



Daily Verse and Comment

[Leviticus 23:4-5](#)

(4) "These are the LORD's appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: (5) The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.

[Numbers 9:2-5](#)

(2) "Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. (3) Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations." (4) So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, (5) and they did so in the Desert of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD commanded Moses.

[Joshua 5:10](#)

(10) On the evening of the fourteenth day of the month, while camped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho, the Israelites celebrated the Passover.

New International Version

[Leviticus 23:4-5](#), [Numbers 9:2-5](#), and [Joshua 5:10](#) all show that [Passover](#) is on the fourteenth day. Many say Nisan 15 is the right day to keep Passover. Not only do these verses tell us what day to observe Passover, but also what part of the day—at "twilight" (NKJV) or "even" (KJV). (Some versions may also use a variation of the more literal "between the evenings." This changes nothing because in all of the [Old Testament](#) verses thus far quoted, it is the *same* Hebrew word, *ben ha arbayim*.) Which part of the day, then, is "even"?

Rather than look to human explanations, notice what the One who created it says: "[God](#) called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the

evening and the morning were the first day" ([Genesis 1:5](#)). God reveals that His days begin with the evening (the night portion) followed by the morning (the daylight portion).

The same Hebrew word translated "at twilight" in [Leviticus 23:5](#); [Numbers 9:3](#); and [Joshua 5:10](#) appears for the first time in [Genesis 1:5](#), where it is translated as "the evening." So Genesis proves that the "at twilight" in the three Passover verses is the time that *begins* Nisan 14 and comes *before* the daylight portion. But when does evening start?

. . . but at the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, *at the going down of the sun*. . . . ([Deuteronomy 16:6](#); see also [Mark 1:32](#))

So it was, at the gates of Jerusalem, as it *began to be dark* before the [Sabbath](#), that I commanded the gates to be shut, and charged that they must not be opened till after the Sabbath. ([Nehemiah 13:19](#))

These verses establish that sunset starts the evening, the start of a day in God's eyes. For anyone who observes the Sabbath, these facts should be clear, yet some who observe the Sabbath—believing their complex and convoluted explanations, and in other cases, preferring tradition over Scripture—reject the Bible's clear teaching.

Additionally, [Numbers 28:16-17](#) requires Passover and the [Feast of Unleavened Bread](#) to be on separate days: "On the *fourteenth* day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. And on the *fifteenth* day of this month is the feast: unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days" (see also [Leviticus 23:5-6](#)). Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are distinct observances; God assigns each a separate day. One spilling over into the other, the result of a Nisan 15 Passover observance, contradicts this verse.

There is one final nail to hammer into the coffin of a Nisan 15 Passover, found in [Exodus 12:5-6](#): "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it *until* the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel *shall kill it at twilight*." According to *Gesenius'*

Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures, the Hebrew word translated "until" is *ad*, which means, "up to a specific point in time"—not through, nor beyond. It signifies "the limit of time itself."

This means that the Passover lamb was to be kept *up to* Nisan 14, which, we say, begins at sunset. This creates a line not to be crossed. What always immediately follows sunset? The twilight or evening—the time between sunset and the dark. This is when the Israelites killed the lamb: in the evening of Nisan 14.

[Exodus 12:8](#) identifies when we are to partake of the Passover: "They shall eat the flesh on *that night*; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." Verse 10 then pins down when the observance should be complete: "You shall let none of it remain *until morning*; and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire."

[Exodus 12:6](#), 8, and 10 lay out a timeline for Passover observance. It begins at the sunset that begins Nisan 14 with the lamb killed in the evening or twilight that immediately follows (verse 6). The Passover is eaten that night (verse 8), and all is to be completed by the morning, the daylight portion of Nisan 14 (verse 10). All this happens on Nisan 14, just as the Bible requires.

— Pat Higgins

To learn more, see:
[When Is Passover?](#)

Related Topics:

[Ben Ha Arbayim](#)
[Christ Kept Passover at Beginning of 14th of Abib](#)
[Passover](#)
[Passover Lamb Killed at Twilight](#)

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Leviticus 23:4-5 (<https://www.theberean.org>)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2025 [Church of the Great God](#)
New International Version copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by [International Bible Society](#)