

The Old Testament Passover, the Lord's Supper, and the Time of Christ's Death!

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Introduction

In his book, *The Real Jesus*, Garner Ted Armstrong painted a vivid and comprehensive picture of the events, which occurred on the day Jesus Christ died, the 14th day of the first month (Nisan or Abib) of the Jewish/Hebrew calendar. That day is called the *preparation day* in the New Testament.

As the New Testament clearly speaks, Jesus Christ died *at the 9th hour* (corresponding to three o'clock in the afternoon) on the *preparation day*. The *9th hour of the 14th day of the first month* was the time of day at which the Passover Lamb was sacrificed in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Regarding the very hour of Christ's death, Mr. Armstrong wrote, "*If this temporal "coincidence" between the sacrifice of the Passover lamb and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is striking, its spiritual implications are absolutely overwhelming.*"

Regarding the Old Testament Passover, the Lord's Supper and the death of Jesus Christ, the Intercontinental Church of God teaches that:

- 1) The Old Testament Passover Lamb (**Exodus 12:6**) was sacrificed **in the evening** (specifically *beyn ha arbayim* - **between the evenings**) **of the 14th day of the first month, toward the end of the day**. Moses and the Children of Israel then ate the Passover lamb meal during **the night of, the beginning of the 15th day** of the first month, which is the First Day of Unleavened Bread.
- 2) Jesus Christ **did not eat** the Old Testament Passover meal *on the night he was betrayed* (**I Corinthians 11:23**), **the beginning of** the 14th day of the first month, in the upper room with His disciples. Rather Jesus Christ ate a supper with His disciples; a meal called the **Lord's Supper** (**I Corinthians 11:20**). Although made ready in a Passover setting (all the leavened bread having been removed from the Upper Room) the supper that Christ and the disciples ate before He introduced the foot-washing and the New Covenant, occurred some 20 hours before the Passover lamb (as specified in **Exodus 12:6** and **Leviticus 23:5**) was sacrificed.
- 3) Jesus Christ died on the **14th day of the first month, at the same time of day** that the High Priest was sacrificing the Passover lamb in the Temple that year. Jesus Christ died *beyn ha arbayim* of the 14th day of the first month, as the law required, and the "*spiritual implications are absolutely overwhelming.*"

As the Passover Lamb (**Leviticus 23:5** and **Exodus 12:6** – called the LORD’s Passover) was sacrificed on the 14th day of the first month, *beyn ha arbayim*, Christ also died, on the 14th day of the first month, *beyn ha arbayim*. The Apostles, along with the 1st Century Church of God, understood this truth, allowing that Paul could confidently write: *Jesus Christ our Passover (lamb implied), is sacrificed for us (I Corinthians 5:7)*.

The transference of symbolism from a physical lamb to the actual Son of God, the true Lamb of God, was complete at that exact moment in history. History and the Scriptures provide ample and evidential proof to this fact. The timing of Christ’s death was necessary, as His death was properly planned, predetermined, and foreordained to occur simultaneously with the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb of Judah that year.

In simplistic terms, the Intercontinental Church of God teaches that the Passover Lamb was sacrificed **toward the end of the 14th day** and **not at the beginning of the 14th day**. Consequently, the meal Jesus Christ ate with his disciples on the night He was betrayed (at the beginning of the 14th) was not the Statutory (**Exodus 12**) Passover meal, for the Statutory Passover meal was never consumed at the beginning of the 14th.

Not intentionally but by reason of the truth maintained, the Intercontinental Church of God presents a conundrum in the minds of most other Churches of God, by teaching the truth that Jesus Christ did not eat the Old Testament Passover Meal on the night He was betrayed. Why does the Intercontinental Church of God teach this? What justification does it have to teach such?

How is it that the Intercontinental Church of God teaches that the Passover lamb was sacrificed toward the end of the 14th day of the first month, as the 14th day was nearing an end?

How is it that the Intercontinental Church of God teaches that the Passover meal was consumed on the night of the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month?

This study will clarify and will provide ample Scriptural evidence explaining why the Intercontinental Church of God is correct in teaching these truths. We will let the very Word of God teach us and define its own terms.

Part I: According to the Scriptures, when does the day end?

It is necessary to understand what the Scriptures teach, regarding when the day ends. In so learning, we will be able to understand *at what time of the day* the Passover sacrifice (**Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5, Deuteronomy 16:6; Numbers 9:3, 5**) occurred.

In understanding when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, we will understand the importance, the *spiritual implications* of the time of Christ’s death. We will also understand that the meal consumed in the Upper Room was not the Passover meal.

In order to understand *when the day ends*, we must become familiar with several Hebrew words/phrases, which are used (translated into the English) in the Scriptures.

Evening - Erev (Strong's 6153): this Hebrew word means *dusk, evening, even(tide)*. (The *v* in the word *erev* can also be transliterated as a *b*. Consequently, the word *erev* can be pronounced as *ereb*.) **Erev** derives from the Hebrew word *arab* (Strong's 6150) which means: covering, to grow dusky at sundown, to be darkened toward evening.

The **evening** is something we understand in this 21st Century. By definition **evening** is – (**a noun**): the latter part or close of the day; the period of decreasing daylight; from late afternoon until nightfall.

By definition, not only in the English language but also in the Hebrew language (and in the Greek language – when we refer to New Testament verses), **evening** is a distinct **period of time**, which occurs within a 24-hour day. It is not a moment in time event nor is it an activity that is both at the start and the end of a 24-hour time period. Evening is a specific **period of time** in which the day's sunlight is diminishing, as the day darkens, as the night approaches. **Evening occurs at the end of the day, as the day is coming to an end.** The Scriptures will teach us this truth, leaving no doubt.

Reading the Scriptures, regarding the word *erev* (*evening*), we will learn of events that occurred **toward** the even(ing), **in** the even(ing), **at** the even(ing), **around** the even(ing), **during** the even(ing), **from** the even(ing), **until** the even(ing) and **between the evenings**.

In the English (and in the original Hebrew) language, there are various prepositional words which come before the word *evening* (*erev*), all of which serve to enhance the meaning or given further clarification to the period of time called “the evening.”

One such phrase in particular is **ba erev** (Strong's 6153 with the preposition **at** (Hebrew - **ba**) preceding the word *erev*). This Hebrew phrase means *at even* or *at evening*.

Contrary to what some individuals and several Church of God groups promote, **the phrase ba erev cannot and does not mean sunset.** The Word of God will absolutely prove this fact to us.

Sunset - Bow shemesh (Strong's 935 8121): this Hebrew phrase expresses specific **actions of the sun**, such as *sunset, sundown, the going down of the sun, goes down the sun, when goes down the sun, at the going down of the sun, the sun went down, the setting of the sun.*

In the Scriptures as well as in reality, *bow shemesh* refers to an **action of the sun** that occurs as the sun is “traveling” toward, approaching, converging, and finally falling below the western horizon, as the sun's light is diminishing or extinguishing for that day.

Does sunset occur at the beginning of the day or at the end of the day? Is the sunset the same as the evening or does the sunset occur during the evening of the day? What can we learn from the Scriptures, the very Word of God?

Twilight - Neshef (Strong's 5399): this Hebrew word means *twilight, dawning* and refers to the daily transition of light, in the morning (*dawn* or *twilight*) and then in the evening (*dusk* or *twilight*). We will see how the scriptural context will provide the correct translation and meaning.

Regarding the **twilight**, this event, this natural phenomenon occurs after the sun has gone down below the western horizon. When we see the splendor of the reddish-orange hues of the sun's fading light sprayed across the western sky, we are witnessing the twilight. At the last vestige of the sun's light, illuminating the western skies just prior to the commencement of the night's darkness, we are witness to the twilight. Twilight, a period of time between sunset and night, certifies that the sun has fallen below the western horizon.

From the scriptures we will learn, when during the day, the evening twilight occurs.

Between the evenings - *Beyn ha arbayim* (Strong's 996 6153): Now the phrase ***between the evenings*** is not something we in the 21st Century are readily able to understand. This term is not a common description of the *evening* or the day's activity. This term has Hebrew roots, the origins of which are found in ancient Israel, and has a historical meaning, dealing specifically with Temple sacrificial activity.

However, just because we do not commonly use this phrase does not mean we cannot understand it. We can understand its meaning and we will let the Word of God, the very Scriptures themselves, explain the meaning of this term, and explain to us **when during the day *between the evenings* occurs**.

When studying the **Exodus 12** Passover, specifically in learning when on the 14th day of the first month the sacrifice took place, we need to understand just when ***between the evenings*** occurred.

No other term or phrase is relevant. ***Let us not be fooled*** - when it comes to understanding at what time of day the Passover sacrifice occurred, the Scriptures do not speak of the *sunset* or the *twilight*.

Only the terms **evening** and **between the evenings** are used when codifying the time at which the Passover was sacrificed. We need to let the Scriptures explain when during the day the ***evening*** and the ***between the evenings*** occurred.

From the scriptures we can learn *when during the day was/is the sunset*; *when during the day was/is the evening* or **at evening**; *when during the day was/is the twilight* and *when during the day was between the evenings*.

In the Hebrew, Greek and English languages, as used throughout the Scriptures, these terms/phrases are used uniquely and distinctly; all are used independently of one another. One does not mean the other. Each word or phrase is distinctively translated and defined appropriately. There are no cross definitions. Each means what it says, and says what it means.

Let us review several of the many scriptures that use both *Bow shemesh* and *Erev*

Consider the following scriptures in which both Hebrew phrases ***bow shemesh*** and ***erev*** are used, as translated into their respective English words. Notice each word is distinct, unique and means what it says.

*The soul that touched any such thing shall be unclean until even (***erev***), and shall not eat the holy things, unless he wash his flesh. And when the sun is down (***bow shemesh***), he shall be clean, and afterward eat the holy things, because it is his food (Leviticus 22:6-7).*

*But when it shall be, when evening (**erev**) cometh on, he shall wash himself with water and when the sun is down (**bow shemesh**), he shall come into the camp again (**Deuteronomy 23:11** KJV).*

*And the King of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide (**erev**) and as soon as the sun was down (**bow shemesh**), Joshua commanded that they should take his carcass down ... (**Joshua 8:29**).*

*... and hanged them on five trees, and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening (**erev**). And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun (**bow shemesh**) that Joshua commanded ... (**Joshua 10:26-27**).*

*... howbeit the King of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the evening (**erev**): and about the time of the sun going down (**bow shemesh**) he died (**II Chronicles 18:34**).*

When reading the five verses above, you notice the Hebrew word **erev** (with a prepositional word) was translated into the English as **evening**.

Bow shemesh also used in these five verses, means **sunset**, expressing some type of action of the sun as it is was traveling toward and converging upon the western horizon.

Here are just five Scripture examples where we read of **both** the sun's activity (**bow shemesh**) and the period of time within the day called the evening (**erev**).

The Bible clearly informs us, as the translators correctly transmitted, *bow shemesh* means *sunset* and *erev* means *evening*.

In the original writings, Moses used two distinct terms to express two distinct realities. Two distinct Hebrew words are used and one does not mean the other. Both have their own distinct meaning. Sunset is not the evening; evening does not mean sunset.

Consider Deuteronomy 16:6 (KJV)

*"But at the place which the Eternal thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the Passover at even (**ba erev**), at the going down of (**when goes down – mss text**) the sun (**bow shemesh**), at the season (**ba moeth** - meaning at the season, at the appointed time - refer to spring season, the month of green ears - Abib) that thou camest forth out of Egypt."*

Notice there are two distinct terms used in this one verse. We read of **at even (ba erev)** and **at the going down of the sun (bow shemesh)**.

Both distinct Hebrew phrases are used and each has its own distinct definition and is translated distinctly. One is not a definition of the other.

Should we conclude that the phrase *at the going down of the sun* is the definition of the Hebrew phrase *ba erev*?

Did *ba erev* mean sunset? Clearly not! *Bow shemesh* is not *ba erev*.

Bow shemesh is translated here as *at the going down of the sun* and *ba erev* is translated as *at even*. These translations are accurate and definitive.

By reading **Deuteronomy 16:6**, we understand that **the sun had not yet gone down** (past tense). We do not read *when the sun went down* or *the sun went down* (meaning a process complete, which the Bible uses – we shall read of shortly). Nor do we read that the *sun did go down* or the *sun did set* (below the western horizon, implied). Rather we read *at the going down of the sun* (present tense, the process currently taking place, the process of, implied).

We read of a *process* or *action* of the sun. We read that the sun was *in the process of* going down. It had not reached the exact moment in time of going down (setting or dropping) below the western horizon. **We do not read of an exact, moment in time event.**

Once again, we read of a process, an action of the sun *going down* which occurs in the evening time, *at even(ing)*. The sun was in the process of going down – *at the going down of the sun*. We do not know how high or low or close to the horizon, the sun was. All we can understand is the sun was going down, traveling toward the western horizon. Moreover, we can understand the sun goes down during the evening time. The scriptures confirm this fact.

Scriptures that use this unique Hebrew term, *Bow Shemesh*

Logically, we know that the sun sets as the day is coming to an end, at the time of day we call the evening.

The sun does not set in the morning of the day, when the sun is coming up. Of course not! The sun sets in the evening of a day. Evening, in its word origins relates to the darkening or covering of the day, the covering of the light.

As the sun is losing its intensity of light, as it travels closer to the western horizon, the sun is setting, the day is ending, and the night is approaching. The scriptures will clearly reveal this fact.

When the sun is in the *process of*, or during the *action of* the *sun setting* or *getting closer* to the western horizon, that *time* of day is the evening time.

Bow shemesh is the Hebrew phrase that expresses the *action of* or *the process of* the sun's departing or going down for that day. *Bow shemesh* means *sunset*. No other Hebrew phrase is translated sunset.

Notice the activity of the sun as recorded in Genesis 15:12-18

Start at verse 12 - "***And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram ...***"

Here we read that the *sun was going down*. The sun was in the *process of* setting; in the *process of* going down. The sun was above the horizon and *was going down*; converging on the western horizon. Simply a process: the sun was going down and the term *bow shemesh* is used.

Neither *erev* nor *ba erev* were used in the original text. Moses wrote *bow shemesh*. He did not write *ba erev* or *erev*.

Continuing the narrative, read **Genesis 15:17**. "*And it came to pass that **when the sun went down** and it was dark...*"

Here we read of a progression of time. Notice, the sun was above the horizon (**vs. 12**), then below the horizon (**vs. 17**), then finally, not visible at all. There was no more light (of the sun) for it was dark.

Now logically, and by our own observation we know these events do not happen that quickly. We also know there is a period of time that transpires, and an event that occurs between the ***sun went down*** (below the horizon) and ***it was dark***.

We definitely read that the sun was ***now below*** the horizon. Once below the western horizon, the sun's fading light eventually became extinguished. The light of the sun will fade out, will extinguish, and will diminish in intensity during a period of time we call the ***twilight***. During the twilight, as the light fades, the sky gets darker as the night commences. This is the natural progression of time at the end of a day.

Before the dark is the twilight and the twilight occurs after the sun falls below the western horizon. We will learn more about the twilight and more about these **Genesis** scriptures as we continue in this study.

But here is **Genesis**, we read of the actions of the sun as it "went away" for the day. *Bow shemesh* is used and never *ba erev*.

Notice however, a few other scriptures, which use the Hebrew *bow shemesh*.

*... the one on the one side and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun (**bow shemesh**) (Exodus 17:12).*

*If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shall return it unto him by that the sun goeth down (**bow shemesh**) (Exodus 22:26).*

Notice also **Joshua 1:4** and **I Kings 22:36**.

Clearly, these verses explain a *process* of the sun as it is nearing or falling below the western horizon, as it is going down and setting for the day.

Bow shemesh is the distinct, unique, self-defined Hebrew phrase which means ***sunset***.

Scriptures which use the Hebrew phrase *ba erev*, as translated into the English meaning *at even* or *at evening*

In **Genesis 19:1**, we read "... *there came two angels to Sodom **at evening** ...*"

The Hebrew term *ba erev* is used in the original text. This term is translated: *at even* or *at evening*.

Ba erev was not translated to read *from*, or *before*, or *until*, or *around* evening. ***Ba erev*** was translated and rightly so to mean ***at*** the evening.

The *evening* is being given consideration here, not *sunset* (*bow shemesh*). *Bow shemesh* was not used here.

Notice - where the sun was in the sky, how close it was to the horizon or far from, we do not know, we cannot learn. The angels came sometime *at the evening*. It is obvious that the sun's action was not being spoken of here. The term *bow shemesh* was not in the original text.

Bow shemesh could have been used, if we needed to know that it was sunset. However, it was not. The time the two angels came was *at even (ba erev)*. The evening is dominant here; specifically *at the evening* time. That is how Moses wrote the narrative.

Notice **Genesis 30:16**, “*And Jacob came out of the field in the evening ...*”

Notice **Judges 19:16** “*... there came an old man from his work out of the field at even ...*”

In each of the two verses just stated, the word *evening* is preceded by a preposition, which gives clarification to the noun even(ing). In was *in the evening* and *at the even(ing)*. Again, there is no mention of an action of the sun; rather what is spoken of in these verses is **a time of day**.

In each verse above the Hebrew word *ba erev* is used. At evening is implied.

Notice also **Deuteronomy 28:67** and **Esther 2:14**.

In these two verses, you again read of the term *ba erev* as translated at or in the evening.

Again, this Hebrew term gives clear meaning to the *time of day*, which was *at the evening time*. No mention of an action of the sun is given and the phrase *bow shemesh* is not used.

Bow shemesh uniquely means ***sunset*** and ***ba erev*** uniquely means ***at even(ing)***. There is no cross meanings. Each is unique.

Mark 1:32 and the Greek words used for Evening and Sunset

“*And at even, when the sun did set they brought unto him all that were diseased ...*”

In the New Testament, we once again read of two distinct and separate terms: *at even* and *when the sun did set*.

This is logical – for as we know, the sun does not set in the morning. The sun sets in the evening. There is no mystery or surprise here.

The Greek word for *even* is *opsios*. With the propositional word *at* (Greek - *epi*) applied to *opsios* we read *at evening*.

The Greek word for sunset or sun did set is *duo helios*.

Again, you are encouraged to look up the occurrences in the New Testament where the Greek words *opsios* and/or *duo helios* are used and you will once again see that each word/phrase is distinct and unique, used independently of one another.

We see from both the Hebrew and the Greek languages that *ba erev* and *epi opsios* do not mean sunset, rather they both mean at even(ing).

Both the Hebrew and Greek phrases *bow shemesh* or *duo helios* mean sunset.

Just as in the English language, evening does not mean sunset, so we understand plainly, that evening means evening and sunset means sunset. ***Ba erev* does not mean *bow shemesh*. *Epi opsios* does not mean *duo helios*.**

There is no confusion or cross meaning. In the English language sunset does not mean evening. In all three languages, as in all languages, sunset means sunset and evening means evening. Each is distinctively unique and differently defined. Again, *ba erev* **does not mean *bow shemesh***.

From all that we have studied, it is evident that *ba erev* does not mean *sunset* and to claim otherwise is just plain wrong.

The Hebrew word Neshef: What do the scriptures teach us?

Another Hebrew word with which we should become familiar and understand is the word *neshef*.

The Hebrew word *neshef* is translated into the English as *twilight*. In a couple instances, it is also translated as *dawn*. The context will reveal the correct translation. The idea expressed by the word *neshef* is that, even though there is a hint of the sun's light radiating in the sky, the actual sun is not visible in the sky.

The sun is below the horizons (the western horizon in the evening - *twilight* and the eastern horizon in the morning - *dawn*) but close enough to either horizon for the sun's **light** to be seen over the respective horizons. *Neshef* is a *light* transition period of time.

Neshef is considered an action of the sun process. The sun's light is either intensifying (during the *dawn* of the day) or diminishing (during the *twilight* of the day).

Whereas the dawn is the first illuminations of the day, twilight is the last illuminations of the sun's diminishing light as the sun continues to drop below the western horizon. Twilight commences after the sun falls below the western horizon and continues until it is dark enough for the night to commence.

Notice several of the scriptures, which use the English word *twilight* as translated in the text from the Hebrew word *neshef*. These scriptures relate to the time of day in which the sun's light is fading out, diminishing.

II Kings 7:5, 7 “*And they rose up in the twilight (neshef), to go unto the camp of the Syrians... wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight (neshef)....*” (Review **verse 9-12** for proof that *neshef* is the *twilight* before the night commenced.)

Job 24:15 “*The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight (neshef) saying no man shall see me and disguiseth his face.*”

Notice **Proverbs 7:9** (Interlinear, Green 1986, mss text) “*He walketh in the twilight (**neshef**), at the evening (**ba erev**) of the day (**yom**), in the black of night and darkness.*”

Notice this verse, as written in the (King James Version): *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night.*”

Notice this verse, as written in the (Jerusalem Bible): “*at twilight when day is declining, at dead of night and in the dark.*”

Notice the (Revised English Bible): “*at twilight, as the day fades, at dusk as night grew dark.*”

Interesting! We read of the twilight, an event that occurs after the sun is no longer above the western horizon. Yet, the twilight occurs in the evening of the day. Twilight is the diminishing sun's light, occurring in the evening, as the day fades or is declining. Twilight occurs as that day is ending.

The twilight as Christ spoke of it

Matthew 16:1-3. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came and tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, when it is evening, ye say, it will be fair weather: for the sky is red, and in the morning it will be foul weather for the sky is red and lowering*

Consider the phenomenon Jesus was describing.

Perhaps you have heard the saying, "pink sky at night, sailor's delight; pink sky in morning, sailor take warning."

In the evening, after the sun has set and fallen below the western horizon, the period of *twilight* occurs.

It is during *twilight*, the sun's fading light produces a red hue, a “pinkish” color, a blending of an orangish/purplish (red) color, which is evident over the western horizon. When this phenomenon occurs, then you know the next 12 hours or so will likely hold good, fair, non-rain or not cloudy, weather.

Why? Because the sun's fading light (as diffused through the atmosphere, radiating from the sun which is now below the western horizon), the sun's twilight, is not being blocked by any clouds in the western sky. As a result, *the sky looks red.*

What is interesting is that Jesus expressed the fact that the activity of “twilight,” which occurs after the sun has dropped (set) below the western horizon, occurs during the “evening” (Greek: *opsios*, which is equivalent to the Hebrew: *erev*), which, by its very meaning, is at the end of the day before the night. Here we see the twilight is understood as occurring during the evening of the day, at the end of a day.

When does the day end, as defined by the Law?

To this point, we have come to understand the scriptures delineate distinct and unique Hebrew terms, *bow shemesh*, *erev*, *ba erev*, and *neshef*. Each of these phrases has a distinct and specific meaning.

The Hebrew word *erev* will usually have a prepositional word associated with it which allows the reader to comprehend a more grammatically and descriptively accurate understanding of *the evening time*. Words such as *at, until, around, toward, with, from* will give greater clarification to what is being communicated about the evening.

Let us now review two scriptures in the Pentateuch that speaks specifically of the term *at evening* or *at even*. Once again, this English term is the English translation of the Hebrew phrase *ba erev*.

By reading **Leviticus 23:32** and/or **Exodus 12:18**, in the very Word of God, we learn that the day (not only the 12 hour portion of the day (light) but the entire 24-hour day) ends “at evening” (*at even* Hebrew: *ba erev*).

By reading these two scriptures, we learn that the day does not end at sunset (*bow shemesh*).

By reading these two scriptures, we learn that the day does not begin with the evening.

As we will clearly see, the Hebrew term *bow shemesh* was not used in these two verses. Any idea that the sunset (*bow shemesh*) ends the day can never be substantiated here and frankly cannot be substantiated anywhere in Scriptures. To understand such will clear up any confusion as to when a day ends and a new day begins.

Notice **Leviticus 23:32** (KJV) "*It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even (ba erev), from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.*"

Notice from the Septuagint (LXX version): "*It shall be a holy Sabbath to you; and ye shall humble your soul, from the ninth day of the month: from evening to evening ye shall keep your Sabbaths.*"

To set the record straight, clearly, both *erev* and *ba erev* are used in this verse. The word (sunset) *bow shemesh* is not spoken of in this verse.

We shall examine the phrase *at even* and the phrase *from evening until evening*.

The phrase *at even* refers to a specific *time period* of a day.

The phrase *from evening until evening* refers to the length of the (24-hour) day.

Once again, prepositional words applied to *evening*, which are helpful in clarifying the meaning.

In order to understand that *ba erev* or *at evening* refers to a specific time period of a day, that is at the end of the day, let us read **Leviticus 23:27-32**, specifically **verse 27**.

From **verse 27**, we understand that the 10th day of the seventh month is the Day of Atonement (affliction). "*Also on the tenth day of the seventh month there shall be a Day of Atonement; it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls...*"

When is the Day of Atonement?

The Day of Atonement is the 10th day of the seventh month.

Read also **Leviticus 16:29-31** and **Numbers 29:7**. Very definitely, the Day of Atonement is not the 9th day of the seventh month. It is the 10th day of the seventh month.

Leviticus 23:32 tells us that: "*It shall be a Sabbath of rest and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even (ba erev), from even (erev) unto even (erev) shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.*"

Logically and understandably, by reading **Leviticus 23:32**, we can conclude that *at even (ba erev)* refers **not** to the beginning of the day, rather *at even (ba erev)* refers to the end of the day or is at the day's end.

How can we conclude this fact? Let us notice!

If *at even (ba erev)* referred to the beginning of the day, then the Day of Atonement would be on the 9th day of the seventh month, rather than the 10th day.

If you start your fast (the Day of Atonement) on the 9th day *at even* and if the 9th day *at even* (evening) occurs at the beginning of the day, then you would be keeping the fast on and during the 9th day.

But we know the Fast (the afflicting of your souls), the Day of Atonement, is observed on the 10th day (cf. **Leviticus 16:29-31; Leviticus 23:27; Numbers 29:7**).

You start your fast *at even* of the 9th, or as the 9th day is ending, and more specifically, *from evening* of the 9th and you continue to keep the fast *unto evening*, the ending, of the 10th.

There is an *evening* at the end of the 9th day and an *evening* at the end of the 10th day.

We celebrate the Day of Atonement (the fast) on the 10th day of the seventh month, "*from even unto even*" or "*from evening to evening*."

You start the fast *from the evening* of the 9th.

It would be correct to say, *generally*, *at even (ba erev)* of the 9th day (and not the sunset (Hebrew: *bow shemesh*) because sunset is not used here), as a reference, as a starting time, you start your fast.

It would be correct to say, *specifically*, once the evening of the 9th day is complete, once the evening sunlight, then twilight (which occurs in the evening) of the 9th day has concluded, and dark/night of the 10th day commences, then the 10th day begins, and the fast begins. After all, the fast is on the 10th day of the seventh month.

Another way to say this would be *from even(ing)* of the 9th day, the 10th day begins. As we read "*from the ninth,*" "*from the evening.*"

Notice - **Leviticus 23:32** *does not* state: "*from bow shemesh to bow shemesh.*"

Leviticus 23:32 states "*from evening*" because it is the *evening* of the 9th day which is being given consideration.

As the 9th day “*at evening*” has concluded, the night of the 10th day commences; the 10th day begins; now the Day of Atonement is to be kept.

The term “*at evening*” or “*at even*” (*ba erev*) always and only connotes the ending of the day, never the beginning of the day. Once again, we notice the term *bow shemesh* is never used in these Scriptures. And *ba erev* does not mean sunset.

Regarding the phrase, *from even unto even*, does this phrase tell us that a day has two evenings?

Your Sabbaths, but specifically in **Leviticus 23:32**, the Day of Atonement, are to be kept *from even unto even*.

The word *from* indicates a terminus, that is a stop or starting point. It is a fixed point or fixed time of clear distinction.

The word *from* is not the same as the word *through* or the word *with*. *From* designates physical or specific separation. You compare this *from* that. You start *from* here. You go *from* here to there. Therefore, you keep the Day of Atonement *from* even (evening). And what evening? The *evening* or *even* of the 9th day, which of course belongs to the 9th day.

A new day starts *from* the evening of the previous day, not *with* the evening of the previous day. Simply a day does not start *with* the even. The day is observed *from* evening (of the old day) until the evening (of the day).

The evening of the day concludes the day (both the 12-hour portion of light and the complete 24-hour day). A new day then logically begins with the night.

Again, we learn there is *one evening* for each day and the day ends at its evening.

When would the 10th day end? The 10th day ends *at the evening* of the 10th day. You keep the Day of Atonement *until the even* of the 10th day. The 11th day would then start *from* the evening of the 10th day and the pattern is maintained.

Now let us look at **Exodus 12:18**.

If the 9th *at even* (*ba erev*) ends the 9th day, would it not be logical to conclude that the 14th *at even* (*ba erev* which again is the Hebrew phrase used here) would then end the 14th day?

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

We know the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th day of, and ends on the 21st day of, the first month (called Abib or Nisan).

Read **Leviticus 23:5-8** and notice specifically **verse 6**: *And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Eternal; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.*

Read also **Numbers 28:16-25** and notice specifically, **verse 17**. *And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.*

Read **Exodus 12:15-19** and notice specifically **verse 15**: *Seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread...*

Notice the following verses: **Exodus 13:6,7; 23:15; 34:18; Deuteronomy 16:4; II Chronicles 30:21; 35:17; Ezra 6:22**. These all refer to eating unleavened bread for *seven days*.

Read **Deuteronomy 16:3**. *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...*

From the Scriptures, we are told, we learn, as a matter-of-fact, that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a seven-day feast. It is not an eight-day feast, nor is it a six-day feast. It is a seven-day feast. The Feast of Unleavened Bread commences on the 15th day of the first month.

The 14th day of the first month is not the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The 15th day of the first month begins the first day of the seven day, Feast of Unleavened Bread.

From the 14th, *at even (ba erev)*, you begin to eat unleavened bread, as the 14th day is ending and the 15th day is beginning, as the night commences.

The 15th day of the first month begins “*from the evening*” of the 14th, just as the 10th day of the seventh month begins “*from the evening*” of the 9th day.

The 14th “*at even*” (*ba erev*) ends the 14th day.

Now count seven days (15 through 21). The 15th to the 21st is seven complete days.

15,16,17,18,19,20,21 = 7 complete days.

It is clear, the *at even (ba erev)* of the 21st day occurs at the end of the 21st day, giving you seven complete days.

When the 21st *at even (ba erev)* is complete then the Last Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread has ended. Thus confirming again that *at even (ba erev)* ends a day.

Moreover, sunset (*bow shemesh*) is not the operative phrase here. *Bow shemesh* is not used here, either!

The 15th day of the first month begins after or “*from the evening*” of the 14th day, for the sun’s light of the 14th day is “all gone” and the night of the 15th day has set in; just like the 10th day of the seventh month begins after or “*from the evening*” of the 9th day, when the sun's light of the 9th day is “all gone” and darkness (night) of the 10th day sets in.

To reiterate one again, the 14th *at even (ba erev)* ends the 14th day.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread ends once the evening of the 21st day is completed, is “all gone” and the night of the 22nd day commences.

In the Scriptures, we do not read that the Sabbaths end “at sunset” (*bow shemesh*).

We do not read that you are to celebrate your Sabbaths “from sunset unto sunset.”

We do not read the Sabbath or any day, ends or begins, “at sunset.”

Rather, it is clear from the Scriptures - you are to celebrate your Sabbaths “*from evening unto evening*.” We see that the day ends at evening, with the evening.

From these two Scriptures (**Leviticus 23:32** and **Exodus 12:18**), as found in God’s Law, we learn that the day ends *at evening*. Each day has only one evening associated with it and it is the evening, when a day ends.

The evening does not begin the day. The evening ends the day (both the 12-hour light portion of the day and the complete 24-hour day).

Why do some erroneously teach that a day begins with the evening? Notice how they err.

There is an argument proposed by some that states - the evening begins the day because we read in the book of Genesis, six different times, of an “evening/morning” sequence. Consequently, God tells us that the evening begins the day.

Really!

What can we learn from the creation narrative about the evening?

Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31: What about the word *evening* as found in the Genesis creation account; what does that teach us?

We will now review **Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31**.

By reading these verses, we read of an *evening - morning* (*erev – boqer*) sequence. We read “*And the evening and the morning were the*” first day, second day, third day, etc.

At first glance, one could conclude that the *evening* was the time of the day, which began a day.

Why?

We read the English language word *evening* and the word *evening* is first in sequence. We see the evening and then the morning sequence. Evening is first; the morning is second. Therefore, evening should begin the day. Makes sense! But let us learn more!

As with any study, dealing with words and their meanings, a word search in any Hebrew Lexicon or Bible Concordance would be appropriate. Researching a word will help us understand the meaning and often the *meanings* of a word.

And such is the case here.

Researching the word *evening* will show us that the original Hebrew word used in the Genesis creation account is the word *erev*. Of course, that should not be surprising. We have learned much about this word.

Now is there more we can learn?

The answer is yes.

Reading from **Strong's Concordance**, we learn *erev* (6153) means – dusk, evening, night.

Reading from **Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words**, we read: “*ereb* (6153) evening, night. The noun *ereb* appears about 130 times and in all periods. The word represents the time of day *immediately preceding and following* the setting of the sun.”

We see that the Hebrew word *erev* means not only *evening* in our traditional or common understanding of the word evening but it can also mean *night*. Yet this type of night is not to be confused with the deep dark of the night. The deep dark of night is understood by the Hebrew word *laylah* (Strong's 3915).

What then does *evening* refer to in the Genesis creation account? Does *erev* in this Genesis account refer to the evening at the end of the day or does it refer to the night at the beginning of the day?

We will quickly come to understand that *evening* in the Genesis creation narrative **does not** refer to the time of day when the sun is setting or to the period of time when the day is losing its light.

Evening as used in the Genesis creation account **does not** refer to the portion of a day, which is growing old or coming to an end; the latter part of day before the night.

Rather *evening* as used in the Genesis creation account **does refer** to the English word *night* and we shall prove this fact.

The Hebrew word *erev* allows as one of its definitions – the *night* and that is exactly what the rendering of *erev* should have been in **Genesis 1**. The problem is not the Hebrew language; the problem was the KJV translators back in 1611 England.

Erev/boger (traditionally known as *evening and morning*) would be better translated as *night and the dawn* or, *night and morning*, were the first day, second day, third day, etc.

Can we prove this fact?

The Scriptures will prove to us that *erev* can mean *night* and hence the dark portion of a day. Let us review the Genesis creation account and learn that **the dark and the light** were the first day, second day, etc.

In so doing we shall see that *Erev* should not have been translated *evening*.

First, consider the following two scriptures where the KJV translators correctly translated the Hebrew word *erev* to the English word *night*. The context allows for this translation to be correct.

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise and the night (erev) be gone? and I am full of tossing to and fro unto the dawning of the day (Job 7:4).

For his anger endureth but for a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure a night (erev), but joy comes in the morning (boqer) (Psalm 30:5).

Interestingly enough, the sequence of *erev/boqer* (night/morning) is rendered here and correctly so. So too, in Genesis the *erev/boqer* sequence should rightly be rendered *night/morning*.

In both verses, the Hebrew word *erev* was correctly translated to the English word *night* because the context required that translation.

Likewise, in **Genesis 1**, the context requires that the word *erev* should have been translated as *night*.

Now we will prove, by reading the context of **Genesis 1** that the translators should have translated *erev* into the English word *night*.

First, as we know, the *evening* is the *portion of the day* in which the *sun is setting* (moving toward the western horizon), in which the light of the day is *transitioning to the darkening of the night* as the day is coming to an end.

This actuality or description of the evening **could not have applied** on that first day of creation. The first day of creation could not and did not include a sunset/evening at the end of that first day or any time during that first day.

Why?

Of a truth, there was no *sunset* or *evening* (as we know it today) on the first day of creation.

Evening, as in the day getting dark, did not exist in the first day, the second or the third day of creation.

The operation (sequence of solar activity as the sun moves across the sky (a result of the earth's orbit and rotation)) of a created sun and light from that sun (consequently a sunset (*bow shemesh*) which occurs in the evening of the day) was not introduced until the fourth day of creation.

Consequently, there was no sunset nor was there a sunrise until the fourth day of creation.

If there was no action of a setting sun, which occurs in the evening portion of the day, during the first, second or third day, then there was no evening as we commonly call it.

Erev (evening) on the first, second and third day of creation did not exist by definition as we understand it to be, as the Scriptures confer it to be, as we read in **Leviticus 23:32** and **Exodus 12:18** and all the other scriptures we will shortly review.

Erev of **Genesis 1** could only refer to night/dark.

Let us prove that there was only *dark/night* at the beginning of the first day of creation, not an *evening*.

Consider the events that took place on the first day of creation, the first of a seven-day pattern.

In **Genesis 1:2**, we read there **was darkness** upon the face of the deep (water) and God moved across the face of the waters (deep). Over all the earth there was darkness.

Then, **in the darkness**, notice what God said. "*Let there be light*" **Genesis 1:3**.

God divided the light from the darkness, **Genesis 1:4**.

Genesis 1:5, the light was called the day and the dark was called the night, and "the evening and morning were the first day." *Erev/boqer* were the first day.

Notice! Evident is the fact that The Eternal was first present in the darkness - called the night. The night - darkness is first, then (next or second in sequence) the day - the light.

Again, there was no sunset, no evening (at the beginning (if some so think) or at the end) on the first day of creation. All that there was, was darkness (called the night) and then light (called the day). In the darkness, light was created.

There was no transition period on that first day, only dark then light; night then day.

We see a *night* - day sequence of events. The *night* was first, then the day.

The Hebrew word *erev*, which at creation meant *night*, was first and the Hebrew word *boqer*, which at creation meant the *morning light*, was second. The *night/morning* or as called *erev* (darkness) *boqer* (light) was the daily sequence, just as we read in **Psalm 30:5**.

Evening, meaning the going down of the sun or the darkening of the day was not present here, on the first day of creation.

The darkening of the day or going down of the sun as a daily event or phenomenon did not happen on that first day, could not happen, and did not exist that first day.

Erev **was incorrectly translated** as *evening* in the Genesis creation account. The translators would have served us better by translating *erev* to the only logical meaning it could have had on the first day of creation; *night*.

Evening, in **Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31** meant the *darkness of a day*, the night; **not** the *darkening of the day's light* as the day is coming to an end or starting.

In the creation account, ***each day began with darkness!***

Once again, we see that the day does not begin in or with the evening (*erev*) as meaning the ***darkening*** of the day.

As we have thoroughly read in **Leviticus 23:32** and **Exodus 12:18**, the Law requires that the evening is at the end of the day The *evening* ends the day, as the day's light darkens to night.

In **Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31**, as in **Job 7:4** and **Psalms 30:5**, *erev* meant the night. God made that point clear. Darkness or the night was first, and then came the light of the day. The light of the day was next in sequence. Night (dark) first, then Day (morning or light) next. Night and morning are the first, second, third, etc. day. That is the Genesis cycle.

We understand the spiritual meaning of the night (darkness) first, then the day (light) as we realize that Christ came into the world (of darkness). The Light came into the darkness (cf. **John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35-36**).

At creation, the *night and the morning* were the first day, the second day, the third day, etc.

Let us learn more about the night (dark) and day (light) and confirm that the Scriptures teach: *the evening ends the day (both the 12-hours of light and the 24-hour complete day) and the night begins the day*

Consider **Nehemiah 13:19** (KJV). *And it came to pass that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the Sabbath, I commanded the gates should be shut....*

Notice **Nehemiah 13:19** (Interlinear Bible (Masoretic text)): *And it was when began to be shaded the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath that I ordered that should be shut the gates ...*

Notice what this scripture communicates to us, as we examine scriptural realities in the light of known scientific phenomenon.

Logically, we understand that **before the sun actually drops (sets) below the western horizon** (when the sun is still visible in the sky), objects on the earth are illuminated by the light of the sun; objects are not getting dark.

It is only **after the sun has set below the western horizon**, a time of day called the evening twilight, as the light of the sun is diminishing, that objects **are beginning to darken**. During the twilight, objects on the earth begin to be less visible as the light of the sun decreases, as the darkness of the night approaches; consequently, objects **begin to get (be) dark**.

An object is or looks **shaded** by a lack of light projected on it. Shaded or shading is a degree of darkness produced by a diminishing of light.

Now consider (**Jeremiah 6:4**) and Jeremiah's reference to the evening shadows; *for the day goeth away, the shadows of the evening are stretched out*.

Just as we understand, Jeremiah understood: when the sun is visible in the western portion of the sky, **above the western horizon**, the light of the sun illuminates objects on the earth and those objects cast shadows, which lengthen or *stretch out* as the evening sun travels closer to the western horizon.

It is only *after the sun drops (sets) below the western horizon* that the objects on earth begin to grow dark, as the light of the sun diminishes in intensity, as the night approaches. Once the sun is below the western horizon, objects no longer cast shadows; they only *begin to be (get) dark*. During the twilight, ***the objects are beginning to grow dark***; objects ***begin to be shaded*** because the light of that day's sun is diminishing as the darkening of the night is approaching.

During the twilight, objects do not cast shadows; rather objects **grow** dark. After the twilight is complete and the night commences, objects **are** dark.

In **Jeremiah 6:4**, evening shadows cast by objects illuminated by the light of the sun were possible because the sun was (still in the sky) above the western horizon. (We will read more about the ***evening shadows*** at the close of this Part I.)

In **Nehemiah 13:19** the twilight (of the sun below the western horizon) was evident, as the light was fading and objects (*the gates of the temple*) were growing dark.

We read that it ***was getting dark***, (*after the sun had set, in the twilight* is clearly understood), and that *period of time* was ***before the Sabbath***.

Let us notice the Hebrew word ***tselel*** (Strong's 6751 a noun), which is derived from the Hebrew root word ***tsalal*** (Strong's 6752 a verb or noun). ***Tselel*** is translated into the English as either *dark* or *shaded* and is used in **Nehemiah 13:19**. Let us notice the full extent and meaning of this word.

To understand ***tselel*** it is necessary to understand its root word, ***tsalal***.

"**Tsalal** – a prime root ... to be shaded, dusky." Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament

"**Tsalal** - a prime root ... to shade, as twilight or an opaque object - begin to be dark, shadowing (as a covering)." Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible

We see the translation of ***tselel*** in the context it is used in the Book of Nehemiah. Clearly, the translation and its root express a description of a period of time we call *twilight*. Of this fact, there can be no debate.

In this verse we read that it **began to be dark** (*twilight* time) ***before the Sabbath***.

Implicit is the fact that when it was dark, it then was the Sabbath.

The lesson expressed here is that at the time of Nehemiah the Sabbath **did not begin** *at the exact moment of sunset* (an exact moment in time – look at your watch time or as written on a sunset time chart in your newspaper). After sundown there is still a period of time called the twilight and twilight (which is part of the evening) was before the Sabbath.

Consider **Genesis 15:12-18** once again.

Start at **verse 12** - "*And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram...*"

Here we read that the sun was going down. The sun was in the process of setting. The sun was above the horizon and was going down. Simply a process: the sun was going down. The term *bow shemesh* is used.

Continuing the narrative, now read **Genesis 15:17**.

"And it came to pass that when the sun went down and it was dark..."

Genesis 15:17 clearly states, "the sun went down (again *bow shemesh* is used) and it was dark."

Now, as previously discussed, logically and by observation, we know these two events do not happen that quickly. Notice what happens between the *sun went down* and *it was dark*. The sun went down, then the twilight. During the twilight, the sky is still light but growing dark. The land is growing dark as objects (**like the gates in Jerusalem**) are growing dark, because the light of the sun is fading away. The evening is evident as it is getting dark and closing in on the night. Once the night commences, it is dark.

As we read, we can logically see that the sun went down, the twilight was past, the evening was past and finally, it was dark, it was now night.

Reading **verse 17** again: *"and it came to pass that when the sun went down and it was dark ..."*

Notice now **Genesis 15:18** *"In the same day the Eternal made a covenant with Abram..."*

Here **verses 17 and 18 state**, *it was dark and in the same day*.

Consider this fact - we **do not read any of the following**:

- "the sun went down and in the same day;"
- "the sun went down and the next or new day,"
- "it was twilight and the same or next or new day;"
- "it was evening and the same or next or a new day."

We simply, and only read, *"it was dark...and in the same day."* We do not even read it was dark and the next day. Again, these verses only states – *"it was dark ...and ... in the same day."*

We are told it was dark (night) and it was "in the same day" that a covenant was made. The sun went down, it was set (completely); the twilight was now over, the evening was past, it was now dark, it was night.

The **dark** definitely was part of a new day. During that day, of which the night is distinguished, the covenant was made.

The **dark (night)** and **in the same day** follows along with the same teaching we gain from the Genesis creation account of the fact that the night begins a new day.

Through Nehemiah, God shows us the Sabbath certainly did not begin right at the exact moment of sunset. The Sabbath began when it was dark.

Not only did Nehemiah and Ezra understand but also the House of Judah and the Elders of Judah understood that the evening, in which the last event to occur was the twilight (when things begin to get dark), was before the Sabbath.

Once the night/dark is evident, a new day (with the 12-hours of night being first, then the 12-hours of light – second) begins.

Consider the Sun (light) Rules the Day; the Light of the Moon and Stars Rule the Night

Consider the following verses:

Genesis 1:16 *“And God made two great lights; the greater light (the sun) to rule the day, and the lesser light (the moon) to rule the night, he made the stars also.”*

Psalm 136:8-9 *“The sun to rule by day: his mercy endures forever: The moon and stars to rule by night...”*

Jeremiah 31:35 *“Thus saith The Eternal, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night....”*

Psalm 148:3 *“Praise ye him, sun and moon, all ye stars of light.”*

It is correct to say that the sun’s light controls (rules) the day. The sun’s light (which rules the day) is manifest during the day. As we will next learn, there are (in general terms) 12 hours in the day. There are also 12 hours in the night.

The following events or sequence of time is what we witness every day (bear in mind clouds do not block the view). We know the **day** is evident:

- from the time of the sun's first illuminations in the morning, which occurs at dawn, before the sun has actually risen above the eastern horizon and continuing with sunrise and through the morning light,
- then late morning into midday; noon,
- continuing with the sun’s light, during the afternoon,
- then late afternoon (the declining of the day),
- then during the going down of the sun and at sunset, during the evening,
- finally, concluding with the twilight, which is the sun’s diminishing light still illuminating the earth after the sun has dropped (set) below the western horizon.

Once the sun’s light is gone, no longer visible, then the dark and night commences.

As the Scriptures teach, the sun’s light **rules** the day, and the day comes to an end when the sun’s light (illuminating the portion of the earth on which the observer is standing), is no longer present, when the sun's light no longer controls (or rules) the day. The sun is the greater light and the greater light is evident during the day.

Once the sun's light is “all gone,” when it rules no longer, then the day has ended. And as we have read, the evening ends the day, as the evening occurs at the end of the day. The action of the sunset occurs during the evening of the day. Once the evening is over because the (sun’s) light of that day is no longer evident, then the night of the new day commences.

A new day begins at the commencement of night, when the **night light** of the moon and/or the stars is evident and **begins to rule**.

Notice **Nehemiah 4:21**:

"So we labored in the work: and half of them held their spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared."

Clearly we can understand the entire measure of the day (12 hour light of day – generally speaking) is from the rising of the morning (the dawn) until the stars appeared (no more sun light visible).

Consider **Psalm 104:20-23** as pertaining to the sequence of activity within the day (complete 24 hours).

"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 down in their dens. Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor, until the evening."

Consider the progression of time within each day and *when*, as Christ related, during the day the evening occurs

Read **John 11:9**. According to Jesus Christ, how many hours (of daylight) are there in the day? *Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walketh in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the world* (referring to the sun).

Although we are aware of (as Christ would have been) seasonal variations and latitudinal positioning of the sun over the earth, in general and from the perspective of a general time element, Christ defines there are twelve hours (of daylight) in a day (as opposed to the night – which also consists of twelve hours).

There are **12 hours** of daylight each day and **12 hours** of darkness each night, totaling 24 hours in each day.

Now read **Matthew 20:1-12**.

Notice the following statements ... *went out early in the morning ... verse 1. ... went out about the third hour ... verse 3. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour ... verse 5. And about the eleventh hour ... verse 6. So when evening was come ... verse 8.*

After reading specifically **verses 1-8**, we read of the progression of time within a 12 hour day(light).

According to Christ, at what hour of the day does the evening occur?

Is the evening, the first hour of the day or, the last (twelfth) hour of the day?

Verses 9 and 12 reveal that the last group of hired servants, those who were hired at the eleventh hour worked for one hour. Eleven plus one equals twelve.

There are twelve hours in the day and consequently, the ***evening is the twelfth*** or last hour of the day.

Let us confirm that the *twelfth hour is the evening hour* by reading **Leviticus 19:13** along with **Deuteronomy 24:14-15**.

Thou shall not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning (Leviticus 19:13).

Now read **Deuteronomy 24:14-15** (New King James Version). *You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. Each day you shall give him his wages and not let the sun go down on it for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD and it be sin with you.*

According to the Law as revealed in these two scriptures (a law which was observed by the householder (or lord of the vineyard) in Christ's parable), Christ was correct to explain that the hired servants were to be gathered together in *the evening of the day*, in order to receive their wages.

As the law requires, on the *same day* they performed their service, on the *same day* they worked, they were to be paid. The wages were not to be held overnight, because it was understood - the night began a new day.

To hold the wages into the next (new) day was against the law. The evening, as the sun was setting (the twelfth hour) was the last opportunity to pay these hired servants (these day laborers) their wages on the same day they worked.

Now with that in mind, reading again **Matthew 20** we see Christ related a sequence of hours including the third, the sixth, the ninth and the eleventh.

We know there are twelve hours of day light, **John 11:9**. Consequently, we can conclude - the evening is the twelfth hour.

Additionally, we can understand, logically, that the twelfth hour of the day lasts for an hour, until the first hour of the night.

In the Hebrew reckoning of time, there is no zero hour. There are, relatively speaking, in general terms, 12 hours of light and 12 hours of dark, totaling 24 hours in each day. Each hour is 60 minutes in duration.

Consequently, the twelfth hour of the day (the evening hour – equivalent to 6:00 pm) is 60 minutes in duration and terminates at the first hour of the night. The first hour of the night is equivalent to 7:00 pm.

The twelfth hour of the night (or the last hour of the night), just before the rising of the sun is equivalent to 6:00 am and it too lasts 60 minutes. Since there is no zero hour, the first hour of the day is equivalent to 7:00 am.

The *sixth hour of the night* is equivalent to 12:00 midnight. The *sixth hour of the day* is equivalent to 12:00 noon.

The third hour of the day is equivalent to 9:00 am; the ninth hour of the day is equivalent to 3:00 in the afternoon.

The third hour of the night is equivalent to 9:00 pm and the eighth hour of the night is equivalent to 2:00 am (2 o'clock in the morning or as we also call it, 2 o'clock at night).

You can see the logic of these time equivalents.

To summarize **Matthew 20:1-12**, as understood by the Old Testament scriptures we read above:

The servants were gathered *in the evening* of the same day they worked.

The servants, gathered in the evening, as the sun was going down, were paid for their services at the end of the day in which they worked, but before the night of the new day. Their money could not be held into the new day.

Evening truly ends when the twilight is complete and there is no more sunlight to rule the day. Once the light of the old day is gone, the dark of a new day begins.

Evening (the twelfth hour of the day) ends a day and *night* (the first hour of the night) begins a new day.

Evening lasts until the darkness of a new day commences.

Now more scriptures, which leave no doubt, that the evening ends the day

Read Judges 19:9 ... *Behold, now the day draweth toward evening (erev), I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here...*

Is *the evening* the event that closes out or ends a day?

Can we conclude that the day ends at the evening time or as the evening ends? Let us continue.

Perhaps a thorough reading of the sequence of the events as recorded in this narrative, which occurred that entire day, will help us understand that indeed, the evening of that day (and any day) is an event that occurs at the end of the day.

First, **Judges 19:5-7**. These three verses narrate events that occurred on the fourth day. That complete fourth day passed. Next, we read in **verse 8** of the fifth day. Verse **8** and **9** speak to the events that occurred on the fifth day.

Read **Judges 19:8** (as part of the narrative that leads up to verse 9): "*And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried until the **afternoon**, and they did eat both of them.*"

The English word *afternoon*, as used in this verse is found only once in the entirety of the KJV Bible. Nowhere else in the KJV will you read the word *afternoon*.

The KJV translators (circa 1611) utilized the **one English word** *afternoon* and in so doing did not accurately convey the meaning the original Hebrew conveys.

If you were to read **Judges 19:8** in the original Hebrew text, you would read a **three-worded Hebrew phrase**, *natah ha yom* instead of the one English word *afternoon*.

Natah ha yom: (See Strong's #'s 5186 *natah* and 3117 *yom*. The Hebrew word *ha* is equivalent to the English word *the*). Once again this Hebrew phrase is the phrase that is used in the original Hebrew text of **Judges 19:8**.

Since the KJV translators incorrectly translate this Hebrew phrase, what English word or phrase should they have used?

What should *natah ha yom* be correctly translated as?

The Hebrew word *natah* is found over 200 times in the Old Testament and its definition is: *to stretch out, to lengthen, to decline, to bow down, to stretch forth, declining*.

Next, the Hebrew word *yom* is used scores of times throughout the OT and its distinctive meaning is *day*.

All together then, *natah ha yom* means or is correctly translated as ***the declining or the stretching forth of the day***.

Consequently, **Judges 19:8** should be correctly translated to read, "*they tarried until the declining of or stretching forth of the day.*"

That is what the more dependable (mss) text reads and the more accurate English translations reveal.

Verse 8 indicates that on that fifth day, they stayed around (*tarried*) *until the declining of the day*. Then picking up the narrative in **Judges 19:9**, notice the next event to occur on that fifth day. *The day draws toward evening (erev); the day groweth to an end.*

Instead of writing the word *afternoon*, the KJV translators would have served their readers well by simply interpreting the Hebrew for what it really says; they tarried until the *declining of the day*.

It was the portion of the day as the sun was declining, as the day was declining. Then continuing **verse 9**, *the day draws toward evening, the day groweth to an end.*

From the original Hebrew text, we read a narrative, which illustrates complete progression of activity that occurred as the day was ending, indicating that the evening ends that day.

Let us learn more.

Next, let us consider Luke 24:29

Consider **Luke 24:29**: "*But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.*"

Notice what we have just read in **Judges 19:9** - "*The day draweth toward evening. The day groweth to an end.*"

Now in the New Testament we read **Luke 24:29** – “*for it is toward evening and the day is far spent.*”

Notice now, there speaks nothing in these two verses about sunset ending the day, or the day draweth toward sunset, or it is toward sunset.

It is *the evening* (Hebrew – *erev*) or as Luke wrote in the original Greek – *hespera* (meaning evening/dusk/twilight) and not sunset (*bow shemesh or duo helios*), which is given consideration in these two scriptures

Notice as well, these scriptures **do not state** that the day draweth toward evening; behold the day is ready to begin. Not at all! **The evening does not begin a day.**

Evening and *end* (of a day) are associated, not evening and beginning.

The evening ends a day. Let us learn more to support this Biblical Truth.

Consider Mark 15:42

To get a complete understanding of the narrative, read **Mark 15:24-47**. Confer with **Mathew 27:45-61**.

Mark 15:33-41 leads us up to **verse 42**.

Reading **Mark 15:25, 33** and **34**, we are given a time element, a reference of 9:00 in the morning (3rd hour), 12:00 noon (6th hour) and then 3:00 in the afternoon (9th hour) of the preparation day or as known, the 14th day of the first month. Christ died around the 9th hour of the preparation day, the 14th day of the first month (the Passover Day).

Mark 15:42 states: “*And now when evening was come, because it was the preparation day, that is the day before the Sabbath*”

Here we read the evening is part of the preparation day (that current day), which is **before** the Sabbath (the next day).

The afternoon had passed. Christ was now dead and the *evening* of the preparation day had arrived. Clearly, ***the evening was at the end of the day.***

The evening belonged to the preparation day, not the Sabbath Day. Once again, we learn from the scriptures that the evening ends the day; never does the evening begin a day.

Consider Numbers 19:11-19

In this narrative, relating to the Law of purification, we read that the person who is exposed to or who comes in contact with a dead body shall be unclean for ***seven days***. Read **verses 11-19**.

Reading verse **19**, we can ask the question, “when does the “*at even*” of the seventh day occur?” When during the seventh day does *at even* occur in order to *complete* the **seven days** of uncleanness as defined by the Law (see verses **11, 14 and 16**)?

Does *at even* (***ba erev***) occur at the beginning of the seventh day; or does *at evening* occur at the end of the seventh day?

Consider **verse 12**. The individual must purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day. On these two days, *during the day*, the individual must purify himself.

Now verse **19** states ... *on the seventh day he shall purify himself and wash his clothes and bath himself in water and shall be clean at even*.

Reading all these scriptures we see 1) he is unclean for seven days; 2) on the seventh day he is performing activity, while still unclean; 3) he shall be clean at even (***ba erev***). Logically we can conclude that the evening is at the end of the seventh day.

The *even* of the seventh day is at the end of the seventh day making seven complete or full days.

Now notice John 20:1 and 19

First, read **John 20:1**. “*The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher.*”

This verse explains that it was *the first day of the week*.

When we read **John 20:1** along with **Matthew 28:1**; **Mark 16:2**; **Luke 24:1** we understand that the night/dark of that first day was giving way to the morning as the sun would be soon rising. (To state the obvious, the Scriptures reveal that each day begins with the night, after the evening/sunset/twilight of the previous day is complete.) This first day began with the night.

On that first day of the week, it was yet dark; the sun would be rising shortly, and the sunlight of the first day of the week would be intensifying.

A lot of activity would then take place on that *first day of the week*, some of which we can read of in **verses 2-18 of John 20**. **Luke 24:1-35** also relates more of the activities, which occurred on that *first day of the week*.

After that *first day of the week*’s activity was winding down, now read **John 20:19**. “*Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week when the doors were shut ...*”

Clearly, we can understand that *the evening* was not at the beginning of the first day. Neither did the evening belong to or begin the second day of the week.

We read it was *the same day, at evening, the first day of the week*. Here again, we see the evening did not begin the day. *The evening was at the end of the first day. The evening is at the end of every day.*

Beyn Ha Arbayim: *Between the evenings*. What do the Scriptures teach us?

Now finally, let us learn what the scriptures teach regarding when the *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice occurred.

Exodus 12:6 explains that the Passover sacrifice should occur *beyn ha arbayim*, or between the evenings (in the KJV the term *in the evening* is used). The following scriptures also refer to the time of the Passover sacrifice, referring to the Hebrew phrase *beyn ha arbayim* – **Leviticus 23:5, Numbers 9:3, 5, 11**.

The Passover Lamb was sacrificed *between the evenings* (Hebrew phrase – Strong's 996 and 6153) of the 14th day of the first month. Contained within the phrase *between the evenings* is the operative word, *evening*.

The scriptures clearly teach us when during the day, *beyn ha arbayim* occurred.

In ancient Israel, one of the responsibilities of the Levitical Priesthood was that of performing the daily sacrifices. Every day two lambs were used in two separate sacrifices.

The first lamb sacrifice was performed in the morning (Hebrew *boqer*) and the second lamb sacrifice was performed *at or in the evening*, specifically *between the evenings*, (Hebrew - *beyn ha arbayim*).

Let us then look to the Laws of God to understand the daily sacrifices and to know when during the day the *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice occurred.

Exodus 29:38-41 (Young's Literal Translation). “*And this is that which thou dost prepare on the altar; two lambs, sons of a year, daily continually; the one lamb thou dost prepare in the morning, and the second lamb thou dost prepare **between the evenings**; and a tenth deal of fine flour, mixed with beaten oil, a fourth part of a hin, and a libation, a fourth part of a hin, of wine, is for the one lamb. And the second lamb thou dost prepare **between the evenings**; according to the present of the morning, and according to its libation, thou dost prepare for it, for sweet fragrance, a fire-offering, to the Eternal.*”

Numbers 28:1-8 (KJV). “*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, and my bread for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season. 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 **at even**; And a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil. It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD And the drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink offering. And the other lamb shalt thou offer **at even**: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour to the LORD.*”

Numbers 28:3-4 (Interlinear mss text) “... lambs a son of a year without blemish two, daily, as a burnt offering continually; the lamb one you shall offer in the morning and the lamb second you shall offer **between the evenings** ...”

By reading **Exodus 29:38-41** and **Numbers 28:1-8**, we see the pattern that The Eternal established. We notice in both passages of Scripture, which speak of the law of the daily sacrifices, that *beyn ha arbayim* refers to a period of time, which occurred *toward* or *at the end* of the day.

Daily sacrifices were only to be performed within the light portion (12-hour period of light) of each day.

There was a morning (Hebrew: *boqer*) sacrifice activity time, which was first for the day, and then there is a *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice activity time, which was second, for the same day.

In the morning, the first lamb of the two daily lambs was sacrificed. Then *beyn ha arbayim*, the second lamb for that same day was sacrificed.

Two lambs were sacrificed each day. One at the beginning and the second lamb at the end, specifically *between the evenings* of the day.

Throughout the Scriptures, we often read of “the evening” sacrifice, or as we understand (from the giving of the laws through Moses), the *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice.

Notice in the Old Testament the following Scriptures: **I Kings 18:36**; **I Chronicles 16:40**; **II Chronicles 2:4, 31:3**; **Ezra 3:3**; **Ezra 9:4-5** and **Daniel 9:21**. Each of these verses refers to “the evening” sacrifice time, or as we know, the *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice time.

Beyn ha arbayim did not nor does not, occur before the morning sacrifice.

Beyn ha arbayim occurred after the morning sacrifice. *Beyn ha arbayim* is not the time of the first daily sacrifice; it is the time of the second daily sacrifice. *Beyn ha arbayim* is the time when the second daily sacrifice (of two daily sacrifices) occurred.

Beyn ha arbayim did not nor does not begin a new day (whether the 12-hour portion or the 24-hour day complete); *beyn ha arbayim* occurred at the end of a day. How much clearer could it be?

Beyn ha arbayim, literally translated “between the evenings” occurs toward the end of the day, during the evening of the day.

Now consider **Leviticus 6:20** (New Revised Standard Version) “*This is the offering that Aaron and his sons shall offer to the LORD on the day when he is anointed: one tenth of an ephah of choice flour as a regular offering, half in the morning and half in the evening.*”

Once again, notice the pattern; notice the consistency, which the Eternal promotes. There is a morning offering which occurs at the beginning of the day (the 12 hour portion cf. **John 11:9**) and there is an evening offering which ends the day's (12 hour portion and 24 hour complete) activity.

Notice again the consistency of a morning/evening pattern for a 12 hour day-light time period, as used in the Scriptures.

Exodus 18:13 (KJV) “*And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from morning unto the evening.*”

Notice also **verse 14**. "... *from morning unto even.*"

Consider Paul's behavior - **Acts 28:23** (check out any other translation you wish): "*And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.*"

Evening always ends the day and the operative word in *beyn ha arbayim* is the evening.

***Beyn Ha Arbayim* as understood in New Testament times, during Christ's walk on earth**

One final consideration – Matthew knew of the meaning of *between the evenings* (*beyn ha arbayim*).

Between the evenings (***beyn ha arbayim***) **never meant** twilight. Now let us let the Word of God teach us the truth.

Read **Matthew 14:15**: "*And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals.*"

Read also **Mark 6:35-36**. "*And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came to him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed: send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.*"

In **Matthew 14:15** we read, "*it was evening.*"

In **Mark 6:35** we read, "*the day was now far spent.*" Both phrases express to us the fact that the day was coming to an end.

From these narratives, we can also understand that it was getting close to "dinnertime." As we read, the disciples told Jesus to send the multitude away in order for them to go buy something to eat. It was evening, close to dinnertime.

From the narrative in **Matthew 14:15-23**, we can conclude the sun was still in the sky above the western horizon.

As the narrative explains, instead of sending the multitude away, Jesus proceeded to "work the miracle" of feeding the 5000 (plus) (perhaps as many as 15,000 counting women and children **Matthew 14:21**) people.

Christ fed them dinner. This feeding took some time, obviously. The people had to be arranged in groups (by ranks of 100's and 50's **Mark 6:40**); there certainly was an orderly presentation. Then the food (fish and bread) was handed out and then eaten. After everyone had eaten, the fragments that remained were collected. Logically, some length of time transpired.

Read **Matthew 14:15-23** to understand the narrative flow.

Now read **verse 23**, again. “*And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray and when evening was come, he was there alone.*”

Interesting! Read **verses 15** and **23** again.

Notice! There are *two different* “*evenings*” mentioned here. Of this fact, we cannot deny.

Verse 15: “*And when it was evening, his disciples came to him....*”

Verse 23: “*...he went up unto the mountain apart to pray, and when evening was come, he was there alone.*” **Mark 6:46 and 47** states: *And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea and he was alone on the land.*

Here we read of two evenings ... of the same day.

What exactly are these two evenings?

These two evenings are - the New Testament Scriptural definition of the phrase *between the evenings* or as also called in Hebrew *beyn ha arbayim*.

The first evening occurred about an hour or two, three at the most, before the sun got near to the western horizon (as evident by all the activity performed) and second evening occurred as the sun was at or perhaps below the western horizon. You can review specifically **Mark 6:35-47** and **John 6:5-17** as to their narratives of this event.

Continuing the narrative in **Matthew 14:24-32**, **Mark 6:48-52** and **John 6:15-21**. Jesus was in the mountain alone, praying, when the second evening came. Then by the fourth watch (equivalent to the morning hours of 4:00 am to 6:00 am) or when it was dark, Jesus came to them walking on the sea. (The rest is another story.)

Matthew certainly knew that the term *between the evenings* was relevant and legitimate to mean a period of time that lasts for about two to three hours prior to the commencement of the sunset/twilight and the darkness.

Evening, whether it be *erev* or *ba erev*; *opsios* or *hespera*, does not occur at the exact moment in time of the sun setting (dropping) below the western horizon. Evening does not indicate an exact moment in time activity.

Evening is not an event that commences after the sun is below the horizon, either.

The evening can be two or three hours prior to the time when the sun falls below the western horizon. The evening is evident, most certainly, *before* the sun sets below the horizon.

Obvious in the **Matthew 14** narrative is the fact that there is no mention of sunset.

In all the gospel accounts, the *evening* is the dominant word in reference to the ending of a day. Rare and only in one or two NT scriptures is the phrase sunset (Greek *Duo Helios*) ever mentioned. But its mention has nothing to do with defining the end of the day.

The disciples and the populace of Judah understood that *beyn ha arbayim* involved the recognition of two evenings occurring as the (same) day was nearing an end. For the first evening to occur around 3:00 in the afternoon, that understanding was no problem for the disciples and the Jews to accept.

In Bible times, the first evening of the day occurred around 3:00 in the afternoon, mid-afternoon (called the 9th hour), which was the time of the *evening prayers* and the *evening sacrifice*. The second evening occurred as the sun set. These two evenings define *beyn ha arbayim*.

Evening as spoken of by Jeremiah

Notice **Jeremiah 6:4**. "*Prepare ye war against her; and let us go up at noon. Woe unto us! For the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.*"

When reading **Jeremiah 6:4** and the phrase “the shadows of the evening are *stretched out*” we read the English phrase *stretched out*. That English phrase is translated from the Hebrew word *natah* (5186). Once again *natah* means *stretched out, declining, or lengthening, to bow down*. Jeremiah explained that the *evening (erev)* shadows are *lengthening* or *stretching out*. This event will occur in the late afternoon, and the late afternoon can be considered the evening.

The evening time described here is easily two or three hours before the sun reaches the western horizon, before the sun drops below the western horizon. As we can easily experience, in the late afternoon, the sun's light begins to cast shadows, which are lengthening (stretching out), as the lowering sun begins to approach the western horizon. The sun is still in the sky, above the western horizon, and beginning to approach the horizon, causing the shadows of the evening to be *stretched out* or *lengthened*. The sun has not yet set (dropped below the western horizon), consequently, the shadows of the evening [are being] stretched out or lengthened. According to Jeremiah's use of the word in this verse, *evening* occurs in the late afternoon.

Between the evenings can and did begin mid-afternoon or around 3:00 pm, the 9th hour.

To summarize the Scriptures, which use the term *evening*, we learn conclusively that **the evening of a day occurs at the end of that day**.

The evening does not begin a day.

Beyn ha arbayim occurs as the day is coming to an end.

Beyn ha arbayim does not mean twilight. It means *between the evenings* and the *evenings* have been defined both in the scriptures and by the nation, which observed *beyn ha arbayim*.

Beyn ha arbayim can include the twilight since the twilight is an event that occurs in the evening of the day, as the day is ending. Ironically, we understand, if *beyn ha arbayim* were taken narrowly to only mean twilight, *beyn ha arbayim* would still be kept at the end of the day.

Beyn ha arbayim always occurred as the day was declining, as the day was coming to an end. Understanding this truth, we know that the Passover Lamb was sacrificed at the end of the 14th day of the first month, as the Law required.

Part II

Concerning the Sequence of Events as Recorded in Exodus 12

The Word of God, the Bible teaches us that *the evening occurs at the end of a day*. Whether we are referring to the Hebrew word *erev* or the phrases *ba erev* or *beyn ha arbayim*, these all refer to the time of day, which is at the day's end.

The Hebrew phrase *beyn ha arbayim* as used in **Leviticus 23:5** and **Exodus 12:6** explains to us the Passover Lamb was slain at the end of the 14th day of the first month, prior to the commencement of the 15th day of the first month.

By no stretch of the imagination does the term, *beyn ha arbayim* allow that the sacrifice would have taken place in the twilight at the beginning of the 14th after the sunset of the 13th.

By no stretch of the imagination can *beyn ha arbayim* ever mean two evenings, which occur, one at the beginning and the other at the end of a 24-hour period. If that were the case, God would have simply commanded Moses to sacrifice the lamb on the 14th. There would have been no need to specify a time; God would not have needed to use any definitive or conditional phrase. If all that were required were a 24-hour period of time, God would have just said on the 14th, period.

The time involved *between the evenings* was more like 2 to 3 hours in length, total - and always at the end of the day. This fact we have seen confirmed by Matthew.

As a result of understanding this vital truth, we can read the New Testament with the full assurance of knowing that Jesus did not eat the **Exodus 12** Passover meal on the night He was betrayed. There is a significant, historical, and doctrinal reason why He did not.

Before we examine the New Testament narratives, let us confirm the logic revealed in the Old Testament, **Exodus 12** Passover scenario.

By now, it is clearly understood when the (old) day ends and when a (new) day begins. Understanding that the day ends with the evening and a new day begins with the commencement of the night, let us read the Old Testament Passover account as recorded in **Exodus 12**.

The Passover lamb was killed on the 14th of the first month, *beyn ha arbayim*. From that point in time, events took place, which are forever recorded in history. **Exodus 12** narrates the sequence of events, the progression of time that began when the lambs were slain and ended when the Children of Israel left Egypt.

By reviewing this time sequence, we will clearly understand why the Intercontinental Church of God is true to the Scriptures when it teaches that the lambs were slain at the end of the 14th and that the Children of Israel ate the Passover meal on the night of, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month. The Children of Israel then left Egypt on the night of the 15th.

Let us begin with **Exodus 12:6-7** (KJV): *And you shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and the upper door post of the house, wherein they shall eat it.*

After the lambs were slain (sacrificed) during *beyn ha arbayim* of the 14th day, the blood of the lamb(s) was to be smeared on the top doorframe and the side door posts of the houses in which the children of Israel would be eating their Passover lamb meal.

As we observe during any evening of a day, we know that after the sun has completely set, the next event is the twilight. Twilight continues for anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes until the dark of the night commences.

When we consider the time element involved, the passage of time required, we can conclude that by the time the lambs were killed and their blood painted on the door posts and (continuing in sequence); by the time the lambs were prepared and then cooked, and then eaten during a meal, the light of the sun was completely gone, and it was dark outside, over the land of Egypt.

It was very easily “night,” when the Israelites were eating their Passover lamb.

Would the Scriptures corroborate the fact that it was dark/night when the Children of Israel were eating their Passover meal?

Let us continue the narrative, **verses 8-10** (NIV):

"That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire—head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it."

You are encouraged to read whichever Bible version you'd like. Let us read **verse 8** from several other English version Bibles.

“That night the flesh must be eaten...” (New Jerusalem Bible)

“On that night they must eat the flesh roasted...” (Revised English Bible)

“And they shall eat the flesh in that night...” (King James Version)

“Then they shall eat the flesh on that night ...” (New King James Version)

We see that after the evening was complete, after the twilight of the 14th was over, it was now "dark outside," as the night commences and, as the Scriptures state; the lambs were to be eaten that night.

Notice too, that the lamb was to be eaten with unleavened bread (bread without yeast). On that night, unleavened bread is to be eaten as part of the "Passover" meal.

Now with regard to eating the Passover meal that night; **Exodus 12:11**, notice how the Israelites were to be poised. *This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand, eat it in haste; it is the Lord's Passover.*

Let us review this verse from the following translations:

(New Revised Standard Version) *This is how you shall eat it, your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly.*

(New American Bible) *This is how you are to eat it; with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand, you shall eat it like those who are in flight.*

(Revised English Bible) *This is the way in which you are to eat it: have your belt fastened, sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand and you must eat it in urgent haste.*

The idea expressed from what we read in this verse is that the children of Israel were not to go to bed that night. They were told to eat the meal quickly, wasting no time, and to be ready to move.

Their cloaks were to be tucked up, in order to be ready to walk. Their sandals placed on their feet, in order to be ready to walk. Their staff or walking sticks (used also to direct goats and lambs, the herd) were to be in their hand, in order to be ready to walk.

As we continue to read the narrative, we learn that God commanded Israel to be ready to walk out of town that night. Eat your meal and be ready to go. The term “in haste” will help us understand just how quickly and just when Israel “got out of town.” This meal **was not** a *take your time, relaxing dinner*.

In Haste

The Hebrew word for *haste* is *chippazown* (pronounced khip-paw-zone). It means trepidation, hurried flight, hasty flight, haste.

Chippazown is derived from the root word *chaphaz* (pronounced khaw-faz).

Chaphaz means to start up suddenly, to hasten away, to fear (make) haste (away), to tremble.

The Hebrew word *chippazown* is only used three times in the Scriptures: **Exodus 12:11**, **Deuteronomy 16:3** and **Isaiah 52:12**. In all three instances, the English word *haste* is used and the definition obtained from the narrative is that of hurriedly, hasty, a quick time element, quick movement.

Confirm **Exodus 12:11** (haste) with that of **Exodus 12:33**. *”The Egyptians urged the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, We shall all be dead.”*

The English word *haste* as found here in **Exodus 12:33** is translated from the Hebrew *mawhar* meaning suddenly, fluidly, or speedily. We will thoroughly address the expediency issue as we continue in the narrative.

Continuing the narrative, **Exodus 12:12** (NIV). *On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn — both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am The Eternal.*

The lambs were sacrificed on the 14th *beyn ha arbayim*. They were prepared, cooked and then during the night, the dark hours of the 15th, the Passover lambs were eaten, “in haste,” with unleavened bread and bitter herbs as the Israelites were in their houses, the door side posts and top posts being sprinkled with the lamb's blood.

On this same night, the Israelites were poised with their cloaks tucked in, sandals on their feet and staffs in their hands, ready to leave in haste. On this same night God passed through the land of Egypt in order to kill the firstborn. This night was a very busy night. Most important to remember is, it was “that same night” in which the children of Israel were eating the Passover lamb, that God “passed over” Egypt.

Now **Exodus 12:13**. *The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.*

This verse confirms God’s promise to protect His people (**Exodus 11:7**), if they painted the lamb's blood on the doorpost of the houses in which they were eating the lamb meal. This verse also confirms the last plague to affect the people of Egypt (**Exodus 11:5-6**).

As “that night,” in which the Israelites were eating the Passover lamb with unleavened bread, eating it in haste with their sandals on their feet, ready to go at a moments notice progressed and grew closer to the midnight hour (**Exodus 11:4; Exodus 12:29**), the tension mounted.

The children of Israel heard the screams and cries of the frightened Egyptians who were witnessing the horror of every first-born man, woman, and beast dying right before them.

For Egypt, this was a night of terror. For Israel it was a night to be much remembered, a night of departure.

Let us continue!

Now **Exodus 12:14-17**. *This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the Eternal— a lasting ordinance. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat—that is all you may do. “Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.*

Let us read **Exodus 12:14-17** from the New King James Version. Again, you are encouraged to read any Bible version you care to read. They all render the same course of events.

"So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to The Eternal throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat - that only may be prepared by you. So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance."

What is “this day” of which we read? What “day” is being spoken of here?

These four verses explain to us that *on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened*, Israel left Egypt. The first day of Unleavened Bread is to be kept (celebrated, commemorated) as a memorial feast, as an everlasting ordinance, a holy convocation, holy High Day, Feast Day, throughout your generations (**vss. 14 & 17**).

The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the day, which commemorates the day The Eternal passed over Egypt to kill the first born, and His delivering Israel out of Egypt.

The Scriptures state God killed the first born “at night.” Here we obtain insight as to the sequence of events.

Notice as the Scriptures teach a night/morning/day/evening sequence, so **Exodus 12** promotes the same sequence. **After** the evening of the 14th, the end of the 14th, is the beginning, the night of the 15th.

“Observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread,” for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt.

The 15th day of the first month is the First Day (of the seven-day in duration) of Feast of Unleavened Bread. From the Scriptures, we learned that the Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th day of, and ends on the 21st day (cf. **Exodus 12:18**) of the first month (called Abib or Nisan).

As the Scriptures clearly reveal to us: **Exodus 12:17** (NIV). *Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.*

Once again, this Scripture informs us that Israel came out of Egypt on the 15th of the first month, the First Day of Unleavened Bread. Israel left Egypt on a Feast Day.

Does the Bible teach us that Israel departed Egypt on the 15th – the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Let us allow the Bible teach us the truth and explain itself.

Let us read **Numbers 33:1-5** (KJV): *These are the journeys of the Children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys (segments) by the commandment of The Eternal: and these are their journeys according to their goings out. 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 the Egyptians. For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which The Eternal had smitten among them; upon their gods also The Eternal executed judgment. And the children of Israel departed from Rameses and pitched in Succoth.*

Numbers 33:3-5 (NIV) reads as follows: *The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, who were burying all their firstborn. The Israelites left Rameses and camped at Succoth.*

Compare **Numbers 33:3** with **Exodus 12:37**, which states: *"The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children."*

The first day of Israel's exodus journey began on the 15th day of the first month. They were thrust out, in haste, as the Scriptures state, from Rameses. Rameses was the starting point. Rameses to Succoth was the first segment (journey) of their departure.

The Passover was sacrificed on the 14th as the day was coming to an end. The morrow (after the Passover) naturally is the 15th.

So then on the 15th at night the Passover meal was consumed, with unleavened bread. Then continuing the narrative, **Exodus 12:29** (KJV): *"And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt..."*

Compare this verse with **Exodus 11:4-6**, in which God foretold, explaining to Moses the events of the passing over, the 14th/15th of Abib. God mentions the time He will pass over (at about midnight), and the destruction, which will result from His passing over (the death of the firstborn).

Now **Exodus 12:30** (KJV): *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.*

Exodus 12:31-33 (NIV): *During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, 'Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the Eternal as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me. The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. For otherwise, they said, we will all die!*

Notice these verses carefully. We see the sequence of events unfold before our eyes. On the night the lamb was eaten (with unleavened bread), was on that same night (at midnight) God passed over Egypt. On that same night, the Israelites were told to leave the land NOW! The Egyptians were urgent upon people ... sent out of the land in haste (**Exodus 12:33** KJV).

There Was No Time To Waste!

There was no time to gather in Goshen or Rameses during the 14th day, only to then begin to “exodus” some 12–18 or 24 hours later. God’s command to Moses, which he explained to the elders of Israel days before the actual events took place, was that the Israelites were to eat the meal “with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in hand; and you shall eat it in haste...”

God knew that the children of Israel would be eating the Passover meal and leaving Egypt on the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. God told Moses that you shall eat unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day I have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. On the very night The Eternal passed over Egypt was the night in which Israel left Egypt, the night of the 15th of Abib.

Israel began its travel on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread - in haste, in a hurry, just as God promised they would.

Notice **Exodus 11:1**. *And The Eternal said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.*

Exodus 12:34: *So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing.*

They ate unleavened bread with their meal and shortly afterwards, after midnight, they took their dough, still without yeast. The yeast had no time to start to ferment.

Exodus 12:35-36: *The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians.*

Did the Children of Israel spoil the Egyptians right there and then, as they were leaving in haste? Or did God arrange that the children of Israel ask of the Egyptians well in advance of the 15th day of the first month?

Compare **Exodus 12:35-36** with **Exodus 11:2-3** *which occurred well prior to the actual exodus.*

Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver and jewels of gold. And The Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians.

Moses had informed the Israelites, at some point in time in advance, before the actual passing over and death of the first born had occurred, well before the 15th day of the first month, even before the first day of the first month (**Exodus 12:1**) to ask of the Egyptians for spoil.

The Eternal had arranged that the Israelites be prepared and ready to leave Egypt at a moment's notice. The Eternal had arranged in advance for the Israelite to spoil the Egyptians days before they selected their Passover lambs.

Notice **Exodus 12:34** ...*had made*... and **Exodus 11:3** ...The Lord *gave* the people fear... Both of these verses are past tense, actions that occurred prior to the 15th.

Israel had already spoiled the Egyptians before they ate their Passover meal.

The truth from the Scriptures points out that Israel had no time on the 14th to gather in Goshen, to collect jewelry and to wait for the 15th to arrive.

The Scriptures do not support any scenario that would have allowed Israel to eat the Passover lamb at the beginning of the 14th then hang around Egypt for a day only to depart on the 15th. Israel left in haste, quickly, with no time to waste.

Now, continuing **Exodus 12:37-39** as the narrative proceeds: *The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. With the dough they had brought from Egypt, they baked cakes of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves.*

Does this verse in any way, shape or form indicate that Israel had time to linger in Goshen or even Rameses on the 14th wasting some 24 hours, only to then depart on the 15th?

The plain truth is, No, it does not.

Notice: **Exodus 12:39** (New Jerusalem Bible) ... *since they had been driven out of Egypt with no time to linger....*

Exodus 12:39 (New American Bible) ...*They had been rushed out of Egypt...*

Exodus 12:39 (New Revised Standard Version)... *because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait...*

Exodus 12:39 (KJV) ...*they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry...*

This verse confirms what God promised Moses in **Exodus 11:1**: *Pharaoh will thrust you out of Egypt.*

Exodus 12:11 tells us that The Eternal commanded Israel to eat their meal, "in haste." Naturally, because they would be kicked out of Egypt - quickly, once the death of the firstborn occurred. The Egyptians did not want the Israelites around anymore, "lest they all be dead."

What is "the night of The Eternal?" A Night to be much remembered!

Exodus 12:42 *It is the night to be much observed unto The Eternal for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of The Eternal to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations."*

As we can logically, from the Scriptures understand, "the night of The Eternal" is the "passing over" night; the night on which He did pass through the land of Egypt (**Exodus 11:4-7; 12:12, 29**).

This night is the night on which He executed judgment and thereby delivered the Israelites from the bondage of the Egyptians. This night is that same night which is to be commemorated as a memorial (kept as a High, Holy Feast Day) throughout your generations. This night is the passing over night of The Eternal and it is called the night to be observed.

The night to be much remembered is the night of the Passover meal.

On the night to be observed, the children of Israel ate the Passover. The Eternal passed over Egypt, and the children of Israel were delivered from bondage that night. The process had begun. And it was done in haste, and it was done on the 15th of the first month, a day that is to be commemorated as the first day of unleavened bread. It was on the 15th day (during its night) that The Eternal brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and the Children of Israel are to remember that night.

The Churches of God maintain a tradition of observing the Night to be Much Remembered on the night of the 15th day of the first month, the First day of the Days of Unleavened Bread. Traditionally, families or whole congregations get together to share a meal. Ironically, they are commemorating the Passover meal.

The morning/night controversy

This controversy, advanced by those who propose "the beginning of the 14th Passover" *theory* suggests the following scenario:

The Exodus 12 Passover Lambs were killed at the beginning of the 14th (after the sunset of the 13th). The lambs were then eaten on the night of the 14th. At midnight of the 14th, God passed over Egypt. Then after the dark/night of the 14th was over, and the morning-sun arose over the eastern horizon on the 14th, the Children of Israel finally came out of their houses.

Continuing, during the morning of the 14th, after they came out of their houses (which it is assumed were located all throughout Goshen), the Children of Israel burned the remains of the Passover meal. Once that was completed, as time progressed that day and the sun was in its full light, Moses gave orders to the children of Israel to organize within Goshen in order to walk into the city of Rameses. During the day portion of the 14th, while the Children of Israel were continuing to assemble into Rameses from all around Goshen, they began to spoil the Egyptians, taking this or that piece of jewelry, gold, etc. Then finally, after some 18-24 hours later, after the Passover meal was eaten, after the sun had finally set on the 14th, as the night of the 15th commenced, they then left Rameses, beginning the Exodus from Egypt. The children of Israel left Rameses during the night of the 15th, some 24 hours after eating the Passover meal.

Does this scenario sound logical in light of the Scriptures, which give clear indication that what Israel did, they did in haste and without hesitation?

Let us notice the two verses that are used to argue the morning/night controversy and let us learn what these Scriptures clearly teach.

Exodus 12:22 *And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning,*

Continuing with **verse 23**, to understand the full impact of this directive. *For The Eternal will pass through and smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, The Eternal will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your house to smite you.*

Now **Deuteronomy 16:1** *"Observe the month of Abib and keep the Passover unto the Eternal thy God; for in the month of Abib the Eternal thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night."*

Here the Bible states *stay in your houses until morning* and Israel was *brought forth out of Egypt by night*.

From these two scriptures, most of the Churches of God have interpreted this to mean "the **morning** of the 14th" and "the **night** of the 15th," some 12-18 hours apart.

But is that true? Was there an extended delay between the meal, the morning burning session and the departure?

First, let us start with **Exodus 12:22-23**. **Exodus 12:22-23** is accurate; it states the facts.

Stay in your house until morning. Do not leave your house. If you do, if any of the firstborn Israelites go out of their houses that night, in which the Eternal passes over, they would be killed. The blood on the doorposts of the houses would protect the firstborn from death as long as they stayed in their houses. It was that simple. The destroyer would not come into their houses.

Israel ate the Passover meal *in haste*, with *staff in hand*, *sandals on their feet*, while in their houses, being ready to depart, just as the Eternal commanded (**Exodus 12:11**), just as the Scriptures state.

Israel ate the Passover meal *at night* (**Exodus 12:8**), and then *at midnight* the Eternal passed over and smote the Egyptians (**Exodus 11:4-6; 12:29**). Then Pharaoh rose up *in the night* (**Exodus 12:30**) after the Eternal

had passed over. Sometime, no doubt very shortly after midnight, as Pharaoh arose in the night, Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron *by night* (**Exodus 12:31**).

Did Moses and Aaron leave their house that night and go to Pharaoh or did Moses stay indoors until morning?

From the **Exodus 10:28-29** point of view, it seems to indicate that Moses did not even see Pharaoh any more. From this point of view, Moses and Aaron did not leave their house at night. However, if (*as the Exodus 12:31* narrative seems to indicate, *And he called for Moses and Aaron by night ...*) Moses and Aaron did go back to see Pharaoh, then they ignored the instruction that “*and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.*” Could this be?

Now let us consider: if Moses and Aaron did see Pharaoh that night, they of course did not wait until the morning to leave their house. (***This is true only if we narrowly interpret the Hebrew word for morning as being the time after the sun has risen over the eastern horizon.*** We will learn more shortly!)

If Moses and Aaron did leave their house that night, after midnight, it is logical then to understand that the command to stay in your houses until morning was now null and void, was now cancelled. Why?

Israel (the firstborn of) needed to stay indoors in order not to be affected by “the Eternal’s passing over,” in order not to be killed. Once the “passing over” took place, there was no reason for them to stay indoors. The instruction was no longer applicable. Death occurred; the judgment was fulfilled.

The Eternal had passed over and had smote the Egyptians. The damage was done and now there was no reason to stay indoors. The command would now be considered null and void since the purpose for the command (to protect the firstborn Israelites from death) had now been fulfilled. The Eternal had passed over! The firstborn were protected! It was now safe to go out of the house.

Therefore, it is very possible that Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh during the night of (after) The Eternal’s passing over, as **Exodus 12:31** seems to indicate. They could have walked out of their house before the morning light, in the night darkness and in so doing would not have been disobedient to the directive.

Can the Scriptures help us understand that the morning does not have to only be the early hours just after the sun is risen over the eastern horizon? Can the morning occur before the light of the sun is cracking over the eastern horizon? Can the morning refer to the nighttime, while it is still dark?

We know that sometime after *midnight* (**Exodus 11:4; 12:29-31**); Moses got word from Pharaoh “go.”

Pharaoh said, *Rise up and get you forth from among my people* **Exodus 12:31**.

“*The Egyptians were urgent upon the people that they might send them out in haste, for they said “we all be dead man”* (**Exodus 12:33**).

Israel was “*thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry*” (**Exodus 12:39**).

After Moses received word, “to get out of here,” he then gave the command to the children of Israel, and the mass of people began their journey (from Rameses as we read in **Exodus 12:37** and **Numbers 33:3** and notice **Genesis 47:11**).

It easily could have been the early morning, 4:00 or 5:00 am, or at the time of the dawn, as the sun, although still below the eastern horizon, begun to illuminate the land of Egypt, when they began to leave.

Yet, if they left, at 1:00 in the morning or even 3:00 in the morning, it is logical to understand that the purpose for the instructions given in **Exodus 12:22** had already been accomplished. One or three o'clock, in the morning would qualify as "morning time," satisfying the command to stay in your houses until the morning while at the same time acknowledging what the Scriptures teach – that the Children of Israel left Egypt at night (**Deuteronomy 16:1**).

Do the Scriptures teach us that morning and night can be synonymous?

Consider **Ruth 3:13-14** (KJV): *Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning. And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another.*

Here we read that Ruth slept (laid down) until the morning. Then she rose up in the morning. Yet in the morning, it was still dark.

Why?

Because the term: "before one could know another" simply meant it was still dark enough that two people standing or walking outside would not have been able to see or recognize one another. It was pitch black - night. We know that on any given day (24 hours), when it is dark, we call that period of time, *night*.

Yet, here we read of a period of time, which is described as being dark enough that people could not recognize one another, and this period of time was called "morning."

Even in our modern vernacular today, we say it is 2:00 in the morning (2:00 am) and we know that time of/in the morning is still the nighttime. Morning nighttime is understandable.

By reading **Ruth 3:13-14**, we can easily understand that if Israel left while it was still dark, 1:00, 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, they not only fulfilled the instruction to stay in your house until the morning but they would have left in the night.

Morning does not have to mean 6:00, 7:00 or 8:00 a.m.; the time after the sun has arisen.

Consider **Mark 1:35**: *And in the morning, rising up a great while before day*

Review **Mark 16:2**, **Luke 24:1** and **John 20:1**. Putting the narratives together, we understand that Mary Magdalene came to the tomb in very early in the morning, while it was yet dark.

Now let us consider **Exodus 14:20-24** *And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel and it was a cloud and darkness to them but it gave light by night to these, so that the one came not near the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Eternal caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land and the waters were divided. And the*

Children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground and the waters were a wall unto them on their right and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horseman. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Eternal looked unto the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud and troubled the host of the Egyptians.

Do you notice what these scriptures communicate to us?

First, it was at *night* that the sea was divided and the Children of Israel went through the parted sea. Second, it was in the *morning watch* that the Eternal looked down on the Egyptians through *the pillar of fire* (**verse 24**).

Exodus 13:21 informs us that God went before the Children of Israel, *by night in a pillar of fire to give them light*. **Verse 22** reiterates ... *a pillar of fire by night* ...

Numbers 9:15 informs us again *at evening there was as it were an appearance of fire until the morning.*"

We see that the *pillar of fire* was manifest during the night. Evening (*erev*) here should once again have been translated *night* as **Exodus 13:21, 22** confirm - the night.

Therefore by reading **Exodus 14:20-24** we understand that the morning watch *refers* to a period of time, which occurred during the night.

We read that in the *morning watch* God looked through the pillar of fire, which was manifest during the *night*.

Again we read from the Word of God, the morning does not have to refer to a time of early sunlight and consequently, daytime. The morning does not have to only refer to the time of day after the sun is above the eastern horizon.

Morning can and does occur during the night. That same understanding has carried on to us today in that we say, its 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning.

Can we definitely prove that the morning watch occurred during the night? Let us continue!

Notice **verses 25-27** *And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily, so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Eternal fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And the Eternal said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretch forth his hand over the sea and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared and the Egyptians fled against it and the Eternal overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.*

Notice **verse 27** from the Interlinear Bible: *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and returned the sea at the dawn of morning to its usual flow...*

When, according to the Scriptures did the sea return to its natural state?

Read **Exodus 14:27** (Interlinear bible): *at the dawn of morning*. or as the King James Version state: *when the morning appeared*.

Other common translations indicate the phrase, *at daybreak*.

The sea returned to its natural state as the night, in which the Eternal looked out from the pillar of fire, was ending, giving way to the early morning sun before it rose over the eastern horizon. The activity occurred and finally at daybreak the parted water came together.

Again, we read that it was during the *morning watch of darkness nighttime* that the Eternal looked through the pillar of fire.

The Scriptures teach us that the morning does not have to mean the time of the early sunlight or the period between the sunrise and 12:00 noon.

The morning can and does occur in the night, during the dark.

Remember Mary Magdalene came to the tomb *in the morning*, while it was *yet dark*.

How can we deny the truth of the Word of God?

Consequently, the Israelites did not have to wait until the sun rose over the eastern horizon before they could leave their houses. For them to leave their house at 1:00, 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning would have been in compliance to the command the Eternal gave them.

If the children of Israel left Egypt at 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, as it was the night, they not only fulfilled the instruction to stay in your house until the morning but they would have left in the night.

The Children of Israel left their house, fully clothe, staff in hand and *in haste*, that night, in the morning darkness of the 15th day of the first month. They ate the Passover meal some 4 to 6 hours earlier.

As the Scriptures teach (**Deuteronomy 16:1; Exodus 12:42**): the Children of Israel left at night, and on the 15th day (which begins at the night, after the *at even* of the 14th) of the first month (**Numbers 33:3**).

There was no time to linger on the 14th during the night and then during the day, while waiting for the night of the 15th to arrive. The Egyptians were urgent upon the Children of Israel (**Exodus 12:33**) and the Children of Israel were thrust out of Egypt (**Exodus 12:39**) in haste.

What about the remains of the lamb?

Now with regard to the instruction to *let nothing of it remain until morning* (**Exodus 12:10**), the instruction was simply to burn that which was not eaten, or used, in order that there be no remains in the morning (cf. **Exodus 34:25**).

Consider the following: Once the meal was eaten, and everyone was satisfied, the families would have then naturally known what remained, that is what would remain until the morning (whether the morning be at 2:00 am or 6:00 am).

Knowing what would remain until the morning, if they left it on the table, the families would have simply burned “the remains,” for that is what they were commanded to do. They were not to let anything remain until the morning.

There was no direct command as to *when* to burn the remains; only that Israel was told they had to burn what would be there in the morning, if they let it stay until the morning.

It was right after they were done eating; they saw what would remain until the morning, if they let it sit on the table (which back then would have been a bad practice) over night.

There was no logic to let the remains sit on the table, or on the spit, for some 12 hours. Knowing that none of the meal was to remain until the morning, they burned it without delay, right after dinner.

Certainly, a fire would be burning in their houses as they were eating, the same fire that was used to cook the lambs. Having then set “the remains” afire, nothing would remain until the morning. They were then ready to leave at a moments notice, in haste, just as he Eternal commanded them to be ready to do.

Israel was told to be ready to go. Israel was told to eat in haste, to have their staffs in hand, and their clothes on their back. In a common vernacular, they were told, do not go to bed this night; get ready to get out of town and do not let *my Passover sacrifice* remain on the table until the morning.

Israel left Egypt in haste (**Deuteronomy 16:3; Exodus 12:33**), they were thrust out. After they ate their meal, they heard the world outside their doors falling apart and they were thrust out (**Exodus 11:1; Exodus 12:39**). They began their exit, their exodus that night.

Once done eating, they burnt the remains and did not let anything remain until the morning.

By night or day – is there a contradiction?

Finally consider **Deuteronomy 16:1** which states: ... *The Eternal thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by **night**.*

However **Deuteronomy 16:3** states: ...*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.*

Which is it, the night or the day?

Is there a conflict between **verse one (night)** and **verse three (day)** of **Deuteronomy 16**?

Do the Scriptures contradict themselves?

Hardly!

That night and day both refers to the same day. Scriptures tell us that day was the 15th day of the first month, the First Day of Unleavened Bread (**Numbers 33:3** and **Exodus 12:17**) that the children of Israel left Egypt.

According to **Deuteronomy 16:3**, it was the day when Israel came out of Egypt.

Exodus 12:17 and **13:3-4** also refers to the day, when the children of Israel came forth out of Egypt. Both verses mention that Israel came out of Egypt - therefore eat no leavened bread - for in this *day* (the 15th), you came out.

Notice **Exodus 23:15** and **Exodus 34:18**. These two verses reference the connection of the days of unleavened bread and the coming out of Egypt. Israel came out of Egypt on the first day of unleavened bread as we read in **Numbers 33:3**.

The children of Israel left Egypt, and in particular, the city of Rameses, on the first day of the seven-days in duration, Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is the 15th day of the first month.

So then, day does apply.

The 15th day of the first month contains 24 hours. During any 24-hour period there is first, a night period of time (12 hours) and then a day period of time (12 hours). The events that occurred during the night, midnight, and night/morning of that particular day occurred specifically on the 15th day of the first month, just as the Scriptures state.

All the Passover/exodus/departure activity that occurred on the 15th day of the first month, occurred during the **night** of the 15th **day** of the first month.

The lamb was sacrificed on the 14th, *beyn ha arbayim* (as the 14th was coming to an end) and just prior to the 15th day. It was cooked, and as time naturally progressed, it was then eaten in that night, on the passing over night, the First Day of Unleavened Bread, which is the 15th day of the first month, Abib. The lamb was eaten with unleavened bread. Unleavened bread is called the bread of affliction or the bread of haste, for in haste Israel departed from Egypt. **Exodus 12:8, 17, 39** and **Deuteronomy 16:2-3** confirms this fact.

Thou shall eat no leavened bread with it. (Deuteronomy 16:3).

With what?

With the Passover lamb (**Deuteronomy 16:2**), which was sacrificed.

Deuteronomy 16:3 shows the association of eating the Passover meal on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the 15th day of the first month, the day on which Israel departed from Egypt. Once again, the Scriptures show that Israel departed Egypt on the 15th day of the first month, not the 14th day of the first month.

So it was the **night** of the 15th **day** of the first month that the children of Israel left Egypt.

There is no contradiction and the morning/night controversy is no controversy at all.

Those who propose a scenario that would have Israel linger in Egypt during the daylight hours of the 14th day of the first month, while waiting for the night of the 15th in order to depart Egypt, set themselves at odds with the Scriptures.

The “beginning of the 14th Passover sacrifice” theorists contradict the truth and have set themselves in controversy with the Word of God.

The Scriptures show us that the children of Israel sacrificed the lamb toward the end of the 14th day, during the *beyn ha arbayim* sacrifice time. The Children of Israel under Moses ate the Passover Lamb on the night of the 15th day of the first month. The Eternal passed over Egypt on the night of the 15th, and Israel, being ready to depart, left in haste after they got word, Pharaoh has released us. They began to walk (without hanging around), sometime after midnight, during the morning/night, during the darkness of night. The children of Israel left on the 15th day of the first month, and that day is to be celebrated as a feast day, a Holy Day, called the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it commemorates Israel coming out of Egypt (**Exodus 12:14-17**).

Knowing the truth, that the Passover meal was consumed on the night of the 15th day of the first month, the first day of unleavened bread, we can understand that Jesus did not eat the Passover on the night He was betrayed.

On the night Jesus was betrayed, the night on which He introduced the New Covenant, the night of, the beginning of the 14th day of the first month; Jesus ate a supper with His disciples. That supper is traditionally called His Last Supper or the Lord’s Supper. That supper was not the Passover Meal.

Part III The Events of the Passover as recorded in the New Testament and the Time of Christ’s Death – *What it reveals!*

As the evening sunset of the 13th day of the first month was giving way to the night of the 14th day, Jesus Christ, accompanied with His disciples, settled in the Upper Room. With His disciples, they did eat. Did Jesus Christ and His disciples eat the Statutory (Old Testament) Passover meal or a supper; his last supper?

When we read only the Synoptic Gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) relating to the last night of Jesus’ life, we can be led to believe that Jesus Christ and His disciples ate the Passover meal.

Yet when we read the book of John, we are told that Jesus ate a supper one night before the Statutory Passover meal would be eaten. John presents a different light on the events that occurred on the **night of the 14th day of the first month**.

When we read together, the three Synoptic accounts and the book of John, regarding the last night of Jesus’ life, we come across “seemingly” conflicting information.

Still Mark and Matthew make no specific mention, no statement verbatim, that Jesus *did eat* the Passover (lamb implied) on the night, the beginning of the 14th.

Luke records Jesus speaking to his disciples, saying, *with desire I desired to eat this Passover* (meal implied) *with you before I suffer*. Continuing in Luke’s account, his wording reveals that Jesus did not eat the Passover meal that night; rather He ate a supper.

John however, categorically states that the meal was a supper, eaten “before the feast of the Passover.” The Feast of Passover, the same as the Feast of Unleavened Bread (**Luke 22:1**), commenced with the eating of the Passover meal on the night of the 15th day of the first month.

This *seeming* conflict between the Synoptic Gospels and the book of John has been a source of contention among the scholars and Christian theologians and among the churches of God. This *seeming* conflict has been debated for centuries. This *seeming* conflict has been presented from every angle by the scholars.

Tragically, many teachers within the various Churches of God have been confused and fooled by the writings of the Christian scholars. Many Church of God teachers have been misled, thereby accepting falsehood and consequently, have taught error regarding the meal that Jesus Christ ate on the night he was betrayed.

Let us read several excerpts of the much available research material which introduces, discusses, debates and informs us about the many "scholarly" interpretations of the New Testament narratives relating to Jesus' last meal.

Each article or commentary addresses the issues from "the scholars" point of view. When it comes to the four gospel accounts of the Last Supper narratives, *confusion does exist*, when we “listen to” the scholars.

Confusion exists *only if* we read the New Testament account *without* thoroughly understanding the time elements, the sequence of events as laid out in **Exodus 12**. Unless one understands the Biblical truth that the Passover lamb was eaten on the night of the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, confusion exists.

Consider the following:

"The Last Supper. Was it the Passover? The precise nature of the meal which the Lord shared with his disciples on the night in which he was betrayed is one of the most warmly debated topics of NT history and interpretation. Various suggestions have been made."

NEW BIBLE DICTIONARY
THE LORD'S SUPPER
PAGE 707

"Some doubt exists as to whether the Last Supper was the paschal meal or not. According to the Synoptic Gospels, it was (Lk 22:7; Mt 26:17; Mk 14:12); while according to John, the Passover was to be eaten some time following the Last Supper (Jh 18: 28). Various harmonizations of these passages have been suggested, the most ingenious, probably being the theory that when the Passover fell on Friday night, the Pharisees ate the meal on Thursday and the Sadducees on Friday, and that Jesus followed the custom of the Pharisees (Chwolson, Das letzte Passahmal Jesu, 2nd ed, St Petersburg, 1904)."

THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPEDIA
PASSOVER
PAGE 2258

"It was also to a Roman-occupied Jerusalem that Jesus came to celebrate what was to be his last Passover. In fact, according to the Synoptic Gospels, the Last Supper, during which the salvational significance of Jesus' death became clear and which was interrupted by Roman soldiers coming to take him away, was the Paschal meal. Jesus was thus crucified on the 15th of Nisan, the first day of Passover, in Jerusalem crowded with people celebrating the festival. However, the Gospel of John moves the crucifixion forward to the 14th of Nisan, the eve of Passover, and thereby equates the death of Jesus with the slaughter of the sacrificial Paschal lamb."

PASSOVER

BY: MORDELL KLEIN

PAGE 24

"According to the synoptic gospels Jesus was arrested on the night that the paschal lamb was sacrificed. ...The description of the Last Supper given in the gospels is undoubtedly a record of the Seder of the first night of Passover. ...Mark and Matthew make no mention that Jesus ate the Paschal lamb. Luke relates that Jesus said to his Apostles, "with desire I desired to eat this paschal lamb with you." The reason that Mark, Matthew and Luke did not mention that Jesus ate the paschal lamb was that they held that Jesus himself was the paschal lamb that was to be sacrificed to redeem men. ... According to the Gospel of John the Last Supper was an ordinary meal, since Jesus was crucified on the eve of Passover. Hence, the meal, which Jesus ate with his disciples on the preceding night, could not have been the Passover meal. The Last Supper, according to John, was on Thursday the 13th of the month and Jesus was arrested and crucified the following morning Friday the 14th, a day before Passover."

THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH

PAGE xi

"A problem still exists as to the date of the Last Supper, the exact date of which affects the nature of the meal. According to Matthew, Mark and Luke, Christ ate the Passover meal with his disciples on the day when "they sacrificed the Passover Lamb" (Mark 14:12; cf. Luke 22:7; Matt 26:17), which is Nisan 14. He was crucified the following day, Nisan 15. This means that the Last Supper was most likely a Passover Supper since it was partaken at the time the Jews ate their Passover meal. However, according to the Gospel of John, Jesus was crucified on the day when the Passover lamb was sacrificed (John 19:14; 18:28), Nisan 14. This means He ate the Last Supper with His disciples the day before the official Passover meal. In this case Jesus' meal with His disciples may have been either a specially arranged Passover meal or a farewell fellowship meal unrelated to the Passover, because it was partaken of the evening before the official Passover. Countless attempts have been made to reconcile the chronology of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) with that of John. Some have tried to resolve the difficulty by presupposing the existence of two dates for Passover, one to suit the calendar of the Pharisees and the other that of the Sadducees."

GOD'S FESTIVALS

In Scripture and History

SAMUELE BACCHIOCCHI

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"Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?

Although a number of scholars identify the Last Supper as a Passover meal, a description of which is given in the Mishna (Pesah 10; cf. Str-B 4/1: 41-76), the majority are still not convinced of this interpretation. However many would conclude that Jesus ate his final meal in a Passover atmosphere;

there was after all, the proximity of the feast. The cause of this scholarly disagreement is that, although the Synoptics clearly identify the Last Supper as a Passover meal (Mark 14:12-16 parr.' Luke 22:15), John (13:1-2; cf. 19:14, 31,36) does not. Jesus' Jewish opponents did not enter the praetorium so that they might not be defiled, but so that they could eat the Passover to be held after Jesus died (John 18:28). Other solutions have been proposed to explain why the Synoptics and John do not agree that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. There is of course the possibility that Jesus anticipated the Passover."

THE ANCHOR BIBLE DICTIONARY
LAST SUPPER
PAGES 235

"Critical NT readers, however, note that the gospels differ in their basic chronology. While the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 14:6, 12-17; Matthew 26:17, 19-20; Luke 22:7-9, 13-14) indicate that the last meal Jesus ate with his disciples the night before his crucifixion was a sacrificial meal, which his disciples had prepared, John (13:1; 18:28; 19:14, 42) states that it occurred "before the feast of the Passover." Despite numerous studies by Jeremias (1966), Lietzmann (1979), and others advocating one or the other date or harmonizing the sources, we are unable to go beyond the literary sources to determine which account is historically "accurate" (Williams 1975). Rather, as argued by Bokser (1984:25-26 and especially 1987b), we see how Jesus' followers and the early church understood the last supper and interpreted the event to fit the message of Jesus.

As portrayed in the gospels, the meal is not structured to celebrate the Exodus but is reinterpreted in a new way that relates to the future of the Jesus movement, that is, Christianity. The bread becomes the salvational body of Christ and the wine his blood - the sign of future redemption; though, as Saldarini (1984:58) observes, these two symbolization's, which might be derived from the liturgical formulae used by the Christians in their worship of Jesus' death, could be understood in light of sacrifices in general and not necessarily the Passover offering.

Recognizing that the early Christians did not focus narrowly on the Exodus enables us to appreciate how they made the Last Supper an anticipation of a future salvific experience. The Synoptics concentrate on Jesus in the Kingdom of God, on the future judgment, on the meaning of the passion, that is, on Jesus' death as a permanent sacrifice.

John on the other hand, uses the Passover analogy in the way that requires him to place the Last Supper before the Passover meal and Jesus' condemnation on the "day of Preparation of the Passover" (John 19:14). John, in thus portraying Jesus crucified at the time of the paschal lambs were being sacrificed at the temple, depicts Jesus as a Passover sacrifice. This synchronization explains how Jesus died for humanity and, it is claimed, gives his death a more enduring redemptive quality than the regular Passover sacrifice.

John, like the letter to the Hebrews and the letters of Paul, thus saw the crucified Jesus as a sacrifice atoning for the sins of the believer, though he identified it as a paschel offering. Such an interpretation, which occurs as early as I Cor 5:7-8 could subtly contrast the literal Passover offering with the ultimate, namely Jesus."

THE ANCHOR BIBLE DICTIONARY
UNLEAVENED BREAD AND
PASSOVER, FEAST OF
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We could read from literally dozens more commentaries and scholastic writings relating to this "warmly debated issue." Multiple theories, ideas, hypotheses, suppositions exist and are taught, relating to the "Last Supper" of Jesus. In addition to the dilemma regarding whether or not the "Last Supper" was the Passover meal, we are also presented with the dilemma of exactly on what day did Jesus die.

The Passover *sacrifice*, occurring at the end of the 14th day of the first month, commenced the activities of the Feast, which “kicked off” with the consumption of the Passover meal on the First Day of Unleavened Bread. Without the Passover sacrifice, there would be no meal.

As scriptures (**Exodus 12:8** and **Deuteronomy 16:3**) reveal, the Passover meal was consumed *with unleavened bread*, on the night in which The Eternal passed over Egypt to slay the firstborn, which was the night of the 15th.

Yet, because of the seeming inconsistencies between the gospel accounts, the scholars ask, did Jesus eat the Passover meal or a supper? Did Jesus die on a Friday, a Wednesday, or a Thursday? Did He eat His Last Supper on a Thursday night or Friday night?

(The scholars are lead to their suppositions/conclusions as a result of looking at the life of Jesus Christ through Greco-Roman/Catholic eyes. If they were to approach this 14th day of the first month through Hebraic eyes, their conclusions would be dramatically different. We know Jesus Christ ate his last meal on a Tuesday night, was put to death on a Wednesday afternoon, and resurrected late Sabbath afternoon.)

Some scholars teach that Jesus died on the 15th of Nisan, the First Day of Unleavened bread. Other scholars say He died on the 14th of Nisan, at the time when the Passover Lamb was slain, which **the gospel writers** called “*the preparation day*.” (That teaching would be correct.)

Some “scholars” also believe Good Friday, as commonly considered, was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan. Other “scholars” believe that that Friday was the 14th of Nisan, just before the Sabbath, which then would have been the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the 15th of Nisan.

Talk of confusion!

When viewing the events of the last day of Christ’s life in the flesh through paganized/Greco-Roman/Catholic eyes, confusion does exist. However, when viewing these events through Hebraic/Scriptural eyes, the truth is clear.

We will now explore the New Testament Scriptures and look at the difficulties presented by the narratives in each. We will read the discrepancies presented among the four gospel narratives. We will let the Word of God, and not the scholars, reveal the truth to us and clear up any difficulties. The Scriptures do interpret themselves, defining their own terms and revealing the truth of God.

The night of the 14th of Nisan (the beginning of the 14th), *the night on which Jesus was betrayed* (**I Corinthians 11:23**), the night on which we annually participate in the foot washing service and partake of the cup and the bread, was the night on which Jesus introduced the symbols of the New Covenant.

The activity that took place on the **night of, the beginning of, the 14th day** of the first month (*that year*) was different from the activity that took place on the **night of, the beginning of the 15th day** of the first month.

Simply, we need not go any further than read **Exodus 12** to understand that the Passover meal was eaten on the night of, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month. Once that fact of history is accepted, there is no

debate, and we would clearly see that the activities, which occurred the night before the Passover (that year of Christ's death), were new, having never occurred before in all history.

However, for those who find difficulty with the **Exodus 12** narrative and perceive the New Testament teaches that Jesus ate the Passover on the night before he died, let us now get to the heart of the question.

Does the Bible state, “Jesus ate the Passover?” Did He eat the Passover?

Matthew, Mark and Luke *seem to* indicate that Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover meal on the night He was betrayed.

However, the truth of the matter is you cannot read any of the following statements in Matthew, Mark or Luke or any other book of the Bible: “*Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover*” or “*Jesus ate the Passover*” or “*he, they or anyone there*” that night “*ate the Passover.*”

The New Testament scriptures **never state** the Passover meal was eaten that night.

Being honest with the Bible none of these phrases are in the Bible. Of a truth, the Bible does not say that Jesus ate the Passover. However, this is not convincing enough for some, so we will press on.

Let us examine the narrative wording of the gospel accounts as they are. Let us read what the Bible speaks.

Matthew 26:1-5 “*And it came to pass when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples. Ye know after two days is the Passover and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.*”

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.*”

Luke 22:1 “*Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might kill him, for they feared the people.*”

These verses acknowledge that the Passover was imminent. The disciples were told that in two days time is the Passover and Jesus would be crucified. Notice how each writer differently summarized this information.

Passover and the death of the Son of Man were emphasized here. This was certainly the point the writers wanted to make. It was during the Passover Jesus Christ would be crucified.

Likewise, we learn that the council debated, if Jesus was to be put to death, it could not be on the First Day of Unleavened Bread, “the feast day.” The Passover Day, the 14th day of the first month, was called at that time the *preparation day*. The Passover **was not, is not** a Feast Day/Holy Day.

The Passover/preparation day is not a Feast or Holy Day. **Leviticus 23** makes that fact plain. On the 14th day of the first month, there is neither a requirement for a *Holy Convocation*, nor a requirement that *no work shall be done*. These two requirements are specific only for the seven annual Holy Days, of which the 14th day of the first month is not. There is no command that the 14th day of the first month be a Holy/Feast day.

Keep in mind, as the Word of God, through the writing of Luke specifies, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called the Passover. This nomenclature is still common today as we can witness on wall calendars. In the spring of each year, either the month of March or April, you will read the word *Passover* on a certain day. That same day is the First Day of the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. Passover and the first day of Unleavened Bread are synonymous as referring to the seven days of unleavened bread.

At least since the 1st Century, even as it is today, the Jews call the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread the Passover.

On that *preparation day*, the Passover Lamb was sacrificed as the first act to commence the Feast of Passover/Unleavened Bread. Work could be performed on *the preparation day*; but generally ceased by noon, the 6th hour of the day, as that day was “the preparation” for the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The First Day of Unleavened Bread is the High Holy Day referred to by the Sanhedrin in the synoptics. If Jesus were to be put to death on the Feast Day, the 15th of Nisan, that act would have been a defilement of that Day and the Law of God. Likewise for him to be put to death during the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread would disrupt those days. With all the throngs of people in Jerusalem at that time, the leaders of the people did not want to make a mockery of this Feast season or cause a riotous disruption. The Council did not wish for his execution to happen on the Feast day because “they feared the people,” that is they feared what the people might do. The whole scheme had to be in secrecy and quickly so the populace and especially His followers would not create a riot, defending Jesus. (From the carnal point of view, we could understand their reasoning.)

Continuing, let us next consider the looseness of the narrative, the inaccurate time sequences, and chronological concerns that are evident in the following synoptic accounts. Herein lies the problem. It is not as though we cannot trust the Scriptures, it is simply the writers were not concerned with every nuance of detail in order to get their point across. They were writing for people who were closer to the situation back then than we are today. Their presentation was more about the context and substance rather than the detail.

John, who wrote some 30 years after the synoptics were written, did clarify any uncertainty and gave greater detail and meaning to the activities that occurred during the night and day portion of the *day of preparation*.

But for our concern now we need to answer the question, “Did Jesus eat the Passover on the night He was betrayed?” Just what are the synoptic gospel accounts saying?

Matthew 26:17 *"Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?"*

The following three words *day, feast of* were left unbold, as these three words are italicized in the KJV. These three words were not in the original text, rather were added to provide clarification and greater meaning of the sentence. Whether we read these three additional words or not does not change the more

obvious problem with Matthew's narrative. If we take this verse at face value, we can then conclude that it is false and misleading historically and against the Laws of the Passover as we read in the Old Testament.

Why?

Because on the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (which is the 15th of Nisan or Abib), Jesus was already dead. He died about the 9th hour (3 o'clock pm) (**Mark 15:34**) of the 14th, or as the Scriptures call it, *the preparation day*. He was placed in the tomb before the Sabbath, the High Day (**Mark 15:34-42; Luke 23:44-54; John 19:31, 42**)

Consequently, the disciples could not have come to Him on the First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread for He was in the tomb that day. Also, one actually began to prepare for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (also known as the Passover) on the 13th at the latest and easily earlier in the month (cf. **John 11:55**), but certainly not on the 15th. Finally, by Law, the Passover is killed on the 14th day of the first month, *ben ha arbayim*. To prepare the Passover on the First Day of Unleavened Bread is to prepare too late.

If taken literally, this verse is chronologically inaccurate. At best, it is a general comment, which cannot carry any weight of exact time sequence, nor can it be used as a proof text Scripture in order to determine doctrine. Notice now the inaccurate time sequence of Mark's narrative.

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?*"

To take Mark's narrative literally causes confusion because it is chronologically inaccurate. It is a loosely worded narrative. Let us analyze this verse and let the Scriptures explain themselves.

1) "*And the first day of unleavened bread*" - We know this day to be the 15th day of the first month (**Leviticus 23:6; Numbers 28:17**). Scriptures inform us that Jesus was in the sepulcher on what we know to be the first day of unleavened bread (cf. **Matthew 27:57-66; Mark 15:42; John 19:31, 42**).

2) "*when they killed the Passover*" - we know the Passover was sacrificed on the 14th *ben ha arbayim* (**Exodus 12:6; Leviticus 23:5**). The Passover was not killed on the First Day of Unleavened Bread. So naturally we see a time order problem.

3) "*his disciples said unto him*" - If this verse is to be taken literally, then it is incorrect, for again on the 15th Jesus was already dead. How then could the disciples talk to a dead man?

4) The disciples asked Jesus, "*where will we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover?*"

Again, if the First Day of Unleavened Bread was the day these men asked Jesus (even if He were still alive) about preparing the Passover, it would have been too late to "prepare for the Passover" in order to eat it.

5) Jesus was not dead yet because He answered their question. Naturally then we can understand that the time (day) at which this verse was occurring was no later than the 13th of Nisan, in the afternoon.

This verse shows a weakness of chronological order. On its face, it shows no historical accuracy. What else might be "generally" inaccurate?

Now notice **Luke 22:7** "*Then came the days of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed.*"

Luke was terse but the time element is missing. When was the Passover killed?

The answer to that question is obtained by reading the Old Testament. The people in Luke's Day, even Theopholis, knew that the Passover Lamb was sacrificed on the 14th, *ben ha arbayim*, as the day was nearing an end.

The Jews observed the proper time sequence. From Moses, through Joshua, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah and at the time of Christ, the Passover timing sequence never changed.

Let us notice a curious discrepancy between the books of Matthew and Mark and the account in the book of Luke.

Matthew 26:17 "*Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?*"

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?*"

Luke 22:7-9 "*Then came the days of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed. And he sent Peter and John saying, Go and prepare us the Passover that we may eat. And they said to him, Where wilt thou that we prepare.*"

Here we see an obvious difference in the narratives of Luke from both Matthew and Mark. With regard to who **initiated** the question about where to eat the Passover, it seems that from both Matthew and Mark's narrative, the disciples initiated the question, asking Jesus, "Where do you want us to go to prepare to eat the Passover?"

However, as you notice in Luke's account, the narrative indicates that Jesus **first** instructed Peter and John—go prepare, **and then** the disciples (Peter and John, not all twelve) asked him, "*Where do you want us to prepare?*"

Because of this discrepancy, the question is asked: did the disciples want to know where to go and what to do, or did Jesus first tell them what to do and where to go?

Was this the practice of their previous Passovers? Did the disciples want to know where they should go this year as they were used to asking in previous years or was this the first year Jesus was with them to celebrate the Passover together as a group?

Were the disciples with their families during the previous Passover celebrations? Did Jesus say words to the disciples, which caused them to realize this year's Passover observance would be different?

Did Jesus prompt them to want to ask the question, "Where do you want us to prepare to eat the Passover?"

Did they naturally get together a night earlier at previous Passover celebrations or was this year different?

Answers to these questions are silent in the Scriptures and it would not be wise to speculate. In any event, once again, we see a discrepancy between the gospel narratives and herein lies the problem.

Continuing, let us read the next verses.

Matthew 26:18-19 *"And he said, Go into the city to such a man and say to him, The Master saith My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them and they made ready the Passover."*

Mark 14:13-16 *"And he sent forth two of his disciples and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared, there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth and came into the city and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover."*

Luke 22: 10-13 *"And he said unto them, Behold when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. And you shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover."*

Of interest, we see that Luke and Mark are almost word for word the same narrative. In these two accounts, the authors indicate that Jesus would be *eating* the Passover or at least preparing to eat the Passover. In the book of Matthew, the narrative relates to the fact that Jesus would be keeping the Passover. Just a slight difference. Let us continue.

Whether keeping or eating the Passover (that night or the next), the disciples knew they would be with Jesus in the Upper Room that night of the 14th.

As **Matthew 26:19**, **Mark 14:16** and **Luke 22:13** all state, preparation was made (they made ready the Passover). But what do we know about the idea of "preparing" for the Passover or the term "they made ready?"

How would preparations for the Passover be made? What did the inhabitants of Jerusalem do to prepare or make ready the Passover? How would the disciples have made ready?

To make ready the Passover would have been something natural for the Jews and the disciples of Jesus to do.

To make ready the Passover does not indicate that the disciples were making ready for an Exodus-type Passover meal for consumption within the next 3-6 hours.

By no stretch of the imagination can we conclude that the disciples would be killing a lamb.

Consider the following:

"The sacrifice had to take place during the afternoon of the 14th day, so most pilgrims probably tried to arrive in Jerusalem a day or two early in order to make arrangements."

JESUS AND HIS TIMES
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"The special preparations for the Passover commenced on the evening of the 13th of Nisan, with which, according to Jewish reckoning, the 14th began, the day being always computed from evening to evening. Then the head of the house was to search with lighted candle all places where leaven was usually kept.

THE TEMPLE; ITS MINISTRY AND SERVICES
BY: ALFRED EDERSHEIM
PAGES 171-172

"The morning before ... Thousands of priests and Levites are gathered in the Temple. There are twenty-four divisions of them on duty throughout the land and, generally, there is only one division present in Jerusalem to take care of the Temple service. However, during the three great festivals, when there are so many people in town and so many animals to be sacrificed, all divisions come to Jerusalem. The chomets, the bread and sour dough, is cleaned out of every house. The night before, by the light of oil lamps, every corner is searched and every bit of chomets removed.

THE JEWISH FESTIVALS
By: Hayyim Schauss
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"On the night preceding, the 14th [of Nisan] they seek out leaven by light of candle. ... A.R. Judah says, "they seek out [leaven] (1) on the night of the fourteenth, (2) on the fourteenth in the morning, and (3) at the time of removal." And sages say [If] one did not seek out [leaven] on the night of the fourteenth, he may seek it out on the fourteenth. If he did not seek it out on the fourteenth, let him seek it out (2) at the appointed time [11 am to 12 noon on the fourteenth]. ... A.R. Meir says, "they eat leaven throughout the fifth [hour on the fourteenth] and they burn it at the beginning of the sixth hour [noon]."

THE MISHNA
Jacob Neusner
PAGES 229-230

By understanding the sequence of events of the **Exodus 12** Passover, we realize that *as* the night of the 14th commenced, Jesus was with the disciples in the guest chamber, they having prepared to keep the Passover. The sacrifice of the lamb would occur later that day *ben ha arbayim* and the Passover meal would be eaten at the night of the 15th.

That night of the 14th, the disciples prepared the upper room, allowing that there was no leavening in the guest chamber. They prepared to eat the Passover and keep the Feast of Passover after the lamb(s) was officially sacrificed on the 14th, *ben ha arbayim*. As with all Judah, the disciples kept/ate the Passover on the 15th day of the first month.

But that year, this first time ever occasion, Jesus Christ had to ensure that the room was clean of leavening (a type of sin) before He could present the purity of the New Covenant to His disciples.

To make ready the Passover would have been something natural for the Jews and the disciples of Jesus to do. To prepare for the Passover on the 13th day and on up to noon of the 14th day was natural for Judah to do and the disciples to do in preparation for Passover.

However, to the casual reader of the synoptic gospels, *to make ready* would imply the Passover meal was next to be eaten since the Passover was the topic of discussion in the previous verse. The next verse states; *and they did eat.*

However, the disciples were expecting to eat the Passover Meal the next night, as that was the correct night to partake of it. And of course they knew the meal could not be eaten until after the lambs were slain *between the evenings* of the 14th.

What is strikingly obvious is that nowhere in the scriptures do we read that the Jews were wrong to celebrate and eat the Passover meal when they did, on the night of the 15th.

Nowhere did Jesus Christ inform the disciples or His church that the correct time to eat the Passover meal was at the beginning of the 14th day of the first month.

Nowhere is the time sequence, as the Jews have maintained and preserved even as it is today, as the Scripture teach, an issue or stated as wrong.

Never did the disciples or writers of the New Testament ever condemn the Passover of the Jews.

Consider, Christ was always present at, keeping the Feasts (of the Jews). When He was twelve, he kept the Feast of Passover (with the Jews). He even kept the “Jewish” Feast of Hanukkah (**John 10:22-23**).

It defies logic to think if the Jews were wrong in keeping the Passover when they did, at Christ’s time, why is there ***no mention anywhere*** in the Scriptures that they were wrong and some other way was right.

Paul and the 1st Century Church kept the Holy Days with the Jews. We learn that fact not only from the Scriptures, but as well from history. Try as one may, you cannot refute the fact that the 1st Century Church of God kept the Holy Days with the Jews.

The meal known today as the Seder meal or the Passover meal or the Night to Be Much Remembered Meal (all one in the same) is correctly eaten on the night of, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month.

Now the Scriptures state, “*And They Did Eat.*”

Eat What?

Matthew 26:20-21 *"Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat he said, Verily I say unto you that one of you shall betray me."*

Mark 14:17-18 “And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat down and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, one of you which eateth with me shall betray me.”

Luke 22:14 “And now when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.”

A simple conclusion from these verses would be that they sat down and they did eat the Passover meal (implied).

But - did they really eat the Statutory Passover meal? Do the Scriptures really tell us that they ate the Passover?

Do these verses say, “they ate the Passover meal” or does one assume it was the Passover meal because the preceding verses inform us they were preparing for the Passover?

Matthew and Mark’s narratives simply state, *they did eat*.

Luke does not say they did eat. (Luke goes into greater detail, which we shall explore shortly.)

That is all we read; that is all the information we gain from the Scriptures, simply put. Because of this uncertainty, many erroneously speculate a conclusion that Jesus ate the Passover. They did eat; but eat what?

As we shall read in the book of John, this meal, which they did eat, was called a *supper* (**John 13:2, 4**), which was eaten prior to the Feast of Passover (**John 13:1**).

The word - Supper

Unrelated to the Passover events, on another occasion, as found in **John 12:2**, John tells us that Jesus ate a *supper*, which Martha served. The Greek word *deipnon* (Strong’s 1173), means supper, main evening meal, a festive chief meal. *Deipnon* is the word used in **Mark 6:21**, **John 12:2** and **John 13:2, 4**; **John 21:20**, **Luke 14:12, 16, 17, 24**, and **I Corinthians 11:20, 21**. This same word is also used in **Revelation 19:9, 17** referring to the marriage supper of the Lamb and the great supper of God (which the fowls of the air will eat).

In all cases, the word (*deipnon*) supper is used and this supper is never translated as (*Pascha*) Passover.

Luke calls the meal a *supper* (**Luke 22:20**), not a Passover meal.

Likewise Paul calls it a *supper* (**I Corinthians 11:20**) not a Passover meal.

Matthew and Mark never mention that Jesus ate the Passover meal.

There is that which is called the Passover (meal does not need to be stated, as it is implied). When one ate the Passover, one knew there was no need to say the Passover meal. The Passover (meal) was a special meal, a special event. One ate the Passover.

Supper on the other hand is a general meal. A festive, feast meal can apply, such as a birthday supper (cf. **Mark 6:21**) or wedding supper/meal (**Revelation 19:9**). However, supper is not *Pascha*.

They did eat and as they ate, Jesus introduced the New Covenant

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 my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it; for this my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sin. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.*”

Mark 14:22-25 “*And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed, and brake it and gave them and said Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, this is the blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day I drink it new in the kingdom of God.*”

Luke 22:17-20 “*And he took the cup, and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread and gave thanks and brake it and gave unto them saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*”

Notice Luke’s account. Luke mentions *two* separate *cups*.

According to Luke, the cup *after supper* was the cup of the New Covenant. The cup *before supper* was not the cup of the blood of the New Covenant. This cup *before supper* was the cup of the fruit of the vine which Christ said he would not drink of until the Kingdom of God shall come.

Continuing, notice in the Book of Luke, we read information *that is not found* in Matthew or Mark.

Luke reveals that Christ did not eat the Passover that year.

Notice first in **Matthew 26:19**, **Mark 14:16** and **Luke 22:13** we read, “... *they made ready the Passover.*”

Now in **Matthew 26:20-21** the next sequence of Matthew’s narration informs us, *Now when evening was come he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat he said verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.*

Next in **Mark 14:17-18** the next sequence of the narrative tells us, *And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.*

Now notice what information Luke provides. Let us read **Luke 22:13**. *And they went and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover.*

Let us now read the next scripture; the sequence of narration from Luke's writings. Notice what Christ tells His disciples as He was with them in the Upper Room; information which neither Mathew nor Mark record.

Luke 22:14-16 (KJV) "*And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not eat any more thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.*"

Let us read **Luke 22:15-16** from the Interlinear Bible (the Textus Receptus): "*with desire, I desired this Passover to eat with you before the me to suffer. I say for to you that never in any way I eat of it until when it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.*"

Let us also consider the Nestle-Aland Greek-English New Testament (edition 27 from the Codex Sinaiticus), which reads: "*And he said unto them, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom.*"

Regardless of which translation one reads, notice carefully, read Luke's narrative once again. **Luke does not say "they sat down and ate."** Rather Luke records that Jesus said, "I earnestly desired" to eat this Passover, but I will not."

Why would Jesus express this *desire* to want to eat it if that night *they did eat* or would be eating the Passover?

The fact is, Christ realized even though He desired to eat the Feast of Passover meal with His disciples on the night of the 15th (when it should be eaten), He could not. For the truth of the matter was, He knew He would be dead by the time the Passover meal would be eaten.

Just as Jesus prayed three times, *Father if thou be willing, remove this cup from me*, so Christ's desire was to be with His disciples another year and to enjoy another Passover with them.

But now that his hour had come, he knew there was no turning back.

What hour was Luke referring to, of which Christ knew had now come?

John 13:1; it was now His time to die and this year was the year.

Consider this commentary with regard to Luke 22:15-16:

"Again it is possible that it was a deliberate choice and in view of the ominous developments of those days Jesus moved his observance of the Passover ahead one day. In this connection his statement in Lk 22:15-16 may be significant. He speaks of how earnestly he has desired to eat the passover with his disciples before he suffers, and according to Codex Bazaee, the Washington Codex, certain minuscules and Syriac versions and the Koine text, he says: "for I tell you I shall never eat it again until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." But according to the Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Ephraemi rescriptus, and some minuscules and Egyptian versions, he said: "for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." The first and less attested form of the saying supposes that he was actually then eating the real Passover meal. The second and much better attested form of the saying supposes that he wanted to do so, but was unable. If the later form of the saying represents the actual situation at the time, we think that the Johannine record is literally correct in

picturing the last supper as a meal held one evening prior to the real passover meal, and we could also surmise that the Synoptics were led to present the last supper as itself the passover meal because it was held so close to the time when the passover meal itself was to be held."

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From Matthew and Mark we are never told; they ate the Passover.

From Luke we are told; they ate a supper, not the Passover.

Notice **Luke 22:20** *Likewise also the cup after supper (deipneo Strong's 1172 – meaning principle or evening meal, sup, supper), saying, this cup is the new testament ...*

What Luke wrote agrees with what Paul taught. **I Corinthians 11:25** *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped (deipneo), saying, this is the cup of the new testament ...*

One more time, we can ask; if that meal was the Passover, why was it not called the Passover? Why was it not written, He took the cup after Passover? Supper (as a meal) is by far different than Passover (as a meal).

[Next let us refer to John's account of the meal, which was eaten on the night Jesus was betrayed.](#)

John 13:1-4 *"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended ... He riseth from supper and laid aside his garments"*

Here we read it is before the Feast of the Passover. Here John reveals that Jesus ate a supper (*Deipnon* and not *Pascha*) and this supper was before the feast of Passover.

John simply writes, *the Feast of the Passover*. It was not the Feast of the Jewish Passover nor was it the Feast of the Lords' Passover, nor was it the Christian Passover. It was **the Passover**, which the Jews were given to keep and properly preserve. The Feast of Passover was the one and only Passover and the reader knew it was the Passover, which the Jews kept, as given by the Law of Moses.

John sheds important light on the fact that "the supper" was before the Feast of the Passover.

If the **Exodus 12** (Statutory) Passover was really eaten at the beginning of the 14th and Jesus and the disciples were eating the Passover at that time, why did John not simply say; "now at the Feast of the Passover" or "now the Passover was being eaten" or "now that we were eating the Passover," or "He riseth up from the Passover," or "and the Passover being ended?"

Why did John say, *before*?

John was writing to the assembly of called out ones, the Church in about 90 AD. Rather than indicating that Jesus ate the Passover meal, John specifically states *before the feast of the Passover*, the Jewish Passover – the **Exodus 12** Passover. It is obvious why we read that this meal was called "supper" as opposed to "Passover."

The Church back then, as does the Intercontinental Church of God today, knew the **Exodus 12** Passover was sacrificed at the end of the 14th day of the first month and the Passover meal was eaten on the night, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month.

Let us continue with the sequence of events and the narrative account, which John presents.

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

In the morning of the 14th, Jesus' meal was past, but here we read the Passover meal was yet to be eaten. Notice John does not call it *their* or *the Jews'* Passover. He simply states "the Passover." The only Passover known to anyone reading John's letter, was the Passover yet to be eaten – THE Passover.

John 19:14 *"And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour and he said unto the Jews, behold your King."*

Here the sixth hour (Roman time reckoning – actually 6:00 am) is the early morning of the 14th. Obviously, the Passover had not yet commenced; the lamb was not yet sacrificed.

While comparing this narrative with Matthew, Mark and Luke, we realize that Jesus only had nine more hours to live (**Mark 15:34**, **Matthew 27:46**). He was put on the stake at 9:00 a.m. At noon, darkness covered the land and at 3:00 p.m., He died.

If we only read John's account of the last day of Jesus' life, we would be content to understand that the last meal eaten by Christ and His disciples was a supper, which was eaten on the night before the Passover was sacrificed.

Finally, notice **John 21:20**: *"Then Peter turning about seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper..."*

Notice once again the word *supper* is used, not Passover.

Understanding the sequence of events in **Exodus 12** allows one to understand the events that took place on *the preparation day* in the year of Christ's death.

The introduction of the New Testament/Covenant on the night of the 14th, one night before the Passover Meal was necessary. The Old Testament Passover meal was necessary. Each event provides a unique meaning that is not to be overlooked or covered over. There is a New Covenant, the elements of which are consumed and there is the Old Testament Passover meal, the elements of which are consumed. Both are unique and both carry a weight of understanding that cannot be mingled or combined. One did not change the other.

The Time of Christ's Death *What It Reveals*

As a sign of His Messiahship, Jesus Christ told the scribes and Pharisees that *as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish so He would be three days and three nights in the grave (Matthew 12:40)*. And so Christ died, was buried and remained in the grave three days and three nights, a total of some 72 hours.

It goes without saying Jesus Christ died. The reality of the death of Jesus Christ is at the very heart and core of the Christian faith, of the gospel message (**I Corinthians 15:3-4, Luke 24:46-47, Revelation 1:5**). Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners (**I Timothy 1:15**) and the first necessary step in the process of salvation is to acknowledge that the death of Jesus Christ is the sacrifice for sins (**Romans 5:6-8**), in place of **your required death as a consequence of your own personal sins** (**Roman 6:23**).

Just when did He die? Was the timing of Christ's death important or a requisite, a fulfillment of scriptures? Was it necessary for Christ to die at a specific time? Was the time Christ died capricious or happenstance or was it carefully and systematically arranged to occur at the precise, right time? Did God the Father make it painstakingly certain that the time of His Son's death, as the sacrifice given for all humanity, occur exactly when He arranged? Did the Father authenticate the events that gave witness to the time Christ died?

It is necessary to understand and we can know with certainty *the time of death* of our Savior Jesus Christ. That understanding is part of the gospel message. The Scriptures reveal that Jesus Christ died on the 14th day of the first month at the same time the Passover Lamb was sacrificed in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Christ's death coinciding with the Passover sacrifice authenticates and provides a clear witness of the plan of salvation; providing a witness to the certainty, that Jesus is **the Messiah** and the redeemer of the world.

Understanding the fact that Christ's death coincided with the Passover sacrifice is necessarily important to the House of Judah (the Jews today). The Passover is central to Jewish belief. To teach that Jesus, the Messiah is the *fulfillment (the reality)* of the *symbolic* Passover of the Lord (**Exodus 12**) is necessary for them to hear and they will one day know it.

Each year when the church observes the (as called Christian Passover) New Covenant Memorial Service, the Lord's Supper, we confirm the time element of events as they occurred in 31 AD. We do *show the Lord's death until he comes*. After Christ returns, the truth of when he died, on what day, and at what time He died will be made known to the world. When Christ returns, we will no longer have to show or give witness to in defense of the truth. **There will be no more confusion.**

Prophecy is clear, explaining that the Jews *will* come to understand the One they call God, The Lord, Yahweh (be it said - ha Shem or Adonai), the one who is their God, the God of the Old Testament, the God of Israel, the God of the Hebrews, the Creator, *is* the one and the same Jesus Christ. *And I will pour upon the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication. They will look upon*

me, the one they have pierced and they will mourn for him as one who mourns for his only son and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son (Zechariah 12:10).

The house of Judah and the House of Israel along with the gentiles will finally learn that Jesus Christ (Emmanuel) died, was pierced; was sacrificed. He died at a specific time and the Scriptures tell us when. They will know the scriptures spoke the truth.

At that time, proverbially speaking, *the scholars will shut their mouths.*

To review what we have learned so far: shortly after the sun had set on the 13th day of the first month and the night, the beginning of the 14th day was commencing, Jesus Christ sat down to eat a meal with His disciples.

As the night progressed, Jesus Christ washed His disciple's feet; He introduced the symbols of the New Covenant.

As that 14th day, called in Scriptures the *day of preparation of the Passover* proceeded, the night passed, the morning passed until finally during the afternoon, early evening (the *first evening Matthew 14:15*) of the 14th, the Passover Lamb was sacrificed in the Temple. The Passover lamb was sacrificed, *between the evenings* of the 14th day, as the Old Testament law requires.

The 14th day of the first month is given the name Passover Day by virtue of the fact that the Passover Lamb was sacrificed on that day "at even" (*between the evenings* as the Hebrew *ben ha arbayim* correctly translates into the English) (**Exodus 12:6, Leviticus 23:5**).

The Scriptures make it clear that Jesus Christ died on the Passover/Preparation day and at the time the Passover Lamb for Judah was slain in the Temple.

The Father arranged this timing in order to demonstrate that His Son *is* the ultimate and final Passover Lamb. The Old Testament Passover sacrifices as performed year after year were only a type, pointing to the ultimate fulfillment – Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

When writing about the last day of Christ's physical life, Matthew, Mark and Luke all reference specific *hours* at which time certain events occurred on that *preparation day*.

Matthew refers to the 6th hour (**Matthew 27:45**) and the 9th hour (**Matthew 27:45 and 46**). Christ died at the 9th hour. Matthew then references the *evening* of the day (**Matthew 27:57**) when Christ was placed in the tomb (vs. **60**). Then notice Matthew writes (vs.**62**): *Now the next day, that followed the day of preparation*

Mark specifies the 3rd hour (**Mark 15:25**), the 6th hour (**Mark 15:33**) and the 9th hour (**Mark 15:33 and 34**). Then continuing in chronological sequence, *the evening of the preparation day – before* the Sabbath (Holy Day) (**Mark 15:42**).

Luke refers to the 6th and the 9th hour (**Luke 23:44**). Luke comments that the events that took place, Christ's death, being taken down from the stake and placed in the tomb, all took place on the day called the preparation (**Luke 23:54**) as the Sabbath which was a High or Holy Day (**John 19:31**) drew on, was coming closer to commencing.

These men established a “time element” as it related to the time Christ was placed on the stake until the time He died, which was at the 9th hour. The 9th hour was significant as we shall see.

Before the advent of the clock and the utilization of the 24 hour time period, man kept time by utilizing a sun dial or recognizing the position of the sun in the sky. Consider **II Kings 20:11** and **Isaiah 38:8** in which we read of the *sun dial of Ahaz* (some scholars call this the *steps of Ahaz*). Here we read that Ancient Israel utilized the technology and science of their day – a time measuring device. This device, enhanced and developed as time progressed, so that in Christ’s day, specific hours were logically and categorically known.

Not only the nation of Israel, but as well the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese all utilized the technology of their day to aid in their ability to know the time of day.

As we read earlier in Part I of this study, Matthew wrote (**Matthew 20:1-12**) of the hours between *the early morning (rising of the sun) and the evening (setting of the sun)*. Matthew recorded Christ’s parable, exposing the reality that there are 12 **hours** of light in the day.

Within **Matthew 20:1-8** specific hours are given name. We read of the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the eleventh hour. A quick review of time keeping methods as reckoned in the 1st Century would teach us that the 3rd hour of the day corresponds to our 9:00 am (in the morning – notice **Acts 2:15**). The 6th hour of the day corresponds to our noontime or called midday. The 9th hour of the day corresponds to our 3:00 pm (in the afternoon) and the 11th hour of the days corresponds to our 5:00 pm.

One aspect to consider when studying the Word of God is the fact that the New Testament *was not written to us* today. It was written **to those** who lived in the 1st Century, specifically. It was a 1st Century audience for whom the words were written. Consequently, the writers expected their audience to know what was being said and the meaning of the words expressed as those words were given definition by a 1st Century frame of mind. Even though the New Testament was not written **to us** today, it was **preserved** for us today in the 21st Century.

Consequently, to understand the events that took place back then, in the 1st Century, we must have an understanding of the language and culture, and meaning of events *as they occurred back then*. We should have an awareness of cultural context in order to truly understand the events that occurred. We should understand *their* concepts of things and *their* meanings of things.

So the question would be - what is the 9th hour? When did it occur and why is it significant?

Let us continue.

In **Acts 3:1**, we read of the *ninth hour* at the temple, which was the hour of prayer, the time of the evening sacrifice. Read **Acts 3:2** thru **Acts 4:2** relating to the events that transpired from the *first evening*, the **ninth hour** until some 3 hours later *the second evening* as we read in **Acts 4:3**. We read that *after* Peter and John spoke their words, they were put in hold (custody) *until the next day* because it was now *evening* (eventide KJV) the 12th hour as conferred by **Matthew 20:8-12**.

Remember Jewish Law required that no court could convene after the evening of a day, in the nighttime of the day. This is another reason why Christ’s judgment was performed illegally and how hurried the Council was, to have Christ crucified quickly – before the people could realize what was going on.

Notice the time elements revealed in Acts. More importantly, the ninth hour was a special time in the temple. The time of the evening prayer is association with the temple sacrifices.

Notice the following Scriptures: **I Kings 18:36** referring to the *evening* sacrifice (relating to verse **29**, midday was past and they, Baal's priest, prophesied until the time of the evening sacrifice).

Daniel 9:21 refers to the *evening* oblation (sacrifices).

The following verses all refer to the morning and the *evening* sacrifice time – **I Chronicles 16:40, II Chronicles 2:4 and 31:3; Ezra 3:3 and Ezra 9:4-5**.

Of course, we read in **Exodus 29:39** and **Numbers 28:4** about the morning and the *evening* sacrifice. These verses all refer to the *evening* sacrifice time or as called *ben ha arbayim* (between the evenings) in the original Hebrew text. Sacrificial activity took place in the Temple during this *evening* sacrifice time.

[Why then do the Gospel writer's call the ninth hour to the reader's attention?](#)

Now with all these scriptures in mind, let us learn why the Gospel writers were calling to *their reader's attention* the 9th hour of the *day of preparation*, the Passover day. Was there something that happened in the Temple on the Passover Day at the 9th hour?

There is much historical research material available, all of which informs us that during the time of Christ, on the Passover/Preparation day, in the Temple, during the 9th hour, the official Passover Lamb for all Judah was sacrificed. That sacrifice initiated the Passover sacrifice activity for all the families of Judah.

Notice the following, as just one of the many commentaries; notice as quoted from Jamieson, Fausset, Brown Commentary Volume One; Exodus: "... *taught that the paschal lamb was to be killed in the interval between the ninth and eleventh hour ... Josephus states that such was the practice of the Jews in the time of our Lord.*"

Was the ninth hour important to acknowledge?

We know that the Father intervened in human affairs when He caused darkness to spread over the land (and over Jerusalem in particular, where the Temple was located, in which were the priests, Levites and religious folk,) from the 6th hour until the 9th hour on the Passover/Preparation Day (**Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44**).

We know that Christ died around the 9th hour on the Passover/Preparation Day (**Matthew 27:46-50**).

We know the Father once again intervened in human affairs when He split the Temple veil (in the Temple in which were the priests, Levites, etc.) in the middle from the top to the bottom (downward) and cause the dead to come out of their graves, as well as an earthquake, at the 9th hour on the Passover/Preparation Day (**Matthew 27:51-53; Mark 15:37-38, Luke 23:45-46**).

Was it mere coincidence or was it perfect timing and an authentication of the events surrounding the death of the Son of God, at the 9th hour on that Day? Did the Father want to bring to the attention of the world the death and the time of death of the Son of God?

One cannot escape these questions.

John provides the key.

Now from John's perspective, notice **John 19:30-37** and his narration of events surrounding Christ's death.

The key point provided by John's narration explains the *connection* of Christ's death to what took place in the Temple at the **9th hour on the Passover Day**.

As Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote, specifying **the ninth hour** as being the time of Christ's death, we will now understand that it was at that hour the sacrifice of the LORD'S Passover Lamb occurred.

Christ died at the ninth hour; was pierced and did not have his legs broken (**John 19:30, 33, 34**)

John wrote (as a witness of the truth of what he actually saw **John 19:35**), **John 19:36** *for these things were done, that the scriptures should be fulfilled, "a bone of him shall not be broken."*

Now just **where exactly is that quote a bone of him shall not be broken found in the Bible?**

That exact quote, *a bone of him shall not be broken* as John wrote **is nowhere found** in the entirety of the Old Testament. However, it still is truth. Based on the astonishing events occurring right in front of John's eyes on that Passover/Preparation day, John used inferential logic with the Scriptures he knew, as he was inspired by God's Spirit to write what he did.

What scripture(s) does John use to infer what he wrote - *a bone of him shall not be broken*? What scripture(s) were **fulfilled at the death of Jesus Christ**?

The following two Scriptures were fulfilled pertaining to His bones – ... *neither shall ye break a bone thereof* **Exodus 12:46** and ... *nor break any bone of it* ... **Numbers 9:12**.

Both these Scriptures, which John says were *fulfilled* at the death of Jesus Christ dealt *specifically and only* with the Passover Lamb.

However, the revelation; now John draws the connection.

These scriptures relate to Jesus Christ himself – THE Passover Lamb. John teaches that **Christ's death fulfilled the scriptures** as they pertained to the Passover sacrifice, which was established under the Old Testament Law as written by Moses.

Jesus Christ is the ultimate, the fulfillment of the Passover Lamb sacrifice.

It was the understanding of that *fulfillment* which caused Paul to say, *Christ, our Passover is sacrificed for us* (**I Corinthians 5:7**). The Passover **Lamb** is what was **sacrificed**. Passover and sacrifice in that context

informs us that Christ *is* our **Passover Lamb** sacrificed for us and He died concurrently with the Passover Lamb in the Temple that year. John made that point clear; Paul confirmed.

The Jews have their Passover Lamb; but the Followers of Christ, the very Messiah, have Jesus Christ as their Passover Lamb. Jesus Christ became THE Passover Lamb for humanity and the Jews. The Jew and Gentile alike will yet accept that fact, just as we have already come to accept that fact.

The Lamb in the Temple was not the fulfillment of the scriptures pertaining to the Passover Lamb sacrifice; rather Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the scriptures relating to the Passover.

Jesus Christ died at the same time the Passover Lamb was sacrificed, *at the 9th hour*.

The time of Christ's death, *at the 9th hour* on the Passover/Preparation day, reveals to the world that He is *the* Passover Lamb and His death was necessary to ensure the process of salvation, of calling people out of and delivering them from sin and into eternal life.

The Time of Christ's death – What Does It reveal?

Jesus Christ died at the time the Passover Lamb of **Exodus 12** was sacrificed, *according to the Old Testament Law*. Jesus Christ died *ben ha arbayim* (between the evenings) of the 14th day of the first month, exactly as the Laws required.

From all that we have learned and established from the Word of God, in this three-part study of the Passover, it is evident why the Intercontinental Church of God is correct to teach:

- The Passover Lamb of **Exodus 12:6** was sacrificed toward the end of the 14th day of the first month.
- The Passover meal was consumed by Moses and the children of Israel on the night of, the beginning of the 15th day of the first month, the First Day of Unleavened Bread.
- Jesus Christ and His disciples did not eat the Passover meal at the beginning of the 14th, the night on which Jesus Christ was betrayed. On that night, Jesus Christ ate a supper. On that night, Jesus Christ introduced for the first time ever, the symbols of the bread and the cup of the New Covenant. That night was/is unique, holding a special meaning.
- Jesus Christ died at the 9th hour of the 14th day of the first month, *beyn ha arbayim* and the *spiritual implications are absolutely overwhelming*.

The Intercontinental Church of God is correct to teach these truths because this is what the Word of God teaches.