeared at that season), it is very clear they left ON THE FIFTEENTH. (See accompanying charts.)

(2) "Communication would have been very difficult."

It is nonsense to assume there was any difficulty whatsoever with communicating within only a matter of minutes, or at the most an hour or so, with the entirety of the slave nation of Israel.

When God first appeared unto Moses, commissioning him to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt, it was

understood that the purpose was for the observance of a sacrificial offering to God - the institution of an annual holy occasion!

God had 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 shall come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the King of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Eternal God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three day's journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Eternal 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" (Exodus 3:17-20). Thus, all the leaders were involved fully.

As Moses was journeying back to Egypt he was met by Aaron (Exodus 4:27), who was told all that had transpired between God and Moses.

"And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: and Aaron spake all the words the Eternal had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people... and afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Eternal God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness" (Exodus 4:27-30; 5, 1). The people all knew, in advance, that the exodus could occur at any time.

Following the plague of the frogs, Pharaoh said "...I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the Eternal" (Exodus 8:8).

The point is, the elders of Israel were fully informed from the very beginning of Moses' and Aaron's attempts to extricate the people of Israel from Egypt, even before the outpouring of the first plague! Constantly, reference was made to the Israelitish request that they may "Journey three days into the wilderness to hold a feast unto the Eternal!" (see Exodus 10:9, 25).

By the time of the killing of the paschal lamb, the Israelites had already "borrowed" ("taken wages of" or "spoiled") the Egyptians.

Remember, the Israelites lived in Goshen. A policy of "apartheid" or complete segregation between the captive Israelites and Egyptians was generally in effect. In the main, the Israelites traveled to their places of work during the day, and retreated to their own hovels and ramshackle dwellings (as would be befitting slaves) by night.

They had witnessed all the plagues falling upon Egypt, and had noted, with terror and awe, the incredible difference between themselves and the Egyptians; that the terrible plagues of lice, boils on cattle, flies, frogs, the rivers turning to blood, etc., befell the Egyptians in Egypt proper, but did not touch the Israelites living in the area called "Goshen."

With the systematic organization of the tribes according to various elders (Exodus 6:9-27); with repeated announcements that at any moment Pharaoh was going to let them go into the wilderness; expecting such a decree to be issued from moment to moment for the better part of a week, surely rapid communication through the elders to the lowliest individual could be accomplished in a matter of very few minutes, at the most, perhaps an hour or so!

No, the argument that communication would have required a full twelve hour daylight period following sunrise on the morning after the passing over of the death angel is superficial, and erroneous.

Now, let's examine the next argument: (3) "Spoiling the Egyptians would have consumed the entire daylight hours of the day following the passing over of the death angel."

This assumption is ludicrous, in the light of clear statements in scripture. Notice well, "And I will give this people favor 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' (require-ask-take wages of) 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" (Exodus 3:21, 22),

This promise from God was given to Moses while he was yet in Midian - BEFORE HE RETURNED TO EGYPT! It was given long before the beginning of the plagues, and was surely communicated by Moses to the people!

Now read Exodus 11:2, 3, "SPEAK NOW in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow [take wages

of] his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

"And the Eternal gave the people favour in sight of the Egyptians..."

This was hours BEFORE the Passover; after the plague of the locusts, and the plague of three days' darkness. The Israelites were plainly told to "spoil" the Egyptians long before the death angel was to pass over.

It becomes clear, then, that; (1) The paschal lamb was sacrificed at some time after midday, and prior to the going down of the sun on the fourteenth. (2) It was eaten after sundown, at the beginning of the fifteenth. (3) The death angel passed over the Israelites at mid-night, killing the Egyptian firstborn. (4) Moses and Aaron, no doubt accompanied by a number of the elders of Israel, were summoned to Pharaoh's palace immediately following the killing of the firstborn. (5) Pharaoh was urgent upon them to get out immediately. (6) The people had been well-prepared in advance for just such an announcement. (7) They had "spoiled" the Egyptians well in advance - there was no need for any delay. (8) Moses and Aaron, and the elders of Israel who appeared before Pharaoh did so at night, but after the death angel had passed, thus proving the command not to go out until "morning" had been lifted OR, the expression "brought you out by night" may be metaphorical, and the bulk of Israel remained indoors until first light. (9) They left immediately, for their bread was not leavened, neither had they prepared themselves any victual.

Study the accompanying charts, together with all scriptural references, to create in your mind a vivid impression of the entire week of Unleavened Bread, and how the whole process of the Exodus took place.

**ABIB 14th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Preparation for Passover and Days of  
Unleavened Bread)

|           |                   |                                                                    |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           | The three days of darkness end. Pharaoh calls Moses,               |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM           | says to go, but insists cattle must stay. Moses says               |
|           | 8:00 PM           | cattle must go. Pharaoh changes his mind, refuses to let           |
|           | 9:00 PM           | Israelites go (Exodus 10:21-29).Moses pronounces final             |
|           | 10:00 PM          | plague - that of death of firstborn - goes from Pharaoh's          |
|           | 11:00 PM          | presence in anger (Exodus 11:1-8).                                 |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                    |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                    |
|           | 2:00 AM           |                                                                    |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                                                                    |
|           | 4:00 AM           |                                                                    |
|           | 5:00 AM           | Moses gives final command concerning Passover lamb during          |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           | morning hours. Explains death angel will pass this night           |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           | (Exodus 12:12).                                                    |
|           | 8:00 AM           |                                                                    |
|           | 9:00 AM           | "Spoiling" of Egyptians probably occurred during daylight hours of |

|                     |               |                                                                                  |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     | 10:00 AM      | fourteenth, while final preparations for Passover meal being made                |
|                     | 11:00 AM      | (Exodus 3:22;11:2).                                                              |
| NOON                | 12:00<br>noon |                                                                                  |
|                     | 1:00 PM       | Paschal lambs (or kids) slain "at even" or in afternoon of fourteenth,           |
|                     | 2:00 PM       | but allowing sufficient time for preparation - some hours required for roasting, |
|                     | 3:00 PM       | for was roasted "whole," like barbecue. Blood was collected, painted             |
|                     | 4:00 PM       | on lintels and doorposts of Israelites' houses.                                  |
|                     | 5:00 PM       |                                                                                  |
| SUNSET<br>(Approx.) | 6:00 PM       | Israelites indoors. Preparing to eat Passover.                                   |

### **ABIB 15th: EXODUS WEEK**

(First day of Unleavened Bread – Annual HolyDay;  
Leviticus 23:6)

|                     |                   |                                                                        |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET<br>(Approx.) | 6:00 PM           | Passover meal being eaten, with loins girded, shoes on feet, staffs in |
|                     | 7:00 PM           | hand, with roast lamb (or kid), bitter herbs, unleavened bread         |
|                     | 8:00 PM           | (Exodus 12:9-11)                                                       |
|                     | 9:00 PM           | Remains of lamb (or kid) to be burned (Exodus 12:10).                  |
|                     | 10:00 PM          |                                                                        |
|                     | 11:00 PM          | Death angel smites Egyptians - no house is spared save Israelites      |
| MIDNIGHT            | 12:00<br>midnight | (Exodus 12:29).                                                        |
|                     | 1:00 AM           | Pharaoh summons Moses, Aaron, immediately (Exodus 12:31).              |
|                     | 2:00 AM           | Orders Israelites out of Goshen urgently, Egyptians "urgent" upon      |
|                     | 3:00 AM           | them, depart "in haste" (Exodus 12:31,33,39).                          |
|                     | 4:00 AM           |                                                                        |
|                     | 5:00 AM           | This was a NIGHT to "be much observed" (Exodus 12:42).                 |

|           |            |                                                                                |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM    | "Went out of Egypt with high hand" (Numbers 33:4).                             |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM    |                                                                                |
|           | 8:00 AM    | Probably about 3 million Israelites, with huge herds of cattle, goats,         |
|           | 9:00 AM    | sheep, journeyed from Rameses to temporary camping place, later                |
|           | 10:00 AM   | called "Succoth," meaning "booths" (Exodus 12:37, 38).                         |
|           | 11:00 AM   |                                                                                |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon | Included in their number were a number of other races who had become           |
|           | 1:00 PM    | "proselytes" ("A mixed multitude went up also with them" Exodus 12:38).        |
|           | 2:00 PM    | They stopped for food, but baked unleavened bread (1st day of Unleavened       |
|           | 3:00 PM    | Bread) "for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt, and    |
|           | 4:00 PM    | could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual" (Exodus |
|           | 5:00 PM    | 2:39).                                                                         |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM    | Camping in "Succoth."                                                          |
| (Approx.) |            |                                                                                |

**ABIB 16th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Second day of Unleavened Bread)

|           |                   |                                                                           |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                                                                           |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM           | At Succoth for the night                                                  |
|           | 8:00 PM           |                                                                           |
|           | 9:00 PM           |                                                                           |
|           | 10:00 PM          |                                                                           |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                                                                           |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                           |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                           |
|           | 2:00 AM           |                                                                           |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                                                                           |
|           | 4:00 AM           | "And they took their journey from Succoth,... and the Eternal went before |

them by day

|           |            |                                                                                            |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | 5:00 AM    | in a pillar of fire, to give them light ..."                                               |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM    |                                                                                            |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 8:00 AM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 9:00 AM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 10:00 AM   |                                                                                            |
|           | 11:00 AM   |                                                                                            |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon |                                                                                            |
|           | 1:00 PM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 2:00 PM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 3:00 PM    |                                                                                            |
|           | 4:00 PM    | ".. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from |
|           | 5:00 PM    | before the people" (Exodus 13:20-22).                                                      |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM    |                                                                                            |
| (Approx.) |            |                                                                                            |

**ABIB 17th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Third day of Unleavened Bread)

|           |                   |                                                                                 |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           | 3rd day of travel - on route from Etham, "In the edge of the wilderness"        |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM           | (Exodus 13:20).                                                                 |
|           | 8:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 9:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 10:00 PM          |                                                                                 |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                                                                                 |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                                 |
|           | 1:00 AM           | "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not |
|           | 2:00 AM           | through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God |

said,

|           |            |                                                                                      |
|-----------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | 3:00 AM    | lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt      |
|           | 4:00 AM    | .                                                                                    |
|           | 5:00 AM    |                                                                                      |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM    |                                                                                      |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM    | "But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea: and |
|           | 8:00 AM    | the children of Israel went up harnessed (armed) out of the land of Egypt"           |
|           | 9:00 AM    | (Exodus 13:17,18).                                                                   |
|           | 10:00 AM   |                                                                                      |
|           | 11:00 AM   |                                                                                      |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon |                                                                                      |
|           | 1:00 PM    |                                                                                      |
|           | 2:00 PM    |                                                                                      |
|           | 3:00 PM    |                                                                                      |
|           | 4:00 PM    | Making camp at "Etham," at the edge of the wilderness (Exodus 13:20).                |
|           | 5:00 PM    |                                                                                      |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM    |                                                                                      |
| (Approx.) |            |                                                                                      |

**ABIB 18th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Fourth day of Unleavened Bread)

|           |          |                                                                                         |
|-----------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM  | Encamped at Etham.                                                                      |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM  |                                                                                         |
|           | 8:00 PM  | God tells Moses, "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn, and encamp before    |
|           | 9:00 PM  | Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon; before it shall ye     |
|           | 10:00 PM | encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel They are entangled in |
|           | 11:00 PM | the land, the wilderness hath shut them in" (Exodus 14:2,3).                            |

|           |                   |                                                                                         |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                                         |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 2:00 AM           | "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them"                    |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 4:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 5:00 AM           | "And it was told the king of Egypt that the people (had) fled, and... he made ready his |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           | chariot, and took his people with him:... he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all  |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           | the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them" (Exodus 14).                |
|           | 8:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 9:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 10:00 AM          |                                                                                         |
|           | 11:00 AM          | Pharaoh's pursuit begins.                                                               |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon        |                                                                                         |
|           | 1:00 PM           | Israelites journey toward Pihahiroth.                                                   |
|           | 2:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 3:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 4:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 5:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
| (Approx.) |                   |                                                                                         |

**ABIB 19th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Fifth day of Unleavened Bread)

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM |
|           | 8:00 PM |
|           | 9:00 PM |

|           |                   |                             |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
|           | 10:00 PM          |                             |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                             |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                             |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 2:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 4:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 5:00 AM           |                             |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           | Traveling toward Pihahiroth |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 8:00 AM           |                             |
|           | 9:00 AM           | Pharaoh in pursuit.         |
|           | 10:00 AM          |                             |
|           | 11:00 AM          |                             |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon        |                             |
|           | 1:00 PM           |                             |
|           | 2:00 PM           |                             |
|           | 3:00 PM           |                             |
|           | 4:00 PM           |                             |
|           | 5:00 PM           |                             |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                             |
| (Approx.) |                   |                             |

**ABIB 20th: EXODUS WEEK**  
(Sixth day of Unleavened Bread)

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM |
|           | 8:00 PM |
|           | 9:00 PM |

|           |                   |                                                                                 |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | 10:00 PM          |                                                                                 |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                                                                                 |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                                 |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 2:00 AM           | Pursuit continues.                                                              |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 4:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 5:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           | "And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pihahiroth, which is before |
|           | 8:00 AM           | Baalzephon: and they pitched (camped) before Migdol" (Numbers 33:7).            |
|           | 9:00 AM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 10:00 AM          |                                                                                 |
|           | 11:00 AM          |                                                                                 |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon        |                                                                                 |
|           | 1:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 2:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 3:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 4:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
|           | 5:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                                                                                 |
| (Approx.) |                   |                                                                                 |

### **ABIB 21st: EXODUS WEEK**

(Seventh and last day of Unleavened Bread; Leviticus 23:8)

|           |         |                                               |
|-----------|---------|-----------------------------------------------|
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM | "Pitched before Migdol" (Numbers 33:7).       |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM | "An holy convocation"; no work, no traveling. |
|           | 8:00 PM |                                               |

|           |                   |                                                                                         |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | 9:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 10:00 PM          |                                                                                         |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                                                                                         |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight |                                                                                         |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 2:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 3:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 4:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 5:00 AM           |                                                                                         |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           | Pharaoh overtakes Israel. "But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and     |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           | chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by     |
|           | 8:00 AM           | the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon. And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the          |
|           | 9:00 AM           | children of Israel lifted up their eyes...and said...Because there were no graves in    |
|           | 10:00 AM          | Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? ...it would have been better   |
|           | 11:00 AM          | for us to serve the Egyptians...and Moses stretched out his hand over the sea" (Exodus  |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon        | 14:9-21).                                                                               |
|           | 1:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 2:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 3:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
|           | 4:00 PM           | "...and the Eternal caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and |
|           | 5:00 PM           | made the dry land" (Exodus 14:21)                                                       |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                                                                                         |
| (Approx.) |                   |                                                                                         |

### **ABIB 22nd: EXODUS WEEK**

SUNSET 6:00 PM

|           |                   |                                                                               |
|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (Approx.) | 7:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 8:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 9:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 10:00 PM          | Strong wind blows apart waters of Red Sea all this night (Exodus 14:21, 22).  |
|           | 11:00 PM          |                                                                               |
| MIDNIGHT  | 12:00<br>midnight | God casts light on Israel, but darkness on Egyptians (Exodus 14:20)           |
|           | 1:00 AM           |                                                                               |
|           | 2:00 AM           |                                                                               |
|           | 3:00 AM           | 3:00 a.m., "The morning watch," God troubles Egyptians, they begin to reverse |
|           | 4:00 AM           | direction.                                                                    |
|           | 5:00 AM           |                                                                               |
| SUNRISE   | 6:00 AM           | 6:00 A.M. EXODUS TAKES PLACE, Israel escapes through dry sea bed              |
| (Approx.) | 7:00 AM           | (Exodus 14:26-31).                                                            |
|           | 8:00 AM           | Pharaoh's army drowned (Exodus 14:26-31).                                     |
|           | 9:00 AM           |                                                                               |
|           | 10:00 AM          | Israel regroups on opposite shore. "Song of Moses" sung by Miriam and women   |
|           | 11:00 AM          | (Exodus 15:1-21).                                                             |
| NOON      | 12:00 noon        |                                                                               |
|           | 1:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 2:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 3:00 PM           | Begin three day's journey into wilderness (Exodus 15:22).                     |
|           | 4:00 PM           |                                                                               |
|           | 5:00 PM           |                                                                               |
| SUNSET    | 6:00 PM           |                                                                               |
| (Approx.) |                   |                                                                               |

## **The Passover in the New Testament**

Much confusion has arisen over the Passover during Jesus' last moments on earth due to the simple lack of understanding the plain, irrefutable statements of God's Holy Word.

For centuries, professing Christian tradition has clung to the completely false practices of a Friday crucifixion, and a Sunday (Easter) morning resurrection. Thus, the plain statements of scripture, including the personal testimony of Christ Himself is set aside in favor of pagan holidays.

Jesus 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 earth" (Matthew 12:39, 40).

Scholars have attempted to argue this plain statement away by claiming Jesus spoke in a "Greek idiom" which meant only a part of a day.

Think about it.

If Jesus was not placed in the tomb until just before sunset on Friday and resurrected at sunrise on "Easter" Sunday morning, then He was in the tomb only TWO NIGHTS and ONE DAY!

Friday night, Saturday daylight, Saturday night are but two nights and one day.

But Jesus plainly said, "AS JONAS was three days and three nights... so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" referring to Jonah 1:7. Was this an "idiom"? Did not Jesus mean what He said?

The book of Jonah was written in HEBREW, not Greek. There was no "Greek idiom" involved which meant only part of the three-day, three-night period.

There is such an idiom in the Hebrew, which can include any part of three days. However, when used in conjunction with the expression "three nights" it totally precludes idiomatic expression, and is to be taken quite literally!

Jesus said there are "twelve hours in a day" (John 11:9), speaking of the daylight portion of a 24-hour period. Thus, when He said He would be in the tomb "three days" and three nights, it is obvious He meant three twelve-hour daylight periods and three twelve-hour nighttime periods!

Notice the Hebrew expression used by Esther. "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, three days. NIGHT OR DAY..." (Esther 4:16).

Because she was a Jewess, Esther specifically added "night or day" to make clear what she meant by "three days."

Since Hebrew days began at sunset, it is obvious that, when the fast ended on "the third day" (Esther 5:1), this "third day" must have followed the "third night," completing three full days and nights, or three 24-hour days!

Notice another Bible example: A young Egyptian was found in a field by David's men. They brought him to David, and "...when he had eaten, his spirit (ruach, meaning breath, or living consciousness) came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights" (1 Samuel 30:12).

Later, in explanation, the Egyptian said, "...my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick" (1 Samuel 30:13).

The young Egyptian therefore meant three complete days and nights, because the Egyptians reckoned the days to begin at sunrise. (See Encyclopedia Britannica 11th Edition, vol. xi, p.77.)

Thus, when the book of Jonah says "three days and three nights" it means precisely what it says!

Christ said "even AS Jonah was three days and three nights" in the belly of the great fish, so would Christ be in the "heart of the earth" (His tomb) for the exact same period of time! To this, all relevant scriptures agree!

It is only because men want to cling to their Pagan traditions that some have attempted to twist and distort Christ's clear meaning!

It is important to understand the paramount importance attached to the annual "high days," the annual holy days of Israel, devoutly observed by the Jews during Jesus' day!

Grave error has resulted from the simple misunderstanding of one cardinal point surrounding the "high day" Sabbath which fell during the time Jesus lay in the tomb. More on this later, however.

Now, let's trace the activities of Jesus Christ during the final six days prior to the Passover.

You read of Jesus' approach to Jerusalem commencing with Luke 19:1-28, where He met Zacchaeus, told him He would stay with him that night. and delivered the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:1-10). We read, "And when He had thus spoken [the parable of the pounds] He went before, ascending up to Jerusalem" (Luke 19:28).

At this point, it is necessary to shift to Matthew's account (Matthew 21:1-7) and read of Jesus' instructions to His disciples concerning the colt He would ride in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. All these events took place on the sixth day before the Passover, which would have been the ninth day of Nisan, corresponding to our Thursday sunset to Friday sunset.

After His cleansing of the temple (Matthew 21:12-16) He returns to Bethany that night (Matthew 21:17; John 12:1).

Notice. Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead" (John 12:1).

The following day, Jesus spent the Sabbath in Bethany, and after sunset that evening (which would have been our Friday sunset, the fifth day before the Passover, which would have been the tenth day of Nisan. The first of three suppers occurred, very likely at the house of Lazarus. On this occasion, we read (John 12:2-8) of how Mary anointed His feet.

On the next day, Jesus starts from Bethany toward Jerusalem, is met by a large multitude, weeps over the city, and enters the temple. (See Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19.)

All of these events took place on the fourth day before the Passover, the eleventh of Nisan, corresponding to our Saturday sunset to Sunday sunset.

The following morning, the third day before the Passover, the twelfth of Nisan, corresponding to our Sunday sunset to Monday sunset, Jesus returned to Jerusalem, cursed the fig tree as an example to the disciples of the penalties for the lack of bearing fruit (Matthew 21:18-22) and enters the temple.

"And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; and would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. And He taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, my house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? But ye have made it a den of thieves."

This so outraged the priests and the scribes that they "...sought how they might destroy Him: for they feared Him, because all the people was astonished at His doctrine.

"And when even was come, He went out of the city" (Mark 11:12-19).

Probably, Jesus returned to Bethany after departing Jerusalem on this occasion.

The next day was the second day before the Passover, the thirteenth of Nisan, corresponding to our Monday sunset to Tuesday sunset.

"And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

"And Peter calling to remembrance saying unto Him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

"For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

"Therefore I say unto you, What things so ever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

"But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

"And they come again to Jerusalem: and as He was walking in the temple, there come to Him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders" (Mark 11:20-27).

See also Matthew 21:23-29 and Luke 20, the entire chapter, and Luke 21:4-38 for additional details of this second day before the Passover.

It is during this day that Jesus delivers His two great prophecies, commencing with the first, in the temple (Luke 21:5-36) and continuing with His second great "Olivet Prophecy" delivered on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24:1-51).

We are very plainly told "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings [the Olivet Prophecy and His warnings of Matthew 25] He said unto His disciples, "Ye know that after two days is [the feast of] the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (Matthew 26:1, 2).

The next day was the "preparation day," the last day before the Passover, the fourteenth of Nisan, and the

day of the crucifixion!

This day corresponded to our Tuesday sunset to Wednesday sunset. The events of this one day fill many pages, including the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew, the 14th and 15th chapters of Mark, and Luke 22 and 23, together with John 13 through the 19th chapter.

We begin with the account of Judas' betrayal and the preparation for the last supper.

"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priest, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him" (Matthew 26:14-16).

Mark's account (Mark 14:10, 11) is almost identical. At this point, it is necessary to remember that by the time of Jesus Christ the custom of searching through Jewish homes for the slightest bit of leavening on the thirteenth of Nisan "in preparation" for the Passover which commenced on the fourteenth of Nisan, became to be called, in common usage, "the first of the unleavened."

Also, the term "Passover" had developed into far broader usage than its original implications.

As you have seen, the original "Passover" was a unique historical EVENT. It was the "passing over" of the Israelites by the death angel who slew the first born of Pharaoh.

However, the term became attached to the ceremony itself, including the killing of the lamb.

Eventually, it became attached to the entire season, embodying the preliminary search for leavening, the putting of leavening out of one's home, the paschal supper, or pesach, and all seven days of unleavened bread.

For all practical purposes, because of Jewish custom, there were eight days during which the Jews observed "the unleavened" period. Although, as we have clearly seen, Almighty God specified only seven days of unleavened bread, the events associated with the "preparation" for the Passover changed general usage of the term until the thirteenth of Nisan became identified as one of the first days of "the unleavened." This is strongly indicated in Luke's account of Judas' betrayal. "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is CALLED the Passover" (Luke 22:1). In spite of the fact that the feast of unleavened bread and the Passover were two distinct occasions, general, collective language had long since come in usage.

The apostle John's lengthy account of Jesus' famous last supper is unique among the four gospels. In it, John makes it clear that the events which took place that evening were "BEFORE the feast of the Passover."

Notice it. "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 during supper, [see verse 26, where the context proves supper was not ended; see also the Critical and Experimental Commentary, The Ivan Panin Greek Numerics New Testament, the Companion Bible, Scofield's Translation, the Revised Standard Text, The Diaglott and other sources] the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him;

"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, [further proof that this event took place "during" the supper] and laid aside His garments; and took a towel and girded Himself.

"After that He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples feet..." (John 13:1-5).

When it was Peter's turn, Peter balked. He challenged, "Lord dost thou wash my feet?" Actually, the force of Peter's words would be better translated in English, "Lord - you're not going to wash MY feet"

Peter was indignant that Christ should stoop to mere servant's work.

Notice Christ's answer!

"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" (John 13:3-9).

Jesus then uttered a strange statement - using metaphor to refer to Judas Iscariot, "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" (John 13:10, 11).

After Christ had completed this ceremony, He left instructions for His disciples to follow.

"... Know ye what I have done to you? Ye 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.

For I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE THAT YE SHOULD DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU!"

(John 13:12-15).

Now, when would the disciples have had opportunity to follow that command - to live by that example? Certainly not in that night! Events swiftly following resulted in Christ's arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

No, the next opportunity for Christ's disciples to follow His example - to be obedient to His specific command, and to DO AS HE DID would have been on the following Passover - the following year!

Think, for a moment! HOW MANY of this world's churches follow this humbling custom of Christ? HOW MANY are truly OBEDIENT to a specific, plain, clear, COMMAND from the One who is our LORD, and our MASTER?

HOW MANY of them zealously FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE?

I know of one such Church - and there are a few other groups -and that one is the Intercontinental Church of God! We do not "argue" with plain commands of Christ, we strive to OBEY them! What about YOU?

Christ went on to say, "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.

"If ye know these things, HAPPY are ye if ye DO them!" (John 13:15-17)

As that final supper progressed, Jesus made His announcement of the betrayal of Judas Iscariot, handed him the sop, and Judas went out in great anger! (Matthew 26:21-25; Mark 14:18-21; John 13:21-30).

After Judas Iscariot went out, Jesus somberly instituted the terms and conditions of His "New Covenant" (see Jeremiah 31:31), substituting the symbolic bread and wine for the ancient paschal lamb, eaten roasted whole, with bitter herbs and unleavened bread.

Read the account! "And when the hour was come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him.

"And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:

"For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.

"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.

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

"But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

"And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom He is betrayed!

"And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing" (Luke 22:14-23).

You may read the parallel accounts in Matthew 26:26-29 and Mark 14:22-25.

For a thorough understanding of the events during the entire "preparation day," the fourteenth of Nisan, or the day before the Passover, be sure to study the chart.

### **Events During the Last Day Before the Passover Nisan 14th-"The Preparation Day" (John 19:31)**

#### **The Day of Jesus' Death**

(Corresponds to our Tuesday sunset to Wednesday sunset)\*

#### **Judas' plot to betray Christ:**

Matthew 26:14-16, Mark 14:10,11, Luke 22:1-6

#### **"Preparation" for Last Supper:**

Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-13

#### **"The even was come"; plot for betrayal:**

Matthew 26:20, Mark 14:17

#### **The last supper; foot washing:**

John 13:1-20

**Announcement of betrayal:**

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, John 13:21-30

**Supper eaten; "New Covenant" proposed: bread and wine instituted:**

Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-23

**First prophecy of Peter's denials:**

John 13:31-38

**Strife over greatest:**

Luke 22:24-30

**Second prophecy of Peter's denials:**

Luke 22:31-34

**They go to Gethsemane:**

Matthew 26:30-35, Mark 14:26-29, Luke 22:39, John 18:1

**Third prophecy of Peter's denials:**

Mark 14:30-31

**Agony in garden:**

Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:40-46

**Christ arrested:**

Matthew 26:47-56 Mark 14:43-50, Luke 22:47-54,  
John 18:2-11

**Lazarus escapes:**

Mark 14:51,52

**Trials - all through Tuesday night:**

Matthew 26:57;27:31, Mark 14:53;15:19,  
Luke 22:54;23:25, John 18:12;19:13

**"Sixth hour" (our Tuesday midnight) Pilate's speech: "Behold your king."**

John 19:14,15

**Christ led away to be killed:**

Matthew 27:31-34, Mark 15:20-23, Luke 23:26-31,  
John 19:16,17

**Discussion with Pilate about inscriptions:**

John 19:19-22

**Dividing of garments:**

Matthew 27:35-37, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:34,  
John 19:23-34

**"It was the third hour and they crucified Him" (Our 9:00 a.m. Wednesday)**

Mark 15:25,26

**"The sixth hour" (our Wednesday noon) and darkness:**

Matthew 27:45-49, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44,45

**"The ninth hour" (our Wednesday 3:00 p.m.) Christ cries out, dies on stake.**

Matthew 27:50, Mark 15:34-37, Luke 23:46,

John 19:28-30

**Many subsequent events:**

Matthew 27:51-56, Mark 15:38-41, Luke 23:47-49,

John 19:31-37

**Christ buried IN HASTE, BEFORE SUNSET** (our Wednesday about 6:00 p.m.) BEFORE THE "HIGH DAY" (The first day of unleavened bread, an annual Sabbath); our Wednesday sunset:

Matthew 27:57-66, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42

\* After Bullinger's Companion Bible, Ap.156, 157, 158.

As you will see, they were making haste to complete the burial of Jesus Christ prior to the beginning of the "high day" Sabbath, the first day of the feast of unleavened bread! (John 18:31). This "high day", Sabbath, or annual Sabbath fell on the fifteenth day of Nisan, and corresponded to our Wednesday sunset to Thursday sunset.

This was the first night and the first day during which Jesus lay in the tomb!

As had occurred from ancient times, the paschal lambs began to be sacrificed sometime after 1:00 p.m. on the daylight part of the fourteenth of Nisan, or only about five or six hours before dark, and the commencement of the fifteenth of Nisan.

There is every reason to believe that the Passover lambs were being sacrificed at the very moment Christ died, thus completing the perfect typical picture of "Christ our Passover who is sacrificed for us!"

Dr. Bullinger says, "It follows, therefore, that the Lord being crucified on 'the preparation day' could not have eaten of the Passover lamb, which was not slain until the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan (i.e., afternoon). On that day the daily sacrifice was killed at the sixth hour (noon) and offered until about the seventh hour (1:00 p.m.). The killing of the Passover lambs began directly afterwards. Thus it is clear, that if the killing of the Passover lambs did not commence until about four hours after our Lord had been hanging upon the cross, and would not have been concluded at the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.) when He 'gave up the ghost' (i.e., expired); no 'Passover lamb' could have been eaten at the 'last supper' on the previous evening."

It is an irrefutable FACT of scripture that the "high day" of John 19:31 was the FIRST DAY OF THE FEAST! That day HAD to fall on the fifteenth of Nisan, according to the scriptures!

Yet, from ancient antiquity, many so-called "scholars," attempting to cling to their false theories revolving around "Good Friday" and "Easter Sunday" have mistaken this "high day," Sabbath, the annual HOLYDAY, or the first day of unleavened bread, for the weekly Sabbath!

But it was not the weekly Sabbath, but an annual holy day, "an high day"!

Notice again, that the Jews said the bodies could not remain upon the cross "because it was the preparation [day]" and, "...for that Sabbath day was a HIGH DAY," (John 19:31).

The second day of the feast, the sixteenth day of Nisan, corresponding to our Thursday sunset to Friday sunset was the second night and second day in the tomb. The third day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the weekly Sabbath, the seventeenth day of Nisan, corresponding exactly to our Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, and represents the third night and third day in the tomb!

Since Christ was buried very late on that Wednesday afternoon, exactly three nights and three days later would bring us to very late on the afternoon of the weekly Sabbath or "the third day" of Matthew 16:21, and succeeding verses.

The following morning, according to the scriptures, the women came to the sepulchre "WHEN IT WAS YET DARK," and found Jesus was already gone.

Notice! "On the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the

sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

"Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.

"Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

"So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

"And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

"Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

"And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

"Then went in also the other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

"For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

"Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

"And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

"And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.

"And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.

"Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

"Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God" (John 20:1-17).

Luke's account says, "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

"And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

"And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

"And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they saith unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

"He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee,

"Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

"And they remembered His words,

"And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest" (Luke 24:1-9).

Again, you see that very early (John's account says while it was yet dark) on Sunday morning Jesus Christ was already risen! He did NOT rise on "Easter" Sunday morning; it was not yet sunrise, but still quite dark, and the tomb was empty!

Notice Matthew's account: "In the end of the Sabbath (the word for Sabbath is Sabbaton, with a plural ending, and should better be rendered "Sabbaths," to include both the high day Sabbath, the fifteenth of Nisan, or the first day of unleavened bread and the weekly Sabbath which fell two days later!), as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

"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.

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was

crucified.

"He is not here: for He is risen, as He said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

"And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you.

"And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring His disciples word" (Matthew 28:1-8).

Again, notice the angel said "He is not here, for He IS RISEN!" That was a past act, an accomplished fact, something which had already happened! The angel did not say "He is rising," but said He had already RISEN!

Of course! He had actually risen from His tomb in the very late afternoon of the previous day, "as He said!" (verse 6).

### *The Rich Meaning of Christ's Last Supper*

Few have understood the truly NEW Testament character of the symbols of Christ's last supper! Thousands have assumed they are "keeping the PASSOVER," as if it is an unbroken festival, a continuous tradition, to be observed in the same way, and at the same time, down through the centuries.

Few seem to realize the Passover was dramatically altered in character following the exodus, and that it was altered again in the post-exile period.

It's time Christians realized they are looking entirely to CHRIST for their salvation - that He alone can save!

Christ was pictured by the paschal lamb. For centuries, the age-old custom looked forward to the sacrifice of a Savior. Since Christ's death and resurrection, the New Testament observance of the Passover has looked back toward Christ - toward His death! He BECAME the Passover.

Notice! "For even CHRIST OUR PASSOVER is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Christ has become the Passover. He IS the Passover. Therefore, when we partake of the symbols He instituted of His broken body and shed blood, we are not keeping the Old Covenant Passover. We are **IMBIBING OF THE SYMBOLS OF CHRIST'S DEATH!**

Notice what He said. "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 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 (partake of Christ) he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world... 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" (John 6:44-58).

This was such a "hard saying" that many of His disciples LEFT Christ!

They had never heard such language! They were offended! Christ turned to Peter and asked if he would leave also. Peter said "Lord to whom shall we go? THOU hast the words of eternal life!" (John 6:68).

When Christ changed the ancient paschal meal; when He performed a ceremony absolutely UNIQUE in all history, washing His disciples' feet, passing broken bread and wine among them, He explained this was "My blood of the NEW COVENANT, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28).

Paul explains, "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

"In that He saith, A New Covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8:11-13).

Notice that Christ was becoming the mediator of the NEW TESTAMENT (New Covenant or "New Will") when He instituted the symbols of His body and blood. When we partake of this completely NEW TESTAMENT ceremony we do not look back in history beyond the time of Christ. We look to the time of HIS DEATH - NOT to the ancient exodus and the captivity in Egypt, except in interesting typology or as interesting history and background. We are not keeping the ancient Passover or the post-exilic Passover. We are keeping a

COMPLETELY NEW TESTAMENT ceremony following Christ's example, doing as He did; as He commanded.

Some few seem to believe they must be more "accurate" than Christ and believe they must observe the NEW Testament symbols of Christ's body and blood at the same moment as the Jews observed the symbols of the OLD Covenant on the fifteenth.

But Jesus Christ instituted a NEW TESTAMENT CEREMONY! He had that right He had that authority. He said, "This DO as I have done unto you!"

He said, "...drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27,28).

The Greek word for "testament" is diatheke. It is an Old Testament word, and should always conform to Old Testament form and usage. The rendering "testament" comes from the Vulgate; testamentum, a Latin translation. Diatheke occurs in the New Testament thirty times, and is rendered "covenant" twenty times. It should better be rendered "covenant" here.

Notice Paul's statement: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

"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.

"For where a testator is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

"For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

"Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood.

"For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

"Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.

"Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry.

"And almost all things are by law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:11-22).

As the Mediator of the New Covenant, Christ was referring to the cup of wine He passed among the disciples as symbolic of His blood, which was to be shed "for the sins of many."

The unleavened bread, He said, was symbolic of His body. Paul says. "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.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11:23-30).

God's church has known for many centuries that the practice instituted by Jesus Christ of offering the symbols of His broken body and shed blood on the BEGINNING of the fourteenth of Nisan was to be observed!

As you have seen clearly proved, the original paschal lambs were slain "at even," or late on the fourteenth, and the actual Passover meal was not eaten until after sunset, during the nighttime part of the FIFTEENTH of

Nisan!

Some few have argued that, even though Jesus Christ clearly set this example, and that His famous "last supper", took place on the fourteenth it is somehow closer to true righteousness to wait and observe the New Testament symbols at the same moment as the ancient Passover, or on the FIFTEENTH!

Church history, and centuries of church tradition, plus careful biblical scholarship all prove otherwise!

The famous "Quartodeciman controversy" which raged for centuries throughout the expanding Roman Catholic world is a major case in point. "Quartodeciman" is merely a Latin term for "FOURTEENTH!" From Carthage in North Africa to Alexandria in Egypt; from Rome to Antioch in Syria, fragmented groups of Christians continued to cling to the same customs delivered to them by Jesus Christ Himself, and by the early apostles. Successive generations clung tenaciously to the "faith once delivered to the saints," absolutely refusing to abandon the practice of observing the New Testament "Passover" (Lord's supper) on the FOURTEENTH of Nisan!

They were careful to do as Jesus did! They recognized that when their Lord and Savior commanded, "THIS DO as I have done unto you!" it represented a command. They recognized that Jesus Christ had set them an example, that they should follow in His steps.

For this reason they were called "Quartodecimans," or observers of the FOURTEENTH, not observers of the "fifteenth" or, "Quintodecimans."

The Intercontinental Church of God, humbly bows before the Eternal God in heaven, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as well as the legacy of centuries of church custom, practice and tradition, and continues to faithfully observe the commemoration of Christ's death at the same moment each year when CHRIST HIMSELF observed it!

After sunset on the thirteenth, as the thirteenth of Nisan is over, and the fourteenth of Nisan is coming on, God's church gathers together in a solemn service traditionally called "The Passover," in commemoration of the events during the last supper of Jesus Christ, and in commemoration of His death.

As Jesus Christ set us an example, we humbly submit to the ancient rite of foot washing. At the conclusion of this ceremony, we solemnly partake of a broken piece of unleavened bread, and sip from a small cup of wine, reading the appropriate scriptures, enacting, in commemoration, the events of that famous night.

Even as the apostle Paul said "...the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread..." so the Church of God today continues to observe the richly significant, monumentally important tradition of the Passover on that same night!

Notice carefully that the correct understanding of the chronological events of the Passover in Egypt, and the correction of false assumptions concerning the time of the Exodus have NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO with the time on which the church has traditionally observed the New Testament Passover from antiquity!

NOTHING is changed! Custom and practice remain the same! What IS accomplished is a fuller understanding of the truth of Almighty God!

Finally, WHY do not the churches of this world OBEY the plain commands of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?

Surely there is no ceremony during the course of the year that is any more important than the PASSOVER! It is that one annual festival which symbolizes, more than any other, the very WAY TO SALVATION! Without the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ; without our deepest repentance, and the acceptance of

Christ's shed blood to atone for our own sins, we cannot be saved!

By our reaffirmation of our acceptance of His broken body and shed blood year by year, we continually resubstantiate and reconfirm our faith in Jesus Christ, and in Him ALONE for salvation! If you truly expect to enter into the soon-coming, glorious kingdom of Almighty God; if you hope to be one of those who will live and reign with Christ for one thousand years on this earth (Revelation 20:4; 5:10) then you need to KEEP THE PASSOVER year by year.

-End-

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**WITHOUT MAKING ANY CHANGES and WITHOUT CHARGE TO ANYONE**

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This publication is intended to be used as a personal study tool. Please know it is not wise to take any man's word for anything, including ours, so prove all things for yourself from the pages of your own Bible. Because your salvation is between you and God, it is through such personal verification that you will gain confidence and come to know for yourself what is truth.

For additional related knowledge and understanding,  
may we suggest the following title:

[Should Christians Observe Easter or the Passover?](#)