

## The First Day Of Unleavened Bread (Part One)

### Distinguishing the Passover from the First Day of Unleavened Bread

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Given 24-Apr-05; Sermon #716B

I believe the word "very" is one of the most over-used words of our day. It came into the English from Latin, where it means "true." In English grammar it is an adverb used to indicate: exceedingly, in large measure, absolute, actual, exclusive, unqualified, and self-saying. The word "very" intensifies the word or thought following it.

The first day of Unleavened Bread began last night as we were observing the Night To Be Much Observed as part of it, and it continued on until sunset the following evening. Despite my thought about the word "very," the first day of Unleavened Bread deserves to be called *very* significant and *very* important to Christians.

Those calling themselves Christian, but who are of this world, have cast this day aside—along with other of God's festivals—as having no importance at all. However, its relevance and significance as a symbol and as a memorial of an important event continues to this day.

The first day of Unleavened Bread memorializes a number of distinctive events, including prophecy, promises, and fulfillments that God made in the distant past, and those prophecies and promises are continuing to be fulfilled by God to this very day. It is these, combined with God's faithfulness, that make this day so significant.

But attacks against the observance of the first day of Unleavened Bread and the other festivals of God continue, and even against the Night To Be Much Observed. We can expect that there will be attacks against it from outside the Church of God, but when the attacks come from *within* the Church of God, that is pretty bad, and you would be surprised how frequently it occurs. Well, it is under attack again and has been under attack for about a year, and so I feel it is good that I begin a defense of it because one of the people attacking it is one most of you know well.

The first thing we must do at this point is to show that Abib 15 (or if you prefer, Nisan 15) **IS** the first day of Unleavened Bread, and the remainder of this sermon will be on this. My sermon is actually planned at this time to include this same subject on the last holy day as well. This needs to be done because this man is making the claim that the 14<sup>th</sup>—Passover—is the first day of Unleavened Bread, and that the Days of Unleavened Bread end at sunset on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Nisan.

Now here is this man's premise taken right from his paper.

Passover night **IS** the Night To Be Much Observed, and the fourteenth **IS** a holy day and the first day of Unleavened Bread. This is contrary to all of our old arguments and previous understanding, but true.

Let me repeat this, but I am going to change the wording somewhat and simplify it. He designates the 14<sup>th</sup> (Passover) as a holy day Sabbath and at the same time makes it (Passover) the first day of Unleavened Bread. Thus, in his model, the entire period of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread is 7 days long, not 8 as the Church of God has kept for as long as I can remember. But here is the question that I feel needs to be asked at the very beginning: If this man's premise is true, then why would God even mention the 15<sup>th</sup>, except to say that this day they left Egypt?

Later I would like all of you to look into this in your personal study. I want you to examine Exodus 15, and I think you will understand that the sequence of events that begin at the end of chapter 11 of Exodus and then continues on through, includes the actual first celebration of Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. But by the time you get to Exodus 15 that sequence is over, and in Exodus 15 the Israelites celebrate what just happened. Now what do you think they celebrate in Exodus 15? The Passover? No. Everything in that chapter is devoted to the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan—the coming out of Egypt.

It would be good for you to pay attention to Exodus 15 for another reason besides, and that is because it is one of the songs of Moses. The joy of that

observance which those people had we also look forward to, because from everything that I am able to understand at this time, we are going to sing that same song in heaven, standing on the Sea of Glass before Jesus Christ after our resurrection. It is that important.

This man claims that he knows all of the arguments against his premise, but that he has received a special revelation from God, and he is accomplishing something. What he is accomplishing is to confuse two related, but distinctly different, teachings in the minds of others.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong taught that every false doctrine begins with a false premise that is accepted as true and then built upon into a seemingly plausible teaching. But if one can disprove the premise, then one need go no further into studying that paper, and you can just toss it aside because everything is going to be wrong. So what is built on a lie can only generate more lies, as scriptures are twisted in order to fit the false premise that began the whole thing.

It was the same principle involved in the teaching that Joshua 5:10-11 included a Wavesheaf offering, making the false premise that the Israelites' eating of unleavened bread and parched corn was proof that a Wavesheaf offering was made. They then twisted scriptures to build their case around that false premise, ignoring clear scriptures showing that no offering need be made because Israel had no acceptable offering to God, and were indeed commanded not to make an offering. Let us go back to Leviticus 23.

**Leviticus 23:4-7** These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover, and on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days you must eat unleavened bread. In the first day you shall have a holy convocation: you shall do no servile work therein.

I sincerely believe that this should end the argument right there; that we are clearly dealing with two separate, but adjacent festivals: Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> and Unleavened Bread beginning on the 15<sup>th</sup>. But this man claims that

because it does not say "the *first* day of unleavened bread," that this opens the door a crack to a new truth. If that is so, why did God word this the way that He did—one verse on one subject, the second verse (verse 6) on an entirely different subject on an entirely different day?

In addition to that first day of Unleavened Bread thing that this man claims, he also claims that verse 7 actually applies to Passover, again changing the subject, making it a Sabbath on which is a holy day convocation.

There is another thing I want you to do on your own later when you study this a little bit more thoroughly and quietly in your own home. This involves Leviticus 23. This is just an additional difference. For all of the festivals in Leviticus 23, except Passover, God clearly states that they are Sabbaths, or that no servile work is to be done on that day, which indicates it is a Sabbath. In other words, He will say one or the other. If He does not say it is a Sabbath but He says "no servile work is to be done," you therefore know that it is a Sabbath. There is a third thing: God directly calls the day "a feast" the second time. No such language is used for Passover. It is simply a festival, and even in verse 5 He does not call it a festival. So it is right here that this man makes the false assumption upon which he builds the rest of his case.

But brethren, verses 7 and 8 both continue the thought of verse 6 regarding the 15<sup>th</sup> day of Abib, not the 14<sup>th</sup>, so verse 4 is complete within itself, and then verses 5-8 all apply to what we call the first day of Unleavened Bread, or what God simply calls there "the feast of unleavened bread."

Let us turn now to Numbers 28. This just confirms what we just read. I just want us to see that God is consistent. Numbers 28 is giving us a listing of all of the sacrifices that were to be made during the holy days and the weekly Sabbath.

**Numbers 28:16-17** And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the Lord. [Again we have a break.] And in the fifteenth day of this month is the *feast* : [Do you see the contrast between those two?] seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

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It is not until after the end that the mention of unleavened bread comes into the picture, and it is in conjunction with that which occurs on the 15<sup>th</sup>. And now verse 18. Here comes a first day:

**Numbers 28:18** In the first day shall be an holy convocation.

Brethren, is that not related to what is in verse 17? Any logically thinking person would say, "Hey, that is right!"

**Numbers 28:18** In the first day [meaning the first day of Unleavened Bread] shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no manner of servile work therein.

The 15<sup>th</sup> of Abib (or Nisan) is a Sabbath. It is that plain and clear.

**Numbers 28:25** And on the seventh day [of Unleavened Bread] you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no servile work.

Of these three verses, verse 16 clearly states that Passover is on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and verse 17 clearly states that the 15<sup>th</sup> is a day of unleavened bread. Unleavened bread is to be eaten, and it is continued to be eaten for seven days.

Unleavened bread is never mentioned in reference to Passover *anywhere* except for the meal itself. That is the only exception. It is never mentioned in reference to Passover except for the service or the meal itself. This is not unusual, because no sacrifice to God was to contain leaven.

To give you proof of this, not forgetting that Passover was a sacrifice, we are going to go to Leviticus 2:11.

**Leviticus 2:11** No meal offering which you shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven: for you shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire.

There are *no* exceptions. Passover was no exception either. It was a sacrifice. It was an offering to the Lord, and therefore unleavened bread was required with it.

**Exodus 23:18** You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread: neither shall the fat of My sacrifice remain until the morning.

That confirms what we just read in Leviticus 2. We are going to go to one more scripture on this.

**Exodus 34:25** You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven: neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning.

Let us consider this in regard to sacrifices and leaven. With the sacrifices, leaven equates with sin, and what was burned on the altar was understood, and is understood, to have been God's meal offered by those who were offering it, and the burning of it on the altar pictured God eating it.

Let us add one more thing to this. Once one realizes that all of the sacrifices of Leviticus—one, two, three, four, five—symbolize the level of Jesus' devotion to God and to man and that He did this without sin, then we can grasp that as we are to be living sacrifices following in His steps, we are to strive that no service of ours to God or to man is to contain sin. In other words, our sacrifices of our lives are not to be done with sin.

Do not forget that the Passover meal was a sacrifice symbolizing the sinless Jesus Christ, and that the lamb was the meal. The Passover sacrifice done in the Israelite's home was a type of the Peace Offering, during which God, the priest, and the offerer are shown in fellowship eating a meal together in peace. This is one reason why the lamb had to be completely burned up before the morning, because that was symbolic of God consuming His portion of the meal completely. He was completely satisfied.

Nowhere does the scripture say no work is to be done on the 14<sup>th</sup>, thus indicating that it is not of the level of a festival of the Sabbath rank. But in reference to the 15<sup>th</sup> and the seventh day on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Abib, scripture directly states that they are not only holy convocations, but no servile work is to be done, strongly indicating that both of those days are Sabbath festivals.

We are going to keep on going through this one thing at a time until we get the whole package together.

Now what about the Passover, the 14<sup>th</sup>, being designated a holy convocation (as it most certainly is) in Leviticus 23? Let us go to Leviticus 23 because I want you to see that once again.

**Leviticus 23:4** These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which you shall proclaim in their seasons.

The first holy convocation mentioned is the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. In other words, Passover. So Passover very definitely is a holy convocation.

Turn now to Exodus 12. We are going to spend most of the time now in Exodus 12. We are just laying the groundwork here in getting some of the peripheral things out of the way.

**Exodus 12:3-4** Speak you unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.

There is the answer to the holy convocation part of it, and that is the Passover was to be kept by strict limitation by one family, or two families together, so that the entire lamb was eaten and nothing was wasted. It was to be observed at *home*. Thus Exodus 12:3-4 strictly limits the size of the assembly that got together to a family or two. All the other festivals were community-wide, or in some cases nationwide.

The three great feasts—Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles—were all kept at the tabernacle or Temple. They were nationwide. All males were commanded to appear before God those three feasts during the year. The other two—Trumpets and Atonement—were not nationwide. They were kept in the local synagogue and observed there. You can understand the

practicality of that. Those people did not have their Hondas and Fords and Chryslers and so forth that they could jump into and run into Jerusalem any old time. They had to go there by shoe leather express. Maybe they had a mule or something. Travel was slow. Most of them were farmers or shepherds, or were involved in agriculture in some way and they could not be away from their places all that long very often. So God only required of them three times [in a year] to go to Jerusalem. The other ones were kept in the home area. Passover was restricted to a family or two. Passover indeed was a holy convocation, but very restricted in the size of the assembly.

We are going to go now to Numbers 33, as we continue to add piece to piece here, showing that all of this man's arguments are wrong.

**Numbers 33:1-2** 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 by the commandment of the Lord; and these are their journeys according to their goings out.

Actually, in a way, what we are looking at here in Numbers 33 is a diary that Moses kept while they were going through the feasts.

**Numbers 33:3** And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow [on the day] after the Passover the children of Israel went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.

That is as plain as day! Israel left Egypt on the day *after* Passover. Passover is on the 14<sup>th</sup>. They left on the 15<sup>th</sup>. If you will look in any modern translation, they will translate that word "morrow" as "*day*," not morning. The King James Version has "morrow," and some will just read right into that "morning." If you have seen the *Ten Commandments* movie, you might be even more likely to think of morning, because they showed the children of Israel leaving Egypt in broad daylight, which they did not do at all. They left just as the 15<sup>th</sup> was beginning and the only light they had was moonlight.

We see here that they left the next day, after Passover. Israel left Egypt at the beginning of what is now the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15<sup>th</sup>, not on Passover, which is on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Now why am I emphasizing this? Because this man combines both of those events as taking place on the 14<sup>th</sup>. He flies right in the face of Numbers 33:1-3. It is incredible, and people are believing him.

I want you to listen to Numbers 33:3 from the *New International Version*, and then from *The New American Standard Bible*.

**Numbers 33:3** [New International Version] 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.

It was the day *after* the Passover. Not *on* the 14<sup>th</sup> (Passover day), but on the day *after* Passover. The translation from the *New International Version* shows very clearly that we are dealing with two separate events, each of which is observed as a festival—one on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and one on the 15<sup>th</sup>. That is why each one is designated in Leviticus 23 as a feast. They indeed both are feasts.

**Numbers 33:3** [*New American Standard Bible*] And they journeyed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month. On the next day after Passover the sons of Israel started out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians.

These translations are so clear they cannot be refuted. However, we are going to keep looking for further evidence that he is wrong. But to this point we are seeing that God is distinguishing Passover and Unleavened Bread as separate events.

**Deuteronomy 16:1** Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover unto the Lord your God: for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you forth out of Egypt by **night**.

They went out on the 15<sup>th</sup> day, but they went out on the *night* of the 15<sup>th</sup> day. This fact becomes very important to showing that we are dealing with two separate festivals. As we move along, this fact will continue to become more and more important. When you combine Deuteronomy 16:1 with Numbers 33:1-3, this clearly means that their departure was on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Recall that with the Israelites, their days began at sunset, as darkness was just beginning. So the question right here is: How can one stay and leave at the same time? That is, how can one keep the Passover at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and according to God's instruction, stay in one's home until the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and then leave while it was still dark the very same day? It is physically impossible to do that!

If they were to stay in their homes until morning, it would mean that when they were free to leave when it was light. They did not leave Egypt until it was dark again, but the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> was over. How can you have Passover and leaving Egypt the same day? It is impossible, if we are going to believe the Bible, that is. You cannot stay and leave. Something has got to give. It is going to be one or the other.

It is becoming clear that we are dealing with events whose beginnings were separated by 24 hours of time. We are going to rehearse the sequence of events in the instructions for keeping the first Passover to prove that you cannot stay and leave at the same time. As we go along in this section, we are going to see that God's instructions for the 14<sup>th</sup> were so clear that the entire amount of time (the 24 hours of the 14<sup>th</sup> day) was taken up before they were ready to leave.

**Exodus 12:5-6** Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: you shall take it out from the sheep or from the goats: 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.

They were to keep the sacrificial animal until the 14<sup>th</sup>. The word "until" means "up to a certain point, to a boundary of time or location." The boundary (as it says right in verse 6) is the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Remember, Israelite days began at sunset, and so the boundary is the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>. We know this is the boundary from two things: (1) the mass of information about the Passover day itself (all that instruction put together) plus that mysterious word *ben ha arbayim* at the end of verse 6 that is translated "evening" or "even." It may appear in your Bible as "even." It appears in my King James as "evening."

We are going to go now to Numbers 9 and look at three verses there.

**Numbers 9:3** In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, you shall keep it in his appointed season, according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall you keep it.

We are talking here about the observance of the Passover.

**Numbers 9:5** And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

**Numbers 9:11** The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Those three verses contain the word "even" a number of times, and in each of those verses the word "even" is translated from that same word "evening" in Exodus 12:6. It is *ben ha arbayim* in each one of those verses in Numbers 9. Thus the instruction here in Numbers 9 is consistent with Exodus 12.

*Ben ha arbaryim* is a *specific* period of time *immediately* following sunset, and indicates that period of afterglow (dusk or twilight) until darkness arrives. *Ben ha arbayim* is synonymous with the English word "twilight." It literally means "between the evenings," as though it is between evening here, and evening here, and right in the middle is *ben ha arbayim*.

I am going to read a comment from the *Expositor's Commentary*, Volume 2, Page 624. They are commenting on Leviticus 23:5, where the word *ben ha arbayim* appears, translated as "even" or "evening." They are using the New International Version, and the New International Version translated *ben ha arbayim* as "twilight."

For 'at twilight,' the Hebrew has *ben ha arbayim* (between the evenings). This curious phrase is explained however in Deuteronomy 16:6 as 'in the evening when the sun goes down.' Some Arabs today distinguish two evenings: one when the sun sets, the other when it is dark.

**Deuteronomy 16:6** But at the place which the Lord your God shall choose to place His name in, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at even, *at the going down of the sun*, at the season that you came forth out of Egypt.

That is very clear. *Ben ha arbayim* is a very specific period of time between when the sun disappears below the horizon to when darkness finally comes. It is actually a period of gradually darkening light. This specific period of time occurs one time during the day just as the day begins. In other words, it is the beginning of a new day.

So when were they to kill the lamb? Right at the very beginning of the 24-hour period beginning Passover day—the 14<sup>th</sup>. They were to kill the Passover lamb in the remaining light as the 13<sup>th</sup> ended with sunset, and the 14<sup>th</sup> day—the first Passover—began.

Before we go any further, we have to clarify a difference between *ben ha arbayim* and another Hebrew word, *ba erev*. We are going to go back again to Exodus 12.

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

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The last word in this verse—"even"—in this verse is not translated from *ben ha arbayim* but from *ba erev* (or *ba ereb*). It depends on what resource you look into. *Ben ha arbayim* is derived from *ba erev*. In contrast though to *ben ha arbayim*, which is a precise part of the day, *ba erev* is a general term covering a far larger part of the day in Hebrew usage.

I have the very latest *Strong's Concordance*, which includes *Vine's Dictionary*. I am going to quote from Strong's Concordance regarding #6153 for the word "even."

*ba erev* (from #6150): dusk, even, evening, night.

You never heard the word "night" associated with *ben ha arbayim*, and you will not, because it is still light then.

*Ba erev* means evening, or night. This word represents the time of day immediately preceding and following the setting of the sun. In its first biblical appearance, it marks the *opening* of a day.

Did you catch what Vine said there? This begins to bring it into close proximity of *ben ha arbayim*. I have given you this because I want you to see how general the term *ba erev* is.

Go now to Genesis 1:5. Here is the first appearance in the Bible of *ba erev*.

**Genesis 1:5** And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

The word "evening" there is *ba erev*. *Ba erev* can mean as much as twelve hours of the day, whereas *ben ha arbayim* is a very specific period of time *always* at the *beginning* of a day. *Ba erev* can be all over the place.

Here is *Vine's* definition of *ben ha arbayim*: "The phrase *in the evening* (literally *between the evenings*), means the period between sunset and darkness: twilight."

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*Ben ha arbayim* is a specific part of *ba erev*. *Ba erev* is a big period of time. *Ben ha arbayim* is a very narrow period of time. *Ba erev* does not literally mean sunset. Sunset takes place **during** *ba erev*.

Now here is when it gets kind of interesting and requires sometimes a great deal of thought. Since *ba erev* can equal or mean up to as long as twelve hours, (and we are going to see in just a minute that it can mean a longer period of time in Hebrew usage), it is sometimes used to designate the beginning of the day and sometimes used to designate the end of the day.

So how do you figure out whether it is the beginning of the day or whether it is the end of the day that is being designated by God in a verse? The answer is that most of the time you are going to be able to determine it from the context in which it appears. Sometimes you cannot do that, and so information from other parts of the Bible, which will never argue against itself, will harmonize with that and show you *definitely* whether it is the beginning or the end. We are going to see this is one of those cases right here in Exodus 12.

In actual usage, the Hebrew people generally use *ba erev* to mean any time after 1 PM. Apparently they did not have a word for afternoon, because they did not use the "12 o'clock to 12 o'clock" designation that we use for keeping time, and so they apparently did not have any word for afternoon, and so they used *ba erev*. You can find this in research material, that the Hebrew people generally used *ba erev* for anytime after about 1 or 2 PM. In addition to that, it does include absolute darkness long after the sun has set, and is used in the Bible for the entire night period for either the beginning of a new day or the end of an old day.

So how does this apply here in Exodus 12:18? We kind of went all the way around the tree here, but it is necessary to do that in order to determine this. *Ba erev* ("even" here) sets the boundary for the Days of Unleavened Bread as being at the **end** of the 21<sup>st</sup> of Abib. Not the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, but the **end** of the 21<sup>st</sup>. The eating of unleavened bread begins as the 14<sup>th</sup> ends and the 15<sup>th</sup> begins, and ends as the 21<sup>st</sup> ends. Unleavened bread is to be eaten **until** even on the 21<sup>st</sup>. There is the boundary. That consumes the entire seven days, and does not include the 14<sup>th</sup>—Passover.

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I am now going to read this from the Amplified Version. Let us see if this makes this any clearer.

**Exodus 12:18** [The Amplified Bible]: In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening [*ba erev*] you shall eat unleavened bread and continue until the twenty-first day of the month at evening [*ba erev*].

From the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 21<sup>st</sup>—7 days. That is as clear as anything. *Ba erev* is used in both cases to indicate the end of a day.

There is an additional piece of evidence that we have here in Exodus 12. Because God used *ben ha arbayim* in verse 6 to specifically designate the *beginning* of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and then switched to *ba erev* in verse 18, this gives strong evidence He is using *ba erev* to designate the *end* of the day. In other words, He contrasted the two so that we would understand. Thus the Days of Unleavened Bread begin as the 14<sup>th</sup> ends and the 15<sup>th</sup> begins, and continue until the 21<sup>st</sup> ends.

We know of a certainty that Passover began as the 14<sup>th</sup> began. Now how was the remaining time on the 14<sup>th</sup> to be consumed until they emerged from their homes on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>?

I'm going to hop, skip, and jump through Exodus 12 and draw your attention to one word in either the singular or the plural.

**Exodus 12:3** "...according to the **house** of their fathers, a lamb for a house."

**Exodus 12:4** "...let him and his neighbor next unto his **house** take it according to the number of the souls"

**Exodus 12:7** "And they shall take of the blood and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the **houses** [plural], wherein they shall eat it."

**Exodus 12:13** "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the **houses** where you are."

**Exodus 12:22-23** "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*. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your **houses** to smite you.

The word "house" actually appears a few more times, but that is enough for our purpose here. The word "house" or "houses" is being used in this chapter both in the sense of a structure in which people live, as well as the family of which one is a part. That is a legitimate use of the word "house." It is being used as either the structure people live in or the family that they are a part. A person might be said to be of the house of David. You know that person is a Jew and he is descended from David, but he lives in that house over there. It is the same word, but it is being used in the sense of a structure. This is no minor point, by the way.

Demographers have estimated that 75 people went into Egypt in comparison to the 600,000-man size of Israel's army when they left Egypt (having factored in average birth rates, death rates, and the amount of time Israel was in Egypt at the time of the Exodus), and that Israel at that time consisted of at least the minimum of 2½ million people.

I just read a paper from a man within the Church of God, who is a pretty good scholar, and he says 4 million people. I have read papers from out in the world where they have said 6 million people could have very easily been the size of Israel when they left Egypt, and that it is not out of the question. Mr. Armstrong tended to tell us to be conservative on this, and so to deal with about 2½ million people. That is about one million people larger than Mecklenburg County, including Charlotte.

When you look at *The Ten Commandments* movie and see this motley group of people leaving Egypt with all of their possessions, that was such a *tiny* amount of people compared to the reality that Moses had to deal with, there is no comparison. We are dealing with a massive number of people. This bears directly on the mention of houses in chapter 12, because Israel lived in houses in the land of Goshen. Where did they depart from? They departed from Rameses.

Two and one-half million people lived in Goshen. They were supposed to stay in their houses until morning, until daybreak. When daybreak came on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the Israelites were still in their houses, and they had to *walk* with all of their possessions to Rameses. You saw in the movie that their possessions included their ducks, their sheep, their goats, their cats, their dogs, their cattle, and their kids. A lady had a baby during that episode!

*The Ten Commandments* depicted their departure fairly well, except for one thing. The Bible makes it fairly clear that they marched out like an army harnessed together. They went out by ranks. I have the sneaking suspicion that all of the Jews gathered at the beginning of the line behind the Levites and the priests, and everybody marched out according to the order of their families. That took organization. Now whether they did this from Goshen, I am not sure. I know for sure they did it when they left Rameses.

Perhaps you have looked at a map at the back of your Bible to see where Goshen was located in relation to Rameses. There is a little bit of vagueness about the exact location of Rameses, but one thing we know for sure is that it was not in Goshen. The Israelites were cloistered in Goshen because they were shepherds of animals, especially of cattle. This was an abomination to the Egyptians because of their religious constraints, and so they stuck the Israelites over in Goshen where the Egyptians did not have to deal with them in that way.

When daybreak came on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the Israelites were still in their houses (not tents, but houses, solid structures), and they had to walk with all of their possessions to Rameses.

I am not exactly sure how large Goshen was, but if Goshen was as large as I think it was, if you lived in the northwest corner of Goshen up near the Mediterranean Sea, you might have had a 25-mile walk to get to Rameses on that day. I think what happened is that they probably gathered together as much as they could in the cities of Goshen in the homes that were closer to the border so that their trek on Passover day would not be any longer than it had to be. I still think they probably had at least seven to ten miles to walk in order to get to Rameses on Passover day.

**Exodus 12:8** And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Remember, they killed the lamb in *ben ha arbayim* (in that period of light). They roasted the lamb, and that must have taken several hours. Verse 8 tells us that all parts of the lamb, including the bones, had to be completely burned up before morning came. No part of the slain lamb was to leave their dwelling place.

**Exodus 12:11** And thus shall you eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover.

That word "haste" is kind of interesting, because if you do a little bit of research on that word, and I did, it means "to be startled," "to have anxiety," like one is ready to run. It might include that kind of movement, but I am not sure.

Again, if you reflect back on *The Ten Commandments* movie, I think those people portrayed that well, that while the Death Angel, or the Destroying Angel, was passing through, they were very sober and praying, while reflecting on the massive deaths happening outside their doors. Those people really did not have very much faith. Moses had the faith. Aaron had the faith, and everybody else was kind of just going along with them. How did they know that blood was going to keep the Destroying Angel away from their houses? They were concerned and very sober.

In verse 29 we are told that the Death Angel passed through at midnight. In verse 22 they were warned not to go out of their houses until morning. This

is important, again considering the time. Pharaoh apparently sent messengers at *night* , telling Moses that they were free to leave; however they did not leave. They did not leave until Moses told them to leave, and that was in the *morning* .

**Exodus 12:31** And he [Pharaoh] called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord as you have said.

They did not. They stayed put.

**Exodus 12:28** And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

They did not leave until morning.

**Exodus 12:35** And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses [not the word of Pharaoh]; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.

**Exodus 12:50** Thus did all the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

There is a reason. Those people were scared stiff by that time. They were doing *exactly* what they were told, out of fear.

**Exodus 12:32** Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone.

This verse confirms that they had their flocks and herds to move along with them. When they opened their doors in the morning, this huge assembly was still in Goshen. They, with all of their possessions, had to walk to Rameses, which was their departure point.

The city of Rameses has long since disappeared, but archaeological research places it in the vicinity of a city today called Qantir. If this is true, this huge

group of people and animals, even though well-organized because some preparations had been made in advance, had a walk of many miles before reaching Rameses. Of course the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians along the way.

**Exodus 13:18** But God led the people about, through the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.

This verse shows that they were well-organized in what they did. When they arrived at Rameses, they were organized into orderly military-like ranks. All of this put together shows that Passover day began with solemn, frightening, and time-consuming ceremony, and ended with strenuous time-consuming activity involving marching for many miles after their left their homes. **The entire day was used to prepare for leaving.** Passover is a preparation day. It is not a Sabbath.

All of the plagues that devastated Egypt, culminating with the killing of the firstborn, were something that only God could provide. The people receiving those blessings spent the entire 14<sup>th</sup> day preparing to leave the world of sin behind and to embark on a new life. So Passover is the final preparation for coming out of sin, and Passover is indeed a significant day. It is the most significant preparation day of the entire year. That is why it is not designated as a non-working Sabbath. It is a preparation day. It is the preparation day that prepares us for the spiritual work to begin. But spiritual work continues right on the Sabbath.

Believe it or not, there is another man in the Church of God who has made the Days of Unleavened Bread one day longer. He has made Passover a part of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Back again now to Exodus 12. I want you to see in these next couple of verses God shows us that both the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> are days to remember. They are significant days, but each one for its own reason.

**Exodus 12:24-27** And you shall observe this thing for an ordinance to you and to your sons forever. And it shall come to pass, when

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you be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as He has promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service? That you shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

What day here are we being instructed to remember? Passover.

**Exodus 13:3** And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage: for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

What day here are we being charged to remember? It is the 15<sup>th</sup>—the first day of Unleavened Bread. That is the day they came out of Egypt. We are dealing again with two different festivals; each one significant on its own, and to be observed for the significant occasion that took place there.

Notice in Exodus 13:3 that unleavened bread is again mentioned specifically in relation to the 15<sup>th</sup> day, not Passover.

**Exodus 13:7-9** Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days: and there shall no leavened bread be seen with you, neither shall there be leaven seen with you in all your quarters. And you shall show your son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that the Lord's law may be in your mouth: for with a strong hand has the Lord brought you out of Egypt.

Show your son what? The coming out of Egypt. The events of both of these days are to be remembered, and thus we are commanded to keep both of them, and to remember each one. We are not to jam them together. Each one is a festival on its own. Each one has its own significance.

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We are now going to go back into the New Testament, to I Corinthians 5:6-8. I really liked when Richard read these verses from the *Phillips* translation. Phillips made it so plain. We are going to look at it though in the *King James*

**I Corinthians 5:6-8** Your glorying is not good. Know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the *feast*, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

What feast is he talking about here? He is talking about The Days of Unleavened Bread! Yes, Passover is included, but they are still two separate festivals.

Brethren, this series of verses is at least clearly instructing me that we are dealing with two separate festivals, and both of them we are charged to keep. The keeping of Passover is shown by means of the service in I Corinthians 11. Right here, the second of them—the Days of Unleavened Bread—is more clearly designated of the two.

I am going to read a comment from *The Expositor's Commentary*, Volume 9, Page 507: "Having been unable to get to Jerusalem for Passover, Paul remained at Philippi to celebrate it and the week-long feast of Unleavened Bread." These Protestant researchers can see clearly what this man, with a long-time Church of God background, cannot see.

I am going to read that again. "Having been unable to get to Jerusalem for Passover, Paul remained at Philippi to celebrate it and the week-long feast of Unleavened Bread. (Compare Josephus for the conjunction of the two festivals in the first century)."

So I looked up Josephus, and I will quote from *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 3, Chapter 10, Paragraph 5. It is good to remember that Josephus lived and authored his books in the first century, about the time of the apostles and

shortly thereafter. The title, incidentally, of this particular chapter is: Concerning The Festivals; And How Each Day Of Such Festival Is To Be Observed:

In the month of Xanthicus, which is by us called Nisan, and is the beginning of our year, on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, when the sun is in Aries, (for in this month it was that we were delivered from bondage under the Egyptians,) the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice which I before told you we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the Passover; and so we do celebrate this Passover in companies, leaving nothing of what we sacrifice till the day following. The feast of unleavened bread succeeds that of the Passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days, wherein they feed on unleavened bread.

I do not know that you could get anything clearer than that from a first century Jew. There are many, many more references in Josephus that these are two separate festivals. I found that in one place though that he may call the entire eight-day period "Passover," and in another place he will call the whole eight-day period "Unleavened Bread."

Let us go to John 13.

**John 13:29** For some of them thought because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast: or, that he should give something to the poor.

You know what was happening here. It was the Passover meal, the foot washing, and Jesus was introducing the New Covenant. This took place at the *beginning* of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Correct? It is. I want you to notice what the apostles assumed. Notice it says the apostles *assumed* that Judas went out to buy things needed for the feast. If Passover is a holy day, as this man claims, would the disciples of Jesus be out and about buying in preparation on the Holy Day? Passover is not a holy day.

**BANG!** That doctrine is dead.

**Matthew 26:3-5** Then assembled together the chief priests and the scribes, and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas. And consulted [that is, they conspired] 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.

Now when did they arrange to take Jesus? On the 14<sup>th</sup>. They did not believe the 14<sup>th</sup> was a holy day, because it is not! It is not the first day of Unleavened Bread. It is a *preparation* day. It is not a Sabbath. They were afraid to take Jesus on the next day (the 15<sup>th</sup>) because they thought the people would riot, because here would be the priest ordering the slaying of a man on a Holy Day, and so they conspired to have Him taken on the Passover day.

**BANG!** That was the second shot!

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

This very clearly states that the Passover—the day on which Jesus was killed—was a preparation day, not a Sabbath. It was not part of the Days of Unleavened Bread. **BANG!** again.

Now we have one more scripture to look at here.

**John 19:40-42** Then took they the body of Jesus and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day: for the sepulchre was near at hand.

How can it be any clearer? **BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!** Passover is not a Sabbath. It is a preparation day.

So can we see that when Passover was fulfilled by means of Jesus' crucifixion, everything concerning His death was finished before the 14<sup>th</sup> ended? In fact, He was buried out of sight, which compares to the Passover lamb being completely consumed Passover night and out of sight. Nothing was left. Nothing remained.

Brethren, there is no doubt that we are dealing with closely related, but separate festivals, observed on different days, and having different spiritual teaching. When you put the two of them together like this man has, it confuses both of them, jamming them into a time frame which they cannot rightfully be placed, thus distracting from the singular significance of both of them.

Now with that behind us, God-willing, we are going to continue next Sabbath on the significance of the first day of Unleavened Bread.