

Why Passover Is NOT a High Day

Perhaps because some Jews eventually and wrongfully combined the Passover with the first high day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, some believe that Passover is the first day of Unleavened Bread. But is it?

If these two observances are the same day, then why do they each have their own designation: "Passover" and "Feast of Unleavened Bread"? Similarly, the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles is separate from the Eighth Day; each having its own identification and meaning, even as one comes immediately after the other.

Overwhelming evidence in both Old and New Testaments shows that Passover was never considered a high day or kept as a Sabbath. The Passover was, however, a memorial of a certain event that was to be remembered in its own distinctive way separate from the feast that follows.

Originally the Jews kept two separate observances, just as Yahweh had commanded in Exodus 12 and Leviticus 23. But at the time of their exile to Babylon the Jews began to keep the two as a combined observance. It is this later, unscriptural practice that has contributed to much of the confusion, especially for New Testament readers who are forced to follow translators who allowed later Jewish practice to influence their translations.

Noteworthy, however, are the more Scriptural Karaite Jews and Samaritans who still observe Passover on the 14th and the Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning the 15th (see *Which Day Is the Passover?* by Phinehas Ben Zadock).

This is what the *Encyclopedia Judaica* says: "The feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the feast of Unleavened Bread. Originally, both parts existed separately; but at the beginning of the [Babylonian] exile they were combined," Vol. 13, p. 169. This is a significant statement. Later Jewish practice combined the two observances on the 15th of Abib.

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* validates the fact that the two observances were originally separate: "Leviticus 23, however, seems to distinguish between Passover, which is set for the fourteenth day of the month, and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. ...The Festival lasted seven days, from sunset on the fourteenth day to sunset on the twenty-first day," ("Passover," p.548).

The book *The Torah*, by W. Gunther Plaut, tells us, "The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread rituals were originally two separate observances which were combined sometime between the events of the Exodus and the redaction of the text," p.456.

Therefore, history as well as the Jews themselves admit that at one time — when Yahweh gave the law to Israel — that these were two distinctly separate observances on different days. But an apostasy occurred at the time that the Jews were taken captive to Babylon, which led to the combining of the two observances — moving Passover to the first high day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Passover Scripturally precedes the days of Unleavened Bread, and has a uniquely separate meaning that is lost when it is thrown in with the Feast that follows.

12 Reasons Why the Passover is Not the First High Day

In Yahweh's commands, the Feasts were to be kept as, and were to include, special high days of rest, convocation, and fellowship (a gathering together of the congregation); in contrast, the Passover was commanded to be kept solemnly by individual families huddled in fear within their separate homes (Exo. 12:1-13).

An Old Testament Scripture that seems to put "feast" and "Passover" together is Exodus 34:25, where the word "feast" is *chag* and refers to the sacrificial VICTIM of Passover — NOT the

FEAST of Passover. What some fail to point out is that *chag* has two primary meanings, only one of which is "feast." Notice how **Strong's** renders it: "2282 = *chag* = (from 2287); a festival, or a VICTIM therefore: — solemn feast (day), SACRIFICE, solemnity."

Using the correct meaning for *chag*, Exodus 34:25 would more accurately read, "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the victim (*chag*) of the Passover be left unto the morning."

An abundance of other important differences separates Passover and the Feast that follows it. Here are some of them:

1. No Feast In Egypt — In Exodus 5:1, Moses tells Pharaoh to let Israel go so that they may hold a Feast [the upcoming Unleavened Bread] to Yahweh in the wilderness. Pharaoh suggests that Israel stay and "sacrifice in the land," (8:25) a suggestion Moses flatly rejects (v. 26), saying that to do so on Egyptian soil would be an ABOMINATION. Moses is adamant, saying that they **MUST** go three days into the wilderness to sacrifice to Yahweh and keep the Feast as Yahweh commanded (8:27). (Sacrifices were included in the law of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, see Num. 28:19-24.)

However, the Passover was an entirely DIFFERENT story. Israel did indeed keep the Passover and its sacrifice in Egypt - in Goshen on the 14th, proving that it could not have been part of the Feast that Moses said could be kept only "in the wilderness" and NOT among the Egyptians.

2. Strangers Prohibited; Strangers Accepted — Yahweh specifically commands in the law that NO STRANGER shall eat of the Passover ("There shall no stranger [alien] eat thereof," Exo. 12:43). In verse 48 He says all strangers must first be circumcised "as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."

Here again the Feast of Unleavened Bread is markedly different. Unlike with the Passover, strangers are commanded to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread: *Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eats that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, WHETHER HE BE A STRANGER or born in the land,* Exodus 12:19.

Strangers are to be included in keeping Yahweh's Sabbaths and Feasts (see Exo. 20:10, Lev. 16:29, Deut. 29). Prohibiting uncircumcised strangers to partake of Passover sets Passover apart from a Feast. Passover is a separate memorial kept a day before the Feast of Unleavened Bread only by those who have been circumcised.

3. One Serious, The Other Joyful — Unlike a typical Feast with its fellowship gatherings and camaraderie, Passover was anything but a happy time, Exodus 12:1-14. It was kept by Israel SEPARATELY in their homes, and was marked by death, sadness, and trepidation as the death angel "passed over" (hence the name "Passover"). It is the same in the New Testament with the beating and death that Yahshua suffered — a very somber time.

4. No Labor On The High Day — Israel spent the daylight part of the 14th (Passover day) spoiling the Egyptians of their possessions (Exo. 12:36) and packing up and moving their belongings, families, and cattle from Goshen to Rameses. This involved a considerable amount of effort and work, which would be a great violation if this were a high day Sabbath. Joyfully gathering at Rameses as the preparation day (Passover day) ended, Israel observed the first high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread on the fifteenth. They cheerfully left Egypt at night, Numbers 33:3 (where "sight," *'ayin*, means either a literal "in view of" or figuratively as, "in favor or regard"), Deuteronomy 16:1. On Abib 21 (the second high Sabbath) they crossed the Red Sea, clear of Egypt, singing the victory song of Moses.

5. Unleavened Bread With Different Meanings — Even the unleavened bread used in the two observances has entirely different connotations. Yahshua said the unleavened bread taken at Passover represented His body, Matthew 26:26. On the other hand, Paul said the unleavened bread eaten during the Feast for seven days represented "sincerity and truth." *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth,* 1 Corinthians 5:8.

6. Scripture Contrasts The Two — Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are not one and the same feast because Scripture gives many separate distinctions for each. We find that the observance called Passover is on the 14th, and another observance called the Feast of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th. They constitute two observances on two DIFFERENT days. Similarly, the Feast of Tabernacles is a Feast for seven days, followed by a separate day called the Eighth Day.

These Scriptures show a marked contrast between Passover on the one day and the Feast that follows the next day: The law said, *In the FOURTEENTH day of the first month at even [twilight, **Tanakh**, Jewish translation] is Yahweh's Passover. And on the FIFTEENTH day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto Yahweh: seven days you must eat unleavened bread,* Leviticus 23:5-6.

And in the FOURTEENTH day of the first month is the Passover of Yahweh. And in the FIFTEENTH day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten, Numbers 28:16-17. Here are two different observances kept on two different days. How much clearer can Yahweh be?

7. Passover Not Called A High Day — Yahweh calls Passover a "service," not a Sabbath, Exodus 12:25-26; 13:5. In contrast, the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins and ends on a high day Sabbath, Leviticus 23:7-8.

8. Passover—Feast Dividing Line — Just after Israel crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land, they camped at Gilgal to keep the Passover. The account from Joshua 5:10-11 reads: "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." Clearly, they were observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the day after the Passover, which is how the **Tanakh** translates that part of the verse 11. Incidentally, corn means grain; the Holy Land didn't have corn as we know it, neither would corn be harvested in the spring. (An example of translator preconditioning.)

9. Where Are The OTHER Passover Offerings? — The law of Numbers 28:24-25 says, *After this manner you shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto Yahweh: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering, And on the seventh day you shall have an holy convocation; you shall do no servile work.* Special offerings were required for all seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The seventh day being a special convocation, the last high day.

If Passover is the first day of the feast, why didn't Israel ever sacrifice other first-day Feast offerings on Passover in ADDITION to the Passover sacrifice? Why didn't Yahweh command these other sacrifices to be done in conjunction with the Passover sacrifice, as He does with regular Feasts that have sacrifices? What's more, Yahweh compares the Feast of Tabernacles in Ezekiel 45:25 with the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. Tabernacles does not have a separate observance on the first high day of its seven-day Feast any more than the Feast of Unleavened Bread has Passover on the first high day.

10. Does Passover Memorial Make Eight Days Of The Feast? — From the time we take the emblems of unleavened bread and the cup, we are to purge (*Strong's* No. 1571 *ekkathairo*), meaning to cleanse thoroughly, to eliminate, to purify, to get rid of the old leaven. Does this mean that we are now keeping eight days of unleavened bread rather than seven, as some allege?

The laws says we are to eat unleavened bread at the Passover memorial service (Exo. 12:8). Passover day, being the "preparation" for the high day of the coming Feast (Mark 15:42), is a time to rid our homes of all leavening.

No command exists, however, to eat unleavened bread on the rest of the Passover day, only to use unleavened bread for the memorial itself. The command for DAILY eating of unleavened bread comes with the start of the feast on the 15th (Lev. 23:6; Num. 28:17). Saying that eating the unleavened Passover symbol at the start of the 14th constitutes eight days of eating unleavened bread is faulty human rationale. It is no more true than saying that putting Yahshua in the tomb a few minutes before sunset accounts for one of the three days in the "three days and three nights" prophecy of Matthew 12:40!

Yahweh simply tells us that the Passover memorial bread must be unleavened.

11. Getting The Leaven Out — We spend the rest of Passover day taking leaven from our houses, then begins a separate seven days of eating unleavened bread. Whether we choose to call that eating unleavened bread "eight days" is irrelevant — especially when the Bible is dealing with two different, separate, and distinct observances. Because the Savior has been sacrificed for our sins, we are then to continue to feed upon the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." We are to keep (No. 1858 *heortazomen*, "keep on keeping") the Feast in the physical and spiritual sense.

Having partaken of the "Bread of Life," we eat nothing leavened for the rest of the 14th. Then we begin eating unleavened bread on the 15th and for the six days thereafter. Eating toasted leavened bread at breakfast and a sandwich at noon following the Passover memorial, as someone suggests, does not allow us to "purge out the old leaven." (Did Israel munch on leavened bread as they left their homes after Passover? No record of such exists.) The seven days of "Unleavened" start that evening at sunset. Following Passover, we may choose not to eat bread of any kind until the fifteenth, then obediently eat unleavened bread.

Consider this fact — on Passover night ancient Israelites still had leavened bread in their houses. The leaven stayed in their houses, while they removed THEMSELVES from it the daylight portion of Passover day as they gathered to leave Egypt. The law in Deuteronomy 16:4 says no leaven was to be found "with thee in all thy coast seven days" of the Feast.

If Passover is the first high day of Unleavened Bread, then Israel violated Yahweh's command by retaining leaven in their homes on Passover. By the start of the Feast all leavening was to be removed: "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with you, neither shall there be leaven seen with you in all your quarters" (Exo. 13:7).

Instead of getting the leaven out of their houses, they themselves got out of their "leavened" houses and took unleavened bread and kneading troughs with them on this preparation day before the high Sabbath. We do the same on Passover day as we separate ourselves from leavening. And so by the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread all leavening is removed. Then we begin eating unleavened bread for seven complete days.

12. Preparation Day Is Not A High Day, But The Preparation For It — The Passover is called the "preparation day" for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins on the annual Sabbath on the fifteenth of Abib (Matt. 27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:14). Scripturally, the "preparation day" is the day to prepare for the Feast, to rid our domiciles of leaven. By simple

definition the preparation day of Passover is not a high day Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but a time to "prepare" for the high day.

Notice: Preparation is **Strong's Concordance** Greek Dictionary No. 3904, "*Paraskeue*, par-ask-yoo-ay; as if from No. 3903; readiness:- preparation [3903: get ready: - prepare self, be (make) ready]" for the high day.

Keep in mind that there was no command for Israel to get leaven out of their houses the night the destroying angel came over, on Abib 14. This is why Yahweh specifically warned Israel not to eat "leavened" bread with the Passover, Exodus 12:8. They had not cleaned (purged) the leaven out of their houses, and consequently it could not have been a time of being "unleavened," as is the first high day of the Feast.

“Preparation” as Found in the New Testament Scriptures

The New Testament shows beyond any doubt that the "preparation" day, meaning Passover, came before the first high day Sabbath of the Feast.

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of Yahweh, came and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Yahshua, Mark 15:43.

Here preparation day is plainly defined for us: it is the day before the high Sabbath. This preparation was the Passover - the day our Savior was put to death and Joseph of Arimathaea took the body of Yahshua and prepared it for burial (just before sundown). Passover was BEFORE the high day, not the high day itself. This honorable man and follower of Yahshua knew he had to get the Savior's body off the tree and buried before sundown began the high day.

Another passage reads, *And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on,* Luke 23:54. The sun was falling on the horizon, the preparation day was soon to end and the first day of Unleavened Bread was about to begin. If Passover was the first day of the Feast, a high day, the Sabbath would not be "drawing on" but it would already BE the Sabbath.

Here are other New Testament verses speaking of the preparation day:

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the tree on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and [that] they might be taken away, John 19:31.

The Jews knew that the coming sunset brought on the first day of Unleavened Bread, a high Sabbath. Joseph and Nicodemus knew about and honored the coming Sabbath of Abib fifteen, which followed the preparation day.

And, behold, [there was] a man named Joseph, a counselor; [and he was] a good man, and a just: (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) [he was] of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of Yahweh. This [man] went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Yahshua, Luke 23:50-52. (See Mark 15:43; John 19:38)

And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Yahshua by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound [weight], John 19:39.

Both Joseph and Nicodemus were eager to get Yahshua down from the tree before nightfall because of Deuteronomy 21:23, the start of the high day of the Feast. Therefore, they hurriedly wrapped Him for burial. They did not complete the burial wrappings because the high Sabbath drew on.

There laid they Yahshua therefore because of the Jews' preparation [day]; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. John 19:42. The Jews even today recognize Passover as the preparation day, but since their Babylonian captivity have kept the observance a day later, having merged Passover

with the first day of Unleavened Bread. Still, they keep a Seder Service at home the night before, a vestige of the true 14th Passover.

And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on, Luke 23:54). The Sabbath (Abib 15) drew on (was coming), therefore, the preparation day, Passover, is not a Sabbath, for they labored to care for the body BEFORE the Sabbath arrived at sunset.

And he bought [Strong's No. 59, agorazo=to go to market] fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulcher, Mark 15:46.

Buying and Working Prohibited on a High Day Sabbath

Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple, bought fine linen. He hurried to put the body of Yahshua away before the high day arrived at sunset. Wrapping the body in fine linen, he laid Him in the tomb. How could Joseph buy fine linen if the Passover, the preparation day, was a high Sabbath? Obviously he would not have bought the linen to wrap the dead body in until AFTER he saw Yahshua nailed up to die, which happened about 9 a.m. on Passover.

While eating the Passover with His disciples, Yahshua told Judas, "What you do, do it quickly," (John 13:26-30). The disciples assumed Yahshua meant the Judas was to buy necessities for the coming Feast of Unleavened Bread (v. 29). If Passover were a high day, would they presume that Judas was to do business on a high day?

Luke 23:26 and Mark 15:21 tell of Simon a Cyrenian (the father of Alexander and Rufus) coming out of the country and being forced to carry the impalement stake. "Country" is *Strong's* No. 68 (Greek = *agros*), from No. 71; a field (as a drive for cattle): generally the country, spec. a farm, i.e. hamlet. We get our word "agriculture" from *agros*.

The KJV translates *agros* 21 times field, 7 times country, 4 times land(s), 1 time farm, and 1 time piece of ground. Simon is coming in from the fields on Passover day. Would an honorable disciple of Yahshua be working in the fields if this were a high day Sabbath? Wouldn't he be at the temple? Again, the simple explanation is that Passover is not a high Sabbath, but the preparation for the high day in which we remove leaven.

Misconstrued Old Testament Verses Explained

Some think Passover is just like the other Feasts of Leviticus 23, believing it is a Feast proper. The Hebrew of verse 4, however, does not say that these are all *chag* (festivals) of Yahweh, but *moedim* — meaning appointed times, not necessarily "feasts." Passover is a *moed*, an appointed time to observe, not a Feast.

A Jewish translation of the Old Testament, the *Tanakh*, renders many difficult passages more accurately than the *King James*. Paul tells us that the job of preserving the Scriptures was given specifically to the Jews: *What advantage then has the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles [utterances] of Yahweh, Romans 3:1-2.*

We will now see how this Jewish translation of the Hebrew clears up the Old Testament passages that are misleading in the *King James Version*.

■ **Exodus 12:14** is misconstrued by those who try to make Passover the first high day of the Feast. It reads in the *King James*: *And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and you shall keep [it] a feast to [Yahweh] throughout your generations; you shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."*

If we take out the word "it," which was added by translators and is in italics in most KJVs, we gain a much more accurate understanding of the original meaning: keep the Passover for a memorial, and then keep a Feast to Yahweh afterward. Recall that the Hebrew had no punctuation. The semicolon here could just as well have been a period, separating the two observances as Yahweh does in the law passages of Leviticus 23:5-6 and Numbers 28-16-17.

■ **Exodus 12:14-15** in the *Tanakh* reads: *This day shall be to you one of remembrance: you shall celebrate it AS [emphasis ours] a festival to Yahweh throughout the ages; you shall celebrate it as an institution for all time. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.* Although not a Feast day, Passover was important and to be observed in its own way.

Now let's look at **Exodus 12:18** *In the first [month], on the fourteenth day of the month at even, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.*

Some teach that this passage shows that the Feast runs from the 14th to the 20th. Let's look at two pivotal words here: "even" and "until," each of which complements and supports the proper meaning.

The word "even" is from the Hebrew *ereb*, from the root *arab*, meaning to grow dusky at sundown. Does "at even" mean the beginning of the 14th at sundown (end of the 13th) or the end of the 14th at sundown? If Yahweh meant the beginning of the 14th, He would have used *ben ha arbayim*, as He did for Passover at the beginning of the 14th (see Exo. 12:6, Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3, 5, 11).

Turn back to Leviticus 23:32, a passage that uses "even" in the same way, only in reference to the day of Atonement:

It [shall be] unto you a Sabbath of rest, and you shall afflict your souls: in the ninth [day] of the month at even [ereb], from even [ereb] unto even [ereb], shall you celebrate your Sabbath. We know that Atonement is kept on the 10th according to Yahweh's distinct command in verse 27. The 10th is defined here as starting from the evening of the 9th, meaning end of the 9th as the 10th begins.

Attempts have been made to twist this verse, essentially saying that the word "ninth" is not even in the text, which is absolutely false. Ninth here is the Hebrew *tish'ah*, and means a nine, nonad (*The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon*). *Strong's* (8672) says *tish'ah* means nine or ninth, through the idea of a turn to the next number 10. Some believe that Exodus 12:18 is telling us that the final day of the Feast is the twentieth day (which would for them and their doctrine make a seven-day Feast if Passover on the 14th is the first day).

The word "until" is *ad*, from *Strong's* No. 5704 and 5703. *Ad* means a terminus or ending with a durative quality. In other words, extending through the period and then ending. Hebrew numeration here uses *terminus a quo to terminus ad quem*, meaning INCLUSIVE of both ends.

The prime root is 5710, *adah*, meaning to advance, pass on and continue through. Therefore, the Feast of Unleavened Bread continues through the 21st and then ends. That means it must begin on the 15th if it is to be a seven-day Feast that ends on the 21st.

To demonstrate, look at Exodus 12:15. The same word *ad* (until) is used here as well, speaking of the Feast of Unleavened Bread: "...from the first day until [ad] the seventh day." Until means extending THROUGH the seventh day, otherwise the Feast would be only six days long — stopping at the end of the sixth. Verse 15 supports this proper rendering of verse 18. We do not stop at the end of the 20th, but CONTINUE THROUGH the 21st for seven full and complete days of a Feast that begins on the 15th.

■ **Numbers 28:16-18** *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, there shall be a Passover sacrifice to Yahweh, and on the fifteenth day of that month a festival. Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days. The first day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations (**Tanakh**). What could be clearer? The 14th is the Passover and the 15th a high day that starts the Feast!*

■ **Deuteronomy 16:1-3** *Observe the month of Abib and offer a Passover sacrifice to Yahweh your Elohim, for it was in the month of Abib, at night, that Yahweh your Elohim freed you from Egypt. You shall slaughter the Passover sacrifice for Yahweh your Elohim, from the flock and the herd, in the place where Yahweh will choose to establish His Name. You shall not eat anything leavened with it; for seven days thereafter you shall eat unleavened bread, bread of distress — for you departed from the land of Egypt hurriedly — so that you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt as long as you live (**Tanakh**). The Passover is one observance; seven days "thereafter" is another one, a Feast of Unleavened Bread.*

■ **Deuteronomy 16:4** *And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there [anything] of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning. According to **Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies**, the word "day" (Heb. *yowm*, No. 3117) "is frequently put for time in general, or for a long time; a whole period under consideration" (p. 109). Verse four speaks of the first day as the start of the Passover and Feast period. Notice how the verse separates the two observances, first speaking of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Then in another thought it deals with Passover through a separate clause beginning with the conjunction "neither."*

Although this passage presents difficulty for some, the proper understanding of it conforms to every other passage showing a distinction between Passover and the Feast that follows.

■ **Deuteronomy 16:7-8** *And you shall roast and eat [it] in the place which Yahweh your Elohim shall choose: and you shall turn in the morning, and go unto your tents. Six days you shall eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day [shall be] a solemn assembly to Yahweh your Elohim: you shall do no work [therein]. On Passover night Israel was out watching. On the morning they were to go to their domiciles, then keep six days of unleavened bread PLUS a high day. The high day is included in the Feast (see Num. 28:17), making seven days outside of Passover.*

■ **Deuteronomy 16:16** does not list Passover as one of the three Feasts during which we are commanded to appear before Yahweh. Instead, it gives Unleavened Bread, Feast of Weeks, and Tabernacles as convocation Feasts. Obviously if Passover were a Feast, it would be listed here along with its companion observance, Unleavened Bread, perhaps even calling the whole time "Passover." Instead the feast is the "feast of unleavened bread," just as Yahweh's law designates it. (See Exodus 23:14-16 for a parallel rendering, wherein Passover is again omitted as a Feast.)

■ **Ezekiel 45:21** in the **King James** translation is unclear, seemingly calling Passover a Feast and implying that it is part of Unleavened Bread: *In the first [month], in the fourteenth day of the month, you shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.* Remember that Hebrew was not punctuated. The translators could just as well have rendered the verse this way: "...you shall have the passover. A feast of seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten." This verse would then agree with all those others that separate the Passover on the 14th from the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th as Yahweh commands in the law.

The **Tanakh** does properly separate the two, translating the Ezekiel 45:21 passage this way: *On the fourteenth day of the first month you shall have the passover sacrifice; and during the festival of seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten.*

Other translators of this passage also separate the two observances.

- **The New Revised Standard Version** reads: *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the festival of the passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten.*
- **The New Berkeley Version in Modern English** on Ezekiel 45:21 reads: *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall hold a feast of the Passover, and during the feast of seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten.*
- **Lamsa's Holy Bible from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts** on Ezekiel 45:21 reads: *In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the feast of the passover, and you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days.*
- **The Jerusalem Bible** renders it: *On the fourteenth day of the first month, you must celebrate the feast of the Passover. For seven days everyone is to eat unleavened loaves.*

Even in practice we see that Passover and the Feast were separate. When Josiah reinstated the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread in 2 Chronicles 35, we read that Judah kept two separate observances:

And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days, verse 17.

When Hezekiah rediscovered Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in 2 Chronicles 30, the people were so thrilled that they decided to keep the Feast seven more days, which they did with gladness, verse 23. But nowhere does the text tell us that they kept the Passover twice. Why? Because Passover is a separate annual **MEMORIAL**, observed only one time a year as all memorials are.

Critical New Testament Verses

Now let's concentrate on the New Testament and certain verses there that are commonly used in support of a 14th high day. Remember, the New Testament must support the truth we have established in the Old.

► **Matthew 26:2** and **5** gives some Bible students difficulty. Verse 2 reads, *You know that after two days is [the feast of] the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be impaled.* Then verse 5 is linked to verse 2 by those who want Passover to be the first day of the Feast, which reads, *But they said, Not on the feast [day], lest there be an uproar among the people.*

The pivotal words added by translators are: "the feast of" and "day." In two days the Passover was to arrive. They were planning their attack on Yahshua, but decided that to do so during the Feast would invite a Jewish revolt. The word "on" in verse 5 should be rendered "during" (Greek en). **Bullinger's Companion Bible** points out that "on the feast" should read, "during the feast," thus relegating it to any time during the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

Understanding the Greek and the error of translators, we can clearly see that there is no combining of Passover with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The chief priests and Pharisees on the high day requested that Pilate station a guard at the tomb of Yahshua (Matt. 27:62).

► **Matthew 26:17** *Now the first [day] of the [feast of] unleavened bread the disciples came to Yahshua, saying unto Him, "Where will you that we prepare for you to eat the passover?"*

Notice in your Bible that the words "day" and "feast of" are in italics, showing that these words were again added by translators. Omitting these translator-added words the verse reads: "Now the

first of the unleavened bread [or unleaveneds] the disciples came to Yahshua, saying..." The word "first" is **Strong's** No. 4413, *protos*, meaning foremost (in time, place, order, or importance):- translated; before, beginning, best, chief, first of all.

The verse should more accurately read: *Now before the unleavened bread the disciples came to Yahshua, saying unto Him, "Where will you that we prepare for you to eat the passover?"* The sense is that the time of unleavened bread would soon be upon them. Rabbinic teaching was to have all leaven removed by around the fourteenth, and the entire celebration became known as the "Feast of Unleavened Bread," also known as "Passover."

► **Mark 14:1-2:** *After two days was [the feast of] the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put [Him] to death. But they said, Not on the feast [day], lest there be an uproar of the people.*

Notice here once again the words "the feast of" and "day" are not in the Greek text, but were added by the translators. It should read, "After two days was the passover, and of unleavened bread..." They could not delay, they had to get the Savior killed before the Feast day of Abib 15 arrived. In two days Passover would be upon them, and in three days the Feast.

(Passover afternoon when Yahshua died could not have been the first day of the feast or the uproar they feared most from the Jews would most assuredly have happened!)

One interlinear Greek study Bible shows how the Greek renders this passage: "It was now the passover and the unleavened bread after two days..." ***The Complete Biblical Library.***

If Passover and the Feast are one and the same, why are they continually spoken of separately? Why not always just "Passover" or just the "Feast of Unleavened Bread"?

► **Mark 14:12** *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, His disciples said unto Him, "Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?"*

In this passage the word "first" is *protos*, and according to ***The New Thayer's Greek English Lexicon***, *protos* means "before something else." It is rendered "prior" in the Latin versions. Therefore, the passage in the Greek says it was PRIOR TO Unleavened Bread when they killed the Passover.

The word "day" is from the **Strong's** 2250, *hemera*, and could have been translated period, age, time, or while for improved clarification. Putting these facts together we get: "And prior to the time of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover..."

What many don't understand is that the entire season came to be referred to simply as "the Passover," as we see in the following Evangel of Luke.

► **Luke 22:1** *Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.* Luke apparently recognizes the error of this vernacular and points out that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is "called" the Passover. Note his careful wording — he does not say Unleavened Bread "is" the Passover, but "is called" the Passover!

Who called it the Passover, then? The answer is the Pharisees, whose minhag (customs) differed from those of the Sadducees who managed the temple. As noted, the Pharisees combined Passover with the 15th high day. To add to the confusion, the Essenes were promoting a solar calendar with entirely different dates still.

Which of these schemes did Yahshua follow? That's simple. He was faithful to the law given in the Old Testament. That is why we find that He had already kept Passover (at the start of the 14th) while other Jews were yet to keep it (on the 15th). We must also be faithful to the law and not base our obedience on misunderstanding of Greek and English translators.

Now look at **Luke 22:7:** *Then came the day [hemera: period, time] of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.* Luke is writing generally here, as he defines the season of the year.

Verses Clearly Differentiating Between the 14th and 15th

Yahweh says Passover is the 14th of Abib. The Feast begins on the 15th. The following verses makes that fact undeniable and absolutely crystal clear:

*In the **FOURTEENTH** [day] of the first month at even [is] Yahweh's passover. And on the **FIFTEENTH** day of the same month [is] the feast of unleavened bread unto Yahweh: seven days you must eat unleavened bread. In the first day you shall have an holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein. But you shall offer an offering made by fire unto Yahweh seven days: **IN THE SEVENTH DAY [IS] AN HOLY CONVOCATION**: you shall do no servile work [therein],* Leviticus 23:5-8.

*And in the **FOURTEENTH** day of the first month [is] the passover of Yahweh. [The Passover was kept in individual homes.] And in the **FIFTEENTH** day of this month [is] the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. In the first day [shall be] an holy convocation; you shall do no manner of servile work [therein]: [The convocation was to recall Israel's assembling at Rameses to begin their trek from Egypt.],* Numbers 28:16-18.

*And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the **FIFTEENTH** day of the first month; on the **MORROW** [next day], **AFTER** the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians,* Numbers 33:3. "Morrow" is the Hebrew *mochoratham* and means "a day following a PAST day" — **Gesenius**. The fifteenth is a whole other day — completely different from Passover, which Yahweh says is on the 14th, Numbers 28:16.

You may not sacrifice the passover within any of your gates, which Yahweh your Elohim gives you: But at the place which Yahweh your Elohim shall choose to place His Name in, there you shall sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that you came forth out of Egypt. And you shall roast and eat [it] in the place which Yahweh your Elohim shall choose: and you shall turn in the morning, and go unto your tents. [Now comes a new thought] Six days you shall eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day [shall be] a solemn assembly to Yahweh your Elohim: you shall do no work [therein], Deuteronomy 16:5-9.

And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of Yahweh, which [is] at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses. And the children of captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth [day] of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them [were] pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek Yahweh Elohim of Israel, did eat, Ezra 6:18-22.

Watch that Punctuation!

Growing evidence has convinced many scholars that both Old and New Testaments were written in Hebrew and then translated into primarily Greek, then to Latin, then English. The Hebrew has no punctuation, leaving the English text at the whim of the translators. Therefore, we cannot rely upon the punctuation of questionable verses to establish a doctrine, which some have done in attempting to show a high day Passover.

For example, the following examples, are used to prove an erroneous first day of the week resurrection:

Now when [Yahshua] was risen early the first [day] of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils, Mark 16:9. As it reads, Yahshua rose the first

day of the week. However, other texts show that He was raised on the seventh-day Sabbath and had already risen by the first day of the week. The correct punctuation should be:

Now when Yahshua was risen, early the first [day] of the week He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. The comma being placed after the words "was risen" gives the sense that Yahshua had risen some time earlier and then appeared first to Mary Magdalene. "Was risen" is a past participle. In other words, sometime in the past He had arisen.

Here's another example of poorly punctuated text that sends some veering away from the truth: *And Yahshua said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with Me in paradise,"* Luke 23:43.

The punctuation of Luke 23:43 implies that the thief on the tree would be with Yahshua in paradise that very day. However, Yahshua was seen for 40 days after His resurrection and the thief was never with Him. Further, Yahshua did not enter paradise "that day." The comma (indicating a pause) should be after the word "today."

The sense is that although Yahshua is nailed to the tree, physically weakened, a beaten victim about to die, yet in spite of His circumstance, He would triumphantly establish His kingdom with the malefactor being a part of it.

Erroneous punctuation occurred because the early Christian translators were not Hebrew scholars. They based their translations on the Greek or the Latin text. To punctuate a sentence properly, one must understand the situation and context and thoroughly comprehend the original writings being translated. Hebrew had no punctuation. Neither was the Hebrew divided into chapters and verses. All is done by translators.

Evidence is Overwhelming

Scripture is clear. From virtually any angle one cares to look at it, Passover is on one day (14th of Abib) and the Feast of Unleavened Bread follows on the next day (the 15th). The two are separated by when they are observed, by whom, by the purpose of each, by the atmosphere of each, by how Israel observed each, by whether the people rested or not, and by the way Yahweh defines and separately names each. We must not follow the leading of apostate Pharisees and combine Passover with the first high day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

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