

Year 2007

STUDY 19-A

The Lord's Supper/Christian Passover

"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29



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THE EVENTS...

Christ Observed Passover

Matt.26:1-20; Mark 14:1-2,12-17;
Luke 22:1,7-13

Christ Our Passover

1Cor.5:4-8; Heb.11:24-29

Additional Scriptures

Ex.12; Lev.23; Num.33:3; Deut.
16; Isa.53; 61; John 3:10-21;
Rom.2; Gal.5; Heb.9:10-10:25

The Betrayal

Matt.26:21-25; Mark 14:10-
11,18-21; Luke 22:1-6,21-23;
John 13:21-30

Foot Washing

John 13:1-20

The Bread and Wine

Matt.26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25;
Luke 22:14-20; 1Cor.11:24

The Final Hymn(s)

Matt.26:30; Mark 14:26

At Gethsemane

Matt.26:30-46; Mark 14:26-42;
Luke 22:39-46; John 18:1

The Christ Arrested

Matt.26:47-56; Mark 14:43-50;
John 18:1-14

Jesus Christ on Trial

Ex.3:13-15; Matt.26:57-68; Mark
14:53-65; Luke 22:54,66-23:25;
John 18:3-14,19-25

That Awful Scourging

Luke 22:63-65; John 18:39-19:4

Peter Denies Jesus

Matt.26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72;
Luke 22:54-62; John 13:31-38

The Christ Led Away

Matt.27:31-34; Mark 15:20-23;
Luke 23:26-33; John 18:28-38;
19:14-18

Crucified and Garments Di- vided

Matt.27:35-37; Mark 15:24; Luke
23:33-34; John 19:23-24

The Third Hour (9:00 a.m.)

Mark 15:25

The Sixth Hour (noon)

Matt.27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke
23:44-45; John 19:14

The Ninth Hour (3:00 p.m.)

Matt.27:50-56; Mark 15:34-41;
Luke 23:44-49

Burial Before Sunset

Matt.27:45-66; Mark 15:42-47;
Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42

He is Risen!

Matt.28:1-17; Mark 16:1-13;
Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18

◆ The scourge, or *flail*, and the *crook*, are the two symbols of power and domination depicted in the hands of Osiris in ancient Egyptian monuments; these show the unchanging form of the instrument throughout the ages. [The Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th ed., vol.24, p.476] #

◆ The punishment of scourging was common among the Jews. The instrument of punishment in ancient Egypt, as it is also in modern times generally in the East, was usually the stick, applied to the soles of the feet. Under the Roman method, the culprit was stripped, stretched with cords or thongs on a frame, and beaten with rods. Another form of the scourge consisted of a handle with three lashes or thongs of leather or cord, sometimes with pieces of metal fastened to them. Roman citizens were exempt by their law from scourging. [Smith's Bible Dictionary, p.595.] #
◆ Crucifixion was in use among the Egyptians; Carthaginians; Persians; Assyrians; Indians; Germans; and from earliest times--the Greeks and Romans.

Probably the Jews borrowed it from the Romans. It was unanimously considered the most horrible of deaths... the punishment was only used in the case of the vilest criminals... The feet were but little raised above the earth. The victim was in full reach of every hand that might choose to strike. A death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly--dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, traumatic fever, tetanus, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of unattended wounds, all intensified up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but stopping just short of the point... of unconsciousness. [ibid. pp.129,130] #

The Lord's Supper/ Christian Passover Supplement

This portion has been adapted from "Pagan Holidays—or God's Holydays—Which?" by Herbert W. Armstrong ©1957 by Ambassador College.

The Passover & Days of Unleavened Bread

On delivering his people from Egypt (sin), God straightened them out as to *time*. And, as the beginning of our salvation was wrought by Christ's death on the Cross, so God said, "**This month [in the spring] shall be your beginning of months**" (Ex.12:2, NKJV).

Some keep the beginning of this Feast of Unleavened Bread in observing the Passover, but never go on to know the "depth of the riches" of God's grace pictured by the following feasts (Rom.11:33). Christ is not only the author, but also the finisher of our salvation.

On the tenth day of this first month, the Israelites were instructed to select a lamb with out blemish. They kept it until—not after—the 14th day of the same first month, at *even*, at dusk as the Jewish translation has it—between the two evenings, or between sunset and dark, and then it was killed. Days were considered from even until even.

This was **in**, not **after**, the 14th day. They shed the blood of the lamb, picturing Christ's sacrifice to come. They ate the flesh *in that night*. At midnight the death angel came, but *passed over* every house where the blood had been sprinkled.

There are some very important details it is vital that we notice at this point; perhaps we have not seen them before. It *proves* that the Passover should be observed early on the 14th day, not late on the 14th, which would be the night portion of the 15th day.

Passover 14th Not 15th

Notice Exodus 12:6, they shall kill the lamb at dusk (Jewish official translation). Verse 8, they shall eat the flesh in that night—still the 14th. Verses 9-11 describe how it shall be roasted (boiled) and eaten—the time is still the same night—the 14th. Verse 12: "**For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born...**" (KJV)—still the same night—the 14th.

Now notice carefully the paragraph beginning verse 22. Here are more detailed directions for striking the blood on the doorposts—the time this was done, as proved above, was the night part of the 14th. "**..and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning**" (Ex.12:22, KJV).

Notice that carefully! None were permitted to leave their houses that night. They remained in their houses until morning! They remained there all night!

Now read on. Verse 29, at midnight (the 14th) the Lord smote the firstborn of Egypt. Verse 30, Pharaoh rose up in the night. This was of course after the death angel passed at midnight, and therefore after midnight.

He called for Moses and Aaron. This must have taken some time, but still the same night. Verse 33, the Egyptian people were urgent to get rid of the Israelites. Verse 35, the Israelites borrowed of the Egyptians silver and gold and clothing, and spoiled the Egyptians. When? Surely, this borrowing and spoiling of the Egyptians took several hours.

The Israelites lived in the land of Goshen, apart from the Egyptians. The Israelites were forbidden to leave their houses until morning—so this spoiling and borrowing took place through

the daylight portion of the 14th day.

Exodus 24 Hours After Passover

But—notice this highly important point—the Israelites did not go out from the land of Egypt until that night—the 15th Abib. Notice the paragraph composed of verses 40-42. "**...even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: This is that night of the Lord to be observed...**" Which is the night to be observed? The night they came out of Egypt. They went out of Egypt, not during the daytime of the 14th, but after that day had ended—after the sun had set—the following night—on the 15th of Abib! And that night, the 15th, is to be observed! The following verses, beginning with verse 43, form a new paragraph, and refer again to Passover—the 14th day.

Now, notice Deut.16:1 (KJV): "**Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover unto the Eternal thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.**" Notice they did not go out of Egypt until night. And this night was the 15th, not the 14th. Need further proof?

"**They departed from Ramases in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day (morrow: KJV) after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. (Num.33:3, NKJV).**"

There it is in plain language. Now some believe that they killed the lamb between noon and sunset the 14th—about 3 P.M., near the end of the day; ate it that night—the 15th (claiming that is when the Passover was eaten and when we should take it today) and then went on out of Egypt that same night. But this

theory will not hold water, in view of all these scriptures and following, through **Exodus 12**.

The Israelites were not permitted to leave their houses that night after eating the lamb. They remained in their own houses—in the land of Goshen—until daylight. Then they went to their Egyptian neighbors, and borrowed from them and spoiled them. There were millions of them. It took time to notify them. It took time to do all this. It could not have been done after midnight, when Pharaoh rose up, and still have gotten out of Egypt the same night. The Israelites were in their own houses in Goshen all that night. **Exodus 12:10** further proves this. Whatever remained of their roasted lamb uneaten until morning they were to burn with fire. That shows they stayed in their homes until morning.

They did not leave Egypt until after that day ended—after nightfall again, during the night part of the fifteenth.

In the 14th Not After

Now to connect one other vital point: **“On the fourteenth day [not after it] is the Passover of the Lord. And on the fifteenth day [not before it] of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days” (Num.28:16-17, NKJV).**

Lev.23:5-6 says the same thing. Notice that Passover is not the 15th, but the 14th. In it is not after it is past. The seven-day period begins the 15th. The 15th is the first of the seven days of unleavened bread.

However, since leaven was put out of the houses during the 14th day, it came to be called one of the days of unleavened bread by New Testament times, but when this is done, eight days are included as days of unleavened bread. The entire eight-day period is, in New Testament usage, called by the name “Passover.”

But the seven-day period begins the 15th, after the 14th, or Passover, has ended.

The 14th day is the Passover. It is the first of God’s festivals. It is not the feast day mentioned here. In the fifteenth day is the feast. Let us get that distinction clearly in mind. It is the 15th that is the feast—and the 14th is the Passover. The feast day begins after Passover has ended.

Ex.12:14-16 (NKJV). “And this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; you shall keep it a feast by an everlasting ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread... On the first day there shall be a holy convocation to you.”

What day is established as a memorial—not a shadow, a memorial—a feast—to be kept forever? Notice, it is the day that is the feast day—the 15th Abib, not the 14th—not the Passover.

This day is the feast day—a memorial, to be kept a Sabbath or Holy Convocation forever! Seven days are included and we have shown that the seven-day period begins the 15th, after Passover has passed. On the 14th day is the Passover but on the 15th day is the feast—seven days.

Many have always believed the day here spoken of, and ordained forever, was the Passover, or 14th. But it is not—it is the 15th day.

Now this day—the 15th—is established a holy convocation. Look in the dictionary. A convocation is an assembly of the people where their presence is commanded, under power and authority. A holy convocation is a religious assembly, for purposes of worship. The weekly Sabbath is a holy convocation. So is Abib 15th. Our presence is commanded, under God’s power and authority. But let us continue.

“On the first day [of the seven = 15th Abib], there shall be a holy convocation... So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day” [the 15th Abib]—“I will have brought your armies

[hosts] out of the land of Egypt. Therefore shall you observe this day”—[the 15th, not the 14th]—**“in your generations as an everlasting ordinance” (Ex.12:16-17, NKJV).**

There it is! Before the Ceremonial Law of Moses! The day established as a Sabbath, or holy convocation forever, is the feast day, the self-same day on which they went out of Egypt, and they went out on the 15th, not the 14th (**Num.33:3**).

This day is a memorial, not a shadow of the cross. It is a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, which pictures to us deliverance from sin.

To keep us constantly in the memory of the great fact that, having had our sins forgiven by Christ’s blood (pictured by the 14th), we are not to stop there, and remain in sin, but to go out away from sin! Why should we observe the 14th, picturing remission of past sins, and then we, commandment keepers of all people, refuse to continue the Feast of Unleavened Bread, picturing the coming out of sin—seven days of unleavened bread symbolizing and picturing complete putting away of sin, or, in other words, the keeping of the commandments.

These feast days picture the keeping of the commandments.

Not Abolished With the Old Covenant

Observe that the days of unleavened bread are a period of time, having two high-day Sabbaths. And this period is *established forever*—while the Israelites were *still* in Egypt—*before* one word of the ceremonial Law of Moses had been given or written—*before* God even proposed the Old Covenant!

What the Law of Moses, or the Old Covenant, did not bring or institute, they cannot take away. And in Fenton’s translation, we find the **verse 17** translated thus: **“consequently keep this period as an everlasting institution.”**

The whole period of time is included.

This alone ought to prove that the Holydays—and the seven days of unleavened bread—are binding today, and forever.

Now, if these terms apply to the 15th, not the 14th, as they assuredly do, and is here conclusively proved, then is the Passover forever? Indeed it is. But these texts above refer to the Feast, and not the Passover. In the paragraph beginning **Ex. 12:21**, the Passover is again referred to, and **verse 24** establishes it forever.

Why did the God ordain these feast days? What was his great purpose? **Ex.13:3 (NKJV):** “**Moses said to the people, Remember this day, in which you went out from Egypt.**” (The 15th of Abib.) **Verses 6-9:** “**Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and the seventh shall be a feast to the Lord... This is done because of what the Eternal did...**”—(a memorial)—“**It shall be for a sign...**” Why? “**That the Lord’s law may be in your mouth... You shall therefore keep this ordinance...**” #

Who Takes It?

Genesis 17:10-Every male circumcised as a token of the covenant between God and the people.

Josh.5:12-All men and strangers were circumcised; then the Passover was observed on the 14th at twilight.

Deut.10:16; 30:6-Circumcise foreskin of your heart. Be no more stiff-necked; love the strangers. Ref: The evil of your doings. [Circumcision is not baptism; it is the removing of unbelief from your heart.]

Acts 15:15-The circumcision party; **v.19**-Trouble them not; **v.24**-Gave no law. **Rom.9:15**-Mercy! **Matt.21:43** -KOG removed. [Ref: **Heb.3:7-8; 1Cor. 11:18-24**].

Notice: Scripture cannot be found that restricts or even suggests the restricting of the partaking of the symbols of the Lord’s Supper/Passover (bread, wine, and foot washing) to only baptized members. Setting up such arbitrary restrictions is a late custom.

When were the Lambs Killed?

REF: **Exodus12:6**—“Then the whole assembly shall kill it at twilight.” (NKJV)

“And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.” (KJV)

“...in the evening.” (RSV; Amplified Bible)

“And then all the assembled community of Israel shall slaughter the victim between dusk and dark.” (The New English Bible)

“All the assemblies of the Families of Israel must kill it between the dusks.” (The Holy Bible in Modern English—Ferrar Fenton)

TWILIGHT

“The light between...”

1. The subdued light just after sunset or, sometimes, just before sunrise.

2. The period from sunset until dark.

3. Any faint light. (*Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*)

1. The light from the sky between full night and sunrise or between sunset and full night produced by diffusion of sunlight through the atmosphere and its dust. (*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*)

DUSK

1. Tending to darkness; moderately dark; shadowing

2. The beginning of darkness in the evening; the dark part of twilight; gloaming, as the dusk of the evening.

(*Webster’s New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*)

BETWEEN THE EVENINGS *

“And all the assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it ‘between the evenings.’” (Interlinear Bible)

“...between the evenings.” (*Young’s Literal Translation*)

“You must keep it till the fourteenth day of the month when the whole assembly of the community of Israel shall slaughter it ‘between the evenings.’” (The Jerusalem Bible) Note: i.e., either between sunset and darkness (Samaritans) or between afternoon and sunset (*Pharisees and Talmud*).

[According to a number of sources, “between the evenings” is a translation of the Hebrew, “*ben ha arbayim*.”]

ADDITIONAL REF: “EVEN”

Strong’s Hebrew # 6153

#6153—“‘ereb, from 6150; dusk; --+ Day, even (ing, tide), night”

#6150—“‘arab; a prim. Root [rather identical with 6148 through the idea of covering with a texture]; to grow dusky at sundown—be darkened, (toward) evening.”

The Holy Scriptures (JPS) say the lambs were to be killed “at dusk.”

Jewish Soncino Commentary definition of *ben ha arbayim*. “It is a period of approximately one-and-a-third hours between sunset and the disappearance of the light which subsequently penetrates the clouds.”

The Imperial Bible Dictionary calls this “between the evenings” translation as “the period between sunset and total darkness.”

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. “Between the evenings, *ben ha arbayim*, was the interval between sunset and total darkness.” (*Global Church News, March/April 1996*)

◆
Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon: #6153—At Even, ref: Deut.16:6—“between the two evenings (Ex.16:12; 30:8 [only]; used as marking the space of time during which the paschal lamb was slain, Ex.12:6; Lev.23:5; Num.9:3; and the evening sacrifice was offered,

Ex.29:39, 41; i.e. according to the opinion of the Karaïtes and Samaritans (which is favored by the words of Deut.16:6), the time between sunset and deep twilight.

The Pharisees, however, and the Rabbinists considered the time when the sun began to descend to be called the first evening (Arab. little evening; when it begins to draw towards evening); and the second evening to be the real sunset.” #6150—“To set, as the sun, (Syr. id: to depart far away, to wander). Hence, to draw towards evening, Judg.19:9. ...doing at evening.”

Passover Commentary

A number of brethren have abandoned the celebration of The Lord's Supper, or Communion, of Nisan (Abib) 14 and have replaced it with an observance on the 15th—the next night. However, the Word of the Lord seems to be clear—we are to observe the taking of the bread and wine on the 14th—in the same time period in which our Lord was betrayed. The Apostle Paul:

“**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; 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.’ 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’**” (1Cor. 11:23-25).

Those who dismiss the re-

membrance of Christ on the 14th and replace it with an observation on the 15th have missed the commanded memorial altogether.

The original Passover was on the 14th. The 14th (early) is the Passover of the Lord and the 15th is the Feast. (The celebration on the 15th is also called by John in the New Testament, the Passover of the Jews.)

“**On the fourteenth day** [not after it] **is the Passover of the Lord. And on the fifteenth day** [not before it] **of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days”** (Num.28:16-17, NKJV).

The Israelites left Egypt the next day, on the 15th.

“**They departed from Ramases in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day (morrow: KJV) after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians.”** (Num.33:3, NKJV).

Christ kept the original Passover.

“**And he said, ‘Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, ‘my time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover”** (Matt.26:18-19).

Would Christ keep the Passover on the wrong date? Hardly. he called what he did, “the Passover” and if we are believers, we should believe the words of Christ. What is the opposite of a believer (2Cor. 6:11-15)?

Let's speculate: maybe there was a different Passover being preached somewhere that Jesus did not observe: “**Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem**” (Jn.2:13). He disrupted the event (vv.14-25). But the context does not tell us that Christ actually took part in their Passover observance.

“**And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusa-**

lem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, ‘What do you think—that he will not come to the feast?’” (Jn.11:55-56). Well, regardless of any speculation about John, will you observe the event the Lord said to do this year on the 14th or will you pass over the Lord and go directly to the feast on the 15th?

◆ Between The Evenings

Conclusion: The time between the evening that ends one day (13th) and the evening that ends the next day (14th). Ref: **Lev.15:5; 22:7; 23: 32; Deut. 16:6; Mk.1:32; Lk.4:40**. Since “even” is approximately sundown under normal conditions, no special interpretation is needed to try to clarify or reconstruct the matter—which it does not do anyway. *This* “between the evenings” concept is a reasonable view. It makes sense.

◆ More “Between the Evenings”

Why would God have one standard for observing Sabbaths and another for observing the Passover/Lord's Supper? Consider:

“**And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement... It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest... on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath’**” (Lev. 23:26-27, 32).

Sabbaths are observed from the evening ending one day until the evening ending the next day—generally a period of 24 hours.

“**Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season. In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season...**” (Num.9:2-3, KJV).

The phrase “at even” is actually Hebrew “between the evenings.” And: **“In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month, between the evenings, is the Passover to Jehovah” (Lev. 23:5, *Interlinear Bible*)**. If the Passover were restricted to a small slice of the fading day, Jesus could not have observed it at the beginning of 14 Abib and become the Passover Lamb in the afternoon of 14 Abib. Originally, the whole day was the Passover. **“On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast ...” (Num.28:16-17).**

And the feast is on 15 Abib—not the Passover!

Why should “between the evenings” be any different than “from evening to evening” in definition? But notice [page 4] that differences of opinion were widespread at the very time the activity was being practiced! **FPH**

The Jews' Passover

One point needs to be made regarding the Passover in the New Testament (NT). This point centers on the number of times the Passover and other areas within Old Testament (OT) scripture are referred to as belonging to the Jews. No doubt, this is one reason why the world in general and Christians in particular insist that the seventh day Sabbath and the Holy Days are “Jewish.”

Another reason is simply that Jews themselves promote these special days as Jewish in origin. Various Messianic Jewish and Christian groups teach that “the Jews” left Egypt and wandered for forty years in the wilderness, or in one way or another equate Judaism, Jews, or the state of Israel with OT Israel. Thus, people have come to believe that Passover and the Sabbaths are outmoded Mosaic rituals.

For example, a Messianic Jew wrote the following: “Back in Egypt the Jew marked his house with the blood of the lamb... God told the Jews to eat only the pure unleavened bread during the

week following Passover... The Jewish Feast: Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits...” (Zola Levitt, *The Seven Feasts of Israel*, pp.4,5,31). R. C. Sproul teaches a similar scenario.

Space does not permit expanding on the glaring errors of this false teaching (cf. **Gen.32:28; 37:3; 49:2, 28; Ex.1:1-7; 10:22-23; 11:7; 12:6-7; Lev.23:1-2**).

But it is hard to believe that Zola (or anyone else) could make such obvious blunders innocently. The thrust of the advice and counsel in **James 3:1** is the question of innocence in our teachings versus the scriptural presumption that assigns responsibility and applies liability.

Today, many Christians of all stripes perpetuate the fraud by preaching that the people to whom God revealed Himself, or with whom he worked in the OT were Jews. This reality of Christianity clarifies the issue of why the vast majority of Christendom believe in a nearly complete separation of the Old and New Testament—the OT is Jewish and the NT is Christian. Blindness in secular Christianity is both endemic and systemic, while blindness in Biblical Christianity seems more selective. Both forms of blindness, however, are debilitating and ruinous.

But God tells us to repent of our “ignorance”: **“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent...” (Acts 17:29; cf. Rom.11:19-25).**

Sadly, some clearly unfulfilled Christian Sabbath keepers are migrating to a Judeo-Centro appeal to God. And many of those are essentially circumventing Jesus Christ—by accident or design—in their fervor to reach the ultimate in worship through the adoption of a form of Judaism. But Christ rejected Judaism as not representative of the theology of his Father (**Jn.8:37-59**).

Perhaps there is hollowness in the current practice and order of service in the Sabbath keeping churches of God—perhaps we

have missed the glory of Jesus Christ in our rush to embrace doctrinal purity, conformity, and unanimity. One thing is certain: Something is amiss in much of our Sabbath-day observances.

Let's speculate about the first century and John's gospel: if the Jews represented the only group following the seventh day Sabbath and the Old Testament Holy Days, why would John make a distinction in scripture regarding the Jewish Passover? The answer is simple and logical: Perhaps John deliberately meant his readers to see a distinction between the Jews' Passover and another unnamed Passover—possibly the one God ordained on the 14th. John's gospel stands apart as the most theological of the four—it is much less an historical work, as the other three are, than it is a spiritual labor of love.

“Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem” (Jn.2:13). By this passage, John defines the Passover in Jerusalem as being of the Jews.

“Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with his disciples” (Jn.11:54). Here, John details a contrast between Jesus and his disciples, and the Jews.

“And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves” (Jn.11:55).

John pictures a contrast between the Jewish Passover and possibly an unmentioned Passover. By defining this event as a Passover of the Jews, it naturally suggests another Passover in existence that was not Jewish.

“After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem” (Jn.5:1). Again, a clear distinction is made regarding this event: it was a feast “of the Jews.”

“Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near” (Jn.6:4). Once more, John calls the Passover a feast of the Jews.

“You know that after two days is the Passover and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified” (Matt.26:2). Matthew (as well as Mark and Luke) simply record the event as “the Passover.” Why do you suppose it was important to John to specify that so many events were labeled of the Jews?



**The Christian Passover/
Lord’s Supper Ceremony**

This blessed ceremony and ordinance is to be an annual event at the beginning of Nisan 14, after nightfall, the same time that our Lord instituted the memorial. Those who celebrate this memorial on any day except the 14th miss the memorial altogether. Jesus Christ and his disciples actually kept a proper Passover to the Lord according to the timing of the original event. The following is a “general practice” procedural order that you can implement within a group setting or individually at home. *You can be creative; add hymns between the readings and events, add other readings, as you feel led.*

The ceremony ought to be an interactive event in respect to scripture readings, music, and the passing of the bread and red wine (not grape juice except as a health issue), as opposed to a ritual administered totally by the clergy. The bread used during the service should always be unleavened. Never use leavened bread with an annual Passover or Lord’s Supper service. Jesus kept a genuine Passover. According to Christ’s instructions, the disciples set up an authentic Passover service (Lk.22:1-12).

The mood of the formal procedure should be reverent, but not somber or grim. To be grim is frequently to put on false humility. After all, the sacrifice of Christ was necessary so that his shed blood would cover our sins. His

death should not be a time of mourning, but a realization of victory over sin. We also realize that his resurrection to glory occurred only three days after his burial in the tomb.

The idea that God approved the setup of a “second” Passover ceremony that may be held one month later than Nisan 14 is an error of interpretation (Num.9:9). Certain men were unable to keep the Passover because of being unclean by touching a dead body or by virtue of being “afar off” on a long trip, so Moses decided they should keep it on the 2nd month. This is not a blanket doctrine for a second month Passover for any other reasons.

However, God would indeed not look harshly upon one whom, by necessity rather than over a calendrical dispute, administered the Lord’s Supper to brethren—in times of war, or due to sickness of the participant, for instance.



**Suggested
Formal Observance**

Double Theme: 1. “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” 2. The absolute victory of Yahweh through Christ over sin and death.

“So when this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. ...

“But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Cor. 15:54-7).

“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent’ ” (Jn.17:1-3, RSV).

Opening Hymn

Reading

Psa.91 & Psa.113—

Opening Prayer

Discuss events in the life of Christ and remarks about the original Passover. Discuss crucifixion briefly.

Some Dialogue points

1. Selection of the Lamb
2. Examination of the Lamb
3. Condemnation of the Lamb
4. Death of the Lamb
5. Blood of the Lamb
6. The victory of the Lamb
7. The communion of the Lamb

Note: The Israelites ate the Lamb and the Lamb walked out with them. The blood was on the outside of the doors was for all to see.

Foot-Washing: Reading

Lk.22:14-16; Jn.13:1-17—

Q: What do we understand from this ceremony? [Wash hands after washing feet and before handling the bread.]

Breaking Bread: Reading

Matt.26:17-26 & 1Cor.11:23-24 — Additional: 1Pet.2:21 [Extra: Acts 8:26-35; Lk.22:19; Jn.3:18-32]

Prayer over the bread

Break the Unleavened

Bread. Distribute the bread. Eat the bread.

Drinking Wine: Reading

Matt.26:27-28 & 1Cor.11:25-29— [Extra: Mk.14:23-25; Lk.22:20]

Prayer over the red wine

Distribute wine. Drink it. Read selections from Jn.14:1-31.

Closing Hymn: Reading

Matt.26:30 “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

Final hymn & Closing Prayer

Suggestions: “Nothing But the Blood of Jesus” or “Sweet Hour of Prayer.”



The Passover Feast



*A celebration of freedom
A family occasion*

Monday April 2, 2007

[Celebrated the previous evening after dark]



The Observations

1. Who were the people that God commanded to observe the Passover?
Exodus 12:1-3

2. Were the Israelites in bondage or slavery in Egypt?
Exodus 1:8-14

3. What is so special about this night? Why are we here?
Exodus 12:4-8, 14



4. How were the Israelites to eat the Passover?
Exodus 12:11-17

5. How many Israelites left Egypt?
Exodus 12:37-39

6. Why is this night special? Why do we observe it in particular?
Exodus 12:40-42

7. But wait! We have never been in bondage, have we?
Romans 6:12-23; Romans 7:8, 12; Romans 8:1-6; 12-23; Hebrews 2:14,15

8. Then, why don't we kill a lamb for Passover like the Israelites did?
1 Corinthians 5:7,8

9. Did Jesus Christ preach about freedom?
Luke 4:16-21



10: But how many people can become free?
John 8:25-36

11. Then there's nothing else for us to do—Christ did it all?
Romans 12:1, 2

12. What should we be doing the rest of the year?
Romans 12:9-21; Romans 13:8-14

