



**PASSOVER,  
THE LORD'S  
SUPPER  
AND  
PENTECOST**

**and  
Addendum to the  
Passover  
Study Paper**



## **Introduction and Comments**

It is God's will that each of us be responsible for the sincerity of our relationship with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ. This includes always being aware that men are fallible and that God's truth stands firm and separate from any one man or institution. We must of necessity, be vigilant in constantly checking and proving all things. Doing these responsibilities as a matter of policy, and making sure we are not taking our relationship with God and His truth for granted, and always keep an eye out for error.

The discussion and points I wish to make concerning Passover and Pentecost are not new truth or a better understanding I have dreamed up, but are established truths of scripture and church history.

## **Defining and Examining the Issues**

I believe the Bible and what it states in matters of how God is to be approached, honored and worshipped. It is simple and precise. Men make it confusing and unappealing. God very plainly says He wants each of us individually to know Him. He gives us His Holy Spirit, His commandments, Sabbath and Holy Days, the Gospel and writings of the New Testament and much more.

Men are fallible and we must always be on our guard. Scripture says, "Trust no man," which is to say, do not give unquestioned loyalty and confidence to mere man or some organization. Each of us is responsible for our personal relationship with Jesus and God the Father.

Study papers and books by the hundreds and thousands could, and have been written. Books fill the libraries, yet the matter at hand is not that difficult an undertaking. The truth with some work and sincerity of heart will become crystal clear and refreshing.

I will make my case by using scripture and a logical common sense approach. I believe what needs to be said can be accomplished without a heavy reliance on outside sources; however, on occasion I will refer to certain references for clarification and qualified support.

## **The Timing & Logistics of the Exodus 12 Passover**

The question of when the actual sacrifice of the Passover lamb took place has been a point of controversy for many Christians. Some Sabbath/Holy Day keeping churches claim that the Passover took place at the beginning of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>. Others say at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup>, shortly before the start of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Exodus 12 gives us a great deal of foundational information. Verse 3 – Moses instructs the people that on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, the head of the household was to select a lamb. Verse 5 – It was to be without blemish and a male of the first year. We know the lamb was to act as a representative for Jesus Christ, who later would give His life, as the true Passover sacrifice for all mankind. Verse 6 – tells us they were to keep it until the 14<sup>th</sup> day and then kill it at twilight, as the sun was going down. The idea for keeping the lamb those five days was that of necessity. It had to be fed and cared for. Lambs, being the cute friendly little things they are, made it easy to form a certain fondness and attachment. The slaughter and preparation would give a certain sense of loss along with a brief period of sadness. Verse 7 – also, the people, before sunset of the 14<sup>th</sup>, going into the 15<sup>th</sup>, were to take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of their homes. This was the original and official Passover ceremony, done once and established for all time.

Having done this, the Israelites came under the guaranteed protection of God. The firstborn of the Egyptians would die, but no harm would come to them. All this is symbolic of the death of Jesus and His shed blood, which covers our sins and thus allows access to everlasting life by reconciling us to God, the Father. For the ancient Israelites, it was an opportunity to continue a favored physical life. For them and for us today, the two conditions of response and obedience were the determining factors.

I would like to re-address Ex. 12:6. This verse is in itself a case for a late 14<sup>th</sup> Passover. It says you shall keep it (the lamb) until the 14<sup>th</sup> day. I think, in context, it is reasonable to understand, and the original Hebrew indicates the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> is being referred to. If Moses wanted the Israelites to keep the lamb until the nighttime portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> (beginning of the new day), then he would have used the correct Hebrew word.

Verse 6 continues to tell us the people are to kill the lamb at twilight, before the complete setting of the sun. We are still in the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>. With the setting of the sun, we now enter the early evening/night of the 15<sup>th</sup>. The end of the 14<sup>th</sup> is not the nighttime part of the day. That was some 24 hours earlier. It is just what it is, the conclusion of the daylight portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> and thus leading into the night part of the 15<sup>th</sup>. There is no way, if one fairly appraises these two stipulations – 1) keep the lamb to the 14<sup>th</sup> day and – 2) kill it later the same day, but before the start of the 15<sup>th</sup> – that one can arrive at an early 14<sup>th</sup> Passover. It is clear English fairly translated from the Hebrew. II Chron. 30:15– states they killed the lambs on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the second month, the daylight part, from mid afternoon to later afternoon to the setting of the sun, but not yet the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Deut. 16:6 – “You shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun...” It is clear from this statement that the Passover lamb is not slaughtered at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Twilight here is the daylight of the 14<sup>th</sup> leading into the 15<sup>th</sup>. Sunset is the touching of the sun on the horizon and the new day (early night fall) begins when the sun is totally hidden behind the horizon. Interestingly, Verse 7 goes directly to the roasting and eating, no waiting for 24 hours.

It does appear the Jews had an extended twilight period, which began mid or even early afternoon. Jesus died at 3:00 PM. The period of time the Passovers lambs were being slaughtered at the temple. It also appears for practical reasons that God permitted this. Jesus never made an issue about how the Pharisees handled temple services and the timing. Although the Sadducees “controlled” the temple, it was the Pharisees who directed how the offerings and various temple activities were handled. More on this point later.

Exodus 12:8 – “Then they shall eat the flesh on that night (15<sup>th</sup>); roasted in fire, with unleavened bread...” Verse 11 – “...so you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s Passover.” It would seem at the break of day (the command was to wait for light) they were to begin their journey, this was also the first day of Unleavened Bread. An immediate start, why wait, is not our journey out of sin immediate? There is no reason to delay or wait around.

At this point it will be helpful to digress and deal with the question of unleavened bread and sin. Some church organizations have as their custom an early 14<sup>th</sup> Passover. At this service wine and unleavened bread are taken in a formal communion type setting with a minister officiating. However, members are allowed to eat leavened products for the next 24 hours until the start of the first day of Unleavened Bread (15<sup>th</sup>). In effect, we have the Passover reaffirming our acceptance of Jesus as our sacrificial lamb – our sins covered by His blood, but we apparently have a 24 hour period of dilly-dally time for sin. However, come the first day of Unleavened bread, we start to get serious about dealing with sin. This is not reasonable. It makes much more sense and is scripturally correct, to have the Passover sacrifice late the 14<sup>th</sup>, and then go into the 15<sup>th</sup>, the first day of Unleavened Bread. No delay, a smooth transitional course of activity, showing for one thing, that once we accept with understanding Christ’s sacrifice, we immediately start on the journey of coming out of sin. There is nothing to think about, there is no reason to wait. The Passover sacrifice and the memorial meal of deliverance and acceptance flow one into the other. As of that moment, the Israelites were done with Egypt and sin, and so it is with us.

Exodus 10:28 – Tells us Pharaoh threatens Moses with death if he sees him again. And, Moses in effect says, “So it shall be.” Because of the huge death loss of Egypt’s firstborn in verse 31, Pharaoh calls Moses or sent his counsel by night and commands, begs him, and the Israelites to leave Egypt. Pharaoh and his people are under great stress and suffering much loss, easy enough to go back on his word. It is very possible by the time Moses returned, it was the beginning of the day, and upon his return the journey out of Egypt began. There was no time to leaven bread, and also, no time to spoil the Egyptians. In Exodus 12:35, Moses had previously instructed the people to ask the Egyptians for gold, silver, clothing and valuable things. Verse 36 – “...and the Egyptians

generously responded.” Plundering – meaning that not much of value was left. Although the people may not have completely understood what was to happen, they knew it would be big and coming soon. Moses gave these instructions days in advance.

Exodus 12:41-42 – are two different events. Verse 41 is merely stating that at the beginning of morning, daylight on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the first day of Unleavened Bread, the Israelites started out of Egypt. Verse 42 is a reference back to the Passover meal, which had been taken earlier. “A night of solemn observance to the Lord,” or as it is sometimes referred to – “The Night To Be Much Observed,” are nothing more than different ways to reference the Passover memorial meal. After the meal they prepared and waited to start the journey. There was only one meal. Not one at the beginning of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> and then one at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>, and upon completion, at night, the journey started. As explained earlier, there was no reason for delay. There is a smooth seamless continuity to the Passover, the meal and Days of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 13:3 – Moses said to the people, “Remember this day....” Why say day, if they left at night, then he would have said night. Night and day are two different things. They are the two parts of a 24-hour period. The exodus started in the daytime; the time when the sun is giving its light and warmth.

Let us take a close look at Deut. 16:1 –“Observe the month of Abib (Nisan), and keep the Passover to the Lord your God, for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night.” This verse is often used as a proof text to support the notion that Israel left Egypt by night, that is to say, after the meal taken earlier on the 15<sup>th</sup>, called by some the meal of the Night To Be Much Observed / Remembered.

Those who support this idea believe the Passover was 24 hours earlier. Already we have explained in detail several verses that clearly show the exodus started in the early daylight hours of the 15<sup>th</sup>, according to the instructions of Moses. The truth of Deut. 16:1 is simple and easy to understand. This verse states that God brought the Israelites out of Egypt by night. This statement is in context of the Passover mentioned earlier in this same verse. When could it be said that deliverance began? At midnight, when the death angel passed over and also in a sense, when Pharaoh called Moses, and told him and the people to leave quickly. In a manner of speaking, it could be said this was the beginning of the journey out of Egypt. This does not mean the actual physical journey started, but rather the activities of the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>, from midnight on, made the journey possible. It was now a reality.

The instruction for the very first Passover was to kill lamb and take the blood to the doors of their dwellings. The Passover was later sacrificed at the temple, where the priests slaughtered the lambs, and at the homes of the people. Today we do not do these things. Jesus, the reality, is our Passover lamb, and there is no temple.

At twilight, as the sun is setting, on the 14<sup>th</sup> we should be gathering together as family and friends, talking about the suffering and sacrifice of our Savior Jesus Christ. It is a solemn time of reflection for what Jesus did for us because of what we are. The Passover memorial meal, which begins after sundown, the new day of the 15<sup>th</sup> is time of remembrance and dedication. A time of happy conversation and storytelling—for we are

delivered from sin and death. A time to share our joy and appreciation for the calling and the wonderful truths we have.

## **Jesus and the New Testament Passover**

Jesus kept the Passover correctly in all ways. The Last Supper, or Lord's Supper, shared with His disciples was not a Passover meal. Jesus at this meal set something new in motion, He gave one last final gift to His disciples and those who later were to call themselves Christians.

In Exodus 12:14 God commanded the people then, and us today, that we should keep Passover as a memorial to the Lord throughout our generations – “They shall keep it as a feast for an everlasting (forever) ordinance.” The Hebrew word “Olam” translated everlasting, means – always, eternal, continuously, perpetual, without end.

Lev. 23: 4-6 says, “These are the Feasts of the Lord, holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at their appointed time. Verse 5 –On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month at twilight is the Lord's Passover. Verse 6 –On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread.” Passover, (the original took place) at twilight (later afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup>). Then going into the 15<sup>th</sup>, we have the Passover meal and also the First Day of Unleavened Bread. We are commanded to keep the Feasts & Holy Days at the “appointed time.” Clearly, no other time will do. The timing and manner of keeping the Passover is again confirmed in scripture. It was now instituted, and was not to be changed.

Jesus did not come to change God's Law, of which Passover and the Holy Days are a part of. Isaiah said (Isa. 42:21) that Christ would come to magnify the Laws of God, not to diminish them in anyway. “The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness sake, He will magnify the Law and make it honorable.” The Hebrew word for magnify also means “to increase, promote, make large, lift up, make great.” Jesus did not in any way lessen the Law and Commandments. He promoted the Torah. In Matt. 5:17-18 and Luke 16:17, Jesus said to His disciples in plain easy to understand language that He did not come to abolish the Law or prophets, but to fulfill and expand them. The smallest part which by no means would be allowed to change or disappear. Jesus was an observant Jew – but more, He was totally committed to the whole Torah.

It should be plainly understood that Jesus did not keep the Passover according to the Sadducees. He kept the Passover and Pentecost as preserved by the Pharisees. True, the Sadducees “controlled” the temple, but many sources make it perfectly clear that the Pharisees were in charge of the conduct and order of things. The Pharisees kept Passover and Pentecost at the correct time. Matt. 23: 2-3 – Jesus said they, the Pharisees, were the dually authorized agents (authorities) in matters of scripture and should be obeyed, as they correctly taught. Their problem was hypocrisy – they said, but did not do. Also, they added many of their own do and don't regulations, which Jesus expressly said was not to be done. The nation had respect to the Pharisees and accepted their leadership. Jesus said of the Sadducees that they did not understand scripture. Jesus did not take issue with the Pharisees and the Pharisees did not make issue with Jesus in regards to the Holy days and the Law. To reason Jesus kept the Passover and Pentecost according to the teachings of the Sadducees, and also kept these things as given by the Pharisees is confusion. Jesus kept only one Passover and at the correct time.

The simple truth is this: Jesus kept the Passover as given in Ex. 12. He did not change it, He did not reason around it. He was obedient to the instruction of Moses. We as Christians are to keep the Passover in the same manner as laid down in the Old Testament and according to the example of Jesus, our true Passover Lamb. To the New Testament writers these things were common and traditional (see Luke 2:41-42), no need to make an issue in their writings.

## **Jesus' Last Meal — A Gift For Us!**

We as Christians today, need to understand and deeply appreciate what Jesus established and gave to us at His last evening meal with His disciples. Jesus knew that called and converted Christians would have a difficult road to travel. His final act, before His suffering and death on the stake, was to leave His church and us individually, a wonderful gift to help us along the way.

John 6:51-56; 63. Jesus talks about Himself as being the Living Bread that must be eaten. The Jews did not understand. Jesus again says “unless you (we) eat His flesh and drink His blood, you (we) have no life.” “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.” We abide in Jesus if we do these two things. Jesus continues on to say that it is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh profits nothing in Verse 63. Jesus uses the analogy of bread and wine for everlasting life. We belong to Jesus if we eat and drink Him symbolized by the bread and wine, understanding that He is complete. By accepting the completion of Jesus, in that He is the Son of God, perfect in every way and atones for our sins, we then are able to receive God’s Holy Spirit that leads, and eventually will take us into His kingdom and everlasting life.

The Old Testament Passover had bread (unleavened) and the lamb’s blood, symbols of Jesus and His suffering on the stake. The unleavened bread of Passover symbolizes a Savior without blemish (sin free). For us, lamb’s blood symbolizes His shed blood. The last supper with its leavened bread and wine is teaching us that Jesus is our completeness, He makes us complete. When properly understood, the last meal gives additional clarity to the Passover and also helps us to more fully appreciate the importance of taking bread (loaf) and wine on a regular basis throughout the year. Continuing on with reference to Matt. 26: 17-29; Luke 22:7-19 and I Cor. 11:23-26. The leavened bread and wine of the last supper gives a direct connection to Jesus. In formalizing these symbols, Christ is referencing them to people who will sin, and often. By accepting the bread and wine, which are symbolic of Jesus who on our behalf was beaten, whipped and finally bleed to extension on the stake, we acknowledge His life and death and resurrection. Jesus gave us special tools and things to do so that we would always have vision and focus in our calling, in His work and final sacrifice.

We should regularly take the bread and wine to remind ourselves of what Jesus did for us, is doing for us, and the condition He found us in, and the condition we are struggling to come out of. Repentance is an ongoing activity in our Christian life. Taking the bread and wine on a regular basis demonstrates our acceptance of Jesus’ sacrifice and our desire for God’s Holy Spirit working in us so that we may change and at some point, become as Jesus is – sin free. The bread and wine are symbolic of our dedication to the

work God, through Jesus Christ is doing in us, and our willingness to do our part by putting forth a righteous effort.

This is not a Jewish thing. The Kiddush is a custom of the Jews in which they take bread and wine, perhaps going back to Abraham and Melchizedek. The Jews do not see a connection with the Passover – but only an idea of a coming delivering Messiah. They failed to recognize Jesus. The Catholics and Protestants have a communion type service that supposedly acknowledges Jesus, but they are also confused about truth. Jesus and the apostle Paul clearly explained the bread and wine. We do ourselves a great disservice by ignoring and failing to appreciate these simple instructions.

Over a period of time, certain inaccurate traditions have come into and established in the Church of God. Not understanding the bread and wine as given at the last supper puts Christians at a big disadvantage in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Understanding what Jesus did is crucial in grasping what He expects in church organization and application of elder (servant) leadership. It is an important key in developing a dependent relationship with Jesus and not with man or an organization. The goal is for the church and each of us individually, as the bride, to prepare and make ourselves acceptable to our husband Jesus Christ. Taking the bread and wine on a regular basis helps us do this.

I Peter 2:21 – “Leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps.” Jesus kept the Passover at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>, not the 14<sup>th</sup>. There is no credible evidence to support a 14<sup>th</sup> Passover. Jesus did not establish some sort of new Christian Passover. During His years on earth, He kept it at the proper time and in the proper way. However, on the eventful Passover of 30 A.D., he would have been dead and buried. The true Lamb of God had thus completed His Father’s work. He died about 3:00 P.M. on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Scriptural evidence gives much support to the fact that Jesus’ final meal of fellowship and instruction took place on Tuesday, Nisan 13<sup>th</sup> (beginning after sunset). More on this point later.

If we believe these verses to be true, which I think we do, then we must acknowledge that Jesus kept a traditional Jewish Passover on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last supper is something separate and different in certain specific ways.

*Up to this point, I have set forth the basic premises for this paper. For the subjects and ideas presented, I have given responsible and reasonable proof. On the other hand, these are themes, which although correct, need to be better substantiated. The following comments and discussion will bring forth more evidence and logical reasoning verifying that what has been previously stated is true.*

## **The Samaritans, Sadducees and Pharisees**

In 718-721 BC, the king of Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and took the people captive beyond the Euphrates River. To replace the Israelites in the now vacant land, he brought peoples in from Babylon and other nations. Because the land was deserted, lions had become a serious problem. The transplants asked the king for an Israelite priest to teach the laws of the God of the land. The priest produced a system of worship previously introduced by Jeroboam. The people acknowledged the God of the

land, but appointed their own to officiate as priests and to guide them in serving their gods in the same manner as the nation they had come from. (II kings 17:15).

This Samaritan religion was a blend of paganism and misinterpretations of the Law. They rejected the prophets and writings. They accepted only their version of the Torah. They rejected Biblical revelation and had their own ideas for Passover and Pentecost. They changed the dates and times for God's festivals. They slayed the Passover lamb after sunset on Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>, instead of the late afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup>. That is, they killed the lamb at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Jesus had no prejudice towards the Samaritans, but when it came to their religious doctrine and teaching, Jesus said this to the Samaritan woman at the well; John 4:22 – “You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we (Jews) worship what we do know, for salvation is of the Jews.” Jesus made it clear that they did not worship the true God, but rather they worshiped gods and things of their own choosing and imagination. Their approach to God was not acceptable, including the Passover and Pentecost, which they counted from the weekly Sabbath.

The Sadducees came from primarily the wealthy and aristocrat families. Many of which followed the Samaritan interpretation of the Law. They, like the Samaritans, considered “between the two evenings” to mean sunset. That is, as the sun is setting, a 20-30 minute period of time. They did not believe in a resurrection, and angels. They were purely a political party who desired to Hellenize the Jews. Jesus said of the Sadducees in Matt. 22:29 – “You are in error because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God.”

Matt. 23:23 – Jesus very plainly explains that in all matters of the Law of God, the people should give heed to the teaching of the Pharisees. It was the Pharisees only who sat on Moses' seat. Jesus recognized their authority as legitimate. The rulers and leaders of the nation and church as it was then. They had authority over religious matters. They understood the Law and taught it correctly, but among themselves, they argued the spiritual intent of the Law. The Pharisees kept the proper time and observance of the Passover. There is no valid reason to consider the Samaritans or Sadducees concerning Passover and Pentecost. Jesus kept the Passover correctly in all ways. The Pharisees never made mention of Jesus' religious habits and Jesus never commented on any of their traditions that were within the written law, including Passover and Pentecost. If there was a point of contention in this area, surely one or the other would have mentioned it. In these matters, they agreed.

It is interesting to note the Karaites and their religious practices have been popping up here and there as a source worthy of valid consideration. It seems they teach as the Sadducees of Jesus' time taught. There still remain small groups in the Middle East. The Karaites calculate Passover according to the new barley and the new moon, which is Biblical.

## **The New Testament Passover and the Lord's Supper Are Two Different Events**

Matt. 26:17-19, verse 17 – “Now on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened bread...the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, ‘where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?’ ” Mark 14:12-16, verse 12 – “Now on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, when they kill the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, where do you want us to go and prepare, that you may eat the Passover?” Luke 22:7-17, verse 7 – “Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. Verse 8 – and He sent Peter and John saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat.’ ” This comment by Jesus deserves an explanation. In context I would say Jesus is referring to the Passover lamb. Also, at this point, I believe Jesus was having very human reactions in facing up to what was ahead. Perhaps somehow He was hoping deliverance would come from the cruel punishment and terrible agonizing death of the stake. He was the Son of God, but also lived the human emotions as you and I. Verse 9 – Peter and John’s comment is completion of the initial instructions Jesus gave. There is also another possible explanation for verse 8 and also verse 11. Although this was not the formal Passover of Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>, Jesus may have considered this meal a type of Passover remembrance, which pictured the true Passover of the 15<sup>th</sup>. In affect, saying this is not the true Passover, but because I will not be here on the 15<sup>th</sup>, remember me, your true Passover lamb. I suppose when all is said, we cannot say for any certainty why He spoke as He did.

These verses would seem to lead us to believe the Days of Unleavened Bread had begun. But, the very next sentence implies that they must now prepare for the Passover. How is this to be understood?

In these three accounts, the First Day of Unleavened Bread is not considered to be a precise period of time, such as the more precise term “Days of Unleavened Bread, found elsewhere in scripture. What we have is a general expression that was understood to include more time than the seven days. The position of the words and sentence structure leave little choice.

In Matthews account “Day” and “Feast” are not part of the original Greek and could read “now on the First of Unleavened Bread.” This means – at the beginning of Unleavened Bread or now before Unleavened Bread – what is being discussed is a period of time (unspecified) before Passover and the First Day of Unleavened Bread. What of the word “day” used in Mark and Luke” Vine says – “A period of undefined length marked by certain characteristics.” In this case, preparing of the lamb from the 10<sup>th</sup>, finding a place to eat and making other necessary preparations. In the timeline of things, Jesus very possibly made His comments on Nisan 12<sup>th</sup>, perhaps early 12<sup>th</sup>. It is possible that Jesus was instructing His disciples to find a place for the Passover, which His disciples would celebrate, but He at that time would be dead. But more likely this room was to serve another purpose; it was to be the place where His final meal of friendship and instruction with His disciples was to take place. The Passover was a family affair and to assume the disciples celebrated the Passover on the 15<sup>th</sup> in their own homes with family is reasonable. Whatever the case, Jesus ate His final meal in the upper room at the

beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup>, not the 14<sup>th</sup>. This meal was not a Passover meal. Jesus in no way changed any part of the Passover, except to give Himself. This meal was to serve other needs of the future.

The Christian world has the Christmas season, which is generally said to begin the day after Thanksgiving. The Jews had their Passover season, which started Nisan 10<sup>th</sup> with selection of the lamb.

John 13:26-29 – What of Judas and his mission? Jesus told Judas that what he had to do to do quickly. The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant. Some thought because Judas kept the purse that he was instructed to go out and buy the necessary things for Passover, or give something to the poor. This idea of shopping on the Passover or leaving the Passover table for any reason, is nonsense, no one would consider giving such instructions, as everything would have been prepared on the preparation days. The comments of the disciples were reasonable, because this was not a Passover meal – it was only an evening supper. Nevertheless, beyond this, it was a preparation day, the 13<sup>th</sup>. The Sadducees and Pharisees would not under any circumstances defile themselves on the preparation day of the 14<sup>th</sup> by involving themselves in the judgment and death of a man. The final decision on Jesus' fate had been made at noon of the 13<sup>th</sup>, about 21 hours before Jesus was nailed to the stake, well before the 14<sup>th</sup>. More on this later.

## **Luke and the Passover**

### **Luke 22:14-16 and also 1, 7, 8, 11 & 13)**

A closer look at these verses tells us some interesting and important things. As we know, the Passover can refer to several different aspects. Verse 1 – the word Passover refers to all of the Days of Unleavened Bread. Interesting it says, “as the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near” – not yet time, perhaps several days away. These verses in Luke 22, when correctly understood, make clear the meal Jesus was sharing with His disciples was not a Passover meal. Verse 13 – simply states, “So they went and found it as He had said to them, and they prepared the (for) Passover.” Verse 14 – “and the hour came and he sat down with His disciples” – a regular meal! Verses 15 and 16 are critical and have been made to appear Jesus was eating a Passover meal with His disciples – this is not what is taking place, this is not what is being said. Verse 15 – “With fervent desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. The Greek word for “desire” (#1939 Strong’s) is Epithuma, which means – “a longing, especially for what is forbidden.” Vines explanation of this word – “a desire, craving, longing, mostly of evil desires; frequently translated as lust.” Jesus greatly desired to eat this Passover, shortly to come, with them, but knew He could not and still fulfill the plan God had for Him – to become our true Passover sacrifice. Jesus would be dead and buried by late afternoon of Wednesday, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>. Verse 16, this is what He said, as taken from the Interlinear Bible for clarity. “For I say to you, that never in anyway I will eat of it (Passover) until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.” Jesus wanted to eat the Passover, but for our sakes, He could not do so at this time.

John 13:1-2 – Here John clarifies the truth of this matter, this along with what has been just previously discussed, should make this matter easy enough to grasp. (Verses 4 and 5, the foot washing, which are valid for us today, as given by Jesus' example).

Verses 1 and 2 take away all doubt. In order to keep Passover as currently practiced in the various Churches of God, one has to reason and excuse away these verses. Don't we want to establish the truth? Many scholars agree that the Gospel of John was written later than Matthew, Mark and Luke. He seems to have clarified the timing issues.

As a review, you may want to read John 6:51-56; 63, and 66. In a matter of speaking, Jesus with these words lays the groundwork for what He plans to introduce at His last meal with His disciples.

John 13:1 – “Now before the Feast of Passover, when Jesus knew His hour had come that he should depart from this world...” Verse 2 – It was during supper Judah Iscariot determined to betray Jesus “And supper being ended,” better – “supper being served,” or as many Bibles read “during supper.” John nowhere calls this meal a Passover. He simply refers to it as supper. Nowhere in scripture are we directed to observe this meal as taking the place of Passover. It is not a holy day, feast or some type of festival, John is clear on this.

As further evidence that this was not some type of Passover meal. It is clear that they ate regular leavened bread; a small loaf, broken by hand. John 13:26 – “it is He to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” The Greek word “Arotos” means loaf or raised bread. The Greek word for unleavened bread is “Azumos” (flat). The word translated “bread” in John 13:26, Matt. 26:26, Mark 14:22 and Luke 22:19-20 and throughout New Testament, is always “Aratos–leavened bread.” Further definition of this Greek word can be “small loaf or cake” composed of flour and water and then baked – typical of the leavened loaf, bread eaten throughout the year.

A detailed discussion of the real meaning of the bread and wine ceremony is in order. What Jesus did that evening with His disciples was to institute the bread and wine; it was given as an example of what He expects us to do on a regular basis throughout the year. It is a gift He gave the church for building a relationship of appreciation, respect and remembrance. Let us first again look at the New Testament Passover.

## **New Testament Passover**

It is not reasonable to hold a memorial service of an event, which is to occur two days later – the death (Passover) of Jesus Christ. If the Passover meal is a memorial service done in memory of Jesus' sacrifice, then it should be done after the fact, early on Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>. It only makes sense that such a memorial should be done at the customary Passover meal. It makes no sense to keep the event being commemorated two days before the event ever took place. This is the true memorial of our deliverance from sin through the shed blood of Christ. Heb. 9:16-17 – “For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.” While Jesus lived, men were dead in their sins. He died and by His blood set us free from sin. The bible instructs us to follow actual facts of history in the same, common sense way they transpired, otherwise, what is the value?

The Old Testament Passover was a perfect type of the death of the true Passover lamb, Jesus Christ. Thus, the New Testament Passover identifies perfectly with the Old Testament Passover. The Old Testament Passover was a shadow, the New Testament Passover with the sacrifice of Jesus, is the reality. There are not two different Passovers – one being celebrated one way and the other (N.T.) Passover being kept another way. There is only one Passover, and it was ordained forever. Jesus did not change anything about the Passover, except to sacrifice Himself as the Lamb of God for our benefit. (Matt. 5:17-19).

He came not to change anything. To accept the “lord’s supper” as a Passover memorial service is a stretch that cannot be made. Not once did Jesus criticize the Jews for keeping the Passover at the wrong time.

By observing the true Passover and accepting Jesus as our Savior, we demonstrate our understanding of the unleavened bread and wine. The bread symbolizing His sinless broken and beaten body which takes away our deserved death penalty. The wine, is the blood of Christ, which covers all of our sins and allows reconciliation to God. I Cor. 5:7–“Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover was sacrificed for us.”

Perhaps the following will help. The Passover meal is a rededication to our original commitment and acceptance of Jesus Christ. The kiddush (bread and wine) is an ongoing remembrance ceremony for what has been done on our behalf and shows Jesus to be the source of truth.

The Passover meal and night is to be a joyous event, a family affair shared with relatives and friends around a dinner table. It is a time to tell the stories of God’s mercy, kindness, love and God’s deliverance of ancient Israel out of sin. It is a celebration of freedom, bonds broken – should we not celebrate our escape from the bondage of sin and Satan? Should we not rejoice in the gift of everlasting life? A gift Jesus gives to us, bought and paid for by His blood. Should we not thank God and acknowledge Him for allowing His Son to be murdered on our behalf? This night gives us an opportunity to express our appreciation and love for God the Father and His son Jesus Christ. It should also be remembered and acknowledged, that the great suffering Jesus endured for 40 hours on our behalf. His beaten, whipped body, those six hours on the stake, slowly bleeding to death, the soldier’s spear and finally, death. A certain period of time (at the beginning) should be given to solemn reflection on these things.

## **Correctly Understanding the Last Supper**

- It was a friendship meal.
- It was a graduation supper for a teacher and his students.
- It was a time to review their journey together.
- It was the final preparation for the future work.
- It was an opportunity to clarify any misunderstandings.
- It was the time to start in motion the final activities of the next two days.

- It was a chosen time for Jesus to give gifts to the church in order to help it stay the course when personal and collective difficulties from inside and outside would present themselves. These things were given as gifts to help His people keep Jesus, God the Father and the Kingdom in perspective. Gifts to keep His church attuned to the purpose, goal and the overall vision of God's master plan.

In John 13:1 we read – “Now before the Feast of Passover, when Jesus knew His hour had come that He should depart...” Verse 2 – “And supper being ended...” John nowhere calls this meal a Passover. Jesus did not transfer the Passover to another time and change the order of things. Jesus Christ is to be the focus of Passover. Passover is a memorial of the death of Jesus. It also pictures our deliverance from the penalty of sin. The way to start our journey out of sin is now open before us by the beaten, whipped and drained body of Jesus. It makes wonderful sense for the First Day of Unleavened Bread and the Passover meal to come together at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>. No time lapse, the one flows into the other. Our justification by Jesus' sacrifice sets the stage for our immediate ongoing struggle to come out of sin. However, this matter of the leavened Bread and wine as given at the last supper is what is going to be clearly and thoroughly explained.

Matt. 26:26-29 – And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body. Verse 27– then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you.’ Verse 28 –For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Verse 29 –But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.”

Luke 22:17-20 –“ Then he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, ‘Take this and divide it among yourselves;’ Verse 18 – ‘for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. Verse 19 – And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Verse 20 – Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.’ ”

John 6:48-51 and verses. 53-58 – “I am the bread of life. Verse 49 –Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. Verse 50 –This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. Verse 51 – I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” John. 6:53-58 – “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.’ Verse 54 – Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. Verse 55 –For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. Verse 56 –He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. Verse 57 –As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. Verse 58 –This is the bread which came down from heaven – not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

As previously discussed, bread here means leavened bread, a loaf. Leaven as used in context, has two basic meanings. Leavening, as an agent, in bread, causes it to rise—puff up! The comparison is to sin, which causes humans to “puff up” in pride and in general, to be very full of self. Bread, leavened bread, as being discussed by John, has an altogether different idea, a positive meaning. When Jesus compares Himself to bread, He is referring to leavened bread. We want Christ and God’s Holy Spirit working in us. God’s Holy Spirit “puffs” us up on to righteousness. As Christ finds and develops a receptive place in our minds and hearts, the more we mature into His character and likeness.

We are to “eat” His flesh – He is the spiritual bread. We are symbolically to partake and consume Jesus, His essence, His truth, for He is truth personified and He is complete in every way. John 1:14 – “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” When we partake of the bread, which symbolizes Jesus’ flesh, we are taking in His word and truth. John. 14:6 – Jesus explains – “I am the way, the truth and the life...” The bread symbolizes life through Christ. He is the way to eternal life. Without truth we do not understand the way, but with truth to guide and keep us in the way, we gain life. The bread symbolizes life through Jesus Christ. On a regular basis, throughout the year, we should eat of leavened bread. Its purpose is to help us stay in remembrance that Jesus is the truth that keeps us in the way that leads to the Kingdom of God. This act of eating bread demonstrates our earnest desire to have Christ in us, so that we can grow into perfection. Humble submission to Jesus and His truth is how we mature into the fullness of Christ.

We are to take the wine on a regular occasion to help us to always stay in remembrance that it is by the blood of Jesus that our sins are covered and we are reconciled to God the Father. In II Cor. 5:17, Paul talks about how we are new creatures in Jesus, we are reconciled to God through Christ – by being reconciled to God by the blood of Jesus our sins are no longer imputed to us. II Cor. 5:21 – “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus paid for our sins by giving His life’s blood on the stake. Our sins are forgiven, taken away and never to be recalled by God.

The wine also calls us into repentance. Our struggle is with sin on a regular ongoing daily basis. The wine as it symbolizes Jesus’ shed blood and taken regularly calls us to repentance, it reminds us that death is what we have earned, but by the mercy of God and the blood of Jesus Christ, we may have life.

The bread and wine ceremony known as the kiddush to Jesus and the Jews of His time, dated back to the time when Melchizedek brought bread and wine for Abraham (Gen. 14:18-19). What Jesus did was to explain the true meaning for these ancient symbols. The Jewish people take the bread and wine after synagogue services; also at the Friday evening Sabbath dinner. They do it as tradition, not knowing nor understanding what they are doing. Some Rabbis say the Kiddush looks forward to the bounty of the earth, others say it represents the Messiah to come. The Jews do not understand the Messiah has already come, as a suffering Savior. They fail to appreciate the bread and

wine as symbols of Christ's sacrificed body. Abraham understood the bread and wine 2000 years before Jesus actually gave Himself.

The Kiddush, the bread and wine, as Paul explains, should be celebrated often during the year. I Cor. 11:24-26 – “After the same manner, also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, ‘this cup is the New Testament in My blood: this you do, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.’ ” Verse 26 – “For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He returns.” By this ceremony we remember Christ's life, suffering, death and resurrection.

The leavened bread pictures the fullness of Jesus, the life-giving prosperity that He offers as the “word” and truth of God. Matt. 4:4 – “It is written man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” John. 6:48 – Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.” The wine keeps us in remembrance that it is by His blood our sins are covered and removed from memory.

In I Cor. 11: 26 – “As often as” is translated from the Greek word “Hosakis,” which is found in only one other place in the New Testament. Rev. 11:6 – “They have the power to shut heaven...and to strike the earth with plagues as often as they desire.” This word does not automatically imply high frequency, but would be a logical choice if Paul is talking about doing, taking, on a regular basis throughout the year. Interestingly enough, Paul does not choose to use any of the common Greek expressions that mean annually.

In I Cor. 11:2 – Paul makes the comment “...keep the traditions, as I delivered them to you.” Paul is not speaking of Jewish traditions, but those things that he specifically gave to them. The Corinthians are his readers and he goes on to discuss these things. I Cor. 11:17 directly approaches a new matter. He says in this verse, that they come together not for the better, but for the worse. In Verses 18-19, he speaks of division and heresies and then he goes into verse 20 about how they handle the Lord's Supper. Verse 20 – “When you come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.” Paul is saying that when they gather or come together for a certain specific reason, that reason is not to celebrate a ritual called the Lord's Supper. Jesus and His disciples shared that final eventful meal, it was a one-time thing, but what He instituted was to be observed on a regular ongoing basis. Verses 21-22 – “For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. Verse 22 – “What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.” Paul admonishes them for improperly assembling as a group. He says as families and small groups, their meals should be eaten in their own homes and not to come together in a church service to observe a “Lord's Supper.” They were not only wrong in what they were doing—making a meal the focus, which clearly was not Jesus' purpose, but added to this they were selfish and drunken. Interesting and important to note is that several times in this chapter Paul writes about coming together “as a church.” The word Passover is never mentioned in this chapter, nor is there any reference to the Feast of Unleavened Bread or any similar thing. Rather than taking the bread and wine to remember our Savior, they were having a big feast. In I Cor. 11:34 Paul repeats himself to make the point. “And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that

you come not together unto condemnation...” The bread and wine was not intended to satisfy hunger and thirst. There is nothing wrong in taking the bread and wine in one’s home, besides on selected Sabbaths or Holy Days when assembled with others.

I Cor. 11:23-26 – “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; Verse 24 – and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘take eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Verse 25 – In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. Verse 26 – For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.’ ” The reference Paul makes is not to the Passover, but rather is to the Last Supper. Specifically, the institution of the bread and wine as symbols of His life in us, and His death for us. His words are almost identical to what Jesus said. He is reviewing and teaching the Corinthians what Jesus did at His last meal. Paul is saying with understanding, this is what we are to do. Leaven bread eaten with meals helps us to be full and satisfied. Even so, we should become full as we take in Jesus through prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation. Some claim that I Cor. 11:23-26 are referring to the Passover. Verse 26 – “Show or proclaim the Lord’s death” are very passive words. The word “proclaim” is better rendered “preach.” The taking of the bread and wine is also a reminder that our lives are witness to others. So in effect what we do in taking the bread and wine is to preach Jesus. This deed makes it clear we are true Christians.

Again, the Passover meal is a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus. It is not fitting to hold a memorial service some 40 plus hours before He died. A memorial is done after the actual event. It makes sense; the memorial is the essence of the Passover meal.

I Cor. 11:27-29 – “Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Verse 28 – But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Verse 29 – For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.” The obvious reference here is what Paul said in the previous verses about the bread and wine. I believe that his comments here also have application to the Passover meal of the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Passover meal should be taken at the correct time and manner, to not do so brings up the questions of understanding and being done in an unworthy manner.

Verses 31-32 – “For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. Verse 32 – But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.” Paul says, “Let a man examine himself...” and we are to judge ourselves. The Corinthian church was in many ways a self-determined church, they did as they saw fit; quite often not in line with sound principles of Christian living. In Matt. 5:23-29, Jesus talks about a man’s offering being unacceptable if he is at serious odds with his neighbor – that had to first be taken care of. We know of the problem of making the “Lord’s Supper” a party type of affair involving gluttony and drunkenness. Another aspect of eating and drinking unworthily is a lack of true appreciation for the ceremony and what it means. Perhaps living a lax and marginal Christian life, not really dedicated to the way of life shown by Christ, but yet not outright rejecting it. Being

lukewarm or chilly for the most part. These things and more, could be listed. I believe we can narrow this down to one all encompassing point. We are all sinners worthy of death, but redeemed by Christ. It is to that Christian of a contrite heart God is pleased with and gives attention to. So what is it that makes one unworthy to whatever degree? It is the pride of heart that so easily befalls each of us. Humility is the all-important thing. So it is that as we have the ability to see ourselves as we are, and understand that the only true standard of comparison is Jesus Christ then we are worthy, by no means perfect, but we know where we stand with God and thus going in the right direction.

## **John 19:14 – How Should We Understand “About the Sixth Hour!”**

John 19:14 – “Now it was the preparation day of the Passover and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, behold your King!” Again, as a review, John 13:1-5, specifically “Now before the Feast of the Passover,” and “supper being ended” is strong proof that this last meal was not a Passover. The fact is the Jews were waiting for Passover even before Jesus was taken before Caiaphas and then later Pontius Pilate. (Jn. 18:28-29). John 19:14-16 is a crucial scripture and when correctly understood, puts everything in its proper time sequence. There will remain no doubt as to the proper timing of Passover and when Jesus’ last supper took place. The forthcoming explanation will be direct and easy enough to understand. The willingness to accept the simple truth of John. 19:14 is an individual matter. Briefly; if we accept a Wednesday afternoon (3:00 PM), Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> death of Jesus, then the chronology of John. 19:14 leaves us no choice but to understand that Jesus’ final meal was after sunset, in the beginning of Tuesday night, Nisan 13<sup>th</sup>. Although many of the churches have a “Passover service” beginning the 14<sup>th</sup>, they are wrong. The true time of the Passover was not changed, and it is chronologically not possible to place the last supper at this time, beginning on the 14<sup>th</sup>, which many mistakenly call the Passover.

It was about the 6<sup>th</sup> hour when Pilate said, “Behold your King!” about 12 noon of Tuesday, Nisan 13<sup>th</sup>. Without it being given any thought, it has been assumed that this was Wednesday, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, which is not possible because Jesus was on the stake at this time. While we are still looking at John 19:14, here is another important consideration. “Now it was the preparation day of the Passover.” The actual Greek is “And it was preparation of the Passover.” No article “the,” thus no reference to a particular day.

Some, in order to explain the 6<sup>th</sup> hour as being 6:00 AM, have tried to squeeze everything into a 7-hour period. A little later, I will detail in proper time sequence, Christ’s activities beginning from His last meal to His final breath on the stake. Meanwhile, here is a brief outline. It is clear one cannot logically compress all the events of the previous night and concluding at 6:00 AM in the morning in a 7-hour period. We have His appearance before Annas & Caiaphas, then to the full Sanhedrin, unto Pilate, the first time, then to Herod, and then back to Pilate once again, the second time. All this before 6:00 AM in the morning, it is not possible.

Some have taught the timing is based on Roman time in order to explain a 6:00 AM appearance before Pilate. The sixth hour in scripture always means noon. Let us take a look at the scriptural evidence. The book of John has many examples that show us it

was Jewish time, not Roman time for reckoning time. John. 1:38-39 – John goes to Jesus and Jesus said, “Come and see” (in response to where He stayed). They came and saw where He was staying and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).” F. F. Bruce comments, “The ‘tenth hour’ (reckoning from sunrise) was about 4:00 PM, when men began to leave their work for the day.” John. 4:3-7 – The Samaritan woman at the well. Verse 6 – “Now Jacob’s well was near and Jesus being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.” Jesus had been walking all morning and stopped at the well to rest and be refreshed by it’s water. The sixth hour from sunrise would have been noon. Not likely that Jesus did all this walking from midnight to sunrise. Later in the chapter, we have the incident of the nobleman’s child. John. 4:49-50 – The nobleman requested of Jesus and Jesus said to him, “go your way, your son lives.” Verse 51 – His servants meet him with the good news and he inquires as to when he was healed and they said, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.” The young boy was healed suddenly at the 7<sup>th</sup> hour, about 1:00 PM and the father (Verse 53) knew it was the same hour Jesus talked to him. Further, John says in John. 11:9 – “Are there not twelve hours in a day?” Twelve hours from sunrise to sunset. The first hour is a sunrise and it follows the 6<sup>th</sup> hour would be about noon. F. F. Bruce makes an important comment on the expression “the sixth hour” in John. 19:14 – he writes, “As for the time of day, it was getting on towards noon. Despite Westcott’s arguments, no evidence is forthcoming that at this time, whether among Greeks, Romans, Jews, hours were even reckoned otherwise than from sunrise.” (F. F. Bruce – The Gospel of John, page 364). If more proof is needed, read carefully the parable of the vineyard in Matt. 20:1-7. Straightforward, nothing difficult to understand.

Consider the “sixth hour” when Jesus was condemned by Pontius Pilate, it had to be about noontime on Tuesday, the day before the crucifixion occurred. It could not have been Wednesday, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> at noon, because Jesus was hanging on the stake from 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM on that day. It was the previous day, Tuesday, Nisan 13<sup>th</sup> that Pilate condemned Jesus. Mark 15:25 – “Now it was the third hour and they crucified Him.” Obviously, the third hour comes before the sixth. Mark 15:33-37 – Verse 33 – “Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the 9<sup>th</sup> hour.” (Also Matt. 27:45). Clearly, we can see the sixth hour refers to noontime. Jesus was on the stake, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>. He died at 3:00 PM, the time the Passover lambs were being sacrificed. Again, Jesus appeared before Pilate at noon, Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>. Thus the “last supper” was at the beginning of Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> — not Wednesday, Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>. Those who maintain a Nisan 14<sup>th</sup> Passover have it wrong. They are holding a Passover 24 hours **before** the Jews, who have the correct Old Testament time, or they are holding a Passover 24 hours **after** the “last supper,” which they claim is the Passover.

Now let us put Jesus’ activities from the last supper to His death on the stake in the proper time line. It is not possible to establish precise times, common sense will tell that what is given is reasonable. Also, others who have written on this are in basic agreement to the time sequence. Some work back from the 3:00 PM death of Jesus. I believe it is easier to follow if we work forward from the time of the final meal.

Previous comments have conclusively proven the last supper was early Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>. Jesus and His disciples placed themselves at the dinner table right around sunset or perhaps a little after. This supper probably lasted from 6:00 PM to about 8:00 PM or

so. After the meal Jesus introduced the bread and wine and spoke His final message, with extensive comments including a prayer of protection from the evil one and to be one as He and the Father are one (John. 14 & 15). From about 8:00-8:30 until 9:00-9:30, these final words were spoken. Matt. 26:30 and Mark 14:26 – “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matt. 26:36 – the Garden of Gethsemane). The final concluding act in the upper room was the hymn. Jesus prayed from 9:00-9:30 to approximately 11:00 PM, when He was taken prisoner. John. 18:12-13 – “Then the band and the captain and the officers of Jews took Jesus and bound Him, and lead Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest that same year.” Annas still maintained much influence and power. Jesus’ appearance and interrogation by Annas most likely was from about midnight to 1:00 AM, or as possibly late as 2:00 AM in the morning. John. 18:24 – “Then Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.” Matt. 26:51-67 gives a more thorough accounting of Jesus’ time before Caiaphas. It was extensive and brutal. None of the witnesses could agree, but at last, two false witnesses came forward. This interrogation probably lasted from about 2:00-4:00 AM. Both events happened in the middle of the night. Although this is not the format for details, historical references tell what the usual way of dealing with criminals was. Everybody involved, especially the Jews ran roughshod over their own procedures—so great was their fear and hatred of Jesus.

Early in the morning (13<sup>th</sup>), Jesus was brought before the entire Sanhedrin. Matt. 27:1-2 – “When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people took council against Jesus to put Him to death. Verse 2 – And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.” Mark 15:1 – “And straightway (immediately) in the morning...” It is now morning, a new day. Here it is early morning and the full Sanhedrin considered the case against Jesus and determined He should die, and they condemned Him to death. So this meeting in the morning, around daybreak, about 6:00 AM or so, was held. Since Jesus’ fate had been for the most part determined, this meeting probably lasted only from 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM. After this, they took Jesus to Pontius Pilate.

Jesus is now before Pilate and it is well into the morning, probably somewhere shortly after 7:00 AM. Pilate was a Roman governor, and to hold court at nighttime would have been contrary to Roman law. Pilate had no great love for Jews, and certainly would not accommodate them with a nighttime court. Besides, the scripture is clear about this being morning.

Luke 23:1-5 – The multitude take Jesus to Pilate, they make their accusations, Pilate asks Jesus a question and then declares to the chief priests and crowd, “I find no fault in this man.” (Pilate knew for envy they delivered Him). All these events naturally took time. It probably was around 8:00 AM when Pilate was finished hearing the complaints and talking directly to Jesus. Matt. 25:6-7 – “When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the man was a Galilean. Verse 7 – And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time.” In Luke 23:8-12, Herod is glad to see Jesus, and he questions Him in great detail. Herod and his men of war mock Jesus and treat Him with great contempt. Herod then sends Jesus back to Pilate. Herod probably interrogated and questioned, abused, insulted and mistreated Jesus from about 9:00 AM, and was finished by 10:00 AM or a little later.

Jesus appears before Pilate for the second and final time. Probably arriving somewhere before 11:00 AM and the matter was finished around 12 noon. Luke 23:13-25 – Pilate again has to put up with the liars and accusers, but he can find no fault worthy of death. The chief priest, rulers and people continue to call for Jesus to be crucified. Pilate is in a tough spot and lacking depth of character gives in and sentences Jesus to death as they requested. (All these locations of interrogation were close by the temple area. Herod was in Jerusalem because it was the Passover season.)

John. 18:37-40 – Pilate questions Jesus and Jesus responds. Pilate attempts to have Jesus released, but they shouted saying, “Not this man, but Barabbas, who was a thief.” John. 19:1-4 – Pilate takes Jesus and plants a crown of thorns on His head and puts Him in a purple robe and proceeds to insult Him. Pilate again excuses himself by proclaiming he finds no fault, but cannot withstand the chief priests and turns Jesus over to them. Pilate knew Jesus was an innocent man. In verses 7-12, Pilate hears that “He made Himself the Son of God.” In verse 11, Jesus answers him that He had no power “except as given you from above,” which greatly upsets Pilate and he again tries to deliver Jesus from the Jews—to no avail.

John. 9:14 – “...and it was about the sixth hour; and he said to the Jews, behold your king.” In this verse, John also says it was the preparation of the Passover. Passover had not yet arrived. The idea that Jesus was crucified the same day as He appeared before Pilate has no merit. Mark 15:25 – “And it was the third hour and they crucified Him.” The third hour was 9:00 AM the morning of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>. Christ was on the stake at 9:00 AM, and it is very obvious He could not be before Pilate at the 6<sup>th</sup> hour. Also, Mark 15:33-37 – “At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice and then died.

At about 11:00 PM on Tuesday night, 13<sup>th</sup>, Jesus was arrested by the high priests. He was greatly insulted and struck brutally by one of the officers. Shortly after sunrise, He was before Pilate, again to receive more abuse, unto Herod who had Him physically abused, and then back to Pilate who whipped and tormented Jesus again. Pilate's final attempts to get Jesus released came to an end about the sixth hour of Nisan 13<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday. From the 6<sup>th</sup> hour (13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan) to the 3<sup>rd</sup> hour of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday, Jesus suffered terribly at the hands of the Roman soldiers. He was beaten and whipped to almost the point of death and then the journey to Golgotha where He is crucified. Isa. 53:6-12 – Take some time to read this, it greatly puts into perspective why Jesus had to suffer such brutality.

From the time Jesus was arrested until His death on the stake was about 40 hours. For 40 hours God allowed His Son to suffer mental and physical torment as probably not suffered by any other man – this was the very Son of God, who for our sakes was proven for 40 long hours.

I know that most will not be convinced by the words and reasonings given in this paper. But for those with an open mind, ready to acknowledge truth when made available, the understanding of John 19:14 along with everything else presented, makes it clear beyond a doubt about the truth of Passover as instituted in Exodus 12. Jesus said it would never change. Jesus' “last supper” as to timing and purpose, has been thoroughly and precisely explained. So simple, so beautiful, and so meaningful.

Men and organizations may say one thing, but scripture tells us plainly and in simple words the truth of Passover and Jesus' last supper.

# Pentecost

The issue of correctly counting Pentecost has been around as long as the Passover controversy. As a matter of support for calculating the correct counting of Pentecost, I have five points of proof/evidence for consideration.

## Pharisees Held the Religious Power

Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, p. 118 – “Herod automatically raised in importance his deputy, the segan, a Pharisee, who got control over all the regular Temple functions and ensured that even the Sadducee high-priests performed the liturgy in a Pharisaical manner. Since Herod was on reasonable terms with the Pharisees, he avoided conflict between the Temple and his government, as a rule. (p. 118).”

The actual power to rule and regulate and control all of the temple functions, including Holy Day observances and dates rested with the office of the “segan,” who was appointed to assist and ensure that Sadducee high priests did all things according to the prescribed manner.

Josephus writes (Antiq. xviii, 1, 3) – “They (Pharisees) are able to greatly persuade the body of the people, and whatever they do about divine worship, prayers and sacrifices, they (Sadducees) perform them according to their directions.” Josephus was a Pharisee and could write with some authority on this group.

Ben-Sasson in his book *History of the Jewish People*, describes how powerful the Pharisees had become. – “...became increasingly important and influential through the whole-hearted support that it received from the people. Their opinion usually carried the day. The chiefs of the priesthood who were of Sadducean persuasion, rarely dared take actions against the express wishes of the Pharisaic hakhamim (representatives) in the Sanhedrin” (p. 250). Ben-Sasson declares that – “Because of the decisive influence of their Pharisaic opponents...the Sadducees had no choice, even while they held the highest offices, but to make many concessions to the Pharisees. Only on rare occasions did they attempt to enforce their own views in various areas of public life and religious ceremonial” (p. 271). Ben-Sasson says the whole second temple period was dominated by the leadership of the Pharisees.

Alfred Edersheim – *Sketches of Jewish Social Life* writes – “Pharisaism...had not only become the leading direction of theological thought, but its principles were solemnly proclaimed, and universally acted upon—and the latter, even by their opponents the Sadducees. A Sadducee in the Temple or on the seat of judgment would be obliged to act and decide precisely like a Pharisee. Not that the party had not attempted to give dominance to their peculiar views. But they were fairly vanquished, and it is said that they themselves destroyed the book of Sadducean ordinances, which they had at one time drawn up. And the Pharisees celebrated each dogmatic victory by a feast!” (p. 219).

Josephus also makes this brief and interesting comment – “...the Sadducees are able to persuade none but the rich, and have not the populace obsequious to them, but the

Pharisees have the multitude on their side.” He again wrote, “The doctrine of the Sadducee” is received by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity; but they are able to do almost nothing of themselves..., they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees.”

H. H. Ben-Sasson in *A History of the Jewish People* writes – “The Pharisees...set their imprint on the entire internal development of Judea and in effect even laid the foundations of Judaism as it was to be after the destruction of the Temple. In the main, the Pharisees carried on a trend that had its origins in the Persian era and had encompassed the activities of the sopherim (scribes) and interpreters of the Torah in the days of Ezra and thereafter.”...“The basic tenet of the Pharisees was an unswerving faithfulness to the Torah and its infusion into all aspects of life” (p. 235, Harvard University Press). “Besides the scriptures, the Torah they taught also included the ‘Oral Torah,’ which was ‘the entire living tradition of the halakhah (rules) as it had evolved in the course of generations’ (ibid.). These were the ‘traditions of men’ or of the ‘elders’ that Jesus Christ said often conflicted with the true word of God” (Matt. 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13).

It is clear to see the real holders of power and religious influence in ancient Judea were the Pharisees—not the Sadducees. The Sadducees had to accept the authority of the Pharisees in all religious matters. They performed all religious rites, ceremonies and rituals according to the “direction and opinion of the Pharisees.”

The temple services were controlled by the Pharisees. The sagan made sure that the Sadducee high priest did everything correctly, and at the appointed time—just as taught by the Pharisees. Hasting comments – “But the real possessors of power (Pharisees), for, in order to render themselves tolerable to the people, the Sadducees were compelled to act in most matters in accordance with Pharisaic principles. And when Jerusalem was destroyed and Israel ceased to exist as a nation, they speedily disappeared entirely from history.”

Here is a very interesting comment from Ederheim’s book, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*. – “The Pharisees held that the time between Passover and Pentecost should be counted from the second day of the Feast; the Sadducees insisted that it should commence with the literal ‘Sabbath’ (Saturday–7th day) after the festival day. But despite argument, the Sadducees had to join when the solemn procession went on in the afternoon of the feast to cut down the ‘first sheaf,’ and to reckon Pentecost as did their opponents” (p. 220). The Sadducees had their ideas, but the Pharisees ruled and Jesus did not rebuke the Pharisees on how they figured Pentecost.

## **Jesus’ Position Concerning the Pharisees and Sadducees**

The Sadducees were always looking for ways to trip Jesus up; usually with a tough trick question. In Matt. 22:29, Jesus rebuked them saying – “You are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.” The Jewish New Testament has it – “The reason you go astray is that you are ignorant of the Tanakh and of the power of God.” The Torah, prophets and writings comprise the books of the Old Testament, and Jesus said they did not know what was really in these books. Matt. 22:23 – “The Sadducees

were in the spiritual wilderness, they denied the resurrection.” In Acts 23:8, they also denied the existence of angels and spirit beings.

Jesus did rebuke the Pharisees for their sins, hypocrisy and attitude; however consenting to their authority to teach the Law, He said this in Matt. 23:2-3 – “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Verse 3 – Therefore, whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say and do not.” Here Jesus clearly endorses the authority of the Pharisees. If the Pharisees were wrong about the dating of Passover and Pentecost, would Christ have sanctioned the Pharisees? You would think Jesus would have rebuked them – but He did not. At this point in time they were teaching the Law of God correctly. In the basic things the Sadducees were so far out of the game that Jesus said they were ignorant. What thinking and knowledgeable person would give any credibility to the Sadducees? Jesus found no fault with the Pharisees having to do with any of the Holy Days, whether the timing or how they were observed. Also, it must be said the Pharisees did not criticize Jesus or even the early church for not correctly counting Pentecost.

Paul was a Pharisee, taught by Gamaliel, a leading teacher of the Jews. There is no hint of a suggestion that the Pharisees had some things wrong and the Sadducees had it right. Paul flatly states in Philippians, that he had been correctly taught the Law of God, and as a Pharisee, he was blameless and faultless. Phil. 3:4-6 – “...a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as to the Law, a Pharisee, as zeal a persecutor of the church, as to legal righteousness without blame.” A more contemporary translation has it, “A strict and devout adherent to God’s Law.” Continuing – “A meticulous observer of everything set down in God’s Law.”

The point is clear. No reason to beat this thing to death. The Sadducees are not credible, and Jesus did not use them as an example of truth and understanding. Jesus acknowledges the legitimate position and teaching of the Pharisees.

## **Counting From the Correct Sabbath**

Lev. 23:10-11 – “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: “When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. Verse 11 – ‘He shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.’” Here we clearly see the Israelites were not to partake of any grain from the new harvest until after the omer was offered. The word Sabbath as used in these verses is a point of confusion for many. Some insist the Bible command is to “count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath (Lev. 23:16). The reasoning is there must be seven regular weekly Sabbaths, then after that final Sabbath you end with a Sunday Pentecost. The Jews (Pharisees) reject this reasoning. The simple truth is the term “Sabbath” can also refer to a “week.” In Deut. 16:9 – “You shall count seven weeks for yourself; begin to count the seven weeks from the time you begin to put the sickle to the grain.” Verse 10 – Then you shall begin to keep the Feast of Weeks to the Lord your God...” Notice Feast of Weeks, not Feast of Sabbaths. The word “weeks” is clearly understood. We are to count periods of seven days for seven weeks and one day for fifty.

Alfred Edersheim says in *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* – “The expression, ‘the morrow after the Sabbath’ (Lev. 23:11), has sometimes been misunderstood as implying that the presentation of the so-called ‘first sheaf’ was to always be made on the day following the weekly Sabbath of the Passover-week. This view, adoption by the ‘Boethusians’ and the Sadducees in the time of Christ, and by the Karaites Jews and certain modern interpreters, rests on a misinterpretation of the word ‘Sabbath’ (Lev. 23:24, 32, 39). As in analogous allusions to others feast in the same chapter, it means not the weekly Sabbath, but the day of the festival. The testimony of Josephus (Antiq. 3.248-249), Philo (Op. ii, 294), and Jewish tradition leaves no room to doubt that in this instance we are to understand by the ‘Sabbath’ the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, on whatever day of the week it may fall” (p. 204). The word for ‘Sabbath’ is Shabat, which most assumes to mean the “Sabbath day.” Not so! Sabbath in Hebrew means “intermission (Strong’s #1767), from the Hebrew Shebeth, meaning, “rest, interruption, and cessation.” The reference is not to the weekly Sabbath, but rather to counting of seven periods of seven days. The Sabbath does not mean the seventh day of the week, but the day of rest.

Josephus in *Antiquities of the Jews* tells us this about Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, therefore, was celebrated fifty days after Passover. Josephus writes: “But on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth day of the month, they first partake of the fruits of the earth, for before that they do not touch them...They also at this participation of the first-fruits of the earth sacrifice a lamb, as a burnt offering to God. When a week of weeks has passed over after this sacrifice, (which week contains forty and nine days,) on the fiftieth day, which is Pentecost, they bring to God a loaf, made of wheat flour...” (Ant., bk. III, chap X, 5-6).

*Barnes Notes on the Bible*, volume 1, regarding Lev. 23:15 – “Seven Sabbaths,” “More properly seven weeks (compare Deut. 16:9). The word Sabbath in the language of the New Testament as well as the Old, is used for ‘week’ (Lev. 25:8; Matt. 28:1; Luke 18:12, etc)” (p. 223).

*Barnes Notes* continues regarding Lev. 23:16 – “The morrow after the seventh week was the 50th day after the conclusion of a week of weeks. The day is called in the Old Testament, ‘the feast of harvest’ (Ex. 23:16), ‘the feast of weeks,’ ‘the feast of the firstfruits of wheat harvest’ (Ex. 34:22; Deut. 16:10), and The day of the firstfruits’ (Num. 28:26)” (p. 223).

## **The LXX or Septuagint and Leviticus 23:11,15**

The Septuagint makes it very clear how to calculate Pentecost. This was the official translation of the Hebrew Pentateuch (first five books of Moses). It was used by Jews in their synagogues throughout the Mediterranean area including Jerusalem and all of Palestine.

Some 250 years before Jesus’ time and before the Sadducees and Pharisees had come on the scene, King Ptolemy Phaladelphus of Egypt requested that the learned Jews would provide him, for his library, a translation of the scriptures into Greek, language of the Mediterranean world. The result was the Septuagint translation is the first authorized translation into another language. Seventy was the number of Jewish scholars who

worked on this translation. This was the official translation of the Sanhedrin. Another interesting point is that Christ and the Apostles of the early New Testament church often quoted from the Septuagint in referencing the Old Testament. Many scholars and commentators recognize this fact. However, there are errors. The translators, when it suited their purposes, could be “careless.” In this case the referred to translation is correct.

We read: “These are the festivals for the Lord—holy, set days, which you shall proclaim in their set times. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the two evenings, is the Passover for the Lord. And on the fifteenth day of this month beginneth the festival of unleavened bread for the Lord. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. Now the first day shall be a holy, set day for you. You shall do no sacrificial service, but offer whole burnt offerings to the Lord seven days, and the seventh day shall be a holy set day for you. You shall do no sacrificial service.”

“Moreover, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt say unto them, when you are come into the land which I give you, and are about to reap the harvest thereof, you shall bring a sheaf, as the first fruits of your harvest, to the priest, and he shall offer up the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you on the morrow after the first day, the priest shall offer this up.’ ” (Lev. 23:4-11).

Verse 15 – “And ye shall number to yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day on which ye shall offer the sheaf of the heave-offering, seven full weeks: until the morrow after the last week ye shall number fifth days...” (The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Green and English, Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, Hendrickson Publishers; Lev. 23:4-15, p. 159-160).

How clear the Septuagint is – “On the morrow after the first day.” There is no way to reason this than to understand it means the first day of the feast (Unleavened Bread). This is not a reference to a seventh day Sabbath

### **Luke 6:1-2 “The Second Sabbath After the First”**

This is an interesting verse, that has caused no end of questions, misunderstandings and confusion. When correctly understood, we have New Testament proof for counting Pentecost from Nisan 16<sup>th</sup>. Luke 6:1-2 – “Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grain fields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate them, rubbing them in their hands. Verse 2 – And some of the Pharisees said to them, ‘why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?’ ” Jesus and His disciples were going through the grain fields, and they took something to eat. So we see that this was also the harvest time. Matt. 12:1, this same event, the wording is changed, especially its lack of description of the Sabbath, it reads – “At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.” “Sabbath” here, meaning a normal weekly Sabbath day, and not an annual holy day. A fair question here is which harvest? The barley harvest of Passover, or the wheat harvest that happens at Pentecost? (Lk. 6:1).

The *Greek-English Interlinear* says – “And it happened on the second chief Sabbath” Literally – “and it was on a Sabbath, the second chief.” The Greek expression

as used here is ‘Sabbaton Dueteroproton’ and means “Sabbath, the second chief,” or “Sabbath the second first.”

This is not a reference to the Feast of Tabernacles, this feast is after the harvest. We find the only time for two “chief Sabbaths” in a row would be the Passover/Unleavened Bread time. We have this activity of eating during the grain harvest taking place on a weekly (7<sup>th</sup> day) Sabbath. During the Passover we have three chief Sabbaths. The first day of Unleavened Bread, the weekly Sabbath, and the 7<sup>th</sup> or final day of Unleavened Bread. A close inspection of Luke 6:1 tells us there were three unique Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. This is not the case if the first or last day falls on the weekly Sabbath. This verse is clearly discussing the Sabbath, which occurred during Passover/Feast of Unleavened Bread. During this period there are three chief Sabbaths and this verse says the “second chief Sabbath,” not the third. Matthew and the account in Mark simply refer to this Sabbath, as the regular weekly Sabbath.

Lev. 23:14-15 – “You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. Verse 15 – And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven weeks shall be completed. The Israelites were not to partake of any grain from the New Harvest until after the wave sheaf (omer) offering, waved before the Lord on the day following the Sabbath. Which Sabbath? The First Day of Unleavened Bread, or the weekly Sabbath? Luke 6:1 gives us the clear and simple answer. It was the weekly Sabbath where we find Christ’s disciples plucking grain and eating them. It is thus clear the wave sheaf offering had already take place, as to eat before this time was forbidden. The Sabbath before the 16<sup>th</sup> is the 15<sup>th</sup>, but the wave sheaf was not offered until the 16<sup>th</sup>, after the 15<sup>th</sup>. There is no other logical choice – the disciples were plucking and eating on the weekly Sabbath. The disciples were free to eat the new grain of the harvest. The Pharisees did not make that the issue. To them it was unlawful to be plucking the grain, rolling out the chaff and eating. In their narrow perspective this was work of sorts, and profaning the weekly Sabbath.

Lets finish up this subject by looking at what the commentaries have to say. The *Matthew Henry Commentary* says regarding the account in Luke, chapter 6: “This story here has a date, which we had not in the other evangelists; it was on the second Sabbath after the first (Verse 1), that is, as Dr. Whitby thinks is pretty clear, the first Sabbath after the second day of Unleavened Bread, from which day they reckoned the seven weeks to the feast of Pentecost; the first of which they called Sabbaton deuteroproton, the second deuterodeuteron, and so on” (p. 1418).

The *Adam Clarke Commentary* declares as to this passage: “The Vulgate Latin renders deuteroproton, secundo-primum, which is literal and right. We (in English) translate it the second Sabbath after the first, which is directly wrong; for it should have been the first Sabbath after the second day of Passover. On the 14th of Nisan, the Passover was killed; the next day (the 15th) was the first day of the feast of unleavened bread; the day following (the 16th) the wave sheaf was offered, pursuant to the law, on the morrow after the Sabbath (Lev. 23:11). The Sabbath here, is not the seventh day of the week, but the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, let it fall on what day of the

week it would...This Sabbath then, on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, was the first Sabbath after that second day. Dr. Lighfoot has demonstrably proved this to be the meaning of this sabbaton deuteroproton, and from his F. Lamy and Dr. Whitby have explained it. This Sabbath could not fall before the Passover because, till the second day of that feast, no Jew might eat either bread or parched corn, nor green ears. (Lev. 23:14).”

Adam Clark further explains: “Had the disciples then gathered these ears of corn on any Sabbath before the Passover (or, before the wave sheaf offering), they would have broken two laws instead of one; and for the breach of these two laws they would infallibly have been accused; whereas now they broke only one...which was that of the Sabbath” (volume 3, p. 404).

I hope the reader better understands the logic and importance of Pentecost being kept on the correct day; as designated by scripture.

# **Addendum to Passover Study**

## **Luke 22:14-16 Christ's Desire to Eat the Passover**

In Luke 22: 14-16 your question indicates that you believe these verses picture Jesus celebrating a Passover meal with His disciples. My paper labels this as Jesus' final meal – Lord's Supper – with His disciples, which took place the early evening of Nisan 13<sup>th</sup>. The Passover period of preparation was from the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nisan with the selecting of the lamb. Jesus, with His disciples, prepared for the Passover, which He would not be able to keep, and they also prepared for their final meal together. This was a special one-time arrangement, since He would not be able to keep the regular 15<sup>th</sup> Passover meal. Passover was set from God through Moses and according to God cannot be changed. So what we can consider is a kind of “pre-Passover” going away meal.

If this meal was a Passover meal, then John would have so stated, but instead, John records in John 13:1 – “Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come...” Verse 2 – “And supper being ended...” Verse 4 – “...Rose from supper...” Here we have this supper identified as another evening-time meal. Remember, it was shortly after this meal that Judas betrayed Jesus, the disciples thought Jesus sent Judas on his way to buy for their needs. If this was the Jew's Passover, this would not have been possible. If one believes Jesus kept a Passover 24 hours sooner than the Jews, we have no choice but to believe Jesus and His disciples kept a Passover at one time, and the Jews another time. Scripture nowhere supports this line of reasoning.

There is only one Passover, early Nisan 15<sup>th</sup>, as instituted by Moses and kept by Israel and the Jews of Jesus' time. The Jews and Paul were not confused or in error about how and when to keep Passover. So what we have is a “pre-Passover” meal that Jesus used to explain more fully the symbols of the bread and wine, and to also give the foot washing ceremony to show humility.

Jesus was not installing some new kind of Passover observance to replace the true Passover as originally given. Jesus and His work was the fulfillment. He said that He had not come to change even the smallest part of the Law, but rather to clarify and expand.

Jesus plainly says in Luke 22, “I desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” Jesus was expressing a wish or desire to do this. The meal He was at was not in actual fact the Passover meal. Jesus desired to eat the upcoming Passover (early 15<sup>th</sup>) with His disciples, before he suffered and died. This was not possible. His suffering and death must come first, it could be no other way. Jesus was only expressing His desires. He never made any type of reference that this was a Passover meal. All knew better than that. He was strongly expressing His desire, His feelings, to be able to share the upcoming Passover (two days away) with His disciples. Also being human, Jesus did not look forward to the suffering and death that was necessary for us.

## **Ex. 12:22 & 31**

### **Night and Morning**

God instructs the people in Ex. 12: 22-23 that after the death angel passed over (the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>), they were to stay indoors until the break of day. Verse 31—“He called for Moses and Aaron by night...” Moses, as God’s direct representative could well have been taken to Pharaoh, the distance was only 10 miles or so, or after the death angel had done his work, it is possible Pharaoh sent his counsel to beg Moses and the people to leave. The cry was throughout the land, and even in Pharaoh’s own household. He knew the minute it had happened. Death was throughout the land, and the Israelites were moving out in the early morning of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Lev. 23:5**

#### **Correctly Timing the Passover Sacrifice**

Understanding the correct day and time gives us a natural progression that leads into the Passover memorial meal at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>. There are not two Passovers, or some type of extended Passover. The Passover meal at the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> is also the start of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, a Holy Day. Later, at midnight, the same day, the 15<sup>th</sup>, the death angel passed over.

Ex. 12:6 – “Now you shall keep it until the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the same month, then the whole congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight (evening). The question is—does this period of time refer to the afternoon of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, especially from 3-5 PM, or the beginning of Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, the setting of the sun as the 13<sup>th</sup> comes to an end, and to its complete exit behind the horizon, which now marks the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, about a thirty minute period of time. Those who are of this opinion believe the Hebrew “Ben Hababayim”, translated “twilight” or “evening” – between sunset and dark – is referring to this 30 minute window of time.

Ex. 12:18 – “In the first month, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month at evening...” Meaning, the closing of the day, starting into the 15<sup>th</sup>. This compares to verse 6 – “...the congregation shall kill it at twilight.” Verse 7 – “And you shall take some of the blood and put it on the doorposts and lintels of the house where they shall eat.” This was to be done before sunset. It was part of the Passover lamb sacrifice. Verse 8 – “They shall eat the flesh that night...” meaning the 15<sup>th</sup>. At the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> day, and for several hours, the meal continued. This is not the late 13<sup>th</sup>, going into the 14<sup>th</sup>. The start of the day was sunset, it is now dark, evening is past. So evening, when correctly understood in these verses is the 14<sup>th</sup>, starting at some point, and going into the 15<sup>th</sup>. What is really needed is an understanding of when evening starts and when it is finished.

The Jews understood and kept many of the traditions not recorded in scriptures. They had this God-given responsibility. However, they did from time to time, get carried away and went beyond what they should have. The Jews correctly understand “twilight/evening” and properly positioned the slaughter of the lamb on the 14<sup>th</sup>. We shall confirm and see how this all fits with the time of Christ’s death on the stake.

Deut. 16:6 – “...there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt.” “Going down” means as the sun descends in the sky. From its beginning descent to its disappearance behind the horizon. Scientifically, from the moment after high noon, until the sun disappears. Within this broad space of time the Passover lamb could be slain. The lambs were killed while the sun was going down, not after it had gone down. At the going down of the sun – “as the sun goes down,” is a present progressive tense. If God intended the lambs to be slain after the sun was down, it would have been stated differently. God commanded the lambs to be slain as the sun sinks in the western sky. The Jews have done this throughout history, from the time of Ex. 12, and this is when they did it at the temple.

The command is to slay the lamb on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, at the mid to late afternoon. If slain after sunset of the 14<sup>th</sup>, they would have been into the 15<sup>th</sup>. A commandment violation. Also, if the lambs had been slain at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, after sunset of the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, this would not have been during the going down of the sun. Some claim twilight means as the 13<sup>th</sup> is closing and the sun is below the horizon.

Ex. 12:6 literally should read “between the evenings.” Many commentaries understand this to mean from the early evening (afternoon) to the late evening, and the onset of the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Jews understood that the lamb was slain before the Holy Day began (15<sup>th</sup>), but close enough so that it is part of the Holy Day ritual. From noon (the 6<sup>th</sup> hr.), they considered the start of the sun’s descent as the beginning of evening. They also refer to this time as the “two mixings.” This is a reference to evening, because day and night are considered co-mingled. The co-mingling from noon to about 3:00 PM or so, is the lighter part of the day. From 3:00-5:00 PM, the co-mingling is more pronounced, and has a certain balance, and from 5:00 PM, the sun continues to descend and the fading of the day is most noticed. The custom was to slay the lambs from 3:00-5:00 PM.

The expression “Ben Hababayim”, the Hebrew for evening, between the evenings, and twilight mean those hours between the darkening of day and the darkness of night. The Jews have always considered this darkening of the day to begin at noon, descent of the sun, with its conclusion at the commencement of the night period of time, the sun beneath the horizon. Therefore, the Biblical understanding of evening is from noon, as the sun descends, until the beginning of night, with the sun behind the horizon. I may have repeated myself several times, but this is crucial understanding. With it, the day and timing of Passover and the Passover memorial meal is beyond question.

Jesus, the Messiah and Holy One, died at 3:00 PM in the afternoon (mid-evening) on Nisan 14<sup>th</sup>, according to scriptures, the ninth hour. It was also at this time the Jews began killing the Passover lambs. At this, the ninth hour, Jesus cried out and gave up His Spirit. The timing and progression is perfect. The lamb of Ex. 12 was slain about 3:00 PM, the blood taken and put on the doorposts and lintels before sunset. The Passover meal began at the beginning of the new day, the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Jesus died at about 3:00 PM, His body is taken and placed in the tomb before sunset. The new day arrives, the First Day of Unleavened Bread, and the Passover memorial meal. This is a common sense logical progression of the most defining times in man’s history.

## **Matt. 16:12**

### **The Teachings of the Pharisees & Sadducees**

Matt. 16:12 – “Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

As previously stated, the Pharisees are considered credible, but not the Sadducees. Jesus said they did not know scripture, including correctly counting for Pentecost. Christ considered the Pharisees legitimate religious leaders in the Jewish community. He also stated as they correctly taught the Law from scripture, they were to be obeyed. Otherwise, they were hypocrites, who burden the people with their schemes and manipulations of the oral traditions.

So what is the doctrine or teaching of the Pharisees? The Pharisees kept all the holy days at the proper time, according to scripture, including Passover and Pentecost. The Law as they understood it, was not the problem. They did not understand, or refused to accept Jesus as the true Messiah.

The problem was how the Pharisees thought of themselves. They exalted themselves among the people and placed unnecessary burdens and hardships on the people. They were liars, money lovers and hypocrites, the Sadducees did not understand scripture. The Pharisees understood scripture, but were self-serving and placed their designed customs and oral traditions over the written Law.

### **Jesus Always Accepted by God**

Jesus said the only sign He would leave was that of Jonah. He would be dead and in the grave for three days and three nights. Jesus being accepted of God has nothing to do with the wave sheaf offering. This ceremony is for and explains the first fruits. Jesus was the First of the First Fruits.

Jesus' relationship to God was unique and very special. Jesus was always in a state of acceptance. When Christ was resurrected, at that very instant, He was accepted by God. No waiting, no qualifying, it was done.

Let's look at Mark 15:34. Jesus cried out – “...my God, my God, why have you forsaken me.” There are several ideas about this. One is because, in a sense, He took on mankind's sins, He had in some way become unclean. The idea being, Jesus became sin.

It is the blood of the Messiah that covers and washes away sin and reconciles us to God. It is Christ living in us that prepares us for everlasting life. Jesus died because He bleed to death. He never sinned. His life's blood without end, washes and covers all sin for all time. This was a work Christ did, on our behalf so that we could share everlasting life with Him and the Father.

Let us examine II Cor. 5:21 – “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” The words “to be” are in italics. Words added by the translators to hopefully give clarity. Possibly in the Greek, a word was missing or not understandable. Better wording that gives a more accurate and clearer sense of the statement is “to be as” sin. This is also more in keeping with the context of

Christ's work and sacrifice. When Jesus takes on what is rightfully ours, it does not mean He is now guilty of sin. It means He has taken the burden, the responsibility and consequences for our transgression.

God, in His mercy, made it possible for the death penalty to be transferred and taken by Jesus Christ, who willingly took this burden on Himself. He therefore died for our sins. He did not become sin. He paid the penalty, which was rightfully ours, because of our transgressions. Death is what we deserve, but Christ gave His life that we should not have eternal death. His blood covers our sins and allows reconciliation and acceptance by God the Father. Upon repentance, we acknowledge our sins, are baptized and receive God's Holy Spirit. Thus, we are prepared to live a life of righteousness according to knowledge and effort. However, we do sin and must continually acknowledge this before God.

However, the reality is He never sinned, and thus was never at any time alienated from God the Father. More reasonable is that within seconds of speaking these words, He was dead. In the grave, where there is no knowledge or any type of relationship. Jesus, the Son of God, and our Savior, did not exit in any kind of form for 72 hours. By the necessity of His death, the relationship ceased to exist, and He was thus forsaken by God.

### **Acts 1:1-9 – The Ascension of Christ**

Acts 1:1-9 – “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>6</sup>So when they met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ <sup>7</sup>He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’ <sup>9</sup>After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”

Mark 16:19 – “So then, after having spoken to them, He was received up into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.” Luke 24:51 – “Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into Heaven.” Some believe these verses to mean Jesus, after talking to certain ones following His resurrection, was later that day, the first day of the week, the day after His resurrection, taken into Heaven. However, these verses complement what is found in Acts 1:2-9.

Acts 1:2-3 – “Until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.” Verse 3 – “To whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” The term “until that day” implies a specific day after certain activities.

In this case, working with the apostles for forty days. Verse 4 – “And being assembled together with them, He (Christ) commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from me.” Verses 5-8 – Here we see words and instructions comparable to what we find in Mark and Luke. Acts 1:2-8, all these comments preceded the ascension. Verse 9 – “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of sight.” In Verse 4, He tells them to wait, this is on the 40<sup>th</sup> day, and He ascends, and in 10 days, Pentecost will come, and the Holy Spirit will be given. It appears there are two ascensions, one on the day after His resurrections and 40 days later, as recorded specifically in Acts 1.

There are two scriptures that should be noted. Mary Magdalene recognizes Jesus. Jn. 20:17. Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to me, for I have not ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.’ ” First, Jesus is mildly correcting Mary for being too familiar. Second, His words are a statement of fact concerning a soon up-coming event—His ascension.

Later on in John 20, Jesus deals with Thomas and his lack of belief and faith. Read Jon. 20:24-29. We will focus on verse 27. “...reach your finger here, and look at my hands; and reach your hand here and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

Mary’s meeting with Jesus was on the first day after the weekly Sabbath. There was conversation. Eight days later, Jesus strengthens Thomas’ faith. Two distinct encounters that Jesus had determined to handle as He considered correct and necessary for the situation.

Matthew does not mention an ascension. John, in his recordings of Jesus’ activities after His resurrection in John 20:17, quotes Jesus. John 20:17 – “Jesus said, ‘Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ ” Jesus says to Mary, “Do not cling to me.” He then gives her instructions to go to His disciples. Next, He states, “I am ascending to my Father.”

With this said, there is the very reasonable possibility Jesus had been resurrected for a very short time. He had accomplished His work as a human, and now was once again the spirit being He had been before emptying Himself of His divine existence. Jesus at this time, without witnesses, ascended to His Father to be accepted as the first fruit of the first fruits, and to bring closure to this phase of God’s plan for salvation and redemption.

Jesus, later that same day, before meeting with His disciples, returns back to earth. John 20:19 – “On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ ” He remains for forty days.

Many, as a confirmation, witnessed the second ascension of Acts 1. As they saw Him ascend, so shall they and we see Him coming in like manner.

The evidence leaves little choice but to understand He was on earth for 40 days before being taken up to Heaven a second time, to His Father's throne. These forty days were spent reconfirming His words and preparing His apostles. Christ was laying the groundwork and making the necessary plans for the next 2000 years.

## **The Wave Sheaf Offering and Counting the Omer**

Pentecost means fiftieth. The count begins from the day after the First Day of Unleavened Bread, a Sabbath. The count begins on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. 7 weeks x 7 days + 1 for fifty. (Lev. 23:15-16). We have the wave sheaf, representing the First Fruits. We are also instructed to count fifty days, that is, count the omer for 49 days + one for Pentecost.

Jesus is the first of the first fruits. Upon His death, He and His works were immediately accepted by God the Father. The wave sheaf, a bundle of grain, represents Christ's Church, which also is to say, representing God's first fruits. The first fruits are the saints of God who have qualified, and will be in the first resurrection.

Pentecost at Mt. Sinai was a special event. The people, for 49 days, prepared with great expectation to meet God. At this time God would establish a covenant with the people and set them apart as His special people. The foundation would be the Ten Commandments. This was an agreement of obedience of a wife to her husband, which if kept, insured safety, physical blessings and prosperity.

Jesus stated in John 14:16 – “And I will pray the Father and he will give you another helper (God's Holy Spirit), that he may abide with you forever.” In John 15:26 Jesus gives the promise of the Holy Spirit. John 15: 26 – “But when the helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth which proceeds from the Father, it will testify of me.:

Chapter 1 on Acts, verses 4-14 details the events leading to His disciples receiving the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1-4 describes the Holy Spirit arriving as promised. Acts 2:14 – “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...”

Counting the omer (days), pictures for Christians, the Christian life of putting on Christ, becoming more and more as He is. In addition, it is that period of time from the resurrection of the saints to the return to earth of Christ. For God's people today counting the omer pictures the 49 days leading to Pentecost and the return of Jesus.

Please read Eph. 5:27-29, Rev. 19:7-9 and chapter five of Galatians. These 49 days picture Christians working and struggling to put sin out and righteousness in. Building Godly character and making ourselves clean and ready for our husband, Yeshua, our Savior. It is the continuous struggle we will all have until our change. This is a focused period of time. The omer count involves two primary things. Day by day we should note our progress and consider our ways, and also the anticipation should be that even though we struggle, in the end we will receive the gift, and evermore be with Christ.

Historically the Day of Pentecost has been a critically important time for mankind. On this day, the law was given and God's Holy Spirit was made available to all who would desire it and claim it. Soon, in a few short years, Jesus, the Messiah will return on this Day of Pentecost to stop the wars and suffering. He will establish true peace and security for all.