

# **Passover And The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

**or**

**All of Passover is on Abib 14 and None on Abib 15!**

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# Passover And The Feast of Unleavened Bread

## 1.0 Introduction

Mainstream Christendom quite early began rejecting God's commanded and sanctified 7<sup>th</sup>-day weekly Sabbath, the Passover day, the seven holy days and three festivals of Leviticus chapter 23. These were replaced by Sunday, Good Friday, Easter and Christmas which have pagan origins and are devoid of biblical meaning. God's appointed days present annually an overview of God's Plan for man's salvation. This paper seeks to explain the deeper meanings of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread and to correct some false practices that have arisen. Apparently only Judaism and the churches of God which derive from the former Worldwide Church of God founded in 1934 by the late Mr Herbert W. Armstrong, observe the days listed in Leviticus chapter 23 albeit not without some errors.

Mr Armstrong correctly observed the N.T. Passover symbols on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month on the Hebrew calendar (Abib 14) and immediately following this the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread from Abib 15 to 21. This has led to many church of God members, after partaking of the Passover unleavened bread symbol early on the Passover day, to assume they must eat unleavened bread for the remainder of the Passover day. These treat the Abib-14 Passover day too as an unleavened bread day, and as a result they observe an 8-day period of unleavened bread (Abib 14-21) instead of God's commanded 7-day period (Abib 15 – 21).

Some avoid an 8-day period of unleavened bread by copying Judaism and moving the observance of the Passover symbols 24 hours forward from Abib 14 to Abib 15. Others avoid an 8-day period of unleavened bread by moving the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread 24 hours back from Abib 15-21 to Abib 14-20. Both methods merge the Passover day with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread to limit the total period of unleavened bread to 7 days but both violate God's commanded dates for either the Passover day or the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. As a result at least three practices have found their way into the churches of God and this paper shows all three are wrong.

A key point missed is that the Passover's symbol of unleavened bread is quite different from the Feast of Unleavened Bread's symbol of unleavened bread. Therefore there is no link or continuity between these two unleavened bread symbols. The Abib-14 Passover day is a leavened bread day; and so there are only 7 and not 8 days of unleavened bread.

Others moved the partaking of the Passover symbols from Abib 14 to Abib 15 because they believe the Passover lambs in Egypt were killed around 3 pm; the hour at which our Lord Jesus died. Since this hour is towards the end of the Abib-14 Passover day, they believe the Passover symbols are to be partaken soon after the sunset that begins Abib 15. This paper examines in depth the time the Passover lambs were killed under Moses in Egypt. The key being the Exodus 12:6 (KJV) phrase *in the evening*. Some Bible translations give the better rendering *between the two evenings*: and this paper offers the more literal translations *between the pair of coverings* (of the Sun). It is shown that the reference is to the twilight that begins the Abib-14 Passover day, when the Sun is covered by the horizon. Many of those promoting an *Abib-15 Passover observance* appeal to Lightfoot's secular claim that *between the evenings* refers to a *first evening* at noon, when the Sun begins its descent towards the horizon, and a *second evening* at sunset when the Sun disappears behind the horizon. By this reckoning *between the evenings* is between noon and sunset or around 3 pm but this unnatural interpretation is shown to be unbiblical.

Appendix 1 was added as a guide for observing Passover at home.

## 2.0 Pre-requisites For This Paper

### 2.1 Conventions Used

The following have been adopted for this paper:-

- Unless stated to the contrary scriptures are quoted from the King James Version (KJV).
- The phrases *Abib-14 Passover observance* and *Abib-15 Passover observance* refer respectively to the partaking of the N.T. Passover symbols on Abib 14 and on Abib 15.
- Strong's KJV numbers are given as #1234 for OT words and as #*1234* (italicized) for N.T. words.

### 2.2 Hebrew Calendar Basics

The reader needs to know the following Hebrew/Jewish calendar facts:

- Biblical 24-hour day is reckoned from sunset to sunset (Gen 1:5; Lev 23:32).
- The Sabbath is the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the biblical week and runs from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset.
- The first month of the Hebrew year is Abib (Exod 12:2 & 13:4) but is also known as Nisan (Est 3:7); and falls in the March-April period.
- The Abib-14 Passover Day is the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the Hebrew year (Num 9:1-3).
- The expression *Abib 13-14 sunset* identifies the sunset ending Abib 13 and beginning Abib 14.
- The Abib-14 Passover day starts at the *Abib 13-14 sunset* and ends at the *Abib 14-15 sunset*.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> holy day of the Feast of Unleavened bread is Abib 15 and starts at the Abib 14-15 sunset.
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a 7-day feast that begins with Abib 15 and ends with Abib 21, and so runs from the Abib 14-15 sunset to the Abib 21-22 sunset.

### 2.3 Hebrew Transliterations

To ensure this document can be sent via Internet as a printable file, only transliterations of Hebrew words are given using standard keyboard characters. Transliterations are not a translation but a representation of Hebrew words as far as possible by English letters. Transliterations in this paper obey the following (non-standard) rules.

- Transliterations of Hebrew words are always placed between angle brackets <...>.
- Hebrew consonants are represented by their English equivalents, save for the so-called silent Hebrew consonants ‘aleph and ‘ayin which are denoted respectively by < ‘ > and < ` >.
- Short vowels are shown by their English equivalent < a, e, i, o, u >, the corresponding long vowels are marked by a colon < a:, e:, i:, o:, u: > and vowels associated with a Hebrew vowel letter are underlined < a, e, i, o, u >.
- Vocal shewas (fleeting or half vowels) are shown by the corresponding short vowel.
- Silent shewas are not shown.

### 3.0 Some Plain Pointers to Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread

This section points to some plain reasons for rejecting both an *Abib-15 Passover observance* and an *Abib 14-20 Feast of Unleavened Bread observance*.

#### 3.1 The Bible Restricts Passover to Abib 14

Numbers 9:1-3 shows that the Passover day is the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month and that *all* rites and *all* ceremonies of Passover belong to this day.

- Num 9:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,
- .2 Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season.
  - .3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

Throughout the O.T. the Passover day is referred to as the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month and not once as the 15<sup>th</sup> day. Indeed we are told that *all* rites and *all* ceremonies of the Passover day are for the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month and so *no* rite and *no* ceremony of the Passover belongs to the 15<sup>th</sup> day!

#### 3.2 It Was The Quartodeciman and Not the Quintodeciman Dispute!

The western church centred upon Rome was the leader in adopting pagan practices, whereas the eastern churches remained longer with apostolic teaching. The following quote from Britannica on CD2000 is worth reading:

QUOTE CONCERNING POPE ST VICTOR I (189-199 AD): "...After succeeding St. Eleutherius in 189, Victor tried to assert Roman authority in the early Christian church. Most notably, he tried to sanction the Roman date for Easter over that celebrated by the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor, who kept the holiday on 14 Nisan rather than on the following Sunday. ... Quartodeciman practices in fact continued in Asia Minor for several centuries ...." [Britannica seems to have substituted 'holiday' (holy day) for Passover.]

The eastern churches of Asia Minor continued observing Passover on the 14th day of the 1st month, when the western church (Rome) had already adopted Good Friday and Easter. This had led towards the end of the 2nd-century AD to the *Quartodeciman* dispute. Quartodeciman is based on the Latin for fourteenth. In particular it was the Quartodeciman (14<sup>th</sup>) and not the Quintodeciman (15<sup>th</sup>) versus Good Friday dispute. It seems the eastern churches had continued the apostolic *Abib-14 Passover observance*, which is a powerful pointer against *Abib-15 Passover observance*!

### 3.3 The First Day of Unleavened Bread is Abib 15 and not Abib 14

Repeatedly the Bible declares that Feast of Unleavened Bread is a 7-day feast, and that it is (begins) on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month (Abib); and that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> day of this feast are holy days (holy convocations / solemn assemblies). So why do some argue that the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on Abib 14?

- Lev 23.6 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.
- .7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.
- .8 ... in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.
- Num 28.17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.
- .18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:
- Exod 12.16 And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.

God's Word tells us that the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread *is* on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, then surely this means the feast begins on that day. If indeed this feast begins on Abib 14 as some claim, why would God refer to this feast by its second day (Abib 15) instead of its alleged first day (Abib 14)? It makes no sense to identify a 7-day feast by its second day and not say it is its second day. When a single day is used to identify a 7-day feast then it must be the first day; as is also done for the Feast of Tabernacles as the following scripture shows.

- Lev 23.34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.

The advocates of the Feast of Unleavened Bread being from Abib 14-20 and that Abib 15 is the second day of this feast, fail to justify their claims because there is no biblical support for these strange claims. That the Feast of Unleavened Bread *follows* the Abib-14 Passover day on Abib 15 is also clear from the passage Numbers 28:18-20 and so we must reject the Abib 14-20 feast claim.

- Num 28.16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.
- .17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.
- .18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:
- .25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is considered further in Section 6.2 concerning Exodus 12:18-20.

### 3.4 N.T. Evidence that Unleavened Bread Begins With Abib 15

John 1:29 and Revelation 21:22 say Jesus is the *Lamb of God* and 1 Corinthians 5:7 that He is *our Passover* and Romans 5:9-10 that we may become reconciled to God the Father through Jesus's shed blood: and so Jesus is mankind's atoning *Passover Lamb* killed on that Abib-14 Passover Day. Of this the Passover lambs killed in Egypt were a type and whose blood too saved from death. That parallel is a powerful testimony of the importance of God's commanded and sanctified days and festivals listed in Leviticus chapter 23. All of God's commanded days of Leviticus 23 have deeper meanings of God's Plan for man's salvation but these became lost quite early to mainstream Christendom.

Most of the churches of God understand that Jesus as man's Passover Lamb was crucified on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the week, which was the Wednesday Abib-14 Passover day – it was not Good Friday as mainstream Christendom teaches. The Crucifixion day of John chapter 19 was Wednesday Abib 14. Let us now look at verse 31 and in particular to the parenthetical explanation of the next day (Abib 15):

John 19:31 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.

That parenthetical explanation states that the following day (Abib 15) was a both a Sabbath and a high day or holy day. This holy day can only have been the first day and holy day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread as declared in Numbers 28:17-18. The Jews had not departed from this holy day; all they had done – and that was bad enough! – was move their Passover observance from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> day. So Abib 15 is the *holy day* mentioned in Numbers 28:17-18 and the *high day* mentioned in John 19:31. We see again that the Abib-14 Passover day (Crucifixion day) is followed by the Abib-15 holy day, which is also the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## 4.0 The Deeper Meaning of Passover, Exodus and Unleavened Bread

It is important to know the deeper meaning behind Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Exodus for these are symbolic for the foundational requirements of man's salvation.

### 4.1 Passover Is About Passing Over

Let us first examine what is meant by the Hebrew word translated *Passover*. This word first occurs in Exodus 12:11 and has Strong reference #6453 and may be transliterated < pesach >. This word is derived from the Hebrew primitive root < pa:sach > (Strong #6452) whose primary meaning is *to pass over*. That primary meaning *to pass over* is precisely the expression used by God two verses later (Exod 12:13), when He tells Moses that He will *pass over* Israelite houses marked by the *Passover* lamb's blood. This *passing over* is the central meaning of the Abib-14 Passover day. This indeed happened on the Abib-14 Passover day. The meaning of *passing over* is reflected by both the Hebrew *Pesach* and the English *Passover*. God gave this name only to the 14th day and not to the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month.

Exo 12:12 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.  
.13 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.  
.29 And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh...

God passed through Egypt at midnight some 6 hours after the Abib 13-14 sunset and the killing of the lambs during the ensuing twilight.

### 4.2 Exodus Denotes A Departure from Bondage to Egypt and Sin

Some claim that the Exodus from Egypt did not begin on Abib 15 because Numbers 33:3 refers only to a departure from Rameses and not to a departure from Egypt.

Num 33:3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out...  
Exo 12:41 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.  
.42 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.

Nevertheless Numbers 33:3 refers to Israel's Exodus beginning at Rameses and as marked in this verse by: "the children of Israel went out". Israel's 13 tribes assembled at Rameses and there began under God's protection their Exodus from Pharaoh's captivity. Rameses is a figure for Egypt and Egypt in turn is a figure for this world in which mankind is captive to Satan through sin. Rameses points to where Israel's Exodus from captivity in Egypt began. From that moment Israel became freed from their bondage to Pharaoh and from that moment they were under God's command.

That captivity had lasted precisely 430 years. See the article *The Importance of Accuracy in the Study of Holy Scripture* extracted from the writings of Dr Ethelbert Bullinger (Section 10.0 References). Dr Bullinger shows that the 430 years began with Abraham's call and that call most certainly was not literally in the nation of Egypt! This again shows the figurative use of Egypt; another example being in Revelation 11:8.

Let there be no doubt that Israel began the Exodus from her Egyptian Captivity at Rameses immediately following the Abib 14-15 sunset, which was already the 15th day of the first month!

### 4.3 The significance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a most significant biblical feast. It follows the Abib-14 Passover day on which Jesus shed His blood as man's atoning *Passover* Lamb. By applying Jesus' shed blood to ourselves we may be washed clean from our *past* sins and become reconciled unto God the Father (Rom 5:10). We then escape the death penalty hanging over us for our *past* sins because Jesus paid that penalty on our behalf.

But we need to quit our life of sin and that is what the Feast of Unleavened Bread signifies – the putting away of sin symbolized by leaven, which like sin puffs up.

- 1 Cor 5.2 And ye are puffed up,....
- .6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?
  - .7 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:
  - .8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Paul refers to the *sin of malice* as the *leaven of malice*. Just as leaven will soon affect the whole dough so sin will soon affect the whole person and the whole church. As leaven puffs up dough so sin puffs up a person. In this context Paul refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This feast actually depicts a Christian putting away sin. It is like an Exodus from our captivity to Satan through sin. Both the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Israel's Exodus from captivity to Pharaoh's Egypt are types of a Christian's Exodus from man's captivity to Satan through sin.

It must be emphasized that the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Exodus which began on the very first day of this feast, both symbolize departure from bondage. For Israel it was an Exodus from bondage under Pharaoh in Egypt. For Christians it is an Exodus from bondage through sin to Satan in this world of which Pharaoh Egypt were types. Although Abib 15, the day Israel began their Exodus from their Egyptian captivity, was a holy day, this was an appropriate time for Israel to begin their symbolic Exodus from their Egyptian bondage.

It was not the occasion to partake of the Passover symbols for these must be partaken the previous evening (Passover) to symbolize the symbolic washing during that Abib-14 Passover observance of our *past* sins. Exodus signifies our departing from captivity to our *present* sins. The 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread symbolizes a Christian's life-long Exodus from captivity to sin. This parallels physical Israel's Exodus from bondage to Pharaoh (1 Cor 10:1-6). For this feast Christians remove from their dwellings and abstain from eating all leaven and all leavened products to symbolize their Exodus from sin.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a 7-day feast. The number 7 portrays spiritual perfection for we need to overcome with God's help sin totally! We purge our homes of all traces of leaven and leavened products before the start of this feast and should we find still some leaven during the feast, then we purge this too from our home. This is symbolic of Christians needing to examine themselves for the rests of their life for sinful ways. Israel's Exodus lasted 40 years, which too is a type of a Christian's life-long exodus from sin.

It is important that the period of unleavened bread be a 7-day period as God's Word requires. The number seven is the number of spiritual perfection and so we should not make it an 8-day period of unleavened bread by declaring the Abib-14 Passover day also a day of unleavened bread.

### 4.4 The Different Unleavened Bread Symbols for Passover and the Feast

The symbolism of the Passover's unleavened bread and the symbolism of the feast's unleavened bread are entirely different: and therefore there is no continuity from the small amount of ceremonial unleavened bread taken soon after sunset on Abib 14 to the meal-portion unleavened bread eaten during the 7-day Abib 15-21 Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The following show that Passover's symbolic unleavened bread depicts our Lord's body.

- John 6.53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Mat 26.26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

The following scriptures show that unleavened bread of the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread has a different symbolism, namely that of putting away sin which is depicted by leaven.

Mat 16.6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.  
1 Cor 5.6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?  
.7 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:  
.8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth

As a result the symbolism of the N.T. Passover unleavened bread and the symbolism the feast's unleavened bread are entirely different. Also the Passover's twin symbols of unleavened bread and wine go together, whereas the unleavened bread of the feast is not so joined to wine. Therefore there is no continuity from the small amount of ceremonial unleavened bread taken with the small amount of ceremonial wine soon after the Abib 13-14 sunset on the Abib-14 Passover day and the meal-sized unleavened bread eaten during the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. There is an almost 24-hour gap between the partaking of the Passover unleavened bread and wine symbols and the first meal with unleavened bread soon after the Abib 14-15 sunset which begins the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

NOTE: When bread is offered with a meat (blood) sacrifice this must be unleavened bread (Exod 34:25; Lev 6:14-17). That does not mean the days on which such sacrifices occur are unleavened bread days. The Passover is no exception to this although unleavened bread is one of its symbols along with red wine. See also Section 6.4 concerning Exodus 23:18.

## 5.0 Between the Two Evenings or Between the Two Coverings?

We need to know the precise time when the Passover lambs were killed in Egypt for if that were during twilight at the start of the Abib-14 Passover day, then this would determine an Abib-14 Passover observance. However, if the lambs were killed some 21 hours later at mid-afternoon (3 pm) on Abib 14 that would determine an Abib-15 Passover observance. This is complicated with our Lord Jesus dying at 3 pm on Abib 14, at which time it is also alleged the priests killed the Passover lambs in Jerusalem. It is therefore imperative that we know the time the Passover lambs were killed in Egypt because only that time can determine the correct Passover observance. The key is Exodus 12:6 where the KJV translates the Hebrew phrase < be:n ha`arbaim > *in the evening* as the time the Passover lambs were killed in Egypt. Because this translation is inaccurate the solving of the problem lies still ahead of us.

The Hebrew expression < be:n ha`arbaim > occurs 11 times in the O.T. and apart from *in the evening* for Exodus 12:6 the KJV renders this ten times *at even*. This section examines what this phrase means and it will be seen that the KJV's renderings *in the evening* and *at even* are unsatisfactory; as are the corresponding renderings in the ASV and RSV. Useful is the descriptive rendering *at twilight* given by the NKJV and NIV. More exact is the translation *between the two evenings* of J.B. Rotherham and J.N. Darby and supported by Dr Ethelbert Bullinger in his side note to Exodus 12:6 in *The Companion Bible*. Also good is *twixt the evenings* of the Interlinear Bible edited by J.P. Green (Hendrickson).

Yet even these 'better' translations overlook each day has one and not two evenings; and so we must question the choice *evening*. This problem is exacerbated by both English and Hebrew not always using precisely or consistently words denoting the parts of the 24-hour day (day, night, morning, evening).

### 5.1 Exodus 12:6's *In The Evening* Examined

The Exodus 12:6 phrase *in the evening* is the KJV rendering of the Hebrew < be:n ha`arbaim >.

Exod 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.

The Hebrew phrase < be:n ha`arbaim > comprises the preposition < be:n > (between/among – Strong #996) and the arthrous (with definite article < ha >) dual plural noun < ha`arbaim >. This noun is dual plural because it has the Hebrew dual plural suffix < -aim >. Hebrew dual plurals indicate a pair of closely related entities. English occasionally uses a type of dual plural as in a *pair of scissors* and a *pair of trousers*, but Hebrew employs dual plurals more extensively and has for this a specific noun suffix.

The arthrous dual plural noun < ha`arbaim > is based on the Hebrew root < `ereb > meaning something like *evening, night, or sunset* (Strong #6153). The Theological Word Book of the Old Testament (Ref. TWOT1689a) too offers *evening, night and sunset*.

It is important to reach an acceptable English translation for Exodus 12:6's < be:n ha`arbaim > which reflects both its dual plural character and the time at which the Passover lambs were killed in Egypt. For example, *between the pair of evenings* or *between the pair of sunsets*. We will return to this in Section 5.3 after analysing in Section 5.2 the eleven OT occurrences of < be:n ha`arbaim >.

## 5.2 Analysis Of 'In the evening' and 'At even'

The Hebrew phrase < be:n ha`arbaim > occurs eleven times in the O.T. and we first meet this phrase in Exodus 12:6 where the KJV renders this *in the evening* (Section 5.1) but *at even* in the other ten verses. Let us now analyse these eleven verses whether this Hebrew phrase supports a twilight killing of the Passover lambs and so an Abib-14 Passover observance or a mid-afternoon (3 pm) killing and so an Abib-15 Passover. It will be seen that none favour a mid-afternoon event but that some favour and even strongly favour a twilight event, and therefore an Abib-14 Passover observance.

- Exod 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.
- 16.12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord your God.
- 29.39 The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even:
- 29.41 And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, ...
- 30.8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.
- Lev 23.5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover.
- Num 9.3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.
- 9.5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.
- 9.11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, [and] eat it with unleavened bread and bitter [herbs].
- 28.4 The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even;
- 28.8 And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat offering of the morning, ...

The following analysis of these eleven verses shows which identify the time of day indicated by the Hebrew phrase < be:n ha`arbaim >:

- Verses Exod 12:6 and Lev 23:5 give no indication whether the phrase marks twilight or 3 pm and so do not help decide between either an *Abib-14* or an *Abib-15 Passover observance*,
- Verses Exod 16:12; 29:39; 29:41; Num 28:4 and 8 place side by side evening < be:n ha`arbaim > and a morning < boqer > event; either as corresponding meals (breakfast and dinner) or corresponding sacrifices (morning and evening). Since < boqer > (Strong #1242) means dawn or day break without there being a suggestion this could be the middle of the morning, there is no reason to believe the corresponding < be:n ha`arbaim > event should be mid-afternoon: and so a sunset or twilight event seems likely. As a result these verses detract from an *Abib-15 Passover observance* and favour *Abib 14-Passover observance*,
- Verse Exod 30:8 suggests < be:n ha`arbaim > is a sunset or twilight event – when else would the lamps be lit? – and therefore favours an *Abib 14 Passover observance*.
- Numbers 9:3 strongly supports an *Abib-14 Passover observance* by restricting all rites and ceremonies of the Passover to the Abib 14 Passover day.
- Hence the related verses Numbers 9:5, 11 too support a fourteenth day of the month *Passover observance*,

Not one of these 11 verses supports an *Abib-15 Passover observance* based on a 3-pm killing of the lambs but several support an *Abib-14 Passover observance* based on a twilight killing of the lambs.

### 5.3 Between the Pair of Coverings of the Sun

In Section 5.1 it was observed that the Hebrew phrase < be:n ha`arbaim > rendered in the KJV *in the evening* or *at even* would be better translated as *between the two evenings* or *twixt the evenings* or *between the pair of evenings*. But each day has only one evening and since evening is strictly the period from sunset to bedtime, even the better translations *between the two evenings* or *between the pair of evenings* does not reflect the true Hebrew meaning. Let us see whether Deuteronomy 16:6 sheds any light on this.

Deut 16:6 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.

This verse also gives *at even* but the Hebrew for this is different to that of those 11 verses analysed in Section 5.1. The Hebrew for *at even* in Deuteronomy 16:6 is < ba`areb >, which we will meet again in Section 6.2 for Leviticus 23:32 and Exodus 12:18. The Hebrew < ba`areb > is a singular version of the same Strong #6153 noun < `ereb > rather than a dual-plural one and has a different prefixed preposition < ba- > which means *in, with* or *by*. From Section 6.2 it will be understood < ba`areb > refers in Deuteronomy 16:6 to the sunset that separates Abib 13 from Abib 14. The emphasis is on the moment the sun goes down (sets) rather than twilight during which the lambs were killed. Since the Passover lambs had to be killed and dressed before the end of twilight, no time was to be lost and the lambs would have been killed the moment the sun descended below the horizon. It is significant that Deuteronomy 16:6 couples < ba`ereb > to the phrase *at the going down of the sun*. Although the time references when the Passover lambs were killed differ linguistically, Deuteronomy 16:6 and Exodus 12:6 do point to the same sunset, which begins Abib 14.

Let us examine the lexical meaning of < `ereb > (Strong #6153) and < `areb > (#6153). Hebrew words are in the main derived from a common tri-literal or 3-consonant root. In this case the tri-literals are < `r-b >. Changes in meaning from the root are obtained by varying the associated vowels such as < `ereb > and < `areb >. We see a similar phenomenon in English with *bind, band, bond, bound* which share the English tri-literal root b-n-d.

*The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-English Lexicon* (BDBG) does not list Hebrew words alphabetically but groups these under their common tri-literal root. This lexicon gives on pages 786-788 six entries for the tri-literal root < `r-b >, which are: (I) (noun) *mixture, mixed company, woof* (as mixed, interwoven with warp), *swarm* (mixed through motion); (II) (verb) *exchange (mix) pledge* (III) sweet, pleasing; (IV) *arid, dessert, sterile*; (V) enter, evening, sunset, west; (VI) raven. In other words the root < `r-b > gives rise to many shades of meaning, which the lexicon lists in considerable detail. Hebrew roots are also closely related to Assyrian and other ancient M.E. languages. It is not easy to be certain of the meaning of < be:n ha`arbaim > of Exodus 12:6.

Strong suggests for #6153 that < `ereb > derives from the primitive root #6150 < `arab > which he claims is rather identical to #6148 through covering with a texture. Strong gives for #6148 to traffic, to braid, to intermix, which reminds one of the BDBG lexicon's (I) *mixture, woof* for the root < `r-b >. The BDBG lexicon also relates under point (V) the root < `r-b > to west and westward where the sun sets < ma`arab >. So does Strong for < ma`arab > (#4628) and shows this is derived from < `arab > (Strong #6150) with the prefix < ma- > and according to Strong in the sense of *shading*. It appears therefore that the Hebrew for westward, evening and dusk all point to the Sun being covered or shaded by the horizon. After all west is the point on the horizon where the sun sets.

This suggests that the spirit of the Hebrew root < `r-b > in Exodus 12:6 is well reflected by replacing *evening* with *covering*. So for Exodus 12:6 the lambs were killed *between the two coverings* (of the Sun) and for Deuteronomy 16:6 *during the covering* (of the Sun) – twilight.

For Exodus 12:6 the *two (pair of) coverings* marked by the Hebrew dual plural < be:n ha`arbaim > are (1) the initial covering of the Sun by the horizon, and (2) the final covering of the Sun's last rays by the rotating Earth. These coverings are indeed a closely related pair deserving of the Hebrew dual plural noun form.

Although many will insist it should be evening instead of covering, yet there is each day only one evening, and evening is strictly the period from sunset to bedtime. Therefore *evening* fails to reflect the meaning of the Hebrew dual plural < be:n ha`arbaim > in Exodus 12:6. Readers who reject my suggested *between the pair of*

*coverings* may like to read instead *between the pair of sunsets*, where these are understood as the start and finish of twilight.

It is important to recognize that there is no linguistic support for a 3 pm slaughtering of the lambs for then the Sun is still above the horizon and so remains uncovered.

## 6.0 Difficult Passover-Unleavened Bread Passages

In this section it is important to remember that the Bible does not contradict itself as written in the original languages, and so related English passages must agree.

### 6.1 The Passage Deuteronomy 16:1-8

Let us now examine the claim by some that Deuteronomy 16:1-8 shows that Abib 14 is not only the Passover day but also the first day of the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

NOTE: Deuteronomy is Moses' farewell address and his restatement of the law to Israel in the 40<sup>th</sup> year of Exodus as we can see from Deuteronomy 1:1-3, "*These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel...*". Although Moses often quotes God in Deuteronomy, he also uses his own words to restate the law but unfortunately at times he then uses less precise terminology than God uses in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Also note how Jesus criticised Moses in Mark 10:2-9 for having given Israel divorce and remarriage contrary to God's *Garden of Eden Marriage* law! Therefore we need to take care where Moses' restatements differs from God's original statements. In no way may we allow Moses' words in Deuteronomy to override God's words in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. Although after 40 years Moses and the Israel of his day understood how to observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it appears familiarity caused Moses to use at times less precise terminology. For example in Exodus 12:6 God uses the expression < be:n ha'arbaim > which refers to the twilight at the start of Abib 14 when the Passover lambs should be killed. This same expression God uses also in Numbers 9:3 and 5 to pinpoint the twilight start of Abib 14 as the time to kill the Passover lambs. However, in Deuteronomy 16:6 Moses restates this time using the less precise expression < ba'areb > which means sunset but fails to stipulate whether it is the sunset at the start or at the end of Abib 14. It appears some have been persuaded it is the sunset that ends Abib 14 and this has led them to observe Passover on Abib 15. Let us be careful to read Moses' restatements in Deuteronomy in harmony with God's original statements in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers; above all let us not allow Moses' restatement of the law influence our reading of God's original law in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers.

- Deut 16.1 Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.
- .2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.
- .3a Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it;...

Verses 1- 3a deal with Passover and the pronoun *it* in verse 3a refers back to the Passover sacrifice of verse 2. It tells us not to eat *it* (the Passover sacrifice) with leavened bread. Note the exclusion being leavened bread rather than the inclusion being unleavened bread. Although unleavened bread should be eaten with the Passover (sacrifice), the accent is on avoiding leavened bread and so points to Passover being a leavened bread day. The remainder of this verse, namely 3b, returns to the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread and for this we are instructed to eat unleavened bread and to remember this day (Abib 15) for then we came out of Egypt (Num 33:3).

- Deut 16.3b ...seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.
- .4a And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days;...

With verse 4b the passage returns to the Passover for additional instructions – compare verse 7 with similar instructions for Passover given in Exodus 12:8-10.

- Deut 16.4b ...neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.
- .5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee:
  - .6 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.
  - .7 And thou shalt roast and eat *it* in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.

Verse 4b refers to the first day, that is the first day of the 8-day period Abib 14, 15-21. This is plain from the Passover instructions that follow in verses 4b-7. Then verse 8 returns to the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. In verse 6 Moses used the less precise expression < ba`areb > for the time when the Passover lambs had to be killed. From Exodus 12:6 where God uses the more precise < be:n ha`arbaim > we know the Passover lambs were killed during the twilight that begins Abib-14.

Deut 16.8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work *therein*.

Verse 8 returns to the 7-day Feast of Unleavened bread and refers to a 6-day period (Abib 15-20) where we must eat unleavened bread. Moses' expression "six days" differs markedly from God's "seven days" found in of unleavened bread, although it is clear from elsewhere in the Pentateuch that the 7<sup>th</sup> day too is an unleavened bread day. Verse 8 explains that the seventh day or the day following those six days, is a holy day. From elsewhere (e.g. Exod 12:15, Lev 23:6, Num 28:17) we know this must be the last day of the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (Abib 21). Since no dates are given in Deuteronomy 16:1-8, we must get these from Leviticus 23:5-8, Numbers 9:1-3 and especially Numbers 28:16-18, 25.

- Num 28.16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.
- .17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.
  - .18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:
  - .25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

Numbers 28:16 declares that Abib 14 is the Passover. Verses 17-18, 25 declare the Feast of Unleavened to be 7 days and identifies this feast with Abib 15, which can only be the start or first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Those that choose to read Abib 15 as the second day of the feast read their private wisdom (Gen 3:6) into God's Holy Word and will do so to their cost. The passage Deuteronomy 16:1-8 is not a justification for an Abib 14-20 Feast of Unleavened Bread but rather for an Abib-14 Passover day followed by an Abib 15-21 Feast of Unleavened Bread.

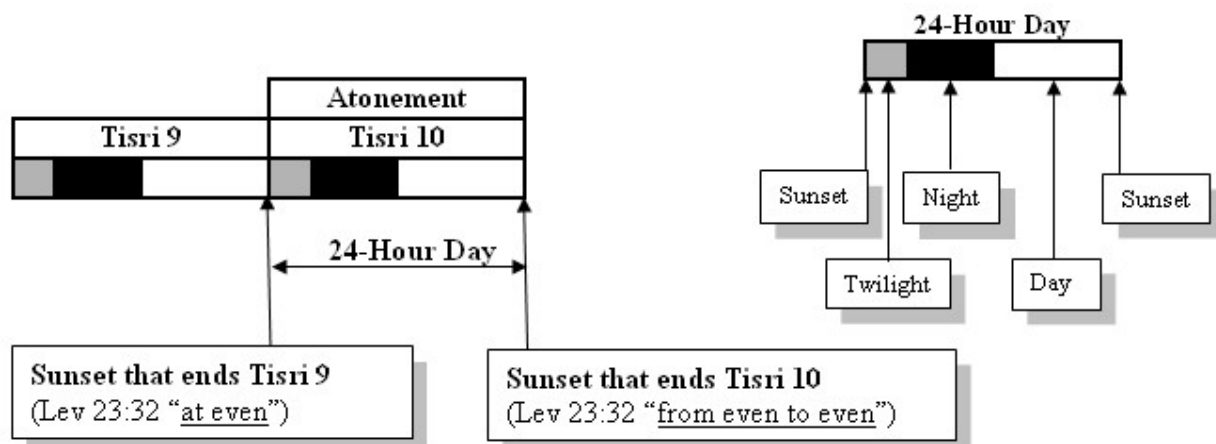
## 6.2 The Passage Exodus 12:18-20

This section should be read with reference to figures 1 and 2 following. The key to understanding this section is the definition for Atonement given in Leviticus 23:27 and 32 and illustrated in Figure 1.

- Lev 23.27 Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement ...
- .32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

Leviticus 23:27 instructs that the Day of Atonement is the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, which is Tisri 10. Then verse 32 uses the expression at even to relate Tisri 10 to the preceding day Tisri 9. We will see an identical method of reference used in Exodus 12:18. In Leviticus 23:32 the start of Tisri 10 is marked with reference to the end of Tisri 9 through the expression "in the ninth day of the month at even", where at even denotes the Hebrew < ba`ereb > and which literally means 'at sunset'. It therefore marks the sunset which ends Tisri 9 and begins Tisri 10. In the light of verse 27 there can be no other interpretation of 'at even' and its Hebrew < ba`ereb >. The reader should convince himself of this by studying Figure 1 following.

**Fig 1 Tisri 10 Day of Atonement As Defined by Leviticus 23:32**



The same phrase *at even* and its Hebrew counterpart < ba`ereb > of Leviticus 23:32 are twice used in Exodus 12:18 to mark first the end of Abib 14 and second the end of Abib 21.

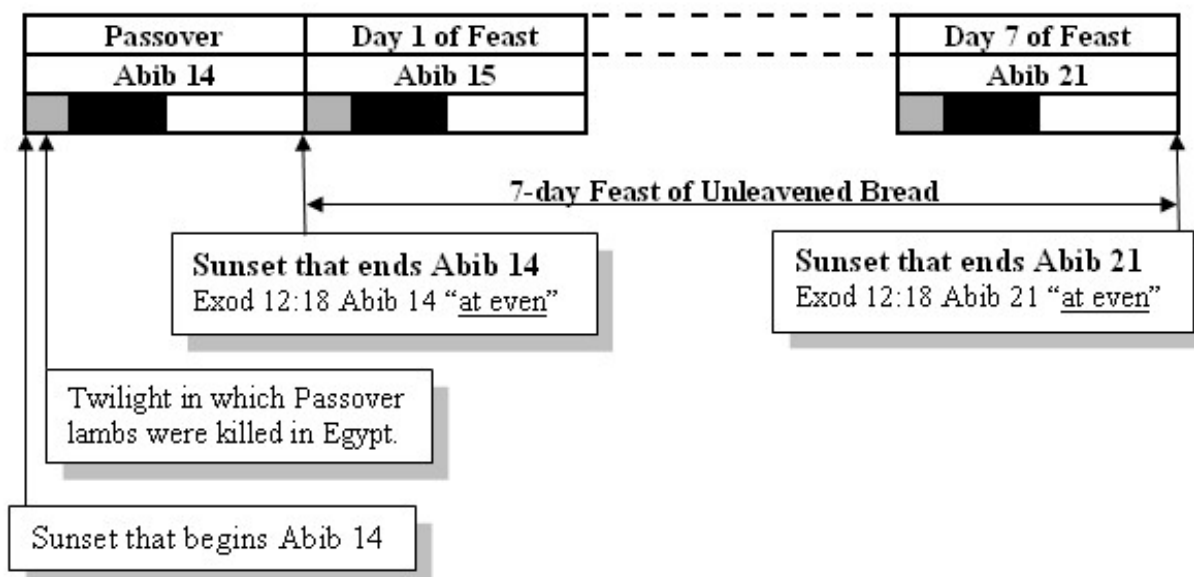
- Exo 12:18 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.
- 19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.

The expression “*on the fourteenth day of the month at even*” marks the sunset which both ends Abib 14 and begins Abib 15. The key is the Hebrew expression < ba`ereb > shared with Leviticus 23:32, where the expression “*in the ninth day of the month at even*” marks the sunset which both ends Tisri 9 and begins Tisri-10.

The second occurrence of ‘at even’ (Hebrew < ba`ereb >) in Exodus 12:18 in the expression “*until the one and twentieth day of the month at even*” marks the sunset which both ends Abib 21 and begins Abib 22.

Jointly the two occurrences of ‘at even’ (Hebrew < ba`ereb >) of Exodus 12:18 define the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread as starting on Abib 15 and ending with Abib 21. This is illustrated in Figure 2 below.

**Fig 2 Abib 15-21 Feast of Unleavened Bread As Defined by Exodus 12:18**



When we let the Bible interpret itself we avoid the false conclusions made by those who relate ‘at even’ (Hebrew < ba`ereb >) of Exodus 12:18 with ‘in the evening’ (Hebrew < be:n ha`arbaim >) of Exodus 12:6, and which marks the twilight period that begins the Abib-14 Passover day when the lambs were killed in Egypt. The Hebrew < ba`ereb > and < be:n ha`arbaim > have entirely different meanings as already explained in Sections 5.0.

The key to *at even* (Hebrew < ba`ereb >) of Exodus 12:18 is not Exodus 12:6 but Leviticus 23:32 for that uses the identical Hebrew expression < ba`ereb > for *at even*. When instead Exodus 12:6 is used to interpret Exodus 12:18, the wrong sunset is adopted for Abib 14, namely the sunset that begins this day instead of the one that ends it. That in turn leads to the error that the Feast of Unleavened Bread runs from the start of Abib 14 to the start of Abib 21, instead of from the end of Abib 14 to the end of Abib 21. That this is an error can be seen from Leviticus 23:6, which marks Abib 15 as the start of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Lev 23.6 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.

The reader is urged to study Figure 2 which shows the start and end of the 7-day Abib 15-21 Feast of Unleavened Bread by marking respectively the sunset ending Abib 14 and the sunset ending Abib 21. This fits precisely the Abib-15 start of this 7-day feast as defined by Leviticus 23:6.

### 6.3 The Passage Exodus 12:12-17

The passage Exodus 12:12-17 too may present a difficulty but not if we bear in mind what other scriptures say (e.g. Num 28:16-18, 25).

- Exod 12.12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, ... I am the LORD.
- .13 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,...
- .14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.
- .15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.
- .16 And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.
- .17 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.

This passage refers to both the Passover day (verses 12-13) and to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (verses 15-17) but it may seem unclear what to make of verse 14, which apparently continues referring to Passover declaring this to be a *memorial* and a *feast* for ever.

Some claim because Exodus 12:14 marks the Abib-14 Passover day a feast day or a holy day. Although the KJV uses the words memorial and feast it is not a *holy convocation* as found for the Abib 15 and 21 *holy days* in Exodus 12:16, where holy is the Hebrew < qodesh > (Strong #6944) and convocation the Hebrew < miqra' > (Strong #4744). This expression coupled with a prohibition on work is the usual way of marking a holy day or annual Sabbath as in Exodus 12:16.

Exod 12.16 And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and ... no manner of work shall be done in them,

This is not done for the Abib-14 Passover day and so this is not a holy day. Exodus 12:14 calls the Passover day a memorial and this it is because the events in Egypt and later at Golgotha must be remembered. In Exodus 12:14 the phrase “and shall keep it a feast...” comprises the Hebrew verb < chagag > (to keep, Strong #2287) and the noun < chag > (feast, Strong #2282). This phrase does not declare the Passover a holy day but rather a solemn meeting that is to be kept. It is customary to assemble in small groups when partaking of the Passover symbols early on the Abib 14 Passover Day but this day is not a holy day.

Therefore no difficulty should arise from Exodus 12:12-17.

## 6.4 The Passage Exodus 23:14-18

- Exo 23.14 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.
- .15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:)
  - .16 And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.
  - .17 Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.
  - .18 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning.

From verse 14 says we know this passage concerns the three annual festivals, which are: the Feast of Unleavened Bread (verse 15), the Feast of Firstfruits or Pentecost (verse 16) and the Feast of Ingathering or Tabernacles (verse 17). Verse 18 adds that when blood of a sacrifice is offered it shall not be with leavened bread and so presumably must be offered with unleavened bread. This applies to whenever blood of a sacrifice is offered and not only to the Passover or those three festivals. It applies only to bread offered with sacrificial blood but not to the bread eaten at meal times because the unleavened bread offered with sacrificial blood does not require the whole day being an unleavened bread day, unless it is during the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread.

It has been shown that the Passover day with all its rites and ceremonies are on Abib 14, and that this is followed by the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins with the Abib-15 holy day and ends with the Abib-21 holy day.

## 7.0 Abib-15 Passover Observance Contradicts the Exodus Events!

If an OT *Abib-15 Passover observance* were correct then in Egypt too the passover lamb must have been killed between noon and the Abib 14-15 sunset, say around 3 p.m. in the latter part of the Abib 14 Passover day. This would have been followed by the Abib 14-15 sunset, the marking of dwellings with the lamb's blood and the eating of the passover lamb shortly after the Abib 14-15 sunset and the staying indoors all night. This means God would have passed through Egypt during the night hours of Abib 15 and that the Israelite would have to stay indoors during the night hours of Abib 15 (Exod 12:22).

This would also mean that God did not *pass over* Israel's blood-marked dwellings at midnight of the Passover day but at midnight the next day, thus negating the very meaning of Passover. Since Exodus 12:41-42 states that the Exodus started during the night (Hebrew Strong #3915 < layil >); an *Abib-15 Passover observance* would force the conclusion that the Exodus started only after the Abib 15-16 sunset or the evening hours of Abib 16. However this is in conflict with Numbers 33:3, which clearly states that the Exodus started on (1) the fifteenth day of the first month and (2) that this was the morrow (day) after the Passover. Both point to the Exodus having started during the night of Abib 15, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. *Abib-15 Passover observance* is contrary to the Bible in several ways and must be rejected.

When we embrace that *all* rites and *all* ceremonies of the Passover are on Abib 14, then no such problems arise. For then the Passover lambs were killed after the Abib 13-14 sunset during the twilight that begins Abib 14. Then the lamb's blood was applied to the dwellings, they then went indoors to roast and eat the Passover and they stayed indoors that Abib 14 night and so were protected when the angel of God passed at midnight through Egypt killing all firstborn males that were not inside a blood marked dwelling. After the Abib 14 night ended the Israelites 'robbed' the Egyptians during the morning of Abib 14. The Israelites then assembled in their divisions and after the Abib 14-15 sunset they began their Exodus by marching during the night hours of Abib 15. This night God observed closely as we read in Exodus 12:41-42 and we know from Numbers 33:3 that it was on Abib 15.

NOTE: One objection often raised to an *Abib-14 Passover observance* is based on the requirement that Israelites were dressed in full readiness for their Exodus (Exod 12:11). If that was Abib 14 and they did not depart for another 24 hours, the question is asked: Why this state of urgency? This overlooks that smaller families shared one Passover lamb in the one dwelling (Exod 12:4). So many families were that night not in their own dwelling and yet had to be ready to prepare to depart in the morning after 'robbing' the Egyptians.

No doubt it would take much time to find their tribe, clan and family amongst an estimated 3 million men, women and children (Exod 12:37).

Surely it is clear that *Abib-15 Passover observance* is a doctrine of man's confusion.

## 8.0 Observing Passover And Feast of Unleavened Bread Biblically

The Passover Day with *all* its rites and *all* its ceremonies is on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1st month (Abib 14). This is immediately followed by the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins on Abib 15 and ends on Abib 21. The first day (Abib 15) and seventh day (Abib 21) of this feast are both holy days (high days or annual Sabbaths).

- Num 28.16 And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.  
.17 And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.  
.18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:  
.25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

A principal cause of Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread errors results from the assumption that the Passover day is an unleavened bread day and so rather indistinguishable from the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread; and so extending this to an overall 8-day period of unleavened bread. Since the Bible repeatedly states that only for 7 days no leaven shall be found in our homes and we must eat unleavened bread for only 7 days, it is often assumed that Passover must not be a separate day but must be an integral part of the feast.

However that assumption must be questioned for the Bible does not state that the Passover day is an unleavened bread day; only that we must partake of the symbols of unleavened bread and wine soon after the start of that day. In Section 4.4 it was shown that unleavened bread symbol for the Passover is entirely different from the unleavened bread symbol of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That as a result there is no link from the unleavened bread symbol of the Passover day to the unleavened bread symbol of the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Abib-14 Passover day is entirely distinct from the 7-day Abib 15-21 Feast of Unleavened Bread.

There are not 8-days of Unleavened Bread but only 7 days as the Bible asserts repeatedly: and these 7 days are precisely the 7 days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning with the Abib-15 holy day and ending with the Aib-21 holy day.

Therefore there is no continuity from the Passover unleavened bread symbolism to that of the feast's unleavened bread. It is not as if with partaking the Passover symbols, we switched to the unleavened bread of the feast for we did not. There is no continuity from the small amount of ceremonial unleavened bread taken at Passover to the meal-size amounts we eat during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. With the Passover service on Abib 14 we do not begin the Feast of Unleavened Bread for that happens some 22 hours later on Abib 15.

The former Worldwide Church of God held the Passover service in halls large enough to hold all baptized and spiritually-circumcised members for a given church area. I believe it better to do this in smaller groups (maximum 12 people) meeting in private homes, because that enhances the solemnity of the occasion. A large group disrupts the continuity of the service due to the time required for foot washing and distribution of unleavened bread and wine. Appendix 1 outlines a Passover at home service.

## 9.0 Conclusion

It was shown that *all* the rites and *all* the ceremonies of the Passover belong to the Abib-14 Passover day (Num 9:1-3). That therefore *none* of the Passover's rites and none of its ceremonies can be partaken on Abib 15 or any other day. That therefore the Passover day is Abib-14 and that this is followed from Abib 15 to 21 by the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread: which feast begins with the Abib-15 holy day and ends with the Abib-21 holy day. That as a result the partaking of the NT Passover symbols of unleavened bread and red wine on Abib 15 or the observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread from Abib 14 -20 are both unbiblical.

It was shown linguistically that the Hebrew KJV Exodus 12:6 phrase *in the evening* refers to the twilight that marks the start of the Abib-14 Passover day and during which the Passover lambs were killed in Egypt. That the Passover lambs were *not* killed in Egypt between noon of Abib 14 and the Abib 14-15 sunset (i.e. around 3 pm), and the flesh eaten shortly after the Abib 14-15 sunset, which is early on Abib 15. That this

again rules out an *Abib-15 Passover observance*. Passover must be observed shortly after the Abib 13-14 sunset, which is soon after the start of the Abib-14 Passover day.

Although our Lord was killed around 3 pm on Abib 14, as were the lambs in the Temple, this does not contravene Numbers 9:3 because Jesus was killed on the Abib-14 Passover day. Further Jesus introduced the N.T. Passover symbols of unleavened bread and red wine the previous evening soon after the start of the Abib-14 Passover day and so around the time the O.T. Passover symbols had been partaken by Israel in Egypt. As a result *all* rites and *all* ceremonies of the Passover remain on Abib 14 as Numbers 9:3 requires.

It was also shown that *Abib-15 Passover observance* contravenes the understanding that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is symbolic of (parallels) the Exodus. The night of Abib 15, which is the first day of the Feast marks both a Christian's Exodus from his bondage to Satan through sin and remembers Israel's Exodus from their bondage to Pharaoh, who is a type of Satan. As a result midnight of Abib 15 cannot possibly have been the time the Angel of God passed through Egypt for then Israel would have had to stay inside their blood-marked houses.

Although the symbol of unleavened bread is partaken along with the red-wine symbol of the NT Passover sacrifice, this does not link the Passover unleavened bread symbol to the unleavened-bread symbol of the feast. The point being that the two symbols of unleavened bread are quite distinct. Whenever unleavened bread is partaken with a blood sacrifice, then that does not render that day an unleavened-bread day. This applies also to the remainder of the Abib-14 Passover day and indeed it would be contrary to God's Word to switch to unleavened bread before the commencement of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## 10.0 References

The following papers may be accessed from my Internet Home Page [www.rightly-dividing.net](http://www.rightly-dividing.net) through a local public or university library's Internet service:

- *Laodicea's Lamp!*
- *God the Father is the Creator and Husband of Israel!*
- *On Sivan 7 Pentecost Was Fully Come!*
- *The Importance of Accuracy in the Study of Holy Scripture*

The reader may like to access Mr Armstrong's literature from, for example, *The Church of God at Northeast Ohio* <http://www.cogne.org/literaturehwa.html>. It should be realized that this church and others providing Mr Armstrong's literature are either unaware or refuse to acknowledge that Mr Armstrong had from 1974 three major doctrinal errors as explained in my paper *Laodicea's Lamp!*

## **Appendix 1: Observing the N.T. Passover at Home**

The leader is to admit only baptized and spiritually circumcised members of the Church of God; under no circumstances permit children or non-members into the room during any part of the service. Before the start of the service, lock all doors, close all windows and curtains. Start the service within an hour after sunset that begins the Abib-14 Passover day.

The leader must ensure that wash pans, fresh water, towels, unleavened bread (e.g. Jewish Matzoth or Matzos or home made from plain wheat flour and water) and red wine (e.g. Cabernet Sauvignon or Claret; between 10-13% alcoholic content) are available. The room is to be plain, clean, tidy and free from symbols with pagan, unwholesome or worldly connotations, as well as free from leavening and leavened products.

Try avoiding the subsequent disposal of excess bread by burning and disposal of excess wine by pouring outside on soil as prescribed below. So outside the room pour from the bottle the wine into the right number of small glasses and place these with a sufficient quantity of yet unbroken unleavened bread on a tray. Then take the tray inside the room and there place it on a table covered with an immaculate white cloth and cover the tray with an immaculate white cloth.

Since this is the most solemn service of the sacred year, all participants are to be dressed to display respect for the service, are to enter the room solemnly and there conduct themselves and partake of the symbols in a worthy manner. The participants must refrain from all conversation and fellowship, immediately before, during and after the service and must remain occupied with the enormity and significance of Jesus' suffering and sacrifice on behalf of mankind.

### **Start of Passover Service**

The leader starts the Passover service by reminding of the solemnity of the occasion and then reads the following passages:

Luke 22.7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed.  
.8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat.

Luke 22.14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.  
.15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:

Matt 26.17 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?

Matt 26.30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

1Cor 11.23 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:  
.24 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.  
.25 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.  
.26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.  
.27 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.  
.28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.  
.29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.  
.30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

John 6.53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.  
.54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

### **Foot Washing**

If two or more participants are present then they must now wash and dry one another's feet. If only one person observes the Passover then this ordinance is omitted. If two or more of each sex are present, they may go to separate rooms. Each person brings a towel and the host provides foot washing pans with ample cold water

but no soap is used. Use fresh water for each person. Each person will wash and dry someone's feet and have in turn his feet washed and dried. Especially when the washing was done in room where the service is held, tidy up all utensils before proceeding with the service.

### **Symbols of Bread and Wine**

The leader then resumes the service by removing the napkin from the unleavened bread and wine.

All bow their head as the leader prays over the bread giving thanks and asking God to bless the bread as a symbol of Jesus' body broken for us for healing; then he breaks and ensures that each participant receives a piece of that bread. Then all eat their bread quietly, solemnly whilst reflecting upon the symbol represented by the bread.

All bow their head again as the leader prays over the wine giving thanks and asking God to bless the wine as a symbol of Jesus' shed blood for the remission of sins; then he ensures that each participant receives a glass of that wine. Then all drink their wine reverently as a renewal of acceptance of the blood of Jesus Christ shed for the remission of our sins.

Unused bread and wine and used glasses are returned to the tray placed on the table and covered with the napkin.

### **Reading of John 13:31 – 17:26.**

The leader reads John 13:31–17:26 but since this is lengthy this may be shared with another male participant.

### **Singing of Psalm 51**

The service is concluded by singing of Psalm 51 from WCG hymnal (revised edition, September 1974).

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|---|---|
| 1. In Thy loving kindness, Lord, be merciful to me;<br>In compassion great blot out all iniquity.<br>Wash me thoroughly from sin; from all guilt cleanse<br>Thou me;<br>For transgressions I confess; sins I ever see.          | 3. From Thy gracious presence, Lord, O cast me not away;<br>And Thy Holy Spirit take not from me, I pray.<br>Joy which Thy salvation brings again to me restore;<br>With Thy spirit free do Thou keep me ever more. |
| 2. 'Gainst Thee only have I sinned, done evil in Thy sight,<br>That Thou speaking may be just, and in judging right.<br>My iniquities blot out, my sin hide from Thy view;<br>And in me a clean heart make, spirit right renew. | 4. Sacrifice dost Thou not want, else would I give it Thee;<br>And with offering shalt Thou not delighted be.<br>For a broken spirit is to God a sacrifice;<br>And a broken, contrite heart, Thou wilt not despise. |

All dismiss quietly; leaving without conversation into the night.

The leader then destroys any wine and bread remaining that was taken into the room and prayed over by burning the bread and pouring out the wine onto grounds outside. Do not pour the wine down the drain or place the bread in the garbage bin for they represent in symbol Jesus' shed blood and broken body.

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