

## WHAT YOU DID NOT KNOW ABOUT THE PASSOVER

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Our Father we come before your throne and holy presence on this first holy day of the New Year, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Abib (Nisan) which is the first day of the feast of Unleavened Bread and an annual Sabbath holy day to worship you in Spirit and truth. Thank you for giving us your annual spring holy days which teach us the meaning of Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread and Counting the Omer to Pentecost. Our grateful praise, honor and glory to you in the name of Jesus Christ Yeshua the Messiah who willingly gave his life that we might be reconciled to you and be forgiven of our sins. We pray that you will create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us. Have mercy on us according to your loving kindness that we, by your mercy may present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto you.

Thank you for your faithfulness, for hearing our prayers and for the fulfilling of your prophecies and setting us apart as holy vessels to you in this generation. We pray that you will continually fill our hearts full with the gift of your Holy Spirit. Enable us to express your loving-kindness to others as you would have us do. Deliver us from temptation. Let your message resound like a trumpet calling your people to repent and to humbly return to you. In your law and commandments are our success and prosperity that point the way to deliver us from evil and achieve the good that leads to eternal life, joy and strength. Let us have peace with you and be forgiven of our sins, firmly set on the path to eternal life. Amen.

Shabbat shalom and Chag Sameach. Passover, the festival of our freedom, is the first in the cycle of the three pilgrimage holidays. The Sabbath before Passover is called *Shabbat Hagadol*, the Great Sabbath. Nisan (or Abib) is the first month of the New Year of God's calendar and the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is called *Hag Ha Mazot*. **God's days begin at sunset and end at sunset.** On this festival the Torah and the Bible not only forbid eating *chametz* (*leaven*) but also prohibits its presence during Passover. Starting with the Passover Seder meal, we begin the first of all God's yearly annual festivals days and we eat unleavened bread for seven days. The second night of Passover we begin counting the Omer (*Sefirat Ha'Omer*) of 49 days to Pentecost the 50<sup>th</sup> day. The annual holy days portray the plan of God. During the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar year will be the fall high holy days of Rosh Hashanah (Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Atonement) and Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles).

Down through the centuries from the first Passover, the Jews have continued keeping the Passover, memorializing it and observing it from year to year at the appointed time as God commanded. That is what we are striving to do as God commanded in his word—not according to the perfidy of men, or the errors, misconceptions, falsehoods and lies of men who are stubborn and rebellious. Some perhaps are really sincere, but others are very insincere. I am not here to judge their heart. Churches today are in gross error and totally deceived on the Passover because of incompetence. They have been misled, wrongly taught and are in error. **Matthew 5:48**—Christ said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” It is

imperative to keep our eyes upon the word of God and see what God says we should do and not trust men.

Peloubet's Bible Dictionary was recommended for all the students at Ambassador College as a source book which covers all the subjects in the Bible including the Passover and the holy days. Peloubet, a knowledgeable historian, writes about the Passover on pages 486-487. "Passover: the first of the three great annual festivals of the Israelites, celebrated in the month of Nisan (March-April) from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>. This feast was instituted by God to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage and the sparing of their firstborn when the destroying angel smote the first-born of the Egyptians. The deliverance from Egypt was regarded as the starting-point of the Hebrew nation. The Israelites were then raised from the condition of bondmen under a foreign tyrant to that of a free people owing allegiance to no one but God. The prophets in a later age spoke of the event as a creation and a redemption of the nation. God declares himself to be 'The Creator of Israel.' The Exodus was looked upon as the birth of the nation; the Passover was its annual birthday feast. It was the yearly memorial of the dedication of the people to him who had saved their first-born from the destroyer in order that they might be made holy to himself. "

*"First celebration of the Passover—* on the tenth day of the month, the head of each family was to select from the flock either a lamb or a kid, a male of the first year, without blemish. On the fourteenth day of the month he was to kill his lamb, while the sun was setting (Deuteronomy 16:6)." This was from the time the sun was going down—after noon—before it set. This was the appointed time by God. If it is not kept at the appointed time, then it is not really the Passover, but a fraudulent counterfeit. We can thank God for opening our eyes to see, grasp, and understand his truth. The truth is a wonderful blessing. "He was then to take blood in a basin, and with a sprig of hyssop to sprinkle it on the two side-posts and the lintel of the door of the house. It was expressly forbidden that the lamb should be boiled or that a bone of it should be broken. The lamb was then to be thoroughly roasted whole. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs were to be eaten with the flesh."

The bitter herbs were to remind them of the bitterness of their bondage and Egyptian slavery. It is amazing how quickly people cease to think for themselves independently after becoming a slave. "The lambs were selected, on the fourteenth they were slain and the blood sprinkled, and in the following evening, **after the fifteenth day of the month had commenced** (*day begins at sunset and ends at sunset*), the first paschal meal was eaten." The Passover (Seder) meal was eaten at the end of Nisan 14 and the beginning of Nisan 15. This began the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the beginning of Passover Day of Nisan 15. This is from Peloubet's Bible Dictionary and Peloubet has no axe to grind. He is just giving us the history. If only we would just look for the facts. The truth—not stories, legends and lies—will make you free. "On the second day also the first fruits of the barley harvest were offered in the temple (Lev. 23:10)."

The Bible talks about the Sabbath Day over and over again. Sunday the first day of the week is mentioned only seven times in the New Testament and none of those was a church service.

**Mark 6:2**—"And when the Sabbath day was come, he (Christ) began to teach in the synagogue." **Luke 4:16 (New Testament)**—Christ "came to Nazareth, where he had been

brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.”

The synagogue (or temple) was the recognized place of worship on the Sabbath day (the seventh day of the week). The seventh day Sabbath is the Sabbath of God not only in the sanctuary, but in all Israel’s dwellings. In the New Testament, the Sabbath is a perpetual sign and covenant with Israel. The holiness of the day is connected with the people (Israel). The people would go to the synagogue where they gathered to hear the word of God read and preached. Paul went throughout the Mediterranean Sea area Asia Minor and even Rome preaching in the synagogues of the Jews on the Sabbath day. **Acts 13:14**—“Later he preached to the Gentiles on the Sabbath day” (7<sup>th</sup> day of the week) which God ordained as holy (**Exodus 31:13**). **Acts 15:21**—“Moses of old time hath in every city them that teach him being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.”

Based upon oral tradition and oral laws, the book of *Jubilees*, was written after the Old Testament was finished, and before the New Testament was begun— about 250 years before Christ. It is a parallel, historical account of the history of the earth from the creation of Adam and Eve and Israel coming out of Egypt until the days of Joshua. Remember this is a Jewish book written about 250 years before Christ. Chapter 49 (XLIX) talks about the origin of the Passover, page 93. “Remember the commandment that the Lord commanded thee concerning the *Pesach* (Passover) that you shall keep it in its time on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. You shall kill it before the evening comes, and that they shall eat it during the night on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> day (Abib/ Nisan 15).” From the time of the setting of the sun is the first day of the festival and the first Passover (Pesach—the evening portion of Abib/Nisan 15) as we did last night.

*Jubilees* (Cont’d), XLIX page 94. “If a man, is pure and does not come to observe in its time the day to bring an offering which is acceptable before the Lord on the day of the festival, and to eat and to drink before the Lord, on the day of the festival, that man shall be rooted out, because he has not brought an offering to the Lord in its time on the fourteenth of the first month, between the evenings (“ben ha arbayim” -- from between the setting sun from noon until the sun is set) in the *third part of the day to the third part of the night*.”

We say a day has 24 hours. Daylight is 12 hours and nighttime is 12 hours which equals 24 hours. A day is a 12 hour day, from 6am in the morning until 6pm in the evening. Dividing the day into thirds would be from 6 am – 10 am (part 1), 10 am - 2 pm (part 2), 2 pm – 6 pm (part 3) the time before sunset (the beginning of the night). The first two parts are given to the light and the third part to the evening (2-6 pm). It is showing that between the two evenings is 2 pm – 6 pm the lambs were to be slain. Historian, Flavius Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*) says the Passover lambs were brought to the temple to be slain from 3 pm to 5 pm. This was because of the number of lambs and the number of the people doing the sacrifice.

‘It shall not take place in the morning, at any time of daylight, but only at the limits of the evenings; and they shall eat it in the time of evening until the third part of the night; and whatever is left of all the meat, they shall again burn in the fire. They shall not cook it in water and shall not eat it raw, but carefully roasted on the fire and broiled on the fire; its head together with the intestines they shall roast, and its feet, and shall not break any bone within it for none of the children of Israel shall have any bone broken. Remember this day all the days of your life

once a year on its day, in all your generations, the appropriate day and time according to all the law thereof. It is a festival and day commanded. Thou shall not change the day for any other day or month, but keep it on the day of its fixed time. It shall become a memorial before the Lord which is acceptable, and that no plague comes over them to kill them and to scourge them in that year. It has no limit of days, for it is ordained for eternity.”

“When the children of Israel come into the land which they shall possess, and in the days when a house shall have been built in the name of the Lord in the land of their inheritance”—that’s the temple —“they shall go there and slay the Passover in the evening as the sun goes down in the third part of the day. The children of Israel are commanded that they shall observe the ordinance of the Passover as it has been commanded year to year before the house of the Lord where his name dwells, and the festival of the unleavened bread, that they shall eat unleavened bread seven days so that they do not trespass against the Lord.”

*Isn't that absolutely PLAIN? This was before the Sadducees or any arguments of any kind about the Passover. **Malachi 3:6** —“For I am the LORD, I change not.” God’s law is eternal—it does not change. **Matthew 5:17** —“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”*

The last few days I have received email letters saying the Passover would be Sunday evening which would be keeping it a day early. In actual truth, they were not keeping it at all, because it was not the appointed (scheduled) time of God. If you have or make an appointment, it is a definite day and time that you have specifically committed to be present. The Passover and the seven days of Unleavened Bread are tied together as one and the same. **Ezekiel 45:21** calls the **seven days of Unleavened Bread** the Feast of the Passover because they are tied together.

It is ten times harder to unlearn error, than to simply learn the truth. It is hard for a person to admit and to accept the fact that they have been wrong. **Luke 6:39**—Christ said, “Can the blind lead the blind? Will they not both fall into the ditch?” Sad to say, there is much confusion about Passover among the churches and the people on the right day as well as the right month. They don’t know when to start (or determine) the month of Abib/Nisan and they often start a month early or a month late and change the day and keep what they call the Passover at the wrong time and on the wrong day. History, the Jewish Talmud and Mishna all show that the year itself can begin before the Spring Equinox as long as the Passover occurs in the spring. Passover can occur on the Spring Equinox or any day thereafter in the first month of Nisan/Abib. But the month of Nisan/Abib can begin several days (5 -10) before the spring Equinox, as long as, the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15 days fall during in the spring, on or after March 21.

If a person serves God and God reveals the truth to that person, they are duty bound to proclaim it as God wants a good servant to do. What truth God has given me is not to just benefit me. **Matthew 10:27**—“Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.” **Isaiah 58:1**-- to the watchman on the wall: “Cry **aloud**, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” Woe to those who do not listen; they will answer for all those people they have misled and caused to go astray. **Isaiah 66:2**—“But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at my word.” It does not matter what men think. No

one can force or make people believe the truth. But if they are willing to listen, we can share the truth.

Alfred Edersheim (1825-1889) was born in Vienna to Jewish parents and was converted to Christianity as a young man. He studied theology at Edinburgh and Berlin and was one of the leading authorities of his time regarding the doctrines and practices of Judaism in the centuries preceding and during the early Christian era. It is almost 200 years ago that he wrote the book, The Temple, its Ministries and Services. The Passover, chapter 11, page 162. “The cycle of Temple-festivals appropriately opens with the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread which are generally treated as one because of their close connection.”

“There are peculiarities about the Passover which mark it as the most important, taking it out of the rank of the other festivals. It was the first of the three festivals (pilgrimage) on which all males in Israel were bound to appear before the Lord in the place which He would choose [the two others being the **Feast of Weeks** (Shavuot/Pentecost) and that of **Tabernacles—Exodus 23:14; 34:18-23; Lev. 23:4-22; Deut. 16:16**]. All the three great festivals bore a threefold reference, however great prominence is given to the *historical* bearing of the Passover. It is not mentioned in the other two festivals, although it could not have been wholly wanting. But the feast of unleavened bread celebrated the one grand event which underlay the whole history of Israel and marked alike their miraculous deliverance from destruction and from bondage, and the commencement of their existence as a nation. For in the night of the Passover the children of Israel, miraculously preserved and set free, for the first time became a people, and that by the direct interposition of God.” “The third bearing of all the festivals, but especially of the Passover, is typical. Every reader of the New Testament knows how frequent are such allusions to the Exodus, the Passover Lamb, the Passover Supper, and the feast of unleavened bread.” God emphasizes this even in the New Testament. So how is it that we can dare to get it wrong?

**Genesis 12:3**—“When God bound up the future of all nations in the history of Abraham and his seed, He made that history prophetic; and each event and every rite became, as it were, a bud, destined to open in blossom and ripen into fruit on that tree under the shadow of which all nations were to be gathered. Thus nature, history, and grace combined to give a special meaning to the festivals, but chiefly to the Passover. It was the feast of spring; the springtime of nature, when, after the death of winter, the scattered seeds were born into a new harvest, and the first ripe sheaf could be presented to the Lord. The spring-time of Israel’s history, when each year the people celebrated anew their national deliverance pointing forward to the birth of the true Israel and the Passover sacrifice to that ‘Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.’ Accordingly, the later times, Nisan, was to be unto the ‘the beginning of months’—the birth-month of the sacred and at the same time the seventh in the civil year.”

Paul wrote this to the Corinthians who were beginning to stray away with contrary teachers rising up. **1 Corinthians 1:13**—“Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” No, Christ is not divided, he is one and his church is one. **1 Corinthians 5:2-5**—“You are puffed up (proud/ filled with spiritual leavening). It is actually reported there is sexual immorality among you of a kind that does not occur even among Gentiles and you have not mourned that he has done this deed. Shouldn’t you rather have been filled with grief and put this man out of your fellowship?” “Your glorying is not good. Know ye

not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 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. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, **let us keep the feast**, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Most likely this was written during the feast of Unleavened Bread. Paul explains to the Corinthians, they need to purge out the old leaven in your lives, even as you are at the present time unleavened. They had put the leaven out of their homes to observe the feast. It is important that we get the Passover right and important that we observe it at the right time, the right way and the right manner. God laid on Christ the sin of us all. We can all be forgiven, if we repent.

The count of the Omer begins tomorrow, the 16<sup>th</sup> day of Nisan and we count 7 weeks of 7 days (49 days) and come to the 50<sup>th</sup> day of Shavuot/Pentecost—the day of the feast of first-fruits. If a person gets the Passover wrong, then they get Pentecost wrong, too. During the time of Jesus the Sadducees disputed with the Pharisees on how to count to Pentecost. The Sadducees began the count the day after the weekly Sabbath on a Sunday. The whole New Testament shows that is wrong. **Matthew 22:29**-- Jesus said to the Sadducees, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection or the existence of angels. The Pharisees counted Pentecost from the day **after the annual Sabbath** of Passover beginning on Nisan 16. Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary shows the same thing, under Passover.

**Philippians 3:1-5** – Paul was educated in Jerusalem, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee.

**Acts 22:3** —“I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel (a leading Pharisee and a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people), taught according to the strictness of our fathers’ law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.”

**Philippians 3:4**—“If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so, circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, **blameless.**”

*Reference:* The Septuagint was written about 250 years before Christ, translated from the original Hebrew into Greek, before there was a division between the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

**Leviticus 23:25** (from the Septuagint) “In the first month on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month between the evening times is the Lord’s Passover, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of this month is the day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.” So unleavened bread has to be eaten on the first day of Unleavened Bread. Otherwise, we would be eating unleavened bread eight days. “And the first day (ULB) shall be a holy convocation to you, and you shall do no servile work. Ye shall offer whole burnt offerings to the Lord. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation to you (a holy day)—[this coming Monday]. Moses speak to the children of Israel, and you shall say to them when your enter into the land which I give you (Canaan) and reap the harvest of it, then shall you bring a sheaf, the first fruits of your harvest (barley) to the priest and he shall lift up the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you on behalf of all the nation of Israel.”

When were they to do this? “On the morrow of the first day the priest shall lift it up.” One day from the *first* day of Unleavened Bread on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan would be the second day of Unleavened Bread or the morrow of the first day—the following day. This would be the day after Passover the annual Sabbath.

All who count from the day after the weekly Sabbath will wind up on a Sunday every year. This year, Passover was last night a Monday. Today Nisan 15 is today, Tuesday. According to what the Rabbis, the Septuagint and the Pharisees say we are to start counting the Omer to Pentecost (Shavuot) on Nisan 16 on the morrow after Nisan 15 which means tomorrow —Wednesday. The Sadducees and those who start counting to Pentecost (Shavuot) from the weekly Sabbath will begin their count on Sunday (Easter Sunday). So they will be close to a week off on Pentecost and celebrate it on the pagan Catholic *Whit Sunday*. You can look it up in The Story of Civilization by Will and Ariel Durant. Verse 15—“You shall number to yourselves from the day after the Sabbath (annual not weekly) [which is today], from the wave sheaf offering seven full weeks (7 days x 7 weeks = 49 days). The 50th day is Shavuot/Pentecost.”

The Temple Its Ministry and Services by Edersheim, page 164. “The name of the Passover, Pesach in Aramaean and in Greek Pascha, is derived from a root that means *step over*, or *to overleap* and thus it points back to its historical origin of the festival (Exod. 12).” The Paschal Feast and the Lord’s Supper— Chapter 12, pages 180 and 181. “Jewish tradition has this curious conceit: that the most important events in Israel’s history were connected with the Passover season. Thus is said to have been on the present Passover night that, after his sacrifice, ‘the horror of great darkness’ fell upon Abraham when God revealed to him the future of his race (Gen.15). Similarly, at Passover time the patriarch entertained his heavenly guests, Sodom was destroyed and Lot escaped, and that the walls of Jericho fell before the Lord. More than that in the days of Gideon the ‘cake of barley bread’ seen in the dream, which led to the destruction of Midian’s host, had been prepared from the Omer, presented on the second day of the feast of unleavened bread; just as at a later period alike the captains of Sennacherib and the King of Assyria, who tarried at Nob, were overtaken by the hand of God at the Passover season.”

“It was at the Passover time also that the mysterious handwriting appeared on the wall to declare Babylon’s doom, and again at the Passover that Esther and the Jews fasted, and that wicked Haman perished. And so in the last days it would be the Passover night when the final judgments should come upon ‘Edom’ [Esau—“modern day Nimrod”—one world government] and the glorious deliverance of Israel take place.” Judgments came upon Pharaoh (the antichrist of his generation) in Egypt after Moses and Aaron returned to Egypt from the land of Midian after Moses met the Lord at the burning bush and was told to bring God’s people out of Egypt. Moses and Aaron went back to Egypt and confronted Pharaoh with his emissaries, captains, and priests/magicians. God sent ten plagues upon Egypt leading up to Passover. That great deliverance was at Passover. Egypt was destroyed. Contrary to just about everybody, it is my belief that Babylon the Great will be destroyed at Passover by Jesus at his return in the springtime a time of new life.

Nisan/Abib 15 (4.16.14) Passover night, the blood red moon eclipse was posted live as we watched it happening on Griffiths.org site starting around 11 p.m. PST. We have many articles available upon request with proofs on the Passover, Pentecost, the Omer Count, Jesus’ Last

Week, How Long was Jesus in the Grave, the Annual Holy Days Reveal the Awesome Plan of God – just to mention a few that are available.

Brethren, we are celebrating Passover at the right time as God commanded. Our eyes have been opened. We are privileged to understand the truth of God. Praise the Lord! Let's get the year started off right with the first of God's festivals and not be empty handed before the Lord. Shalom Aleichem—Peace be upon you.