

[... the first part of this article has been omitted ... , Original Writing April 5, 1990]

Historical Evidence Original Passover Was A Fourteenth - Fifteenth Event:

Exodus 12:6-11 states that the Passover sacrifice was to be selected on the tenth of Nisan, kept until the fourteenth day, killed between the evenings, eaten at night, eaten with unleavened bread, eaten with loins girded, sandals on feet, staff in hand, and eaten in a hurried manner.

Lev. 23:26-32 informs us that the phrase "on the ninth at evening" has the meaning of "on the ninth as the ninth day is ending". Likewise, "on the tenth at evening" has the meaning of "on the tenth as the tenth day is ending". This strongly suggests that the similar phrase "on the fourteenth at evening" means "on the fourteenth as the fourteenth day is ending".

Deut. 16:1-8 states that we are to keep the Passover, including eating unleavened bread. Verse four states that unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days, and that none of the flesh of the Passover shall remain until the morning of the first of the unleavened-days.

Note that the word "morning" is Strong's #1242 which means dawn, having the root of "to break". This suggests that the word "morning" refers to the actual time of sunrise or "breaking of daylight".

Further, in verse six it states that the Passover is to be killed "at evening when goes down the sun." Note that the original language has three words, Strong's numbers #6183, #935 and #8121. Literally it says: "at evening goes sun". This can only refer to one astronomical event, that is the time when the sun actually sets over the horizon. As the sun is setting, the previous daylight had to be on the 14th day.

Verses seven and eight specify that they were to go to their own tents only after morning, and then eat unleavened bread for an additional six days after that. Since the total number of days of unleavened bread is seven, then the 15th and its previous night must also be one of the days of unleavened bread.

These points combine to demonstrate that the original Passover meal occurred on the same night that is also the beginning of counting out the seven days, this meal starts the first day of unleavened bread week.

The Egyptian Calendar Clarifies Moses' Instructions:

How can the Passover be started on the 14th as the day is ending, have the meal extend into the night, progressing to a conclusion to the next morning, and not be stated as being eaten on the 15th ? The scriptures always specify that the date for the Passover is the 14th .

The answer to this "riddle" is simple. The Egyptian calendar began its days at sunrise, in the morning; (Ref. "Egyptian Chronology and The Torah", page 3 and "Ancient Planetary Observations", Pg. 42). Beginning the day twelve hours earlier at sunset was not how the Egyptians

counted days. By not taking into account which calendar the Egyptian slaves (Israelites) were using, we can become confused when reading the Passover instructions.

The Israelites had lived in Egypt for generations, and therefore the instructions given by God/Moses to them, and the eyewitness account of their exodus events, would be specified using the Egyptian calendar they knew.

From the Egyptian calendar's point of view, the Israelites actually did eat the Passover "on the fourteenth". The 15th day of the Egyptian month would not start until after the night time, not until the next morning, when the Passover meal was to be concluded. In accordance with the Egyptian calendar, which they grew up with, they both sacrificed the Passover at sunset and ate the Passover at night, doing the entire ceremony while it was still the 14th day of their way of counting.

Notice Leviticus 7:15, **they must eat** the offering **the same day**, leaving nothing **until morning**. The next morning would be their 15th day, so the entire ceremony, including the eating of it, was all done "**the same day**", on their 14th day.

The scriptures are written absolutely correctly. But they were written to the culture and context of the time. By reading the Exodus account using the Egyptian method of counting calendar days, there is no contradiction, nor any ambiguity. There is no reason to have a controversy regarding the chronology of the original Passover.

The Book Of Jubilees Describes How The Ancient Hebrews Observed The Passover:

"The Book of Jubilees" was written in Hebrew circa 135 BC, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jubilees>. It is part of the Coptic Christian Bible, called "The Book of Divisions". As a historical reference, this book is invaluable, giving us an insight into how the ancient Jewish authorities understood the Scripture's Hebrew words.

In the book of Jubilees, Chapter 49 **explains both the history of, and the details of how to observe the Passover**. In this discourse we are told what is meant by the Hebrew words "between the evenings". **We are told that the Hebrew day is divided into three (3) unequal parts:** two (2) parts for the daylight's twelve hours of the day, and only one (1) part for the entire night time portion of the calendar day. It then explains how the reader is to interpret the Passover instructions, relative to the words "between the evenings".

The Hebrew word for "evening" only means "mixture", and by the context means the "mixture of lightness and darkness". The time after sunset is a "dusk" (mixture) of lightness and darkness, and the morning before sunrise is a "dusk" (mixture) of lightness and darkness also. The time in between these two "mixtures" is the night-portion, and is the third division of the ancient Hebrew day.

This chapter explains that we are to kill the Passover on the 14th daylight portion of the day, and then eat the Passover "between the mixtures" during the 12-hour night time portion of that day, and leave nothing of the meat after sunrise the next morning. This chapter is so clear, it even calls this night-portion of the Passover meal the 15th.

Even if the reader discounts this book because it is not "scripture" in the Protestant cannon, this book nevertheless is authentic. It tells us how the Jewish scholars of circa 135 BC understood the

division of the day into three parts, and explains the Hebrew understanding of the words “between the evenings”. Thus, we are provided with significant historical evidence, and eyewitness insight into the ancient Hebrew understanding of the Passover ceremony.

The Passover and Easter Controversy Circa 325 AD:

From Eusebius' “The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine”, p. 231+, Eusebius describes the great controversy which shook the entire church (quoting):

“It was at that stage that a controversy of great significance took place, because all the Asian dioceses thought that in accordance with ancient tradition they ought to observe the fourteenth day of the lunar month as the beginning of the Paschal festival – the day on which the Jews had been commanded to sacrifice the lambs: on that day, no matter which day of the week it might be . . .

The Asian bishops who insisted that they must observe the custom transmitted to them long ago were headed by Polycrates, who in the letter he wrote to Victor and the Roman church sets out . . . the tradition that he had received:”

(Eusebius now quoting the letter from Polycrates) “We for our part keep the day scrupulously, without addition or subtraction. For in Asia great luminaries sleep who shall rise again on the day of the Lord's advent, when He is coming with glory from heaven and shall search out all His saints – such as Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who sleeps in Hierapolis with two of his daughters, who remained unmarried to the end of their days, while his other daughter lived in the Holy Spirit and rests in Ephesus. **Again there is John, who lent back on the Lord's breast, and who became a priest wearing the mitre, a martyr, and a teacher; he too sleeps in Ephesus.** Then in Smyrna there is Polycarp, bishop and martyr; and Thraseus, the bishop and martyr from Eumenia, who also sleeps in Smyrna. Need I mention Sagaris, bishop and martyr, who sleeps in Laodicea, or blessed Papirius, or Melito the eunuch . . . ? **All these kept the fourteenth day of the month as the beginning of the Paschal Festival**, in accordance with the Gospel, not deviating in the least but following the rule of the Faith. Last of all, I too, Polycrates, the least of you all, act according to the tradition of my family, some members of which I have actually followed; for seven of them were bishops and I am the eighth, and my family has always kept the day when the people put away the leaven. So I, my friends, after spending sixty-five years in the Lord's service and conversing with Christians from all parts of the world, and going carefully through all Holy Scripture, and not scared of threats. Better people than I have said: ‘**We must obey God rather than men**’ ”.

This historical evidence demonstrates the strict adherence of the early Bishops and congregations, from all parts of the world, to the original teachings of the apostles. For at least eight generations they did not deviate. Not only did they keep the Passover Festival, **they started the Festival on the same day as the Jews**. This adherence was important to them, and they then came into direct conflict with the Bishop of Rome.

The practice of starting the Passover by killing the lambs **on the same day as did the Jews**, on the 14th day of the lunar month, was a Christian tradition kept from ancient times. The Messiah was crucified on the 14th day, killed on the same day as the Jews killed their own Passover lambs. The Sanhedrin priests who insisted that Jesus be sentenced to die, they wanted to stay ‘clean’ so they could eat the Passover meal later that night. Therefore, the eating of the Passover meal must be

after the daylight portion of the 14th day, after the Messiah and the lambs were killed, after sunset of that 14th daylight.

Points Of Textual Evidence: Last Meal Was Not The Passover:

Below is a list of reasons which provide evidence that the last meal of Jesus the Christ was not, nor could have been, the Passover meal. For:

1. They ate in a reclined position, (Lk 22:14). The Passover meal was commanded to be eaten in haste, staff in hand, ready to go out the door at any moment, (Ex 12:11; Deut. 16). Even allowing that this original eating posture may have been replaced by custom, notice that the accounts do not specifically state that the meal was a Passover meal. All accounts describe the meal, and its events, without reference to it being the Passover ceremony. Matthew 26:17, Mark 14:12, and Luke 22:7 each state specifically that they ate a supper, none directly state that it was anything else (also note John 13:1 and 29). This omission is important. Those who suggest that this meal was the Passover meal, have no direct and unambiguous statements in scripture to quote in their support.
2. They left the meal before morning, (John 13:30). The Passover meal was to last all night, leaving nothing of the lamb to the morning, (Ex 12:10). The Passover participants were forbidden to leave the house prior to morning, (Deut. 16:7). Yet the gospel accounts report that numerous people had left their houses, and were standing around with Peter before dawn.
3. John 13:28-30: Judas left the dinner, and the other disciples thought that he was told by Jesus to go out and buy more preparations for the feast. Such a conclusion is not possible, for:
 - A. If that meal were the Passover meal, nobody (stores or kin-folk) would be open for business. The thought of Judas going outside that night to buy something “for the feast” would be a complete contradiction. The disciples could not have had such a thought enter into their minds, if they were at that very moment eating the Passover meal.
 - B. This verse only makes sense interpreting it as the Greek grammar allows. That is, the feast was still future-tense, upcoming, and Judas was going outside in order to buy provisions for it.
4. In I Cor. 11:23 Paul states that: "in the night in which He was betrayed...". Paul makes no special point to the type of meal that they ate, but rather concentrates on the events of the night.
5. John 19:31: In the Greek it states that the next day (after the evening meal, the very day Jesus was crucified) was the preparation day. It further states that the next day was the Sabbath, and that "this particular Sabbath" was “the high day”.

In the Greek “the high day” is an adjective to the noun “this the Sabbath”. It is stating that “this the Sabbath” was “the high day”. When the Sabbath falls on the fifteenth of Nisan, which is the first day of unleavened bread, which is a Holy Day, then “that Sabbath” is also a “high day”. To reverse this, and suggest that “the high day” is the noun of the sentence, and that “the Sabbath” was the adjective about the annual “high day”, would reverse the Greek grammar, which is not the case.

6. John 18:28 states that on the day of Jesus' crucifixion, the Pharisees and priests did not want to defile themselves, lest they could not eat of the Passover. The means the Passover meal must have been still in the future, after the trial and crucifixion.
7. The armed band of men and priests which took Jesus captive, tried Him, presented Him to Pilate, and had Him crucified, would have violated and profaned the sanctity of the Passover night and the Holy Day, as they would have:
 - A. Disobeyed the command to not go out of their dwellings before morning, and very important, they were not leading their families in the Passover ceremonies (customs) of the night.
 - B. Held a trial on the Passover night, and continued on into the next day with Pilate and the crowd, which would then have been done on the Holy Day. Doing this, and conducting business with Pilate (exchange of prisoners), would have violated a large number of Torah laws, ceremonial rules, and customs.
 - C. Conducted business with Judas in the exchange of silver.
 - D. Profaned the sacredness of the Holy Day, by allowing the scourging and the crucifixion of three men.
 - E. Contradicted themselves by desiring to have the bodies taken down before the Sabbath, yet allowed the men to be there in agony during a Holy Day.
8. The Passover celebration was a family event. Its participation was to include the whole family, including children and slaves, (Ref. Ex. 12:24-28, 43-49). Yet, none of the disciples' family, Mary, or the other women (who were in Jerusalem at that time) were at this meal.
9. The next day Simon the Cyrenian was returning from the field. This is a reference to them working in the field. The day of the crucifixion was a "working-day", which means it could not be a Holy Day.

Concluding All Of The Above Evidence: The combination of all these points, and the historical evidence, describe only one possible sequence of events. As viewed by the Jewish calendar we use today:

1. The Passover sacrifice is to be killed in the daylight portion of the 14th day, as the 14th day's light was ending with sunset. After sunset then starts the third-portion of the ancient Hebrew 24-hour day.
2. The Passover meal is to be eaten that night, "between the evenings", which is during the third-portion of the Hebrew 24-hour day, ending at the next "evening", which is at dusk just before sunrise.
3. The Passover meal is to be eaten with unleavened bread, was performed as part of the first day of unleavened bread, and unleavened bread was to be eaten for an additional six days after that.

What About Three Days and Three Nights ?:

It is an assumption to interpret the phrase "in the heart of the earth" as meaning "in the grave". If at your own resurrection, you are then told that as a cosmic fact this phrase did not mean that, then were you lied to by God? No, of course not, "in the grave" is an assumed meaning.

Luke 24:21 tells us that the trial and crucifixion event occurred, and that (in the Greek) “But with all these things **third this day comes today** since these things occurred”. The Text says that Sunday was the third day, now count backwards: two was Sabbath, and one was Friday. **The 14th of the month, and the crucifixion, was on Friday.**

The wave sheaf offering, where the two loaves are presented on the altar for God's approval (Leviticus 23:16, 17), is widely accepted as symbolizing Jesus as being the resurrected Christ being presented to the Father. Consider, early on Sunday morning, recorded in John 20:17, Jesus rebukes Mary to not touch Him as: "**I have not yet ascended to My Father...**". Yet, later that same Sunday Jesus is touched by the disciples, and eats with them. It was Jesus' triumphant approval by God the Father, as the resurrected wave sheaf offering, which nullified Satan's attempt to crush the Son of God.

Satan's attempt to crush Jesus started when he entered into Judas, to betray Jesus later that night. **The three days and three nights starts at the time of His betrayal, when Jesus was placed into the hands of men, as stated in Matthew 17:22 and Luke 24:7.**

Count night times: Thursday night of betrayal and put into the hands of men, Friday night, Sabbath night. Count day times: Friday crucifixion, Sabbath rest, Sunday wave sheaf offering and presentation to God. It was on Sunday morning that Jesus was accepted by God the Father as the wave sheaf offering, fully defeating Satan's attempt.

The fulfillment of the sign of Jonah was accomplished, **as viewed from the time Jesus was in the clutches of men, including the penalty of Adam's sin, through the time He was accepted by the Father**, receiving all power in heaven and earth, and thereafter no longer subject to the sins of Adam and Eve.

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