

PASSOVER AND PENTECOST

WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

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Some may ask, "Why another article on Passover and Pentecost?" It has been fifteen years since we first wrote on these subjects. Since that time a number of vicious attacks in article form have been written against the revealed truth. These attacks include a number of new concepts not originally considered. We find ourselves forced by circumstances to defend the "faith once delivered to the saints." It is hoped the reader will find this article adequate in addressing these heretical notions intended to mislead those called of God.

Order of Holy Days Ordained of God

Everything God does is purposeful. The Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, two of God's annual Holy Days, are given in their order for a very specific reason. God's Holy Days reveal the plan of salvation. The Passover represents Christ as the sacrificial lamb sent to pay the penalty for the sins of the world. The Days of Unleavened Bread depict the necessity of putting sin out of our lives—through keeping the commandments of God. Pentecost demonstrates the need to receive the Holy Spirit in order to live a godly life. The Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles all depict future events as the plan of salvation unfolds.

The very first requirement for those called of God is to repent; that is, to be sorry for breaking God's Law and to turn around and go the other way. The Apostle Peter emphasized this, as recorded in the book of Acts. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy [Spirit]" (Acts 2:38). It is not possible for man to obey God in the complete spiritual sense until he receives the Holy Spirit.

Paul described this dilemma when he wrote, "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this

death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Romans 7:14–25).

Paul shows that it is not possible for man himself to rid his life entirely of the pulls and lusts of sin. We are sinful by nature. So, the notion that God does not cover our sins with the blood of Christ, our Passover Lamb, until after we repent and depart from sin is a fallacious argument designed to deceive the unwary into believing they can repent and depart from sin without first accepting the shed blood of Jesus Christ for their past sins. It *is* the blood of Christ that covers our past sins (Romans 3:25); but we must have the help of the Holy Spirit in order to live a godly life after we are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Paul described the Christian experience after repentance and receipt of the Holy Spirit. He said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). The Passover depicts Christ as our sacrificial lamb—the One who died in our stead and whose shed blood applies to us. By our acceptance of this sacrifice God forgives our past sins. We then, by repentance, endeavor to put sin out of our lives by keeping the commandments of God. This is portrayed by the Days of Unleavened Bread. It is then, and only then, that God gives us the Holy Spirit—which is the meaning behind the Day of Pentecost.

Passover—a Feast and Eight-day Festival?

All the Holy Days are called "feasts." We read in Leviticus 23:4, "These are the *feasts* of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." Notice in verse 5 that the Passover is the first "feast" mentioned. While it is not observed in the same manner as the rest of the Holy Days, it is nonetheless a feast, as the Bible clearly reveals. Similarly, the Day of Atonement is called a feast (Leviticus 23:4, 27), yet it is a commanded fast day (v. 29). The Passover is called a feast in the New Testament as well, although by this time the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread were joined together under a single designation. "Now before the *feast* [*eortes*] 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" (John 13:1). "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the *feast* day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did" (John 2:23). "But they said, Not on the *feast* day, lest there be an uproar among the people" (Matthew 26:5). In these three texts above we note the Passover is called a feast. The following text demonstrates that in Christ's day the entire eight-day period was designated as "the Passover." "Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover" (Luke 22:1).

Much confusion has been generated regarding the exact time the Passover should be observed. Many believe that the Passover lamb was killed at the end of the fourteenth day, just as the fifteenth day was beginning. (Keep in mind Biblical days are from even to even; that is, from sunset to sunset, so the end of the fourteenth day would be just before sundown as the fifteenth day is about to begin.) One proof given to support the idea that the Passover lamb was slain at the end of the fourteenth day and eaten during the night of the fifteenth is Ezekiel 45:21. This text reads: "In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten." The text seems to imply that the entire period of the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread is seven days. An examination of the verses following, however, shows otherwise. Notice verses 22 and 23: "And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering. And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the Lord, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering." Verse 21 mentions "the passover, a feast of seven days." The punctuation here implies that the Passover is a seven-day feast, but punctuation is not a part of the inspired text. It could just as well read, "In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover; a feast of seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten." In this manner the text would delineate an eight-day period. The following verses prove this is what is meant. Verse 22 states on that day (the Passover) the prince should offer a sin offering. Verse 23 states he shall offer seven bullocks and seven rams for the following seven days—a total of eight days. Thus, the Passover occurs on the fourteenth day and the feast of Unleavened Bread the following seven days.

Some correctly insist the Passover—all of it—must occur on the fourteenth; no part of it may be done on the fifteenth. However, many assert that the Passover was slain at the end of the fourteenth and eaten the night of the fifteenth. If it were sacrificed and eaten on the fourteenth, within the same Biblical day, then the lamb had to be sacrificed on the end of the thirteenth, so two nights would be involved regardless. The answer to this is found in the meaning of "between the two evenings." This will be analyzed in more detail later in this article. Suffice it to say for the present that God is not the author of confusion. The fourteenth day means the fourteenth day, not portions of days that leave the participants in a state of perplexity. The beginning and ending of Biblical days are clearly defined in the Bible. There need not be any confusion. As Leviticus 23:5–6 states, "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." So, the Passover is on the fourteenth day of the first month, and the Days of Unleavened Bread commence on the fifteenth—a total of eight days.

Passover—Required for Salvation?

It is believed by many that Christians must keep the Passover as a requisite for salvation. If the Old Testament type has any significance, it tells us that the Israelites were required to slay the Passover lamb and to sprinkle the blood on the lintel and side posts of the doors on their houses. This was the means by which the destroyer would "pass over" the house. Further, this was the means, then, by which they were "saved." Some say keeping the Passover today, however, has no relevance as far as salvation is concerned. Yet, Jesus was quite explicit in His explanation of the need to partake of the Passover. He said, ". . . 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" (John 6:53). It is contended that Jesus was not referring to the Passover in John 6:53; that this, rather, is a reference to His word only—His Truth. The key to understanding John 6:53 is found in verse 4, "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." The discussion that followed was related to the Passover. Thus, in the context of the Passover Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (vv. 47–51). The Jews could not understand the meaning of these words and asked among themselves, ". . . How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Then Jesus clearly said, ". . . 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" (v. 53). Bible commentators all recognize this is a reference to the bread and wine of "the Lord's Supper." Notice what J. Jeremias, a German theologian, says. "The whole sequence of thought in the discourse on the bread of life now becomes clearer: its conclusion (6:53–58) is a eucharistic homily, the theme of which is introduced by the word of interpretation to the bread. . . . For here, we may assume, we have an example of the way in which the 'proclamation of the death of the Lord' was carried out at the celebration of the Lord's Supper" (*The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, by J. Jeremias, p. 108). Jesus used the bread and wine as a type of his flesh and blood which would be broken open and shed for the sins of mankind. This is what we read in Matthew 26:26–28, "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 [represents] my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is [represents] my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Make no mistake about it, Jesus stated that Christians must partake of the Passover if they are to be saved. Why? The Passover symbols of the bread and wine represent the sacrifice Christ made to expiate the sins of the world. One who refuses to accept this sacrifice by repudiating the Passover is repudiating the only means he has for the forgiveness of sin. Without the forgiveness of sin there is no hope for salvation!

When Did Israel Leave the Land of Egypt?

The Bible states, "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children" (Exodus 12:37). Also, "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" (v. 42). So, approximately two to three million Israelites left the land of Egypt by night, according to the Bible. Yet, some tell us that it would have been impossible for three million people plus numerous cattle and goats to leave by night, even during a full moon. That such would have been sheer chaos. They would have us believe that, when the Bible says God brought them out by night, what is meant is that this is the Passover night when God "began to deliver Israel." Furthermore, that when Josephus tells us that Israel was already gathered at Rameses, staying in tents, that he means Moses kept the people in one place and when the fourteenth came, they were all ready to depart. That it is a night to be much observed because this is when God began to deliver Israel.

Anyone who has spent any time in the woods during the full moon knows how easy it is to get around. There is so much light even print can be read, and once the eyes are accustomed to the dark it is practically as light as daytime. So it would not have been chaotic for Israel to leave by night. Furthermore, according to Josephus, Moses had been a general in the Egyptian army. He would have known how to organize such a trek. But, rather than assuming, let us see what Josephus did say about the event. We find his comments in *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, chapter 14, section 6. "Accordingly, he having got the Hebrews ready for their departure, and having sorted the people into tribes, he kept them together in one place: but when the fourteenth was come, and all were ready to depart, they offered the sacrifice [that is, the Passover], and purified their houses with the blood, using bunches of hyssop for that purpose, and when they had supped, they burnt the remainder of the flesh, as just ready to depart." Josephus did not say the Israelites were gathered at Rameses in tents. In fact, they were in their houses. Their houses were in the land of Goshen. So, Moses organized the people into tribes in the land of Goshen where they remained until the time to depart. The Bible is explicit in stating that Israel went out of Egypt by night. "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" (Exodus 12:42). Deuteronomy 16:1 tells us, "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." The Bible nowhere says the Israelites left Egypt in broad daylight. The Passover is distinct from the feast of Unleavened Bread. Numbers 28:16–17 makes this clear: "And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the Lord. And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten." There is no confusion regarding the time of the Passover and the Days of

Unleavened Bread. Neither is there any confusion regarding the night that Israel left the land of Egypt. That night was the dark portion of the fifteenth. Israel did not leave Egypt on the Passover night.

None to Leave Their Houses Until the Morning

According to Bible instruction, the Israelites were forbidden to leave their houses until the morning following the Passover. "And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning" (Exodus 12:22). Along with the sprinkled blood on the lintel and side posts, this was their protection against the destroyer or destroying angel. Yet, one writer says that this is a gross assumption. God did not forbid the Israelites to leave their homes until the morning; rather, Moses instructed them not to go out as a precautionary measure. It is further emphasized that this was Moses' advice, not God's command. Moses and Aaron went out shortly after midnight because by that time the plague had passed and it was safe for the Israelites to travel. According to this writer, Israel left Egypt in the very early morning, after the Passover night. They ate the Passover fully clothed, staff in hand, ready to depart.

If the above is true, then the Israelites had little regard for Moses' instruction. But what did the Apostle Paul say about Moses' instruction? Paul wrote, "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth [Moses], much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Hebrews 12:24–25). The Israelites, Paul says, feared to disobey Moses. Those who did paid the consequences. Had they left their homes before the morning, they surely would have been slain. Did the Israelites obey? Read Exodus 12:28: "And the children went away, and as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they." As J. Jeremias states, "At this festival the people of God remember the merciful immunity granted to the houses with the blood of the paschal lamb and the deliverance from the Egyptian servitude" (Jeremias, p. 206). Regarding the argument that this was Moses' instruction and not God's command, let us notice Exodus 12:8, 10: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night. . . . And ye shall let nothing of it [the Passover lamb] remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire." Here is a direct command from God (see v. 1) for the Israelites to remain with the leftovers so that they could be destroyed in the morning. It is not likely they could do this if they departed before the night was fully gone.

One of the reasons given that the Israelites went out of Egypt on the Passover night is that Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron by night. Since they supposedly went to Pharaoh's palace shortly after midnight, it was permissible for the Israelites to leave their homes as well. But, is this true? The account goes as follows: "And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said" (Exodus 12:29–31). It is assumed Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh's palace according to this text.

But let us notice Moses' words in Exodus 10:27–29, during an incident that occurred sometime before God slew the firstborn of Egypt. "But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go. And Pharaoh said unto him [Moses], Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more." Did Moses break his word later after making this statement to Pharaoh? The answer is given in Exodus 11. God told Moses that He would soon smite the firstborn of Egypt. Then Moses said, "But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all these thy servants [Pharaoh's] shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people that follow thee: and after that I will go out. And he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger" (Exodus 11:7–8). What is clear by comparing all the Scriptures is that when Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night, Moses and Aaron did not leave their houses and go to Pharaoh's palace. Rather, the servants of Pharaoh came to Moses.

What about the statement that proof of an early departure was the fact that the Israelites ate the Passover fully clothed, staff in hand, ready to depart? According to the *Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, by McClintock and Strong, article "Passover," page 749, "some think, that, like the dress and the posture in which the first Passover was to be eaten, it was intended to remind the people that they were now no longer to regard themselves as settled down in a home, but as a host upon the march, roasting being the proper military mode of dressing meat." In other words, their dress and staff in hand were to reinforce the anticipation of their soon-coming departure.

A Night to Be Much Observed

Exodus 12:40–42 states: "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." Since the Israelites were *commanded* not to depart from their houses until the morning, it is clear from the Bible they did not depart from Egypt on the Passover night. But, what about the following day? Did they depart in the daylight portion of the fourteenth? As stated earlier, a Biblical day is from sunset to sunset, so the fourteenth day would begin with an approximate twelve-hour period of darkness, followed by an approximate twelve-hour period of light. There is only one way to justify the argument that a departure earlier than the daylight portion of the fourteenth occurred. This is to say that the Israelites disregarded both God and Moses and left in the darkness, late in the night portion of the fourteenth, that is, in the early morning hours before daylight.

One author states that when the Bible speaks of a night deliverance it is referring to the night of the Passover, the night the Israelites were given permission to go. Therefore, leaving by night refers to the miracle of the Passover which set the Israelites free, and Exodus 12:42 refers to the Passover night occurring at the end of the fourteenth of Nisan. As such, the "night to be much observed" is not a separate festival or night. It is the same night as the Passover, the night Israel left Egypt. But according to the Scriptures the Israelites were not given permission to depart from their homes until the morning following the Passover. Notice what we read in Numbers 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 with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians." The question is, then, did the Passover occur at the beginning of the fourteenth or at the end, with the lamb actually eaten on the fifteenth of Nisan? Since the fifteenth is specifically stated to be the day the Israelites left Egypt, the "morrow" after the Passover could refer only to a time period *after* the daylight portion of the fourteenth of Nisan, and since the Bible clearly states Israel left Egypt by night, the only night within these parameters is the dark or beginning portion of the fifteenth, just as is stated in Numbers 33:3. This is the time period spoken of as "a night to be much observed."

The sequence of events, then, is plain. The Passover was observed at the beginning or the night portion of the fourteenth day. The Israelites were not permitted to leave their houses until the daylight portion of the fourteenth. During the daylight portion of the fourteenth they gathered at Rameses in preparation for their departure (Exodus 12:37). That departure began on the night portion of the fifteenth, the morrow after the Passover, as stated

in Numbers 33:3. The Israelites did not depart during the Passover night, in, as some would say, the wee hours of the morning. They did not leave their homes until the daylight portion of the fourteenth, in obedience to God's command (Exodus 12:28). The departure took place that evening, or at the beginning of the fifteenth day. There is no need for confusion in this matter. Twisting the Scriptures by making the Israelites disregard God's instruction by departing during the dark portion of the fourteenth has generated confusion in the minds of so many today. The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, page 667, summarizes the matter well: "The institution [Passover] is not a commemoration of the escape but an anticipation of it and a means by which it becomes possible. It is the sealing of the covenant between the Lord and Israel by which the people pass into his protection and possession; it is a sign of the divine redemptive action that is about to take place. . . . While the Passover commemorates the slaying of the first-born, Unleavened Bread emphasizes the Exodus itself." Notice again: "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" (Leviticus 23:5–6).

With regard to the Passover lamb, the Israelites were commanded, "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" (Exodus 12:10). This command, in conjunction with Exodus 12:22—not to go out of the door of the houses until the morning—proves Israel did not leave Egypt on the Passover night. Those who advocate keeping a Passover at the end of the fourteenth, rather than the beginning, would have us believe the Israelites did not obey the command to remain in their houses until morning and that they did not leave Egypt at night, but in broad daylight. To obey the command to burn the residue of the Passover lamb the following morning necessitated their remaining in their homes until the morning, just as God commanded. The remains of the lamb certainly included the bones. These had to be burned. How long did this take? Bones do not burn readily. High and prolonged heat is required, and we can certainly presume this took at least an hour or two after beginning the burning process. The word for "morning" in Exodus 12:10 is *boker* or *boquer*. Gesenius says it means "morning, daybreak, dawn ["and even before light, Ruth 3:14"], so called from the breaking forth of light . . . in the morning . . . (2) Specially the next morning . . ." The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* states: "boquer. Morning, dawn . . . denotes the breaking through of the daylight and thus dawn or more usually morning. . ." What this means is that the Israelites did not leave their homes until sometime after dawn on the morning following the Passover. So important is this command to burn the residue that it is repeated in Deuteronomy 16:4: "And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificest the first day at even, remain all night until the morning."

There is another consideration we must take into account. The Israelites were told to spoil the Egyptians. How long did this spoiling take place? Some say the spoiling of the Egyptians took place during the time of the plagues; therefore, there was no need to spoil the Egyptians on the daylight portion of the fourteenth. We have clearly seen from the Scriptures that the Israelites were forbidden to go out of their houses until the morning. There were at least three million Israelites occupying the land of Goshen, an area of approximately nine hundred square miles. They could not have spoiled the Egyptians the night of the Passover as they were forbidden to go out of their homes until the morning.

But what about the assertion they spoiled the Egyptians during the plagues? Notice Exodus 3:21–22: "And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty. But every woman shall borrow [demand] of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians." Exodus 11:2–3 adds, "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." Verse two here is a parenthetical expression, emphasizing the previous command. Regarding the notion that the spoiling took place prior to the Exodus, we need to ask ourselves this question. Since Exodus 11:8–10 relates that Pharaoh's heart was hardened, does it make any sense the Egyptians would have given their valuables to the Israelites when Pharaoh had made it plain they would not be permitted to go anywhere?

The chronological order of Exodus 12 proves it took some time to spoil the Egyptians, and this did not take place prior to the Exodus or on the Passover night. Exodus 12:35–36 states, "And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians." In the proper time sequence of events this could have taken place in the daylight portion of the fourteenth only. At that time the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians and gathered at Rameses for the departure on the beginning of the fifteenth—at night.

The Bible tells us, "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders" (Exodus 12:33–34). Some say the Israelites left Egypt the night of the Passover because had they remained any longer their bread would have been leavened. In

those days the people did not have access to Fleischmann's Yeast. An article in the *Eugene Register Guard*, March 27, 1991, page 2D, paragraphs 1–5, entitled "Sourdough can be the start of many a fine meal," tells us that sourdough is probably the oldest form of raised or leavened bread we know and while the Egyptians are generally credited for baking the first raised bread, their claim occurred just after the Jews (Israelites) left Egypt. In America sourdough bread is often associated with San Francisco because many pioneers used the sourdough method even after commercial yeasts were developed. How does one make sourdough? The article tells us one cup of water is mixed with one tablespoon of sugar, one cup flour, and four tablespoons of commercial buttermilk. Mix these together and place in a glass or stainless steel bowl. Cover the bowl with a towel and allow to stand in a warm place for a few days until it has begun to ferment. Old timers claim you can get sourdough going just by mixing flour and water and allowing it to sit in a warm place for several days. Sourdough batter must be made about twelve hours before you begin the bread-making process. The idea that had the Israelites waited until the morning to leave all their bread would have been leavened is sheer nonsense in light of the above information. One author contends that, if the Israelites would have waited a whole day before departing, their bread would have easily had time to be leavened (Exodus 12:39). At such a traumatic time, it is unlikely the Israelites would have been thinking about leavened bread at all. The command in Exodus 12:8 was to eat the Passover with unleavened bread, and that their homes were to be void of leaven for seven days (Exodus 12:15). Therefore, under the circumstances, it would not have been appropriate to have leaven even if they had left several days later.

Was the Passover Changed?

It has been stated that the Jewish practice of today—keeping the Passover on the fifteenth of Nisan rather than on the fourteenth—is the result of Egyptian influence during the 301–198 B.C. period. Those who oppose such a postulation say that there is no proof to back it up, that it is a bold-faced claim without any evidence to support it, and that there is no evidence the Jews ever changed the day they celebrate Passover.

Is this true? Is there any evidence the Jews changed the Passover from the fourteenth to the fifteenth? Notice what is said in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, article "Passover": "Lev. xxiii., however, seems to distinguish between Passover, which is set for the fourteenth day of the month, and *haghamatzoth* (the Festival of Unleavened Bread) . . . appointed for the fifteenth day. . . . Comparison of the successive strata of the Pentateuchal laws bearing on the festival makes it plain that the institution, as developed, is really of a composite character. *Two festivals, originally distinct, have become merged*[emphasis ours]." This authoritative source openly admits that the Passover was changed from the fourteenth and merged with the feast of Unleavened Bread on the fifteenth! So, while it may be speculative to say this

change occurred during the period of Egyptian hegemony, it is no speculation to say there indeed was a change!

Hayyim Schauss in his book entitled *The Jewish Festivals* says, "We cannot be certain how long a time passed before the Jews accepted these reforms in practice [Josiah's reforms] and ceased to offer the Pesach sacrifice in their own homes. *Nor can we be certain how long it took for Pesach and the Feast of Unleavened Bread to become one festival* [emphasis ours]" (p. 46). In a footnote on page 293, Schauss says: "That Pesach and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were originally two distinct festivals, distinct in name as well as in character, is evident from the Pentateuchal sources. . . . Pesach and Chag ha-matsos [unleavened bread] were never amalgamated among the Samaritans and remained two distinct holidays."

The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread," makes this statement: "In contemporary Judaism the word *Pesah* or 'Passover' is used to refer to the whole range of observances related to this season. This usage has been customary *since ca. the second century of the Christian era*. . . . As the employment of the one title, Passover, indicates, the Mishna, like Josephus, treated all the observances as parts of a single integrated feast. This had not always been so. Earlier, in the Old Testament, and into the NT as well, 'Passover' and 'feast of Unleavened Bread' (Mark 14:1) were both used with reference to the rites. Now one and now the other covered the entire sequence. But basically the Passover referred to the even of the first day, that is, the fourteenth day of the month (Leviticus 23:5, etc.), on which the sacrifice of the Passover lamb took place, while the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Leviticus 23:6, etc.), applied to the seven days following. This indicates a recollection that there were two separable units or feasts in the single complex of observances. *But this distinction was not carefully kept* (cf. Luke 22:7). . . . Amid all the uncertainty about the history of the Passover and Unleavened Bread in Israel there is general agreement on two points: *the feast contains two originally separate components*; and both have a pre-Israelite history [emphasis ours]" (pp. 663–664).

"Between the Two Evenings"

The phrase *ben haerevim*, "between the two evenings," is used in Exodus 12:6 (see margin) and should be translated: "And ye shall keep it [the Passover lamb] up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it between the two evenings." Probably no other phrase in the Bible has led to as much argument. It has been a point of controversy for thousands of years. The Karaites (a strict Jewish sect of the eighth century A.D.) and the Samaritans (viewed by some as a pagan people) interpreted "between the two evenings" as the time between sunset and deep twilight

or dusk. The Pharisees and Rabbinitists, on the other hand, considered it to be the time when the sun began to descend, from noon on, which was called the first evening—while the second evening was the real sunset.

Notice what the *Critical and Experimental Commentary*, by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, page 310, says about this controversy: ". . . In the early period of their history the Hebrews had no proper divisions of time, and accordingly periods of the day were indicated in a very loose and general manner, (Gen. xv. 12; xliii. 16, & c.) 'Between the evenings' is a phrase of similar import, denoting the part of the day between the declining and the setting sun, or between noon and sunset. As the slaughtering of the numerous victims required would of necessity occupy a considerable time, no particular hour was specified, farther than that the operation should be performed 'between the evenings.' But in order to be within the limits defined, it was necessary that it should be begun and completed between the commencement of the first and the termination of the second evening. On the republication of the law the time was definitely fixed at sunset (Deut. xvi. 6). But the Israelites did not consider themselves bound by that expression to wait till *sunset*, and hence, availing themselves of the latitude which the use of the general term *'ereb* (evening) afforded, they were accustomed to kill the paschal lamb an hour or two before that period. . . In later times a controversy arose in reference to the time this marked. The Samaritans and Karaites considered it as the interval between sunset and darkness . . . But the Pharisees and Rabbinitists . . . who maintained that the first evening began after noon . . . and the second with the sunset, taught that the paschal lamb was to be killed in the interval between the ninth and eleventh hour . . ." What this commentary is really telling us is that the Jews refused to obey the Bible injunction to sacrifice the Passover lamb at sunset, according to Deuteronomy 16:6, but rather chose to perform the ceremony in the afternoon according to their tradition.

Consider the idea that the time period from noon to darkness is the evening. Since a Biblical day begins at sunset, we have a dark period of approximately twelve hours, followed by a light period of six hours, followed by another dark period of six hours. Thus, in a given day we have six hours of light and eighteen hours of darkness. Not too logical is it? Many Jewish traditions such as this contradict the Bible. *Cruden's Concordance* tells us under the word "tradition," "(Usually this word means laws and regulations handed down orally from one generation to another, and forming the Oral Law of the Jews, which Jesus frequently denounced when it was against the real law of God)." What did Jesus say about the traditions of the Jews? "Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Matthew 15:1–3).

The phrase "between the two evenings" is used in Numbers 28:3 and is often cited to prove the Passover should be sacrificed in the afternoon, rather than at dusk. Numbers 28:3–4 reads: "And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the Lord; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer between the two evenings" (see margin). The reasoning is that if the evening sacrifice was offered at dusk it would not have been on the same day as the morning sacrifice. Joshua 10:26–27 and Deuteronomy 16:6 are also cited as proof that the Passover should be offered in the afternoon rather than at dusk. "The going down of the sun," used in both the above verses, is interpreted to mean "between the two evenings." But, "the going down of the sun" in Joshua 10:26–27 and Deuteronomy 16:6 is not the Hebrew expression *ben haerevim*. It is *bo hashemesh* and means "when the sun goes down." These two texts cannot be used to prove Exodus 12:6 (cited in the first paragraph under this heading) means before dusk. It is not even reasonable to consider sundown to begin at noon, as the Rabbinites did. The only reason such an argument was used by them was to support a position that did not have Scriptural support.

A Biblical day begins and ends with the setting of the sun. See Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31. A day, therefore, has approximately twelve hours of darkness and twelve hours of light. Leviticus 23:27 tells us the tenth day of the seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Verse 32 tells us it begins with the close of the ninth day—at even. The tenth day is described as extending "from even unto even." When the sun goes down at the end of the ninth day, the commencement of the tenth day begins. The tenth day does not end until the sun goes down the following evening. Thus, "even" can mean both the beginning and the end of a day. All Biblical days are from even to even. All sabbaths are from even to even. All Holy Days are from even to even. There are no exceptions. Yet, an exception was made by the Jews when they attempted to designate noon as the even of the Passover day.

Jewish tradition may call the evening "noon" but does the Bible support such a notion? As noted a few paragraphs above, the phrase "the going down of the sun" in Deuteronomy 16:6 could not be referring to noon, as the phrase used there does not contain the word "even." Also, to attempt to interpret the phrase "the going down of the sun" in Joshua 10:26–27 to be "noon" creates the same problem as Deuteronomy 16:6, as it is the same Hebrew expression. Consider Joshua 10:26–27: "And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day." Does this text mean the kings were slain in the morning, hung on trees until noon, and buried shortly thereafter? Are we to assume that at noon they were then thrown into the cave where

they had previously hid? There is a distinct word for "noon" in the Hebrew language and if noon would have been meant, it would have been so stated. "At the going down of the sun" means exactly what it says—at dusk. This was when the kings were cut down and thrown into the cave.

Let us notice 2 Chronicles 18:33–34: "And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness: therefore he said to his chariot man, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the even: and about the time of the sun going down he died." In this text not only do we have the word *ereb* (even) but *bo hashemesh*, "the time of the sun going down." Obviously they mean the same thing. Are we to assume that the king was wounded in the morning and died at noon? Or that the battle lasted until noon, then everyone went home? There is a distinct Hebrew word for "morning," and it would have been used had the battle lasted until noon only. But notice, it says the battle increased that day and it was not until even, at the going down of the sun that the king died. "Even" in these verses does not mean noon.

We have seen from Leviticus 23:32 that the end of the ninth day at even is the termination point for the ninth day and the beginning of the tenth day—the time when the ninth day begins the tenth day. Is this time period ever called "noon" in the Bible? Of course not! In Psalm 55:17 we have three periods of the day delineated. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice." Noon is distinct from both evening and morning. So, noon is not evening and noon is not when the sun goes down.

Amos 8:9 speaks of a time when God will bring about something man has not seen before on any large scale. "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." This text tells us that at noontime the day is normally light or bright, but God will cause it to become dark as it is at night. Clearly, this text shows that noontime is not "even" but the time when the light is strong.

Exodus 30:7–8 instructs Aaron in proper tabernacle procedures. Notice the instruction: "And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." The phrase here for "even" is "between the two evens" (margin). Would Aaron light the sacred lamps at noon? What purpose would there be to light the lamps at noon when there is ample light? Common sense should tell us that the lamps were lit when the sun was going down and when light was needed in the tabernacle. We use lamps when we cannot see well.

Lamps are not normally lit in the middle of the day. "Even" in this case means when the sun is going down, not midday!

We can add to the above paragraph the account in 2 Chronicles 13:11: "And they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense: the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God . . ." Here we see the sacrifices were made in the morning and evening, not at noon. No one disputes this. At the time of the evening sacrifice the sacred lamps were also lit. If evening is meant in the earlier portion of this verse when applied to the sacrifices, it is also meant when the sacred lamps were lit. This was not at noon but in the evening as the sun was going down.

Leviticus 11 gives instruction on the matter of ceremonial uncleanness. Verses 24–25 tell us, "And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even. And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even." Does this mean the man is unclean until noon? What if he contaminated himself at 1:00 P.M.? Would he then remain unclean until noon the following day? Obviously "even" here means at the end of the day as the sun is going down. It would be senseless to interpret the time period of uncleanness to be from noon to noon.

Deuteronomy 23:11 relates another example of ceremonial uncleanness. Verse 11 states, "But it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall wash himself with water: and when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again." Does this text instruct the man to begin washing himself at noon and continuing until sundown or "the second evening" as the Jews liked to call it? The marginal reference says when evening "cometh toward." When does it turn toward evening? At noon or when the sun is going down? Notice the man can return to the camp when the sun is down. It would be ridiculous to believe the man spent the entire afternoon washing himself in order to be clean and able to return to the camp after dark. *Ereb* here clearly means late in the day when the sun is going down.

The book of Ruth relates how Ruth was sent out to glean in the field. Boaz made it easier for her. He instructed the young men, "And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley" (Ruth 2:15–17). When does the work day end? At noon? It is obvious Ruth worked hard until the sun was going down.

In 1 Samuel 14:24 we see an example of a foolish command by Saul. He forbade his soldiers to eat anything even in the middle of the battle. They were in a weakened state as

a result and were not able to be as victorious as they should have been. We read, "And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food." If noon was meant here they could have eaten at that time and would have had plenty of strength to continue the battle. By the time they could eat, after the sun was down, it was too late to effect a great victory.

The account of David and Bath-sheba gives further proof that "even" is not noon. Notice the account: "And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house" (2 Samuel 11:2-4). Now stop and consider. If "even" (eveningtide) meant noon, what was David doing in bed? Taking a siesta? And what was she doing in broad daylight exposing herself in the sight of all who could see? It should be clear from the account that David arose from his bed in the early night while it was dark, and the woman was bathing at night so that she could not be observed. David did see her, though, and this is what led to the sin.

Esther 2:13-14 relates the protocol required when a concubine was called by the king. "Then thus came every maiden unto the king: whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house. In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women . . ." Now does it seem reasonable that the king of a vast empire stopped all his business every day at noon so that he could cavort with a concubine until the next day? His kingdom would not last very long if this were the case. It is obvious from this account that "evening" here meant after sundown and morrow meant the next morning.

Psalms 104:20-23 is even more explicit. "Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening." Here the contrast is made between the habits of animals and men. Many animals are nocturnal; they retire at dawn or shortly after. But this is the time men arise. Their workday begins at dawn and continues until the evening. Does this mean they stop work and retire at noon? Ridiculous, is it not? Evening here clearly means "at the going down of the sun."

Jeremiah 6:4 speaks about the destruction coming upon Jerusalem. It reads, "Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, for

the shadows of the evening are stretched out." Notice here the distinction between noon and evening. They are not the same. Men begin the war at noon when they can see well, but the day is now gone and the shadows of the evening appear. The attack continues in the night and the palace is to be destroyed. Noon is distinct from evening and night when it is dark. According to this Scripture evening is not noon. Evening is when the sun begins to set.

Zechariah 14:7, another text, is similar to Amos 8:9. Zechariah 14:7 reads, "But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light." Here is a day during which the light and dark phases are completely altered. Instead of darkness at evening time it will be light. This text reveals that in an ordinary day it is dark in the evening, not at noontime.

Proverbs 7:9 is even more explicit. This text reads: "In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:" Here *ereb* (evening) is equated with twilight and darkness. This is certainly not referring to the noon hour. The same Hebrew word for twilight is used in Jeremiah 13:16 and Isaiah 59:10. Jeremiah 13:16 reads, "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains [mountains of darkness], and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness." Darkness in the brackets, which is the correct translation, is the same word as twilight in Proverbs 7:9. Men stumble in the darkness because there is no light. There is ample light at noon but not at night. Isaiah 59:10 states, "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men." In this text the word "night" is the word used for "twilight" in Proverbs 7:9. This text foretells a time when men will be unable to see at noontime just as they are unable to see at night—a text that corroborates Amos 8:9 and Zechariah 14:7.

The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, by Harris, Archer, and Waltke, certainly one of the finest reference works available today, says of the Hebrew word *ereb* (*erev*): ". . . Sometimes, as in Exodus 12:6, the Hebrew reads literally, 'between the two evenings,' likely 'twilight,' the time interval between sunset and darkness in which there is a state of illumination. Only in Job 7:4 does '*ereb* denote 'night' proper." The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, article "Passover," page 666, states: "The counsel to kill the lambs 'in the evening' is more literally followed in the Samaritan rite; the Hebrew is properly interpreted as dusk and cannot be fully reconciled with the later practice of making the sacrifice in the late afternoon."

Gesenius' *Hebrew-English Lexicon to the Old Testament*, p. 562, under *ereb* summarizes the viewpoints of the Karaites and Samaritans who held to the twilight period for slaying the Passover lamb and the Pharisees and Rabbinites who held to an afternoon slaying. We have seen from a number of examples given in the above paragraphs that the

Bible does not support an afternoon sacrifice because not one text in the Bible designates noon as an evening time period.

In Matthew 26:20 we read: "Now when the *even* was come, he sat down with the twelve." Luke 22:14 states, "And when *the hour* was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him." John 13:30 tells when Judas departed from the Last Supper, "he then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was *night*." So, what is the explanation? There was a specific hour in the evening when the disciples gathered. We have Judas departing at night during or toward the end of the supper. Clearly, then, the Passover service or Last Supper occurred in the evening when darkness was about to set in, lasting into the night, as is illustrated by Judas' departure at night. Decidedly, the Last Supper *did not occur anytime in the afternoon!*

Josephus is often referred to for proof that the sacrifice of the Passover occurred in the afternoon. He is said to have stated that the priests slew the Passover lamb from the ninth to the eleventh hours (3 to 5 P.M.) on the fourteenth day of the month. But is this what Josephus really said? In Book 11, chapter 4, section 7 of *Antiquities of the Jews*, Josephus wrote: "And as the feast of unleavened bread was at hand, in the first month, which, according to the Macedonians, is called 'Xanthicus,' but according to us 'Nisan,' all the people ran together out of the villages to the city, and celebrated the festival, having purified themselves, with their wives and children, according to the law of their country: and they offered the sacrifice which was called the 'Passover,' on the fourteenth day of the same month, and feasted seven days. . . ." In *Wars*, Book 6, chapter 9, section 3, he says, "So these high priests, upon the coming of their feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh, but so that a company not less than ten belong to every sacrifice" Notice carefully here that Josephus does not say they killed the sacrifice from the ninth to eleventh hours *on the fourteenth day*. He simply states the Jewish practice of slaying the lambs during the ninth to eleventh hours. He does not mention the day in Book 6, chapter 9, section 3. He mentions the day in Book 11, chapter 4, section 7, only. It is by merging these two statements to make them say what they do not that the erroneous conclusion is reached the Passover lambs were slain during the ninth to eleventh hours on the fourteenth day. This conclusion is reached in order to justify the preconceived notion that the Passover lambs were slain at the *end* of the fourteenth rather than the beginning, thus running the Passover into the first day of Unleavened Bread and merging the two separate festivals.

The Jews may have felt compelled by circumstances to sacrifice the Passover in the mid-afternoon, rather than following the *original command* given in Exodus. During the days of Josiah, the Passover was "temple-ized"—centralized at the Temple in Jerusalem (see 2 Chronicles 35). As Joachim Jeremias relates: "Further, as early as the first century B.C. it

proved impossible to maintain the cultic practice going back to the Josianic Reform, whereby all the participants of the feast ate the passover sacrifice in the Temple forecourts. For lack of space the place of slaughter had to be separated from the place of eating: from the first century B.C. only the slaughter took place in the Temple area: the passover meal was transferred to the houses of Jerusalem. . . . Because of the great number of passover pilgrims the overcrowding of the passover night was such that a great many of the participants were forced to eat the passover meal in the courtyards, indeed, even on the roofs of the holy city, despite the coldness of the season" (Jeremias, pp. 42–43). It would not be incorrect to conclude that the press of participants would have made it impossible to complete the sacrifice of the Passover within the allotted time had they waited until dusk to commence. Theological support for this change most likely came in the form of interpreting "between the two evenings" to mean from noon on, a practice, as we have seen, was of late origin. But the Scriptures are clear. Deuteronomy 16:6 states: "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." Joshua 10:26–27 makes it plain that the "going down of the sun" is late in the day, after the evening commenced. As noted this text says, "And afterward Joshua smote them and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain until this very day."

One author who supports the notion that the Passover should be held at the end of the fourteenth day, rather than the beginning, admits that the meaning of "between the two evenings" must be interpreted, in each case, by its context. He reasons that since Leviticus 23:32 says a Bible day is from even to even, the ninth day at even is the close of the ninth day and beginning of the tenth. Therefore, when the Bible mentions the fourteenth day at even, it has to mean the end of the fourteenth day and the beginning of the fifteenth. He violates his own rule by arbitrarily interpreting Leviticus 23:5 to mean the end of the fourteenth day rather than the beginning. There is absolutely nothing here or in any other of the passages relating to the Passover that indicates the end of the day rather than the beginning. The late Jewish practice of designating the period "between the two evenings" as starting at noon has no Bible support and did not begin until at least *after* the reformation of Josiah, and most likely much later. In this context, since the Bible does not contradict itself (John 10:36), Exodus 12:18 can be understood in the light of Leviticus 23:5–6 only. In the Bible, *erev* (even), according to Harris, Archer, and Waltke, can refer to night proper (Job 7:4). Leviticus 23:5–6 states: "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." When Exodus 12:18 says, "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," it is referring to the seven-day period spoken of in verse 19, "Seven days shall there no leaven be found in your houses. . . ." The end of the fourteenth day to the end of the twenty-first day is the period spoken of in Exodus 12:18.

It has been stated that Jesus did not take issue with the Pharisaical practice of observing the Passover at the end of the fourteenth. We will examine this more closely later. There was plenty of opposition to the viewpoint of the Pharisees, though. McClintock and Strong tell us that the precise meaning of the phrase "between the two evenings" is greatly disputed. The Samaritans and Karaites took it to mean the space between the setting of the sun and the moment when the stars became visible, or when darkness sets in, that is, sometime between six and seven o'clock. Tradition, however, interprets the phrase to mean from afternoon to the disappearance of the sun. The Greeks, too, held that there were two evenings, one which they called the latter evening, at the close of the day; the other the former evening, which commenced immediately after noon (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Passover," p. 735).

Who were the Karaites and Samaritans who took issue with the Pharisees? McClintock and Strong say the Karaites were one of the oldest and most remarkable sects of the Jewish synagogue, whose distinguishing tenet was strict adherence to the letter of the written law, that is, the sacred writings of the Old Testament, with utter disregard to the authority of the oral law. While it is certain they existed before the eighth century A.D., the Karaites claimed to be the remains of the ten tribes led captive by Shalmaneser. The Rabbins unjustly assert that this sect was identical with the Sadducees. Research has demonstrated that the Karaites must have originated immediately after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, although they did not organize into a distinct sect until after the collection of the oral tradition. It is known that upon the completion of the Talmud there was great agitation in the Jewish community, especially in the western synagogues. There were many who adhered to the inspired writings of the Old Testament only. So great was the agitation that from an organized center in Jerusalem there emanated letters of admonition, instruction, and encouragement to distant countries, with zealous preachers who proclaimed everywhere the supreme authority of the Law, and the worthlessness of all that which, whether in the Talmud or in any other writings, was contrary to the law of Moses. Jacob Trigland, a professor at Leyden, wrote in 1698 that after the prophets had ceased, the Jews became divided on the subject of works and supererogation (that is, going beyond the call of duty), some maintaining their necessity from tradition, while others, keeping close to the written law, set them aside, and that was the beginning of the Karaites. Thus, the Jews became divided into two sects, the Karaites and the Traditionalists (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Karaites").

Although the Samaritans were a small and isolated community, their history and literature are so closely connected with the Hebrews as to give them great importance in a Biblical point of view (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Samaritan"). Hayyim Schauss states: "Modern historical research has proved that the Samaritans are not descendants of the heathen colonists settled in the northern kingdom of Israel by the conquerors of Samaria, as was once assumed. Nor are they to be identified with Nehemiah's opponents of the Persian period. Actually, the Samaritans of *today* are a small and poor remnant of an old and great Jewish sect that appeared in Palestine about the beginning of the Greek period. They form the oldest Jewish sect in existence. They were always strongly religious Jews who believed in one God and strictly observed the Law of Moses. . . . A study of their ceremonies and observances during the festival [Passover] is of special interest to us, because they practically duplicate the rites of the Jews of the very old days. What certain knowledge we have of Pesach and its rites dates only from the last century of the Second Temple [515–69 B.C.]; of what happened before there are no exact records. We can learn much about the holiday, however, from the observances of today; for they are a living record and monument of the old life lived by the children of Israel on the Mount of Ephraim. . . . The main ceremonial in the Pesach observance of the Samaritans is the sacrifice of a sheep and eating it at night, in great haste, together with matsos and bitter herbs. They begin the preparation for the feast late in the afternoon. . . . Exactly at sunset the High Priest faces westward and reads that portion of the Pentateuch which orders the slaughtering of the Pesach sacrifice. . . . They form a circle about the pit of fire, holding the lambs between their legs, and as the High Priest utters the words, 'And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at dusk,' they utter a benediction and throw the lambs, throats to the pit, where they are slaughtered . . ." (Schauss, pp. 60–63). As Schauss states in a footnote, p. 293, "Pesach and Chag ha-matsos [Unleavened Bread] were never amalgamated among the Samaritans and remained two distinct holidays."

Joshua 5 and the Second Passover

In an attempt to take issue with everything having to do with the Passover, even the second Passover of Joshua 5 has been repudiated. One author says that there is no mention here of a second month. If it had been so, Joshua certainly would have said so. Bible students are well aware of many instances in the Scriptures where the truth is ascertained by inference. This is true in the case of the second Passover of Joshua 5. Let us notice the time sequence. Joshua 4:19 tells us: "And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho." Then in Joshua 5:2–8 we have the following account:

At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord: unto whom the Lord sware that he would not shew them the land, which the Lord sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, *till they were whole.*"

Now, the circumcision took place shortly *after* the tenth day of the first month. Passover occurs on the fourteenth day. We read the Israelites abode in the camp until they were well. Then in verse 10: "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho." Could they keep the Passover on the tenth day of the first month? Notice what Genesis 34:24–25 states: "And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city. And it came to pass on the third day, *when they were sore*, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males." Circumcision is such a painful ordeal that it often takes upwards of two weeks to recover. The third day is extremely painful, according to Genesis 34. Could the Israelites carry out the sacrificial duties, all the work required to observe the Passover, three or four days after circumcision? Hardly! It is obvious from the account that the Passover Israel observed in Joshua 5:10 was the second Passover. See Numbers 9:9.

Difficult Verses?

One author says that those who believe the Passover to be at the beginning of the fourteenth have a serious problem with several verses. He then goes to Numbers 33:3 and Deuteronomy 16:2–3 to support his argument. Notice Numbers 33:3 in the Authorized Version: "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 with an high

hand in the sight of all the Egyptians." This is clear enough. Green translates it in the *Interlinear Hebrew-Greek English Bible*, "And they journeyed from Rameses in the first month on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the next day after the Passover the sons of Israel went out with a high hand, before the eyes of all the Egyptians." The Passover day includes a full twenty-four hour period. The Passover service itself occurred at the beginning of the day. Thus, the Authorized Version's use of the word "morrow" and Green's use of "the next day" mean exactly what they say—both references to the fifteenth day. The fifteenth day did not begin until after sundown of the fourteenth day. Israel departed from Rameses at night, the beginning of the fifteenth day, as is stated in Exodus 12:37, 42.

The author mentioned in the above paragraph goes to the *New Berkeley Translation* to "prove" his point. The *New Berkeley Translation* states: "The people of Israel broke camp at Ramses the morning after the Passover, on the fifteenth day of the first month." This is, of course, an interpretation of what Numbers 33:3 says. Numbers 33:3 does not say in the Hebrew, "the morning after the Passover." It says the "morrow after the Passover," which means the next day, or the fifteenth. Since the fifteenth does not begin until the sun goes down on the fourteenth, the children of Israel did not leave Ramses in the daylight portion of the fourteenth.

Deuteronomy 16:2–3 states: "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. Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; 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." According to those who hold to a Passover at the end of the fourteenth, this text means, "Do not eat it [the Passover] with bread made with yeast, But for seven days eat unleavened bread" (*New Berkeley Translation*). Again, this is an interpretation of the original Hebrew. The Authorized Version is much clearer. It indicates a clear break in thought between the first two clauses of verse three. ". . . Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it [the Passover]; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith. . . ." Notice verse four: "And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days. . . ." The inference here is clear. There is a Passover, mentioned in verses one and two, followed by a seven-day period of unleavened bread mentioned in verses three and four, clearly understood in the light of Leviticus 23:5–6: "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."

Jesus Christ Set the Example?

It is alleged that Jesus Christ personally endorsed the Passover that the Jews observed, that He took issue with the Pharisees on relatively minor things such as pots and pans, but not on the matter of an improper Passover day. He set the example by following the traditional custom of the Jews by observing the Passover at the end of the fourteenth (Luke 2:41–42). Thus, if he had observed it twenty-four hours earlier, as some believe, we would be observing it twenty-four hours before his crucifixion, death, and burial. The argument continues that the Passover was ordained as a memorial, not a foretaste day. Jesus plainly said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:2–3). Accordingly, we are to follow the teaching of the Pharisees, Jesus said, and to keep the Passover at the end of the fourteenth.

What was the Jewish religion in the days of Christ? Was it the original teaching of Moses, or did the Pharisees represent a change? Notice what Paul Johnson says. Referring to the time period of Greek rule and after, we read, "Up to a point, pious Jews were willing to learn from the Greeks and absorbed a great many more Hellenic ideas than they were prepared to admit. There had always been a rationalizing element in Mosaic legalism and theology, and this was almost unconsciously reinforced by Greek rationalism. This is how the Pharisees created the oral law, which was essentially rationalistic, to apply the archaic Mosaic law to the actious world of today. It is significant that their enemies the Sadducees, who stuck rigidly to the written law and would admit no casuistry, said that the logic of the Pharisees would lead to more respect for 'the book of Homer' (by which they meant Greek literature) than the 'holy scriptures'" (*A History of the Jews*, by Paul Johnson, p. 100). The reader will recall, no doubt, that the Greeks believed in two evenings, one that began at noon and the other at sundown.

"Sadducees" was the name given to the party representing views and practices of the law and interests of temple and priesthood directly opposite to those of the Pharisees. The Sadducees formed the temple hierarchy all through the time of the first and second temples. According to Josephus, the Sadducees regarded only those observances as obligatory which are contained in the written word, and did not recognize those not written in the law of Moses and declared by the Pharisees to be derived from the traditions of the fathers. Following the destruction of the temple they disappear from history, though their views are partly maintained and echoed by the Samaritans, with whom they are frequently identified (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Sadducees").

The Pharisees and their teachings, on the other hand, continue to be reflected in modern Judaism, according to Ellis Rivkin in *A Hidden Revolution*. He gives us much

information about the Pharisees. For example, he tells us the scribes and Pharisees are those who adhere to the traditions of the elders, a tradition valued so highly that it takes precedence over the literal words of Moses. The scribes and Pharisees are charged with substituting for divine precepts those which have been contrived by men. They nullify and make void the very word of God. The Pentateuch, God's revelation to Moses, is made the handmaiden to the traditions of the Pharisees. The Pharisees, in upholding an oral tradition along with the written law, were the exponents of the twofold law. They enjoyed such prestige and exercised such power that to all appearances they sat securely on Moses' seat (Rivkin, pp. 89–90, 123–124).

Rivkin goes on to say the Pharisees were born out of revolution. Following the Maccabean revolt, the priests, people, rulers, and elders proclaimed Simon the son of Mattathias to be the leader and high priest of the Jews forever, until a true prophet arose. For this act there was no Pentateuchal warrant, as the Pentateuch states clearly that Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, is to have for himself and his seed after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood (Numbers 25:13). The line was broken when Jason and then Menelaus violated the sacred order of high priestly succession just before the Maccabean revolt occurred. This act of elevating Simon to the high priesthood, following the revolt, as well as all previous precedent, were acts of usurpation. Simon's appointment was a revolutionary act, an outrageous audacity. Only God, through a prophet, had the right to change the order of succession (pp. 217–218). The commands of the Pentateuch, Rivkin says, had been superseded by the decision of the Great Synagogue, which God had not mandated and Moses had not ordained. Its authority was self-generated. Its authority was derived from a class that was rejected by the Sadducees because it did not recognize the binding character of the written law of Moses exclusively. This revolutionary class—the scribes-Pharisees—felt free to legitimize a new high priestly line on the basis of *laws not written down in the law of Moses*. They "had this right" because they affirmed that the laws not written down in the laws of Moses were binding laws (Rivkin, pp. 219–220).

According to Rivkin, the Mishna takes for granted that the oral law was no less revealed to Moses on Sinai than the written law and that the scholar class—scribes-Pharisees—were no less the spokesmen of God's will than the prophets had been. When the Mishna is set alongside the Pentateuch, it does not reveal a logical progression, but a quantum leap. By any measure, the Mishna is incongruent with the Pentateuch. At no time does the Mishna allow the Pentateuch to speak out unmediated by the scholar class. Priority is not given the Pentateuch; the written law is thus made utterly dependent on the unwritten law. God, according to the Pharisees, had revealed a twofold law. The Mishna is thus a repository exclusively of the teachings of the *scholar* class, which testifies to a system of authority that is self-assumed, self-asserted, and self-validated. Such a self-generated, self-validating system that is nowhere mandated in the Scriptures could only have come to being

in the wake of a deep and profound revolution—a revolution that transferred the authority of the law and the Aaronide-Zadokite priesthood to the scholar class, who made their teachings more rigorously binding than those of the written Torah (Rivkin, pp. 223–234).

What is striking, according to Rivkin, is the correlation between the view of the scholar class and the Greco-Romans. For example, the Pharisaic-scholar class had its equivalent in the philosopher-sage, philosopher-statesmen, philosopher-law-giver, and philosopher-legislator of the Hellenistic-Roman world. The teacher-disciple relationship, which is non-Pentateuchal, is a mirror image of the relationship between Socrates and Plato and between the Stoic sages and their pupils. The concept of unwritten laws was widespread among the Greek and Roman philosophers and is nowhere articulated in the Scriptures. Such law-making institutions as the Great Synagogue and so forth are very reminiscent of the Greek-Roman legislatures, especially the Roman Senate. The formulation of laws as individual items, freed of any narrative connection, is the very formulation characteristic of the legal pronouncements of Greco-Roman legal bodies. The belief that the individual, after death, enters into another world, whether Hades or the Elysium fields, along with the belief in the immortality of the soul (this was a fundamental belief of the Pharisees) echo and reecho throughout Greco-Roman literature (Rivkin, pp. 242–243).

We see the Sadducees, by contrast, as the literalists (Rivkin, p. 263). While Matthew 23 excoriates the scribes-Pharisees as hypocrites and blind guides, Jesus did acknowledge that they sat in Moses' seat as teachers of the authoritative law. But this law was the twofold law, because it was their tradition which became the oral law, their hallmark. Indeed Pharisaism was the Judaism of Jesus' day, adhered to by all but a handful of Sadducees, a smattering of Essenes, and by a minority of malcontents who despaired of effective Pharisaic leadership against Rome (Rivkin, pp. 269, 276). In spite of all this, author Bo Reicke tells us that the high priests, for some time before the ministry of Christ and after, were Sadducees. Annas held the post until A.D. 15, but continued to exercise control over the office until his death in A.D. 35. At the time of Jesus and the apostles, Reicke says, the high priest had important duties as a result of his traditional religious significance and newly regained political position. He represented all the Jews before the God of Israel, especially at the annual festivals, whenever possible performing liturgical functions on other occasions, and also supervised the temple worship and the sacrificial system with their attendant priests and Levites. During the first procuratorship (A.D. 6–41), the high priest was the most powerful man in Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, after the procurator (*The New Testament Era*, by Bo Reicke, pp. 143–144).

It should be apparent what Jesus meant in Matthew 23 when He said, ". . . The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (vv. 2–3). The

Pharisees held to a twofold law—the written law and the oral law. The oral law was man-made, not inspired of God. Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament (1 Corinthians 10:4). He gave the written law. Would He command Christians to disobey the inspired written law in favor of an uninspired oral law? Emphatically no! Therefore, the only law the Pharisees taught that had authority and should be obeyed was the written law. This is why He said in Matthew 23:13: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." Jesus condemned the teaching of the Pharisees because their oral law prevented men from obtaining eternal life. This should hardly be wondered at when we consider its fundamental teaching was the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The *Critical and Experimental Commentary*, by "Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown," gives the correct analysis of Jesus' statement in Matthew 23:

. . . in Moses' seat—that is, as interpreters of the law given by Moses. 3. All therefore—that is, all which, as *sitting in that seat* and teaching *out of that law* they bid you observe, that observe and do. The word, "therefore" is thus, it will be seen of great importance, as limiting those injunctions which He would have them obey to what they fetched from the law itself.

In other words, Jesus instructed His disciples to obey their teaching only inasmuch as it emanates from the written law. He did not uphold or teach His disciples to obey the oral law. All of this is made quite clear by Jesus' statement in Matthew 16:

Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the *doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6–12).

The teaching of both the Pharisees and Sadducees was corrupt. Jesus instructed His disciples to pay no heed to it, as *He* was the able Instructor of the Law of God (Matthew 5:17–18).

Jesus said the religious leaders transgressed the Law of God by their traditions (Matthew 15:3). He added:

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15:7–9).

And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. . . . Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye (Mark 7:9, 13).

In another sharp denunciation, Jesus called them blind guides (Matthew 23:16, 24) stoutly rebuking them by saying, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:33).

The next question is: Did Christ have to be killed the same time the Passover lamb was slain? Some believe the affirmative to this question proves that the Passover lamb was slain in the daylight portion of the fourteenth, since Christ was crucified at this time. John, however, makes a significant statement regarding the answer to this question. He said, "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" (John 13:1). Jesus knew that His *hour* had come. This moment occurred at the Passover meal, the very moment when Jesus had been consigned over to Satan and to the world. The fact that the Jews, after the destruction of the temple, had become confused in knowing when to kill the Passover has no bearing on the significance of this statement. They should have slain the Messiah at the beginning of the fourteenth day, not toward the end. Jesus knew that His hour had come at that very moment—at the beginning of the fourteenth—not nearly twenty hours later when the Jews actually killed Him.

The Pentecost Argument

The time to observe the Passover was not the only argument between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The *counting* of Pentecost was another major issue. Notice the Bible command for the counting of Pentecost: "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and

ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord" (Leviticus 23:15–16). The wave sheaf was offered during the Days of Unleavened Bread, so the sabbath from which to count, the one in question, was a sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The problem is that we have three sabbaths that can be counted from during the Days of Unleavened Bread—the first and second high sabbath days as well as the weekly sabbath.

Josephus said the Pharisees observed Pentecost on Sivan 6, counting fifty days from the morrow (the wave-sheaf day) after the first high sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread (*Ant.*, Book 3, chap. 10, sec. 5–6). The Sadducees, on the other hand, rejected the teaching of the Pharisees (*Ant.*, Book 13, chap. 10, sec. 6) and began the count for Pentecost on the morrow after the weekly sabbath (wave-sheaf Sunday) during the Days of Unleavened Bread (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Pentecost"). In both cases, the Pharisaic count from the first high sabbath and the Sadducean count from the weekly sabbath end after forty-nine days (*ibid.*, s.v. "Passover") and Pentecost is observed on the fiftieth day. But notice again the Bible command: "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath *shall ye number fifty days*; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord" (Leviticus 23:15–16). The Bible does not say to count forty-nine days; it says to count fifty days! When does the fifty-day count end? The answer: When a full fifty days are completed. Please read our article, "The Plain Truth About Pentecost."

According to the Hebrew numeration rule, when the preposition *min* is used with respect to time, the count is always inclusive (*Gesenius' Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, pp. 484–485). This means the count begins on the day following the high sabbath, in the case of the Pharisees, or the day following the weekly sabbath—Sunday—in the case of the Sadducees. But notice carefully Leviticus 23:15–16 again. The word "morrow" is found once in verse 15 and once in verse 16. In both cases the Hebrew word *min* is used with "morrow," one at the beginning of the count, the other at the end of the count. This makes the count inclusive at the beginning; for example, in the case of the Sadducees, Sunday is day one of the count. But what about the end of the count? Should not the fiftieth day also be included? Yes, indeed! But of what are both the Pharisees and Sadducees guilty? They make the count inclusive at the beginning and *exclusive* at the end; that is, they ignore the fiftieth day of the count and count only forty-nine days, just as McClintock and Strong point out. No wonder Jesus said, ". . . beware . . . of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:12). Neither one of them is to be trusted in the matter of counting Pentecost! Pentecost should not be observed until the fifty-day count has been completed. Archbishop Cranmer, no doubt, was aware of this; in his English translation of 1539 he translated Acts 2:1 as follows: "*When the fifty days had come to an end*, they were all with one accord together in one place." It has been said the key to

Pentecost is the number "fifty." It would be more accurate to say "the key to Pentecost is *how* to count fifty."

There is a unique consideration with the Day of Pentecost not found on any of the other Holy Days. Pentecost is the only Holy Day that must be counted in order to be properly kept. An examination of Leviticus 23 shows fixed dates for all the Holy Days, with the exception of Pentecost. Why did God instruct the Israelites to count Pentecost? If it is counted from the morrow after the first high sabbath day during the Days of Unleavened Bread, as the Pharisees reckoned, it would always fall on a fixed date—Sivan 6. In such a case there would be no need to count, as it would automatically fall on the same date each year. If it is counted from the morrow after the weekly sabbath—wave-sheaf Sunday—it would not fall on a fixed date because the beginning of the count, while always on a Sunday, would not be a fixed date year by year. The only variable date from which to count during the Days of Unleavened Bread is the morrow after the weekly sabbath, as both of the annual high sabbaths fall on fixed dates (Leviticus 23:7–8).

Remember, the Pharisees did not appear until about the second century B.C. The Aaronic priesthood had represented God for 1,200 years before the time of the Pharisees. The Sadducean party developed in opposition to the Pharisees after the rejection of the Aaronic priesthood. The Pharisees represented an apostate scholar class which relied on Greek rationalism and human reasoning to develop a theology opposed to the revelation given by Jesus Christ, the God of the Old Testament. To say the sabbath from which to count in Leviticus 23:15 is the first high sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, and that it represents the older and better opinion, is sheer nonsense. The Sadducees reflect the older and better opinion, based on more than a thousand years' precedence. The argument over the proper day from which to count Pentecost has raged since about 200 B.C. McClintock and Strong tell us that the precise meaning of the word "sabbath" in Leviticus 23:15 has been a matter of dispute from time immemorial. The Sadducees in the time of the second temple and the Karaites in the eighth century A.D. took it to mean the weekly sabbath and maintained that the omer (wave sheaf) was offered on the day following the weekly sabbath that falls during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Pentecost, according to them, would always fall on the first day of the week, but not on a fixed date (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Pentecost"). The Pharisees held, as we have noted, to the day after the first high sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread for the beginning of the count. Thus Pentecost always fell on a fixed date. In both cases the count is incomplete, as both count only forty-nine days.

Since the Pharisees were opposed to the Sadducees, they could not accept the plain, common sense argument that there would be no need to count Pentecost if the count began on a fixed date. So, a rationale was developed to support the notion that there should be a count. As one author asks, why count Pentecost? His answer is not because the date was

reckoned from the weekly sabbath, which falls on different dates each year, but because of a formal countdown inaugurated because Pentecost is considered to be the end of the Passover season. This countdown is a custom handed down from ancient times. Supposedly, the countdown illustrates a connecting link between Passover and Pentecost and may be regarded as preparatory to the feast of Pentecost. It is counted in order to magnify Pentecost, just as one counts the days and hours before the arrival of an old friend, according to Maimonides. From the time of the second temple, Pentecost was called the termination of the Passover and the termination of the spring harvest. The entire rationale is given by McClintock and Strong, in the article "Pentecost." They note that the custom has probably been handed down from ancient times. Again, we see it was a custom or tradition, not substantiated by the Bible. What did Jesus say about the traditions of the Pharisees?

He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye *reject* the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition (Mark 7:6–9).

An unnecessary countdown, not directed or sanctioned by the Scriptures and based on an erroneous beginning point for counting Pentecost, is a vivid example of the traditions Jesus was condemning.

One present-day writer propounds another argument to sustain the notion of an unnecessary count for Pentecost. He says that when the law was given to Moses there was no fixed calendar. According to him, the "fact" that there is a fixed calendar now and that Pentecost always falls on Sivan 6 makes no difference. Yet, in another one of his articles on the subject of the Passover, he says that God gave Israel the inspired calendar at the time of the Exodus. What a calendar it must have been, one without any fixed dates and with the length of the month so unstable that every Holy Day, not just Pentecost, would have to have been counted in order to keep the right day. But God is not the author of confusion. When He gave Moses the calendar (Exodus 12:2), you can be sure it was fixed and stable. The fact that the Jews later published the calendar calculations does not mean it did not exist as a fixed calendar originally.

Deuteronomy 16:9–10

Deuteronomy 16:9–10 has been quoted in order to sustain a Sivan 6 Pentecost. It reads: "Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from

such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." According to the argument, the word "weeks" (*shabua*) refers to the seven-week count beginning with the morrow after the first high day during the Days of Unleavened Bread and ending on Sivan 6. "Weeks" could not refer to a week that goes from Sabbath to Sabbath; it refers to a week that begins on a non-Sabbath day and ends on a non-Sabbath day. Therefore, "seven Sabbaths" in Leviticus 23:15 refers to seven weeks that do not begin with a Sabbath, not seven weeks from Sabbath to Sabbath. There is a problem with this, however. Leviticus 23:15–16 uses the word *haShabbat*, which refers to the weekly Sabbath only. Deuteronomy 16:9 refers to a plain week. The confusion occurs when men try to mix the two counts, when in reality they are distinct and separate.

What is evident in Deuteronomy 16:9 is that the count involves weeks as the primary consideration, not days, as is the case in Leviticus 23:15–16. If we were to make this a count of days, it would be a forty-nine day count—seven seven-day periods—with the starting point the Monday following Wavesheaf Sunday. This is because Deuteronomy 16:9 states, "Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn." Day one of this count would not be complete until the end of Monday, thus making it day one of the count. The ending point of the count would coincide with the last day of the fifty-day count in Leviticus 23:15–16. The count must be complete before the feast is observed. This is common with both the Leviticus and Deuteronomy counts. If we were to make the Deuteronomy count a count of days, it would not have an inclusive beginning as does the count in Leviticus and would therefore commence one full day later. The main point to realize from Deuteronomy 16:9 is that because God has chosen to emphasize the counting of weeks, there is a very simple way to count—and arrive at the correct day for the observance of the Feast of Weeks. If we were to meet "one week from today," we would meet on the same day of the week—seven days later. Likewise, starting with Wavesheaf Sunday—one week from that Sunday is the following Sunday. Seven weeks from Wavesheaf Sunday is the seventh Sunday. Once those seven weeks are complete, then we observe the Feast of Weeks starting at sundown at the end of the seventh week. This is seen in the Hebrew counting method of Leviticus 15:18–19, 28–29 and Judges 14:12, 18. It is very simple indeed. And regardless of which count is used, the Feast of Weeks—Pentecost—is always on the second day of the week—a Monday!

Joshua 5

Joshua 5:10–12 is another text used to "prove" the count for Pentecost begins on the morrow after the first high sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Notice Joshua

5:10–12: "And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." It is incorrectly argued that the command given in Leviticus, "And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings" (Leviticus 23:14), indicates that the Passover of Joshua 5 fell on a sabbath and the following day—Sunday—was the wave-sheaf day. It cannot be denied that the Passover in Joshua 5 fell on the weekly sabbath, but it has already been demonstrated earlier in this work this was not the first month of the sacred calendar, but the second. Therefore, the morrow after the Passover in Joshua 5 is not the wave-sheaf day. Wave-sheaf day occurred one month before. Keep in mind that during the Days of Unleavened Bread there are three sabbaths, two annual sabbaths and a weekly sabbath. Pentecost is counted from the first month only. In some cases the annual sabbath and the weekly sabbath fall on the same day. It is assumed this is the case in Joshua 5:10, so the wave-sheaf count began on Sunday following the Passover which fell on the weekly sabbath—thus making the weekly sabbath and first high sabbath fall on the same day. But, this is not the case here. The context of Joshua 4 and 5 proves that the Passover is that of the second month.

The Sabbaton Theory

The "Sabbaton theory" is supposedly a New Testament proof that Pentecost falls on Sivan 6. According to this theory, the Greek phrase "day of the sabbaths" refers to Pentecost. But the *Word Study Concordance*, p. 679, shows *sabbaton* to simply be the word *shabbath* with a grammatical ending. Texts which supposedly prove this phrase refers to Pentecost are Luke 4:16, Acts 13:14, and Acts 16:11–13. In Luke 4:16 we read: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." The word "sabbath day" includes the Greek *sabbaton*. There is nothing in the context here that could remotely refer to Pentecost. Acts 13:14 states, "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down." Again, while *sabbaton* is used for the word "sabbath," there is nothing to indicate this refers to Pentecost. The last text which uses *sabbaton* is Acts 16:11–13 and reads as follows: "Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis; And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither." One writer reasons that the apostles abode at Philippi several days but did not meet

until Pentecost. Pentecost did not fall on a Sunday or Monday here because they would have met on the sabbath prior to Pentecost, which would have been mentioned. In all of the above texts, which supposedly support the "Sabbaton theory," we see absolutely nothing to give credence to such a notion, except the speculations and wishful thinking of some who are frantically trying to prove something which does not exist! Though *The Jerusalem Bible* translates *sabbaton* as the "Day of Pentecost," the reader should keep in mind this is an interpretation only. There is no evidence, either historically or Biblically, that *sabbaton* refers to the day of Pentecost.

Follow the Pharisees?

What about the suggestion that we should follow the teachings of the Pharisees as they relate to the laws of God and the Torah? Or that Jesus observed Pentecost the same day the Pharisees did? Or that not once did Jesus say to look to the Sadducean priests for spiritual truth and guidance? Or that Jesus did not rebuke the Pharisees for their teaching concerning the law of Moses?

If there is anything we should not do, it is to follow the teachings of the Pharisees. They do not represent God's revelation. Rather, they represent speculation and Greek rationalism in much of their thought. Their law was a twofold law—one of the written word and an oral law without Scriptural foundation. Inasmuch as they adhered to the written word, fine. But, their oral law is another matter. Much ado is made by one writer concerning the matter of the Pharisees' sitting on Moses' seat and hence to be obeyed in everything. Nonsense! Jesus said, "beware . . . of the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees." It is true that not once did Jesus look to the Sadducean priests for spiritual truth and guidance. But neither did He look to the Pharisees. As to the day of Pentecost that Jesus observed, we can certainly infer from the Scriptures that neither the Pharisees nor the Sadducees were the guides. Both kept Pentecost on an incorrect day. The Pharisees on Sivan 6, counting from the wrong sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread with an incomplete count of forty-nine days; the Sadducees counting from the correct day, but also using an incomplete count.

It is asserted that since the Pharisees controlled the calendar, all the Jews followed their rules and kept Pentecost on Sivan 6. You can be sure of one thing. The Sadducees did not! And if the Sadducees did not, neither did others. It may be moot to say the Pharisees controlled the calendar. Rivkin thinks so, but this is not what Reicke indicates. Reicke said that during the time of Christ, the Sadducean high priest was, next to the Roman procurator, the most powerful man in Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, and that he supervised the temple worship (Reicke, p. 144). The truth of the matter is that worship during the Holy Days appears to have been a rather loosely held affair. McClintock and Strong tell us that the festival continued in a minor degree for a whole week and that the days that followed the

beginning were semi-holidays (McClintock and Strong, s.v. "Pentecost"). So, it does not appear that the Pharisees had rigid control of Holy Day observance, as some believe.

Scholarship the Key?

One author states that the reason the Church of God kept Pentecost on the wrong day was that its leader did not consult authorities and knowledgeable scholars. To this writer, truth comes by scholarship, not by revelation. But this flies in the face of the entire Bible teaching on truth. The Bible clearly tells us truth comes by revelation only, not by scholarship. If scholars have the truth today, why are they all in disagreement? It is difficult to find even two that agree on the really hard issues of the Bible. We should not think for a moment that the Bible substantiates the notion that truth comes by scholarship. This same writer tells us it is nonsense to believe that a work of God has to have total truth at its beginning. This is true, but neither will truth that may come later contradict any previous truth. Truth that has been revealed is absolute. Subsequent revelation will not alter previously revealed truth. Added truth will always complement and augment original truth; it will never be contrary to it. So, to say that a church now has new truth, for example—Pentecost—after believing something else for forty years means one of two things: Either it never had the truth to begin with and cannot represent any revelation from God; or what is now called new truth is, in fact, apostasy.

Also, this same writer asks why it should be difficult to swallow the fact that the Church of God was in error regarding the correct day to observe Pentecost for forty years, when history shows the church did not even realize the need to observe Pentecost for hundreds of years.

History is scant regarding the true Church of God. The lack of a historical record does not mean that there were not people observing the correct Pentecost. What the Bible does clearly show is that during the A.D. period there were only two major works of God for certain: The work that occurred during the first century A.D. by Christ and the apostles and the work that is to occur in the last days shortly before the return of Christ. In both cases the Bible clearly shows apostasy was to occur, one during and shortly after the time of the apostles; the other, just before the return of Christ. Doctrinal changes, in the light of this knowledge, should be viewed with much suspicion.

This same author asks, "How can we know whether any inspiration we receive is from God or not?" "Should we merely assume it is?" he asks. His answer is that before we assume God reveals the truth, we should get all the facts. Also, we should question whether or not God really did such a thing. Yet, in another article he wrote on the subject of the Passover, he states, "God opened my mind and the truth sprang out from the Scriptures with

crystal clarity. . . . I suddenly saw where Herbert Armstrong made his major error, and why he misunderstood the clear sequence of events." Apparently, "inspiration" applies to this writer, but to no one else.

Now, what about the statement that, since Mr. Armstrong supposedly kept Sivan 6 for two or three years very early in his ministry, we should keep Pentecost on Sivan 6 also—that this represents the original revelation?

While it is believed by some that Mr. Armstrong kept Sivan 6 for a short period of time, there is no solid proof he did. No old-time members ever recall a Sivan 6, and the date was never hinted at by early church officials. If he did keep a Sivan 6, it was during a formative period of learning and both Sivan 6 and a Sunday Pentecost were soon rejected. At the time the work began, a Monday Pentecost was firmly established, and was observed by the church for nearly forty years. God does not initiate a formal activity ensconced in error. While all the truth may not be known at the time, added truth will supplement the old. It will never be contrary to it. How long did it take the Apostle Paul to learn the revelation of Jesus Christ? He said it took three years (Galatians 1:17–18). Likewise, it took Mr. Armstrong some period of time to learn the original truth. The notion, then, that because he may have observed Pentecost on Sivan 6 we should do so also is merely another attempt to substantiate Jewish fables. At the most, it would be a guess to say Mr. Armstrong kept a Sivan 6. If he did, the above paragraph should make it plain that a complete fifty-day count from the morrow after the weekly sabbath was the premise for the Monday Pentecost observed for nearly forty years in the Church of God.

What the Bible does show is that the Passover should be observed at the beginning of the fourteenth day of the first month. The Days of Unleavened Bread are from the fifteenth through the twenty-first, inclusive. Pentecost is observed after a fifty-day count which begins on the morrow after the weekly sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. This makes Pentecost fall on a Monday each year, but on a different calendar date. Jewish tradition—Pharisee as well as Sadducee—has no place in the quest for truth. The Apostle Paul was once a Pharisee, but you can be sure he repudiated Pharisaism's tenets once Christ called him to the true revelation (Galatians 1:12; Colossians 2:8; Titus 1:14).



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