

## Passover (Part Two)

### Can The Jews Be Trusted?

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The last time that I spoke, I gave the indication that I was going to go into "between the two evenings" today. We still may get into that, but after thinking through the organization of my sermon, I decided to rearrange things a little bit. And I think, at this point, there is something that is more important to go into. This is also still in regard to Passover. I have not changed the subject at all, but I feel that I need to lay some necessary groundwork before we get into the things regarding "between the two evenings," and other things that have to do with the Passover.

The question is, "Can the Jews be trusted?" Now, I do not mean any individual Jew—can they be trusted in regard to anything. I am talking about "Can the religion of the Jews (the practices of the Jews) be relied on as faithful interpreters of the Old Testament?" This is a very important question in regard to the Passover, because every author of every paper that I have ever read in regard to the keeping of a late fourteenth Passover, or a fifteenth Passover, must rely heavily upon Jewish interpretation and Jewish tradition. The reason that they must do so is because there is nothing in the Bible upon which they can clearly, and authoritatively, base their conclusions.

We are going to begin in Romans 3:1-4. This is a scripture that has been used to imply that, because the Word of God has been given to Israel (including the Jews), they are the ones that we should look to for authority regarding interpretation and practice of the Old Testament scriptures.

**Romans 3:1-4** What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged."

Notice especially, right at this point, "for what if some did not believe?" Now who else could He be referring to there, than *the Jews*? Is it possible that they might have given *a wrong example* to the world regarding things that are important to the destiny to which we are called? That is, those things that have to do with the commands of God—and obedience to those commands.

Does that make God's Word any less true? Well, of course it does not! As He said, "Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! "Indeed, *let God be true*. . ." We have to look to the Word of God—not men.

This context (in which this appears) begins back in chapter two. We are going to go back to verse 17 of chapter two; and, in my Bible, it says—as a heading for this paragraph, "The Jews as Guilty as the Gentiles." Now that is an interesting thought!

**Romans 2:17-19** Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness.

That is a common assumption of the Jews. You might recall that, in the opening chapters of the book of Matthew, John the Baptist, in chapter 3, said to these people, "Think not that because Abraham is your father. . ." It shows to me that they put a great deal of reliance on their heritage physically, because there was a direct attachment (by genes) all the way back to Abraham. But were they obeying? Were they submissive to God? Were they really keeping His commands?

**Romans 2:20-24** An instructor of the foolish [This is the way they thought of themselves.], a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For [And this is a quote out of the Old Testament.] "the name of God is blasphemed [profaned, reviled] among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

We could go on here, but I think that is enough to show you that the Jews (though they had the law of God) were not keeping it perfectly. It was God's intention that they do that, but they certainly were not doing that—as even the printers of my Bible saw, and showed in the heading that they put on this paragraph.

So this context is saying just the opposite of what some reach as a conclusion. Yes, the Jews did have an advantage; but, also, they were not taking advantage of it. They were supposed to be the interpreters of the law—of the way—of God; but brethren, they failed miserably in their responsibility.

Let us go back to the Old Testament, to Amos, where a judgment is pronounced upon Judah.

**Amos 2:4** Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, because they have despised the law of the LORD and have not kept His commandments.

I chose to begin here because that was so clear. The Jews do *not* have a good record for keeping the commands, and the way, of God. Old Testament [times], New Testament times—you name it, they have not! There is God's own announcement, you might say, regarding their relationship with Him. *They despised the law of God.* We are talking here most specifically about the Torah, where the commands are regarding the keeping of the Passover and the holy days. It says there, literally, that *they rejected the Torah.*

**Amos 3:1-2** Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family [meaning both Israel in the north, and Judah in the south] which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth. . . ;

Israel and Judah should have been the interpreters of God's law. They should have been the ones that kept the commands of God, that lived it as a way of life, and set the example for the entire world. "You only have I *known*. . ." It is a matter of intimacy that He is expressing there. "I have revealed Myself to you," God says. "Of all the families of the earth, you are the only ones that I have done this to."

**Amos 3:2** . . . therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities [lawlessness]."

Having the revelation of God, having the law of God, having the Word of God was supposed to give them an "advantage" before the world because it set up, for them, a relationship with God. Instead, it became the means, and the basis, for the punishment that God meted out against them. "They should have known better," is what God is saying. *To whom much is given, much is required*. So their "special privilege"—of having been given the revelation of God—boomeranged on them because they failed to live up to the terms of the agreement. And, thus, the wrath of God came down upon them.

Let us look at some more. Let us go back to Jeremiah 35. This is a very interesting example that we are going to use here. We will cover this chapter pretty rapidly because I just want to set the stage so that you understand what is going on.

**Jeremiah 35:1-2** The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying. "Go to the house of the Rechabites, speak to them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink."

So Jeremiah followed through as he was commanded. He brought them (verse 4) "into the house of the LORD." And then it names a few of the people.

**Jeremiah 35:5-9** Then I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, "Drink wine." But they said, "We will drink no wine, for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, 'You shall drink no

wine, you nor your sons, forever. You shall not build a house, sow seed, plant a vineyard, nor have any of these; but all your days you shall dwell in tents, that you may live many days in the land where you are sojourners.' Thus we have obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, nor to build ourselves houses to dwell in; nor do we have vineyard, field, or seed.

**Jeremiah 35:12-13** Then came the word of the LORD to Jeremiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 'Go tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. . . ,

The very people who should have known better. The very people who should have submitted to (subjected themselves to) God through His law, He says:

**Jeremiah 35:13-16** ". . . Will you not receive instruction ["Instruction" from this example regarding the Rechabites.] to obey My words?" says the LORD. "The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, which he commanded his sons, not to drink wine, are performed; for to this day they drink none, and obey their father's commandment. But although I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, you did not obey Me. [Can we trust the Jews?] I have also sent to you all My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, 'Turn now everyone from his evil way, [If they were doing evil, they were not keeping the commands of God.], amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them; then you will dwell in the land which I have given you and your fathers.' But you have not inclined your ear, nor obeyed Me. Surely the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandments of their father, which he commanded them, but this people has not obeyed Me."

**Ezekiel 23:1-5** The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. They committed harlotry in Egypt. They committed harlotry in their youth; their breasts were there embraced, their virgin bosom

was there pressed. Their names: Oholah the elder and Oholibah here sister. They are Mine. And they bore sons and daughters. As for their names: Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem [the Jews] is Oholibah. Oholah played the harlot even though she is Mine; and she lusted for her lovers, the neighboring Assyrians.

And then He goes on to describe that relationship. Now, in verse 11:

**Ezekiel 23:11** "Now although her sister Oholibah saw this [In other words, the Jews looking up from Jerusalem at what happened to Samaria.], she became more corrupt in her lust than she, and in her harlotry more corrupt than her sister's harlotry.

Now surely, brethren, those of us who are living in Israel (and know a great deal about the history of Israel, going all the way back anciently to the very time about which he is speaking)—we are familiar, at least somewhat, with the harlotries of Israel; but Judah was worse! There are the "interpreters" that we are supposed to believe? These are the "interpreters" whose practices we are encouraged to follow?

**Ezekiel 23:12-14** "She lusted for the neighboring Assyrians, captains and rulers, clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men. Then I saw that she was defiled; both [sisters] took the same way. But she [Judah] increased her harlotry; she looked at men portrayed on the wall, images of Chaldeans.

And on and on it goes. Let us go to Hosea 5. We will pick up the story in verse 4. In verse 3, he mentions the name "Ephraim" as being used as the leader of the Ten Tribes in the north. So it actually stands for all of Israel.

**Hosea 5:4-5** They do not direct their deeds [That is, the Israelites—in the north] toward turning to their God, for the spirit of harlotry is in their midst, and they do not know the LORD. The pride of Israel testifies to his face; therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also stumbles with them.

Drop down to verse 10, "The princes" means the leaders. It is a general term. Sometimes it can mean the political leaders—as the king, or all of the ministers that serve under him in exercising the government over the land. It can also mean the spiritual leaders, as well. It can mean the high priest, and all of the priests under him, and the Levites who were serving at the Temple.

**Hosea 5:10** "The princes of Judah are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out My wrath on them like water."

That kind of a description gives you an indication that they were doing something pretty bad in the eyes of God. When it said that they were like those who remove a landmark, do you know what he is talking about? If you know anything about the laws regarding land (that appear back in the Pentateuch), land was *never* supposed to pass from a family. Once it was given to a family, it was to stay in that family. The reason for that, brethren, is because all wealth comes out of the ground.

When people had property—that they could either get minerals from, or that they could farm (or have orchards on, or have cattle grazing on—that ensured that they would have wealth of some type. And it gave stability to the entire financial system; and, besides that, it gave people a sense of "being"—a sense of being somebody. "I am somebody. I own land. I am the equal of my neighbor." And when land, or property, *passes from a person*, it does a great deal more than just make that person poor.

Well, what he is originally describing here were unscrupulous people who went out in the middle of the night, and they removed the landmark and made their own land bigger by taking away land from their neighbor. The landmarks, at that time, were really nothing more than a stone, or a pile of stones, or a pillar that was stuck up. And so they would go out in the middle of the night and they would move it over twenty feet or so. And now, "That land belongs to me! See, that's where the landmark is."

The phrase came to mean anybody who made a gain by doing something deceitful under the cover of secrecy, or darkness. But over time, the phrase began to be an idiom that meant anybody who was playing fast and loose with the law of God.

Instead of having a straight and narrow way that defined the way of God, God is describing, here, the Jews as being someone who blurred the difference between right and wrong, by constantly moving the walls (the sides, the boundaries, the borders) between right and wrong. In other words, they were *liberalizing* the law of God and making the way "broad" (and leading to *destruction*), rather than "narrow" (and leading to *life*).

We could march right through the Old Testament and go to each book and show you the record of these people. But I know you are fairly familiar with that, and I am eventually (in another sermon, or two) going to get back to this subject, and go through it in more detail. I am going to give you a record that you will always have to show that these people were *not* to be trusted. It is *the Word of God that is to be trusted*—not the record, not the traditions of people. I mean, people who are supposed to be the people of God [including the Jews].

Let us go back to the New Testament, to John 1.

**John 1:11** He [Jesus Christ] came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

The implication of that scripture is that He came to His own family—the Jews—and they did not "recognize" Him. Do you know why? At least part of the reason is because they were not familiar enough with the Old Testament descriptions of what the Messiah would be like, to be able to recognize Him when He did come. You know the story. They were looking for a conquering king who would kick the Romans out. [They were] completely deceived, completely turned away from the truth of God's Word.

Let us go to John 8, which is a very interesting section where we have our Lord and Master's very own description of this.

**John 8:37-42** "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me. [I mean, you talk about rejection of the Messiah! He came to "His own" and they seek to kill Him. Now, why? Pay careful attention to this!] Because My word [The Old Testament, the Pentateuch, the writings, the prophecies] has no place in you. [How in the world can a people like that make a good record, that

we are supposed to follow?] I speak what I have seen with My father, and you do [The emphasis is now on action, not just hearing or accepting.] what you have seen with your father. They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. [It seems to me like they were not accepting the truth.] Abraham did not do this. [But] you do [act, behave, conduct your life] the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God." Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me. . . ,

Is He not implying that they did not love Him? Do you not think that if they loved Him they would have been obedient to what it says in the Old Testament? Is He not saying, very strongly, here that these people were not obeying God?

**John 8:42-43** . . . for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

You see, in reality, they belonged to someone else. They belonged to another "family." Jesus very clearly represented the *Family of God*. These people, who were supposed to represent the Family of God, were not representing the Family of God. They were representing someone else.

**John 8:44** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth."

It means he has nothing to do with it. It does not mean that he will not *use* it, because Satan will "use" truth to deceive. And what usually happens in such a case? We get a mixture of truth and error. You know what James says about a mixture of truth and error—it is all bad.

**John 8:44** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources [That is, he does what is natural to him.], for he is a liar and the father of it."

Jesus is implying that these people, too, are liars. Should we go further? Let us go further. It does not end. Let us go to Mark 7.

**Mark 7:6-8** He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' For laying aside the commandments of God, you hold the traditions of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things do you."

These are the people whose record we are to trust? That we are asked to trust?

So the Jews were this way. What about the apostle Paul? Surely, there was a prime representative of the Jewish religion, and surely he must have had things right before his conversion? Surely, he must have known. Surely he must have understood. Did he not say that "before the law" he was blameless? And, if anybody had any advantage, it surely must have been the apostle Paul, who was a brilliant scholar. Besides that, did he not study at the very feet of Gamaliel, one of the greatest teaching rabbis who ever lived? Surely the apostle Paul had things right. Let's look at Paul's own testimony.

**Galatians 1:11** But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me was not according to man.

Paul fires the cannon-shot across the bow, in case anybody thought that he was doing otherwise—in case people thought that he was somehow instructed by men at some time prior to the writing of this book of Galatians.

People could suppose that he knew "truth" even before he was converted. Paul says, "Oh, no, I wasn't instructed by men. I didn't get this from Gamaliel. I didn't get this from the Jews."

**Galatians 1:12** For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Remember I Corinthians 2:10—these things are revealed through God's Spirit. Now, verse 13 is very revealing.

**Galatians 1:13** For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism [Or, if you have a King James Bible, it might say "the religion of the Jews."], how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

Brethren, does that sound like somebody who loved the truth of God? If this man loved the truth of God before conversion, then why did he persecute the true church—who had the true religion, who had the true Word of God, who had the true Messiah?

**Galatians 1:14** And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation [Pay close attention here!] being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers.

Did you notice that? "For the tradition of the fathers"—not for the truth of God! That is what Paul was zealous for. "The traditions of the fathers"—which is equated with Judaism right in the context.

Now, was Judaism the religion of Moses? Was Judaism the truth of the Old Testament? Brethren, by this apostle's own admission (in Romans 7, you can check it out yourself), Paul did not even understand what sin is. Romans 7:7—he said he did not know, until the law came (until the Word came). Then he said: Sin revived and I died. (Romans 7:9)

For the first time in his life, upon conversion, he had a clear and a true understanding of "what sin is." And when he said, "I died;" it means that he repented. And he was baptized in the water, buried.

Even the great Paul had only a cursory knowledge of the truth of God. What he was zealous in, brethren, was the religion of the Jews! That is, the traditions of his fathers. This is the same man who said that he was "a sinner above all sinners" because he persecuted the church.

Do you honestly think that someone attuned to the truth of God would be persecuting the church? Or, let me make that even more personal. Do you think that somebody attuned to the truth of God would be persecuting the Messiah? Do you realize there in Acts 9, where he was converted, that Christ said to him (when He appeared to him), "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting *Me*?"

Now let us go to I Timothy 1. Paul is writing, and he says:

**I Timothy 1:12-13** And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man. . . ;

This is the man who was *blameless before the law*? Now, what Paul says (there in Philippians 3) about being "blameless before the law" is the truth. But it must not mean what some people are interpreting it to mean, because a man who is "a blasphemer" is not blameless. A man who is a "persecutor," a man who is "an insolent man," is not blameless.

**I Timothy 1:13-14** . . . but [he says] I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

We are dealing with one of the most outstanding characters in all of the Bible. Yes, one of the most outstanding people who has ever lived on the face of the earth. But there was a time in his life when he considered it "meritorious conduct" to persecute the church and even be, perhaps, directly responsible for the murder of innocent people.

So when he says (in Philippians 3) that he was "blameless before the law," he was blameless before the *Pharisaic* law. He was blameless before the

laws of *Judaism*. It means (when we put this together with I Timothy 3) that he did what he did in ignorance and good conscience; that is, he did not go against his convictions at the time. Paul's perceptions, his convictions, and his conduct regarding truth were *not* in agreement with God's Word. They were in agreement with Judaism!

God had to strike this man temporarily blind, in order to get him to really "see."

Paul was a Pharisee. They, along with the Sadducees, were keeping the Temple sacrifice of the Passover, which God *never* commanded. I am not saying it was not done in the Old Testament. I am saying God *never* commanded it! There is a big difference between the two. There are examples in the Old Testament of people sacrificing at the Temple. But you cannot find any place where God ever altered the commands regarding Passover (until Jesus kept it in the New Testament). Even then, He did not change the *time*. There is no word, anywhere in the Bible, of a change of *time* in the keeping of the Passover. There is only word regarding a change of symbols.

Now, you wonder, "How could this ever happen?" That is, that someone like the apostle Paul could be so fooled. Brethren, Paul was no different than you and me. He was no different than anybody before conversion. He was deceived by Satan the Devil. He grew up accepting what was in his society. Did you not grow up accepting Christmas and Easter? Well, these people grew up accepting a Temple sacrificed lamb, on the late afternoon of the fourteenth—something that does not appear in God's Word by way of command. It only records that it was done.

The apostle Paul was just as much a victim of the deceptions of Satan as we. He, too, had to have the "scales" lifted from his eyes, so he could see the truth of God.

**Romans 10:1-3** Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. [He means "truth."] For they being ignorant [Not stupid. They just did not "know." They were unconverted.] of God's righteousness, and

seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Now that sums it up, I think, about as well as any series of verses in the entire Bible. We cannot trust the record—the tradition—of the Jews in regard to spiritual things because they were just as *unconverted* as we were.

I think that you understand that it has always been the broad majority (the ones who leave "the record," the ones who leave "the histories of people"), as Jesus' own witness tells you, who are on the broad way to destruction. It has always been "the remnants" (a tiny number of people) who are doing it right.

God has *not* always preserved a great deal of knowledge about those people, because He wants us *to live by faith* too. Our faith has to be in the Word of God (in the truth that is there) and not in the historical records of men. Do you know who our faith would be in then? It would not be in God. It would be in history. That is not *living by faith*. We are dealing with something that is *spiritually discerned*.

So, we see a summation here in Romans 10:1-3, that the Jews are not to be trusted any more than any other people in regard to spiritual things. They had erected a system of worship that is called Judaism; and, oh, it was strict. Oh, they were zealous for it; and, oh, it was done in the name of God (just like "Christianity" today). But this religion was in agreement with their own character—*not the mind of God!* We have just seen the witness of that in God's Word. They were not in agreement with God. Some were doing things right, but the vast majority were not—even as it is today.

In the last sermon, I laid the foundation by discussing the importance of Passover to God's purpose. I want you to turn to John 6, just to review that.

**John 6:49-51** "Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

**John 6:54-58** "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread shall live forever."

*That is how important Passover is!*

In Exodus 12, if those people had not followed the instructions—I want you to note this. They had to *eat* the Passover. The emphasis here is on "eating." We may go so far as to say that the eating of the Passover might be the most important part of all. Anybody can begin by believing in the Word of God—believing in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "Eating" *and* "drinking" *implies a lifelong process* ! That shows whether the person really is "a Christian."

The next thing that we established is that Passover is named for *the passing over* of the Israelites, who were still in their homes (not "going out" of Egypt) while the Death Angel was going through. We saw that verified by Josephus, who very clearly stated such.

**Exodus 12:11-13** And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. For I will pass over through the land of Egypt on 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.

The day is named for *the passing over*—not the sacrifice. The sacrifice came to be named because of the pass-over.

**Exodus 12:23-27** For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts; the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you. And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever. It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service. And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD [Notice: It is the Passover sacrifice.], who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.'" So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

The third point was, then, that Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread are two separate memorials—of two *distinctly separate though closely occurring* events; and they are to be kept on two separate days.

**Leviticus 23:5-6** On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD'S Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

That is so clear! It is undeniable. (Well, I should not say that. There are still people who will "deny.") But God says (God's Word says), Passover is on the fourteenth and the first day of Unleavened Bread is on the fifteenth!

Next we need to clarify what it means to *keep* the Passover. The common Jewish explanation is that Passover merely entailed the killing of the lambs. I am going to give you a quote from Drs. Grabbe and Kuhn. It is going to come from their book "The Passover and the Church Today." This is page 14 and 15.

Leviticus 23:5 states, "On the fourteenth of the first month, between the two evenings is the Lord's Passover." This shows that

whenever a precise time was given, the emphasis was on the slaughter of the lamb—not subsequent events such as eating. The only part of the ceremony specified for the fourteenth, between the two evenings, is the slaughter of the lamb. The eating and other aspects of it did not have to come at that time.

Is that so? What about roasting the lamb? What about eating the lamb? What about staying in the house? What about burning the remains of the lamb? What about not going out of your house until morning? Is the killing of the lamb the only thing that God was interested in?

Now, if we make a spiritual parallel of that, the killing of the lamb represents the death of our Savior, does it not? Is that the "end" of salvation? Is that all one has to do is accept the blood of our Passover Sacrifice, that then that is all there is to it? You mean we do not have to obey God, and follow His instructions regarding anything else? I think you know better than that! That is only the beginning. Are we to say that God never "tests us" to see if we will follow His instruction?

**Exodus 12:3** Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

There is the first thing that they had to do. What if they never selected the lamb? They would never have a lamb to kill on the fourteenth! So, if they did not follow that instruction, boy, they were up a creek.

**Exodus 12:6-7** 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. [So the lamb was to be killed "between the evenings," or "at twilight," on the fourteenth.] And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

Oh, what if they had killed the lamb, but they did not put the blood on the doorposts, or the lintel? Were they really *keeping* Passover?

**Exodus 12:8-9** Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. [They had to eat the flesh *that night*; and roast the whole lamb, of course.] Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails.

There is another one. It was not allowed to be boiled. That is part of the instruction. Nor were they allowed to eat it raw. It also had to be burned in fire—the bones, the fat, the skin, and the guts. And verse 11 tells us that they had to eat it, as it were, "in haste."

**Exodus 12:44** But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

So, no one could eat [of the Passover] unless he was circumcised.

**Exodus 12:46** In one house it shall be eaten; you may not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.

The lamb had to be eaten at the house where it was slain. These instructions are fairly detailed. You can understand (if you *know* God) that there is something involved in each step here that is important to His purpose. There is teaching here.

Finally, they were not allowed to carry it out until the morning.

If you go through those nine separate steps that those people had to go through, more than half of them had to be done *before* the Death Angel went through. And then, even after the Death Angel went through, there were other things that had to be done in order to complete the keeping of it.

**Numbers 9:1-3** Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying [You have the time element. The first Passover took place just before they left Egypt. We are now when the second Passover is going to be kept; but the first one that they kept after coming out of the land.], "Let the children of Israel keep

the Passover at the appointed time. [Nothing has changed.] On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. [Look at this last sentence.] According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it."

Is that plain, brethren? Just because they were out of Egypt and the Death Angel was not literally going to go through, God changed nothing! So now we have all of those things that they did, following the sacrifice of the lamb—now they are called *statutes and ordinances*.

Also, in this chapter, appear the instructions regarding the keeping of "the second Passover." That is, if a person was defiled because of touching a dead body or were traveling on a journey so that they could not keep the Passover when it rightfully came, God permitted them to keep it one month later. Now, one month later, were they excused from doing all of the other things? All they had to do was kill a lamb? No. Let us look at what it says.

**Numbers 9:9-12** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, [then] he may still keep the LORD's Passover. On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.'

Nothing changed for the keeping of "the second Passover." There are no instructions in the Old Testament scriptures that modify the original instructions, and there is nothing in the New Testament modified, except for the symbols. And even as there is no example, or command, in the New Testament regarding the [changing] of the Sabbath, neither is there any example, or command, in the New Testament changing Passover.

In the clearest of terms, the apostles record for us when Jesus kept that last Passover, when He changed the symbols. He did it at the time that God has always commanded it to be done. Regardless of what the other Jews were doing, He did it when God commanded in Exodus 12 and Numbers 9—at the beginning of the fourteenth.

God's command is very clear. In order to keep the Passover, one must *eat* of it. And it had to be eaten on the night of the fourteenth. Again, remember John 6, "unless you *eat* of His flesh. . ." you have no life in you.

Now, I want to ask you something very serious here. Did God agree with Nadab and Abihu, even though they were Aaron's sons, when they decided to make a change (just a "little" change) in the laws regarding the incense offering and they offered 'strange fire'? Did God agree with that "little" change? *He struck them dead*—as a witness to Aaron and to every high priest that "You don't go fooling around with My instructions!" ("Oh, it's just a little thing. It won't matter.")

Did God agree with David when David said, "Yeah, bring the ark home on a new cart drawn by certain cows," or whatever. Did God agree when Uzzah reached out his hand and decided to keep the ark from falling off the cart? God's Word clearly said that the ark was to be carried and not touched by defiled human hands. I do not think God agreed.

Did God agree with Saul when Saul went out and changed the instructions that were given to him by Samuel to kill all the Amalekites? Did God agree with Saul, when Saul changed the command that was given to him by Samuel not to make an offering until Samuel arrived? Instead, he went and did it himself.

And Samuel came, both times, and he said, "Why have you done this thing? God has rent the kingdom from you and has given it to somebody else who is better than you."

Did God agree with Ananias and Sapphira, when they decided to go back on their word; and they lied to God's apostle and then lied to God, lied to the Holy Spirit? I think that we need to take a lesson here. Even though God's "chosen people" (the Jews) decide to do it differently than God commanded in His Word, God will record what they did, and He will give you an honest recording of what they did. But that does *not* say that He agreed with it. He is just giving us a record to show how far off they were.

I think that we will stop there. And, indeed, I think that the next time we will be able to get to what I said that we would get to this week, that is "between the two evenings."