

## Christ's Words Prove an Early 14<sup>th</sup> Passover.

Amongst those who promote a Passover on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> much has been made of Deuteronomy Chapter 16, but the sacrifices there mentioned are those of the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Deuteronomy 16:2, 6,7.

2 "Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the LORD chooses to put His name. 6 "but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. 7 "And you shall roast and eat *it* in the place which the LORD your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents."

These were the peace offerings of the Night to be Much Observed, renamed Passover offerings by Ezra to match the current usage – cf 2Chronicles 35:7,9

"7 Then Josiah gave the lay people lambs and young goats from the flock, all for Passover offerings for all who were present, to the number of thirty thousand, as well as three thousand cattle; these were from the king's possessions. 9 Also Conaniah, his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, chief of the Levites, gave to the Levites for Passover offerings five thousand from the flock and five hundred cattle."

### **Exodus 12:6.....**

"And ye shall keep it up **until** the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening."(twilight -NKJ,NIV, occurs just after sunset till dark.)

Numbers 9:1-3 "And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season. 3 **In the fourteenth day** of this month, at **even**, ( twilight, Hebrew ben ha arbayim ) ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and **according to all the ceremonies** thereof, shall ye keep it." eg. All the rites of the fourteenth, Exodus 12:6-14.

Keep it up **until** the 14th day. Sunset (Hebrew - ba erev ) ends each day. Twilight starts the next.

Exodus 12:14 "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a **feast** to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever." And this day [14th] shall be a memorial - an ordinance for ever."

Numbers 28:16 " And in the **fourteenth** day of the first month *is* the Passover of the LORD,"

and verse 17 "And in the **fifteenth** day of this month *is* the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten." This is the day the Jews call Passover. They do nothing at all on the **fourteenth** but some have been deceived into following their error because they do not understand that both "ben ha arbayim" and "ba erev" are translated "even" in the Bible.

Let the Bible prove that ben ha abayim occurs at the very start of each biblical day. In Exodus 16, only four chapters away from Exodus 12, God wishes to teach the people that they must rest on the Sabbath. Exodus 16:4

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

God will bring quail for them to eat that evening and manna six days of each future week. Exodus 16:11-15 " And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At **even** [ben ha arbayim] ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. And it came to pass, that at **even** [be erev] the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat."

We can figure that God said this on the Sabbath day because next morning the Israelites found manna for the first time. Sunday was day one, Monday two, Tuesday three, Wednesday four, Thursday five, but on Friday they had to gather twice as much for the Sabbath - Exodus 16:22-23

"And **it** came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. 23 And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning."

So, back to verse 6 - Exodus 16:6

" And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At **even**, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:" The word 'even' here is 'ba erev' - sunset. That was when God would bring the quail.

Then in verse 12 'even' is 'ben ha abayim', meaning twilight. Exodus 16:12

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

In verse 13, and remember this is the Sabbath.....

"And it came to pass, that at **even** the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host."

'Even' here is 'ba erev' - the sunset that ends the Sabbath.

God here has shown them that despite their murmuring, they would have to wait until the Sabbath ended at 'ba erev', before 'ben ha abayim', twilight at the start of the next day, allowed them to catch and cook the quail.

Proverbs 7:9 "In the twilight, in the evening, In the black and dark night."

Ezekiel 12:7 "So I did as I was commanded. I brought out my belongings by day, as though going into captivity, and at evening I dug through the wall with my hand. I brought them out at twilight, and I bore them on my shoulder in their sight."

Notice also Exodus 30:8 (ben ha arbayim) – when light is needed, "And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations" as in Numbers 28:4. "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, ' The Hebrew 'and' here, prefixed to the word 'other' reveals events out of chronological order, ie the evening lamb is the first of the day [see Waltke An Introduction to Hebrew Syntax page 650 and Fred Coulter The Christian Passover, Appendix L]

### ***Ezra 6:19***

"And the children of the captivity kept the Passover **upon** the fourteenth day of the first month." Remember the Passover consists of all the rites mentioned in Exodus 12 .

One of the instructions was that they were not to go out of their houses until dawn . Exodus 12:22

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

They did not.

Exodus 12:28 "And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they."

The Israelites lived in Goshen, up to twenty miles away from Rameses and traveled there with their flocks and herds next day.

### **They left Rameses on the 15<sup>th</sup>, by night - on the morrow after the Passover.**

Numbers 33:3 "And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians." And, Deuteronomy 16:1 "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night."

"Ba erev" ends each day, for example, Leviticus 23:28 "And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the LORD your God ... and

Leviticus 23:32 .... It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from **even unto even**, shall ye celebrate your sabbath."

"Ba erev" – sunset, ended the fourteenth, and that night Israel departed.

**Psalm 81:3** tells us more. It reveals that Passover takes place on the full moon!

Psalm 81:3 "Sound the rams horn at the new moon, and when the moon is full, on the day of our Feast (yes, Exodus 12:14) ..this is a decree for Israel... an ordinance... He established ... when he **went out**

against Egypt." NIV,NKJ. Compare Exodus 11:4 "And Moses said, Thus said the LORD, About midnight **will I go out** into the midst of Egypt:"

Read the whole Psalm - there can be no doubt about which ordinance it refers to! CF Psalm 78:5, Ex. 12:24-27. Statistics show that the full moon falls most often on the **fourteenth** day of the month.

Passover simply means God's passing over and sparing the Children of Israel. Jewish Encyclopaedia Volume 9, Article Passover "Comparison of the successive strata of the Pentateuchal Laws bearing on the festival makes it plain that the institution, as developed is really of composite character. Two Festivals, originally distinct, have become merged."

If we count back from the full moon in any month, most often we arrive at the first visible crescent. Fifteen days back brings us to a moon often less than 1% lit, which is too hard to see. Sixteen days back brings us to the conjunction. (Incidentally this disproves the dark new moon as the start of the month)

Psalm 81:3 is statistically quite correct; Passover is 14 days from the first visible new moon.

**All of the above is significant, but for a Christian those verses cannot compare with the evidence spoken by our Saviour!**

***Luke 22:8,11,13,15***

8 "And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the **Passover**, that we may eat."

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

13 "And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the **Passover**. 15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this **Passover** with you before I suffer:"

Which of us is prepared to deny the plain words of Christ, which He repeated three times to get the message across ? That meal was the Passover ! And yet some who claim to be His followers refuse to accept their own Saviour's plain words !

**Mark 14:12** "And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the **Passover**?"

In the Greek, this verse reads: ... **when they were killing** the Passover [ lambs].... in the imperfect tense of the verb ethuon - an action still going on. The disciples were walking into Jerusalem with Christ about the end of the thirteenth and obviously saw people getting ready for their domestic Passover. To the disciples this was nothing out of the ordinary, for they prepared for the Passover at this time every year.

**Philo** De Decalogue Page 159 - "called by the Hebrews in their own tongue, the Pasch on which the whole people sacrifice, every member of them, without waiting for the Priests, because the law has granted to the whole nation for one special day in every year the right of the priesthood and of performing the sacrifices themselves."

**Philo** De Spec. Page 146 “In this festival many myriads of victims are offered - by the whole people, old and young alike .... and acts as priests”

**Josephus** “But when the 14<sup>th</sup> day was come and all were ready to depart, they offered the sacrifice, and purified their houses with the blood, using a bunch of hyssop for that purpose, and when they had supped they burnt the remainder of the flesh, as just ready to depart. When it is that we still do offer this sacrifice in like manner to this day and call this festival Pascha, which signifies the Feast of the Passover ...”

**Now that we know that this meal was the Passover, we can be sure all the next events took place on the fourteenth also.**

Matthew 26:30-34

30 “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

31 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me **this night**, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

"But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, **before the rooster crows** you will deny Me three times."

Matthew 26:74-75

“Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" **Immediately a rooster crowed.** And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly."

**They led Him to Pilate Matthew 27:1-2,26**

**“When morning came**, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. 2 And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.”

Matthew 27:15 “Now **at the feast** the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished.” This is still Passover !

26 “Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to be crucified.”

Mark 15:25 “Now it was the **third hour**, and they crucified Him.” This was 9am.

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!”

Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott comments - “Six o’clock in the morning. See note on John 1:39.

John 1:39 He says to them. “Come and see” They went, therefore, and saw where he dwelt, and continued with him that DAY. It was about the tenth hour.

Comment on verse 39 It was the way of the ancients to divide the day into twelve hours, and the night into as many. The first hour of the day was an hour after the sun rose, and the twelfth was when it set. This was the way in Judaea, and to this the other Evangelists adhere. But St John appears to have reckoned the hours as we do, from midnight to noon, and again from noon to midnight. And it may be observed that he

mentions the hour of the day oftener than any other Evangelist; as if to give his readers an opportunity of discerning his method, by comparing one passage with another. If the time here intended was that which we may call Jewish (to distinguish it not from the Greek and Roman which were the same with the Jewish, but from the modern; the tenth hour was about four in the afternoon, or two hours before the day ended in Judaea; with which time neither the words nor circumstances seem to agree. For the words *they abode with him that day* rather imply, that they spent a good part of the day with him. Therefore the most reasonable account of this tenth hour is that it was ten in the morning. - Townson”

John 19:31 31 “Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.”

It is obvious then, that all of these events followed on, during the 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Jesus Christ is our Passover, sacrificed for us. I Corinthians 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.”

His death was the price of our freedom from the wages of our sin - the penalty of death.

Many have equated the death of Christ with the sacrifice of lambs which they believe took place **at the same time**, the afternoon of the 14th, despite what we saw in Mark 14:12.

12 “Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, [the unleaveneds] **when they [were killing]** the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, "Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?"

Christ's death was indeed a ransom, which paid for our freedom from the penalty of sin.

But was the **lambs death** the ransom that brought about the Israelites freedom from Egypt ? No. It was only the token, by the use of its blood painted on their doorposts that spared their firstborn from the death angel. The ransom that freed Israel from Egypt was the death of the Egyptian firstborn.

Lets let the bible prove that - Isaiah 43:3-4 “For *I am* the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; **I gave Egypt** for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place.

4 Since you were precious in My sight, You have been honored, And I have loved you; Therefore **I will give men for you, And people for your life.**”

The firstborn were the ransom, not the lambs !

Jesus Christ became our ransom soon after midnight on the fourteenth, when he was betrayed.

The firstborn of Egypt became a ransom after midnight on the fourteenth when they began to die.

Jesus was buried at the end of the fourteenth.

The Egyptian firstborn were then starting to be buried. Remember they departed Egypt by night !

Numbers 33:3-4

3 “And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.  
4 For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.”

The lambs were to be killed at twilight in the early part of the fourteenth. We saw that they were being sacrificed as Christ walked with His disciples into Jerusalem. We cannot equate the sacrifice of the lambs with the death of Christ, based upon the original Passover events. The lambs death did not free Israel. It was the ransom death of the firstborn that freed Israel, and as we have seen that the lambs were not to be sacrificed on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup>, the Pharisees never kept the true Passover if they kept it on the early evening of the fifteenth. What they call the Passover then, and still do now, is the celebration of the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

### **How did a temple Passover come about?**

The first record of a temple Passover is found in 2 Chronicles 29:1-10

“Hezekiah became king when he was twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah.<sup>2</sup> And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

3 In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them.<sup>4</sup> Then he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them in the East Square,<sup>5</sup> and said to them: “Hear me, Levites! Now sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place.<sup>6</sup> “For our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of the LORD our God; they have forsaken Him, have turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the LORD, and turned their backs on Him.<sup>7</sup> “They have also shut up the doors of the vestibule, put out the lamps, and have not burned incense or offered burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel.  
8 “Therefore the wrath of the LORD fell upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has given them up to trouble, to desolation, and to jeering, as you see with your eyes. 9 “For indeed, because of this our fathers have fallen by the sword; and our sons, our daughters, and our wives are in captivity.<sup>10</sup> “Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us.”

2 Chronicles 30:15 “Then they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought the burnt offerings to the house of the LORD.”

Hezekiah the King was determined to use his authority to restore the temple and its service.

It was done solely by his authority 2 Chronicles 30:6 “Then the runners went throughout all Israel and Judah with the letters from the king and his leaders, and spoke **according to the command of the king**: “Children of Israel, return to the LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel; then He will return to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.”

2 Chronicles 30:13-17 “ Now many people, a very great assembly, gathered at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month.<sup>14</sup> They arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and they took away all the incense altars and cast them into the Brook Kidron.<sup>15</sup> Then they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought the burnt offerings to the house of the LORD.<sup>16</sup> They stood in their place according to their custom, according to the Law of Moses the man of God; the priests sprinkled the blood received from the hand of the Levites.<sup>17</sup> For there were many in the assembly

who had not sanctified themselves; therefore the Levites had charge of the slaughter of the Passover lambs for everyone who was not clean, to sanctify them to the LORD.”

Many of the people were unclean, ceremonially polluted, so Hezekiah determined that the priests and the temple would be used for the Passover sacrifices.

2 Chronicles 30:18-20 “For a multitude of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “May the good LORD provide atonement for everyone 19 who prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he is not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.” 20 And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.”

They ate the Passover otherwise than it is written [ in Exodus 12].

Though this was necessary it did not change the original Passover ordinances of God. No scripture anywhere in the Bible authorises that. God changes not.

The second such observance was re-instituted after the longest period of idolatry and paganism in the history of Judah. Again a righteous King commanded the priests to sacrifice the lambs for the people, 2 Chronicles 35:10 “So the service was prepared, and the priests stood in their places, and the Levites in their divisions, according to the king’s command.”

The priests and levites followed the instructions for peace offerings, not Passover lambs - cf 2 Chronicles 35:11 with Leviticus 3:1,8.

2 Chronicles 35:11 “And they slaughtered the Passover offerings; and the priests **sprinkled the blood** with their hands, while the Levites skinned the animals.”

Leviticus 3:1,8 ‘When his offering is a sacrifice of a peace offering, if he offers it of the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD. 8 ‘And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of meeting; and Aaron’s sons shall **sprinkle its blood** all around on the altar.’

These two righteous kings did restore God’s feasts, but in the process felt they needed to use the priests and the temple to make sure that the people did not sacrifice Passover lambs at pagan sites and return to their old pagan habits. However some of the Jews then continued to sacrifice their lambs in the temple. This tradition runs counter to the instructions God gave in Exodus 12.

## Conclusion

Most of all though, **we must believe the words of our Saviour.** He said His last meal was the Passover.

John 3:34, 36

34 “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

36 He that **believeth on the Son** hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Lets read what God's word stresses about that belief.

**Belief** John 5:46-47 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Is this not what has happened to some ? If we won't believe His words - John 10:26-27

26 "But **you do not believe**, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

How could that happen ? 2 Corinthians 4:4 "whose minds the god of this age has blinded, **who do not believe**, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them."

Passover occurred on one night. Only on one night in the New Testament too!

1 Corinthians 11:23 "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;"

1 Corinthians 11:24 -25

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." 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."

And so we do, at exactly the same time - on the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> following all the instructions we have read today from plain words in the Bible.

We have read Christ's words and seen when Christ kept the Passover, which the disciples simply looked on as their regular practice. CHRIST KEPT His own instructions of Exodus 12, every year, and obviously kept the same calendar based on observation of the abib and the visible new moon as all the Jews of His day did. He died on the 14<sup>th</sup> by the Jewish calendar *of His day*, (not the Hebrew calendar the Jews keep today !)

Christ left us the example, and as it says in 1 Peter 2:21 "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, **that you should follow His steps:**"