

Passover (Part Five)

When Did the Exodus Begin?

John W. Ritenbaugh

Given 24-Apr-92; Sermon #016

I wanted to make just a short, brief, preface to this sermon—just in case any of you are feeling a little bit dreary with us going through the Passover so thoroughly. But I want to use this series of sermons in another way, because to me this exemplifies what is happening in the Church of God today, maybe as clearly as anything does. So I am going through it with a great deal of carefulness here, so that you can understand that what we are doing is trying to help all of you to understand that *the truth of God is going to be taken from God's Word.*

What has happened, over the past four or five years, is that gradually the Church of God has turned away from the Word of God. It is turning to psychology; turning to secular historians; and turning to Protestant and Catholic and Jewish theologians, rather than the Word of God, as the basis for doctrine.

This is why these things are changing. What was given to us previously were things that had been dug **out of God's Word** by Mr. Armstrong. That the Church of God has been slowly, but surely, turning from that is becoming very, very plain. This doctrine regarding the Passover makes it very clear, because we are learning some things here that exemplify where the truth lies regarding Passover. And by the time that we are done with this series, there ought to be no question in our mind.

We saw in the previous sermon that there are eight elements connected to the original Passover. We have proceeded through five of them, and we are now working on number six.

Element #1 was that the lambs were killed at the beginning of the fourteenth. This was the element that involved *ba erev* and *ben ha arbayim*. And I think that I showed you very clearly (from Leviticus 26) that *ba erev* occurs at the end of the day. It is **sunset**. Making a comparison between Leviticus 23:27

and 32 makes it very clear that the tenth day of the month begins **at the end of** the ninth. And the end of the ninth is determined by *ba erev* —from "even" to "even." "Even" is *ba erev*. That is when the [previous] day ends—and that is when the [next] day begins.

By comparing that with Exodus 16:12-13, it makes it very clear that *ben ha arbayim* ("twilight," "dusk," "between the two evenings") occurs **AFTER** *ba erev* —not before. It occurs after *ba erev*.

Ben ha arbayim consists of that period of light that is gradually diminishing into darkness. It begins with a period of light (in which there is still a great deal of light). It lasts about one hour in the spring. It lasts about an hour-and-a-half by the time we get to June 21st, and then gradually diminishes again as we go back to December 21st, and then it is slightly less than an hour.

That is the period of time in which the Israelites were to kill the Passover. And it occurred at the very beginning of the fourteenth. Not at the end of the fourteenth, but at the beginning of it. If anyone is looking for proof, it is right in God's Scriptures! This is not something that we have gotten from Jewish tradition. It is not something we have gotten from the rabbis. **It is in God's Word.** (Very clear.)

Element #2 was that the lambs were killed **at the houses** of the Israelites. It is so plain. They had to splash the blood on the doors of their house—not on a tent (on the doors). If they were in tents, gathered in Rameses, I am sure that God would have said something about it. But they were *at their house*.

It is ridiculous to think that they slaughtered the lamb at their tent, ran back to their houses (maybe fifteen or twenty miles), splashed some blood on the doorposts and lintel, ran back to Rameses, and then proceeded to roast the lamb. God sometimes demands things of us, but He's not crazy. (That is ridiculous and confusing.) So, the lambs were killed **at their houses**. They were still at their house. And at *ben ha arbayim* they killed the lamb and then they put the blood on the doorposts and on the lintel.

Element #3 was that their homes were located **in Goshen**. They were **not** assembled in Rameses. That is shown over and over again, in the book of Exodus, that their homes were located there.

Element #4 was that Passover involved all the time from about 6:00 p.m. (that is, sunset) to about 2-3:00 a.m.—to kill, skin, roast, eat, and burn the leftovers and entrails. Passover did **not** consist merely of killing the lamb. Passover consisted of ALL of those steps. They had to kill it. They had to splash the blood on the doorposts and the lintel. Then they had to skin the lamb, clean the lamb, roast the lamb; eat the lamb; and then burn up what was left over.

I went through the time element for each one of those things, and they were eating the lamb just about the time that the Death Angel went through. It still was not safe to go out. But then, following the Death Angel, they burned that which was left over. That took another two to three hours for that to occur, before all the bones were completely burned up.

In element #5, they stayed in their houses, in Goshen, the night of the fourteenth. They did **not** leave shortly after midnight. This one blends right on, into number six. But I want to really make this plain and clear to us that *the vital key in establishing Bible doctrine is to allow the Bible to define its own terms—to allow it to establish its own evidence*. Then we do not have to guess. We do not have to say, "apparently," "maybe," "it is indicated." There is enough Scripture that God has not allowed to be tampered with—clear Scriptures—that will make more clear those which are vague.

We have to understand that these people who are writing these papers about Passover being at the end of the day and on the fifteenth *are* using Scriptures. But I want to draw your attention to the fact that Satan uses Scriptures too. Matthew 4 and Luke 4 are very good evidences of that. So is Genesis 3, "*Oh? Did God say...?*" Satan said. That is the Word of God. And he [Satan] used it—to his own end!

These people **are** using Scripture, but they are **NOT** using it honestly. We will just have to assume that they are deceived in what they are doing, and

leave it at that. We are not here to judge their hearts (their intentions, their motive). We only can see what they are producing; and what they are producing in the Church of God is confusion and doubt. When people begin to become confused and in doubt as to *what is right*, then we begin to drift into things that are *not right*.

When "black" is not "black" and "white" is not "white" (and when things get to the place where we are **vague** about which direction to go), it is much easier to go in the direction that is **wrong**. Because of human nature, because of all that we have learned in the past, because of ingrained habits that are there—it is much easier to drift into what is wrong than to stick with what is right, whenever one is not quite sure what is right. And so we see a spin-off from these things beginning to take place in the Church of God. Immorality is on the rise, and things are happening that should not be happening.

We had worked our way partly through element #6, and so I want to review a portion of that element so we can have a running start on what is going to follow.

Genesis 1:3-5 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Verse 5 is the one that I want to concentrate on here, just very briefly. "God called the light *Day*." This is the Hebrew word *yom*. (You are familiar with it, probably, from reading in the newspaper about Yom Kippur. *Yom*, meaning *day*. The Day of Atonement.) Then "the darkness He called *Night*." This is *lailah*. And "the evening and the morning." Evening there is **ba erev**, and morning is **boqer**. What we are seeing here is that *the Day (yom) consists of two parts*: one is dark, and one is light. The **dark** is called ***lailah***; and the **light** is called ***boqer***.

I go to this verse because I want you to see, very clearly, that "darkness" and "light" are **not** the same thing. ***Lailah*** and ***boqer*** are NOT the same thing!

They are shown here in opposition to one another (in contrast to one another). *Yom* consists of *night* and *day* (*lailah* and *boqer*). That is established in the fifth verse of the Book. That is very clear.

Let us go to Exodus 10—right in all the activities preceding Passover and Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 10:10-13 Then he said to them, "The LORD had better be with you when I let you and your little ones go! Beware, for evil is ahead of you. Not so! Go now, you who are men, and serve the LORD, for that is what you desired." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land—all that the hail has left." So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land [Now, notice.] all that *day* [*yom*] and all that *night* [*lailah*]. When it was *morning* [*boqer*], the east wind brought the locusts.

Verse 13 shows *a* complete day and a complete night with its next morning. With this usage, it clearly establishes right within the context of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, that there is a difference between "night" and "morning"—between *lailah* and *boqer*. The locusts arrived at *boqer* (morning). Did you notice? *Boqer* follows *lailah*.

Even as *ben ha arbayim* follows *ba erev*, *boqer* follows *lailah*. When that occurs, naturally, they have to butt up against one another. But it is very clearly established that they are NOT the same things. They are NOT "night" and "morning" at the same time.

It does not say that the locusts arrived shortly after midnight. This is the argument of the proponents of a fifteenth Passover. They say that *boqer* arrives right after midnight. But it is still **pitch dark** right after midnight. It is still **night**. It is still *lailah*. *Lailah* and *boqer* are not the same thing—established by Genesis 1, Exodus 10, and (as we are going to see) other Scriptures as well.

Exodus 12:29-30 And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, 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.

This is an interesting verse. It is the same word "house" as was used for the Israelites. If we assume that the Israelites were in tents for the Passover, then we also have to assume that all the Egyptians lived in tents too. Dumb! The Egyptians were in houses, and the Israelites were in houses. They lived there for a couple of hundred years, and they built houses in that period of time.

Exodus 12:31 Then he called for Moses and Aaron by *night (lailah)*, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said.

The thing that we can pick up here is that *lailah* continues after midnight. That ought to be plain. The Death Angel went through at midnight. And when Pharaoh called, it was after this, but it was still *lailah*.

How long did it take to get from Pharaoh to Rameses? I do not know, because I do not know how far he was away. But you have to think that he was far enough away that it must have taken a little bit of time; maybe a half an hour, an hour, by horseback or chariot. Remember that they were going on darkened streets. They did not have streetlights, like we do, and it was the middle of the night. Maybe there was a good clear moon, and maybe they got there pretty fast, but still *lailah* follows midnight. That is very clear.

Exodus 10:28-29 Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take heed to yourself and see my face no more! For in the day you see my face you shall die!" So Moses said, "You have spoken well. I will never see your face again."

And Moses did not! The message came from Pharaoh to Moses in Goshen. That is where Moses was.

Exodus 11:4-8 Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again. But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' And all these your [Pharaoh's] servants shall come down to me [Moses speaking here in Goshen] and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

Moses followed God's command. He did not leave the house either until *boqer*. Pharaoh's servants *came to him*, and delivered their message. I think they undoubtedly did it with a great deal of fear. They did not know whether the Death Angel was still around, and whether it was going to strike them. They did not know every detail of the plague that God was sending on them. It took some brave men to go out that night!

I do not know what time it was, but we know for sure that it was after midnight. And *lailah* follows midnight. That is very clearly established in the scriptures. *Lailah* continues after midnight, and it precedes *boqer*— morning.

Now we are going to look at the word *boqer* just a little bit, because it presents its own difficulties for those who are in favor of a fifteenth Passover. This word, too, must be twisted in order to support a late fourteenth killing of the Passover lamb and then a fifteenth Passover. The explanation that these people give appears to be plausible only because of some very clever reasoning, by dropping things in your mind as they explain along. However, if somebody is carefully examining the Scripture for truth, then their argument crumbles.

As I mentioned to you earlier in this sermon, they are very much like an attorney defending his client. He knows that his client is, in all probability,

guilty—and so what he has to do is arrange his summation before the jury in such a way as to create in the minds of the jury *reasonable doubt*. "*Maybe* this guy really is this way." Or, "*maybe* it really didn't happen the way the prosecutor says." "*Maybe* this witness over here is not quite telling the truth." "*Maybe* we can't respect that person's testimony, because, after all, they did some bad things."

And so they throw up all of this "fuzz" or "fog" that really does not address the truth, but draws people's attention away from the central issue. And *the central issue* here is the Word of God!

Listen to this admission from these fellows that started this in the church, back in 1976 and 1977. From Kuhn and Grabbe's "The Passover in the Bible and the Church Today," page 8:

Boqer, though, is somewhat more troublesome. In English we can use the term 'morning' for any time between midnight and noon.

I want to take you through this step by step because you see what they have already done. "*In English...*" They have put the thought of twentieth century thinking (terminology) into your mind. That is, that somehow twentieth century terminology is going to **fit** into the biblical context. It will "fit" **only** if it is true! But they have begun getting you thinking about the English language way of thinking.

In English we can use the term 'morning' for any time between midnight and noon. We have not found any passage which specifically begins *boqer* with the middle of the night.

There you see *an admission* that is preceded by *a diversion*. Very clever! It begins to cast doubt, and produce confusion of thinking.

It often refers [*boqer* does] to the light period of the day from sunrise until about the middle of the day just as English 'morning' does.

That is a true statement, but quite an admission—*not a single passage* which shows that ***boqer*** means anything more than **sunrise**, or **the light of dawn**. That is incredible! They begin by telling you that there is *no scripture* that can be found that is going to support and substantiate their premise, and then they proceed to go right on and try to substantiate it.

It might be noted here that Exodus 11 and 12 emphasize that the death angel passed about midnight. The Israelites already knew that the death angel would come by about then. Once the angel passed, the danger was also past.

Is that true? How did the Israelites know? Were they not told by the elders of Israel to stay in their house until morning? Would not your assumption be—if you knew that something awesome was going to happen—that it was not safe to go out until the signal was given?

Since Israel was told to eat in haste and to burn anything left until evidently ["Evidently"—that is an interesting word] 'morning' (***boqer***), is this not a good indication, in the context, that ***boqer*** began just after midnight just as it does in our modern parlance?

That is clever. Very clever! I want you to see how they keep zigzagging back. "There is NO ABSOLUTE PROOF for this."—is the very next sentence. They have your head spinning.

But it is significant that certain Jewish groups, including the Samaritans, later required everything to be eaten by midnight. What was not consumed by then was burned. Is this what God meant when He commanded them to burn anything left until ***boqer*** and not to go out of their houses until ***boqer***? This is certainly indicated by the context. In any case we have evidence [Here comes the statement. They have now "proved" it.] that ***boqer*** could include a considerable period of time before sunrise."

Yes, but did you notice that "evidence" did NOT come from the Bible? It came from applying a twentieth century AD application to a situation that

was 3500 years old. You cannot do that and expect to come up with *biblical truth*. You will come up with something, but *biblical doctrine has to come from biblical evidence!*

Now, listen to this. This is rich:

Thus, there is no contradiction or difficulty with the statements that Israel left while it was 'morning' and yet also went out 'in the night.'

No trouble at all **IF** you are using twentieth century definitions. That is a true statement **IF** you are using modern English.

A second possible explanation is as follows: the Israelites could be said to go out at night because that is when Pharaoh's command came. This is the explanation given by such eminent Jewish commentators as Rashi and Ibn Ezra. Even according to it the Israelites did not have to wait until sunrise to begin getting under way. Since God commanded them to stay in their houses only until 'morning' [*boqer*], not 'sunrise.' But even if they waited until shortly before sunrise to leave their houses, they could be said to go out in the night simply because that was when Pharaoh was forced into ordering their departure.

We will see that smashed, in just a little bit, *by the Scriptures!* There is no possible way for the Israelites to have known when Pharaoh's command came. Remember that they were scattered out over an area, which I estimated to you in the last sermon, somewhere around 500 square miles. Goshen was not a little place. It was the best of the land of Egypt—by the Bible's own description, and by Pharaoh's own description.

They had no telephones, no televisions, and no two-way radios. As far as we know from the Scriptures, they did not even have drums to send signals back and forth. Maybe they could have used trumpets, as we see them doing in the wilderness (calling people to assembly). But there is no record of any such thing like that in the Exodus account, at all. Why is it not there? Because God had already told them, "Stay in your house until *boqer*." It was not needed. It had already been communicated to them.

In their [Kuhn's and Grabbe's] writing, you will notice the words "*evidently*," "*a good indication*," "*no absolute proof*," "*certainly indicated*," "*could include*," "*second possible explanation*," "*eminent Jewish commentators*," and "*could be said*." This is the terminology of a lawyer seeking a verdict based upon **reasonable doubt**. And that is what has happened.

Create reasonable doubt, and you begin to have people become confused and doubting as to what they believe, and the veracity of what they have been taught. And that is what occurred. The only reason this did not occur earlier is because Mr. Armstrong quashed it. These people did **not** establish clear Scriptural proof. They confused the unwary, and then they end up making a **clouded judgment**—that, in the Bible, 'morning' and 'night' can somehow mean the same thing.

They use a Scripture, which we are going to turn to, in the book of Ruth. We have to turn to this, because this is one of their "proof texts" in regard to their usage of *boqer*.

Ruth 3:14 So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."

The word 'morning' there is *boqer*. And my New King James Bible translates that phrase following the word *boqer* as "she arose before one could recognize another." During the course of the writing of their paper, Mr. Grabbe made his own translation of that verse, and he translated that word 'recognize' into 'discern.' (That is, they could not "discern" one another.) What we have here is an example of lifting a Scripture out of its context to make it appear to say what it does NOT.

We are not going to spend a great deal of time on this, but we are going to look at it **in its context**, so that we can see what it is. The word 'discern' is the key here. Let me say, right at the beginning, "How could these two people who had known one another, eaten with one another, spoken to one another, and we find out here that they laid down with one another—how could they not know who the other one was?" That's a puzzle!

You know the story. Ruth was the Moabite who came into Israel with her mother-in-law as a widow. Her mother-in-law had ideas of having Boaz redeem her. So her mother-in-law very cleverly played matchmaker, and had Ruth introduced to Boaz, who was apparently a fairly well off (maybe even rich) single man. It seemed that he was the nearest kin of kin, but it turned out that he was not. There was somebody who was nearer of kin, than him.

At any rate, they were introduced to one another, and Boaz was smitten. He decided that he wanted this gal. But Naomi is in the background, and she is pushing the gal. What she said, in effect, was "You have to make your intentions known to this man, so that he knows which way to proceed." That is why Naomi got Ruth to go to where Boaz was lying down. It was during the barley harvest.

Ruth 3:1-3 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you? Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

Ruth did as she was told. Boaz lay down, and then after he was asleep, Ruth sneaked into the threshing floor and she lay down at his feet. At midnight (*lailah*) Boaz awakened, and for the first time, he became aware that this young lady was lying at his feet. That is when this took place.

Ruth 3:10-11 Then he said, "Blessed are you of the LORD, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman."

Is he talking to somebody he did not know? He knew very well who it was! So how late in the night can this possibly be? It was pretty dark when this took place, but he knew who she was.

Ruth 3:13-14 "Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the LORD lives! Lie down until morning [*boqer*]." So she lay at his feet until morning [*boqer*], and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, "Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."

We will not go on to the rest here, but what he did is that, before he would let her go out of his presence, he loaded her with a considerable amount of food. He filled up a shawl, which she then positioned on her in some way, and then she went home.

How early is *boqer*? By Hebrew usage, it is obvious from this account that *boqer* occurs **before sunrise**, but yet while it is still very dark—so that it is very difficult for one to recognize another, unless they are very close together.

Ruth took the barley and threw it over her shoulder. She left the threshing floor and it was light enough for her to go home by, but dark enough that, if anybody might have looked out the door of their house, they would not have been able to recognize who it was. Here we have a pretty precise definition of the usage of *boqer*. First of all, it is established that it is a fairly considerable time after midnight. However, it occurs before sunrise. Sunrise is when the sun appears over the horizon.

Boqer is in many ways similar to *ben ha arbayim*, only it is on the other end of the night period. ***Boqer* begins at the first crack of dawn, when light begins to appear in the eastern sky.** We will not go to Exodus 16. But (again, by Hebrew usage at the time that this thing was occurring) that chapter makes it very clear that *boqer* continued through the morning until it was warm enough to be considered hot. That would be at least mid-morning and maybe late morning (by their own usage). That makes it very clear.

If sunrise is at, let us say, 6:00 a.m., then *boqer* probably begins at least at 5:00 a.m. (and maybe just a little bit earlier than that)—but certainly **not 'midnight'**. With *boqer* then, there is sufficient light to be able to distinguish

one person from another *at close range* but not enough to be able to recognize somebody who might be 30-40 feet away, out on the path (or the street) going by a house. You could see the form. You could see the shape. But you could not really recognize who the person was.

The answer to element #6: **Lailah** means *the dark of night*. **Boqer** does not mean any part of night, nor shortly after midnight. It means *the crack of dawn*, first light (as night ends). So in summary we can say that the Hebrews did NOT use "morning" in the same way that we do. And to put an English usage onto this is NOT being honest with the Scriptures.

Now, element #7: When did the Israelites spoil the Egyptians?—before or after the Passover? Again, the proponents of the fifteenth Passover claim that all the spoiling was done before Passover ever took place. Indeed, some claim that it was done weeks before the Israelites ever did the Passover. But this is not entirely correct. I feel, from the Scriptures, that it is evident that there was **some** spoiling done before the Passover.

I want you to turn with me back to Exodus 3. This is the chapter where God reveals Himself to Moses in the burning bush. And He tells Moses that He is commissioning him to go to Egypt, and be the instrument through which God's people, Israel, will be released from their captivity. He tells Moses that he is going to take the people to a land that flows with milk and honey.

Exodus 3:20-22 "So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go. And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed. But every woman shall ask of her neighbor, namely, of her who dwells near her house, articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing; and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians."

In what way? I mean, how could they? Were the Egyptians **in fear** of the God of Israel at this time? Were they in fear of the first plague? Second plague? Third plague? Fourth plague? When did they really begin to become in fear that this was never ever going to end? And maybe they would all be

dead by the time that this man, Moses, got done acting on behalf of his God. It took a considerable period of time before this fear filtered all the way down to the Egyptian people.

Remember that there were times when Pharaoh was in a bit of fear, but he always changed his mind, did he not? The **fear** did not last very long. "Yes, you can go." "No, you can't go." He said that at least three times before he finally let them go. And here he is really representing all of his people. Do you not feel that, basically, the Egyptians felt much the same way as their leader did? I think so. They were probably quite ambivalent about it. There was not any spoiling of the Egyptians, until very late in the process.

Exodus 11:1-2 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether. Speak now in the hearing of the people, and let every man ask from his neighbor and every woman from her neighbor, articles of silver and articles of gold."

Here comes **a command** to do it! When did this take place? Look at verse 21. It was *after the ninth plague*, and finally a command comes from God to begin to do some plundering of the Egyptians. When did the ninth plague occur? I do not know how close it was to the tenth one. But I think that Exodus 11 and 12 shows us when the instruction was given because chapter 11 blends right on into chapter 12.

Exodus 12:1-2 Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you."

We are already into Abib. Did this take place on the first day of Abib? Second? Third? Fourth? Fifth? We know for sure that it took place before the tenth—because that is when they had to choose the lamb. We are narrowed down here to nine days (day 1 to day 9)—somewhere in that period of time. Do you think that we could calculate, from the Scriptures, that God would have been fair? That is, that God would have given as much warning as He possibly could from this point on, and that these instructions took place on

the first day of Abib? Does it not seem to indicate that He said this just as the month was beginning? That is the indication. "This month shall be your beginning of months." I think we can, at least, narrow it down to eight days because they would have had at least one day to do some spoiling. So I think that we got it narrowed down there, pretty well.

Now we have to narrow it down even further. Did Moses get instruction from God and then blow the silver trumpets, and everybody gathered around? No, that is not the way that it worked because we find...

Exodus 12:21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

God spoke to Moses. Moses called for the elders. The elders then went back to their tribes, and they spoke to the people. So we have to begin to allow some time for the word to get out to the elders, and then for the elders to get back to Moses. Next, Moses had to communicate to the elders. The elders then had to go back to their tribes, and communicate it to all the families in the tribe. That was *their communication system*. (And they used it frequently, throughout the entirety of the Exodus.)

At the very most, if this command was given on the 1st day of the first month—then allowing a day for those people to get to Moses, hear the instructions, and then to get back (because we are dealing with a fair amount of distance here, for them to travel throughout Goshen), and deliver the message to the people—then can we not say that the Israelites must have known that they could begin to spoil the Egyptians some time, at the earliest, late on the 2nd day of the month? Most likely, in order to be conservative, with the beginning of light on the 3rd day of the month? They then would have had seven days to do their spoiling **before** choosing out the lamb—and then, a couple of more days before Passover actually arrived.

We are beginning to see that the spoiling of the Egyptians was limited, then, to roughly a thirteen day period—beginning with the first day of the first month, and ending with whatever preparations they had to make, up until *ba erev* on the thirteenth day.

In Exodus 12:33, the Passover has occurred; and Pharaoh has sent his message.

Exodus 12:33 And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."

Notice, they did not say this—they were not that urgent; they were not that concerned—to give the Israelites things—payment for all their years of wages that was owed to them—**until** after the killing of the firstborn. **Now** they were throwing things at them! "Here, take it. Get! Get out of here. Go away. Leave!"

We can safely say that *the spoiling of the Egyptians* began **after** the ninth plague—the one of darkness. It was interrupted for the Passover, and then it continued **after** the killing of the firstborn on the fourteenth day of the first month. That is what the Scriptures tell us. So it was done in two stages—a little bit before [Passover], an avalanche after. God had to set them up, and then they were willing.

Element #8: When did the Exodus begin? Did it begin on the fourteenth? The fifteenth? After midnight? In the morning? When they left their houses? Or at night, when they left Rameses? The fifteenth Passover advocates are, again, confronted with a serious problem as a result of the squeezing of the events of the Passover into a 9-11 hour period. Mind you here, we are talking about one full 24-hour day. In order to support a fifteenth Passover, you have to cram events that God intended to take 24 hours, into 9-11 hours. That is why they have to have this crazy idea about *lailah* and *boqer*. That is why they have to have the children of Israel in Rameses, already gathered together in order to squeeze all of these activities into a shorter period of time.

What occurs as a result of their premise, their explanation, is that in order to ridicule those who believe in an early fourteenth Passover, they come up with the idea of what they call "*a day's delay*" or "*an extra day's time.*" And they reason something like this: "Didn't God tell them to be in haste? Didn't God tell them to be all dressed up and ready to go? Why would He tell them

that if they didn't leave immediately after the Death Angel passed through? Why wouldn't they already be in Rameses, ready to get out just as soon as the signal was given?"

So they say to the fourteenth Passover people, "Well, if they were done at 3 or 4 a.m. in the morning, and *boqer* occurred at the crack of dawn and daylight began, that leaves you with a whole extra day to play around with. (That is, the whole daylight period of the fourteenth.) What did they do? Play mumblety-peg?" So, a ridiculing attitude takes place.

But "*the extra day*" is a figment of their imagination. There is **no extra time** at all with an early fourteenth Passover, and we will see that. What they succeed in doing is that they *reduce* what God intended to be an eight-day period of time (Passover one day, and the Days of Unleavened Bread seven days) into seven days and a few extra hours, and they *rename* the whole thing "Passover." The only problem is that this violates what God says in the Scripture because the Passover is one day (a whole day) and Unleavened Bread is seven days (seven whole days).

William Dankenbring says on page 8 of his article "When Should the Passover be Observed?": "The late afternoon fourteenth Passover itself, then, introduces the seven-day festival of Passover..." Isn't that interesting? Where in God's Scriptures does He call the seven days "Passover"? [Dankenbring says...] "The fourteenth Passover itself introduces the seven-day festival of Passover *or Unleavened Bread*."

The Scripture says that it is an eight-day festival—one for Passover and seven for Unleavened Bread. What is so hard about that? What we are dealing with here, in principle, is exactly the same thing that we face with the fall feasts—the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. They are two different festivals. One is seven days long, and one is one day long. We do not get confused about that! Why should we get confused about an eight-day festival in the spring—that begins with a single day and ends with seven days?

It is so simple—to anyone who wants to follow the Scriptures. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover are just as different as Christmas and Easter. They are different festivals. They just happen to butt up against one another. Two entirely different meanings and two separate teaching vehicles.

Let us go back to Kuhn and Grabbe again (page 15). Listen to this quote: "Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron at midnight." Not true! The Scripture does not say that it was midnight. It just says it was **night**. If you are not careful reading these things, you could read right over something like this. It is still "night" at 4:00 a.m. How do we know that Pharaoh did not send for Moses at 4:00 a.m.—after it took him a couple of hours to deal with the shock of what was happening to his nation, and to get together with his advisors and decide what they were going to do?

The Egyptians were as urgent to get the Israelites out as the Israelites were to leave. A day's delay would have been unusual and there is no indication of one in Exodus. [That is true. There was no delay.] They evidently got underway in a period between midnight and dawn which could be called both 'morning' and 'night,' thus staying in their houses till 'morning' while leaving at 'night.'

They are accusing God of confusion. God does not deal that way. Anyone who deals honestly with God's Word is NOT going to be confused. 'Morning' and 'night' are not the same thing!

Continuing the quote:

One might wonder why they would have waited the entire daylight portion of the fourteenth and then finally left only sometime after sundown on the fifteenth. They were already ready. They had already spoiled the Egyptians before the Passover. [Not true!] They had spent a sleepless night. The Egyptians wanted to rush them off. Why would they have delayed, even assuming they had to wait until sunrise before leaving their houses? They could still have been underway long before nightfall.

Okay, let us review something here.

Exodus 12:12-14 For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. So **this day** shall be to you a memorial: [What day? The day God **passed over!** The fourteenth.] and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

In every Scripture in the Old Testament referring to the Passover itself, the Passover day is a **memorial feast**. It commemorates God's *passing over*—not Israel leaving Egypt! They are two distinct events.

Exodus 12:15-18 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day [the first of the seven] 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**, [Now look at this instruction.] for on **this same day** I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. [Not Passover! *Leaving Egypt* is celebrated *on the fifteenth day.*] Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance. [You want to make sure exactly when it begins.] In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening (*ba erev*)...

Remember Leviticus 23:27 and 32. *Ba erev* ends and begins a day. Therefore, the fifteenth day begins when *ba erev* occurs at the end of the fourteenth. Brethren, we are talking about two different feasts. *Passing over* on the fourteenth, and *coming out* on the fifteenth. That is so clear.

Now look at some more differences, which we will not cover in any detail. With Passover there is no command not to work. The reason is that there is a lot of **work** associated with Passover—killing a lamb, roasting a lamb, burning a lamb, and those kinds of things. Passover is the *preparation day* for Unleavened Bread. There is a lot of preparation that takes place before one really begins to come out of sin. That is what God is teaching us. A lot of groundwork has to be laid before one can really begin to come out of sin. So it is the preparation for the holy day.

Passover memorializes the *preparations* necessary to seriously come out of sin. Unleavened Bread memorializes **actually coming out!** And so what kind of preparation has to be laid spiritually? We have to come to a knowledge of the plan and purpose of God. We have to come to a knowledge of our Savior, Jesus Christ and an understanding of a knowledge and a belief in His blood. And we have to begin to turn around. We have to repent. This is all *preparation* for actually beginning to come out. Then we begin to *come out*; and that is covered by what Unleavened Bread memorializes. That is, actually coming out—directly moving out from sin.

Notice the language in Exodus 12:17, again. "For **on this same day** I will have brought your armies *out* of the land of Egypt." Look again at another place:

Exodus 12:41 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—**on that very same day**—it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went *out* from the land of Egypt.

He's talking about the fifteenth!

Exodus 12:51 And it came to pass, **on that very same day**, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.

So we see the same language here. They went out on the fifteenth. And verse 22, of this chapter, **proves** that none of these verses (17, 41, or 51) could

refer to Passover day because (in verse 22) they had to stay in their houses until morning. They were still in their houses when daylight of the fourteenth came, and they had not even gone to Rameses yet.

Now, let us check a couple of other verses here. We have to check into this because the fifteenth advocates claim that the Exodus—the leaving of Egypt—began the moment the Israelites went out of the doors of their houses. But is that true? We shall see. Verse 37 says: "Then the children of Israel journeyed *from their houses* to Succoth." Are you looking at your Book? It does NOT say that! *The starting point was Rameses—not* their house. Do you want proof of that?

Numbers 33:1-3 These are the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys **at the command of the LORD**. And these are their journeys according to their **starting points**: They departed **from Rameses** in the first month, **on the fifteenth day** of the first month; **on the day after the Passover . . .**

Oh, brethren. I hate to appear sarcastic, or cynical, or whatever—but not even Goshen was listed as the starting point. Not their houses, but *Rameses*—at the command of God!

So, they had to remain in their houses until *boqer* . When they left their houses, the morning portion of the fourteenth was beginning. The fifteenth would not begin until *ba erev* . So, the only time that they could have assembled in Rameses was during the day portion of the fourteenth. Thus during the fourteenth, brethren, what did they do? During this "*day's delay*," they continued their preparations for leaving. But what did they specifically do? They **walked** from their houses to Rameses! And they spoiled the Egyptians along the way. There was NO DELAY!

Now, we want to look at some of the logistics of the Exodus:

Exodus 12:41-42 And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass

that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night of solemn observance to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the LORD, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Exodus 13:18 So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up **in orderly ranks** out of the land of Egypt.

They went out, but they did not go out in a disorganized way. Everybody was not just tramping, tramping, tramping—running things over, or whatever. They were all lined up. And, because of Scriptures like this, I do not believe that Moses merely assembled everybody in one huge mass, like a huge crowd attending a rock concert, in some open area of Rameses. It would not have worked that way. The indication, from these Scriptures, is that he had them **lined up** as in a parade—according to their tribes, according to their families. It was not a milling mass of people, just running in every direction. Rather, he had them lined up—like a parade.

How many people are we dealing with here? According to Exodus 12:37, 600,000 men who were fighting men (over the age of twenty). If there were 600,000 men, there must have been at least 600,000 women (also over age twenty). According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of the United States right now is 52% female and 48% male. If it was the same in Israel, then we are very conservative by saying that there were an equal number of men and women. Thus, 1,200,000 Israelites (males and females) above the age of twenty.

How many children were there? Exodus 1 says that the Israelites were a prolific bunch, and they had their babies so fast that they had them before the midwife could even get there. Surely there must have been at least one child for every adult. (I think that is very conservative.) So, already we are up to the place where there are 2,400,000 Israelites getting ready to leave Egypt.

I have seen where mathematicians have calculated, given that figure, that it could very easily be between five and six million—given the period of time

that the Israelites were in Egypt, the land that they dwelt in, and so forth. But we are going to say a conservative estimate of somewhere around 2 ½ million people.

Let us get a little bit of a handle on this. That is more than the population of Orange County. That is two times the population of San Diego. That is almost the population of Chicago, Illinois. That is two times the metropolitan population of Charlotte, North Carolina. It is more than the combined population of Alaska, Delaware, Montana, and South Dakota (and many other 3 or 4 states of the United States that you might want to combine).

It is four times the population of Washington, D.C. In fact, the total population of D.C. is only a few thousand more than the number of Israelite men there were over the age of twenty and able to fight in an army. It is greater than the population of Arizona, or Arkansas, or Hawaii, or Idaho, or Kansas, or Maine, or Nebraska, or Nevada, or New Hampshire. And almost, as I said, as great as Chicago's population.

Another way of looking at it: Most of us are at least somewhat familiar with the Rose Parade. Do you know how many people watch the Rose Parade every year? About one million! That's not even half as many as the Israelites (by a conservative guess, or calculation) had in marching out of Egypt. The Rose Parade stretches out over a length of 5½ miles. We have one million people stretched out over 5½ miles. These people are, of course, gathered into stands. And, I want to bring to your attention, they are sitting or standing fairly close together. Are they not? It is not a distance in which a person could walk, because you would always be walking right up the heels and the back of the legs of the person in front of you. That's one million people stretched out over 5½ miles.

How long must the "parade" of Israelites leaving Egypt have been? Ten miles? Easily. Twelve miles? Probably getting closer to the truth. A parade of people about twelve miles long. They had their flocks and herds with them too. So we are not just talking about people. We are talking about sheep and goats. We are talking about cows. We are talking about ducks and geese. We are talking about people carrying all of their possessions—perhaps in wagons, perhaps dragging them along. How fast, brethren, are these people going to walk?

An army marches at roughly $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles per hour. That includes taking a ten-minute break every hour. So they are moving along fairly rapidly. On the other hand, refugees normally walk about one mile an hour slower ($1\frac{3}{4}$ miles per hour). Let us say the Israelites, who were in good health, strong slave people, and the Egyptians were urging them to get out but they still had to take along their goats and geese and ducks and everything, so maybe they were moving along at 2 miles per hour.

The furthest point in Goshen to Rameses would have been somewhere near 15-20 miles. Walking at that rate, to get into Rameses on the day of Passover, preparing to get there would have taken them 7 to 8 or 9 hours—just to get to their place on the route. Thus, leaving at the break of dawn on Passover day, they would have gotten there somewhere around 2-3:00 in the afternoon.

I think that it is safe to assume that not everybody had to walk to Rameses. I am pretty sure that *birds of a feather flock together*. Most of the Israelites would have been gathered with their tribe, with their family. So then they would have had prearranged meeting points to which they were to go. Once they got there though, they still would have had time then to water their flocks and herds (take care of them), do a bit of feeding, rest up a little bit, do some eating—still making preparations **to leave at night** .

And I believe that this is not an assumption. In fact, I know that they left before the fifteenth actually began because Numbers tells us that they watched the Egyptians bury their dead on the way out. So it was still daylight when they began to leave. But a 12 mile long parade, moving at 2 miles an hour, would have taken 6-7 hours to pass any given point in the city of Rameses.

That can be calculated. The Rose Parade officials will give you the statistics and everything. The Rose Parade is $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles long. It takes 4 hours to cover that $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles. And it takes them, at any given point of the parade, 4 hours to pass any given point of the spectators. I do not think that it is wrong to calculate from that that the Israelites would have spent 6-7 hours getting out of Rameses. And during that period of time, they would have been able to see the Egyptians burying their dead.

There are other factors that we could consider here—like the appearance of the cloud and the pillar of fire. The Bible tells us that did not appear until the fifteenth. If they had left on the fourteenth, they would not have had the guidance of the pillar of fire and the cloud (to guide them out or the protection of it).

There is one thing that I want to pick up here. Let's go back to Numbers 33, and we will end with this scripture.

Numbers 33:3-5 They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. For the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had killed among them. Also on their gods the LORD had executed judgments. Then the children of Israel moved from Rameses and camped at Succoth.

They departed the day after Passover. And I want to think about the Egyptians burying their dead for just a minute here. If Israel had left after midnight (as the fifteenth advocates declare), then think about this. And I want you to put your heart into this. Pretend for a minute that you are an Egyptian, and you have seen your country devastated. And now this devastation reaches into your family and it affects you more directly than any plague has to this point. It takes away from you—very likely in a fit of agony, because these people did not die 'happy' deaths. That is very clear from the book of Exodus. They did not just silently die, and stop breathing in their bed. There was something done to them that made them rouse the other people in the house. Maybe screams of pain and anguish, as their life was snuffed out of them.

You have just lost your husband, your father, or your child. And now these fifteenth advocates are going to tell you that you are going to bury your loved one before they are even cold. If they are correct and Israel went out, then that turns the Egyptians into just cold, hardhearted people who did not give a hoot about anybody else. Who do these people think we are to accept something like that?

Those Egyptians felt about their loved ones exactly the same way that we feel about ours. They agonized, and they mourned over their dead—for at least one day, before they buried them. But if they had done as these fifteenth advocates say, they would have been outside of their houses within an hour or two, after midnight, to bury their dead in the dark of night. Well, I present to you that that is unthinkable.

Let us conclude in Psalm 78.

Psalm 78:43-45 When He worked His signs in Egypt, and His wonders in the field of Zoan; turned their rivers into blood, and their streams, that they could not drink. He sent swarms of flies among them....

Psalm 78:49-53 He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending angels of destruction among them. He made a path for His anger; He did not spare their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague, and destroyed all the firstborn of Egypt, the first of their strength in the tents of Ham. But He made His own people go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock; and He led them on safely, so that they did not fear; but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

God did that—not on the fourteenth, but on the fifteenth. The Passover took place on the fourteenth, and the going out of Egypt on the fifteenth.