

PASSOVER (Part 2)

As we meet here this evening, the Jewish calendar reads Nisan 14th, which is the day of the Feast of Passover! Jesus died on this very day, fulfilling the requirements of the Passover lamb: **EXODUS 12:1-13; LEVITICUS 23:1-8; LUKE 24:25-27,44, 45; 1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8; 10:1-11.** Jesus truly is *“Christ our Passover...sacrificed for us!”*

We began last week with the Bible’s teaching on Passover, and contrasted that with the traditions of Easter which are mixed with pagan festivals from Babylon. How do we get Easter eggs, rabbits, Good Friday, and lent out of what the Bible says of Christ’s death and resurrection?

THE RESURRECTION

Church tradition teaches that Jesus rose from the grave on Sunday morning; the truth is that Jesus rose from the grave on Saturday evening. Keep in mind that the Jewish day is reckoned from sunset to sunset; the Sabbath begins Friday at 6 PM (actually sunset) and ends on Saturday at 6 PM (sunset). **LEVITICUS 23:32** *“...from evening unto evening shall you celebrate your Sabbath.”* **MATTHEW 28:1-7** *“In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week...”* the women came to the grave but Jesus was already risen. The Sabbath is over; we are in either the dusk or pre-dawn of Sunday. George Ricker Berry’s Greek Interlinear translation reads *“Now late on Sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward the first day of the week...”* The Greek word is **“EPIPHOSKO”** which **may be used of dawn or just before a new day starts at dusk.** You see, Jesus rose from the Tomb on what we would call Saturday evening, but by Jewish reckoning it was the first day of the week, Sunday.

JOHN 19:28-31 *“...because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the crosses on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath was a high day)...”* Every Saturday was a Sabbath day (from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset); but there were also “high” or “special” Sabbaths in connection with the Feasts of the Lord. **What is very interesting here is that the Jewish leaders just committed murder by falsely accusing and killing Jesus; yet here they are concerned about observing the ritual laws for burial – MATTHEW 23:23-33.**

LEVITICUS 23:1-8 *“In the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD’S Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread...seven days...in the first day [the 15th] ye shall do no servile work...”* Passover is always on Nisan 14th; it could fall on any day of the week. **Unleavened Bread** begins on Nisan 15th, lasting for seven days, but the first day (and the seventh) was a high or special Sabbath; not the weekly Saturday Sabbath, but Nisan 15th was always a high Sabbath and this is what is spoken of in **JOHN 19:31.**

The events: Jesus ate the Passover in the first hours of Wednesday, Nisan 14th, after 6 PM, we would call it Tuesday night. Next, He went to the Garden of Gethsemane, was arrested, endured six mock trials throughout the night, was crucified by 9 AM, and died by 3PM, and this was still Nisan 14th, the Feast of Passover.

LUKE 23 (vv44-49) Jesus died on Nisan 14th, Passover, at about 3 PM; in Jewish time reckoning the ninth hour means since the break of day. He was buried the same day, Passover, just before the beginning of Unleavened Bread, in which that day was a high Sabbath day. (vv50-56) *“And that day [Nisan 14th Passover] was the preparation, and the Sabbath [first day of Unleavened Bread] drew on...”*

- **Wednesday** (before sunset) – burial of Jesus
- **Thursday** (sunset to sunset) – the “high” Passover Sabbath
- **Friday** – the women bought spices and prepared them
- **Saturday** – the weekly Sabbath, the women rested
- **Sunday** (begins at sunset Saturday night) – the women brought spices to anoint Jesus’ body

EASTER

This is not a Christian name; it has Chaldean (Babylonian) origin, named after Astarte the goddess of light or spring, in honor of whom a festival was celebrated in April. The Assyrians called her *Ishtar*, the so-called **“queen of heaven”**. In ancient history, Babylon was taken over by Medo-Persia around 540 BC, then Greece took over, and finally the Romans; the Babylonian priesthood remained and eventually would get all entangled with “Roman Christianity.” Ishtar was the mythological goddess of spring and fertility; she was alleged to have rabbits that laid eggs, symbolizing a new life. The eggs were colored to signify a wish for a ‘bright new year.’ Both the rabbit and the egg are pagan symbols for fertility. **JEREMIAH 7:18; 44:15-19** many see a source here for the Easter tradition of hot cross buns. When these traditions get mixed in, and men and women begin to worship the ‘queen of heaven’, God is not pleased!

LENT

This period of forty days in which fasting and abstaining from certain foods is commanded, can be directly traced back to the worshippers of the Babylonian queen of heaven, which they did in ritualistic worship of this ‘goddess’ leading up to the yearly festival in April; sound familiar.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-8 God’s Word anticipates every doctrine of Satan. If these words are read with an open mind it is easy to see that many doctrines of the professed Christian church today come from **“seducing spirits and doctrines of demons”** according to the Bible! **GALATIANS 4:1-11** while I am not saying we have to refuse to celebrate the Resurrection, or Christmas, or many other such holidays; we must understand that they are only marginally about Christ at best. So keep focused on Jesus; truly everyday is about Him! **COLOSSIANS 2:1-17** **Are you born again? Forgiven from all sin by His blood?** Jesus is the Lamb of God! Seek Him!