

God's Feast Days: PASSOVER & ULB

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There has been a controversy raging between many over when the Passover should be observed: some say that the Passover should be kept at the beginning of the 14th of the first month, while others say it should be kept at the end of the 14th day. This controversy is by no means new.

When did the Israelites in the Old Testament observe the Passover? When does the Bible say that we should observe the Passover? What does Christ's sacrifice mean to us? What is the deep meaning behind Christ's beating and death?

We shall answer all these questions and more in this manuscript. It is now time to understand!

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Chapter 1

The original Passover

In this first chapter, we will discuss the original (Old Testament) sacrifice. We will take a detailed look at all the events that surround the original sacrifice as outlined within the pages of the Bible, including the spoiling of the Egyptians, *the timing of the killing and eating of the Passover lamb*, the death angel, the Night to be Much Observed and more.

Timing of the killing of the original Passover lamb

We shall begin by discussing the timing of the killing of the original Passover lamb. To do this we must take a *close* look at 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^{H6153}”.

Although this is a straightforward scripture, it has been grossly misunderstood by many. To understand the *exact* meaning of what is being stated, we must understand the meaning of the word “evening”; this word puts the verse into proper time perspective. What exactly does the word “evening” mean in this scripture?

The word “evening” could be better translated as “between the two evenings” as it says in the original Hebrew text. (In other scriptures it is translated as “even” – Lev. 23:5; Deut 16:6 etc). ‘Young’s Literal Translation’ gives the following rendition for Exodus 12:6:

“And it hath become a charge to you, until the fourteenth day of this month, and the whole assembly of the company of Israel have slaughtered it **between the evenings** ^{H6153}”.

This scripture tells us that the lamb was kept *until* the 14th day of the first month; it was sacrificed *between the evenings*. We must understand the phrase “between the evenings” if we are to know the exact time that the Passover lamb was killed. What *exactly* does “between the evenings” mean? Let us take a look at two verses in Exodus 29 to help clarify this phrase and the time to which it is referring. We will see further scriptures as we proceed:

“Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one^{H259} [^{H259} = FIRST] lamb thou shalt offer in the morning^{H1242}; [^{H1242} = dawn] and the other^{H8145} [^{H8145} = SECOND] lamb thou shalt offer at even^{H6153}” [*or, between the evenings as it says in the original Hebrew text*]” (vs. 38-39).

Notice Young’s Literal Translation for Exodus 29:38-40:

“And this [is] that which thou dost prepare on the altar; two lambs, sons of a year, daily continually; the *one* lamb thou dost prepare in the morning, and the *second* lamb thou dost prepare **between the evenings**”

These verses tell us that the Israelites were to offer *two* lambs every day: verse 39 tells us that the *first* lamb was to be offered *in the morning* and the *second* lamb was to be offered *‘between the evenings’*! This would mean that the phrase “between the evenings” *must* refer to a time **before** sunset if both sacrifices were offered on the same day – which they were! Understand: two sacrifices took place every day; the first sacrifice was offered in the morning and the second sacrifice

was offered at even, or between the evenings. As we proceed we will see that the second sacrifice was offered before sunset.

Let us further prove that the word “even^{H6153}”, or the phrase “between the evenings” (Ex. 12:6), is referring to a time period *before* sunset. As you read the following passage in scripture, notice all the details that take place after the sacrifice is performed:

“And it came to pass **at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice**, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. [*Editor’s note: pay close attention to the bolded part of the verses, which are events that took place after the sacrifice was offered to God*]. And Elijah said unto them, **Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.** And Elijah said unto Ahab, **Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.** So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his

servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that *the heaven was black with clouds* and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel” (1 Kings 18:36-46).

Think about the above scriptures. All the events outlined took place about the time of, and after, the sacrifice offered at even^{H6153}. Is it not obvious that these events had to have taken place before sundown? How else would there have been enough light for Elijah to do all the things mentioned in these scriptures, including climbing to the top of Mount Carmel, and also his servant climbing the mount several times and able to look toward the sea? Would it have been possible to do this after sunset, or in the dark? Many Jews use this scriptural passage to help prove that ‘between the evenings’ refers to a time before sundown. Since these scriptures give the Biblical support needed to prove this undeniable fact, we too use these verses in 1 Kings 18 as evidence to support the Biblical fact we are here making – that ‘between the evenings’ refers to a time *before* sundown!

Notice what Gill’s commentary states about the phrase “between the evenings”:

““between the two evenings”, as it may be rendered; which respects that space of time after the sun begins to decline [*Editor’s note: this is referring to*

12 noon], and the entire setting of it; **when the sun begins to decline, as it does after noon, that is the first evening, and when it is set, that is the second; and the middle space between the one and the other is about the ninth hour** of the day, according to the Jewish computation, and, with us, about three o'clock in the afternoon, about which time the Passover used to be killed”

It is interesting to note that the Jews describe the time period known as “between the evenings” as “from the decline of the sun [or 12 o'clock noon] to the setting of the sun”. This is obviously referring to the ‘afternoon’, between noon and sunset, which is 3pm. In his book entitled “The Wars of the Jews”, Josephus wrote the following in chapter 9 and paragraph 3: “So these high priests, upon the coming of their feast which is called Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh hour”. In other words, Josephus the historian wrote that the Passover lamb was sacrificed between 3:00pm [the ninth hour] and 5:00pm [the eleventh hour]. This is the time which corresponds to the evening sacrifice which takes place ‘between the evenings’!

Exodus 12:6, Leviticus 23:5, Deuteronomy 16:6 tell us that the Passover lamb was sacrificed on the fourteenth day of the first month, at ‘even’. After having seen what is meant by the word ‘even’, or the phrase ‘between the evenings’, it should now be obvious to the reader that the Passover lamb was killed in the afternoon, *before sundown* on the 14th day of the first month.

This must be understood! There must be no doubt in the reader’s mind concerning the timing of the killing of the Passover sacrifice. We have a grave responsibility to ensure that we understand what the Bible states about the time when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, as this will help us observe the Passover correctly today! For further scriptural support

regarding the timing of “between the evenings” or “even”, notice what is stated in Gen. 24:11:

"And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the **evening** (*Strongs 6153 = 'even'*), even the time that women go out to draw water" (Gen. 24:11).

Is it not obvious that if the women would have gone out to draw water from the wells at ‘even’, it would have had to be a time *before* sundown, while there was still light? Absolutely! Women would have most definitely gone to draw water in the afternoon and not at dark after sunset! Logic should tell us this; History tells us this! The word ‘even’ or ‘evening’ (both Strong’s 6153) in this verse is unarguably referring to the time period BEFORE sundown, and not at sundown or after sundown! However, let us continue to allow scripture to interpret itself and further confirm beyond doubt that the definition of the word 'even' is referring to the time period *before* sunset, which is when the Passover lamb was sacrificed (Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:5; Deut 16:6)! Notice:

"Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there THOU SHALT SACRIFICE THE PASSOVER AT EVEN, AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt" (Deut 16:5-6).

This scripture is crystal clear and leaves no room for doubt! It defines the word “even”. In no uncertain terms, this scripture states that the Passover must be sacrificed “at the going down of the sun” (or as the sun goes down) and *not* after the sun has gone down! We must understand what is being communicated to us in scripture because it will determine the correct date and

time for keeping the Passover. The Passover lambs were *not* sacrificed *at the beginning* of the 14th day. Scripture plainly states that the Passover lambs were sacrificed between 3pm and 5pm in the afternoon, before sundown!

We must listen to God's Voice, allow Him to communicate to us and acknowledge what it is that He is stating. There is a grave danger in relying on preconceived ideas (1 Thess. 5:21).

Exodus 12:18 & Leviticus 23:6-8

We shall now compare Exodus 12:18 and Leviticus 23:6-8:

“In the first month, on the *fourteenth day* of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even” (Ex. 12:18).

“In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. And on the *fifteenth day* of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread” (Lev. 23:5-6).

Exodus 12:18 states that we shall eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth day of the first month, while Leviticus 23:5-6 state that the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the fifteenth of the first month. Do these two scriptures conflict? No, they do not! It is clear from these scriptures that the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th of the first month, yet we are to eat unleavened bread from the 14th right through to the end of the 21st day. It would indicate that no leavened bread should be eaten between the time of the Passover sacrifice and the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Over the last decades, the Church has partaken of the Passover with the symbols of unleavened bread and wine at the beginning of the fourteenth day and has then eaten leavened products till the beginning of the fifteenth day at the commencement of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Does not this destroy and make a

mockery of the deep meaning of the Passover sacrifice? Immediately after the Passover Lamb is sacrificed, should we not do our part and ‘remain clean’ by symbolically eating unleavened bread? Is it not obvious that in the above scriptures God is telling us not to eat any unleavened bread between the time that the Passover Lamb is sacrificed and the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Eating of leavened bread after the Lamb is sacrificed would be to symbolically return to sin!

Israelites spoiled the Egyptians

Exodus 12 gives clear instructions for the Passover. Towards the end of the chapter we see that the Israelites were *thrust out* of Egypt. They left in haste, because they were *pushed out* of Egypt. The Egyptians no longer wanted them there because of all the grief they experienced due to the plagues brought upon them because of the Israelites! The Egyptians actually gave them what they wanted – they allowed the Israelites to spoil them (Ex. 12:36) – *anything* to get them to leave Egypt quickly.

A number of Bible commentaries explain that when scripture says the Israelites ‘spoiled the Egyptians’, it simply means that the Israelites were allowed to take what was in fact theirs to take. The Israelites didn’t ‘steal’ anything...they simply took what was rightfully theirs. They had worked for the Egyptians, were paid poorly if at all, and were treated badly by them. The Israelites were able to spoil the Egyptians because they found favor from the Lord; they were given what they should have been paid for all the work which they performed.

The obvious question is: *when* exactly did the Israelites spoil the Egyptians? Exodus 11 clearly demonstrates that God told the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians *before* the Passover sacrifice took place! Notice:

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Yet will I
bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon

Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. **Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour**, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold. And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people. And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts....” (Ex. 11:1-5).

Verse 2 (above) shows that Moses was told to “speak *now*” into the ears of the Israelites to tell them to spoil the Egyptians. From the context of the above scriptures, it is clear that God instructed Moses to tell the Israelites to do this *before* the Passover sacrifice. The spoiling of the Egyptians must have taken place in the morning of the 14th of the first month *before* the Passover and not in the daylight portion of the first Holy Day! It would not have been appropriate for the Israelites to spoil the Egyptians on a Holy Day! Read again the eleventh and twelfth chapters of Exodus and notice how clear and obvious this fact is!

Night to be Much Observed

Exodus 12:37-42 states:

“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very

much cattle. *And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry,* neither had they prepared for themselves any victual. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, **even the selfsame 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 of all the children of Israel in their generations”**.

After the Passover lamb was killed between the 9th and 11th hour (3pm – 5pm) on the 14th of Nisan, the Jews were to eat it that night *after* sunset but before midnight. Does this mean that the Passover Lambs were eaten on the 15th of the month? This will be the subject of the next chapter. However, we are told that they ate it in haste, before the death angel passed over Egypt and killed the firstborn who were not protected by the blood of the lamb. This meal commemorated the Israelites being freed from under Egyptian slavery. The Passover meal is to be kept throughout our generations. This is a Night To Be Much Observed. (More on this later).

Recapitulation

Here is a point by point sequence of events that took place at the original Passover:

- The Passover lambs were set apart on the tenth of the first month (Ex. 12:3).
- The spoiling of the Egyptians took place in the morning part of the 14th Nisan before the Passover sacrifice was performed (Ex. 11).

- The Passover lambs were killed between the two evenings between 3pm and 5pm, on the 14th of the first month (Ex. 12:6-7).
- The Israelites painted the door posts to their homes with the blood of the lambs (Ex. 12:6-7).
- The Israelites ate the Passover in the night after sundown but before midnight, a Night to be Much Observed. They ate the Passover in haste (Ex. 12:11, 41-43).
- The death angel, which killed all the firstborn except for the Israelites who had God's protection, passed over the land of Egypt at midnight. The blood on the doorposts of the Israelite homes was a sign that those families were to be protected from this plague (Ex. 12:12, 29).
- Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and told them and all the Israelites to immediately leave Egypt (Ex. 12:31).
- The Israelites remained in their homes till the morning in fulfillment of Ex. 12:22
- The next morning, the Israelites 'burnt with fire' anything that remained of the Passover lambs which they did not eat the previous evening (Ex. 12:10).
- The beginning of the 15th Nisan marked the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- The Israelites were thrust out of the land of Egypt (Ex. 12:34, 37-39).

When does a Biblical day begin?

Common belief according to the widely used Roman calendar is that when the moon reaches its peak in a given 24-hour period, and the clock strikes midnight, a new day begins. According to the Jewish calendar, the new day begins at sunset. Others teach that a new day begins at sunrise.

The question is, when does a day begin according to *God's* calendar? What does *He* reveal to us through His inspired Word on this most important subject?

Let us begin by discussing a central passage on this subject, which is found in the book of Genesis:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called *the light Day*, and the darkness he called Night. And the *evening and the morning were the first day*” (Gen. 1:1-5).

Notice that, during the re-creation week, the first thing God re-created was “light”. When He created “light” he separated it from darkness (i.e. He separated it from “night”) and called it “day”. Through His inspired Word, God tells us that “light” is “day” (and “darkness” is “night”). In Gen 1:5 we are further told that “the evening and morning” were the first “day”. Therefore, both “evening and morning” must be part of the “day” and not the “night”. This is what is plainly stated in the Word of God!

Genesis 1:5 is an easy scripture to understand if we allow the Bible to interpret itself. However, in most cases, it is also a grossly misunderstood and misrepresented scripture. As we proceed, keep in mind that God called the light “day” and he called the dark “night”. Never lose sight of the fact that scripture tells us that “*the evening*^{H6153} *and the morning were the first day*”. Scripture does not state

that “*night*^{H3915} and morning” constitute a day, but “evening^{H6153} and morning” constitute a day. This is important to understand!

Please clear your mind from pre-conceived ideas, and follow along with the Biblical explanation being given hereunder. Please be sure to prove all things as you go along, and use the Bible as your authority (1 Thess. 5:21).

Genesis 1:5 tells us that “evening and morning” make up a day. We must understand that the word “evening^{H6153}” is not referring to “night^{H3915}”, but is in fact referring to the afternoon period between noon and sunset. We will here give irrefutable proof to support this Biblical fact. Please carefully study the following examples taken directly from scripture which demonstrate that “evening” is referring to a time between noon and sunset. The first example we shall discuss refers to the offerings which the Israelites were required to perform on a daily basis:

“Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one^{H259} [*H259 = FIRST*] lamb thou shalt offer in the morning ^{H1242}; [*H1242 = dawn*] and the other^{H8145} [*H8145 = SECOND*] lamb thou shalt offer at even^{H6153} [or, evening]” (Ex. 29:38-39).

These verses tell us that the Israelites were to offer two lambs every day: verse 39 tells us that the first lamb was to be offered *in the morning* and *the second* lamb was to be offered in the evening^{H6153}! This would mean that evening^{H6153} *must* refer to a time *before* sunset if both sacrifices were offered on the same day – which they were! Understand: two sacrifices took place every day; the first sacrifice was offered in the morning and the second sacrifice was offered at even^{H6153}, (evening^{H6153}), which must indicate a time *before* sunset! As you read the following passage in scripture, notice all the details that take place after the sacrifice is performed:

“And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the *evening sacrifice*, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their

heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. *[Editor's note: pay close attention to the bolded part of the verses, which are events that took place after the sacrifice was offered to God].* **And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that *the heaven was black with clouds* and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel” (1 Kings 18:36-46).**

Think about the above verses. All the events outlined took place about the time of, and after, the sacrifice offered in the evening^{H6153}. Is it not obvious that these events had to have taken place *before* sundown? How else would there have been enough light for Elijah to do all the things mentioned in these scriptures, including climbing to the top of Mount Carmel, and also his servant climbing the mount several times and able to look toward the sea? Would it have been possible to do this after sunset, or in the dark? Since these scriptures give the Biblical support needed to prove this undeniable fact, we use these verses in 1 Kings 18 as conclusive evidence that support the Biblical fact we are here making – that the word “evening^{H6153}” refers to a time *before* sundown!

Notice further in Gen. 24:11:

"And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening^{H6153}, even the time that women go out to draw water" (Gen. 24:11).

Here we are told that the camels knelt by the well of water in the evening^{H6153}. We are also told that women would go out to draw water in the "evening^{H6153}". Clearly, the women did *not* go out to draw water after sunset, or in the dark of night! Historical evidence confirms this! Logic confirms this! It should be obvious to those who really want to prove this subject, that the women in Old Testament times would have gone out to draw water from the wells at 'evening^{H6153}', a time *before* sundown, while there was still light. The word 'evening^{H6153}' in this Genesis 1:5 inarguably refers to the time period *before* sundown, and not after sundown or at night! In Genesis 1:5, when God tells us that the "morning and evening" constitute a "day", He is evidently telling us that it is the "morning" and "afternoon" – the light portion – which is "day"!

Again we state – this is important to understand because those who profess that a day begins at sunset and ends at sunset, use Genesis 1:5 as one of their proofs for their argument. They wrongly argue that since Genesis 1:5 states "evening and morning" is a day, then they conclude that the day must start at sunset (which is their mistaken understanding of the word "evening") and end at sunset. But this is not what the Bible is communicating! God separated the light from darkness, He called light "day". He called darkness "night", and the morning and evening are "day" (Gen. 1:5). We should simply believe God at His Word: if He tells us that "morning and evening" are part of the "day", then evidently "morning and evening" must be part of the 12 hours of light (Gen. 1:1-5)!

Again, some will still continue to argue that since "evening" is mentioned before "morning" a number of times in Genesis 1 (i.e. verses 5, 8, 13, 19, 23), then it must mean that "evening" comes before "morning". But this is clearly not the case. Notice the following verses, among others, which list the word "morning" before the word "evening":

"...the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening" (Ex. 18:13).

“...the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days” (1 Sam. 17:16)

[Editors’ note: Note that morning and evening here are again reckoned with the “day”. The Philistine drew near in the light hours (morning and evening), and not at night].

It should be evident from scripture, that when God refers to a “day”, He is referring to the light hours (morning and evening), and not a twenty-four hour period. As we have discussed and proved, a Biblical day is made up of “morning” which is the time between sunrise and noon, and “evening” which is the time between noon and sundown. (The Biblical “night” refers to the dark hours between sunset and the following sunrise).

Additionally, God’s Word further confirms:

“Jesus answered, Are there *not twelve hours in the day?* If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world” (Jn. 11:9).

In His own words, Christ stated that there are 12 hours in a day. By Christ’s own definition, the day is made up of the light hours! The obvious question then is, when does a day begin on God’s calendar?

Biblical proof: a day begins at sunrise

Something very interesting is revealed and confirmed in Matthew 28. Notice:

“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn^{G2020} toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher” (Matt. 28:1).

Notice carefully that which is being stated. We are told that the two Mary’s came to the sepulcher *at the end of the Sabbath* as it began to dawn^{G2020} towards the first day of the week. This clearly indicates that the end of the Sabbath came just before dawn^{G2020} on the first day of the week. Read the above scripture again! If we allow the Bible to interpret itself, it clearly proves that the end of the Sabbath came just before dawn^{G2020} on the first day of the week! The word “dawn^{G2020}” in Matthew 28:1 continues to confirm this Biblical truism. “Dawn” is translated from the Greek word “epiphosko” and

could be translated as: “begin to grow light, dawn”. Matthew 28:1 could be translated as follows:

“In the end of the sabbath, as it began to grow light^{G2020} toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher” (Matt. 28:1).

Is it not so clear that the end of the Sabbath (or the end of any day) came as it began to grow light the next day? In other words, the Sabbath did not end before sunset, but before the following sunrise! Notice the following translations of this same scripture:

“Now late on the Sabbath...as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...” (American Standard Version)

“Now late on sabbath, as it was the dusk of the next day after Sabbath...” (Derby Translation).

If it was “late on the Sabbath” and beginning “to dawn toward the first day of the week” when the two Mary’s went to the sepulcher, it should be plainly obvious that the Sabbath does not end at sunset! Meditate deeply on this important Truth, and allow the Bible to interpret itself!

Let us discuss another New Testament scripture, which continues to prove this point being made to us by God through His inspired Word. Notice:

“And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things. And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) *he was* of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also

himself waited for the kingdom of God. This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, *and the sabbath drew on*^{G2020} (Lk. 23:44-54).

Notice that verse 54 (above) concludes by stating that the Sabbath “drew on^{G2020}”, or “began to grow light^{G2020}”! What the above passage is telling us is that Joseph of Arimathaea went to Pilate and begged for the body of Christ. This would have no doubt taken time. Once clearance was granted from Pilate for Joseph to take Christ’s body, Joseph had to then arrange for the body to be removed from the stake. He would have also had to clean the body, wrap it in linen, and then transport it to the sepulcher. To do all this would have taken more than just a few hours. We know that Christ died at the ninth hour (Lk. 23:44) which is 3pm. Sunset was around 6pm. If we think about this logically, it should be obvious that it must have taken Joseph much more than a few hours till sunset to fulfill the obligations before burial. No doubt, Joseph worked through the night. At any rate, we are told that this was all finished before the Sabbath “began to grow light^{G2020}” (Lk. 23:54)! The Sabbath did not begin at sunset when it began to grow dark, but it began before sunrise, when it began to grow light.

Notice the following Bible translations for Luke 23:54 which continue to give us further clarity:

“It was the day of Preparation [for the Sabbath], and the Sabbath was dawning...” (Amplified Bible).

“And [the] day was [the] preparation and [the] Sabbath lighted up...” (Greek Interlinear).

Joseph of Arimathea worked until the Sabbath lit up! This is what scripture tells us. Clearly, a day according to God begins at sunrise and not at sunset.

Instructions on offerings – more proof!

God gave some specific instructions regarding daily offerings. If we look closely at these instructions we will note that there is evidence

in these instructions that prove that a day begins at sunrise – and not at sunset! Notice Lev. 7:15:

“And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning^{H1242}”.

We are told that the peace offerings were to be eaten the same day that it was offered; none should be left till the morning^{H1242}. Consider: If the following morning^{H1242} was the same day as when the sacrifices were offered, why could none of the offerings be left till the morning^{H1242}? These statements (such as Lev. 7:15) suggest that the morning^{H1242} marks the beginning of a new day. Interestingly, the word “morning^{H1242}” is translated from the Hebrew word “boqer” (Strong’s 1242) and could be rendered as “morrow”! This demonstrates absolute clarity and continues to solidify the Biblical evidence that a new day begins at sunrise! Taking this definition into account, Lev. 7:15 could be translated as:

“And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morrow (morning)^{H1242}”.

Notice the following, perhaps even clearer scripture:

“And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow *is* a feast to the LORD. And they rose up early [*H7925 = early morning*] on the morrow [*H4283 = next day*], and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play” (Ex. 32:5-6).

Did you notice that Aaron woke up on the morrow^{H4283} [the next day], which was early in the morning! Does this not yet again clearly indicate that the morning is the beginning of a new day? If there are any who are still skeptical of this Biblical Truth, there is even more proof! Notice the following account in the book of Genesis:

“And they made their father drink wine *that night*: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass *on the morrow* [*H4283 = next day*], that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold,

I lay *yesternight* [H570 = *yesterday, last night*] with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father” (Gen. 19:33-34).

These two verses prove that the night before the morning, or “yesternight”, was reckoned with the previous day and was not part of the new day which begun in the morning! How plain and simple are the teachings of God when we allow His Word to interpret itself!

Let us take one final look at Genesis 1:5 and discuss an additional interesting point which supports the Biblical fact that a day begins at sunrise and *not* at sunset or midnight! Notice:

“And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day^{H3117}” (Gen. 1:5).

Morning and evening make up the light part of the day while the night makes up the dark portion of a particular date. The Old Testament word for “day” is translated from the Hebrew word “yom”. Strong’s gives the following definition which confirms what is plainly being communicated in Gen. 1:5 regarding “day”: “From an unused root meaning to be hot; a day (as the warm hours)...from sunrise to sunset...”. The *warm hours* of a day are of course the hours between *sunrise and sunset*! The definition in Strong’s concordance continues: “...a day...from one sunset to the next...”. Many use this part of the definition to conclude that a day begins at sunset and ends the following sunset. They are satisfied to rely on this “man-made” definition rather than allow the Bible to define the meaning of the word “day”! If one honestly wants to understand this subject, the legitimacy and accuracy of the latter part of this definition should be questioned. Because scripture consistently and irrefutably proves that a day begins at sunrise, it should be obvious that the 24-hour day (date) ends immediately prior to the following sunrise. It seems clearly evident that the Old Testament definition in Strong’s for the word “day” was no doubt influenced by *Jewish tradition* rather than by scripture. Strong’s defines a day to be “from one sunset to the next”, while scripture defines a day to start at sunrise and end at sunset. (Note: A calendar “date” lasts for 24 hours and begins at sunrise and ends immediately prior to the following sunrise. For example, the first of the month starts at sunrise and ends immediately prior to the following sunrise). If we take *all* scriptures

into account on this subject we see that a “day” is defined to start at sunrise and end at sunset (the hot part). Furthermore, a biblical 24 hour period starts at sunrise and ends immediately prior to the following sunrise. Interestingly, one should take note of Strong’s definition for the word “day” in the New Testament. “Day” is translated from the Greek word “hemera” (Strong’s number 2250). Strong’s gives the following definition for “hemera”: “...the time space between dawn and dark, or the whole 24 hours...”.

From all the evidence that we have seen, is it not abundantly clear that the Biblical “morning and evening” make up a Biblical “day”? Doesn’t scripture clearly teach that a Biblical “day” refers to the time period between sunrise and sunset (the warm hours of a given date)? God offers even more proof that a day starts at sunrise (rather than at sunset). Get ready for more, deeper understanding on this subject!

Passover – further proof!

The instructions on the Lord’s Passover continue to confirm that a new day begins at sunrise. Notice the following passage from Exodus 12:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 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. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning ^{H1242}; and that which

remaineth of it until the morning ^{H1242} ye shall burn with fire” (Ex. 12:1-10).

The fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover. The Israelites were told to kill the lamb in the “evening” (or in the afternoon, as proved earlier on in this script). They were further instructed to eat the flesh “in that night” – *not* the next day! In other words, the Israelites were to kill the lamb in the afternoon on the fourteenth and eat it in “that night”, which was reckoned with the fourteenth! Furthermore, they were to leave none of the Passover lamb remain “until the morning ^{H1242}”, or until the “morrow ^{H1242}”.

Notice another scripture:

“Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month... And they roasted the passover with fire according to the ordinance: but the other holy offerings sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and in pans, and divided them speedily among all the people. And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: because the priests the sons of Aaron were busied in offering of burnt offerings and the fat until night; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron...So ALL THE SERVICE of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the commandment of king Josiah” (2 Chron. 35:1, 13-14, 16).

In the above verses we are told that “all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day”. In other words they killed, cooked and ate the lamb on the 14th. They killed the lamb at 3pm, they cleaned, prepared and cooked the lamb after that, and they ate it sometime after sundown – in that night. The time after sundown was still the fourteenth. And as we read earlier on in Ex. 12:10, whatever remained of the Passover lamb until the next day in the morning, they were required to burn. Remember – the death angel PASSED OVER in that same night. It PASSED OVER on PASSOVER which was the fourteenth and not the beginning of the next day, or the fifteenth!

Beginning of Feast of Unleavened Bread/Day of Atonement

God *specifically* commands that unleavened bread is to be eaten from sunset the day before the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Likewise, He commands His people to afflict their souls beginning the previous sunset. Let us first of all notice God's instructions on the Passover:

“And on *the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread* unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread” (Lev. 23:6).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the fifteenth of the first month. However, in another section of scripture we are told to begin eating unleavened bread from the sunset of the fourteenth - the previous day!

“In the first month, *on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread*, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even” (Ex. 12:18).

Here we are specifically commanded to begin eating unleavened bread from the *fourteenth* day of the month at even, yet the Feast of unleavened bread is on the fifteenth (Lev. 23:6).

Notice the following instructions on the Day of Atonement:

“Also on *the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement*: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD” (Lev. 23:27).

Here we are specifically told that the Day of Atonement is to be kept on the tenth day of the seventh month, yet in the following scripture we are admonished to afflict our souls from sunset on the *ninth* day of the seventh month:

“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” (Lev. 23:32).

God commands that we keep the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month, yet we are also told to afflict our souls from sunset on the ninth – the previous day.

Many use the above scriptures as proof of a sunset to sunset day, however, the thinking individual will realize that these scriptures in fact prove that the day begins at sunrise! Please understand: In Leviticus 23:6, God plainly states that the first day of the Feast of unleavened bread is on the fifteenth day of the first month. In Lev. 23:7, He clearly states that the Day of Atonement is on the tenth day of the seventh month. The fact that He tells us to begin eating unleavened bread from the sunset before the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and to fast from the sunset of the day before for the Day of Atonement indicates that the day begins at sunrise otherwise there would be no need for him to tell us to begin them the day before! If the day began at sunset, the command would have simply been to keep the Day of Atonement on the 10th. There would have been no need to emphasize it beginning on the eve...*on the 9th!*

It is interesting to note that God does not tell us to begin the Feast of Pentecost from the sunset on the day prior to the Feast, He does not tell us to begin the Feast of Trumpets, Tabernacles or the Last Great Day from the sunset on the day prior to the Feast! It is clear that, from all His Feasts, God *only* commands that we eat unleavened bread from the sunset prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and that we afflict our souls from the sunset prior to the Day of Atonement. We are not told to begin any of the other Feasts from the previous sunset. Interestingly, Unleavened Bread and Atonement are the *only* two Feasts which have a specific connection with food! Evidently, God wants us to eat unleavened bread 12 hours before the Feast begins. This consolidates the fact that we must begin doing our part in God's plan by eating unleavened bread – spiritually signifying putting on Christ as we remove sin – immediately after our Savior sacrificed Himself through death. The Feast of Unleavened Bread then begins the next day, on the 15th (Lev. 23:6). Similarly for the Day of Atonement, God wants us to afflict our soul beginning on the eve of the Feast, so that we can get our bodies ready for the Day of Atonement, going into the Feast day with our soul already afflicted. He commands us to begin the fast from sunset on the 9th, to obviously render the Day of Atonement physically and spiritually effective.

Historical evidence

Here is some historical evidence that supports the Biblical Truism that a day begins at sunrise:

“Meaning of "day": In the Bible, the season of light (Gen. 1:5), lasting from dawn (literally “the rising of the morning”) to the coming forth of the stars” (Jewish Encyclopedia, page 475)

“In order to assure against profanation of the Sabbath the Jews added the late Friday afternoon hours to the Sabbath” (The Jewish Festivals: History & Observance, p.13).

[Note: The Jews changed the configuration of a day and added the time between sunset and sunrise to the day. This is not Biblical but constitutes a pharisaical approach!]

"If we look at the essentials of a day of rest and reflection which has a religious orientation, it is possible to justify the shifting of Sabbath worship to Friday evening, the celebration of the vigil/night watch was moved back to the eve of the Feast as early as the middle ages..." (Judaism: Between Yesterday and Tomorrow, p. 518).

"...a sacred day of rest on the 7th day (the Sabbath). Days were reckoned from morning to morning..." (New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 11, pg. 1068).

"Following the reign of King Josiah (c. 640-609), and especially after the Babylonian exile, a number of significant and enduring changes occurred in the Israelite calendar showing that the Jews gradually adopted the Babylonian calendar of the time...The day however, was counted from evening to evening, after the Babylonian fashion..." (New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 11, section titled “Later Jewish Calendar”).

“...shortly after the beginning of the Greek period, [236 BC] came the change in the method of reckoning the day, from evening to evening instead of from morning to morning as of old...” (The Calendars of Ancient Israel, p. 146).

Logic

God is a logical God. Let *us* also use logic to understand that what is being stated is in fact correct and Biblically accurate. Does it make logical sense for a day to begin at sunset, at a time when man has finished from his daily labor? Does it make logical sense that a new day is to begin at a time when man is exhausted from his daily work? Does it make sense for a day to begin at night after the day has died out? The night time is a time for sleep: does it make sense for a fresh, new day to begin when mankind, and creation as a whole, goes to sleep? Absolutely not!

On the other hand, does it not make much more sense that a day begins at sunrise, a time of daily new beginnings? Does it not make more sense for a day to begin at sunrise when most life forms on this earth awake for a fresh start to a bright, new day? Absolutely!

What Biblical proof is there for a midnight-to-midnight day, or a sunset-to-sunset day? There is none! Clear Biblical proof demonstrates that a day begins at sunrise. Please study this script with an open mind, clear of all preconceived ideas, proving all things with your Bible (1 Thess. 5:21). As you do this, you will see how clear and easy it is to understand this most important Truth, which is detailed within the text of the Word of God! If you have any questions on this subject, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help!

Chapter 2

The New Testament Passover

Before we discuss that which is recorded in the New Testament regarding the observance of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we need to review a few verses in the Old Testament. Notice the following scriptures:

“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*” (Ex. 12:14).

“And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: *therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever*” (Ex. 12:17).

“And *ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance* to thee and to thy sons *for ever*” (Ex. 12:24).

Clearly, the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread must be observed *when* and *as* they were originally instituted; they are also to be kept forever – throughout our generations. We are not given any authority to change the time in which we observe the Passover. We will see that the New Testament gospel accounts of the Passover observance *completely tallies* with the Old Testament observance as discussed in chapter one of this booklet.

One more important scripture which we must reference before delving into the New Testament scriptures on this subject is Matt. 23:1-3:

“Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: **All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do!**”

As these verses confirm, if we search the scriptures to see how the Scribes and Pharisees kept the Passover we should be able to come to the correct conclusion as to the Biblical observance of Passover. The Scribes and Pharisees evidently sacrificed and then ate the Passover on the correct day and at the correct time, otherwise Christ's words in Matt. 23:1-3 would not be true! The Jews were given the oracles of God for a reason (Rom. 3:2) – so that they could be preserved for God's people. Christ never reprimanded or corrected the Pharisees for not observing the Passover at the correct time. In fact, Christ Himself observed the Passover as did the Jews of His time (Lk. 2:41-42).

New Testament accounts

We will now take a look at the New Testament accounts of the Passover. As we shall see, some texts are not as clear as others, but when all the scriptures on the subject are studied, the picture becomes very clear.

Notice Matthew 26:

“Now **the first day of the feast of unleavened bread** the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee **to eat** the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them;

and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me” (verses 17-20).

Verse 17 (above) is not the clearest scripture on the subject because we know that Christ was killed *before* the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, so it could not have been the first day of Unleavened Bread when Christ and the disciples spoke the words outlined in these verses. Christ would have been in the grave on the first day of Unleavened Bread! Perhaps verse 17 would be better rendered: “Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread [*was approaching and*] the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?”

Here is the parallel verse in Mark’s account:

“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?” (Mk. 14:12).

Now notice the parallel account in Luke:

“Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 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? And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover. And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Lk. 22:7-16).

The scriptures in the accounts of Matthew, Mark and Luke indicate that the disciples asked Christ **where** He wanted them to prepare to eat the Passover meal, but that Passover meal was to actually take place the next night. We will discuss this further along in this text. However, it is evident that the above two scriptures are still not clear enough for us to come to a firm conclusion on the subject of *when* the Passover was killed or eaten. We must continue to look for a clearer account to ensure that we understand what God is communicating to us about this most important subject.

When the disciples questioned Christ about where they were going to eat the Passover meal, they did not yet fully understand that He would be dead by then! Christ would not be able to eat the Passover at the correct time with them because He was destined to be sacrificed as our true Passover. Only He knew that at the time, and He did not yet share this knowledge with His disciples! Instead of explaining the upcoming events, He simply told them *where* to prepare to eat the Passover meal. After Peter and John delevaned the room and made ready for the upcoming Passover, Christ used their final meal together to instruct His disciples one last time before his death, *and at this time He changed the symbols of Passover to bread and wine and introduced the foot washing*. This was Christ’s Last Supper and not the Passover meal. [We will see further proof of this as we proceed]. Christ used this time as an opportunity to instruct His disciples. The actual Passover meal was to take place *after*

sundown of the 14th. We will look at some other scriptures which will completely clarify this and eliminate any doubt!

Notice Luke 22:15:

“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer”.

The New Bible Dictionary (pg. 707), states that "...Lk. 22:15 may be read as an unfulfilled wish". Christ desired to eat the Passover with his disciples, but it remained an unfulfilled desire because He was to be sacrificed as our Passover Lamb before the Passover meal was to be eaten. The meal Christ ate with His disciples was the Last Supper and not the Passover! The point that needs to be understood is that Christ *IS* our Passover Lamb. He is the Passover Lamb and He was killed at the correct time on the 14th of Nisan. As the New Testament Passover Lamb, He was killed at the same time as the Old Testament Passover Lamb was killed! God does things right on time, and the time of Christ's sacrifice completely correlates and corresponds with the original Passover sacrifice which is so discussed in such detail in the Old Testament (and discussed in chapter one of this booklet). We must commemorate the Passover at the time Christ died and not the night before. We must eat the Passover Lamb when and as commanded in the Bible!

Christ is our Passover and He was killed at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan as we discussed in chapter 1. Would it not be strange and unbiblical to commemorate the Passover on the night before Christ died when in fact the Passover commemorates His death? God does things right on time and so should we! There is no instruction in the Bible that tells us to change the day or time in which we are to observe the Passover. Understand: Christ did not change the date or time of the Passover. If He did, it would be clearly written in the New Testament – in as detailed a manner as it is recorded in Exodus

12 and Leviticus 23! Christ was killed at 3pm on the 14th of the first month as we have clearly seen.

Christ and his disciples could not have eaten the Passover lamb with their meal on the night of the last supper because the scriptures clearly state that *Christ was our Passover* (1 Cor. 5:7). The death of Christ took place at the ninth hour (or at 3:00 p.m.) on the 14th of this first month (Nisan). This is clearly the precise fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures on the Passover sacrifice.

We still have not referred to John's account of Christ's last supper and Passover which is by far the clearest of all gospel accounts. John clarifies any doubts, and confirms that Christ did *not* eat the Passover supper with His disciples, but instead partook of His last supper during which **He changed the Passover symbols**. Notice:

“Now **before the feast of the passover**, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper [*Editor's note: **BEFORE** the Feast of the Passover as outlined in verses 1 & 2*], and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded” (John 13:1-5).

Here we see that Christ's last supper took place **BEFORE** the Feast of the Passover! John's account is the clearest of all

accounts and totally tallies with the Old Testament account! Further on in the account, John writes:

“When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me... Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against *[for]the feast; [Editor’s note: This is talking about the Feast in the future tense]*, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night” (John 13:21, 26-30).

“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: *and it was early; [Editors’ note: this happened early the next morning]* and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but ***that they might eat the passover***” *[future tense]*, (John 18:28).

Evidently, when they led Jesus to Caiaphas, **eating the Passover was still a *future* event!** The disciples still had to eat the Passover (*future tense*). Notice:

“And it was **the preparation of the passover**, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!...The Jews therefore, **because it was the preparation**, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath

day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away...There laid they Jesus therefore **because of the Jews' preparation day**; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:14, 31, 42).

John *clearly* points out that Christ's last supper and His trial took place *BEFORE* the Passover.

Now let us examine a few more verses in the gospel account according to John, that continue to demonstrate that the Passover was a future event! The Passover was yet to take place, *after* Christ's last supper! Notice:

“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; **but that they might eat the Passover**” (John 18:28).

The Jews led Christ *before they ate the Passover* giving further conclusive and irrefutable evidence that the Passover was still to be eaten. Christ did not eat of the Passover at His last supper!

“But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one *at the Passover*: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” (John 18:39).

The Jews' custom was such that Pilate would release a prisoner at Passover. Instead of requesting Christ to be released, the crowd requested the release of Barabbas (vs. 40). Is it not clear that the Passover was not eaten the night before? Notice further:

“And it was the *preparation of the passover*, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!” (John 19:14).

Scripture states that “it was the *preparation of the Passover*”! Understand: *After* Christ ate His last supper with the disciples, He was later presented to be beaten and killed as the ultimate Passover sacrifice. Christ the Passover was a perfect fulfillment of the Passover sacrifice which took place on the same date and at the same time as the Old Testament sacrifice:

“Now **from the sixth hour** there was darkness over all the land **unto the ninth hour**. **And about the ninth hour** (*or 3pm*) Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost” (Matt. 27:45-50).

Here we have clearly described the New Testament fulfillment of the Passover – Jesus Christ humiliated, beaten and killed for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus Christ’s death brought us out of spiritual Egypt. His death - a solemn occasion – took place at 3pm, on the 14th day of the first month! This is an accurate fulfillment of the Passover as outlined in the Old *and* New Testaments.

The Night To Be Much Observed

We have thus far learnt that Jesus Christ ate His last supper with His disciples on the night of the 13th of the first month and

that Christ was killed on Passover day, at 3pm on the 14th of the first month. This was the same time that the Passover Lambs were killed.

In the Old Testament, after the lambs were killed, the Jews were commanded to eat them. This all took place on the same day, the 14th. Remember, the Passover lambs were killed at 3pm. It would have taken them a few hours to clean and prepare the lamb and then another few hours to cook a whole lamb. The lamb would have been ready to eat in the dark hours of the day, *after sunset*. So, that night, *on the 14th after sundown, is an evening when we are to commemorate the fact that Christ (the sacrificial Passover Lamb) died for the forgiveness of our sins, which made possible our being brought out of spiritual Egypt (sin)*. It is for this reason that we are to eat unleavened Bread from the end of the fourteenth day (Ex. 12:18), the day before the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins (Lev. 23:6-8). We restate: we are to begin eating unleavened bread on the 14th (Ex. 12:18) after 3pm, after the sacrificial lamb was killed. This should be obvious, because once Christ died for the forgiveness of our sins, we are to come out of sin symbolized by eating unleavened bread. The next day is the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread when we are to eat unleavened bread for seven days (Lev. 23:6-8)

Without Christ's sacrifice we would be dead to sin and the gospel could not be realized in our lives: This is a Night To Be *Much Observed* (Ex. 12:42). It is a night *to be observed* (or to be kept), and a night *to observe* (or to watch)! This is a *special* night! It is a night we are to remember to keep, but importantly, it is also a night in which God's people are to keep special vigil. Notice the word "observe" in verse 42 is a translation from the Hebrew word "shimmur" which indicates that this is a night to be observed (Strong's 8102) and a night of observance (Strong's 8104).

(For more information on this subject, please read chapter 6 of our booklet entitled "The Day of the Lord cometh...").

Recapitulation

- The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread are to be kept as an ordinance forever (Ex. 12:14, 17, 24). The New Testament Church has no authority to change the date or time of the Passover Service from its original Old Testament observance.
- The oracles of God were given to the Jews to preserve. The Feast days form part of those oracles (Matt. 23:1-3).
- Christ did not partake of the Passover in the year of His death. He ate His last supper during which He changed the Passover symbols (John 13:1-5).
- Christ is our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7). He was a perfect fulfillment of the Passover sacrifice, which took place at the same time as the Old Testament sacrifice took place!
- The Jews sacrificed the Passover lamb the same afternoon in which Christ was killed, on the 14th of the first month at even (John 18:28).
- The Night to be Much Observed commemorates the fact that Christ died for the forgiveness of our sins which made possible our being brought out of spiritual Egypt (sin). On this night we are to eat the Passover and keep special vigil (Ex. 12:42-43).
- The Night to be Much Observed is kept on the night of the 14th, before the 15th which begins at sunrise on the 15th (Ex. 12:8; Ex. 12:42).

Chapter 3

Observing the Passover today

Throughout the pages of the first two chapters of this booklet we proved from scripture that the Passover was sacrificed at 3pm of the 14th of the first month and *not* at the beginning of the 14th. We further discussed and proved that the Passover lamb was eaten that same day after sundown, on the 14th of the first month. The Passover lamb was killed, cooked and eaten on the 14th (Lev. 23:5).

Notice the following scriptures:

“In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S Passover” (Lev. 23:5).

“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 [sacrifice] it in the evening [even/between the evenings]. And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it* on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. **And they shall eat the flesh in that night**, [same day, after sunset], roast with fire, and unleavened bread; *and* with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof” (Ex. 12:6-9).

These scriptures are saying that the Israelites were to kill the Passover lamb at 3pm on the 14th and then eat it **in the night** (in the night of the 14th) after they cleaned it and roasted it with fire.

“And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning [*i.e. nothing was to be left to the next morning, or the next day, the 15th*]; **and that which remaineth of it until the morning [Strongs 1242 = *the morrow*] ye shall burn with fire.** And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: **it is the LORD'S passover.** For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt. And **this day shall be unto you for a memorial;** And **this day (the 14th) 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” (Ex. 12:10-14).

Read the above verses again, *very carefully*. Remember that Lev. 23:5 states that the Passover is the 14th of the first month. In Ex. 12:11-12 (above) we are told that the Israelites were to eat the Passover the same night that the death angel PASSEd-OVER to smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. We are told that this is a memorial to be kept forever. It is the Night to be Much Observed! We are told that this special night is to be observed on the night of the 14th, the Lord's Passover. Evidently, the Passover lamb was killed in the afternoon of the 14th, and eaten later on that night of the same day (the 14th). The Israelites were to eat the Passover lamb before the death angel passed over that same night at midnight (Ex. 12:29). All this took place on the Lord's Passover, the 14th of the first month!

Notice what is stated in the New Testament:

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. **For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us**” (1 Cor. 5:7)

Here is a clear scripture which states that Christ is our Passover. Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Passover prophecy. And with Christ’s sacrifice came the abolishment of the physical sacrifices which were performed in the times of the Old Testament. Notice:

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14)

The New Testament Church is no longer required to keep any *physical* sacrifices. These physical sacrifices and ceremonial ordinances were nailed to the cross. However, we know that those physical sacrifices have been replaced by *spiritual* sacrifices (1 Pet. 2:5; Rev. 5:8 etc. Please also download or request our booklet entitled “Daily Sacrifices” for scriptural proof on this subject).

Spiritual sacrifice on the 14th Nisan at even

When we study all the scriptures on the Passover sacrifice and the offering of spiritual sacrifices in the New Testament age, it is clear that God is showing us that a **spiritual** sacrifice of prayer must be offered at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan at the time of Christ’s death in place of sacrificing a lamb. (Please download or request our booklet entitled “Daily Sacrifices” for scriptural proof on this subject). Christ fulfilled the Passover sacrifice and abolished all ceremonial ordinances when He was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14). We are to now offer a *spiritual* sacrifice in place of the physical sacrifice which takes place at the time the Passover Lamb was killed. (Please contact us for a more detailed explanation on this).

Partaking of Passover symbols & NTBMO

It is clear that in Old Testament times, the Passover lamb was not eaten at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan. The lamb was *sacrificed* at 3pm but *eaten* after sundown that same day (still the 14th of Nisan). Since Christ abolished the ceremonial ordinances, we are no longer required to sacrifice the Passover lamb. Christ was our Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), and He changed the Passover symbols:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body” (1 Cor. 11:23-29).

When the Passover lamb was killed anciently at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan, it was not eaten at that same time. The lamb was not eaten the moment it was killed, but was eaten in the night during the Night To Be Much Observed after sundown (Ex. 12:42-43).

Two important questions

- During Christ's Last Supper, did He mention *anything* about changing the time of when we are to *eat* the Passover?
- Is there any instruction given in any part of the New Testament that indicates we are to change the time of *eating* the Passover?

Not one scripture is to be found anywhere in the Bible indicating that we are to eat the Passover at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan! Not one scripture in the New Testament indicates that Christ changed the time that we are to eat the Passover meal. Christ simply changed the Passover symbols to bread and wine (1 Cor. 11:23-29), but He did not change the time of the meal!

Let us repeat this for clarity: We are no longer required to sacrifice a lamb, but Christ did indicate that we are to change the Passover symbols. Christ said that instead of eating of the Passover lamb we are to eat bread symbolic of His Body (Matt. 26:26; Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24), and drink wine symbolic of His spilled blood (Matt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24; Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). However there is not one scripture that tells us to change the time that we are to eat the Passover meal! Evidently we are to eat the bread and drink the wine, which represent the body and blood of Christ (our True Passover lamb), at the same time that the Passover lamb used to be eaten **on the Night To Be Much Observed** (which is after sunset on the 14th of the first month).

Let us understand further:

“Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it* according to the number of the souls; every man according to his

eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it* out from the sheep, or from the goats: 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 (sacrifice it) between the evenings. And they shall eat the flesh **in that night**, [*which is after sunset on the 14th day of the first month – this is the Night to be Much Observed*] roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: **it is the Lord's Passover**” (Ex. 12:3-6, 8, 10-11).

Notice what is stated at the end of Ex. 12:11! It clearly states that the Lord's Passover is eaten “in that night” to be much observed! The Lord's Passover was killed at 3pm (14th) but that same Lord's Passover was eaten “in that night” – during the Night To Be Much Observed on the 14th of the first month! The Lord's Passover takes place on the 14th of the first month, which means that the Lamb was killed, and eaten on the same day.

“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” (Ex. 12:14).

The Lord's Passover which was eaten at the end of the 14th, after sundown, is to be kept as a memorial for ever!

“And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD

will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, **when your children shall say unto you**, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the LORD'S passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they” (Ex. 12:24-28).

Evidently, the Passover meal is a family affair where the children ask questions and the parents and adults use this as an opportunity to teach the children on the meaning, history and prophecy of the Passover! The Night To Be Much Observed is a night of remembrance and a night of vigil. It is an opportunity to teach and engage in deep family fellowship on the meaning of the Passover and the coming out of sin! We must also ensure that the Passover is to be eaten in a worthy manner! In other words, this is not an occasion to drink in excess or to eat to satisfy fleshly desires. The Night To Be Much Observed is not an occasion for revelry; it is a ‘spiritual’ occasion where God’s people are to have a meal and partake of the symbols of bread and wine which have deep and significant spiritual meaning.

“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 of **all the children of Israel** in their generations. And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, **This is the ordinance of the passover**: There shall no stranger eat thereof” (Ex. 12:42-43).

Read that again! GOD SAID TO MOSES AND AARON: **“IT IS A NIGHT TO BE MUCH OBSERVED...THIS IS THE ORDINANCE OF THE PASSOVER”!** This is when we

are to eat the Passover meal – this is very clear reference in scripture that we are to eat the Passover meal (with the newly ordained symbols of bread and wine) during the Night To Be Much Observed as it says in verses 42 and 43. The Night to be Much Observed is the ordinance of Passover! This is what God tells us in His Word!

Where to partake of the Passover meal...

“A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. In one house [*not in a restaurant*] but in the house shall it be eaten; **thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house**; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it” (Ex. 12:45-47).

It has been customary for some to celebrate the Night to be Much Observed in restaurants but scripture is very clear that we are to observe this in the home.

Footwashing

“And supper being ended...He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded...So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” (Jn. 13:2, 4-5, 12-15).

As a lesson in humility, Christ instituted the footwashing service at the end of His last supper with His disciples.

Therefore, at the end of the Passover meal (Ex. 12:42-43), it is appropriate to follow Christ's example as He directed. This example is to be followed as outlined in John 13:14-17. (Please contact us with any questions or for more information on how to observe the Passover meal and the Night To Be Much Observed).

Oracles of God

Romans 3:1-2:

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them (the Jews) were committed the oracles of God”.

God gave the oracles, the Old Testament and the Feasts to the Jews to preserve **for us!** Christ set us an example where He observed the Jewish custom of Passover. This confirms that the Jews were then observing the correct day and time for partaking of the Passover meal (Lk. 2:41-42). Christ came to magnify and promote the law. All He changed were the Passover symbols (Is. 42:21; Mt. 5:17-19). Christ did not change the timings of the seasons. There is no biblical record of any change to the time we are to eat the Passover! All we have to do is change the symbols: Replace the physical sacrifice with a spiritual sacrifice and partake of the new Passover symbols of bread and wine at the time of the Passover meal which is during the Night To Be Much Observed after sundown on the 14th of the first month (Ex. 12:42-43).

Recapitulation

- The Passover Lamb was sacrificed at 3pm on the 14th of Nisan (Matt. 27:46). Since we are no longer required to perform physical sacrifices (Col. 2:14), we must offer a spiritual sacrifice at this time (1 Pet. 2:5 etc).
- The Passover Lamb was eaten in the night, after sundown on the 14th of Nisan during the Night To Be Much Observed (Ex. 12:11; Ex. 12:42-43).

- Christ is our Passover Sacrifice (1 Cor. 5:7). The symbols of bread and wine represent Christ's Body and spilled Blood (1 Cor. 11:23-29). We are to partake of these symbols at the same time that the Israelites partook of the Passover lamb anciently. This means we are to partake of the Passover symbols during the Passover meal which is eaten after sundown on the 14th of Nisan during the Night To Be Much Observed.
- The footwashing is a service that takes place at the end of the Passover meal as instituted by Christ Himself (Jn. 13:4-5, 15-16).

Chapter 4

Christ's spilled blood forgives all sin

Now that we have discussed the Passover sacrifice as it was observed in the Old Testament and as we are to observe it in this New Testament era as outlined in the Word of God, we must take the time to understand and discern the all important meaning of the Passover sacrifice: “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, *not discerning* the Lord's body” (1 Cor. 11:29).

What is sin?

Let us begin by asking an all-important question: What is sin? 1 John 3:4 clearly defines sin as follows: “...sin is the transgression of the law”. Until recently, many of God's people have differentiated between physical and spiritual sins:

- 1) We believed that breaking ‘*physical laws*’ constitutes the committal of ‘physical sins’, and that Christ's beating and scourging prior to His death was the penalty that paid for the forgiveness of these ‘physical sins’.
- 2) We also believed that the breaking of ‘*spiritual laws*’ constitutes the committal of ‘spiritual sins’, forgiveness of which was made possible through the spilled blood of Christ.

Are there any scriptures in the Bible which support a differentiation on physical and spiritual sin? No there are not! The Bible does not differentiate between physical and spiritual sins. Whether one breaks a physical or a spiritual law, he or she commits sin. The breaking of any law results in sin.

Consider this: Our physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). If, for example, we eat poorly or treat our bodies harmfully we break physical laws put in motion by the Great God. By breaking these physical laws, are we not damaging the temple wherein dwells the Holy Spirit? When we break ‘physical laws’ such as these, are we not ultimately sinning against God? Whether we transgress ‘physical’ or ‘spiritual’ laws, is not the result the same – that of broken law which constitutes sin?

Is not ALL sin spiritual?

Scripture does not differentiate between physical or spiritual sin. The Bible clearly tells us that ALL sin, committed as a result of breaking either physical or spiritual laws, is forgiven by the shed blood of Christ. Please read and understand the following scriptures carefully:

1) “...THE BLOOD of Jesus Christ His Son
CLEANSES US FROM ALL SIN” (1 John
1:7).

2) “In whom WE HAVE REDEMPTION
THROUGH HIS BLOOD” (Eph. 1:7).

3) “Unto Him that loved us, and WASHED US
FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD”
(Rev. 1:5).

4) “CHRIST DIED FOR US...BEING NOW
JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, we shall be
saved...” (Rom 5:8-9).

Scripture is so clear! It plainly states that Christ’s spilled blood washes away *all* our sins! Forgiveness of sin is made possible through Christ’s spilled blood. Furthermore, scripture also tells us that “the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23). Notice carefully: this scripture states that *death (or spilled blood)* is the penalty of sin. It does not say that beating or scourging is

the penalty of any sin – not even for so-called ‘physical’ sin! Not one single scripture can be found in the Bible that supports the theory that ‘physical sin was forgiven by the *beating* of Christ’. (We will shortly discuss Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Pet. 2:24). Christ *had to die and spill His blood* for the forgiveness of ALL our sins. Irrespective of whether we term certain sins ‘physical’ or ‘spiritual’, Christ’s *blood* had to be, and was, spilled for the forgiveness of ALL sin – whether physical or spiritual laws were broken! We must understand this simple Bible truism.

With His stripes we are healed

Three scriptures in the Bible must be closely studied if we are to completely understand the Passover Sacrifice. Let us take a look at these scriptures paying particular attention to the definitions in Strong’s Concordance for some of the words used:

Isa 53:4 Surely He hath borne^{H5375} [*carried, received, taken up, worn*] our griefs,^{H2483} [*diseases and sicknesses*] and carried our sorrows:^{H4341} [*pain, grief, sorrow, affliction*] yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions,^{H4480 H6588} [*wounded for our sins*] he was bruised for our iniquities:^{H4480 H5771} [*bruised for our evil, sin*] the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and *with His stripes we are healed*.

1Pe 2:24 Who His own self bare^{G399} [*carried*] our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: *by whose stripes ye were healed*.

As Christ was beaten, scourged and bruised He took upon Himself our diseases, sicknesses and sins (Is. 53:4-5). We are also told that He carried all these to the stake (1 Pet. 2:24). Interestingly, both of these scriptures tell us that it is with His stripes that we are healed. What exactly does this mean? We must understand!

Healing is the forgiveness of sin

Notice: *The Bible tells us that healing is the forgiveness of sin* (Matt. 9:2-5). Scripture also tells us that ALL sin is forgiven through Christ's spilled blood: **"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from ALL sin"** (1 John 1:7). Please also see Eph. 1:7 and Rev 1:5. Therefore when we place all the scriptures together, it becomes clear that the phrase "by His stripes we are healed" means that Christ *had to* endure being beaten, scourged and bruised to take on the weight of man's sin and diseases *before* He could pay the penalty in our stead. Isaiah 53:4-5 confirms that the forgiveness of our sins could not have taken place any other way. The spilling of Christ's blood *had to be preceded* by His beating to make the sacrifice and forgiveness of our sins possible.

Consider this scenario: A friend of yours is sentenced to prison for breaking the law. If you wanted to pay the penalty in his or her stead, you would first have to accept the weight of that penalty and *then* pay the penalty by going to prison. If, for whatever reason and at whatever stage, you decide to 'pull out' and not go through with paying the full penalty, that same penalty would still have to be paid by your friend. Your friend would not be 'off the hook' until the full penalty was paid!

Remember, healing is the forgiveness of sin. The beating, scourging and bruising represented Christ taking upon Himself the weight of the penalty for ALL sin (Is. 53:4-5). Once He took that weight and carried it to the cross, He could then (and only then) pay the penalty in our stead. Christ's spilled blood (death) ultimately paid the penalty for the World's sins (Rom 6:23; 1 John 1:7).

Christ went through tremendous beating and scourging. He endured the pain of being whipped with leather whips. These whips had metal spikes at the end of them which ripped into and tore open Christ's flesh and disfigured Him to the point where He was no longer recognizable (Is. 52:14). By placing all the scriptures together (Is. 53:5; 1 Jn. 1:17; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Rom. 5:8-9; Rom. 6:23; 1 Pet. 2:24), it is clear that the stripes of Christ was the *first (and most necessary) step* to make possible the forgiveness of our sins and healing. He was brutally *wounded* as a result of our sins, but those *sins were not forgiven by the beating of Christ* – they were forgiven by His spilled blood (1 Jn. 1:17; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Rom. 5:8-9; Rom. 6:23). *Without the stripes of Christ* – as the first step towards the complete sacrifice – *our sins could not be forgiven and we could not be healed!* This is what we must understand: All of our sins were 'borne' (Strong's 5375: accept, carry, taken, worn, etc) upon Christ's body through every stripe of the whip which He received (Is. 53:4-5). The transgressions of God's law (physical and spiritual) were placed upon Him at the time of His beating and scourging. This is when He bore our sicknesses and diseases (Is. 53:4) and every other sin (verse 5) on Himself! This was a tremendous burden our Savior carried because of God's tremendous love for us. Completely understand: When Christ was beaten, *no sin was forgiven!* The beating that He suffered signified the heaping of our sins upon His body! He had to go through this for our sins to be forgiven. He then carried the weight of those sins to the stake. He bore the sins on the stake (1 Peter 2:24). It was then *by His spilled blood that our sins were washed away* (1 John 1:7; Eph 1:7; Rev 1:5; Rom 5:8-9; Rom 6:23 etc). On the stake, Christ finally took His last breath as "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). The story continues in Matthew 27:50-51:

“Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top

to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent”.

The moment the soldiers spear ripped through Christ’s side, His blood was spilled and He died. At that same time, the veil of the temple was ripped in two (Matt. 27:51). Hebrews 10:19-20 clearly confirm that (a) our sins are washed away through Christ’s spilled blood, (b) His death gave us access to God through Christ’s torn body representing the torn veil of the temple, and (c) Christ’s sacrifice made possible the forgiveness of our sins, which includes the healing of all our sicknesses and diseases.

God our Healer

The phrase “with His stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24) should confirm in the reader’s mind that God, and only God, IS our Healer! Only He can perform the miraculous healings we read about in the Bible – doctors and drugs cannot do this. Notice the word “healed” in Isaiah 53:5 is translated from the Hebrew word “rapha”. Strong’s definition is as follows: “to mend (by stitching)...to cure...cause to heal...physician, repair...make whole”. The word “healed” in 1 Pet. 2:24 is translated from the Greek word “iaomai” and could be translated as “to cure, heal, make whole”. Only God can heal! He is our Healer (Yahweh Rapha) as is clearly defined in Ex. 15:26, where it states: “... for I am the Lord that healeth thee”. This is directly tied in with the Passover sacrifice, and the Passover Service which we observe in this New Testament era. God’s people must have faith in the meaning of the Passover sacrifice and in the symbols which baptized members partake of at the Passover Service on the 14th day of the first month. Healing is the forgiveness of sin brought about by broken physical laws (Matt. 9:1-5). We have already seen in this text that the sins resulting from broken spiritual laws were heaped upon Christ’s body during His beating. The phrase “With His stripes we are healed” (Is. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24) clearly indicates that with the beating which preceded His death, Christ also

took upon Himself all the sins that led to our illnesses and diseases. All these sins were forgiven by His spilled blood.

Understand: the unmerciful scourging of Jesus' body before His Crucifixion was prophesied in Isaiah 53: 4-5. During that terrible scourging, Christ took upon Himself the penalty which was due us for the transgression of physical laws which produces sicknesses and diseases. Physical illness in any form, whether incurred wittingly or unwittingly, is a result of broken PHYSICAL LAWS that govern human health. Sin is the transgressing of law (I John 3: 4). When we repent and accept Christ's sacrifice in faith, we are then forgiven and can claim God's promise of healing (I Peter 2: 24; Isaiah 53: 4-5; Psalm 103:3 and 18). "The prayer of faith shall save the sick..." (Jam. 5:14-15).

Recapitulation

- Whether we break physical or spiritual laws, all sin is spiritual (1 Cor. 6:19).
- The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
- The spilled blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn. 1:7, Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Rom. 5:8-9).
- There are 'two parts' to Christ's 'one' sacrifice: the beating and His death.
- "With His stripes we are healed" demonstrates that Christ had to first and foremost be brutally whipped before our sins could be forgiven. He was wounded for our transgressions. His stripes were necessary for our healing to be made possible, and His death (spilled blood) confirms it.
- Christ's death gave us access to God, through the torn veil of the temple (Heb 10:19-20).
- Christ's sacrifice provided access to God so that He can forgive our sins and heal us from all our diseases.
- Healing is the forgiveness of sin (Matt. 9:1-5). Only God can forgive sin which means that God alone is our Healer (Ex. 15:26)!

We are here to help! Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions. Our address is: Faithful Church of God in Laodicea, P.O. Box 311021, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20731, USA. Email: info@fcogl.org. Our web address is: www.fcogl.org